

Here is the assumption that costs Toronto property owners the most money: the best fence repair contractor is the one with the best reviews. Reviews tell you that <https://gta-fencing.b-cdn.net/fence-installation/index.html> a contractor built fences. They do not tell you whether he can match your twenty-year-old cedar line, reset a post that has rotted below grade, or handle a fence that sits exactly on the boundary between two neighbors. The questions you ask before hiring do more screening than any review page ever will. Choosing a contractor for fence repairs is an interview, and you are the one who should be running it.



This article lays out the questions that matter for repair work across Toronto and the GTA, organized by the decisions you will face: damage assessment, repair versus replacement, shared fences, matching, timing, and the paperwork that protects you. For each one you will find what a good answer sounds like and the follow-up that separates a real answer from a rehearsed one.

Questions About Damage Assessment

1. Can you show me what is structural damage and what is only cosmetic? A good contractor points at your fence and explains the difference on the actual material: the crack in a rail that carries load versus the split in a single picket that simply looks bad. If the answer stays abstract, ask him to walk the line and show you, post by post. The distinction matters because cosmetic damage is often left alone while structural damage gets fixed, and the contractor who cannot make that call in front of you will not make it correctly behind your back.
2. Which posts are actually failing, and how do you know? The honest answer involves checking below the ground line. A contractor who probes the post bases, pushes on them, and explains what rot looks like at the base of a cedar post sitting in clay soil is a contractor who has repaired fences in this region before. A contractor who answers without touching a post is quoting from experience he does not have, and the proof will surface after the first heavy rain.

Questions About Repair Versus Replacement

3. Which sections can be repaired, and which should be replaced? This is the most important question on the list, and a good answer is a list of its own, not a single sentence: these three posts are sound, this section gets new pickets, this run is beyond saving. If the contractor says replace it all without examining the fence, ask for the repair-first alternative and watch how he reacts. If the contractor says repair everything, ask which posts are holding the fence up and how he knows they are sound, because a fence that is repaired without checking its foundation is a fence that fails on a schedule.
4. If you do replace, how will the new work match what is already there? Matching is the difference between a repair and a visible patch. The answer should cover material, picket spacing, height, and finish, and it should be honest about the fact that new wood will look different from weathered wood until it ages in. Ask to see samples of the material and any stain the contractor proposes, held up against your fence in daylight. A contractor who cannot produce samples is a contractor who has not thought about the match, and the match is half the job.

Questions About Shared Fences in the GTA

5. Is this fence on the property line, and how will you confirm the boundary before setting posts? Fences in Toronto, Mississauga, and the surrounding municipalities sit on shared lines more often than owners realize, and a repair crew that digs without confirming the boundary can start a neighbor dispute that outlives the repair. The answer should reference your survey, municipal records, or a clear plan for confirming the line. If the contractor shrugs, the boundary question becomes your job, and you should treat that as a warning.
6. Have you handled shared-fence repairs where the neighbor had to be involved? Shared fences need consent for access, agreement on who pays, and a plan for debris and working space that crosses the line. A contractor with real GTA experience will have a calm, practical answer about talking to neighbors and coordinating access through someone else's yard. A contractor who has never dealt with it will treat the neighbor as an obstacle rather than a participant, and that attitude will become your problem when the crew needs the other side of the fence.
7. If the fence is shared, how do you recommend we split the work and the cost? This is a conversation question, not a yes-or-no question. The useful answer covers the options: splitting the cost of a repair that benefits both sides, one owner paying for improvements only they want, and what happens if the neighbor declines to participate at all. The contractor should be able to describe how these situations usually play out in the GTA, where lots are tight and fences run close to houses, and he should be comfortable being the neutral party in that discussion rather than pushing you into a fight.

Questions About Matching and Materials

8. What is my fence made of, and what will you use for the repair? A contractor who can identify cedar versus pressure-treated versus vinyl at a glance, and explain why the repair material matters, understands the job. The answer should include the practical details: cedar rots at the ground line, vinyl gets brittle in cold weather, and older materials may no longer be available in matching profiles. If the contractor cannot tell you what your fence is made of after looking at it, the rest of the estimate deserves the same skepticism.
9. How will the repaired section look next year, not just next week? New wood silvering at a different rate than old wood is the classic disappointment, and no contractor can promise an invisible match forever. A good answer names the reality and gives you choices: accept the color difference as the fence ages, stain the entire run to even it out, or use a finish that speeds up the weathered look. A contractor who promises a perfect match with no caveats is not being straight with you, and you will be looking at that section for a decade.

Questions About Timing and the Work Itself

10. When can you start, and how long will the repair actually take? Repair work is small enough to be scheduled around bigger jobs, so the honest answer includes both a start date and a number of working days, plus the weather conditions that would delay the work. Across the GTA, spring thaw and the summer backlog push repair timelines out, and a contractor who tells you the job will take one day should be able to say what happens if the crew finds worse rot than expected. Ask about scheduling early in the season rather than assuming availability.
11. What happens to my yard, my garden, and anything buried along the fence line? A repair crew should have a plan for protecting plantings, working around sprinkler lines, and leaving the site clean. The answer should sound specific: where equipment will go, how debris leaves the property, and what gets repaired if the crew cuts a sprinkler line. Vague reassurance here means you will be the one dealing with the aftermath, and the aftermath of a fence repair is usually a muddy lawn and a broken irrigation head.
12. The gate is the most used part of the fence. Will you repair the frame, hinges, and latch, or only what is visibly broken? Gates sag for reasons: posts that have shifted, hinges that have pulled, frames that have twisted. A

contractor who plans to hang the gate back on the same failing hinges is doing half a repair. The good answer covers the whole gate assembly, including whether the posts on either side of the gate need to be reset, and it explains how the latch will be adjusted so the gate closes square.

Questions About Paperwork, Insurance, and Payment

13. Can you provide proof of insurance and WSIB coverage, and will you verify it? Any contractor working on your property should carry liability coverage, and anyone with employees should be registered with WSIB. Ask for the certificates and verify them with the provider rather than accepting a scan at face value. Coverage details and requirements change, so if you have questions, confirm the current requirements with your insurer or the relevant authority. This is not paperwork for its own sake; it is the difference between a clean claim and a personal lawsuit if someone gets hurt on your fence line.
14. Do I need a permit for this repair, and will you handle it? Municipal rules across the GTA differ, and what is exempt in Caledon may not be in Toronto. A contractor who knows the local requirements, or who tells you plainly to confirm with your municipality, is more trustworthy than one who waves the question away. Repairs near property lines, pools, or watercourses can carry their own requirements, so ask specifically rather than generally, and do not rely on the contractor's memory of what was required a few years ago.
15. What does your workmanship warranty cover, and how is payment structured? The useful answer names what is guaranteed, such as new posts that lean, fasteners that fail, or replaced material that rots prematurely, and it names what is not covered, like damage from a vehicle or a falling tree. Ask how long the coverage lasts and what the process is if something fails. Then ask about money: how much is due upfront, what triggers each payment, and what happens if the work is not finished when promised. A contractor who is clear about both warranty and payment is a contractor who has done this before.

How to Listen to the Answers

The content of the answers matters less than their specificity. A good contractor answers with reference to your fence: that rail carries the gate load, so it gets replaced, rather than a blanket claim of quality work. Vague answers are rehearsed answers. Ask follow-ups that force detail: which post would you replace first, what would you do if you found rot under this section, have you repaired this type of fence in this neighborhood. Then ask for references from repair jobs specifically, not installations, and ask whether you can look at a completed repair in person. A repair contractor's best work is on fences that are still standing years later, and he should be able to show you a few.

Notice also what the contractor does on the site visit. The right person walks the whole line, checks both sides, probes the ground line, asks about the neighbor, and takes notes. The wrong person stands at the gate, quotes a number, and mentions how busy he is. The visit itself is part of the interview, and the way a contractor treats your fence before he is hired is exactly how he will treat it after he is paid.

Ask These Questions When Choosing a Contractor for Fence Repairs

Choosing a contractor for fence repairs in Toronto and the GTA comes down to how well you interview. The questions in this article cover damage assessment, repair-versus-replacement judgment, shared fences, matching, timing, and the paperwork that protects you. Any contractor who answers them specifically, on your property, with your fence in front of him, is worth a second meeting. One who cannot answer them is not a repair contractor; he is someone with a truck and a price. The fence will be there long after both of you are gone, so take the twenty minutes to ask properly.