

Builder Interview & Comparison Checklist

For Custom Homes, Additions & Major Renovations

Alto66 Home Design Knowledge Base — KB-000007

Companion worksheet for interviewing and comparing prospective builders.

Project: _____

Property / Address: _____

Date started: _____

How to use this checklist

1. Verify the contractor before treating the company as a serious candidate.
2. Use the same core questions for every builder.
3. Write down what was actually said; do not fill gaps with assumptions.
4. Mark items that still need independent verification.
5. Compare project fit, team, capacity, communication, process, and contract clarity—not just price.
6. Treat unresolved legal, insurance, lien, or contract questions as issues to verify with the appropriate professional.

Suggested marks

☐ Verified

☐ Needs follow-up

☐ Concern

☐ Not applicable

This worksheet is educational. It does not certify a contractor, interpret a contract, verify insurance, provide legal advice, or guarantee construction performance.

Free PDF download. No email address required.

Pre-Interview Verification

Builder / Company: _____

Website / Phone: _____

Exact contracting entity: _____

Qualifier / licensed individual: _____

License number: _____

License classification: _____

Florida license and business identity

☐ Exact business entity confirmed

☐ Individual qualifier confirmed

☐ License number confirmed

☐ Relevant classification reviewed

☐ Current status reviewed

☐ Business name and qualifier relationship make sense

Notes: _____

Complaint / discipline / public-record review

☐ DBPR public complaint/discipline information reviewed

☐ DBPR unlicensed-activity search reviewed if relevant

☐ Local building-department/public-record follow-up considered if relevant

Important: public complaint information may be incomplete and is not a quality score.

Notes: _____

Insurance

☐ Current insurance evidence requested

☐ Carrier / policy information recorded

☐ Current coverage independently verified with insurer where appropriate

Do not assume an active license proves current insurance coverage.

Notes: _____

Basic business research

☐ Recent comparable projects identified

☐ References provided

☐ Written proposal / scope information available

☐ Company history / ownership understood

☐ Major unresolved identity or verification questions listed below

Questions / concerns to resolve before interview:

Official Florida starting points

DBPR license search: <https://www.myfloridalicense.com/portalsearches/VerifyLicensee?mode=0>

Florida Attorney General contractor guidance:

<https://www.myfloridalegal.com/consumer-protection/how-to-protect-yourself-contractors>

Builder A Interview Sheet

Builder / Company: _____

Interview date: _____

People present: _____

Project fit and experience

☐ Recent comparable custom home / renovation / addition examples reviewed

☐ Experience matches project type, complexity, finish level, and site conditions

☐ Renovation/addition experience includes existing-condition and tie-in work when relevant

Questions

What recent projects are most comparable to ours?

What made those projects difficult, and how were those issues handled?

For renovations/additions: how do you protect existing work and handle concealed conditions?

Team, supervision and capacity

Who will be our day-to-day contact? _____

Project manager / superintendent: _____

How many concurrent projects will that person manage? ____

How often is that person normally on site? _____

How involved is the owner / qualifying contractor? _____

How are subcontractors selected and coordinated?

Communication and documentation

How often do formal updates occur? _____

What system tracks drawings, selections, questions and decisions?

Who can give / receive project direction? _____

How are urgent issues escalated? _____

Schedule and capacity

How is the project schedule developed and updated?

How are long-lead items and owner selections tracked?

How are delays and schedule changes communicated?

Pricing clarity

What drawings / specifications / assumptions is the proposal based on?

Major inclusions / exclusions / allowances still to clarify:

How will pricing be updated if scope or documents change?

Change orders

Who can request a change? _____

When is pricing provided? _____
Is written approval required before work proceeds? _____
How are cost and schedule effects documented? _____
How are concealed conditions / urgent changes handled?

Contract, payment, closeout and warranty

Payment structure / deposit questions: _____
Lien-release / subcontractor-payment process: _____
Punch-list / closeout process: _____
Warranty coverage / claim process: _____
Contract terms needing legal review: _____

Overall notes

Strongest evidence / fit: _____
Questions still open: _____
Concerns / follow-up: _____

Builder B Interview Sheet

Builder / Company: _____

Interview date: _____

People present: _____

Project fit and experience

☐ Recent comparable custom home / renovation / addition examples reviewed

☐ Experience matches project type, complexity, finish level, and site conditions

☐ Renovation/addition experience includes existing-condition and tie-in work when relevant

Questions

What recent projects are most comparable to ours?

What made those projects difficult, and how were those issues handled?

For renovations/additions: how do you protect existing work and handle concealed conditions?

Team, supervision and capacity

Who will be our day-to-day contact? _____

Project manager / superintendent: _____

How many concurrent projects will that person manage? ____

How often is that person normally on site? _____

How involved is the owner / qualifying contractor? _____

How are subcontractors selected and coordinated?

Communication and documentation

How often do formal updates occur? _____

What system tracks drawings, selections, questions and decisions?

Who can give / receive project direction? _____

How are urgent issues escalated? _____

Schedule and capacity

How is the project schedule developed and updated?

How are long-lead items and owner selections tracked?

How are delays and schedule changes communicated?

Pricing clarity

What drawings / specifications / assumptions is the proposal based on?

Major inclusions / exclusions / allowances still to clarify:

How will pricing be updated if scope or documents change?

Change orders

Who can request a change? _____

When is pricing provided? _____
Is written approval required before work proceeds? _____
How are cost and schedule effects documented? _____
How are concealed conditions / urgent changes handled?

Contract, payment, closeout and warranty

Payment structure / deposit questions: _____
Lien-release / subcontractor-payment process: _____
Punch-list / closeout process: _____
Warranty coverage / claim process: _____
Contract terms needing legal review: _____

Overall notes

Strongest evidence / fit: _____
Questions still open: _____
Concerns / follow-up: _____

Builder C Interview Sheet

Builder / Company: _____

Interview date: _____

People present: _____

Project fit and experience

☐ Recent comparable custom home / renovation / addition examples reviewed

☐ Experience matches project type, complexity, finish level, and site conditions

☐ Renovation/addition experience includes existing-condition and tie-in work when relevant

Questions

What recent projects are most comparable to ours?

What made those projects difficult, and how were those issues handled?

For renovations/additions: how do you protect existing work and handle concealed conditions?

Team, supervision and capacity

Who will be our day-to-day contact? _____

Project manager / superintendent: _____

How many concurrent projects will that person manage? ____

How often is that person normally on site? _____

How involved is the owner / qualifying contractor? _____

How are subcontractors selected and coordinated?

Communication and documentation

How often do formal updates occur? _____

What system tracks drawings, selections, questions and decisions?

Who can give / receive project direction? _____

How are urgent issues escalated? _____

Schedule and capacity

How is the project schedule developed and updated?

How are long-lead items and owner selections tracked?

How are delays and schedule changes communicated?

Pricing clarity

What drawings / specifications / assumptions is the proposal based on?

Major inclusions / exclusions / allowances still to clarify:

How will pricing be updated if scope or documents change?

Change orders

Who can request a change? _____

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Is written approval required before work proceeds? _____
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Contract, payment, closeout and warranty

Payment structure / deposit questions: _____
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Punch-list / closeout process: _____
Warranty coverage / claim process: _____
Contract terms needing legal review: _____

Overall notes

Strongest evidence / fit: _____
Questions still open: _____
Concerns / follow-up: _____

References & Project Visits

Builder / Company: _____

Reference 1

Name / project: _____

Phone / email: _____

Project type / completion date: _____

Ask:

☐ Did communication match what was promised?

☐ Were changes documented clearly?

☐ Was pricing / allowance information understandable?

☐ Were schedule changes communicated?

☐ Was the site organized and professionally managed?

☐ How was punch-list / closeout handled?

☐ How did warranty service go?

☐ Would you hire this builder again?

What would you do differently?

Notes: _____

Reference 2

Name / project: _____

Phone / email: _____

Project type / completion date: _____

Notes: _____

Completed project visit

Project: _____

Observe / ask about:

☐ Workmanship relevant to your priorities

☐ How materials/details have held up

☐ Homeowner comments on follow-through / warranty

Notes: _____

Active project visit

Project: _____

Observe / ask about:

☐ Jobsite organization

☐ Protection of existing work when relevant

☐ Coordination / sequencing

☐ Cleanliness and professional site management

Notes: _____

Patterns across references / visits:

Side-by-Side Builder Comparison

Use qualitative judgments and verified facts. Do not let a single total score hide a deal-breaker.

CATEGORY	BUILDER A	BUILDER B	BUILDER C
License / business verification	_____	_____	_____
Insurance verification	_____	_____	_____
Comparable project experience	_____	_____	_____
Renovation/addition fit*	_____	_____	_____
Named PM / superintendent	_____	_____	_____
Team capacity / workload	_____	_____	_____
Communication process	_____	_____	_____
Document / decision tracking	_____	_____	_____
Schedule-management process	_____	_____	_____
Pricing-scope clarity	_____	_____	_____
Allowances / exclusions clarity	_____	_____	_____
Change-order process	_____	_____	_____
References	_____	_____	_____
Project visits	_____	_____	_____
Contract clarity	_____	_____	_____
Payment / lien process clarity	_____	_____	_____
Warranty / closeout process	_____	_____	_____
Overall project fit	_____	_____	_____

*When applicable.

Major strengths

Builder A: _____

Builder B: _____

Builder C: _____

Major concerns / unresolved questions

Builder A: _____

Builder B: _____

Builder C: _____

Deal-breakers identified?

Builder A: _____

Builder B: _____

Builder C: _____

Price / proposal note

Do not treat the lowest number as automatically best. Confirm that the proposals rely on sufficiently comparable scope, drawings, selections, allowances, exclusions and assumptions. Detailed bid normalization is a separate analysis.

Final Decision Notes — Before Signing

Preferred builder / finalist: _____

Decision date: _____

Before signing

- ☐ Contracting entity matches the party I evaluated
- ☐ License / status rechecked
- ☐ Current insurance evidence rechecked
- ☐ Final scope and exclusions understood
- ☐ Major allowances and unresolved selections understood
- ☐ Payment schedule understood
- ☐ Change-order procedure understood
- ☐ Schedule assumptions understood
- ☐ Project-management / communication structure understood
- ☐ References and project examples reviewed
- ☐ Warranty / punch-list / closeout process understood
- ☐ Lien-release / payment questions resolved
- ☐ Legal questions sent for attorney review where appropriate
- ☐ Other professional / consultant questions resolved where appropriate

Questions still open

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Why this builder appears to fit the project

What could still change the decision

Final notes

Florida legal / consumer-protection note

Florida contractor licensing, construction-contract, payment and lien issues can be legally significant. This checklist provides general educational prompts only. It does not interpret your contract, determine lien exposure, certify insurance, or substitute for advice from a qualified Florida attorney or other appropriate professional.

Authoritative starting points

Florida DBPR: <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/construction-industry/>

Florida Attorney General contractor guidance:

<https://www.myfloridalegal.com/consumer-protection/how-to-protect-yourself-contractors>

Florida Statutes Chapter 713:

https://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0700-0799%2F0713%2F0713.html

Additional Notes
