

# Deciding to Build or Buy a Home

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**“To build a new custom home or buy a pre-existing home”. This is the first question that you need to decide before you waste a lot of time and energy. Answer each of the following questions. Be honest with yourself. Answer carefully. Remember there are no wrong answers. You are trying to determine what the best course of action is for you at this point in your life.**

***Questions to consider:*** ***(yes/no)***

- 1. Do you have a hard time making decisions? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Once I make decisions, do I constantly change my mind? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Is it difficult for you to finish a project (perfectionist)? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Is your daily schedule regimented? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Are you able to delegate authority (let someone else be in charge)? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. I am regularly disappointed when interacting with other people. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. I am a visual person (I have to see it before I know if I like it). \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. I deal with lemons by making lemonade (deal with problems well). \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. I believe that teamwork is one of my best skills. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. My spouse and I are very stable, we handle activities well together. \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. My family and I always make our decisions (by committee) together. \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. I always get what I want, my spouse wants me to be happy. \_\_\_\_\_

## *Discussion of answers*

1. **Do you have a hard time making decisions?** No – there are hundreds of decisions that the Architect, Builder, Interior Designer will need made in a short period of time. This is why having a great team is important. We do not expect you to have all of the answers, just be able to decide when the options are presented to you.
2. **Once I make decisions, do I constantly change my mind?** No – Changing your mind costs... time and money. Remember you are paying here. It is your home. We are not talking about the normal minor variances in color of paint or fabrics.
3. **Is it difficult for you to finish a project (perfectionist)?** No – Although there are standards of construction, perfection is not possible in a home that is produced by hundreds of men working by hand for many months. Quality of work is an absolute must, perfection is not. A home is not a mass produced product. A great builder should have a written standard for his finished work available to you prior to signing a contract.
4. **Is your daily schedule regimented?** No- If unusual interruptions are a minor crisis in your life, building a home can cause a major crisis. A great home builder should have all of the decisions in writing prior to starting your home, but things do happen which can require your immediate attention when called on.
5. **Are you able to delegate authority (let someone else be in charge)?** Yes- A great home builder should have the project under complete control at all times. You should be able to relax and watch the decisions that you made during the pre-build design sequence occur.
6. **I am regularly disappointed when interacting with other people.** No- If no one ever performs work up to your standards, perhaps it would be better if you did buy a pre-existing home. There would be fewer interactions.
7. **I am a visual person (I have to see it before I know if I like it)** No – this can get tricky. What if you have to have the house built to see if you like it? Perhaps buying a pre-existing home would be a smarter deal for you.
8. **I deal with lemons by making lemonade (deal with problems well)** Yes – When a problem occurs are you willing to take the best course of action to rectify and remedy the issue or do you want to take the Architect and the Builder out on a short plank in shark infested waters. A great builder will catch almost any problem before they manifest, but there can always be a wrong measurement on the plan or a material that is on backorder.
9. **I believe that teamwork is one of my best skills** . Yes – Teamwork is the best skill to have when you are relying on a team of Designers, Vendors, subcontractors and a Builder to manage all of them. If you are not a team player, it can create major friction for the duration of the project.
10. **My spouse and I are very stable, we handle activities well together.** Yes – A very stable relationship is critical. I have seen several divorces or project over runs occur due to infighting with the spouse. Home owners need to be on the same page at all times. A good Builder should help mitigate this with great communication with both parties.
11. **My family and I always make our decisions (by committee) together.** No – Building by committee is an excuse to delay decisions or transfer the blame to someone else for incorrect construction decisions. A good builder should have all of the major decisions in writing prior to

start of construction, during construction; one home owner (cave mate) should be the decision giver.

12. **I always get what I want; my spouse wants me to be happy.** No – This is an attitude that brings discord to the jobsite. All decisions should be made in advance. All changes must be in writing, signed by both parties. The bank or a good builder will not allow changes to be made without full documentation. Clear and concise communication between all parties is a must.

### *Summation*

**According to Murphy's Laws; anytime that seems to be the right time to start a project will invariably be the wrong time.**

**Statistically, most homes seem to be built during a personal crisis for the home owner. A new child in on the way or the business goes into a boom or bust cycle. An illness in the family or an elderly member suddenly needs care, it will always be something. A great builder should have your best interest at the forefront. The builder should have everything under control with all construction decisions made prior to getting started.**

**However, if you answered differently to more than 3 or 4 of these questions; perhaps building a custom home is not in your family's best interest. Consider that not being able to keep appointments on time, constantly changing ideas on what to do during construction, letting friends and extended family influence your decisions... are all bad signs. First, the builder is a professional and has other projects to take care of. Projects that are not on schedule or decisions being late or constantly demanding that you are just "exploring your options" when you ask to stop construction or slow down to make changes is not a method that will produce a project on time and budget. Remember, your family and friends are not paying for this home.**

**We are all human and expect that we should have all of the time that we want to make up our mind or change our mind.. after all, we are paying... right! The problem is that time is money and construction crews are not dedicated to your home forever. They too have schedules to keep and other projects to start or finish. If you delay a project, the construction crew can walk to the next job where they can work and get paid. Then your project is delayed while the Builder finds replacement crews. It is important to stay on schedule and on budget. No one is happy when the project is behind schedule.**

**Building a custom home is not for everyone. A great building team can make it less stressful and a much more enjoyable experience. You should be able to rely on your team to carry you through all of the hurdles without a misstep. A great home is created by a great team of which you are a member.**