

# 2016 How to Guide





# How to Choose an Auto Repair Shop

**Looking to keep your car running great? Do you want to avoid large repair bills?**

**There's a simple solution: regular maintenance.**

Consider building a good relationship with a high-quality auto repair shop. It will make your life a lot easier when you have a need for unexpected repairs.

Having such a relationship is critical regardless of your car's age. At some point, the car will need tires, oil changes or even a new engine. If you have a relationship with a good auto repair shop, it will make it easier to take care of repairs and other maintenance issues.

If you don't have a regular mechanic, take your car in for a regular tune-up and maintenance. Since your car needs preventive maintenance anyway, take it to get an oil change or to service the air conditioning. This is a great way to try out a shop to see if they meet your needs.

**Here are some other things to keep in mind when looking for an auto repair shop:**

- Most people choose an auto repair shop based on a referral from friends, family or coworkers. Less than 40 percent of new customers are walk-ins.

- The Better Business Bureau can inform you about the repair shop's performance and reliability.

- People who travel often usually work with shops that offer a

national warranty. For instance, a warranty of 12,000 miles or 12 months is handy for issues that keep cropping up, particularly in older cars.

- Ask about the shop's range of services. They will need the latest technology to diagnose problems with newer cars. For example, can your prospective shop handle brake systems, electrical components and warranty repairs? Does the shop provide a loaner, rental car, or shuttle service while your car is being repaired?

- Inquire about their customer satisfaction policy. Look around the shop. Is the equipment in good condition? Is it clean, well-lit and organized? These factors all contribute to a level of professionalism.

- Look for brand names and proper certification. Does the auto repair shop use brand-name parts? These parts are engineered to meet the manufacturer's specifications and will likely come with a war-



ranty. Shops may use remade or generic brands which your insurance policy may not cover, so be sure to check.

- Are the auto technicians certified by a specific car manufacturer, the National Institute for Automotive Services or Automotive Science Excellence? Is the shop approved by the American Automobile Association? If so, this indicates a customer approval rating of 90 percent or higher and the ability to adequately perform the services advertised.

- Compare the services and fees of each shop in the area to find out the average price ranges.

Don't pick a shop based on cost; poor repair work will mean higher costs in the long run.

Once you have found a shop you trust, establish a good working relationship with your mechanic. When you have great communication, getting repair work completed will be less painful.

## For All of Your Automotive Needs

*Rusty*

**WARREN'S AUTOMOTIVE**

Keeping you on the road **SINCE 1983!**

501 W. Ridgecrest Blvd.

- **Service**
- **Maintenance**
- **Smog Checks**
- **Diagnostics**

(760) 375-4123

# How to Choose Alzheimer's Care

**Every 67 seconds someone in the United States is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. More than five million people in this country live with Alzheimer's. That number is expected to double in the next 25 years.**



A diagnosis of Alzheimer's or dementia is a devastating, radically life altering experience. It requires the finest level of professional care for your loved one. Finding the right managed care facility for your loved one who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's may be one of the most important decisions you ever make.

Ensuring that your loved one is placed in the right facility is critical. It guarantees that they are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve during the

toughest phase of their lives.

It also gives you peace of mind and erases the guilt about your loved one's new living arrangements.

Here are some tips to help you find the best quality care facility to meet the needs of you and your loved one, guilt-free.

The best care facilities are dedicated solely to treating patients with Alzheimer's and dementia. The staff in these facilities is knowledgeable and dedicated. Inquire about the staff requirements at each cen-

ter, as well as online or continuing education opportunities.

The care facility should conduct evaluations to determine where your loved one falls in the Alzheimer's spectrum -- beginning, middle or end stage. The care they give will fit the personal needs of the individual.

After the initial assessment, the facility should be assessed on a regular basis, as individual needs can change according to the symptoms experienced. People in the beginning stages of the disease might still maintain limited independence while others in

end-stage dementia need around-the-clock care and attention. The center should be able to adapt to the changing needs.

How is the living environment at the facility? Are the rooms clean and comfortable? Are there quiet areas for reading? Do outdoor activities inspire activity? Patients need to feel comfortable and safe. The best facilities offer cozy atmospheres where your loved one can feel at ease.

Professionals who care for

Alzheimer and dementia patients know the support of family and friends can have a huge impact. You should have ample opportunities for family visits, activities and outings that include family and friends.

When choosing a residential facility, tour the entire center. Ask to see a model resident room, and if permitted, ask to speak to some residents or family members.

Does the center have group activities, special outings and other services? Quality centers provide supervised picnics, fitness and craft classes, religious events and even field trips to enhance the care of the residents. Active people stay healthier longer.

The facility should not feel like a locked hospital ward or a boot camp, but should have security and protective measures in place. Your loved one should be treated with dignity and respect.

Some centers have a pet therapy program for animal lovers and people who have left pets behind.

When you find the right care for your loved one, you can be assured of their safety, health and happiness. And you can enjoy peace of mind knowing they are safe and well cared for.

## High Desert Haven

## Dementia Care Center

## A Place to Call Home!



Lic. # 157200576

1-760-371-1989

- *Around-the-clock assistance*
- *Nutritious Meals & Snacks*
- *24 Hour Supervision*
- *Trained, knowledgeable staff*
- *Assistance with Bathing, Dressing, Medication & Diet*

**OPENING  
SOON**

**CALL TODAY  
TO RESERVE  
YOUR SPACE**

1240 College Heights Blvd. Ridgecrest, CA



# How to Choose an Insurance Company

**With so many insurance companies out there, choosing one can seem like a daunting task. Which one can you really trust? Which one deserves your business?**

Many companies resort to gimmicks and funny commercials to attract new customers. But when it comes to filing a claim, the laughter suddenly stops. How do you know if an insurance company will come through for you?

Choosing a good insurance company requires you to take a long-term approach. It is similar to a mathematical equation. Weighing a price quote with the quality of service and risks you'll be taking will provide the right answer.

## KNOW YOUR POLICY

First off, consider the type of insurance you're buying. You will have to take a look at the fine details and figures for each policy.

If you are in the beginning of this process, insurance representatives should act more like teachers instead of salespeople. Your choices may be complicated, with a range of pricing options, deductibles and exclusions. A good company will give you choices, explain them clearly and let you make up your own mind.

While reviewing your options, make sure you are comparing similar policies. If a premium seems unusually low, it might have a higher deductible or more limitations.

It is important that you get as much information as possible about each policy before making a decision.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

Of course, customer service always plays a key role in determining which company is best. If you've had friends or family who have filed insurance claims previously, ask them about their experiences.

Some insurance companies have better reputations than others. Gathering all of these experiences will give you a good idea of how you might be treated by them.

Each company has a different customer service philosophy. Some of them prefer to use a local representative to communicate with clients. Others will discuss policies through their website or a 24-hour phone number.

Many insurance companies; however, use a combination of these methods. They might give you 24-hour access to national representatives along with a local advisor.

## FINANCIAL STRENGTH

An insurance company is only



as strong as its balance sheet. Financial strength is especially important these days.

Every insurer is independently rated based on their finances. An insurance agent should inform you of the company's rating and tell you what it means. A good rating means the company can make a payout in the event of a catastrophic event. A reputable, stable, well-capitalized insurance company is also likely to have more coverage options.

While your insurance premiums

are an important factor, it is just one piece of a complicated puzzle. Choose a company that will not only give you a fair price, but who will also be prompt and courteous in the event you have to file a claim.

The right insurance company will treat you well at every level of interaction, provide quality coverage, and pay out in a timely manner should there be an accident.



## For All Of Your Insurance Needs

• Home • Life • Auto • Renters

**CALL FOR YOUR FREE QUOTE**

**1281 N. Norma St., Ridgecrest, CA 93555 • 760-446-4560**



Lic. # 0608412/0G05847





# How to Choose the Right Landscaper

## Xeriscaping. A perfect fit for our environment

At its simplest, xeriscaping is about selecting plants that can thrive in the landscape with as little supplemental water as possible. This means choosing a variety of native plants, as well as other well-adapted species.

A number of things can spur an interest in xeriscaping. Many regions restrict the use of water on landscapes, so choosing xeric plants is one way of having a beautiful garden even while watering less. Other people are interested in the environmental benefits of planting natives and using fewer resources. Lastly, xeriscaping is an effective way of saving both time and money in the landscape, a benefit which everybody can appreciate.

Replacing thirsty lawns with either patios or xeric plantings can cut your water use by 80% or more,

and even eliminating a little bit of lawn will help.

While you may think the point of a xeriscape is that you don't have to water, in fact even xeric plants will need some water. During the first two summers, thorough watering at regular intervals will allow plants to develop the deep root systems they need to become strong. Some plants, once mature, may only need to be watered once per week during the hottest times of the year. That's why professional landscapers consider a drip irrigation system a must for nearly all xeriscapes.

## Set Your Budget

Cost is always a concern when hiring a home improvement specialist. Set a budget and stick to it.

Understand what you can afford and are willing to spend annually on your landscaping. It will help you prioritize your list so you can at

least get your necessities.

You might need to make sacrifices. If you need a new landscaping wall, you might have to delay getting a sprinkler system. On the other hand, if irrigation is a must, then you might need to cut back on how often your lawn is

mowed each month.

Even if your budget is tight, don't get discouraged. Some landscapers may charge less in order to get your business.

## Prioritize Your Needs

Determining what you need will help you decide which services you require from a landscaping company. Most professionals offer the following: weekly or monthly lawn and garden maintenance, weed control, tree pruning and shaping, garden installations, inspection and maintenance of irrigation systems and possibly even the construction of retaining walls or other structures.

## Get Referrals

Neighbors are sometimes the best way to get referrals. If you like what you see in their yard, ask them for their landscaper's name.

**If your project costs more than \$500, the contractor must be licensed by the state. To verify a license, contact the California State License Board by phone at (800) 321-2752 or visit them online at [www.csib.ca.gov](http://www.csib.ca.gov).**

Discuss the pros and cons of the service as well. You can even watch the company perform work. It will give you an idea about their employees and work habits even before contacting them.

You could also do an online search for landscaping companies. Be sure to read reviews from prior customers. Keep in mind, though, not all bad reviews are necessarily true. Some past clients may harbor a grudge and could inflate the problem. Good reviews also need to be taken into consideration. Some companies have people post good reviews even if the person has never used their service.

Also check the Better Business Bureau (BBB) for more information. If any complaints have been lodged against the company, the BBB will inform you.

## Consider Availability

Availability is another factor when looking for a landscaper. One of the first questions to ask is how often the company will be available for maintenance. If you want to be home while the landscaper is working, make sure you can coordinate your schedule.

Also consider community regulations. For example, if your town has noise regulations, ask each landscape company what they will do to adhere to them.

Once you find a landscaper that meets your needs, you can sit back and enjoy your bountiful reward.

## COMPLETE RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL LANDSCAPING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

**Call For A Free Consultation**

- Xeriscaping
- Yard Maintenance
- Landscape Design
- Sod Installation



**Senior & Military Discount!**

- General Yard Clean-Up And Trash Hauled Away
- Drip System Install And Repair
- Synthetic Turf Installed



*Bernie's*  
**LANDSCAPING**



**760-382-3883**  
[www.bernieslandscaping.com](http://www.bernieslandscaping.com)



**I Will Give Your Yard The Help It Needs To Make It The Most Beautiful Yard On The Block!**

CA LIC #990399



# What to Look for in an Assisted Living Center

**Assisted living centers help patients continue to live an active lifestyle in comfortable, cost-effective settings that offer many conveniences and amenities.**

People often need extra care as they age. Some, particularly those confronting severe health challenges, need regular care that is significantly beyond the scope of what family members or close friends are able to provide. Some just need to be in an environment where someone is on hand to check on them throughout the day.

Bottom line: all assisted care centers are not the same.

Some assisted care centers double as full-time medical facilities and assisted living centers are popular options for people who need medical attention.

In the past, long-term care could only be handled by a nursing home. Living in a hospital setting for an extended time was not a pleasant environment.

When looking for an assisted care center, consider some of these factors.

## GARDEN AND LANDSCAPING

It's a little known fact that the landscaping of an assisted living center will give you a good indication about the quality of the facility. Proper maintenance of the lawn and gardens is a good sign.

If the prospective resident enjoys spending time in nature, look for a facility that has park-like areas. Some centers have community-style gardens and walkways for residents.

Just being able to see nature as it grows and changes with the seasons can be uplifting and soothing.

An assisted living center with a manicured lawn and garden can make a huge difference in the quality of life for a loved one.

## HOME AMENITIES

Accommodations at these centers can range from luxurious, detached cottages to cozy condominiums. It all depends on what you are looking for, what you can afford, and what is available.

As you visit the facilities, try to personalize each space. Imagine how your loved one's belongings might fit into the area and where decorations will be placed. Does the atmosphere bring about a feeling of peace and tranquility? How are the rooms decorated? Are they tasteful and soothing, or do they remind you of a hospital setting?

Look at the home amenities and consider how you would feel about living there. Would you want your loved one living there? Is the facility within your budget.

## RECREATION FACILITIES

Game and meeting areas can help the resident make new friends and keep them from feeling alone and lonely. Leaving the confines of their units is an important part of recovery. Make sure the center offers activities and space to occupy your loved one's time.



Quality facilities will have activities that match his or her hobbies. If your family member enjoys crafts, then look for a center with a designated craft area or classes for your loved one to enjoy.

## PERSONAL CARE

Ask your loved one's personal physician how much care is required to function safely. The doctor may even be able to guide you toward an appropriate facility. Be sure to seek advice on what qualifications and certifications you need to look for in the center's staff. The center's employees should be well-

qualified to handle medical needs.

If you monitor the medical care, you can avoid paying for extensive services that your loved one may not need. Understanding the care the person requires will help you find a center that is a good fit.

Choosing an assisted living facility is about finding the right combination of medical services and amenities. With research and thought, you will find the perfect place to bring comfort and care to your loved one.

## High Desert Haven

**A Seniors Community in tune with your life. A Place to Call Home!**



1-760-371-1989

Lic. # 157200576

- *Around-the-clock assistance*
- *Nutritious Meals & Snacks*
- *Housekeeping, Laundry & Transportation Service*
- *Individual Climate Control System*

- *Assistance with Bathing, Dressing, Medication & Diet*
- *Planned Activities*
- *Each Unit contains Living Room, Bedroom, & Bathroom for comfort & privacy*

1240 College Heights Blvd



# How to Choose a Final Resting Place

**Choosing a final resting place is a daunting task emotionally and sometimes financially. No one likes to think about it.**

But choosing a final resting place is actually one of the most compassionate things you can do for your loved ones.

Whether you're pre-planning for yourself or helping a family member with choices, these end-of-life decisions will have a lasting impact.

Here are some things to consider when choosing a final resting place.

## **CEMETERY**

In some respects, choosing a resting place is like buying real estate. Location will play a large part in choosing a cemetery plot or mausoleum.

Your final resting place should have special meaning for you and your loved ones. Ideally, it should be neat, clean and have long-term arrangements for taking care of the grounds. A convenient location is preferable, so loved ones can pay their respects easily and conveniently.

Much of this decision will be based on personal preference. It might be a small, quiet country location or a plot in the middle of a bustling city. There are plenty of options available, depending on your wishes.

The property manager should have a stellar reputation and a lengthy track record of being professional. It is important that they make you feel comfortable and at peace with your decisions.

Look for a cemetery that will be run in perpetuity. It should have stable management now and detailed plans for ongoing maintenance through decades to come. Do not be afraid to ask questions about the company's history and plans for the future.

## **HEADSTONES**

Deciding on the right headstone is another way to leave a legacy.

The monument or headstone can say a lot about the deceased's life. You can choose a simple, straightforward stone or an elaborate stone with a custom design. You can also leave a message for descendants. This headstone will be around for a very long time, and it can inform people about your life.

So you might want something more unique. Monuments can also reflect the personality and interests of the person they are honoring.

Many companies offer a variety of designs and layouts for people who want a special headstone. They have symbols and messages that can honor religious beliefs, clubs, honors or careers. These elements will add personality to your headstone.

These companies are happy to cater to your request. They might also make recommendations.

A final resting place will honor a legacy for many years to come. The decisions you make will leave a meaningful impression, so take the time to choose wisely.



## **Your Partner in Advance Planning**



Pre-planning your final arrangements is one of the most thoughtful decisions you can make for your loved ones. By making the arrangements of your choosing in advance, you spare your family the burden and stress of making difficult decisions during their time of grief and mourning. In addition, making your final arrangements now will protect you and your loved ones against future price increases.

**Some of the services we offer include:**

• *Burial, Cremation Burial, Garden Scattering • Columbarium • Preplanning*

To discuss your pre-planning needs, please call 760-375-8814.

# Desert Memorial Park

Office: 216 S. Norma St.  
Grounds: 801 S. San Bernardino County Line Rd  
760-375-8814 | [desertmemorialpark@gmail.com](mailto:desertmemorialpark@gmail.com)



# How to Choose a Plumber

Selecting the right plumbing company can take the stress and worry out of your repair needs, whether they are large or small.

Proper plumbing design is a science. Providing adequate water pressure and keeping various toxins out of your water lines are only two of many concerns a plumber must address when designing a system.

## What To Look For:

\*Ask to see the state license- All plumbers, including sub-contractors and journeymen, are required to be licensed by the state.

\*Check proof of insurance- For your own protection, check proof of both workman's compensation and general liability.

\*Business stability- Find out how long the company has been in business and how long it has been at its present location.

\*Building codes- In certain municipalities you'll need to see that all building codes are met.

When looking for a reliable plumbing company, you cannot simply rely on hourly rates. Plumbing companies' billing systems vary. While some will charge according to "time and material", other companies will charge a "flat rate". When you get an estimate from a company, be sure to ask what will be provided for the price quoted.

Recognize that there are several variables in developing the price. These include:

\*Time that it takes to complete the installation or perform the repair.

\*Quality of the fixtures.

\*Number of fixtures.

Remember, the company quoting a low rate may not necessarily be the right company for you. Some plumbing companies may offer low hourly rates, but then charge additional

"equipment fees" for certain tools needed on the job. Ask if there are any additional charges for equipment, truck or trip costs. Basically, when evaluating quotes, be sure you are comparing apples to apples.

You may also need to consider that most companies charge a higher rate for over-time, weekends, holidays and emergency calls. These charges vary from company to company.

Also ask about the types of fixtures and pipes that are to be installed. Make sure you are comparing similar quality products when seeking estimates. It is not uncommon for companies to require a deposit for special orders on fixtures.

If you are purchasing products yourself to be installed by a plumber, check with your plumber first. Many will not install customer-purchased products. If the plumber will install customer-purchased products, check the quality of the product. Look for an approval stamp, such as the Uniform



Plumbing Code stamp (UPC). The National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) also places stamps on products. These stamps are similar to the familiar UL approval on electronic products. You should also make sure the product is right for your building and meets all codes. Remember, if the product fails and the problem is not with the installation, then you may have to pay for the removal of the item.

It is common to receive a warranty on the services provided. This may include 30 days on stoppage and as

many as 90 days on installation. Be aware that material may have a longer warranty than labor. For example, a part may be under a warranty for five years and the labor for only one.

Check for membership in trade organizations, such as the local chapter of The National Association of Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors and the Association of Master Plumbers. Companies who participate in these organizations are more likely to keep up-to-date on new regulations and codes.



## Call Us For All Of Your Plumbing Needs

- |                   |                           |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Sewers & Drains | • Tank Water Heaters      | • Toilets                 |
| • Faucets & Sinks | • On-Demand Water Heaters | • Repipes                 |
| • Tubs/Showers    | • Hot Water Dispensers    | • Sewer Camera Inspection |

Protect yourself and your property-always use a licensed and insured contractor! Lic.#496447  
Celebrating 40 Years Serving Ridgecrest

1501 1/2 N. China Lake Blvd. • 760-446-4004 • [www.cardinalplumbing.net](http://www.cardinalplumbing.net)