



CTP

California Trademark Pools

**What to do before you build
your dream pool**

Your home is generally the largest financial investment you may make in a lifetime. Adding a pool to your property, while it contributes to your enjoyment, does represent a relatively significant monetary outlay for most people. As a result, we encourage you to be diligent in your research as you find the perfect contractor and pool company to design and build your dream pool.

GENERAL INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW

In California, any contracting job—including swimming pool construction or repair—that costs \$500 or more must be performed by a contractor who holds a current, valid contractor's license from the California Contractors License Board (CSLB). The license must be in the specialty for the work to be performed. There are 44 different kinds of contractor licenses, most of which are for specialty work, such as swimming pool construction.

In general, to become licensed, contractors must pass a written examination that tests knowledge of their trade; verify four years of journey-level experience in their trade; post a license bond; and show proof of workers' compensation insurance, if needed.

Contractors who perform swimming pool construction or repairs must be licensed as swimming pool specialty contractors. A general building contractor may also contract for swimming pool work provided the general building contractor holds the swimming pool specialty classification, or the general building contractor hires a licensed swimming pool specialty contractor to perform the work.

It is important to find out who you're dealing with—the contractor or the contractor's salesperson. Anyone who solicits, sells, negotiates, or executes home improvement contracts, including swimming pool contracts, for a licensed contractor away from the contractor's normal place of business (such as in your home), must be registered with the CSLB. Home improvement salespersons must be ready to present to you their HIS registration.

Check the menu for suggested research criteria and other helpful tips.

One of the first steps in investigating a contractor is to check out the pool company's license with the California Contractors State License Board. Ask the contractor for their license number and if applicable, the salesman, HIS registration.

What Does The Contractors State License Board (CLSB) Do?

The Contractors State License Board (CSLB) protects consumers by regulating the construction industry through policies that promote the health, safety and general welfare of the public in matters relating to construction. The CSLB licenses and regulates contractors in 44 license classifications, registers home improvement salespersons, investigates complaints against contractors, provides education for informed consumer decisions and through SWIFT (Statewide Investigative Fraud Team), works to eliminate the number of unlicensed contractors working in California.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

1. Does the contractor or company carry at least a C-53 license?
2. Have any complaints/legal actions been filed against their license and if so, how were they resolved?
3. Is the company bonded?
4. Does the company carry workman's compensation insurance?
5. Does the company carry liability insurance?

To check a license number, go to www.cslb.ca.gov.

CHECK REFERENCES

Ask the contractor for the names of clients—one current and one completed—and talk to them about the job and their satisfaction with the contractor. Some questions to ask include:

1. Were you satisfied with the contractor's work?
2. Did the contractor keep to the project schedule?
3. Did the contractor stick to the contract terms and costs?
4. How did the contractor deal with changes and corrections?
5. Did the contractor resolve problems?

PREPARE A CHECKLIST

We have supplied a sample check list for you on the next menu selection item to use when comparing contractors and companies. Below are some tips to keep in mind once you select your pool builder and you start the building process.

1. Hire only licensed contractors.
2. Check contractor's license number at www.cslb.ca.gov or (800) 321-CSLB.
3. Get three references and review past work.
4. Get at least three bids.
5. Get a written contract and don't sign anything until you completely understand the terms.
6. Pay 10% or \$1,000 down, whichever is less, for swimming pool projects. At CA TradeMark Pools, we require ZERO down to start your pool!
7. Don't let payments get ahead of the work.
8. Don't make final payment until completion of the final plastering phase of construction, and until the installation or construction of equipment, decking, or fencing required by the contract has also been completed.
9. Don't pay cash.
10. Keep a job file of all papers relating to your project.