

How-To

Choose a builder

Building a new home is an involved process. The builder you choose will depend on the type of customization you'd like to have in your home, the area in which you'd like to live and your budget. Before you start interviewing builders, decide whether you need to work with a custom builder, a production/spec builder or a custom/production builder.

Custom builders will build on land you own, or land they own. These builders specialize in creating unique plans for clients, and may offer design/build services. These builders generally only complete a small number of high-end homes each year (usually less than 20). The advantage with using a custom builder is that a homebuyer can have a home built any way they want within the limits of their budget, but the resulting cost might be higher than a production/spec builder or a custom/production builder.

Production/spec builders will build homes from set plans, with little or no modifications allowed. Usually these homes are built on land owned by the builder and in a larger community or development. These builders complete many homes each year, at a range of price points. The advantage to using a production/spec builder is the ability to take advantage of the builder's volume discount pricing, but these homes usually contain few (if any) special features or details.

Custom/production builders have a set of plans they build from, but they allow much more modification and contain certain special features. The advantage is that a homebuyer gets a "custom" feel along with the ability of make more modifications. Good pricing is still available due to the volume buying that production building allows. A disadvantage is that if modifications are made, it will add some time to the home buying process.

Castle Homes is a custom/production builder that offers a large selection of plans from which homebuyers can select. Each plan offers different elevations, resulting in a more varied appearance in the home exteriors.

Finding a builder

Once you narrow where you'd like to live down to a few areas, tour the new communities. Representatives at home models can give you information about the builder, helping you to ensure that builder is capable of the type of home you prefer.

Castle Homes builds only in communities where they are the only builder, in an effort to maintain better control on such items as appearance, the streetscape and quality control in a particular community, resulting in better value of the community

and the homes there.

Word of mouth is another way to search for a quality builder. Ask friends, relatives and co-workers about experiences they've had with particular builders. Call your local homebuilders association, Chamber of Commerce or Better Business Bureau for recommendations.

It's a good idea to verify if the builder is a member of the local building association. Members of the association have access to the latest industry information and educational programs. They're also more likely to be active in their community and have a solid reputation.

Castle Homes is a licensed homebuilder with the state of Georgia, and the company is a member of the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association and its local chapter, as well as the National Association of Home Builders.

Interviewing the builder

Once you've selected potential builders, interview each one, and find out about the builder's business. Make sure the builder has a permanent business address and builds full-time.

How long has the builder been in business? Longevity means more experience and better working relationships with area tradespeople, such as carpenters and painters.

Does the builder offer a warranty? The builder should stand behind the product.

Castle Homes has more than 40 years of experience with a strong team of dedicated professionals that care about the "attention to detail" in your home. The company has its headquarters in Covington and is currently active in subdivisions in Newton, Rockdale, Barrow and Walton Counties.

The Castle Homes Team is intimately involved in the development of all plans built by the company. They also work with the company's quality control manager to find and correct any problems before the final walk-through of the home by the purchaser. Castle Homes places high value on quality, customer service and the integrity demonstrated by all representatives of their company.

Check it out

Once you've chosen a builder, check out his or her references. Call past clients, and interview them. Ask if there were delays and if they were satisfied with the home's quality. Don't be fooled by brochures boasting elegant amenities. Some prospective homeowners get too "bowled over by sizzle," rather than the quality and structural integrity of the home. Inspect the builder's model or, if possible, homes of references. Are the highest quality materials used? Are there cracks in drywall or the foundation? Every little detail is important, from the fixtures and the cabinetry to the floor finishes; you'll want to hire someone you can count on to give you the quality you deserve. Remember, quality affects what you see as well as what you don't see.

How-To Tips

Tips on selecting the right builder for you

- ❑ *Decide what kind of builder you want: a custom builder, a production/spec builder or a custom/production builder.*
- ❑ *Once you've narrowed down where you'd like to live, take a drive through new communities.*
- ❑ *Ask friends and relatives about their past experiences with builders.*
- ❑ *After narrowing your search, interview different builders. Make sure each builder has a permanent address and builds full-time.*
- ❑ *Once you've chosen a builder, check out his or her references.*