

It's good to be home.

Checklist for Hiring a Design-Builder

What to do first

- Determine why you want to renovate or design-build your custom home. What are the problems you're trying to solve?
- Write a description of the home you envision, with as much detail as possible.
- Establish your budgetary threshold.

Find a Design-Builder

- Ask family, friends and neighbours that had similar work done for recommendations.
- Visit GOHBA.ca. (Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association).
- Interview companies. (Download worksheets at <https://www.chba.ca/finding-a-builder/>)
- Ask for references from past customers. Read reviews and testimonials on Houzz, GuildQuality, etc.

Establishing the design and costs will require:

- A complete description of the home to be constructed by the design-builder.
- Samples and/or literature, showing the different products that will be used
- Detailed drawings and/or 3D's and specifications of the home to be constructed.

Your Construction Contract should contain:

- Correct and complete address of the property where the work will be done
- Your name and address
- Design-Builder's name, address and telephone number
- Start and completion dates
- The price and payment schedule (keep in mind seasonal and lien holdbacks)
- Detailed description of the work, plans and details specifications of the materials (type, quality, model) to be used
- The right to retain a lien holdback as specified in provincial law
- A clause stating that work will conform to the requirements of all applicable codes, such as building, safety and fire codes
- Agreement on who (homeowner or design-builder) is responsible for all necessary permits, licenses, inspections and certificates

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Design-Builder's responsibilities include:

- Public liability and property damage insurance
- Identifying any necessary permits and ensuring all legal requirements are satisfied
- Worker's compensation for all employees of the renovator or subcontractors (WSIB)
- Removal of construction debris when the job is finished
- Warranties on all builder supplied work and materials (in addition to manufacture's warranties) for a period of at least a year

Homeowner's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that all contracted work conforms to zoning bylaws
- Ensuring adequate working space and freedom of movement for workers, and use of utilities
- Ensuring prompt payment according to the requirements of the law & the holdback & payment schedule