



Builder Interview Cheat-Sheet

Land the perfect builder without sitting through pushy sales pitches.

01. How to Use This Guide

1. Print one copy for each builder you're considering.
2. During your first meeting or site tour, ask the **10 questions** below and jot answers in the blanks.
3. After the meeting, mark each answer in the **Builder Scorecard** (✓ = Meets, ✗ = Doesn't, ? = Unclear)
4. When you've met at least three builders, compare scorecards—patterns jump out fast.

The 10 Must-Ask Questions

#	Question	Answer
1	Can I walk to my current jobsite today?	
2	What's your average build timeline from permit to punch-out?	
3	List three recent clients I can call—unfiltered.	
4	How many builds are you juggling right now?	
5	What's included as a true spec and what's considered an upgrade ?	
6	How do you handle change orders and their fees?	
7	Which trades are in-house vs. subcontracted?	
3	How often will I get schedule updates?	
4	What new-build warranty do you provide, in writing?	
5	If delays happen, how is the timeline—and my cost—protected?	

Builder Scorecard (copy this grid for each builder)

Criteria	Meets	Doesn't	Unclear	Notes
Clean, organized jobsite				
Realistic timeline				
Transparent spec vs. upgrade list				
Recent client references				
Clear change-order process				
In-house trade control				
Prompt communication plan				
Written warranty terms				
Delay/cost protection				
Overall fit				

Quick Glossary: Spec vs. Upgrade

Term	Meaning
Spec (Specification)	A feature included in the base price (e.g., standard cabinets).
Upgrade	Anything that costs extra above the base spec.
Allowances	Dollar amounts set aside for items you'll choose later (lighting, flooring).
Change Order	Written approval for work added or altered after the contract is signed.
Punch-Out	Final fix-list before closing; builder corrects all noted issues.

02. Why This Matters

Dubuque's new-construction market is booming—and quality varies wildly. Asking pointed, fact-based questions exposes red flags long before you sign a contract. A structured scorecard keeps emotion out of the decision so you don't end up with delays, surprise fees, or workmanship regrets.

03. Next Step: Get Expert Help

Ready for a second set of eyes?

Book a quick 15-minute call with 11:11 Realty. We'll review your scorecards, share insider builder intel, and map your next move—no sales pressure, just clarity:

1111realty.house