

Trends in Home Construction

By ALEX MASON | Green Shoot Media

Every new generation wants to build the better mouse trap, and the home building business is leading the way.

Traditional home construction has its place with style, grace and aesthetic beauty, but older homes sometimes fail to meet the needs of today's savvy buyer.

Prime home buyer concerns have been collected and calculated by the construction industry to assist in building a better home product. Wrap-around comfort and energy-efficient accommodations are the trends, and they are offered at a fair price when compared to updating an older home.

THE BASICS

Newer homes typically are oriented with an open floor plan that flows from the main living areas.

Vaulted ceilings lift the living space to new heights with spacious dimensions that add a sense of more square footage. Cramped quarters are out, and freedom of motion is in.

Many newly constructed houses have incorporated a larger laundry space either into the home interior or by enlarging the garage to accommodate a full sized washer and dryer with a generous cabinet area.

Regardless of the bedroom and bathroom count in the home, utility spaces are easily incorporated into smaller homes and remain a front-running selling feature.

KITCHENS

A wide and easy-access kitchen is one of the first things a buyer will evaluate about the property. This is not simply an issue for the cook in the family, as everybody in the household will spend a considerable amount of time at the kitchen table.

The counter space may be



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Popular amenities in today's buyer's market include laundry rooms with plenty of space and storage.

granite, tile or laminate, just as long as there is plenty of it. Extra outlets are appreciated, and a deep closet or pantry shelves mean serious storage capacity.

GOING GREEN

The buzz word today is "green," and finer newly constructed houses have mastered this art to perfection.

Energy-saving home features include alternative energy resources that not only protect the environment but also keep energy costs down. Solar paneling and wind generation power, along with a combination of other money-saving strategies, are expected from the modern home.

Ask your builder to double up on the insulation, add rubber stripping beneath the doors and opt for heavy glazed windows to keep the air temperature comfortable.

CREATURE COMFORTS

Let builders entertain you with a variety of media perks to woo and court the fussiest buyer. Home theater rooms are no longer a luxury, but rather are becoming the norm.

In addition, built-in sophisticated security systems add a special touch to set the property apart from the pack. Not to be neglected is the outdoor living space that, when carefully planned, can pro-

vide a backyard entertaining area with or without a pool.

A covered patio, mixture of concrete and greenery and a privacy wall can contribute a lot to the sale of a home.

NEVER SETTLE

When purchasing a new construction home or building your own dream home from scratch, be sure to factor in the key components that make your house a home.

Whether you are searching for an economical 1,200 square feet or several thousand square feet of sumptuous living space, the layout and design should reflect your lifestyle.

In today's competitive market,

REAL ESTATE 101

Plan Your New Home with Social Media

These websites are great places to research, organize and share your ideas for your new home:

■ **Houzz.com:** Browse photos of all types of home features, find local construction professionals, see virtual tours of homes, and hit the message boards for advice from fellow homeowners.

■ **Pinterest:** Search fellow pinners' boards and compile your own. Pin everything from floorplans to fixtures.

buyers get what they want instead of taking what they get. The right home for you will have that special look and feel that delivers a custom fit for flow, design and practicality.

We are all as different and unique as our fingerprints, and your dream home should fit you like a glove.

Take your time and shop the market for all the perks and perfections that your home buying budget can buy.



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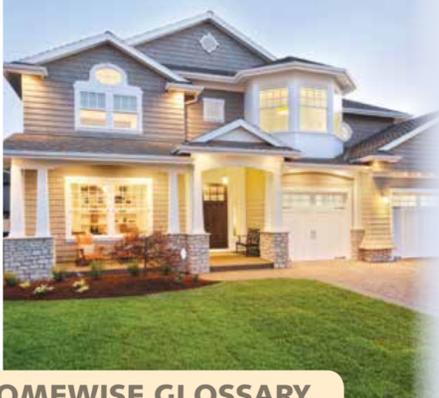
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HOMESWISE GLOSSARY

National Green Building Standard (NGBS): A consensus standard that was co-developed by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and the International Code Conference (ICC). The NGBS is the only ANSI-recognized green rating system for residential buildings. The NGBS can be used to rate single-family and multifamily homes, residential remodeling projects and site-development projects and still allow for the flexibility that is required for regionally appropriate best green practices.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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