

RETAINAGE CHART

Eleven contract values against five retainage percentages, then a full progress schedule showing what is earned, what is held and what is actually payable at each application.

Retainage is a percentage of every progress payment that the owner keeps until the job is finished and accepted. Five or ten percent sounds small against a contract, and it is not small against a contractor's margin, because the margin is usually a similar size.

That is the part worth sitting with. On a job priced at a ten percent net margin with ten percent retainage, the entire profit on the contract is sitting in somebody else's account until closeout, and the work was financed out of your own pocket to get there.

Retainage held at completion

Contract amount	5%	7.5%	10%	12.5%	15%
\$10,000	\$500.00	\$750.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,250.00	\$1,500.00
\$25,000	\$1,250.00	\$1,875.00	\$2,500.00	\$3,125.00	\$3,750.00
\$50,000	\$2,500.00	\$3,750.00	\$5,000.00	\$6,250.00	\$7,500.00
\$75,000	\$3,750.00	\$5,625.00	\$7,500.00	\$9,375.00	\$11,250.00
\$100,000	\$5,000.00	\$7,500.00	\$10,000.00	\$12,500.00	\$15,000.00
\$150,000	\$7,500.00	\$11,250.00	\$15,000.00	\$18,750.00	\$22,500.00
\$200,000	\$10,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$30,000.00
\$250,000	\$12,500.00	\$18,750.00	\$25,000.00	\$31,250.00	\$37,500.00
\$500,000	\$25,000.00	\$37,500.00	\$50,000.00	\$62,500.00	\$75,000.00
\$750,000	\$37,500.00	\$56,250.00	\$75,000.00	\$93,750.00	\$112,500.00
\$1,000,000	\$50,000.00	\$75,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$125,000.00	\$150,000.00

The full amount held back across the life of the contract, released at closeout once the punch list is done and the lien waivers are in. Several states cap the percentage, and several require the rate to drop at substantial completion.

A \$100,000 contract at 10 percent, application by application

Work completed	Earned to date	Retainage held	Net payable to date
10%	\$10,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$9,000.00
20%	\$20,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$18,000.00
30%	\$30,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$27,000.00
40%	\$40,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$36,000.00
50%	\$50,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$45,000.00
60%	\$60,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$54,000.00

Work completed	Earned to date	Retainage held	Net payable to date
70%	\$70,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$63,000.00
80%	\$80,000.00	\$8,000.00	\$72,000.00
90%	\$90,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$81,000.00
100%	\$100,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$90,000.00

Net payable to date is cumulative. What goes on any one application is this figure less everything already paid, which is what the calculator does when you give it the amount received so far.

At the halfway point, what is held and what is paid

Contract	Earned at 50%	Held at 5%	Paid at 5%	Held at 10%	Paid at 10%
\$10,000	\$5,000.00	\$250.00	\$4,750.00	\$500.00	\$4,500.00
\$25,000	\$12,500.00	\$625.00	\$11,875.00	\$1,250.00	\$11,250.00
\$50,000	\$25,000.00	\$1,250.00	\$23,750.00	\$2,500.00	\$22,500.00
\$75,000	\$37,500.00	\$1,875.00	\$35,625.00	\$3,750.00	\$33,750.00
\$100,000	\$50,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$47,500.00	\$5,000.00	\$45,000.00
\$150,000	\$75,000.00	\$3,750.00	\$71,250.00	\$7,500.00	\$67,500.00
\$200,000	\$100,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$95,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$90,000.00
\$250,000	\$125,000.00	\$6,250.00	\$118,750.00	\$12,500.00	\$112,500.00
\$500,000	\$250,000.00	\$12,500.00	\$237,500.00	\$25,000.00	\$225,000.00
\$750,000	\$375,000.00	\$18,750.00	\$356,250.00	\$37,500.00	\$337,500.00
\$1,000,000	\$500,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$475,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$450,000.00

A job exactly half built, with nothing paid yet. The paid columns are cumulative to date rather than one application. Note that at ten percent retainage on a job carrying a ten percent margin, the amount withheld is the whole profit on the work done so far.

Every figure on this sheet was produced by the same calculator that runs at contractorhandbook.com, free and with no signup.

These are estimating figures for ordering and pricing, not engineering. Nothing here sizes a structural member, checks a load, or replaces local code, a permit, or a manufacturer's installation instructions. Where a rule of thumb is doing the work it is written into the notes under each table rather than hidden.