

Selecting Your Builder with Confidence

- Ask friends and relatives for recommendations. Ask about builders they have dealt with directly, or ask them for the names of acquaintances who have recently had a good experience with a builder.
- Make sure the builder is properly licensed, insured and a member of their local Home Builders Association.
- Professional builders provide both a written warranty and a call back program.
- Professional builders will supply a list of references.
- Professional builders use quality subcontractors and reputable suppliers.
- Ask questions, and look at houses in the area that are similar to what you are planning to build.



Where Do I Start?

Once you have thought about the type of house you want, where should you look for a builder? First, the real estate section of your local newspaper is a good starting point to learn which builders are active in your area, the types of homes they are building, and the prices you can expect to pay.



Another great source is your local Home Builders Association. They can provide a list of reputable, licensed home builders in your area. See the list on the back of this brochure for the local Home Builders Associations in Alabama.

Need help finding your local Home Builders Association? Contact:

Home Builders Association of Alabama
 Phone: (800) 745-4222 / (334) 834-3006
www.HBAA.org

Find Your Local Pros

Athens/Limestone Home Builders Association
 (256) 998-5399

Baldwin County Home Builders Association
 (251) 928-9927

Blount County Home Builders Association
 (205) 274-7774

Chilton County Home Builders Association
 (205) 755-1927

Cullman County Home Builders Association
 (256) 739-5110

Dekalb County HBA
 (256) 845-7677

Enterprise Home Builders Association
 (334) 347-9614

Greater Birmingham Association of Home Builders
 (205) 912-7000

Greater Gadsden Home Builders Association
 (256) 490-0450

Greater Montgomery Home Builders Association
 (334) 277-7766

Greater Morgan County Builders Association
 (256) 318-9161

Home Builders Association of Dothan & Wiregrass Area
 (334) 793-6696

Home Builders Association of Greater Calhoun County
 (256) 237-5266

Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Mobile
 (251) 661-6523

Home Builders Association of Tuscaloosa
 (205) 345-7253

Huntsville/Madison County Builders Association
 (256) 536-2602

Jackson County Home Builders Association
 (256) 259-6000

Lee County Home Builders Association
 (334) 319-2555

Marshall County Home Builders Association
 (256) 891-7061

Northwest Alabama Home Builders Association
 (205) 487-6536

Phenix City Home Builders Association
 (334) 298-7778

Shoals Home Builders Association
 (256) 766-9110

South Alabama Home Builders Association
 (334) 371-1000

St. Clair County Home Builders Association
 (205) 884-0838

Tallapoosa County Home Builders Association
 (256) 212-2418

Walker County Home Builders Association
 (205) 221-1424



Your Guide to Choosing a Professional Builder

A service of the



Home Builders Association of Alabama

Making the Right Choice

Once you develop a list of builders, find out about their reputations and the quality of their work. Recording all such information--as well as your own impressions--about specific builders and homes in a notebook or on your mobile device helps to make comparisons later.

The best way to learn about builders is to visit homes they have built and talk to the owners. Ask builders on your list for the addresses of their recently built homes. At the very least drive by and see if the homes are visually appealing.

Look at homes that are the same style as you plan to buy--if you are interested in a two-story home, look at two-story homes rather than split levels. Visit on a Saturday morning when people are outside doing chores or errands. Introduce yourself and explain that you are considering buying a home from the builder who built their home. Consult more than one home buyer for each builder; the more people you talk to the better the cross section of opinion you'll get.

Ask people if they are happy with their homes and if the builder did what was promised and did it in a timely manner. Ask if they would buy another home from this builder. Usually, people will tell you if they are pleased or not.

Shop for Quality and Value

When examining a home, look at the quality of the construction features. Inspect the quality of the cabinetry, carpeting, trimwork, and paint. If you feel incapable of judging such things, take a knowledgeable person along with you.



money regarding location, housing supply and demand, and other market factors.

Another important aspect of value is design quality. In viewing each home, determine whether it lends itself to the type of lifestyle you want to lead. Look at the amount of interior living space and how efficiently the space is used. Find out if the builder is using state of the art energy features--both in equipment and insulation. Think about the amount of upkeep required both indoors and outdoors.

Consider the location of the property. Is it convenient to schools, shopping, and transportation?

Warranties/Service After the Sale

An important criterion for selecting a builder is the warranty provided on the home. Ask to see a copy of the builder's warranty. Although reading legal documents can be tedious, read the warranty to understand what protection you would have. Don't wait to read it until after you move in and a problem arises. If you have questions about the coverage, ask the builder.

Many builders offer a warranty of one year on workmanship and materials, while others offer extended warranties through an insured program.

Also, find out from each builder what kind of service you can expect after the sale. Typically, a builder has his own system for warranty call backs.



Always keep value in mind when shopping. Just because a home is less expensive than another does not mean it is a better value. Likewise, a more expensive home does not assure higher quality.

A home is primarily a place to live, but it is also an important investment. Consider the appreciation potential of any home. Be concerned with the value you are getting for your



Be Thorough

When choosing a builder, be thorough and ask a lot of questions. Get as many specifics as possible. If you receive the answers verbally rather than in writing, take notes. Never hesitate to ask a question for fear of sounding stupid or uninformed. What seems like a dumb question might yield an informative answer.

Buying a new home is one of the biggest and most important purchases you will make in your lifetime. By doing your homework, you will be able to shop for a home with a sense of confidence and knowledge that will help you make the right decision. If you have additional questions about finding a builder, the Home Builders Association of Alabama can help you find the answers.

Remember that a professional builder is a good businessman, committed to high standards of quality and a solid code of ethics. A builder's product is his masterpiece, and his reputation is built one home at a time.