

Building Your Home..... The Construction Process

Please note that as not all homebuilders work the same. These guidelines are generic in nature when building a home. When building with Galaxy Homes you'll receive a more in depth explanation showing you the step by step process of building your new home.

Building a home can be much more enjoyable if you understand the process. That is why it is important that work with a homebuilder that will take the time to help guide you through it. There are many steps to be taken by both the homebuyer as well as a homebuilder, but by working together this can be a fluid process.

Just a quick note. Before beginning construction it would be beneficial to all parties that you get preapproved for a home loan. Not only because most homebuilders require this, but as a purchaser will be more reassured by the decisions you're making.

Pre-construction

The first two steps in building your new home are to determine the floor plan and the lot on which you will build your new home. Most people will find a floor plan that they like first and then will find the lot. This is especially true if they are considering several similar subdivisions. If you are you looking for a unique lot, such as an acreage, a golf course lot, a lake lot, a lot backing to trees or an open space, or some other specialty type lot, then it is important that you locate the lot prior to deciding on the floor plan.

Assuming you have found a lot to build on and have found the home plan that you like, it's time to start turning your dream into reality. Now is the time you'll meet with the builder or his representative to make any custom changes or additions to the plan that you're interested in.

Once you picked the plan, the lot and given the builder a list of your customized changes, he will work up the price of what it will cost for you to build your dream home.

It is at this time that an agreement should be reached and put into writing.

The builder will then have the plans drawn including your custom changes if you have any. After these have been completed, the builder or his representative will meet with you to review the plans and specifications. If the plans are acceptable to you, then both the builder and the homebuyers should sign the plans and specs thereby agreeing how the home is to be built.

It is now time for the builder to obtain building permits and stake the lot.

Excavation

Once the builder has obtained the building permits and has staked the lot it is now time to dig the basement. An experienced excavator will generally be able to do the excavation of the site in one day and usually in only a few hours. Much of the dirt will be left on the site for use later or it may be hauled away at this time if it will not be needed.

Footings and Foundation

Once the hole is dug, another subcontractor comes to dig the footings. The subcontractor then inserts the necessary rebar and pours the concrete footing. Footings are designed to carry the weight of the foundation walls and the home above it. The size of the footing and the rebar used are determined by the size and type of home and the site conditions. Once the footing has had time to harden, wall panels are erected on top of the footing. As the walls are formed using the removable panels, the foundation contractor will be inserting rebars both horizontally and vertically throughout the forms. Once all the forms are set concrete will be poured into the forms. Once the walls are dry enough, the forms are removed to be used on the next job. You will now see the foundation walls.

Drain Tile and Backfill

Some builders use interior drain tile while others use exterior drain tile. With the interior drain tile, it is put in place on the inside of the footings but below the concrete floor of the basement. With an exterior drain tile, it is attached to the foundation wall where it meets the footing. In either case the drain tile is designed to prevent water from sitting on the basement concrete floor. The foundation is then waterproofed below grade level. Typically the foundation will be backfilled about a week after the foundation walls have been poured.

Owner Selections

At this time some of your personal selections will need to be made. Consult your builder regarding your selections. In most cases, the brick or stone selections will need to be made by this point of the building process. Many homebuyers also like to pick their exterior paint colors and the color of the roofing shingles at this point so that all of the exterior colors blend together. There are many other selections that will be made throughout the building process.

Framing

The framing stage can take one to four weeks depending on the size of the home, the complexity of the design, the weather, and the availability of materials and labor. The framer may also install the windows and the felt paper on the roof to help keep out wet or snowy weather.

Rough Mechanicals

After the framing is completed, there will be many different trades working on your home.

The plumber will come and run all of the waste lines and plumbing vents. The plumber will also run any water lines on the main or upper levels that he will not be able to reach later once drywall is up. If he has it not already done so, he will also run any water and waste lines that run under the basement concrete floor.

The heating and air conditioning vendor (HVAC) will run the duct work and cold air returns for the central air-conditioning and furnace. If a different type of system is to be used, the appropriate contractor will be installing it at this time.

The electricians will run wiring for electrical outlets, switches, light fixtures, and any other electrical openings. In some cases they may also be wiring for telephone and cable TV jacks.

Your builder may also use a specialty contractor to install things such as central vacuum systems, security systems, stereo surround sound, whole house audio, and phone and cable jacks.

Inspections

In the Omaha Metro area, this is the time when the city or county building inspectors will inspect your home to make sure it conforms to all local building codes. If any violations are found, the inspector will demand that the builder correct them and the home will be reinspected. Once a home clears all inspections it is time to insulate and drywall the home.

It is a critical that you look over your home before drywall is put in place.

Although the electricians and other contractors must follow the building codes, if you need electrical switches, plugs, telephone outlets, cable outlets or other wiring put into place, now is the easiest and most cost effective time to have it done.

Insulation and Drywall

Both of these are relatively quick and you'll be excited as your home takes form.

The exterior walls of the home will be insulated and the penetrations should be sealed. In most cases this will be completed in one to three days. Once the drywall is on-site a crew will cut the pieces to size and hang the drywall on the walls and ceilings. After the drywall has been hung, another crew will tape and mud the drywall seams. This process takes several coats with sanding in between in order to develop a smooth surface. This is also the time where the drywall finisher will be texturing ceilings as needed. Most builders will also be insulating the attic at this time.

Wood Floor

If a real wood floor is being installed this is generally the timeframe in which it is completed. The finish is not put on at this time as other construction traffic may cause dents and scratching that will be taken care of later.

Trim Carpentry and Cabinets

The trim carpenter will install all interior doors, door casings, base, underlayment and other wood moldings as needed. The cabinets throughout the house are also installed at this time.

Painting

The painter will start by staining and lacquering the woodwork as needed. After that is completed he will tape and cover the woodwork to avoid getting paint on it. He will then paint the walls of the interior of home.

Hard surface flooring and countertops

Several different people will be working on the flooring and countertops during this period. On the floors there may be tile, vinyl, laminate flooring or a combination of them being installed. The countertops being installed may be laminate, corian, granite, or some other surface

Finish mechanicals and appliances

The mechanical contractors will return to finish their work. The plumber will install sinks, faucets, toilets, dishwasher, and completes the plumbing in the basement. The HVAC contractor installs the registers, the air returns, sets the air-conditioning unit, and tests to make sure everything is working correctly. The electrician installs light fixtures, electrical outlets and switches, installs a doorbell and wires the electrical panel.

Wood floor finish

If a real wood floor has been installed, the contractor will come back at this time to sand the floor. Depending on the customer's preference the floor may be stained or left natural. The installer then puts two coats of sealer on the floor allowing it to dry in between coats.

Carpeting

The installer attaches the tack strips, installs the carpet pad, cuts the carpet as needed and stretches it into place.

Final punch out

A lot of little things happen now to put the finishing touches on the home. Interior doors are hung and doorknobs installed. Any trim that was removed or has not been installed is put into place at this time. Damaged drywall is repaired. Shower doors and vanity mirrors are installed. Window screens are installed. The home and windows are cleaned professionally. The painter comes back to touch up paint.

Exterior of home

Depending on the time of year and weather conditions, sod may or may not be installed, if you purchased a sprinkler system for the yard it also may or may not be installed. In addition the exterior home may have been painted (unless vinyl siding is used). If any of these have not been completed, they will be done so as conditions allow.

Home orientation

Your home is nearly complete and ready to be moved into. The builder or his representative will do a walk-through the home with you. At this meeting, the builder will walk through the home with you room by room. He will be making sure the doors and windows are in place and operational, the plumbing fixtures are working correctly, the correct lights are installed and working, the appliances are working, he will explain how the major systems of the house work, and cover customer service, home maintenance, and when and who to call if something is not working properly.

Closing

Your home is now complete. Generally a closing will take place at a title company or your lender. If you owe money you will need to bring a certified check to closing. You should also have changed the utilities for your new home into your own name effective the date of closing. Don't forget to order new phone and cable service and change your mail delivery.

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