

8 Steps to Building a Home



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Knowing what to expect is the key to a stress-free home building experience.

Building your own home is a great option for your next move. Not only can you design the home specifically for your own needs, but everything in it will be brand new and unused. And, while the process itself is fun and invigorating, it will ask for an investment of your time, thoughtfulness and patience. Knowing what to expect is essential in order to eliminate surprises along the way. This checklist can help you identify critical elements of the home-building process and prepare you for your homeowner role when you encounter them.

1 Choosing a builder

Because building a new home is unique when compared to everything else you will ever purchase, your relationship with a builder must, first of all, have a solid foundation of trust, honesty and respect. You should learn as much as you can about a particular builder's work. Some are more collaborative, some less so. Some will want quick decisions from you; others let you take your time. Each builder has a style that works best for them. Make sure your style is compatible with theirs.



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2 Architectural design

Before you build, asking yourself a question: do I want to design my home from scratch, or will personalizing a plan that's already on paper save time and help me better visualize the relationship between spaces, square footages and rooms? Answering this question is an important first step to home building.

3 Budget

Your financial advisor and/or banker can help with this, but it's important to know your budget comfort level before you begin the process. Starting without a pre-determined budget in mind may unnecessarily delay the process at important and crucial stages. Knowing what you want to spend—and knowing the figure you will not exceed—also helps make many other decisions throughout the process much easier.

4 Financing

There are many options for home financing, so it's important that you review them all to find the one best suited for you. Do you need a construction loan and have you researched what that entails? What cost monitoring process have you, your builder and your lender agreed on to make certain you're all on the same page throughout the process?

5 Interior design

Waiting for decisions/agreements about colors, textures, and materials can bring the home building process to a grinding halt. That's why it's a good idea to make certain there's family agreement about the type of interior decorating that will be used in the new home. Ask how much of this service your builder can provide and ask yourself how much you want to do on your own.



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Page 2

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7 Closing/Move-in

It's important that you review the steps in the closing process with your builder, lender and Title Company so you'll know what to expect. The last thing you want is confusion as you're signing important title and financing documents. Your actual move-in date can be coordinated with your builder as soon as the proper municipal approvals and authorizations have been received.

□ Even when nothing appears to be happening, there are always processes at work behind the scenes to keep your new home moving forward. □

specific about what constitutes a valid warranty claim. Also ask them if there's a clearly written service program that describes how—and how quickly—they handle warranty claims.

6 Construction

Home building may be the only thing you ever experience that you'll actually watch from start to finish. Even when nothing appears to be happening, there are always processes at work behind the scenes to keep your new home moving forward. Your home site can even get uglier—with rain, snow, and sawdust—before it starts to look pretty again. While your home is being built, it's important to remember that you're not in a race. Builders are typically motivated to move as expeditiously as they can and still maintain the quality processes that best serve their customers' needs. Be prepared: construction time can be adversely affected by weather, tradesmen, suppliers, municipal inspections and many other unforeseen interruptions.

8 Post close

If your new home came with a warranty, make sure you understand it. Be prepared to ask questions if your responsibilities for care and maintenance are unclear. Ask your builder to be

