



Dear Consumer,

When your home is clean, life just seems a little bit simpler. When there is no hair in the sink, not one crumb on the floor, and no dried-on food stuck to the countertops, it's easier to think, to breathe, to live. A clean space is an open space for your mind to wander and to work on the more important things in life.

Getting to that blissful clean place, however, can be a challenge. Even if you make the choice to hire someone to clean your home, the process of choosing a cleaning company can be quite daunting. To help with this process and hopefully ease the burden of selecting the right cleaning company for you, we here at Bella's House Cleaning have put together a consumer guide that will hopefully provide some clarity and direction for your search.

Before deciding on the who, you need to figure out the what. What exactly are your cleaning needs? How would you define clean - top to bottom, every square inch scrubbed with a toothbrush, or are there specific rooms or surfaces you're looking to target? How often would you like these spaces cleaned? How much time do you think the cleaning job would take? Once you know what you want, it will be much easier to evaluate cleaning companies based on how well they fit into your criteria.

Now that you know what you're looking for, you can have a better idea of who you're looking for. Google local companies. Read reviews online. Ask your friends, neighbors, and co-workers if they use a cleaning company, and ask them for their honest, blunt opinions. Once you've identified a handful of companies that could work, contact them for an estimate. If the company doesn't offer a free estimate, be weary. Take note of what happens when you first communicate with them - are they responsive, friendly, informative, and transparent?

Before you hire a cleaning company, we would strongly recommend conducting a short interview. This often happens in person during the free estimate, but it can happen over the phone as well. We've put together a list of important questions to ask and issues to address that will help you evaluate whether a cleaning company is a good fit for your needs.

**Money** - Ask how the cleaning company comes up with their pricing, and ask about any extra charges. A clever way to gain insight into the integrity of a company is to ask how you can save money with their services. Leave this question a little open-ended, and listen carefully to what is said...and not said. An honest company will answer this question fully and transparently.

**History** - Although it sounds extraneous, we would recommend asking a cleaning company about their business and cleaning history. Listen for their passion. There is a such a difference between working with a person or group of people who clean because it's their job, versus a company that cleans because they are passionate about cleaning spaces and serving their customers well.

**Insurance** - Is the company insured? Uninsured cleaning companies are often cheaper up front and can sometimes offer more flexibility, however, they come with the added risk of being much more costly and unreliable on the back end if something were to go wrong. If someone is injured in your home while cleaning, you could be held responsible for their medical bills. What if an employee damaged your house or stole something? An uninsured company has no liability to pay for any of those circumstances if they were to arise. Additionally, many uninsured companies have no accountability, and they have nowhere to leave a review, so if something were to go wrong, you would have no recourse to hold the uninsured company accountable for their actions.

Products - What products does the company use? Are they toxic, non-toxic, natural, or somewhere in between? Do they care what they use, or do you?

Guarantees or Warranties - Is there a guarantee of service or a guarantee of satisfaction? What does the fine print say?

Pets - If you have pets, they can be greatly impacted by whoever is cleaning your house, especially if you won't be home during the initial clean. Have the cleaning company meet with your animals first, and be sure to clearly outline any additional needs, such as pets needing to be let outside, watered, or fed.

Entry and Lockup - Be sure to discuss all safe entry and lock-up procedures prior to the first cleaning session, especially if the house will be empty. This is an often overlooked, yet crucially important piece to maintaining the safety of your home.

Once you've asked all of your questions and decided that you want to move forward with having the cleaning company clean your home, there is one last task to complete - ask for everything in writing. Read things over, then adjust and clarify terms if needed. Having a written agreement between both parties can be a key resource for both parties if a conflict or disagreement were to arise. A written agreement builds trust and transparency, and having that security can help you focus on what really matters - your newly clean house!

Thank you for letting us walk with you in your journey toward a simpler, cleaner, brighter home. If we can be of any help in cleaning your home, we would love to hear from you!

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