



5 Questions to Ask a Plumber Before Hiring

Do a search for “plumbers near me” and you are bound to come up with dozens of options. Narrowing down your choices requires careful research, so be sure to ask these five questions before you hire a plumber.

#1. Are you properly licensed?

To obtain an Illinois license, an individual must first work as an apprentice plumber under the supervision of a licensed plumber for 48 to 72 months. After that time, an individual may sit for the state licensing exam to become a [certified plumber](#). Holding the appropriate license means a plumber has the necessary skills to perform repairs, installation, and maintenance as safely as possible. Always verify a license by checking with the Illinois Department of Public Health.

#2. Do you carry liability insurance? What are the policy details?

An uninsured plumber is a potential liability, as you could be held responsible for an on-the-job injury, or find yourself needing to cover unexpected property damage. As such, you will need to ensure your plumber carries adequate insurance to cover these things. A plumbing company should carry a general liability policy with a minimum of \$1 million in coverage, in addition to a worker’s compensation plan that covers employees.

#3. How much experience do you have handling plumbing issues such as mine?

Not all plumbing jobs are the same. Some plumbers deal mainly with residential issues, while others cater to commercial clients. In addition, specialty knowledge is needed when servicing septic tanks, sewer lines, and drainage pipes. For this reason, you should know whether or not your plumber has any experience tackling your particular problem before making an appointment.

#4. Do you have references?

A [reputable plumber](#) will be able to provide you with reliable references. Ideally, these references should be from other customers who have had similar work performed in the recent past. In addition to references, be sure to look for online reviews to find out what type of experience other people have

had. Remember that no company is perfect, but if you do find one that has more than its share of negative reviews, you should stay far away.

#5. What kind of guarantee can you offer?

Any time you have [plumbing work](#) performed, you should be given a written guarantee. The length of that guarantee will vary, but can be at least 30 days for smaller projects or a year or more for bigger jobs. A guarantee should be provided in writing, and cover parts, labor, and the cost of an additional service call. Unless you have a written guarantee, you could be on the hook for repairs if you encounter the same problem only a short time later.

In addition to these questions, you should perform additional research by looking at a company's website and talking with friends and family members who have recently hired a plumber. Look for a well- established company with a long track record of success, and the odds of you being satisfied with your results will be much greater.