

How to Choose the Right Builder for You!

By Floyd Lance
President Castle Homes

If you've always wanted a new home built especially for you and your family, you're not alone. In 2002, there were more than one million housing starts for single-family homes, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. And with each housing start begins a new adventure.

Evaluate your wants and needs

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 few homes a year (less than 20). However this is too costly for most buyers.

Production/spec builders will build homes from set plans, with little or no modifications are allowed. Usually these homes are built on land owned by the builder, and in a larger community or development. They are affordable due to the builder's volume discount pricing, but these homes usually contain few (if any) special features or specialized 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 home buyer 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, but the choice of whether this is done belongs to the customer.

Finding a builder

Once you narrow where you'd like to live down to a few areas, take a driving tour of the new communities.

Representatives at home models in these neighborhoods can give you information about the builders. This way you can be sure the builder is capable of building the type of home that you prefer.

A builder who builds only in a community where they are the only builder allows them 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 home builders association, Chamber of Commerce or Better Business Bureau for recommendations. Good home builders will have good reputations.

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.

Interviewing the builder

Once you've selected potential builders, carefully 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. And how well does the builder know its product?

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 home owners 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. All of the materials used behind walls, under countertops, above ceilings and under floors are equally important.



- A Custom/Production Builder.
- Offering homes to fit different budgets with a Classic Series and a Regal Series.
- Develops communities to establish quality within the subdivision.
- Licensed builder in Georgia
- Member of Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association and the National Association of Home Builders.
- 40 years of home building experience.
- Quality craftsmanship and materials used throughout from the foundation to the roof.



FROM \$290's - MID 400's



WALTON

From GWINNETT: Take Hwy. 316 East. Turn right onto Hwy. 81. Turn right onto June Ivey Rd. Go right at the fork and June Ivey Springs is on the right.

From LOGANVILLE: Take Hwy. 81 North. Turn left on June Ivey Rd. Go right at the fork and June Ivey Springs is on the right.



NEWTON

From ATLANTA: Take I-20 East to exit 84. Turn right onto Salem Rd. Travel 6.9 miles. Turn right at stop sign onto Hwy. 81. Go 2.2 miles immediately past Livingston Elementary School turn right onto Bethany Rd. The Landings is on the right.



ROCKDALE

From ATLANTA: Take I-20 East to exit 82. Turn right onto Hwy. 20/138. Turn right following Hwy. 138/Stockbridge Hwy. at the Wachovia Bank. Go approximately 6.3 miles. Turn left onto Tucker Mill Rd. Montclair is 1 mile on right.



FROM \$160's - LOW 200's



BARROW

From GWINNETT: Take Hwy. 316 East. Turn Right on Patrick Mill Rd. Turn Left onto Tom Miller Rd. Turn Left on Ben Johnson Rd. Pointe South is on the right.

From LOGANVILLE: Take Hwy. 81 North. Turn left on Tom Miller Rd. Turn Right on Ben Johnson Rd. Pointe South is on the right.

For More Information or to Register for Private PreSale Call the Number Below.
Private Presale Clients receive special incentives and introductory pricing and offered priority homesites.

1-800-361-0236 x9106