

Finding a Good Personal Injury Attorney: Hard Rules

These are a few hard and fast rules to follow once you've decided to hire a personal injury lawyer.

1. Meet with the (potential) lawyer before you sign anything.

A good personal injury attorney is someone you will trust and feel comfortable with, since you'll need to tell your lawyer everything and be completely honest. Follow your gut instinct here—the best lawyer in the world won't be able to win your case if you don't trust them.

2. Make sure your lawyer is willing to go to trial if you do not get a reasonable offer.

Of course, the lawyer and the injured party may not always see eye-to-eye on what's reasonable, but if the offer is objectively *unreasonable*, your lawyer must be willing to go to trial. Not all lawyers are willing to take the time to do so.

3. Have your lawyer explain all fees up front.

You don't want any surprises, especially unexpected fees.

4. Make sure your lawyer has adequate malpractice insurance.

One mark of a great lawyer is that they are prepared, so that their mistake does not become their client's problem. Every lawyer in Oregon is required to carry at least \$300,000 in malpractice insurance. A careful lawyer will carry more than that. If your case is worth more than \$300,000, you should be sure that your lawyer has enough malpractice insurance to cover you if your lawyer messes up! Do not be afraid to ask your lawyer how much malpractice insurance they have. A careful lawyer should have more than the required minimum.