

## Tips For Selecting a Tile Craftsman

Have you ever walked into a house and looked at a tile floor and thought “I would love to have this in my house?” But then, after you start looking at the details such as squared off cut tiles around the doorways, crooked cuts up against the walls with a ½” grout line separating the tile and the baseboard, the sizes and straightness of the grout joints, etc., you realize that this isn't what you want in your home. Yes, you would like a tile floor, but there must be somebody that does a better job.

‘Back in the day’ people took pride in working with their hands and were considered craftsmen. The high-tech world we now live in considers working with your hands a low level vocation that doesn't require much brain power. Now, anyone with a trowel, bucket, and a sponge can install tile, but how well?

Here are a few things to consider when searching for a craftsman to improve your home.

### Look for...

Most importantly, **references**. The best referral comes from someone you know that is pleased with their tile installation. This also allows you to see for yourself the quality of the finished job.

If you do not know someone that has had a good tile experience, the bidding contractors should be able to give you names of customers that you can call and ask specific questions of.

**Longevity/ experience.** How long has the contractor been in business? If not long, does this person appear to be in for the long haul, i.e. will they be there should any problems arise later or if you need another project done? A good indicator is...

**Communication.** During the bid process, were appointments kept and if not, did you get a call ahead of time to re-schedule? Did it take more than one day to get a return phone call? Were your questions answered adequately and thoroughly? Which brings us to...

**Knowledge.** You must trust that the person you are hiring has the technical know-how as well as the **skill** to perform a proper installation. Do you know, and *more importantly*, does your contractor know...

- the difference between thinset and mudset installation and what circumstances call for each method?
- porcelain tile should be set in multi-purpose thinset?
- the setting supplies used to set stone tile are different than for porcelain tile?
- the reason why grout joints are narrower for granite and marble tile than other types of tile?
- the proper use of sanded vs. non-sanded grout?

**Price.** This is probably the hardest part of the decision-making process when selecting a contractor. Try to get two to three estimates and don't always go for the lowest bidder. Just remember, like a lot of other things, you get what you pay for.

John Ruskin, an English essayist, put it best:

“It's unwise to pay too much...but it's worse to pay too little. When you pay too much, you lose a little money...that is all. When you pay too little, you sometimes lose everything, because the thing you bought was incapable of doing the thing it was bought to do.”

**Your Gut!** Always, consider your “gut feeling” about the contractors you are considering. Do they seem to be honest and have integrity?

We at McVey Marble & Tile, Inc. will provide you with all the above qualities and an office staff to support our field staff. We can provide your total tile and natural stone needs, including granite and marble slab fabrication.

**For a complimentary estimate, please call our office at 281-370-5914.**