FINALIST.CC BENCHMARK NOTE

Benchmark note: interior repaint quote

Trade	Interior painting
What we read	A one-page quote, pasted into the form (made up for this sample)
The house	Single-story, built in 1972 (as the homeowner told us)
The question	“Is anything missing? How do I compare this with another painter’s quote?”
Read by	A person at finalist.cc, against our interior painting scope checklist

1. The quote as we received it

> **Example Painting LLC (made up) · Quote 1042**
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Interior repaint, walls: living room, hallway, 3 bedrooms | $3,200 |
> | Ceilings: living room and hallway | $650 |
> | Trim and doors as needed | $600 |
> | Materials, premium paint | $400 |
> | **Total** | **$4,850** |
>
> *2 coats where needed. Minor patching included. Fully insured. 1 year warranty. 50% deposit at signing, balance on completion. Price good for 15 days.*

2. In four lines

- The quote names five rooms and the lines add up: $3,200 + $650 + $600 + $400 = $4,850.
- Five lines are vague: trim and doors “as needed”, “premium paint”, “2 coats where needed”, “minor patching” and “fully insured”. The first four let a second painter price a different job.
- Five things are missing: bedroom ceilings, colors, furniture and cleanup, a schedule, and lead-safe practice (the house was built before 1978).
- Half the total, $2,425, is due at signing. Ask what it pays for.

3. Line by line

LINE	THE QUOTE SAYS	WHAT WE FOUND	STATE
Rooms	“Walls: living room, hallway, 3 bedrooms”	Five rooms named, no sizes. Give any second painter the same room list with sizes so both price the same walls.	Included
Bedroom ceilings	Not listed (the quote has “Ceilings: living room and hallway”)	Bedroom ceilings are not on the quote. If you want them, ask for them as their own line.	Missing
Trim and doors	“As needed”, $600	No count. Ask for the number of doors (one side or both) and which trim: baseboards, door casings, window casings, crown.	Vague
Coats	“2 coats where needed”	Who decides where? Ask for two finish coats on every wall and ceiling named.	Vague
Paint	“Premium paint”, $400 materials	No brand, product line or sheen. Ask for the product name and the sheen for walls, ceilings and trim.	Vague

LINE	THE QUOTE SAYS	WHAT WE FOUND	STATE
Prep	“Minor patching included”	Define minor: nail holes and dings only, or cracks and water stains too? Ask about caulking, sanding and spot priming.	**Vague**
Colors	Not stated	How many colors, and does any wall go from dark to light? That often takes an extra coat.	**Missing**
Furniture, floors, cleanup	Not stated	Who moves furniture, how floors are covered, and what cleanup happens each day and at the end.	**Missing**
Schedule	Not stated	Ask for a start date and the number of working days.	**Missing**
Lead-safe practice	Not stated	The house was built in 1972. EPA rules require firms paid to disturb painted surfaces in a home built before 1978 to hold an EPA RRP firm certificate. Ask for the firm’s EPA RRP certificate and how it will contain dust.	**Missing**
Insurance	“Fully insured”	A phrase, not a document. Ask the painter’s insurance agent to send you the certificate of insurance, then check the business name and the dates.	**Vague**
Warranty	“1 year warranty”	The length is stated; what it covers is not. Ask for it in writing: peeling and blistering, labor and materials.	**Stated**
Payment	“50% deposit at signing, balance on completion”	$2,425 before work starts. Ask what the deposit pays for and whether the balance is due after a walk-through.	**Stated**
Arithmetic	Total $4,850	$3,200 + $650 + $600 + $400 = $4,850.	**Adds up**
Price good for	“15 days”	Note the date it runs out before you collect other quotes.	**Stated**

Lead-safe line: EPA, Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Program, https://www.epa.gov/lead/lead-renovation-repair-and-painting-program, read October 7, 2026.

4. Questions to send back to the painter

1. Please add the bedroom ceilings as a separate line.
2. How many doors are included, one side or both, and which trim: baseboards, door casings, window casings, crown?
3. Will every wall and ceiling named get two finish coats?
4. Which paint product and which sheen for walls, ceilings and trim?
5. What does “minor patching” cover? Is caulking and spot priming included?
6. How many colors does the price allow?
7. Who moves furniture, how are floors covered, and what is the cleanup?
8. What is the start date, and how many working days?
9. Does your firm hold an EPA RRP lead-safe certificate, and how will you contain dust? The house was built in 1972.
10. Please have your insurance agent send me your certificate of insurance.
11. What does the deposit pay for, and is the balance due after a final walk-through?

5. A scope to hand to a second painter

Yours to send to any painter you choose, so their quote prices the same job line by line. Fill in the blanks first.

- Walls in five rooms: living room, hallway, bedrooms 1, 2 and 3 (sizes attached).
- Ceilings: living room and hallway; price the three bedroom ceilings as a separate line.
- Trim: ___ interior doors (both sides), baseboards and door casings in all five rooms. Price trim as its own line.
- Two finish coats on everything named. Name the product and sheen for each surface.

- Prep: fill nail holes and dings, caulk trim gaps, spot prime patches. Price larger repairs per item.
- Colors: ___ wall colors, one ceiling white, one trim color.
- Include furniture moving, floor protection, daily and final cleanup.
- House built in 1972: describe lead-safe practice and EPA RRP firm certificate.
- Give a start date, working days, payment schedule, warranty terms, and send a certificate of insurance.

6. What this note does not do

- It does not say whether $4,850 is high or low. We do not have a price database; the note is about scope and terms, and about making quotes comparable.
- It is not an opinion on the painter. Every finding quotes the painter's own words.
- It is not a review of the contract's legal terms.
- We did not see the house. Sizes and conditions come from the homeowner.

Prepared by finalist.cc. A sample to show the format; every name and figure is made up.