



A Name You Can Trust™



What a consumer should know *before* buying a garage door

A garage door is an important component to any home. It represents much of a home's façade and is your home's largest piece of moving equipment. As a homeowner, you want to be proud of your home, therefore you want a garage door that:

- Enhances your home's appearance
- Works well and efficiently
- Is of excellent quality, yet will not break your account
- Does not have to be serviced frequently
- Has long life wear expectancy and therefore does not have to be replaced every few years
- And...most importantly, is supplied and installed by a reputable and professional company.

Let's take you quickly through a scenario, much like the one at your neighbor's house.

A dilapidated pick-up truck pulled in across the street and leaked oil on the Thompson's driveway. The driver's appearance matched that of the truck— disheveled and not too clean. The garage door that the guy installed seemed to work pretty well, but Norma Thompson worked most of Saturday afternoon after he left, scrubbing away the grease he smeared.

When the driver finally drove away, the truck hit her front steps, loosening the stones and creating a dangerous situation for the Thompson children. When Jerry Thompson called the store where he had purchased the door, he was told that the installation had been contracted out. Yes, the provided a warranty on the door, but, no, the installation was someone else's responsibility. Mr. Thompson was furious. He asked if they knew the installer's address and telephone number. The answer he received from his garage door company was, "No, he only comes by to pick up his paycheck. Sorry we can not help you."

Sound unbelievable? It really happens! What are you going to do? You know little about garage doors. How are you going to choose a door and have it installed to your satisfaction? Keep reading more to find out the most important things you need to know before purchasing a garage door.

No. 1: What Kind of Door Should I Buy?

Garage doors are typically made from four different types of materials: Wood, Steel, Vinyl, or Wood Composite.

- WOOD garage doors have been around for the longest period of time. Wood has a natural beauty, is very versatile, and operates quietly. It may be painted or stained. Wood doors are available in a wide price range, and a whole array of designs, therefore they are easier to fit into any budget.
- STEEL garage doors are among the most popular today. The cost of a steel door is lower than a door made of any other material. Steel doors may be ordered in several colors. They can be non-insulated, or can have a variety of layers of insulation and backing. They require very little maintenance. Today's manufacturers offer a wide array of styles to fit any home design, and budgets.
- VINYL garage doors offer a maintenance-free, resilient option that will not rust, dent or crack. They are insulated, but come in limited color options, and cannot be painted. While the initial cost of a vinyl door is greater than doors made of other materials, the long-term cost is less.
- WOOD COMPOSITE garage doors are crack-proof, split-proof and are quiet. The door is insulated and the wood grain is properly registered so that the door has the elegance of wood. A wood composite door may be painted or stained. It requires a minimum amount of maintenance.

No. 2: What Company Should I Buy From?

Unfortunately, the garage door industry is not strictly monitored. There are many fly-by-night companies that are not insured and do not provide their employees with worker's compensation. You will want to research for a company that:

- Carries adequate insurance
- Gives you warranties on both materials and labor of your garage door
- Employs installers that wear uniforms and drive clean company-owned vehicles
- Are courteous to the customers and conscientious in the customer's home
- Supplies references from previous customers upon request
- Is a member of the Better Business Bureau and the International Door Association (IDA), and the Northwest Door and Operators Association

Most important, choose a company that provides training for their technicians. Every year, there are more accidents related to garage doors than to lawn mowers and snow blowers combined. You can avoid future garage door accidents when the technician is properly trained and certified in safety procedures.