



# HOME DESIGN CHECKLIST:

*From Concept to  
Construction*

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# Choosing the Right Path Forward

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Planning a home is one of the most significant investments you will ever make.

But before getting lost in floor plans and materials, the most important step in planning your home is deciding the best design route for your lot, budget, and lifestyle.

Do you need a head-start with one of our [Signature Plan](#), or a completely [Custom Design](#) built from scratch?

This checklist is divided into two phases to help you make that decision:

## PHASE 1:

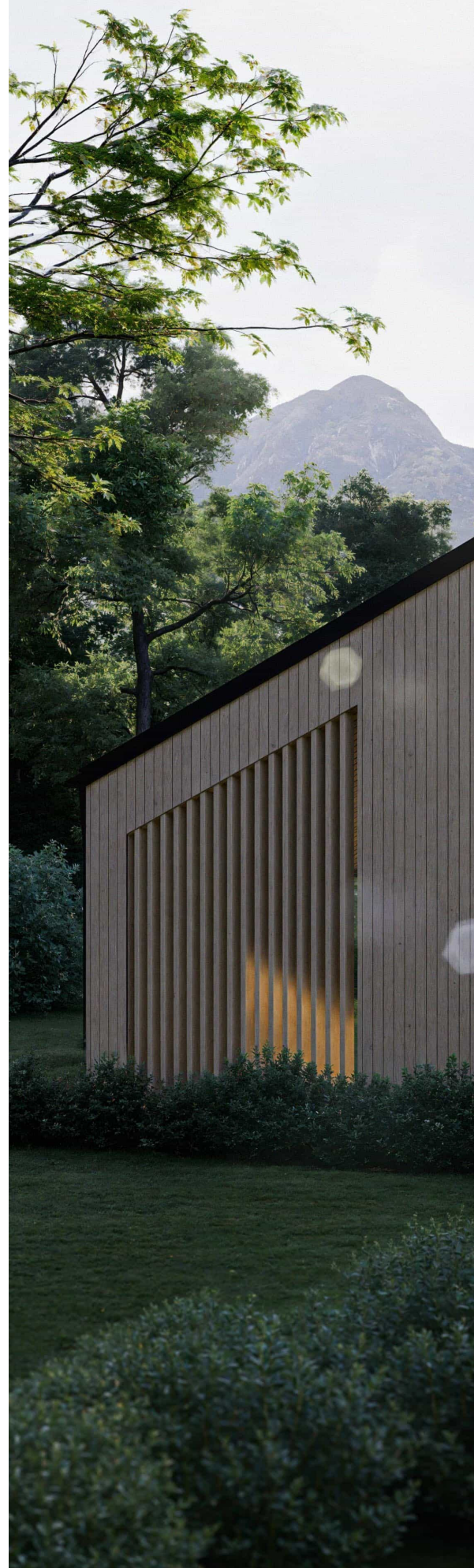
### Choosing Your Starting Point

Evaluate your specific needs to determine which design route best fits your goals.

## PHASE 2:

### The Design Journey

Learn the essential steps needed to reach a finalized design that is perfected to your vision.



# Assessing Your Lot and Location

The physical characteristics of your building site will heavily influence your design path. Review the statements below to understand how your land dictates whether a pre-designed Signature Plan or a Custom Design is your best option:



- ☐ **Standard Lot Conditions:**  
My building site is relatively flat with typical dimensions and setbacks.  
**Best for: Signature Plan**
- ☐ **Flexible Placement:**  
My lot allows a home to be placed in multiple orientations without strict zoning restrictions.  
**Best for: Signature Plan**
- ☐ **Challenging Terrain:**  
My land features steep slopes, waterfront boundaries, or uneven ground.  
**Best for: Custom Design**
- ☐ **Specific Views or Sunlight:**  
I want to position windows and outdoor spaces to capture unique views or maximize natural light.  
**Best for: Custom Design**
- ☐ **Strict Local Zoning:**  
My lot is subject to strict Homeowner Association guidelines or unique footprint restrictions.  
**Best for: Custom Design**

## Balancing Time and Investment

The time and financial investment you are ready to make will help clarify your ideal design path. Review the statements below to see which approach best aligns with your project timeline and budget:

☐ **Fast-Track Timeline:**

I want to skip the initial conceptual phases and move toward a buildable plan as quickly as possible.

**Best for: Signature Plan**

☐ **Flexible Schedule:**

I am in no rush and have the necessary time to dedicate to a comprehensive, multi-phase design process.

**Best for: Custom Design**

☐ **Cost-Effective Design:**

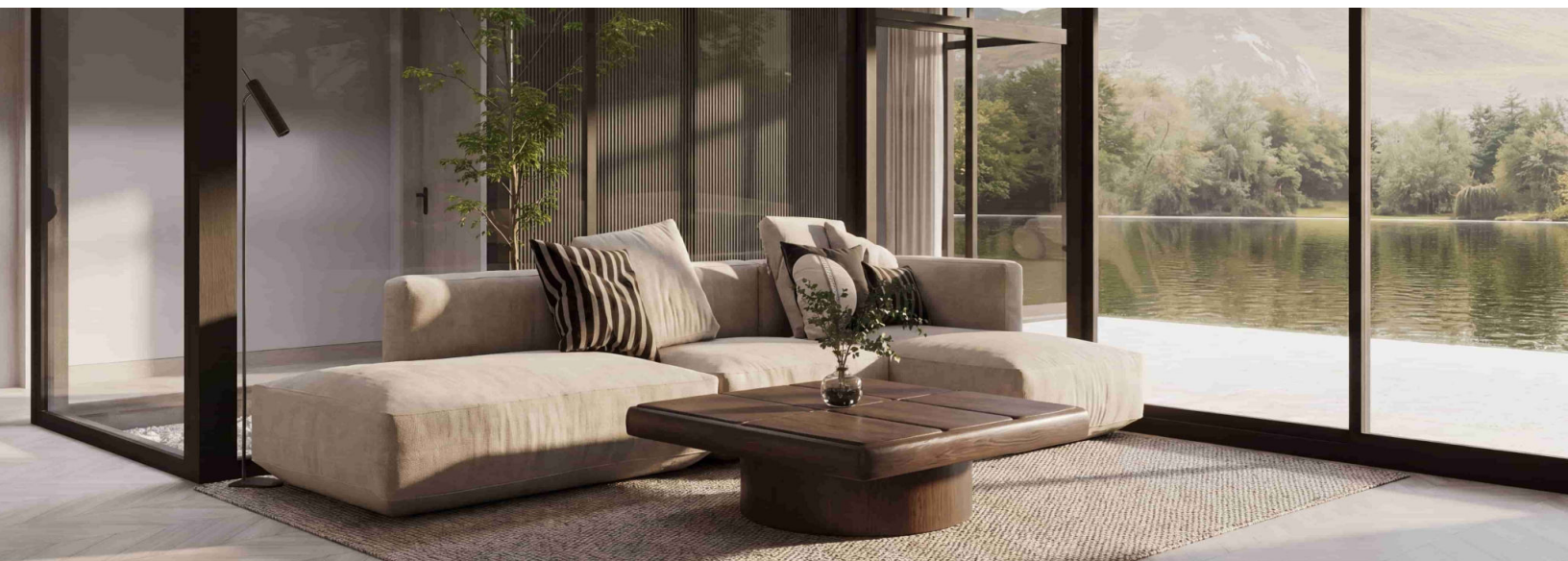
I prefer to minimize upfront architectural costs by starting with a pre-designed layout.

**Best for: Signature Plan**

☐ **Unrestricted Vision:**

I am prepared to invest in a blank canvas approach to ensure every single detail is uniquely tailored to my exact lifestyle.

**Best for: Custom Design**



# Defining Your Vision

Your daily routines and personal aesthetic play a huge role in choosing your design path. Review the statements below to see if your vision aligns best with modifying an existing layout or creating something entirely new:

- ☐ **A Strong Starting Point:**  
I have browsed the Nordic Home Plans collection and found a design that already closely matches my needs.  
**Best for: Signature Plan**
- ☐ **Visual Guidance:**  
I prefer to compare different finished concepts to help me picture my future home rather than starting from a blank page.  
**Best for: Signature Plan**
- ☐ **Highly Specific Needs:**  
I have unique lifestyle requirements, specialized hobbies, or specific room relationships that standard layouts usually do not accommodate.  
**Best for: Custom Design**
- ☐ **A Unique Statement:**  
I want my home to be a completely original architectural expression that is created explicitly to my family and exists nowhere else.  
**Best for: Custom Design**



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# Determining Your Ideal Starting Point

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Now that you have evaluated your building site, budget, timeline, and personal vision, count your checkmarks to reveal the design path that makes the most sense for your new home:

## Mostly Signature Plan

Your lot, budget, and lifestyle align smoothly with a pre-designed layout. Starting with a [Signature Plan](#) saves significant time and upfront investment, while still allowing our team to make targeted refinements for your specific property.

## Mostly Custom Design

Your land features challenging terrain or strict zoning, you prefer a unique architectural aesthetic, or your lifestyle requires specialized room relationships. Starting with a [Custom Design](#) ensures that every architectural and structural decision is made specifically to suit your property and daily routines.

## An Equal Split

You value the efficiency of a pre-designed layout but have a few specialized site or lifestyle requirements. Because the Signature Plans are adaptable, our team can often customize an existing layout to solve your unique challenges without adding significant time to the planning process.

Whichever starting point you choose, the planning milestones ahead remain the same. In **Phase 2**, discover the essential steps that await you as your concept develops into construction.



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# STEP 1.

## The Architectural Concept

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Once you have chosen your path, the design process officially begins. Whether you are modifying a Signature Plan or starting a Custom Design, make sure you receive these foundational elements to establish the layout and look of your home:

- ☐ **Detailed Floor Plans:**  
Look for clear layouts of every level, showing exact room dimensions, door placements, and the overall flow of the living spaces.
- ☐ **Exterior Elevations:**  
Ensure you receive visual representations of the home from all four sides to fully understand heights, rooflines, and exterior material finishes.
- ☐ **Section Drawings:**  
Verify that vertical cutaway views are included to show how different levels interact and to illustrate specific ceiling heights.
- ☐ **Adaptable Files:**  
Confirm that the initial conceptual design files can be easily modified and refined as you work with the team to perfect the layout.



## STEP 2.

# Comfort and Climate

A well-designed home should feel as good to live in as it looks on paper. Planning for indoor comfort and energy efficiency requires careful attention from the very beginning. As your initial design concepts are developing, make sure these foundational performance factors are leading the way:

- ☐ **Smart Solar Orientation:**  
Positioning living areas and window glazing to capture sunlight in the winter while protecting against overheating in the summer.
- ☐ **High-Performance Insulation:**  
Designing a continuous, well-insulated building envelope calculated to your local climate zone to keep energy bills low year-round.
- ☐ **Fresh Air and Ventilation:**  
Planning for modern mechanical ventilation systems that constantly circulate fresh, filtered outdoor air while keeping your indoor temperatures stable and comfortable year-round.
- ☐ **Durable, Healthy Materials:**  
Selecting low-emission interior finishes and exterior materials built to withstand the elements with minimal long-term maintenance.



## STEP 3.

# 3D Design Review

Seeing your ideas take shape is one of the most exciting parts of the design journey. Before locking in your final design, it is crucial to review 3D models to ensure every detail matches your expectations. Make sure your design process includes:

- ☐ **Comprehensive Exterior Views:**  
Review realistic renderings of the home from multiple angles to confirm the rooflines, window placements, and exterior elements are exactly what you want.
- ☐ **Interior Space Evaluation:**  
Navigate through a virtual model of your layout to experience the flow of the rooms, ceiling heights, and natural light patterns before construction begins.
- ☐ **Proactive Design Adjustments:**  
Utilize the 3D model to experiment with different design elements, making visual changes early in the process to avoid costly mistakes on the building site.
- ☐ **Material Visualization:**  
Ensure the 3D renderings reflect your chosen exterior and interior finishes to help you confidently approve the final aesthetic.



## STEP 4.

# Design and Engineering

A beautiful design must be supported by sound engineering. Whether you have your own local engineer or need us to connect you with one, this crucial step ensures your home is safe, compliant, and perfectly adapted to your specific site. Make sure your design process includes:



- ☐ **Local Code Compliance:**  
Collaboration with a local professional who understands your specific regional building codes, climate requirements, and soil conditions.
- ☐ **Comprehensive Structural Plans:**  
The development of detailed structural drawings that cover foundation systems, roof framing, and load-bearing requirements.
- ☐ **Effective Collaboration:**  
A coordinated effort between the architectural and engineering teams to guarantee the structural elements do not compromise your overall design vision.
- ☐ **Permit-Ready Documentation:**  
The creation of all necessary technical files required by your local municipality to guarantee a smooth building permit application process.

## STEP 5.

# Finalizing for Construction

The final step of the design journey is ensuring you have everything needed to confidently break ground. Before construction begins, your final blueprint package must provide all the necessary technical details for your builder and local authorities. Check that your final deliverables include:

- ☐ **Detailed Material Specifications:**  
Ensure the final plans include precise material callouts and finish details to help your builder provide accurate cost estimates and timelines.
- ☐ **Energy and Sustainability Guidelines:**  
Verify that the plans incorporate specific insulation details and energy efficiency strategies engineered for your climate and local regulations.
- ☐ **Complete Permit Documentation:**  
Confirm that the final package combines all architectural layouts and structural engineering details required for a successful building permit application.
- ☐ **Ongoing Expert Access:**  
Make sure that your design agreement includes ongoing access to the architectural team to answer questions and clarify technical details for your general contractor during construction.





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# Next Step Toward Your New Home

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You now know exactly what it takes to bring your future home to life.

Whether your checklist results pointed you toward the quick start of an adaptable Signature Plan or the blank canvas of a full Custom Design, you are ready for the next step.

Our team is here to take over the heavy lifting, ensuring your vision is backed by expert architectural design and local structural engineering. Lets get started!

## Book Your Free Design Call

The most effective way to start is with a structured, 30-minute conversation with our design team. We will discuss your lot, budget and timeline, and help you determine your next steps.

[BOOK A DESIGN CALL](#) 

## Not Ready for a Call Yet?

If you want to explore our pre-designed plans before speaking with our team, browse our complete online catalog at your own pace.

[BROWSE SIGNATURE PLANS](#) 