

What to ask before hiring a microcement installer

Most homeowners have never hired a microcement installer before — it's a specialized craft, not a commodity service. Without the right questions, it's nearly impossible to tell a true expert from someone figuring it out on your walls. **These questions level the playing field. Ask them before you commit to anyone.**

01 EXPERIENCE & TRACK RECORD

How many microcement projects have you completed?

There's no magic number, but context matters — five projects done properly beats fifty rushed ones. Follow up by asking to see **photos from at least three** real finished projects, not manufacturer stock images.

How long have you worked specifically with microcement?

General tile or construction experience doesn't transfer directly — microcement is its own discipline. Look for someone who can speak to what they've learned over time and how their process has improved.

Have you done projects similar to mine?

A shower pan is different from a kitchen backsplash, which is different from an open-concept floor. Make sure they've done **your specific application** — not just microcement in general.

Can you provide references from past microcement clients?

A confident installer won't hesitate. When you follow up, ask specifically **how the surface is holding up months or years later** — not just how the project went.

02 PROCESS & MATERIALS

What product system do you use, and why?

Microcement quality varies widely. A knowledgeable installer can name their supplier, explain why they chose it over alternatives, and speak to its performance. **Vague answers here are a red flag.**

How do you assess the substrate before starting?

Look for: checking for moisture, testing adhesion, inspecting for cracks or movement, and evaluating whether the surface needs repair or priming. **Anyone who quotes without seeing the space is skipping this.**

How do you handle existing grout lines?

A specific answer: grout lines are cleaned and filled — typically with **epoxy filler** — to create a smooth, even base before microcement goes down. If they can't walk you through this, keep looking.

How many coats do you apply, and what are the dry times?

The correct answer: a minimum of **two coats, at least 12 hours apart**, with sealer after 24 hours. Rushed dry times are one of the most common causes of cracking and adhesion failure.

What sealer do you use for wet rooms and showers?

For any surface that sees water regularly, a **polyurethane sealer** is the standard. They should name the product and explain why it's right for your application.

How do you waterproof a shower application?

The most important question for a bathroom. The answer should include a **waterproofing membrane** beneath the microcement, waterproofing tape at the drain and all wall-floor junctions, and a polyurethane topcoat. If the plan is just "we seal it at the end," that's not enough for a shower.

What happens if moisture gets behind the surface?

A good installer explains how their process prevents it — and how they ensure the substrate is fully dry and sealed before application. An honest one also tells you what failure looks like and **how they stand behind their work**.

What's included in your quote?

Get it in writing. Specifically ask whether **substrate prep, primer, materials, all coats, sealer, and cleanup** are included. Competitive-looking quotes sometimes exclude key steps.

What's the realistic timeline for my project?

A typical bathroom runs **one to three weeks**; a straightforward floor, three to five days. Be cautious of anyone promising significantly faster — dry times between coats aren't negotiable.

How soon can the space be used after the final coat?

Expect **24 to 48 hours** for most surfaces. Showers should wait the full 48 hours, sometimes longer depending on temperature and conditions.

Red flags to watch for

Walk away — or ask harder questions — if any of these come up.

- They quote you without wanting to see your existing surface
- They can't name the product system they use
- They have no photos of real completed projects
- They promise timelines faster than the process allows
- Their shower waterproofing plan is vague or incomplete
- They can't explain why each step in their process matters
- No references — or references who only speak to how nice they were, not how the surface is holding up

One last thing

The best installers **welcome these questions**. They've answered them before, they know why they matter, and they respond without hesitation. If asking makes a contractor uncomfortable, that tells you everything you need to know.