

# LOOKING TO BUILD? A GUIDE TO YOUR BUILDER SEARCH

By Sue Durio

**Y**ou've dreamed of having a custom-built home for years — one with exactly the design, layout and features you want, in the perfect location, at a reasonable price. But you've read horror stories about homebuilding experiences. How can you ensure your homebuilding experience will be a dream-come-true? The key is to carefully choose the most important partner in this process: the builder.

- 1. TALK TO CLIENTS.** If a home buyer still raves about their builder after the sometimes intense and stressful building process is complete, that's a builder to consider. Sure, a few hiccups in the construction process are inevitable, but was the builder easy to work with? Did he fulfill his commitments? Was he honest and fair? Did he make the process enjoyable?
- 2. LOOK AT THE WORK.** Most builders have photo galleries on their websites; browse those, but don't stop there. Tour a recently completed project, one similar to your desired style and budget. If construction details aren't your expertise, consider bringing a friend to be your expert eyes. Make sure you have a builder who doesn't cut corners behind a pretty façade.

### 3. GO WITH EXPERIENCE.

Your builder should not just have experience in building homes, but experience in building homes *here*. A builder who isn't knowledgeable of Lakeway building codes and permitting processes, soil and septic issues and local homeowner's association requirements can add costs to your project and delay its completion.



- 4. CHECK THEIR RELATIONSHIPS.** To get your project completed on time at the quality you expect, be sure your builder has longstanding, positive relationships with subcontractors and suppliers. If possible, watch the builder interact with crews on their other projects. Choose a builder who treats subcontractors with respect and a sense of humor. Be cautious of builders who change subcontractors from job to job; that can be a red flag to poor relationships and a bad reputation.

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