

New Construction – Timing and Early Stages

The time spent building a new construction home varies greatly. It will depend upon the size and complexity of the home, permitting time line, lot topography, degree of customization, availability of materials and subcontractors, and the weather. The builder will be able to give you an estimate based upon past experience with other similar homes.

Building stages in new construction are grouped into definite categories. Your involvement at each stage depends on where the home falls in the New Home Spectrum and at what stage the home is in when you enter into a contract.

The preliminary stage focuses on lot choice, lot reservation, financing, choosing a floor plan (or designing custom plans), selecting upgrades (or deciding on custom specifications), negotiating a price, and signing a final contract. No actual construction can begin before these items are completed. If the home is close to spec on the spectrum, this stage can be very short. If the home is to the custom end of the spectrum, this stage takes more time.

The contract-to-release stage is next. During this time, the builder will secure building permits, gather bids for septic and well if necessary, and pay utility tap fees. This period can be prolonged depending on the bureaucratic process in place within each municipality that issues a building permit. If the builder is not using a standard plan, an architect will draw up a final set of plans and specifications. These will be used by subcontractors during construction.

The last stage before construction will be final buyer approval of the project. You will sign off on the final plans and specifications and decide on lot placement for the home. If this is a spec home, these decisions may already be made. If this is a custom, then your input will be needed.