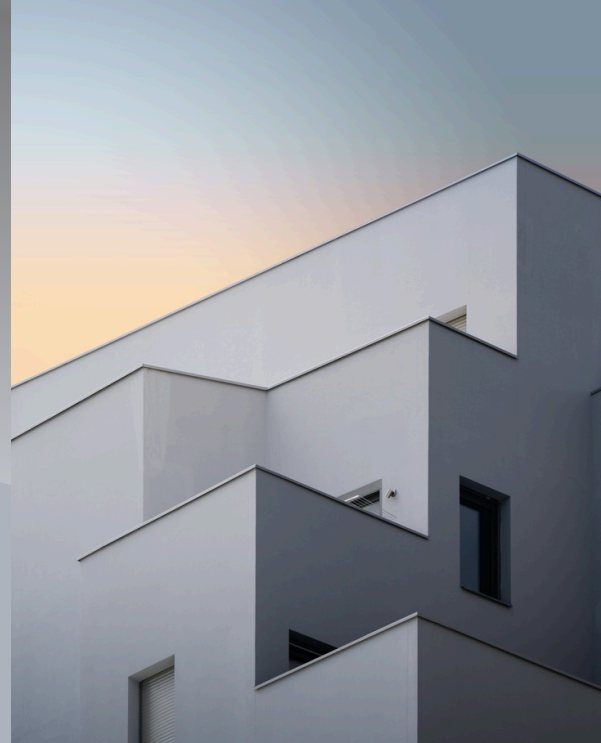


THE ULTIMATE CUSTOM HOME BUILDING CHECKLIST

A PRACTICAL, NO-REGRET GUIDE TO BUILDING A CUSTOM HOME THE RIGHT WAY

Use this checklist to stay in control, avoid costly mistakes, and make smarter decisions at every stage of your custom home build.



PHASE 1: STRATEGIC PLANNING (DON'T RUSH)

Vision & Priorities

- ☐ Define how you actually live day to day
- ☐ List non-negotiables vs. nice-to-haves
- ☐ Rank priorities in case budget pressure arises
- ☐ Consider long-term lifestyle changes (aging, remote work, family growth)

Budget & Financial Readiness

- ☐ Establish total project budget (not just construction)
- ☐ Include land, permits, utilities, landscaping, furnishings
- ☐ Add 15–20% contingency for unknowns
- ☐ Secure construction loan or financing pre-approval
- ☐ Identify areas to splurge vs. areas to save
- ☐ Set up a system to track costs and change orders



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PHASE 2: LOT SELECTION & SITE DUE DILIGENCE

Land Evaluation

- ☐ Confirm zoning and setback requirements
- ☐ Review HOA or CC&R restrictions
- ☐ Obtain soil test and geotechnical report
- ☐ Review slope, drainage, and water table conditions
- ☐ Confirm utility access (or cost to bring utilities in)
- ☐ Check floodplain, environmental, or easement restrictions
- ☐ Evaluate future development around the property

PHASE 3: TEAM SELECTION & ALIGNMENT

Assemble the Right Team

- ☐ Select a custom home builder experienced with similar projects
- ☐ Choose an architect or designer aligned with your budget reality
- ☐ Confirm builder licensing, insurance, and references
- ☐ Clarify who controls costs during design
- ☐ Confirm communication cadence and decision process
- ☐ Review contract terms, allowances, and change-order process

PHASE 4: DESIGN & PRE-CONSTRUCTION (HIGH-IMPACT STAGE)

Home Design & Layout

- ☐ Confirm square footage aligns with budget and neighborhood norms
- ☐ Review room flow and daily functionality
- ☐ Verify furniture layouts fit real room sizes
- ☐ Plan adequate storage (closets, pantry, garage)
- ☐ Design for natural light and window placement
- ☐ Confirm structural flexibility for future changes

Systems & Infrastructure Planning

- ☐ Electrical outlet and lighting plan finalized
- ☐ Plan for EV chargers and future power needs
- ☐ HVAC system sized correctly for the home
- ☐ Plumbing layout optimized for efficiency
- ☐ Smart home, security, and data wiring planned
- ☐ Energy-efficiency strategy confirmed

Permits & Documentation

- ☐ Final construction drawings approved
- ☐ Building permits submitted and approved
- ☐ Environmental or grading permits secured
- ☐ Inspection schedule confirmed
- ☐ Construction timeline finalized

PHASE 5: CONSTRUCTION EXECUTION

Site Prep & Foundation

- ☐ Site cleared and graded properly
- ☐ Drainage and erosion control installed
- ☐ Foundation type confirmed (slab, crawl, basement)
- ☐ Waterproofing and drainage systems installed
- ☐ Foundation inspection passed

Framing & Structure

- ☐ Electrical outlet and lighting plan finalized
- ☐ Plan for EV chargers and future power needs
- ☐ HVAC system sized correctly for the home
- ☐ Plumbing layout optimized for efficiency
- ☐ Smart home, security, and data wiring planned
- ☐ Energy-efficiency strategy confirmed

Systems Installation

- ☐ Electrical rough-in completed and inspected
- ☐ Plumbing rough-in completed and inspected
- ☐ HVAC ductwork and equipment installed
- ☐ Insulation installed to specification
- ☐ All rough inspections passed before drywall

PHASE 6: FINISHES & FINAL DETAILS

Interior Finishes

- ☐ Drywall installed and finished
- ☐ Flooring installed correctly
- ☐ Cabinets and countertops installed
- ☐ Paint and trim completed
- ☐ Lighting and plumbing fixtures installed

Exterior & Landscaping

- ☐ Siding and exterior finishes completed
- ☐ Roofing and gutters installed
- ☐ Driveways, walkways, and drainage finalized
- ☐ Landscaping and grading completed

PHASE 7: FINAL APPROVAL & MOVE-IN

Final Inspections & Walkthrough

- ☐ Final building inspection passed
- ☐ Electrical, plumbing, HVAC approvals received
- ☐ Fire safety systems approved
- ☐ Complete detailed punch list
- ☐ Verify all punch-list items resolved

Documentation & Handover

- ☐ Collect contractor warranties
- ☐ File product warranties and manuals
- ☐ Receive as-built plans
- ☐ Store permits and inspection records
- ☐ Create home maintenance schedule

MOVE-IN READY

- ☐ Utilities activated
- ☐ Security system programmed
- ☐ Final cleaning completed
- ☐ Furniture delivery planned
- ☐ Celebrate—your custom home is complete