9 QUESTIONS YOU WON’T REGRET TO ASK YOUR HOME BUILDER

When you’re thinking about buying a new home, you want to ensure you select a trusted home builder. Building a home is a large investment and the process takes months, so you definitely want the builder on your side. We have compiled a few questions for you to ask your home builder. Asking these questions will help you better understand the building process and set the right expectations for both you and the builder.

But first, do some research:

* Find out how many years your builder has been in the business and how many homes they have built.
* Make sure they are licensed and insured.
* Get some client references. You can always ask the builder, but also feel free to look on Yelp, Angie’s list, or get some references from homeowners already in the community.

Next, ask your home builder these questions:

1. **What standard features do your homes include? What options and upgrades can I select?**  
   Model homes often have upgrades already included, so you’ll need to ask about standard vs upgrade features, and what each upgrade costs. Know that upgrades can also be part of a negotiation when making an offer. Often upgrades are a better deal than trying to reduce the price of the home.
2. **Who will oversee the construction of my home? Who should I contact with any questions I may have?**  
   Designing and building your new home takes a team of trained professionals. From the home building firm to the developer and key trade contractors, these professionals are involved in every step of the home construction process. You need to be aware of who does what and who you need to contact with questions or concerns
3. **How and when can I make changes to the construction plans?**  
   Every builder is different with how they handle changes or upgrades; they can also be costly depending on what you’re changing. Ask your builder up front what the process is for changes or amendments to the contract. Your builder should be able to give you a timeline and costs associated for each change.
4. **Can I visit the construction site while the home is being built?**  
   Your builder can’t say no, but he or she may ask you to give a heads up before you visit, for safety reasons and to inform the construction workers that people will be coming by the site. Ask your home builder if someone would be available on site if you have any comments or concerns.
5. **How will you report construction progress to me?**  
   Your builder should keep you informed on the construction progress and do a status check on an estimated time of completion. Along with this information, your builder should also make you aware if the costs of labor or materials change from the original bid. Ask your builder when you can expect to hear from them and if the communication would be better in person, via phone, or email.
6. **What type of warranty do you offer?**  
   Make sure the warranties you receive include what is and isn’t covered, and if there are limitations for damages. You should also receive any manufacturer’s warranties if the home comes with a washer and dryer, hot water heater, air conditioner, and kitchen appliances.
7. **Does the community have an HOA?**  
   Each homeowner’s association has their own bylaws, Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs). Ask for copies of all the information, including fees and payment schedules. Sometimes builders cover fees as an incentive to buy a new home.
8. **What’s your process for inspection at final walk-through? Is there a checklist provided?**  
   As a final inspection of the home, you and your builder will do a [walk-through](https://www.nahb.org/en/consumers/home-buying/home-buying-highlights/the-new-home-walk-through.aspx), which provides an opportunity for the both of you to identify items that need to be corrected or fixed. You will also learn about any new features or appliances in the new home. Many builders may ask you to sign a form stating that all surfaces have been inspected and that there is no damage; this is why it’s important for you to ask for a checklist ahead of time.
9. **When will my home be ready?**  
   The [average home build](https://www.newhomesource.com/guide/articles/how-long-does-it-take-to-build-a-house) takes six months. You may have an ideal date for your home to be ready, but be sure you are aligned with the builder. Also, feel free to ask your home builder how the weather or a season will affect construction.

**If all else fails….**  
Communication is key, and in a situation like building a home, overcommunication is perfectly acceptable. Use the list above as a starting point, and know that it is not the end all be all of questions you can ask a builder. At the end of the day, you want to feel confident and comfortable you are working with more than just a vendor; you’re working with a partner to build the home you love.