
7 Key Questions
YOU MUST ASK

Before Starting Your
Kitchen Renovation



By Mark Tonkin
Rosemount Kitchens

Welcome to the guide

I want to thank you for downloading this guide on the questions you should ask before starting your kitchen renovation.

I've written this guide to help you distinguish between the reputable and not-so reputable kitchen renovation companies.

Choosing the right company can be the difference between a satisfying and terrible renovation experience - and my aim is to not only help you achieve the best result, but also to have a good experience.

If you've got any questions after reading this, feel free to email me on info@rosemountkitchens.com.au and I'll do my best to help out.

All the best
Mark



Mark Tonkin
Managing Director
Rosemount Kitchens

What happens if:

Kitchen renovations are exciting - an opportunity to transform the most important room in your home and make it perfect for your lifestyle.

But what happens if:

- You choose the wrong company to carry out such a major and complex project?
- Those nightmare renovations you've heard about becomes your reality?

Not worth thinking about, right?

As someone who has worked in this industry for more than 20 years, I've heard stories about people taking advantage of well-intentioned customers, or homeowners losing out because their chosen company just wasn't up to the job.

Needless to say, that's never happened to one of my company's clients.

And it never will, because my philosophy is that a job isn't complete until the client is 100% happy.

But how do you avoid picking the wrong kitchen company?

That's why I've written this guide. To help you:

- Ask the right questions BEFORE you put pen to paper on one of the bigger investments you're likely to make.
- Choose the quality providers who'll provide the best value and make the whole experience as painless and free from inconvenience as possible.

You will normally come across two main types of kitchen renovators ...

- Solid, reputable companies with the expertise, staffing and processes to design, build and install a kitchen - who value their clients and back up their work with guarantees.

- Unqualified fly-by-night operators who talk a good game at first and offer "too good to be true" prices - then deliver poor service and work, make countless excuses and pile on additional unexpected charges - an all too familiar story.

Which one would you rather have in your home renovating your kitchen?

A quick word about **PRICING**

Why you should beware a cheap quote

We all love a bargain, but when it comes to kitchen renovations, consider carefully if you receive a cheap quote.

Unscrupulous providers have various tricks to keep down the cost of new kitchens. They'll put in more cupboards than drawers and include lower-quality materials and hardware.

The result? You get a less practical space that'll annoy you over time and you'll probably end up having to repair or replace those low-quality cabinets, surfaces or tiles - costing you more in the long run.

Then there's customer service, which is so important in a project that typically lasts weeks and has tradesmen constantly coming in and out of your home.

You don't want to be dealing with a company who might not turn up on time, does poor work and finds ways of charging more after the job starts to make up for the initial low quote.

My advice is always to focus on overall value. Sure, try to get the best price but don't cut corners on quality and service.

7 Basic Questions To Ask Before Hiring a Kitchen Company

Here's a list of some basic questions you simply **MUST** ask before choosing a kitchen company.

- How long have you been in business and how many kitchen renovations have you completed?
- How many online reviews do you have from your past customers?
- Can you show me your licenses and insurance?
- What guarantees do you have on your work and products you use?
- Do you use a written agreement or contract and will the price you quote be fixed?

- Can I see the contract you use?
- Do you have a documented process that we'll follow during the renovation?
- What happens if I'm not happy at any point or something needs to be fixed?

Any reputable company will be more than happy to answer these questions.

Reputable companies want to ease concerns and provide peace of mind up front - and **prove to you** that they're worthy of your business.

OK, let's get into some of the important details ...

Questions You Should Ask About The Business

The Business:

First things first. Just who is the business asking to renovate your kitchen?

In Victoria operators come and go, so you'll want to find out if the business you're dealing with is legit?

If the company has been operating for several years and has at least one showroom, then that's a good sign they're a viable business.

But if it's a tradie with a ute who sub-contracts for each job you might want to do some more due diligence.

Questions to get a handle on the business

- How long have you been trading under your current business name?
- Do you have an office and / or showroom(s) or do you work from home?
- Do you have staff, experienced sub-contractors or long-term workers?
- How many kitchen renovations have you completed in the last year?

Tip: Try the company's phone number. Does he/she answer or does it go to answering machine? If so, how long do they take to respond?

How Rosemount does it:

- Rosemount Kitchens has been trading since 2010, and its owners, staff and sub-contractors have worked in the kitchen industry for more than 20 years.
- We have three showrooms in Essendon, Nunawading and Oakleigh.
- We currently have 25 staff and more than 40 tradespeople and craftsmen who work regularly on our projects.
- In the last year we've completed almost 300 kitchen renovations.

Questions You Should Ask About Reputation

Reputation:

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos once said: *“You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well.”*

I like that quote because it sums up our philosophy at Rosemount. Kitchen renovations are hard and we always endeavour to do them really well.

Reputation is key when choosing a kitchen company to work with.

You’re making a big investment on people coming into your home over a substantial period of time.

You’re relying on them to have the expertise and skills to design and build your home’s most important room - all with the minimum of fuss and inconvenience.

So you’re taking a huge risk if you hand that task to someone who doesn’t have a proven track record.

And crucially, don’t take their word for it.

Get your information from independent review websites or speak directly to their previous customers.

Questions on reputation ...

- Can you provide me with recent reviews from at least 10 previous customers?
- Can you put me in touch with some customers who would be happy to talk about their experience? *(see the end of the ebook for questions to ask those customers)*
- Can you provide references from your suppliers?

Tip:

Check out reviews of the business on websites over which they have no control. Type in “business name” and reviews into Google. If there are lots of bad reviews, or no reviews at all, that’s a red flag.

How Rosemount does it:

- We have more than 150 client reviews (averaging 4.9 out of 5) on Google Reviews and Product Review, which is Australia’s leading consumer review site.
- Our website has detailed case studies featuring the experiences of our clients, and we’re always happy to put you in touch with a previous client to get some first-hand feedback.
- We can also provide references from our industry suppliers.

Questions You Should Ask About Process and Systems

Process:

You won't be surprised to hear that having the right process and systems in place is essential to make a kitchen renovation go as smoothly as possible.

Through hundreds of previous renovations, we've honed our process to minimise inconvenience and maximise the result for our clients.

And no matter how well a renovation goes, they all involve upheaval in your home and there will always be some degree of inconvenience to you and your family. Any renovator who tells you otherwise is not being up front.

Questions on process ...

- Do you have a clear documented process for the consultation, design, quoting and installation of the new kitchen?
- Is there a timeline with milestones, as well as a start and end date?
- Once the renovation is underway, how will it be managed?

Tip:

Be wary of operators who provide vague answers to these questions - you want to get specifics. Otherwise, you run a higher risk of the project being delayed or derailed because of a lack of planning and organisation.

How Rosemount does it:

- We believe in clear and regular communication with our clients throughout the project. Before a project starts, you'll know what, when and how things are going to happen. You'll have a designated point of contact who you can speak to at any time.
- We also let clients know upfront that some unexpected issues may occur during the work. What's important in these circumstances is how a company responds, and at Rosemount we always go above and beyond to resolve any issues.

Questions You Should Ask About Licenses and Contracts

Licenses, Insurance and Contracts:

It's important to check that your company has the required legal licenses. To carry out work worth more than \$10,000 in your home, the company must be a Registered Building Practitioner registered with the Victorian Building Authority (VBA).

As well as this, check that the company's sub-contractors are qualified and licensed. Although it's the company's responsibility to ensure this, some unethical operators might try to transfer that responsibility to you by asking you to sign a building permit as an "owner builder". Don't do it.

- Plumbers, gasfitters and drainers must carry an ID card and be licensed with the VBA
- Electricians are licensed with Energy Safe Victoria
- Some other trades need to be registered with the VBA

Kitchen renovations don't usually require local council permits, but you might need one if you're doing structural work on your home. Always check in advance what's required - a good company will be able to advise you.

Questions on licenses, insurance and contracts ...

- Are you a Registered Building Practitioner and can you provide me with your Registered Building Practitioner license number?
- Are your tradespeople qualified and licensed?
- Do you use a Domestic Building Contract?

Tip:

If a company seems reluctant to provide proof of these licenses or engage in a written contract, that's another red flag. Hold off signing anything until you're happy with the terms and conditions, and satisfied it includes everything you need and have been promised.

How Rosemount does it:

- Rosemount is a Registered Building Practitioner (Licence No: CDB-L 48241).
- Our tradespeople have decades of experience between them. They all have appropriate licenses for their work.
- We're also a member of the Australian Cabinet and Furniture Association (ACFA), and Housing Industry Association of Australia (HIA).

Questions You Should Ask About Warranties and Guarantees

Warranties & Guarantees:

Reputable companies guarantee their work. If there's an issue or mistake that needs to be fixed, they should do the work at no extra charge.

Less reputable operators will refuse to take responsibility for their mistakes. They'll make excuses and might charge you more to get it fixed.

Our project managers go to each client's home and are always available to discuss a job. They will address any problems that may arise and will get those problems fixed.

Questions on warranties and guarantees ...

- What guarantees do you offer on the quality of your work?
- What warranties do you offer for the products you use?
- Will you commit to fixing any issues that arise?

Tip:

If a company seems reluctant to commit to taking responsibility for any mistakes, that's a red flag.

How Rosemount does it:

- All cabinets, benches, fittings and accessories supplied by Rosemount are guaranteed for 10 years. We use the highest quality materials and hardware - like world-renowned Blum drawer hinges and runners - in all projects.
- Our philosophy is simple: the job is only complete once our customer is 100% happy. We always go the extra mile to fix or resolve any issues.

Questions To Ask About The Cost Of Your Kitchen

How Much Will My New Kitchen Cost?

Before signing a contract, make sure you've received a line-by-line schedule of pricing that breaks out the cost of the different components of the project.

Do any seem particularly expensive or cheap? If it's too cheap, is that a sign that the company is using inexperienced labour or cheap knock-off products imported from places like China.

How much do you pay and when? Reputable companies take a 5% deposit in advance, further payments on reaching certain milestones and final payment on completion.

Renovations can be unpredictable and it's possible circumstances will change after the project is underway. Unforeseen issues can pop up, but there should always be conversations to decide the best way forward.

If there is a need for extra budget, it's essential that the company gets your approval to do the work - and that this is specified in the contract.

Questions on the cost ...

- Do you provide costs of line items as part of your quote?
- How much of a deposit do you require before starting work?
- Are there any hidden or extra charges in addition to the amount we agree upfront?

Tip:

Be wary of companies that ask for a big deposit or even all of the money upfront. That's a another red flag.

How Rosemount does it:

- We require a 5% deposit for all our projects.
- We're committed to clear and transparent pricing, and show the cost of each element in the contract so you know how much of your investment goes to each component.
- In the event that something comes up during the renovation requiring more budget, we'll discuss the options with you, and only after getting your approval, will we do any necessary additional work.

Questions To Ask About Project Management of Your Renovation

Project Management

Kitchen renovations take time and tradespeople can be coming and going from your home for a number of weeks.

So you want to know in advance how that's going to work and how to minimise the level of inconvenience to you and your family. Every home is different so it's important to discuss and agree various elements in advance.

You'll want to know what days the tradespeople are going to be there, when the tradespeople will arrive and leave each day, and if they'll clean up the mess they make each day too.

- What precautions will they take to protect your furniture, floors and the security of your home?
- Will they need to store equipment or tools overnight on your property?
- A reputable kitchen company will discuss all of this and more with you in advance.

Questions on project management

- Who will be the project manager and what will be best way to get in contact with that person?
- Will the project manager be working on site and, if not, how often will he or she come to check the work?
- Will the tradespeople be the same throughout the project and how many other jobs are they working on at the same time?

Tip:

If a company is reluctant to get into specifics on the above points ask yourself why. It's another red flag.

How Rosemount does it:

- Every project is different, so we always discuss with a client in advance and agree the specifics of how the work will be done.
- The client knows when the tradespeople will be on-site and that they'll treat the client's home as if it was their own.
- Each client is assigned a project manager who visits the site regularly and can be contacted by the client by mobile phone, text or email.

A Quick Word About Disagreements

How do we resolve any disagreement?

This is a crucial question that many companies will shy away from.

But reputable companies are happy to discuss this because they know that - even when both the company and client have the best of intentions - problems can sometimes arise.

When they do, the key is to be confident that the company will do its best to fix the issue.

How Rosemount does it:

- Clear communication between a good company and the client is essential through all stages of a kitchen renovation project.
- When an issue arises, we believe firmly that it's important to recognise the issue and then do our absolute best to resolve it.
- If you look at our reviews, you'll see how issues have cropped up during some projects. What we're proud of is that on each occasion the clients expressed satisfaction with how we dealt with and resolved those issues.

WARNING SIGNS

Kitchen Company Warning Signs

As well as all of the questions outlined in this guide, it's also a good idea to be on the lookout for some warning signs that a company might not be the best fit.

- **Mobile phone number that rings out or goes to answering machine**
Suggests a one-man operation. Will he/she have the resources to handle a big project like a kitchen renovation?
- **Verbal or basic written agreement**
Insist on a Domestic Building Contract that specifies the cost of each component in the renovation, as well as timelines, milestones and contingencies.

- **No independent reviews or references**
It's a risk to use a company who can't provide proof of third-party recommendations and testimonials.
- **No proof of license or insurance**
If your company doesn't have the required licenses, will you be liable for any injuries at your home or accidents that result from work carried out by unlicensed tradespeople?
- **Big upfront payment or payment in cash**
Reputable companies don't use cash and only require deposits to get started. Those who ask for significant upfront payments may need the money to pay bills from previous jobs.

Questions To Ask A Company's Previous Customers

Here are some questions to ask a company's previous customers:

- Did the company start work when they said they would?
- Did they protect your furniture and floors, and clean up each day?
- What were the tradespeople like in your home?
- How often were you updated on the progress of your project?
- Did anything go wrong and, if so, was it fixed to your satisfaction?
- Would you use the company again or recommend them to friends?

WHAT'S NEXT?

www.rosemountkitchens.com.au

Choose a Kitchen Company With Confidence

I hope this guide has been useful and will help you choose a company for your kitchen renovation.

Asking these questions will help you gather all relevant information, and allow you to proceed with confidence that you've picked a reputable and reliable company.

We aim to build trust with prospective clients by answering questions, easing concerns and demonstrating our expertise.

If they like what they see, great. If they prefer to go with someone else, that's fine too.

Whatever choice you make, we want you to be totally comfortable with your decision, and to end up with the best possible result.

If you're ready to get started with your renovation, visit one of our three showrooms to see all the options and get advice from our showroom specialists.

Alternatively, give us a call on **1300 476 736** or [book a free no obligation in-home consultation](#) with one of our kitchen designers.

You can also get inspiration from the [photo galleries](#) and [case studies](#) on our website.

www.rosemountkitchens.com.au

What they say about Rosemount Kitchens



Average Rating: ★★★★★ (4.9/5)



Average Rating: ★★★★★ (4.9/5)

Absolutely delighted with our Rosemount kitchen. Not only did we end up with a stunning new kitchen but the process of getting there was made easy and enjoyable by a team of professionals who provided first-class service throughout.

Georgia Wright
Kew

We did a full kitchen and bathroom renovation. Everyone within the company is fantastic, from the reps to the managers/owners to the tradesmen. We couldn't have asked for a better team to look after this build.

Daniel and Anastasia
Armada

I'm sure we could have done our reno cheaper, but we couldn't have done it better or had a smoother trouble free experience with such great trades and final result. These guys really want to get a good outcome.

Paul H
Melbourne

Where you'll find Rosemount Kitchens

Showrooms open 7 days - 10am-4pm

Call us on **1300 476 736**

**20 Napier St
Essendon
VIC 3040**

Tel: 03 9375 3371

**358 Whitehorse Rd
Nunawading
VIC 3131**

Tel: 03 9878 1200

**2 Kingston Town Cl
Oakleigh
VIC 3166**

Tel: 03 9572 4805

Check out our website: www.rosemountkitchens.com.au