

THE BLUEBLOCK AUDIT

The 10-Point Technical Vetting Checklist for Homeowners

Bring this sheet to your contractor interviews. If they cannot answer these questions, they are selling you a decoration, not a renovation.

1. FRAMING & STRUCTURE

Question: Do you use LSL (Laminated Strand Lumber) studs for kitchen/millwork walls?

- **YES (Pass):** "Yes, to prevent warping behind cabinetry."
- **NO (Fail):** "No, we just use standard 2x4s and shim them."
- *Why it matters:* Standard lumber shrinks and twists. LSL is engineered to stay dead flat forever.

Question: Do you laser-level the framing *before* drywall is hung?

- **YES (Pass):** "Yes, we plane and fur every stud to a tolerance of 1/8 inch."
- **NO (Fail):** "We just follow the existing walls."

2. WATER MANAGEMENT

Question: Do you use a "Hot Mop" or a Sealed Bonded System (Schluter/Wedi)?

- **YES (Pass):** "We use Schluter-KERDI/Wedi/Hydroban."
- **NO (Fail):** "Hot mop/pan liner."
- *Why it matters:* Hot mops saturate the mortar bed. Sealed systems evacuate water immediately.

Question: Do you perform a mandatory 24-hour flood test on shower pans?

- **YES (Pass):** "Always. We plug it and fill it overnight."
- **NO (Fail):** "No, we trust our plumber."

3. TILE & STONE

Question: Do you use mechanical leveling clips (lippage control)?

- **YES (Pass):** "Yes, for all large format tiles."
- **NO (Fail):** "I do it by feel."

4. SUBFLOORS

Question: How do you fasten the subfloor?

- **YES (Pass):** "Glue and Screw."
- **NO (Fail):** "Nails."
- *Why it matters:* Nails loosen. Screws + Glue = Silence.

5. DUST & HYGIENE

Question: Do you use HEPA air scrubbers (BuildClean) during demo?

- **YES (Pass):** "Yes, we create negative pressure zones."
- **NO (Fail):** "We use a fan and a window."

6. FINISHES

Question: Do you scribe cabinets to the wall?

- **YES (Pass):** "Yes, we scribe everything."
- **NO (Fail):** "We use caulk to fill the gap."

7. CONTRACT

Question: Is your pricing fixed scope or allowances?

- **YES (Pass):** "Detailed fixed scope after investigation."
- **NO (Fail):** "Low bid with many allowances."

TOTAL SCORE: _____ / 10

If your contractor scored less than 10/10, your asset is at risk.

Ready to engineer your home?

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