

THE NEW BUILD CONFIDENCE CHECKLIST

15 Things To Know Before You Sign

Walk in informed. Sign with confidence.

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Why This Checklist Exists

Buying a new construction home is one of the best decisions you can make — but it's a different process than buying resale, and it comes with its own set of details that are easy to overlook if you haven't done it before.

This checklist covers the 15 things I walk every buyer through before they sign a purchase agreement. None of these are tricks or gotchas — they're simply the details that separate a confident buyer from one who's scrambling to catch up after the fact.

Print this out. Bring it with you. And if anything on this list raises a question, that's exactly what I'm here for.

Eric

The Checklist (1-5).

1. Understand what's included in the base price — and what isn't.

The base price covers the home's standard features, but upgrades, lot premiums, and certain finishes are additional. Ask for a full breakdown so you know exactly where the base price ends and your selections begin.

2. Know the lot premium before you fall in love with a lot.

Corner lots, lots backing to open space, and lots with views typically carry a premium. This isn't hidden — but it's easy to overlook until you're deep in the process. Ask about lot premiums upfront so your budget stays accurate.

3. Get clear on the construction timeline.

New builds follow a general timeline, but weather, permits, and material availability can shift things. Ask what the estimated timeline looks like from contract to close, and how you'll be updated along the way.

4. Know how earnest money works.

Earnest money is your deposit when you go under contract. Understand how much is required, when it's due, and under what conditions it's refundable. This is standard — but the specifics matter.

5. Ask about the structural warranty.

New homes come with warranty coverage, but the details vary. Ask what's covered, for how long, and what the process looks like if something comes up after you move in.

The Checklist (6-10)

6. Understand how the design center works.

The design center is where you select your finishes — countertops, flooring, cabinets, fixtures, and more. It's one of the best parts of buying new, but it's also where costs can add up quickly. Ask what's included in the base package, what the upgrade pricing looks like, and how much time you'll have to make selections.

7. Know which upgrades are only available during construction.

Certain upgrades — like electrical layouts, plumbing additions, flooring throughout, and structural options — can only be done while the home is being built. Once the walls are up, those options are off the table.

Understanding what's available now helps you make the most of the design center and build the home exactly the way you want it from the start.

8. Ask about builder incentives and what they include.

Most builders offer incentives — rate buydowns, closing cost credits, design center allowances. These are real savings, but they sometimes come with conditions like using the builder's preferred lender. Ask exactly what's available and what's required to qualify.

9. Understand the preferred lender relationship.

Builders often have a preferred lender and offer better incentives when you use them. You're not required to — but the incentive difference can be significant. Get quotes from both the preferred lender and your own so you can compare clearly.

10. Know what HOA covers — and what it costs.

Most new construction communities have an HOA. Ask what the monthly fee is, what it covers (landscaping, community amenities, exterior maintenance), and whether there are any special assessments planned.

The Checklist (11–15).

11. Ask about lot grading and drainage responsibility.

Your lot will be graded for proper drainage during construction. After closing, maintaining that grading is typically the homeowner's responsibility. Understand what's been done and what you need to maintain — especially if you're planning landscaping changes.

12. Understand what happens at the pre-drywall walkthrough.

Before the drywall goes up, you'll have a chance to walk through your home and see the framing, electrical, and plumbing layout. This is your window to confirm things like outlet placement, fixture locations, and any structural changes. Know when it's scheduled and what to look for.

13. Know what the final walkthrough covers.

Before closing, you'll do a final walkthrough to check finishes, paint, fixtures, appliances, and overall condition. This is where you flag anything that needs attention before you take the keys. Come with a checklist and take your time.

14. Ask about the closing process and timeline.

New construction closings follow the builder's timeline, which can shift. Ask how far in advance you'll know your closing date, what documents you'll need, and what the process looks like from final walkthrough to keys in hand.

15. Know who your point of contact is — before, during, and after.

From contract signing through construction, design center, and closing — know who to call with questions at every stage. A clear point of contact makes the entire process smoother and eliminates the "who do I ask?" frustration.

How To Use This Checklist

This isn't a test — *it's a tool.*

Bring it with you when you visit a community.
Use it during your first conversation with a new home consultant. Reference it before you sign your purchase agreement.

Every item on this list has a clear answer. If you don't know the answer yet, ask. That's how the process is supposed to work - and it's exactly the kind of conversation I have with every buyer I work with.

You don't need to memorize any of this.
You just need to know what to ask :)

Ready To Walk Through This Together?

This checklist gives you the questions. I'll give you the answers.

When you're ready to visit a community, I'll walk through every one of these items with you — in plain language, with zero pressure. That's the whole point of working with someone who does this every day.

Here's what happens when you reach out:

1. We have a quick conversation about your timeline, budget, and what matters most.
2. I match you with the right communities for your priorities.
3. We tour together, and I walk you through every detail — including everything on this checklist.

No pressure. Ever. Just clarity, a straightforward process, and a move that's built around your life.

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