



25 Questions to ask your builder

Selecting the right builder is the most important step in turning your ideal plans into your dream home.

Asking builders the questions below will help you choose the right builder and also help you better understand key steps in the building process and the decisions you'll make, in partnership with the builder, to bring your new home to life.

“Tell me more about you...”

1. How many years have you been in the industry?
2. How many houses have you built in the last twelve months?
3. What sets you apart from other builders?
4. Can I view your previous projects (portfolio)?
 - Do you have a website?
 - Do you have any show houses in the area?
5. Can you give me references, with contact numbers and contract values?

“What’s your project management approach?”

6. How do you manage your projects in terms of:
 - Cash flow?
 - Timelines and milestones?
7. How do you manage resources onsite, both skilled (e.g. electricians) and semi-skilled (e.g. bricklayers)?
8. How many projects are you currently busy with?
9. How do you manage labour resources across projects?

“Let’s talk funding...”

10. I intend to apply for a loan and the bank pays on progress of work done onsite. Do you have sufficient cashflow to start building my home?
11. Will you give me a complete breakdown of all the costs?

“What about security?”

12. How do you manage security onsite with regard to theft and damage?
13. How do you vet labourers onsite for purposes of security?
14. Will theft, injuries onsite, damages and natural disasters be covered by insurance during construction?

“With regard to this specific project and role players...”

15. How long does it normally take you to complete a house of this magnitude?
16. Do you need to meet with my architect during construction of the project?
17. Can I choose my own plumber and electrician or will you provide them?
18. Do I get to choose my own finishes?

19. What equipment will you be using to mix the cement?

20. Will I get a list of all the materials you will be using?

“How does your contract work?”

21. Who drafts your building contracts?
22. Have you ever had a dispute with a customer? How did you resolve and manage the dispute?
23. If I have variation orders* during construction, how and when should I present them to you?

*Additions, substitutions or omissions from the original scope of work

“I’ve found defects, what now?”

24. When work is completed, will you allow me to check for defects before I release the final payment?
25. If there are any defects, how long will it take you to rectify them?