

EXPERT HOMEBUILDING ADVICE

The essential checklist to ensure a smooth custom homebuilding experience

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Custom homebuilding is a rewarding experience — and one that requires a keen attention to detail, even before you break ground. In an effort to make the process as seamless and enjoyable as possible, we talked to custom build experts and compiled a list of things to keep in mind as you build your new home.

No. 1: Invest time upfront

The amount of time and effort spent upfront on a project correlates directly to satisfactory results for the homeowner. Thinking ahead on variables such as space programming and planning, as well as establishing scope, budget and design elements, helps ensure a smooth construction period.

The most critical element is architectural plan review. When changes are made earlier, the better the impact on timing and budget.

Mark Danuser, president of Tatum Brown Custom Homes, says, “To help ensure a smooth process, we work closely with our clients and their architects to provide counsel. We recommend our clients ‘live’ with the plans for a while.” With Danuser’s input, here are a few tips as you get started:

- Measure your current home as a reference point. What spaces work well for your family?
- Will the furniture you plan to use work in the new space? This might mean existing furniture or a new furniture layout you hope to accommodate.
- Are all the appliances you need included?
- Is there adequate storage, cabinet space, etc. in the kitchen and bathrooms?

No. 2: Establish your design vision

The more invested you are in what you want your new home to look and feel like, the easier it will be for you and your homebuilding team (architect, builder, interior designer, landscaper) to bring it to life. Danuser notes, “We encourage our clients to do homework, such as look at magazines and online sources, so we can better understand their vision and assist with pulling together an overall aesthetic for the home.”

When pulling together design inspiration, consider every element, from flooring and tile selections to cabinetry and interior furnishings.

No. 3: Prepare for change

Industry pros want to build the perfect house for you. Sometimes Mother Nature, human error or industry circumstances dictate that things need to be changed during the building process. Keep in mind that change is an absolute part of the building process and that some flexibility will be required along the way to bring your dream home to life.

No. 4: Timeline tactics

It can sometimes take weeks, even months, for certain items (i.e., tile, cabinets, plumbing fixtures) to arrive once they’ve been ordered. If you stick to your selections timeline, you’ll help keep the whole project on track.

No. 5: Come on over

“We encourage our clients to come by the job site as often as they like,” Danuser says. For some, that’s daily; others prefer to come for weekly scheduled “all hands on deck” meetings.

This is an ideal time to go through plan layout, room size, etc. with your team — and a great time for you to address any concerns or changes that pop up along the way.



The natural light and ample seating make this family room a great place to hang out. *Photo courtesy of Tatum Brown Custom Homes*



This master bedroom balcony overlooks a serene backyard pool with simple water feature. *Photo courtesy of Tatum Brown Custom Homes*