

PIPPIN WISDOM

  
PIPPIN HOME DESIGNS

# A Guide to Choosing The Right Builder



Jenny Pippin  
@PippinHomeDesigns



# How to Choose the Right Builder

A successful renovation or custom-build project depends on assembling a team of **highly skilled and collaborative professionals**. Each member should work seamlessly with the rest of the team to bring your vision to life.



Typically, residential designers and architects serve as project leaders, guiding the process from concept to completion. Those with decades of experience in the industry can often recommend builders who are **highly skilled and reliable** as well as the right fit for your **unique personality and project needs**.



Choosing the **right builder** is crucial for keeping your project **on track, on time, and within budget**. A great builder follows **best practices** that emphasize **quality, safety, comfort, and long-term durability**, safeguarding one of your most significant investments—especially if it's your **family home or legacy property**.

# Expert Guidance You Can Trust

With nearly **40 years of experience** in home design, I've dedicated myself to elevating the standards of custom home design, constantly **improving the industry** and the **quality of life** for the homeowners I serve.

Over the years, I've partnered with a select group of **high-quality custom builders** in North Carolina, carefully vetting each one to ensure they deliver **exceptional craftsmanship** tailored to every client's unique needs. When you work with us, you gain **exclusive access to our trusted Builders Guild**, complete with personalized recommendations.



However, if you'd prefer to explore other options, we've crafted a **comprehensive guide** to help you **select the ideal builder** for your project. Let's ensure you find a builder who truly understands your vision - so you can **come home to yourself** in spaces made just for you.

- *Jenny Pippin*

# How To Use This Guide

To ensure a **smooth and informed selection process**, go beyond the basics and ask **detailed, strategic questions**—all of which we've outlined in our **comprehensive Builder Questionnaire** below.



You can use this guide to **interview builders directly** or send it to them to complete.

This will give you the clarity and confidence needed to **choose the right builder for your project!**



# Builder Questionnaire

## CONTACT INFO

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| BUILDER'S NAME                     |  |
| BUILDER'S COMPANY NAME             |  |
| BUILDER'S ADDRESS                  |  |
| PHONE NUMBER                       |  |
| WEBSITE                            |  |
| EMAIL ADDRESS                      |  |
| TYPE OF LICENSE                    |  |
| LICENSE NUMBER                     |  |
| PROJECT MANAGER'S NAME AND CONTACT |  |

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT & TIMELINE

What is your typical project timeline for the size home we desire to build, and how do you ensure you meet deadlines?

How do you manage and communicate delays, and how do you ensure timely completion?

Will I have a dedicated project manager or team for my home? If so, how many projects does each project manager handle at the same time?

How frequently are you and/or the project manager on-site each day or week?

BUDGET & COST CONTROL

How do you handle budgeting, and how do you ensure that the project stays within budget?

How do you handle cost overruns or unforeseen expenses?

Will you provide a detailed breakdown of the budget, including all potential hidden costs?

Are you available to review our plans prior to completion of construction drawings to provide cost-saving suggestions ?

WARRANTY, INSURANCE & AFTERCARE

What warranties do you offer on the home and the materials used?

Do you provide post-construction support or maintenance services?

How do you handle repairs or issues that arise after construction is completed?

Can you provide a certificate of insurance for the following (Yes/No):

|                        |  |                       |  |
|------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| General Liability?     |  | Errors and Omissions? |  |
| Worker's Compensation? |  | Installation Floater? |  |
| Business Interruption? |  | Umbrella Liability?   |  |

## DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

How do you collaborate with architects and designers during the design phase?

What is your process for managing custom or unique materials?

How do you handle design changes and change orders during construction?

## QUALITY & CRAFTSMANSHIP STANDARDS

What quality control processes do you have in place during construction?

How do you ensure the highest level of craftsmanship and finish in the work?

## SUSTAINABILITY & LAND CONSIDERATIONS

What experience do you have with sustainable building practices or green architecture?

Do you work with specialized contractors for eco-friendly systems?

What's included in the 'clearing' of the land (e.g.) trees, brush, limbs, soil?

Do you have a system for preserving soils on site?

What is your system for tree preservation during construction?

COMMUNICATION & CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

How will you communicate with me throughout the build process and how often?

How would a disagreement or conflict with your team be addressed, if one arises?

Are you accustomed to working on renovation projects while the homeowners are living in the home?

If so, how do you handle privacy and security issues?

REPUTATION AND LEGAL STANDING

Do you have any active or past legal disputes related to construction projects?

REFERENCES

Please provide client reference contacts from the past year:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Client 1 |  |
| Client 2 |  |
| Client 3 |  |

Can I visit any current or past projects?

If yes, please provide the names and addresses of homeowners:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Project 1 address |  |
| Project 2 address |  |
| Project 3 address |  |



# NEXT STEPS



## 1. Hire Designer FIRST!

The KEY to success is hiring a Residential Designer or Architect FIRST! They'll create detailed plans that guide builders and ensure your vision is clearly understood. Strong collaboration between your designer and builder is essential - ask about their previous experiences working together.

Pippin Home Designs offers the expertise and resources to skillfully design a home that bridges the gap between where you are now and where you want to be — a home that harmonizes with your land, supports your vision, and enhances your life.

## 2. In-Person Interview

Schedule an in-person meeting with the builder to complete the questionnaire. During the interview ask yourself the following:

- Do they feel like a good fit for me and my project over an 18-24 month time period?
- Are they able to listen and do I feel heard by them?
- Are they willing to collaborate and provide feedback?
- Do they seem genuinely interested in my project?





### 3. Site Visit

When you find a builder you like, visit a few of their completed projects and a few job sites currently under construction. Observe the condition of the site carefully and ask yourself:

- Is the site clean and safe to navigate?
- Are the plans easily accessible to all who need them?
- Are the vents, flooring, windows, and finishes being protected?
- Does the site look organized?

Our favorite builders protect their client's investment and follow builder's best practices.

### 4. Hire Builder of Your Choice

You're now equipped with all the information needed to confidently choose a builder who aligns with your vision, project goals, land, and budget. Congratulations! The time and effort you've invested in carefully evaluating your options will set the foundation for a successful partnership and a smooth building process.

