

When meeting the sales rep a few good questions to ask are:-

- Have you done this sort of work before? Do you have photos? Can I talk to a previous customer?

This shouldn't be a problem if you're really unsure just ask, most will be only too happy to help.

- Are you insured?

These days there are only a few companies who do not carry liability insurance, but if in doubt ask.

- Is your quote an estimate or a fixed price quote?

This is important to know. Estimates can be subject to going up, a fixed quote should not. Now is also a good time to check that VAT is included in the price given. A 20% surprise at the end won't cheer you up.

- What is the condition of my fascia, are they rotten?

If rot is visibly present you may want to ask a side question of -

- I know my fascia is rotten has that spread or present in any of the rafter ends, if so what will you do about it and is that included in your price?

A decent companies will repair rafter ends back to the wall plate as part of the installation and will be able to tell you how before you purchase.

- What material will you use to attach the new PVC fascia and soffit?

Here there are there are only two answers you want to hear, either timber noggins or PVC noggins, these are fitted to the rafter ends and allow the installer to straighten the line of the roof and ensure a square finish. ANYONE who tells you they will attach it back to the existing rafter feet should be illuminated from your screening process as this will not give you a secure high quality finish that will last years, before long you will be looking for someone to put it right at your own cost most likely. It might also be worth asking what they will attach these with, installation of noggins should have a minimum of 3 * 50mm screws in each noggin and every rafter end should have one.

- What thickness of board will you be fitting?

Here the answer may vary slightly from 16mm - 20mm depending on the board manufacturer, the answer you definitely don't want is 10mm, also if you do go with someone check that the offcuts are the thickness they quoted, I have seen jobs where the customer has

paid the price for full replacement but whilst no one was looking a 10mm capping board had been fitted to keep the cost down.

- What fixing do you use for the fascia?

Here you want to hear the words "65mm poly nails" anything less is really lowering the bar on your installation and should not be accepted. .

- Are there usually any complications with a replacement fascia installation?

The simple answer is yes, cement verges can split, tiles can crack and rafter feet can break or be missing, a bay might have sunk. Whatever the problem what you really want to know is "what do you do if any of this happens" the professional fascia companies will repair any damage without additional cost to you.

- How do you deal with asbestos?

Most good fascia companies will be trained to remove the low risk asbestos but anything above that will need specialist contractors. Ask them how they remove it, the last thing you need is asbestos all over the garden and driveway.

- What training have you had for installing Fascia and soffit?

Although there are very few qualifications out there for this specifically you should be looking for a company with fitters who have a carpentry background as the work involve whilst straight forward to a skilled tradesman may not be full understood by your local handyman, bracing, loading strength and fixing spacing's are to mention but a few bits of key knowledge needed to do a good job.

- What spacing will you use on the gutter brackets?

Here we have checkmate for the untrained man in a van, guttering companies have a set of guidelines to which your guttering must be fitted. If they can't give you a straight answer or sound unsure you may want to reconsider hiring them as this is a very basic question and will catch all want-to-be installers out. Gutter brackets should be fitted no closer together than 600mm and no further apart than 900 750mm in our opinion is the Goldie Locks zone.

- Will you fit a box end to my gable and what will you use to build it?

Box ends come in all shapes and sizes and if you look down your street almost every house that has one will be made differently, some more ugly than others. Off cuts and trim are not what you want adorning your home for the next 30 years. All box ends should be made from 400mm full replacement fascia board fitted in one piece with no visible fixings showing anything else is unsightly and disappointing.

- What is the guarantee?

Is this a personal guarantee or is it insurance backed, if so who under rights your guarantee and how long does it last for. Remember if your relying on a guarantee to make you feel more confident you should probably look elsewhere, always go with your gut on this.

ALWAYS REMEMBER! It is your right and your obligation to ask these questions should any company become defensive or aggressive eliminate them from the tendering process without hesitation.