

Questions to Ask Your Home Builder

When you're thinking about buying a new home, selecting the right home builder is a key step in creating the home of your dreams. You should feel comfortable asking a potential home builder every question that you think is important. And, a professional builder or sales representative will want to make you a happy and satisfied home owner.

Besides the questions of "How much does it cost?," and "When can we move in?," here are some other questions you should ask:

- Will the builder give you references of recent buyers/occupants?
- Does the builder have a financing plan established?
- Are there options in the floor plan — for example, can a basement or deck be added?
- Can a room such as the basement be left unfinished?
- How much "customizing" can be done versus standard features?
- Can appliances be up- or down-graded?
- Are there any additional fees relating to the home or development?
- Will there be a home owners' association? If so, what will the dues cost and what do they cover?
- Does the builder offer a warranty program?
- Does the price include landscaping? What if the plants die within a year?
- Are there any restrictive covenants?
- What are the estimated taxes on the property?
- How is the school system rated?
- Are day care and grocery stores convenient and satisfactory?
- What about emergency facilities — police, fire department and hospitals?
- Are there any major development plans for the area in the next five years?