



5 Important Questions to Ask When Selecting a Home Builder

Written by **Collin Frisbie** | November 16, 2016

The decision to build a new home is exciting, but many people consider it a stressful endeavor. In reality, the process of building your new home should be fun—and it can be, if you select the right home builder.

When starting the process of building your home, you will most likely need to interview several builders before finding the right one for your project. You should feel comfortable asking a potential home builder every question that you think is important to make your decision. Of course, throughout the process you will have hundreds of questions, but here are 5 of the most important questions to ask when selecting a home builder.

1. WHAT METHODS WILL YOU USE TO DETERMINE THE COST OF MY HOME?

Builders will often have different ways of determining the overall cost of your home. Be sure you fully understand each builder's methods before committing. Ask about potential areas where you may incur additional fees. The last thing you want in this process is to be surprised by hidden costs when it's too late. You should seek out a builder that provides you with a flat, easy-to-understand cost that is guaranteed not to exceed a certain amount.

2. HOW FLEXIBLE IS THE FLOOR PLAN?

Many builders offer a series of standard floor plans that homeowners can choose from. This makes it easy to stick with the predesigned, predefined specifications, or add your own customizations; for example, can you choose one particular plan but add on a finished basement or a backyard deck? Depending on the neighborhood in which you choose to build, you may be limited to just a few plans. Ask potential builders about their flexibility when it comes to customizing predefined home plans.

If you want a completely custom home that is designed specifically for you, be sure to find a builder who can either complete the design for you, or can work with your chosen architect to produce exactly what you want.

3. HOW AND WHEN DO I SELECT THE FINISHES AND FIXTURES FOR MY HOME?

Ask about the process of selecting fixtures and finishes of your home. Be sure to understand your builder's methods for guiding you through the selection process. How much customizing will you be allowed to do versus the standard features, and how will that affect your final cost?

Additionally, if you choose to make upgrades or changes during the project, how do you communicate those to the builder?

4. WHO WILL SUPERVISE THE CONSTRUCTION OF MY HOME?

It is important that you understand the structure of your potential builder's business. Ask who will be supervising your project. Get a sense of who will be on-site every day. Also ask with whom you will be working once the project starts. Who will communicate with you about progress updates or issues, and how often can you expect to hear from them?

5. ARE YOU ABLE TO PROVIDE SAMPLES OF THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS?

In order to completely understand the builder's processes, ask if they can provide samples of important documents.

- Contract
- Budget and payment schedule
- Construction timeline
- Warranty
- Operation and maintenance manual

Selecting a home builder may be a long process, but the benefits of choosing the right builder are priceless.