

Building Your Home: Custom, Semi-Custom or Production?

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When you start thinking about buying a brand-new home, it can sometimes be confusing knowing what kind of home builder you need to hire in order to get the home that best fits your family's needs and budget. Here's a brief explanation of the types of home builders, and some of the differences in working with each.

Custom home builders

Custom homes are generally single-family homes that are built to the buyer's specifications on land the buyer owns. A custom home is one-of-a-kind, and won't look like any other home in the neighborhood.

The buyer works closely with the builder and architect to design and construct a home with all the features and elements that they want. Because of this personalization, custom homes are generally higher-end and take longer to build. Alterations can be made at any point in the building process, which could cause the total cost to build the home to increase dramatically. Custom home builders typically build 25 or fewer homes a year.

Semi-custom home builders

Semi-custom home builders build homes based on existing blueprints, but the home buyer is typically able to change the plans prior to construction to conform to their personal preferences. Once construction has begun, however, there is less flexibility to make changes.

The home can be built on land the builder or the buyer owns. Because the home is not being designed from scratch, it often costs less and is completed in a faster timeframe than a full custom home.

Production home builders

Production home builders build a large volume of homes, generally more than 25 and up to hundreds a year. The homes are built in developments, on land the builder owns. Many different types of homes are available, including single-family, condominiums and town houses.

Production builders use standard plans, but often offer a variety of plan choices and options, such as different floor plans and elevations. There will likely be multiple homes in the neighborhood that look similar to each other.

A range of decoration and feature options including flooring, appliances, cabinets, countertops and trim is also often offered. These options may or may not increase the base home price, but they enable the buyer to pick items that they desire. However, the builder may or may not offer a selection of options that conform exactly to what the buyer wants.

Production homes are built in a range of price points, so production homes can be found in entry level, move up and luxury price ranges. The home is generally built in a fast timeframe, since the builder has already obtained the necessary permits for the plans. However, making alterations to structural elements, such as the foundation walls, will require reengineering the plans and resubmitting them for new permits which could lengthen the completion date.

For more information on types of builders in the Central Illinois area, contact the Springfield Area Home Builders Association at (217) 698-4941 or visit www.springfieldareaHBA.com