

GATHERING ESTIMATES

Comparing estimates: questions to ask

Ask each builder the same questions and write down what you hear. The answers often explain why the numbers differ. If your plans aren't finished yet, expect a budget range rather than a fixed price, and ask how it will be refined as the design comes together.

Question	Builder name _____	Builder name _____	Builder name _____
01 Was this estimate built from finished plans or an early design, and how will it be refined?			
02 What assumptions are included in this estimate?			
03 What isn't included that could affect the final cost later?			
04 How do you handle unforeseen conditions if they're uncovered during construction?			
05 Based on your experience, where do you see the biggest unknowns in this project?			
06 What would trigger a change order?			
07 How are allowances determined?			
08 If something changes, how and when will additional costs be communicated?			

The number is important. But so is understanding how the builder arrived at it, and how they'll work with your design team to get there.

A few more things worth asking

You don't need to ask every one of these. Start with what matters most for your project.

Question	Builder name	Builder name	Builder name
WORKING WITH YOUR DESIGN TEAM			
How early do you get involved with the architect or designer, and how do you work together?			
If we don't have a design team yet, can you help us find the right fit?			
WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE			
Who is responsible for permits, and is that cost included?			
Which products and materials are priced, and which are placeholders until selections are made?			
Who handles cleanup, debris removal and protecting the rest of the home?			
Are there markups or fees on changes, and how are they calculated?			
SCHEDULE AND PAYMENT			
When could work start, and how long is the project expected to take?			
What could affect that timeline, such as permits, material lead times or weather?			
What is the payment schedule, and what is each payment tied to?			
How much is due before work begins?			
EXPERIENCE AND PROTECTION			
Can you show proof of license and insurance?			
What warranty covers the work, and how do I request service?			
Can I speak with past clients who had projects similar to mine?			

Still early in the process? We'd be glad to talk through your ideas and help bring the right people to the table.

hello@cheramybuilders.com