



Custom Home Builder Evaluation Checklist

Selecting a builder to build your luxury home can be a challenging task. Not all builders approach building the same way. It can be very helpful to consider what is important to you in your relationship with a builder and to evaluate each builder against a common set of questions regarding the key phases of construction.

Just as important as the physical construction is the quality of communication, the flexibility and the resources of your builder to meet your needs. IKE Construction, Inc. is pleased to share with you a checklist – a resource to help you ask key questions of your prospective builders to assist you in making the best possible decision for you. Good luck as you begin what can be a most exciting and enjoyable experience – building your dream home.

Pre-Construction – More than just looking at homes your builder candidates have built, it is important to understand the approach the builder takes to building, including the resources and standards each one draws upon in providing you a quality home on time and on budget. And don't underestimate the importance of communication and chemistry that can make or break your building experience.

- Is the builder passionate about building your home?
- How responsive and accessible is the builder?
- What is the financial stability of the builder's company and the quality of its banking relationships?
- How many years has the builder been in business?
- What accreditations does the builder possess? Solely a homebuilders' license, or has the builder also secured an Unlimited General License, other?
- What industry organizations does the builder belong to, i.e. NHBA, Builder 20, local HBA, BBB, etc.?
- What are the builder's history, growth pattern, volume and scope of business?
- Is the builder process oriented, using project management technology to ensure budgets and schedules are met and your home is delivered in a timely manner?
- How are project schedules established, managed and communicated to various audiences – sub-contractors, homeowners, lenders, etc.?
- Does the builder proactively provide a referral base or third-party testimonials from past or current homeowners?
- How does the builder communicate? Phone, Email, Customer Web Portal, in person? All of the above?
- Does the builder have qualified in-house management resources to accommodate your needs throughout the homebuilding process or is everything including key management contracted out?
 - Project Managers
 - Project Superintendents
 - Project Coordinator
 - Interior Designer
 - Other Employees
- Does the builder have strong relationships with key suppliers to ensure you get the best quality and pricing on the materials and amenities for your home?
- Will the builder offer in-house design expertise and/or afford resources for local architects and designers for complex plan modifications? How well does the builder work with architects and designers?
- Will the builder visit the site to review the topography of the land and offer suggestions on plans, placement and other conditions?
- Is it standard for the builder to recommend a topography, tree and foundation survey as part of the civil engineering phase of the project?
- Is the builder knowledgeable about new products and research associated with new products on the market today?
- How are Change Orders handled?

Construction – As you think about the construction of your home, there are key questions to ask about the detailed specifications of the construction and how the builder will manage the project. Understand the approach the builder takes in completing each detail of your construction project, the quality and details of the materials and how they are used. Keep in mind, good construction combines quality craftsmanship with quality management.

- Has the builder established an in-house team of highly qualified tradesmen to ensure the quality and consistency of performance for some of the critical phase(s) of the project, like foundations, footers, grading, framing or siding?
- How does the builder select its sub-contractor team? Is it based on price, or qualifications?
- How long has the builder worked with these sub-contractors?
- What is the experience level of the builder's field operations? Are the Superintendents equipped to handle high-end custom projects?
- How long will it take the builder, on average, to complete a home? Is the builder process-oriented enough to ensure there are no downtimes in your project?
- Will the principals at the builder's company visit your job site on a regular basis? Weekly? Bi-Monthly? Monthly? Quarterly?
- Will the builder accommodate in-process changes with your home's plan, such as moving walls during framing or adding additional attic storage? Is the builder flexible?
- Does the builder maintain a clean job-site and care about the safety of all people on the job?
- How are foundations – crawl space and basements – managed by the builder? Is it the builder's practice to meet the state's building codes or to exceed them in the pursuit of quality?
- Does the builder use engineered floor systems and go the extra mile to ensure sound suppression?
- Does the builder offer house wrap as a standard?
- How are the walls, floors and roof insulated? Is insulation installation just a routine process or is there quality control for this very important, yet often taken for granted step?
- Are solid core doors used at the bathrooms, bedrooms & laundry room areas?
- What type of plumbing and wiring is used by the builder?
- Is the builder knowledgeable about window manufacturers and their key differentiators? What are their standard window options?
- What standard finishes does the builder provide for the home, i.e. flooring, paint, trim, etc?
- Does the builder conduct a closing walk-through to identify any punch list items?

Post-Construction – The home is complete, so that’s the end of the relationship, right? Wrong. You may want to consider what the builder does to ensure you are happy in your home. After all, a happy homeowner, living in the home, is the best form of advertising for a quality builder.

- Does the builder provide a warranty program? What are its parameters?
- How is the warranty/service program managed?
- Are warranty matters handled in a timely and efficient manner?
- Will the builder schedule a post-completion walk-through after you have been in the home for a while to ensure that your home is all that it should be?
- How does the builder react to a possible “post-sale challenge” that may not fall within the warranty?
- Does the builder provide a forum (survey) to express your satisfaction, dissatisfaction or suggestions about the home building process?

**We hope this has been a helpful tool as you begin the important process of selecting a builder to construct your beautiful new home.
We wish you the very best.**

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