

Congratulations, you are considering building your dream home or maybe you have decided already but you aren't sure where to start. At King Built we have been building custom homes in Southwest Missouri for a very long time and we want to share some tips and tricks with you. No matter when you decided to build your dream home or if we are your preferred home builder, we know that building a house is a big decision and it's important to consider all your options so you can create a home that you will love for many years.

In this guide you will find 10 things that you should consider when building your home as well as 15 things you should ask when interviewing a home builder. We encourage you to use this guide as you move through the process, and we hope it will help you make this experience as rewarding as possible.

20 Things to Consider when Building a Custom Home

1. Location

The location of your home is one of the most important factors to consider. Not only do you want to consider the macro-location factors such as city, neighborhood, schools and proximity to amenities that are important to you. You also want to think about micro-location details too. Micro-location details include:

- Lot location within a subdivision or even on the street
- Lot size and shape
- House placement on the lot
- Direction of the sun rise and sunset
- Drainage paths

2. Size & Floor Plan

How big of a house you need seems like an obvious thing to consider when building a home, but we encourage you to think less about square footage and more about how you will use your home and the functionality you require from the space.

Consider things like:

- Number of bedrooms for people living in the house today and in the future
- Do you need a guest room? How often will you use the guestroom, and can it be flexible as another space?
- Do you need a designated home office?

- Do you want a formal dining space?
- How many living areas do you need?
- Would you like a flex space that can change as your family grows?
- Do you need space for a second refrigerator or a deep freeze?
- Would you like primary bedroom separated from the other bedrooms?
- Do you entertain?

3. Architectural Style

Selecting an architectural style that suits your tastes and meets your needs functionally can be overwhelming. We encourage you to not worry so much about labeling the style of home you want, like modern vs craftsman vs cape cod, etc. and more at finding pictures that provide inspiration for what you are looking for. Your builder and your architect can help you understand what style you gravitate to by the images you share. When determining the architectural style of your home it is important that you consider the location you've selected. Sometimes codes and covenants will limit what is possible in a subdivision and sometimes surrounding homes will drive what might look best in an area or may impact resale value in the future. For example, it may be hard to sell a super modern home in a subdivision filled with American colonial style homes. Architectural style and location should be considered together. Don't forget to think about how this architectural style influences the interior design as well. Low pitch roofs won't allow for cathedral ceilings with beams and a modern or contemporary decor style might look strange in a craftsman style home.

4. Budget & Financing

Establishing a budget and obtaining financing for your construction project is crucial. Just as you would provide your Realtor with a realistic budget when buying a house, it is equally important to do the same when building a house. Collaborating with a lender early on allows you to grasp interest rates, requirements, and your potential approval amount, aiding you in setting your budget. Understanding how your budget and personal preferences will influence the outcome of your project is vital. Consider whether you prioritize ample space over intricate design details or if you desire a meticulously designed house, even if it increases the price per square foot. Maximizing space becomes crucial when aiming to keep costs down. Moreover, identifying your non-negotiable elements will enable you to allocate funds accordingly in the budget.

Additionally, it is essential to account for location-related factors that can impact your budget. Will you need to move a significant amount of earth, construct a retaining wall, or comply with certain codes and covenants that influence material choices for the exterior of your home? These considerations can ultimately affect your budget planning.

5. Timeline

Setting a realistic timeline for your home build is important and making sure you have a contingency in place if you should run into any unforeseen delays. Factors to consider when you are thinking about timeline are:

- Size of house - bigger houses take longer to build
- Level of finishes – intricate detailing, mill work, paint or specialty treatments may take longer to accomplish, or you may have to wait for qualified labor
- Supply chain – think about what is going on in the world are there things impacting how long it takes to receive materials, appliances and fixtures
- Time of year – consider how the seasons and weather will impact your schedule. Will you be under-roof before winter hits, will the rainy season impact exterior finishes and landscaping install
- Your schedule – are you trying to move in before the start of a school year, do you have a busy season at work or lots of trips planned where you will be less available for decisions and to meet on site at the house

6. Materials

Choosing the right materials when building a home is important as it can have a drastic effect on cost but also durability, functionality and the overall aesthetic of the property. Considering each of these things is important:

- **Cost:** When considering the cost of materials, it's essential to think beyond the initial outlay and consider the long-term costs associated with maintenance and upkeep. While some materials may be more expensive upfront, they may prove to be more cost-effective over time due to their durability and low maintenance requirements. For example, a composite deck may cost more initially than a wood deck, but it requires little maintenance and does not need to be re-stained or repaired regularly. King Built can help you set a realistic budget and identify materials that are cost-effective over the long term.
- **Durability:** The materials used in construction can impact the durability of the home. Make sure to think about who lives in your house and how you will

use it. Do you have kids or Pets? Are there certain areas of your home you will use more or less than others? Selecting materials that can withstand the required use is important

- **Style:** The materials used in building a home will impact the overall look and feel of the property. Depending on the desired aesthetic, certain types of materials may be more appropriate. For example, a modern home may require different materials than a rustic home.

7. Finishes

The finishes selected for your home is the main thing that will impact the aesthetic. While these are used in the final stages of construction it's important to carefully consider and select these early in the process to ensure a cohesive design and to make sure that the house is properly built with these finishes in mind. For example:

- Flooring is an essential aspect of a home and there are many different types of flooring to choose from. Early in the construction process it will be important to know which rooms will have hardwood vs tile or carpet for example. Or perhaps you want stained concrete floors.
- There are many different counter-top materials to choose from including granite, quartz, marble, concrete and more. Each material has its own unique characteristics and maintenance requirements. Your counter-top selection will not only impact appearance and durability of your home it may also impact cabinet design. Your cabinet maker will need to be aware of material selection and desired treatment of corners or edges to ensure that the cabinets are built accordingly.
- Cabinets play a vital role in both the function and appearance of a home. Determining if you want custom cabinets or prefabricated cabinets is often a budget and design decision. There is no wrong choice but selecting early will provide the appropriate lead time required. Knowing the layout of your cabinetry is essential and should be considered during architectural and planning phase as it impacts many other aspects of your build.
- Lighting may be one of the most important finishing elements because of how greatly it can impact the ambiance of a home. Carefully selecting the right type and placement of lighting throughout the house can enhance the functionality and mood of your home. Selecting light fixtures early will help King Built and the electrician rough-in the property correctly to ensure adequate light in each room.

- Hardware is one of the last things to be installed but is a very important aspect of the aesthetics of your home. Making sure that doorknobs, cabinet hardware and plumbing fixtures all complement one another as well as the light fixtures is something that is important to the cohesiveness of your home. We like to think of hardware as jewelry for your home. It can really elevate the design.

8. Landscaping & Outdoor Spaces

While landscaping is typically one of the last things done during the construction process, it's important to keep it in mind from the beginning.

Here are some reasons why:

- **Aesthetic Appeal:** Landscaping can greatly enhance the aesthetic appeal of your home, creating a welcoming and beautiful environment for you and your guests. Well-designed landscaping can increase curb appeal, which can be important if you plan to sell your property in the future.
- **Codes and Covenants:** Many subdivisions have specific codes and covenants in place that require certain landscaping features, such as sodded front yards or a specific number of trees. It's important to understand these requirements early in the planning process to ensure compliance.
- **Budget:** Landscaping and outdoor spaces can have a significant impact on your budget, particularly if you're considering features like an irrigation system, pool, deck, outdoor fireplace, fire pit, or outdoor kitchen. Understanding your desires and budget for these elements can help you plan accordingly and avoid unexpected expenses.
- **Planning:** Good landscaping requires planning and foresight. By considering your desires for landscaping early in the construction process, you can ensure that the necessary preparations are made to accommodate your vision.
- Don't let landscaping and outdoor spaces be an afterthought during the construction process, it's important to keep it in mind from the beginning.

9. Storage

Considering storage is an important aspect when building a home and one of the perks of building a custom home for several reasons:

- **Functionality:** Adequate storage space can make a big difference in how functional and livable your home is. Without sufficient storage, your living spaces can quickly become cluttered and disorganized, making it difficult to find what you need and enjoy your home to the fullest. When building a custom home, you can create the storage space you need based on your lifestyle.
- **Resale Value:** Home buyers are often looking for homes with ample storage space, as it's a key consideration for many people. By incorporating plenty of storage into your home's design, you can increase its resale value and appeal to potential buyers in the future.
- **Customization:** Building a custom home gives you the opportunity to design the storage solutions to meet your unique needs and preferences. You can choose the size and the location of storage throughout your home that best suits you.
- **Organization:** Having adequate storage helps keep your home organized and clean. By having a designated place for everything, you can easily find what you need and maintain a clutter-free living space.
- **Efficiency:** Adequate storage can also help increase the efficiency of your home. By having everything you need within easy reach, you can save time and energy that would otherwise be spent searching for misplaced items.

10. Security

Security is important for personal safety and peace of mind and it's important to discuss early in the building process so the home can be designed and wired with security in mind. Location, entry points, surveillance and lighting can all be important security factors to discuss. In addition to personal safety having a secure home provides:

- Protection from theft, vandalism, and other forms of damage.
- Peace of mind knowing that your home is secure creating a sense of comfort and reducing stress and anxiety.
- Potential increased in resale value. Security is a key consideration for many home buyers, and a home with robust security features can increase value and appeal to potential buyers in the future.

- Discounts on homeowner's insurance from some companies. Premiums for homes with security features like alarms, cameras, and deadbolts can be lower than those without.

Now that you know what to think about, are you excited to start building your dream home? It's a big decision, but it can be an amazing journey. We recommend asking these questions when you're talking to builders. Then compare their answers and choose the one that feels like the best fit for you.

20 things you should ask when interviewing a home builder

1. How long have you been in business?
2. What is your experience building homes in my area?
3. Do you have experience building homes like what we are looking for?
4. What is your building process?
5. What is included in the price of the home?
6. How do you handle changes or modifications during the process?
7. What is your warranty policy?
8. Do you have any references I can speak to?
9. Are you licensed and insured?
10. What is the price range you typically build in?
11. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a builder?
12. How do you ensure quality and craftsmanship?
13. What sets you apart from others?
14. What is your availability and when could you get started?
15. How long does it typically take you to build a home?
16. Do you have architect that you work with? Do you help us through that process?
17. Do you have interior design resources?
18. Can you help me select my land/lot?
19. Do you have lender relationships and can you make an introduction?
20. What is your fee structure?

