

New Construction Homes

What to Expect From Builders, Timelines and Customization

When you're searching for a home, there's something undeniably appealing about buying brand new. No mystery leaks, no out-dated tile — just clean lines, modern layouts and that fresh paint smell. But new construction isn't always the right choice for every buyer.

Before you decide between a resale home and a builder's model, it's worth learning what sets them apart and what to expect from the process.

PROS AND PITFALLS OF BUYING NEW

New construction homes come in a few forms. You might choose a move-in ready spec home, a semi-custom home still under construction or a fully custom project built from the ground up on your own lot.

One of the biggest perks of buying new is modern design. Open layouts, energy-efficient systems, large kitchens and smart home features are standard in many new builds. Everything is up to current codes and energy standards, which can lead to long-term savings on utilities and repairs.

You also get the benefit of a builder warranty, which often



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covers systems, materials and workmanship for the first one to ten years, depending on the component.

Buyers often have the chance to choose their finishes — like flooring, cabinetry and countertops — which adds a personal touch. However, if construction is already underway, those options may be limited or come at a premium.

There are trade-offs. New

homes tend to have higher upfront prices than comparable resale homes, and once you factor in upgrades, landscaping, window coverings and appliances, the total cost can increase quickly.

Also consider location. New subdivisions are often built on the edge of growing towns, which may mean longer commutes or living in a construction zone for a while. Some

communities take time to fully develop, which could affect amenities and resale value in the short term.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE PROCESS

Buying new construction is different from buying an existing home. You'll likely work with a builder's representative, and while it may feel like a retail experience, you're still

entering into a real estate contract that requires review and negotiation. It's important to bring your own agent, one who represents your interests, not the builder's.

Ask about what's included in the base price and what counts as an upgrade. Sometimes things like garage door openers, backyard landscaping or even light fixtures cost extra.

Timing is another key issue. A spec home may be ready immediately, but a custom build can take six months to a year. Even homes that are nearly finished can experience delays due to weather, labor shortages or supply chain issues.

Be sure to get everything in writing: construction timelines, upgrade selections, warranties and walk-through procedures. Even brand-new homes can have punch-list items that need attention before you move in.

Buying new construction can be a great fit for buyers who value low maintenance and customization. Just be sure to research the builder's reputation, review the contract carefully and prepare for the unique timeline and process involved.



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REAL ESTATE 101



HOMEWISE GLOSSARY

New Doesn’t Mean Perfect

Even newly built homes can have flaws. Always get an independent home inspection to catch potential issues with plumbing, HVAC, roofing or finishing work.

Spec Home: A spec (speculative) home is a newly built house the builder constructs without a specific buyer in mind. These are often move-in ready or close to completion when listed for sale.

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