

Two owners on the same street in Brampton called the same three contractors last spring. The first owned a level, sixty-foot backyard with straight access from the driveway, one gate, and a cedar fence that was tired but standing. The second owned a corner lot that sloped toward the back, a shared fence on one side, a ravine edge on the other, and an old chain-link run that had to come out post by post. Both asked for a fence, and both received three quotes, but the two sets of numbers behaved completely differently. The first owner's quotes clustered close together, because every estimator saw the same simple job. The second owner's quotes spread out like a fan, because every estimator priced a different solution to the same complicated site. That is the reality of comparing costs and options on any GTA property: how to compare local fence contractors well starts with understanding what sits inside each number, and the number is built from materials, site conditions, and a string of decisions you make before anyone digs.

How to Compare Local Fence Contractors: Why Two Quotes for the Same Yard Can Sit a World Apart

Every fence quote is a bundle of choices, and the bundle can be assembled many ways. The main drivers are material type, linear footage, height, the number and width of gates, terrain, access for materials and equipment, demolition and disposal of the old fence, the post installation method, the finish and treatment, and the season in which the work happens. Change any one of those and the number moves. That is why the final figure depends entirely on your scope and your local market, and why anyone who quotes you a price before seeing the site is guessing.

When quotes arrive, sort them by what is inside, not by the total. Two contractors can price the same material and still differ on posts set in concrete versus posts set on gravel, on the amount of concrete per hole, on whether the old fence removal and disposal is included or added later, and on the grade of lumber they will actually install. Ask each one to explain the breakdown. The conversation that follows is where you learn who read your site carefully and who read your checkbook.

Materials: What the Big Price Drivers Actually Are

Cedar remains the most common choice across the GTA, and within cedar there is a wide range. The grade of lumber, whether the boards are nailed or screwed, whether the fence is board-on-board for privacy or a shadowbox with gaps, and whether the wood comes pre-treated all change the cost and the maintenance calendar. Cedar weathers to gray if left natural, which many owners like, and it takes stain or paint well if you plan to finish it. The tradeoff is upkeep: expect to inspect it seasonally and to refinish it on a schedule you can live with.

Vinyl and composite fences trade that maintenance for a higher upfront figure and fewer color options. Good vinyl holds its color and shrugs off snow, but cheap vinyl can grow brittle in cold weather, so the gauge of the material and the quality of the hardware matter more than the brand name. Aluminum and steel options sit at the higher end of the range and are chosen mostly for looks and security rather than privacy. Chain link remains the workhorse for commercial yards and for owners who want the lowest-maintenance enclosure that still does its job, and it can be dressed up with privacy slats later if priorities change. Each material answers a different question, so the right first step is deciding which question you are actually asking: privacy, security, looks, or the lowest long-term upkeep.

Height, Gates, and the Details That Move the Number

Height is the second biggest lever after material. A six-foot privacy fence uses a lot more material than a four-foot decorative fence, and it catches more wind and snow load, which means the posts and footings have to do more work. Height rules differ from one municipality to another, and pool enclosures have their own requirements, so verify the current rules for your city before you fall in love with a design.

Gates are where scopes quietly diverge. One four-foot walk gate is standard on many jobs, but owners frequently add a double gate for the side yard, a wide gate for the lawn tractor or the snow blower, or a self-closing gate for a pool area, and each addition changes the quote and the hardware quality. A gate that hangs well depends on good hinges and latches and a post that is set to carry the weight, so this is not a place to save money. Post spacing, corner posts, top rails, and the finish and treatment of the wood all move the number as well, which is why the smallest details in your scope sheet are the ones that keep quotes comparable.

The Site Is Half the Price

Site conditions often move a quote more than the material does. A level, open run is the cheapest fence to build. A sloped backyard forces a choice between stepped panels, which are simpler, and racked panels that follow the grade, which look better and take more labor. Clay soil, common across much of the GTA, shifts through freeze-thaw cycles, so [pool enclosure contractor](#) posts in clay typically need deeper footings and more concrete to stay straight, and some contractors will recommend different post installation methods for ravine lots and low-lying yards that hold water.

Access decides how much of the job is hand labor. If materials can be dropped at the work area, the job moves fast. If everything has to be carried through a narrow side yard or over a neighbor's lawn, the labor hours climb and so does the quote. Demolition and disposal of the old fence is another line that owners forget: old concrete pads, buried post bases, and wire fencing all have to go somewhere, and the removal is real work. If the back [GTA commercial fence](#) of your lot sits against a hydro corridor or an easement, the access rules for that land can restrict where equipment can go, so confirm the requirements with the utility and your municipality before you plan the work around them.

Residential and Commercial Budgets Are Different Animals

A house fence and a commercial fence are different projects wearing the same name. Residential jobs are measured in dozens of feet and shaped by neighbors, property lines, and aesthetics. Commercial jobs are measured in hundreds of feet and shaped by security, liability, and the cost of downtime. A strip mall owner fencing the back of the building cares about controlling access after hours, sight lines for the parking lot, and a gate that survives a delivery truck's impatience. An industrial yard owner cares about perimeter security, clearances for snow removal equipment, and a fence that keeps working for years with minimal attention.

The comparison process changes too. Commercial bids usually need to include liability coverage, and the contractor's insurance and WSIB status should be verified with their insurer before anyone mobilizes, because the exposure on a parking lot job is not the same as a backyard job. Approvals and permissions also differ by municipality and by property type, so verify the current requirements for your specific site. Maintenance planning is part of the decision on both sides, but on the commercial side it is usually written into a budget that runs for years, which is why a slightly higher quote for a more durable system can be the cheaper choice over the life of the fence.



Season and Timing: When You Book Matters

Demand shapes both scheduling and pricing. Across the GTA, the season opens with spring thaw, when the ground finally stops moving and crews start catching up on the backlog of jobs booked over the winter. Early summer is peak season, and good crews are often booked weeks out. Fall offers cooler working weather and less competition for dates, and winter work is possible for some materials but brings its own constraints around frost, concrete curing, and short daylight hours. The same scope can carry a different number in May than it does in September, and a contractor who is busy and in demand has less reason to sharpen their pencil. Booking early, or booking in the shoulder seasons, is a legitimate part of the budgeting conversation. A contractor with a full calendar is also a contractor with less time to walk your line twice, so ask directly how many jobs will be running at the same time as yours. The answer tells you how much attention your project will actually get, and attention is part of what you are paying for.

Build a Budget That Survives the First Site Walk

Set your budget around the whole project, not just the fence itself. Removal and disposal, site preparation, materials, labor, and cleanup all belong in the number, and a small contingency for surprises like buried concrete or a rock shelf is the mark of an experienced owner. Then make your scope decisions before you compare: what material, what height, how many gates, who removes the old fence. When every contractor prices the same list, the remaining differences are meaningful, and you can spend your attention on the tradeoffs that actually matter to you, like privacy versus maintenance or upfront cost versus longevity. That is the point of the whole exercise, because the money conversation only works when it follows the decisions, never before them.

How to Compare Local Fence Contractors: Spend the Money Where the Fence Stands

Most owners regret one thing after a fence goes up, and it is rarely the material they chose. It is the money saved on the parts they cannot see: footings, post installation, hardware, and the quality of the crew doing the work. The fence you see is only as good as the foundation you do not. When the quotes are in and the scopes match, let that be the tiebreaker. A contractor who prices the posts and footings properly is building a fence for the next twenty years, and that is worth more than a lower number built on thinner assumptions. How to compare local fence contractors for your GTA property comes down to this: compare the whole package, spend where it counts, and the fence will still be standing straight when the neighbors' has started to lean.