



BUILD YOUR BARNDO

A collection of
FORMS, GUIDELINES, and TOOLS
to guide you through your

BARNDOMINIUM BUILD

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* Editable versions included in download

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations, you've decided you want to build a new home. What's the next step? Easy peasy...go find a builder, write a big fat check, and Voila! There's nothing more for you to do but wait for move-in day. Don't we wish! I don't know about you, but I chose to build a "Barndominium" in order to save money while building my new, safe, and forever home. This material will help you do the same.

I originally created this guide to help homeowners act as their own general contractor during their barndominium builds. And while this guide absolutely still accomplishes that, it will help those that intend on hiring a general contractor or a builder, as well. Before contacting a GC, or a builder, it's important to have a good idea and understanding of what you want to build. The checklists and forms in this guide will be used to cover all the details of the planning, budgeting, and building processes regardless if you are acting as your own GC or hiring someone for the job.

I recently completed my barndo build while acting as my own general contractor so I know firsthand the apprehension you might be facing if you are planning on acting as your own GC. You are probably even second guessing if it's something you can actually handle yourself. I'm not going to lie, I probably know more about the construction industry than most typical homeowners. Throughout my career, I've worked for a new build residential/commercial plumbing company, a residential builder for a short period of time, I studied a builder's license manual (at one time I thought about getting my license), I completed AHIT's home inspector training program, and I'm just a hands-on type of person in general. But! I am by no means an expert when it comes to building. I had never done an owner-build before.

Now, with that being said, I'm here to tell you that as long as you are willing to put in the effort and RESEARCH! RESEARCH! RESEARCH!, you can do it too. I researched my home build for nearly 2 years prior to breaking ground. I'm not saying it's going to be easy, but it doesn't have to be difficult either. Preparation and knowledge are key and you've made the right decision by purchasing this guide to get started. It will provide you with the resources you need to be well informed, prepared and organized. All of these things, along with a can-do attitude, will make your build come together that much easier.

Now, don't get me wrong, there are going to be times when you want to walk away from all of it and most likely, if you are trying to obtain financing, it will be at that time. There will be times when you question if you even want to build at all. We sold our home of 20+ years and lived in a motorhome for 2 years while trying to get our build rolling during the pandemic. There were times when I didn't think we were ever going to own a home again. There were times when I thought about throwing in the towel on our barndo journey and buying a modular instead. In the end, I'm so glad I stuck it out and I now live in the home I dreamt about for well over those 2 years.

If I was able to make it happen, you can too. The ABSOLUTE best advice I can give is to research all the options and choices you are making. Research everything until you absolutely can not research it anymore. This is how you are going to make informed decisions and decisions in which you are confident. There will be people who question or try to influence those decisions. Do not allow them to hinder your choices. Trust your gut. And unfortunately, there are a lot of people you will be dealing with that will try to cut corners or take advantage of you. Again, trust your gut. If something doesn't seem right, do your research and get to the bottom of it. You need to be prepared to stand your ground on what you want. And you know what they say about opinions, right? To paraphrase, "everyone has one".

There is another side to that, however. Sometimes what we want just simply can't be done. Or sometimes what we want might blow our budget. In that case, you need to be prepared to keep an open mind and be ready to compromise on those things and decide if they are worth it. Also, in order to keep the project moving forward, be ready to make on the spot decisions. Trust me, the last thing you want is for your trades to leave the jobsite because you have to make a decision. Trades keep themselves extremely busy so it might be awhile before you can get them back to your job.

FINANCING

One topic I won't be providing much information on in this guide is financing. There are just too many variables and hoops to jump through to secure financing for these builds. I will, however, share a few pointers when it comes to financing.

#1: The first rule of building a "barndo" is don't refer to it a "barndo". Barndo or Barndominium are not proper terms for the type of home you want to build. The term itself is not widely accepted within the industry (although more & more are coming around to the concept). Instead, use the proper and exact terminology of what your home will be made of. You can refer to it as a "custom built home" or an "open concept home". You will be required to submit plans and documentation so be prepared to tell them if you are building post-frame, metal frame, red-iron frame, etc.

#2: Do not begin any work on your property until after financing is secured. Even if you so much as clear trees, a potential lender could look at this as work started. One reason for this is they need to make sure the build site doesn't have any liens against it prior to funding your project. Take that as you will, I just wanted to make sure I mentioned it.

#3: Do not believe it when people try to tell you you can't get financing for a "barndo" or that you can't get financing as an owner-builder. You absolutely can and there are plenty of success stories of those that did. Again, it's not going to be easy. You may need to be persistent and call lender after lender but they are out there. Facebook Barndominium groups are a great resource for help with figuring out financing for your build. How to finance is a HOT topic with these builds. Join as many groups as you can. You'll find an incredible amount of information on Facebook.

WHAT IS A BARNDOMINIUM?

Do you know those cute monikers that are given to celebrity couples? Like Bennifer and Bradgelina? The nicknames are a combination of the two individuals. That's what "barndominium" is; a combination of "barn" and "condominium". You might think the term is fairly new but in actuality, it's been in use since the 1970s. This type of home trend is quickly gaining momentum. Originally, the term "barndominium" was coined after farm hands started making living quarters in actual already erect barns found on farms. But now, homeowners like us are choosing to build our dream homes out of this style of structure more and more every day.

A barndominium is not your traditional house.

A barndominium, or barndo for short, is not your traditional house. A barndo is a home that can be built by renovating an existing barn structure. More recently, many are choosing to build their new home from scratch using a barn-type structures framed of metal or wood.

A variety of materials, including metal, wood, and brick are used when it comes to building a barndominium. You can choose to go modern or more traditional when designing the home. Typically the exterior consists of metal siding and metal roofing. If a more traditional feel is desired, you might choose to do asphalt shingles or add brick wainscoting to the exterior walls.

Barndos offer many styles and options.

There isn't just one way to build a barndominium. In fact, when you get right down to it, the possibilities are almost endless. Barndo layouts can be custom created to meet the needs of the owner by designing in a way that a portion of the house is used as living space and the other side used as an alternative space such as a shop or office.

There are different ways to construct the foundation, the shell, the exterior, and the interior. You'll find there are a lot of people out there who will tell you one way is better than another. Ultimately, the choice comes down to personal preference after considering location, affordability, and time allowance.

FOUNDATION

Choosing the type of foundation is going to be determined by the location of your build and the type of structure you are building. Generally speaking, a barndominium is built on a concrete slab foundation, however, basements are becoming more popular as these homes become more mainstream.

SHELL

The “shell” or exterior framework of a barndominium can be made of metal, such as a metal garage-type structure, steel with large I-beams, wood, or a mixture of steel and wood. There are pros and cons to each. A metal garage-type structure can be erected super quickly in just a matter of days, the steel I-beam design is great for strength, and wood structures, such as post-frame or pole barns have been around and withheld their longevity for many, many years.

EXTERIOR

There are different types of materials that can be used for the exterior of a barndo. The most common is the use of metal siding. Other options could include vinyl siding, board and batten siding, or brick. One popular design choice is to add a brick wainscoting to the exterior. A more traditional exterior style might have a shingled roof, while a modern exterior style might have metal roofing. Each gives its own feel and character to the building. Covered porches and lean-tos are a great addition to complete the look and functionality of the home.

INTERIOR

Just like the exterior, there are many interior options available when designing a barndo. A popular layout option is an open concept in which there is one large room with high ceilings where you will find the living room, kitchen and dining area. The interior floor plan layout can be created without the worries of active structural elements, which is one of the greatest advantages of building a barndominium. Since the exterior structure is a “shell” that bears all the weight of the structure, there is no need for load-bearing interior walls. Not only is this a great convenience upon original build, but is also a great convenience if a remodel was ever desired down the road. Interior finishes can be done to please everyone’s unique styles and tastes. A simple interior with modest finishes might include laminate countertops and finished concrete floors or higher-end finishes might include granite countertops and hardwood flooring.

What are some advantages of a Barndominium?

Cost Savings... There was a time when building this type of home, even with a builder, was a cheaper option than a traditional home. Unfortunately, those days are gone with today's cost of materials and the ever-growing popularity of these homes. Nowadays, if you were to price compare a barndominium build, without doing any of the work yourselves, to a new traditional home build, also without doing any of the work yourselves, you will most likely find the costs to be very comparable. With that said, if you enjoy being hands-on and desire to "build it with your own two hands" a barndominium is a great option and can provide significant cost savings.

Design Flexibility... Regardless if the structure is built of wood or steel, the weight of the roof is carried along the perimeter of the barn. This leaves the entire interior space open, making design possibilities endless.

Time Frame... Due to the simplicity of design, typically speaking, a barndominium can be built in a much shorter time period than a traditional home. As long as the build is planned properly and all hiccups are dealt with in a timely manner, a barndominium can be built as quickly as 3-6 months.

Low Maintenance... With metal roofing and siding, these homes are considered "low maintenance". They don't require the upkeep a traditional home would.

What are some disadvantages of a Barndominium?

Financing... Obtaining a loan to build is a huge hurdle when it comes to building a barndominium. There are banks and lenders out there who will lend on these types of homes but they aren't quite as cut and dry as a traditional build. One of the reasons for this is due to the lack of comparables available for barndominiums. As I mentioned earlier, these homes are becoming very popular and trendy, however, they are still few and far between and lack in the recently sold market. This makes them difficult to determine an appraised value which is essential for granting a loan.

Building Restrictions... Not all areas will allow barndominiums. Before purchasing land, it's important to contact your local building authority to make sure your build will be allowed.

Cell Reception... Another less significant disadvantage of a barndominium is getting good cell service and internet signal inside the structure. Signal can be a challenge especially if the building is made of metal. However, there are signal boosters available that can be incorporated into the home. There are different

makes and models out there but we chose to purchase the [weBoost Multi Room Booster](#) and it was a total game changer. Prior to installation we only had service while standing at an East facing window. Now, we have great signal everywhere in the home.

Conclusion

We've determined what a barndominium is and why many are choosing to go this route when building their dream homes. We've also reviewed a few disadvantages. They may not suit everyone's lifestyle and building a traditional home might be easier, especially when it comes to financing. But, all things considered, can a traditional home offer as much personalization, character, and versatility as a custom-designed barndominium?



RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GENERAL CONTRACTOR

A general contractor is someone who coordinates and supervises every aspect of a building or remodeling project. Below is a generalized list of responsibilities. There could be more or less depending on your build requirements.

BEFORE THE BUILD:

- Design/Obtain a layout
- Quote and budget the build
- If financing, gather and provide all build data to lender
- Having access made available to the jobsite
 - Driveway - are permits needed? Who will complete the work?
 - Build site grade - Who will complete the work?

DURING THE BUILD:

- Securing proper permits
- Dealing and communicating with inspectors
- Scheduling inspections
- Hiring, scheduling and overseeing the work of contractor/subcontractors (carpenters, plumbers, electricians, HVAC installers, etc.)
 - Making sure their vision will match yours
 - Addressing problems and changes as they occur
 - When quoting - determine who will provide the materials (you or them)
- Materials
 - Ordering materials and having them ready and available when needed
 - Coordinating deliveries

Note: Check availability way ahead of time. (Building package, garage doors, entry doors, windows, cabinets, lumber, drywall, plumbing fixtures, lighting, etc.)
- Laying out windows/doors if working off a basic layout
- Scheduling utilities
 - Electrical - When? Temporary? Who is responsible for getting the meter base?
 - Coordinating septic installation or public sewer hook up - When?
 - Coordinating well installation or public water hook up - When?
- Keeping a clean worksite and coordinating porta potties & dumpsters
- Submitting paperwork (invoices, lien waivers, payments)

GETTING STARTED!

Take these next suggestions and get started putting your build together.

- **Find your little piece of heaven.** Where and what you build will be influenced by the property you will be building on. I'm not only talking about layout but also if a barndo is even allowed in the jurisdiction. Make sure you check with the area's building authority to see if you can build the type of home you are wanting prior to purchasing the land. Other considerations will be water, sewer or septic (perc test), and electrical availability. Every jurisdiction is different. Make the calls and find out what kind of expenses you will be looking at to get these services installed prior to purchasing a piece of property.

What is a perc test? A perc test is done by the health department within your property's jurisdiction. This test will help the health department determine the type and size of septic field that will be required. Septic fields can range from a couple thousand dollars to tens of thousands of dollars so this is crucial information to have prior to purchasing land.

- **Design it.** If you are able to come across a set of plans that you are in love with, great! If not, find an online software, use a phone app or get out the graph paper for this process. You will need some sort of idea of what you are looking for and want to build. But be prepared, during the quote process, you may need to modify your design to fit within your budget. One of my favorite apps for designing a layout is [magicplan](#). It's easy to use and modify.
- **Do you need a set of blueprints?** Not always, but maybe. Do your research and find out if an actual set of blueprints is going to be needed for your build. We were able to build off of a simple layout with dimensions. This is what all of my trades worked off of. I created my own basic layouts for each trade by hand on a print-off of what I created in the magicplan app. Blueprints or engineered plans may be required by your lending institution and/or building department.
- **Build a budget and get quotes.** If you don't have direct access to the trades, use the power of the internet in order to come up with some sort of rough budget for your project. I researched going rates for trades and came up with a rough figure to work with. I made adjustments to my layout in order to save in certain areas. Once I had a rough idea of what I was looking at, I started making the calls for more exact projected costs. Trades will be able to use your plans and drawings to provide you with detailed quotes. The quotes should include the labor cost, materials being used and expiration date of quote. Be warned: This part is tedious and will be frustrating. You are

going to find that a lot of contractors/subcontractors won't return your calls or tell you they will get you a quote but simply do not follow through. You don't want to work with these types of contractors so move on to the next. Keep at it until you have a complete projected cost to build. If something seems high, ask the contractor if there is anything they might suggest in order for you to save money. Again, consider making changes if it means staying within your budget. Don't forget to ask their time frame to get to your project and how long their job is going to take. *TIP: Keep quotes for each trade separate by using manilla folders and keeping a detailed record of your communication with them attached to the inside of the front cover. (See page 25.)*

- Hire your contractors/subcontractors. My advice is not to hire based on price alone. Some people would recommend getting three quotes and going with the one that is priced in the middle. I don't feel like it's that simple. Of course, you need to consider the cost but also take your gut into consideration. Are they someone you can see yourself working with and trusting? How did they handle getting you the quote? Were they easy to talk to and did they treat you with respect? Sometimes that's still not enough to put you at ease. To help, I've provided evaluation forms for you to use so you can make a more informed decision. During this time, discuss start dates and lead times you need to give them to be put on their schedule.
- Obtain permits, if necessary. Who will be pulling the permits? Will you be pulling all or will the individual trades pull their own? Common permits needed are building, plumbing, electrical, HVAC, driveway, and septic. Again, you are going to have to do your research to determine which are necessary and what inspections will be required of each.
- Get insurance. Obtain quotes for coverage on your build. Make sure you are adequately covered and if applicable, let them know you are acting as the general contractor of your build.
- Clear the property and get started building your dream home.

HOT TOPICS

I can not stress this enough. Do your research!

The best ways to research anything that has to do with barndos or building...

1. Join Barndominium Facebook groups.

There are a massive amount of barndominium Facebook groups where other barndo lovers post questions and advice. They are searchable so before you throw a question out there, search it. Chances are it's already been discussed. You should join these groups ASAP! Get the juices flowing on your build and start realizing things you want to do or don't want to do with your build. I've included a list of the top groups later on in this guide.

2. YouTube Channels.

There are several builders that have great YouTube channels that show you right and wrong ways of doing things.

Below are "Hot Topics" often discussed.

- **Plumbing vents through the roof (Hint: try not to allow)**
- **Concrete - cracking/coverings during build if going to be finished floor/finishing materials**
- **Window installation - proper way**
- **Countertops - different materials**
- **Flooring - different types**
- **Truss beams - how to cover or incorporate into design**
- **Wall heights**
- **Insulation types**
- **Plan out light switches - never enough**
- **Plan out electrical outlets - do you want them in the concrete floor for lamps, etc. or in the kitchen island?**

As a bonus, I've included links to several of the top Facebook groups below.

[Barndominium Homes | Facebook](#)

[Barndominium Living | Facebook](#)

[Barndominium Living | Facebook](#)

[Barndominium Ideas | Facebook](#)

[Barndominiums Planning and Info | Facebook](#)

[Barndominium Budget | Facebook](#)

[Barndominiums and Metal buildings | Facebook](#)

[Barndominium Ideas | Facebook](#)

[Barndos For Beginners | Facebook](#)

[Barndominium Life Group | Facebook](#)

What not to do...

There is a massive amount of misinformation on the web about barndominiums. And the use of AI in writing articles is only going to continue to add to that misinformation. Only trust reliable resources online. If you simply Google search a topic about barndominiums, chances are you are going to come across something that isn't true. Barndominiums aren't cut and dry. They can be completely different things to different people. So, stick with the statement that "just because something is on the Internet, that doesn't make it true."



ESTIMATING CHECKLIST

Note: There may be other elements that will need to be included in this list per your project. Alternatively, some of the elements listed may not be necessary for your project.

General Requirements

- Plans and specifications
- Plan review and permits (zoning, building, environmental, other)
- Property survey
- Engineering fees
- Legal fees
- Insurance

Site Prep / Excavation

- Job-site access; roadway, driveway
- Job-site security and storage
- Dumpster rental
- Lot clearing
- Portable toilet
- Temporary power
- Temporary heat
- Scaffolding rental
- Equipment/tool rental
- Cut and fill
- Removal of stone/dirt
- Rough grading
- Trenching for utility hookups
- Foundation prep or excavation
- Backfill
- Pest Control

On-site Water/Sewer & Utilities

- Soil and perc tests
- Septic system design
- Septic system permits, inspections, fees
- Septic system installation and tie into house
- Well drilling
- Well trenching, plumbing, pump, wiring pressure tank
- Well permits
- Public water: tap fees, hookup, installation to building
- Public sewer: tap fees, hookup, installation to building
- Electrical: permit, connection fee, service installation
- Natural Gas: permit, connection fee, hook up
- Propane: permit, tank installation, hookup
- Internet installation
- Television installation
- Telephone installation

Foundation

- Concrete slabs: foundation, basement, garage
- Footings/pads, concrete piers
- Steel reinforcing
- Vapor barrier
- Sump pump

Structure / Shell

- Metal frame or wood frame building
- Installation labor
- Equipment rental (i.e. set trusses)
- Roof and ridge vents
- Metal flashing (chimney, vent pipes, etc.)
- Weather barrier
- Skylights
- Siding
- Roof materials

Exterior

- Gutters and downspouts
- Posts
- Shutters
- Brick or stonework
- Trim
- Paint and stain

Windows and Exterior Doors

- Windows
- Exterior doors
- Patio doors
- Locksets, door hardware
- Garage doors
- Garage door openers

Plumbing

- Underground / in slab and labor
- Rough-in drain, waste, vent, water supply and labor
- Finish plumbing and fixture set labor
- Gas piping
- Hydronic heat piping
- Water heater
- Sinks - kitchen and baths
- Toilets
- Baths
- Showers
- Faucets, valves, shower heads
- Garbage disposal
- Water softener and filters

Electrical

- Service panels
- Rough wiring
- Internet, television, telephone wiring
- Light fixtures and fans interior
- Light fixtures and fans exterior
- Outlets, switches, dimmers
- Doorbell
- Smoke, Carbon Monoxide detectors
- Security system
- Home theater/entertainment

HVAC

- Furnace / heat pump / Mini splits
- Air conditioning
- Air handler / exchange unit
- Air filter
- Ductwork and registers
- Radiant heating
- Thermostat
- Bath exhaust fans

Insulation

- Roof/attic insulation
- Wall cavity insulation
- Spray foam insulation
- Crawlspace, foundation insulation

Interior Finish

- Rough framing materials and labor
- Drywall and labor
- Decorative ceilings
- Flooring
- Interior doors and door frames
- Door hardware
- Baseboards and door/window trim
- Wainscoting, paneling, chair rail, other trim
- Cabinets (Kitchen, bath, other)
- Cabinet hardware/pulls
- Kitchen and bath countertops
- Kitchen and bath backsplashes
- Ceramic tile, stone
- Bath tubs
- Showers
- Shower doors
- Medicine cabinets
- Mirrors
- Towel hangers, toilet paper holders, other accessories
- Shelving, including closets
- Stairs and railings
- Interior paint
- Interior stain

Appliances

- Refrigerator
- Range, cooktop
- Range hood
- Wall oven
- Dishwasher
- Microwave
- Washer and Dryer

Other Masonry

- Patios
- Fireplaces
- Driveway
- Walkways

Earthwork

- Topsoil
- Ponds
- Finish grading
- Seeding/sod
- Landscaping

BUILD YOUR BARNDO

PROJECTED COSTS BY OWNER

This is a good base point to start calculating your costs and creating a budget. Use in conjunction with the Estimating Checklist above.

[\(LINK TO EDITABLE SPREADSHEET HERE\)](#)

General Requirements:

Plans, Permits, Surveys, Etc. \$ _____
Other \$ _____

Site Prep/Excavation:

Clearing, Grading, Culverts, Etc. \$ _____
Temporaries - Equip. Rentals, Dumpsters \$ _____
Pest Control \$ _____
Other \$ _____

On-Site Water/Sewer & Utilities:

Water Meter or Well Drilling \$ _____
Sewer Tap Fees or Septic Tank & Field \$ _____
Electrical Connection \$ _____
Natural Gas or Propane Installation \$ _____
Other \$ _____

Foundation:

Concrete Slab or Footings \$ _____
Other \$ _____

Structure/Shell:

Construction Material \$ _____
Construction Labor \$ _____
Other \$ _____

Exterior:

Gutters & Downspouts \$ _____
Brick or Stonework \$ _____
Other \$ _____

Windows & Exterior Doors:

Windows & Doors \$ _____
Garage Doors & Openers \$ _____
Other \$ _____

Plumbing:

Material & Labor \$ _____
Fixtures (sinks, toilets, faucets, etc.) \$ _____

Water Heater	\$ _____
In Floor Hydronic Heat Piping	\$ _____
Gas Piping	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Electrical:	
Material & Labor	\$ _____
Fixtures (lights, fans, etc.)	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
HVAC:	
Material & Labor	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Insulation:	
Material & Labor	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Interior Finish:	
Rough Framing Materials	\$ _____
Rough Framing Labor	\$ _____
Drywall Materials & Labor	\$ _____
Flooring	\$ _____
Cabinets & Countertops	\$ _____
Tile Floor, Showers, Backsplashes	\$ _____
Paint, Stain Materials & Labor	\$ _____
Trim Baseboards, Doors/Windows	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Appliances:	
Appliances	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Other Masonry:	
Patios, Fireplaces, Driveway, Walkways	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Earthwork:	
Topsoil, Seeding, Landscaping	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
SUBTOTAL:	\$ _____
Plus 10% Misc Overages	\$ _____
TOTAL:	\$ _____

ORDER OF OPERATIONS

The order of operations is going to vary depending on the type of structure you are going to build (i.e. post-frame vs. metal frame or slab vs. crawl/basement). But since this is an often-asked question, I wanted to make sure to include some sort of direction for you.

POST FRAME

Site Prep (Dirt work, Excavation)
Set Posts
Erect Building
Plumbing - Underground
Concrete - Pour Slab
Exterior Doors/Windows
Interior Walls
Rough Electrical, Rough Plumbing, Rough HVAC
 Septic/Sewer
 Water/Well
Insulation
Drywall/Sheetrock
Paint/Tile
Cabinets
Countertops
Finish Electrical, Finish Plumbing, Finish HVAC
Flooring
Trim
Exterior Concrete

METAL FRAME

Site Prep (Dirt work, Excavation)
Plumbing - Underground
Foundation - Concrete
Erect Building
Exterior Doors/Windows
Interior Walls
Rough Electrical, Rough Plumbing, Rough HVAC
 Septic/Sewer
 Water/Well
Insulation
Drywall/Sheetrock
Paint/Tile
Cabinets
Countertops
Finish Electrical, Finish Plumbing, Finish HVAC
Flooring
Trim
Exterior Concrete

A GUIDE TO ROOM SIZES

Sometimes it's difficult to picture the size a room should be when designing your home layout. Use the sizes below as a reference guide for determining the approximate square footage for your proposed plans. The actual size of the room should be determined by the function of the room and the furnishings going into the room.

Room	Small	Medium	Large
Kitchen	5x10 or 50 sq. ft.	10x16 or 160 sq. ft.	12x20 or 240 sq. ft.
Eating Area	10x10 or 100 sq. ft.	12x12 or 144 sq. ft.	16x16 or 256 sq. ft.
Dining Room	10x12 or 120 sq. ft.	12x16 or 192 sq. ft.	14x18 or 252 sq. ft.
Pantry	2x2 or 4 sq. ft.	3x4 or 12 sq. ft.	4x6 or 24 sq. ft.
Living Room	12x18 or 216 sq. ft.	16x20 or 320 sq. ft.	22x28 or 616 sq. ft.
Great Room	16x18 or 288 sq. ft.	18x24 or 432 sq. ft.	20x28 or 560 sq. ft.
Family Room	12x16 or 192 sq. ft.	14x20 or 280 sq. ft.	16x24 or 384 sq. ft.
Master Bedroom	12x14 or 168 sq. ft.	14x20 or 280 sq. ft.	16x24 or 384 sq. ft.
Bedrooms	10x10 or 100 sq. ft.	12x12 or 144 sq. ft.	14x16 or 224 sq. ft.
Master Bathroom	6x9 or 54 sq. ft.	8x12 or 96 sq. ft.	10x16 or 160 sq. ft.
Full Bath	6x9 or 54 sq. ft.	7x10 or 70 sq. ft.	8x12 or 96 sq. ft.
Powder Room	4x4 or 16 sq. ft.	5x5 or 25 sq. ft.	6x6 or 36 sq. ft.
Walk-in Closets	4x6 or 24 sq. ft.	6x6 or 36 sq. ft.	6x8 or 48 sq. ft.
Bedroom Closets	2x4 or 8 sq. ft.	2x6 or 12 sq. ft.	2x8 or 16 sq. ft.
Linen Closets	1x3 or 3 sq. ft.	2x4 or 8 sq. ft.	3x6 or 18 sq. ft.
Entry Closets	2x3 or 6 sq. ft.	2x4 or 8 sq. ft.	2x6 or 12 sq. ft.
Office	8x10 or 80 sq. ft.	12x14 or 168 sq. ft.	14x18 or 252 sq. ft.
Mud Room/Utility	5x6 or 30 sq. ft.	6x8 or 48 sq. ft.	8x10 or 80 sq. ft.
Foyer	6x6 or 36 sq. ft.	8x10 or 80 sq. ft.	8x15 or 120 sq. ft.
Recreation Room	12x18 or 216 sq. ft.	16x24 or 384 sq. ft.	18x30 or 540 sq. ft.
Media Room	10x14 or 140 sq. ft.	12x16 or 192 sq. ft.	14x20 or 280 sq. ft.

HOME SPECS: EXAMPLE

note: may be helpful for financing or obtaining permits

[\(LINK TO EDITABLE DOCUMENT HERE\)](#)

Owner Name: Joe and Karen Jones

Address: 123 Forest Lane, Somewhere, SC

Home Style: One story ranch on slab with attached garage

Rooms (sizes are approx):	Kitchen/Dining Room	18x20	
	Living Room	18x20	
	Master Bdrm	13x18	
	Master Bath	12x9	
	Master Closet	9x8	
	Bedrm #2	9x14	
	Bedrm #3	12x11	
	Bath #2	5x9	
	Laundry	5x10	
	Mechanical/Storage	5x10	
	Mud/Garage Entry	9x12	
	Hallway	5x15	
	Other (sizes are approx):	Garage	35x40
		Front Porch	6x55
Side Patio		46x10	

Foundation: Concrete slab

Framing: Wood framing with steel trusses

Roofing: Metal

Exterior: Front Facing – Metal with wainscoting of steel or stone appearance

Side Facing – Metal siding

Rear Facing – Metal siding

Walls: Interior house – Drywall

Interior garage – unfinished with exception of shared house wall

Ceilings & Trim: Drywall with vaulted over living room and kitchen/dining room

Custom decorative wood trim

Doors:	Front Entry	Std	Decorative entry door
	Dining Room	French	White 6ft
	Kitchen	Std	Steel w/grid window
	Mud/Garage Entry	Std	Steel
	Master Bed	Std	Hollow core
	Master Bath	Std	Hollow core

	Master Closet	Pocket	Hollow core
	Bedroom 2	Barn	Wood barn door
	Bedroom 3	Std	Hollow core
	Bath 2	Std	Hollow core
	Laundry	Std	Hollow core
	Mechanical	Std	Steel
	Garage Entry x2	Std	Steel
	Garage Doors	10x10	Metal
		12x14	Metal
Windows:	Living Room	3	Vinyl double hung
	Kitchen	2	Vinyl sliding
	Master Bed	1	Vinyl double hung
	Bedroom 2	1	Vinyl double hung
	Bedroom 3	1	Vinyl double hung
Plumbing:	Kitchen	1	Sink
		1	Dishwasher
		1	Icemaker in fridge
Laundry Room		1	Hot/Cold for washer
Master Bath		1	Lav
		1	Toilet
		1	Shower
		1	Tub
Bath 2		1	Lav
		1	Toilet
		1	Shower
Exterior		2	Hose Bibs
	Garage	1	Hot/Cold hose bib
Electrical:	Hall	2	Ceiling fixtures
	Living Room	1	Ceiling fan
		2-4	Recessed can lights
	Kitchen/Dining Room	1	Light above sink
		2-4	Recessed can lights
	Mud Room/Garage Entry	1	Ceiling fixture
	Master Bedroom	1	Ceiling fan with light
	Master Bath	1	Wall fixture
		2-3	Recessed can lights
	Master Closet	1	Ceiling fixture
	Bedroom 2	1	Ceiling fan with light
	Bedroom 3	1	Ceiling fan with light
	Bath 2	1	Wall fixture above
		1	Recessed can light

Garage	4-6	Light outlets
	1	220 connection
Exterior	6	Outdoor lights

HVAC: Electric Heat Pump
Ducting system
Programmable Thermostat
A/C Unit

Insulation: Walls – minimum R-19 fiberglass*
Roof – minimum R-30 fiberglass or spray foam*
* to meet code requirements

Kitchen:	Cabinets	Semi-custom
	Countertops	Laminate
	Range	Electric
	Microwave	Over range w/exhaust vent
	Dishwasher	Std
Master Bath:	Sink	China lav w/faucet
	Cabinet	Semi-custom
	Countertop	Laminate
	Toilet	China
Bath 2:	Shower	Ceramic tile w/faucet
	Tub	Free standing w/faucet
	Sink	China lav w/faucet
	Cabinet	Semi-custom
	Countertop	Laminate
	Toilet	China
	Shower	Ceramic tile w/faucet

Laundry: Washer / Electric Dryer

Flooring: Decorative stained concrete throughout home

Other: Build-in Desk in hallway with floor and wall cabinets

Garage: Concrete floor – unstained
Unfinished walls with exception of shared wall to house – to be insulated with finished drywall

Driveway: Gravel

Patios/porch: Concrete 10x46 and 6x46 wrap around porch
Wood wrapped posts

CONTRACTOR EVALUATION FORM

Date: _____

Contractor Name: _____ Scope of Work: _____

Business Address: _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Other: _____

Questions to Ask:

1. How long has your company been in business? _____
2. What is your Contractor's License Number? _____
3. Do you carry liability insurance? _____ Agency Name: _____
Policy number: _____ Phone/Contact: _____
4. Do you carry worker's compensation? _____ Agency Name: _____
Policy number: _____ Phone/Contact: _____
5. Can you provide 3 references for projects of similar scope?
Owner: _____ Owner: _____ Owner: _____
Project: _____ Project: _____ Project: _____
Phone: _____ Phone: _____ Phone: _____
Email: _____ Email: _____ Email: _____
6. Can you provide a banking reference? Name: _____ Phone: _____
7. Can you provide 3 supplier references?
Supplier: _____ Supplier: _____ Supplier: _____
Contact: _____ Contact: _____ Contact: _____
Phone: _____ Phone: _____ Phone: _____
Email: _____ Email: _____ Email: _____
8. How many employees work directly for your company?
9. What is your policy on change orders?
10. What is your record for completing projects on time?
11. How long do you anticipate your phase of work to take?
12. What is your work schedule? Do you work weekends?
13. Who will oversee my project on behalf of your company?
14. Have you ever been involved in a dispute with an owner that resulted in litigation, arbitration or mediation?
15. Is your business financially secure? Will you be around next year if needed?
16. Do you guarantee all these things in writing?
17. Are you a member of the Better Business Bureau?
18. Are you a member of a local builders association?

REFERENCE EVALUATION FORM

Date: _____

Reference Name: _____

Re: Contractor: _____

Questions to Ask:

1. Do you have a personal relationship with the contractor? (i.e. brother, cousin, friend)
2. What type of work did the contractor do for you?
3. Were there any delays? If so, why?
4. Did workers show up regularly and on time?
5. Was the work area maintained in a neat and clean manner?
6. Were actual materials and workmanship as specified?
7. Were all aspects of the job presented in writing?
8. How did the contractor respond to changes? Were change orders submitted in writing?
9. Were time and cost estimates acceptable?
10. How were questions and complaints handled?
11. Were you comfortable asking questions about the work?
12. Was the final price what you expected?
13. Would you use the contractor again?
14. Did the contractor provide regular progress reports and keep you informed?
15. Would you recommend them to family and friends?
16. How would you describe the contractor's and crew's work in the following areas:

	Positive	Negative
a. Promptness	_____	_____
b. Accessibility	_____	_____
c. Neatness/Cleanliness	_____	_____
d. Responsiveness	_____	_____
e. Respectfulness	_____	_____
f. Adhered to schedule	_____	_____
g. Adhered to estimates	_____	_____
h. Receptive to changes	_____	_____

Additional Notes: _____

THE CONSTRUCTION LIEN PROCESS

In the realm of construction projects, effective communication and collaboration between contractors, subcontractors, and stakeholders (such as lender) is crucial. One aspect of this involves the timely and accurate payment of those involved in the build. To ensure smooth transactions and keep disputes to a minimum (preferably non-existent), the construction lien process plays a vital role.

****As payments are made, contractors and subcontractors should provide completed and signed lien waivers or releases.** These documents confirm that they have received payment for the work and waive their right to file a lien.

What is a construction lien? A construction lien, also known as a mechanics lien or contractor's lien, is a legal claim placed on a property by contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, or other parties who have provided labor, materials, or services for a construction project. This claim serves as a security interest in the property, providing the claimant with a legal right to demand payment for their work.

Ensuring that contractors and subcontractors are paid promptly and fairly is crucial for maintaining a positive working relationship and preventing disputes. You can be sure to achieve this by following the guidelines below.

1. ****Clear Contractual Agreements:**** Begin with well-defined contracts that outline payment terms, project scope, milestones, and the process for addressing changes or disputes. Clear expectations can prevent misunderstandings.
2. ****Verification of Work:**** Before authorizing payments, ensure that the work performed matches the project's progress.
3. ****Document Everything:**** Maintain meticulous records of work completed, materials delivered, and correspondence related to payments. Documentation can serve as evidence in case of disputes.
4. ****Prompt Communication:**** Address payment concerns or delays promptly and transparently. Open communication fosters trust and prevents frustrations from escalating.

I have attached Lien Waiver forms following this section. If you are working with a lender, be sure to use their approved forms and follow their instructions accordingly.

Conditional Waiver & Release Upon Progress Payment: This form is used when more work by the particular contractor/subcontractor is to be done. Use this form for progress payments.

Final Waiver & Release on Final Payment: This form is used when all work is complete. Use this form for final payment.

CONDITIONAL WAIVER & RELEASE UPON PROGRESS PAYMENT

Upon receipt by the undersigned of a check from

_____ (payer)

in the sum of \$ _____ (amount) payable to

_____ (payee), and when the check has been properly endorsed and has been paid by the bank upon which it is drawn, this document shall become effective to release any mechanic's lien, stop notice, or bond right the

undersigned has on the job of _____ (owner name)

located at _____ (jobsite)

to the following extent.

This release covers a progress payment for labor, services, equipment, or material furnished to _____ (owner) through _____ (date) only and does not cover any retentions retained before or after the release date; extras furnished before the release date for which payment has not been received; extras or items furnished after the release date. Rights based upon work performed or items furnished under a written change order which has been fully executed by the parties prior to the release date are covered by this release unless specifically reserved by the claimant in this release. This release of any mechanic's lien, stop notice, or bond right shall not otherwise affect the contract rights, including rights between parties to the contract based upon a rescission, abandonment, or breach of the contract, or the right of the undersigned to recover compensation for furnished labor, services, equipment, or material covered by this release if that furnished labor, services, equipment, or material was not compensated by the progress payment.

Before any recipient of this document relies on it, said party should verify evidence of payment of the undersigned. This release only becomes effective when the check, properly endorsed, has cleared the bank.

_____ (Business Name of Payee)

By: _____ (authorized agent signature)

Title: _____

Dated: _____

FINAL WAIVER AND RELEASE ON FINAL PAYMENT

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT WAIVES THE CLAIMANT'S LIEN, STOP PAYMENT NOTICE, AND PAYMENT BOND RIGHTS EFFECTIVE ON RECEIPT OF PAYMENT. A PERSON SHOULD NOT RELY ON THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS SATISFIED THAT THE CLAIMANT HAS RECEIVED PAYMENT.

NAME OF CLAIMANT: _____

NAME OF CUSTOMER: _____

JOB LOCATION: _____

SITE OWNER: _____

FINAL WAIVER AND RELEASE

This document waives and releases lien, stop payment notice, and payment bond rights the claimant has for labor and service(s) provided, and equipment and material delivered to the customer on this job through _____ (date). Rights based upon labor or services(s) provided, or equipment or material delivered, pursuant to a written change order that has been fully executed by the parties prior to the date that this document is signed by the claimant, are waived and released by this document, unless listed as an exception below. This document is effective only on the claimant's receipt of payment and cleared funds from the financial institution on which the follow check is drawn:

PAYER (MAKER OF CHECK): _____

AMOUNT OF CHECK: _____

CHECK PAYABLE TO: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CLAIMANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

CLAIMANT'S TITLE: _____

DATE OF SIGNATURE: _____

DISCLAIMER

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