

Quality Installation

You should get what you pay for!

There are many factors to consider when replacing your HVAC system. How can you be sure you will get what you pay for? How can you discern a contractor's skills, or evaluate their proposal's promises? How can you assess the value of your new heating and cooling system and its installation when the cost is but one variable in the total value equation?

Experts from across the HVAC industry identified and refined the core elements required for a quality HVAC installation. The result is a nationally-recognized, industry-approved standard (ANSI/ACCA HVAC Quality Installation Specification) which documents these industry requirements. The chart below will help you evaluate your contractor's compliance with the key elements in the Quality Installation (QI) standard. The questions address requirements of the key QI sections, then discusses the requirement so you can get what you pay for. If you seek value, rate your contractor—before you rate the price. For a detailed checklist visit www.acca/quality.

QUALITY INSTALLATION CHECKLIST (ABBREVIATED)		Contractor's Score (Yes = 1 & No = 0)		
QI Elements Questions	How to Get What You Pay For	Contractor 1	Contractor 2	Contractor 3
Did the contractor review the load calculation for your home with you?	In order to install the right size unit, contractors need to know the home's heating and cooling requirements, based on a variety of factors (e.g., size of the home, type of windows, insulation etc.). Determining heating and cooling loads based on the building's square footage is inaccurate and inadequate. Also, basing replacement equipment on the size of the original system could lead to problems since the original equipment size may have been incorrect.			
Did the contractor review the equipment installation procedures with you? Does the contractor have an installation checklist for testing the new equipment?	Selecting a high efficiency unit is smart. Hiring a contractor who will install the unit so it performs at that high level of efficiency is very smart. It takes great skill and a little extra time to design and test the system to ensure the equipment was installed correctly. Post installation measurements are key factors to ensuring your energy savings and guarding your health and safety.			
Did the contractor review the condition of your duct system with you? Did the contractor offer a plan to solve identified problems?	Leaky ducts can cause health problems and waste the energy savings that new high efficiency HVAC systems promise. Also, if the ducts are too small they will cause the HVAC system to use more energy while delivering less comfort. Ducts that are too small also may lead to early equipment failure.			
Upon job completion, will the contractor sit down and give you all the information you need?	You should receive the equipment's operators manual(s) and be shown how to do a few simple things like operate the thermostat and change the air filter. You should receive warranty and maintenance requirements and contact information. You should also receive a copy of the checklist used to test, measure, and ensure the system is working as designed.			
Is the installing technician NATE certified?	Contractors who employ NATE™ certified technicians are providing you with the highest level of nationally recognized talent.			
After interviewing the contractors, compare their scores, then their prices.	Contractor's Score			
	Contractor's Price			

ACCA is the nationwide nonprofit association of professional heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration contracting businesses. For more than 40 years, ACCA has provided education and research in support of efficient, safe and healthy heating and cooling systems. We invite you to visit us at www.acca.org.



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For more information, contact:



(800) 400-4152
www.ActionAC.net