

## Custom home building

Having represented numerous homebuilders over the years, I have seen some really smooth builds and some fairly tough ones. If ever there is a need for clear, concise communication and preparation, this is the time.

In the initial stages, you are meeting with an architect to choose and draft your plan. Some solid advice? Ask the architect what the fee will be to follow the house through from conception to completion. Here's why: many homeowners cannot visualize a house simply by looking at plans. Problems develop on the job site when the owners finally realize what the house is going to look like.

During the building process, your architect can assist with change orders and act as the

mediator in minor and moderate disputes between you and your builder. Periodic field inspections at critical times allow the architect to verify that the project is progressing as planned. Your contract with the architect should note that the builder must make all corrections at his sole expense as pointed out by the architect. If you want your job to go smoothly, you must have superb plans and detailed specifications. It also pays for you plan well in advance by selecting all items that will be used in your home.

Do not try to pick things as you build. Long lead times are required on some items, such as cabinetry, lighting fixtures, imported tile and unusual appliances. If you delay, you may be limited to garden-variety

choices that guarantee quick delivery, or, you risk delaying your move-in date. Early selection eliminates surprises and allows you to get bids from contractors that are highly accurate.

The extra money you pay an architect to go along for the ride can be viewed as an insurance policy. My recent home build went well because of many excellent professionals. Call us if you need help finding the right key people for your build.

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Asking**



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