

## specs checklist

Specifications compliment a set of construction drawings as the written description of work to be performed on a project. The commercial construction industry has a standardized format but the residential industry does not. As a result, nearly every residential project has uniquely formatted written requirements if they exist at all. Be aware that drawings by themselves are severely inadequate for creating an accurate estimate.

Good specifications should provide all the information required by the builder, the trade contractors and suppliers working on the project. Concise information supports accurate bidding, enhances communication, improves quality, expedites the time schedule and prevents mistakes.

Following is a list of everything that may be required but it's important to note that even the items that are not needed should be mentioned. This list should be reviewed with the builder prior to creating the specifications and providing a detailed estimate. The most common error in a construction budget is an omission. Overlooking something can result in expensive surprises.

Feel free to ask to see a copy of our 40-page specifications template.

### 0. Preliminary & Planning

Design / Drawings / Engineering / Interior Design / Landscape Design?  
Green & sustainable / Durable construction?  
Energy Efficiency / Water conservation?  
Environmental concerns / Indoor health?

### 1. General Conditions

Insurance - builder's risk / liability / homeowners?  
Temporary services - electric / water / security?  
Waste removal - dumpsters / recycling?

### 2. Permits Prep & Earthwork

Permits & fees - building permit / impact & connection fees?  
Utilities - sewer / water / septic / well / electric / natural gas?  
Surveys - existing / topo / trees?  
Site prep - clearing / demolition / soil testing / tree work?  
Earthwork - fill dirt / grading?

### 3. Foundation & Structural

Foundation - elevated / crawl space / monolithic / stemwall?

Slab - cracking / termites?

Exterior walls - CMU / ICF / wood frame?

Interior architectural details?

Trusses - bonus space / raised heel / roof load?

### 4. Mechanical & Equipment:

HVAC - efficiency / dehumidification / filtration / ventilation / zoning?

Plumbing - filtration / fixture allowance / manifold / softener / water saving?

Water heater(s) - electric / gas / solar / tankless / heat pump / recirculating?

Electrical - lighting control / generator / special needs?

Lighting & Fans - allowance / LED / recessed / lighting control?

Low voltage - automation / AV / network / security / theater / video?

Appliances - electric / gas / stove / oven(s) / refrigerator(s) / laundry / wine cooler?

Equipment - alternate energy / elevator / fireplace / generator?

### 5. Doors & Windows

Entry door(s) - single / double / arched / pivot / custom?

Exterior doors - French / sliding / folding / side garage?

Garage door(s) - metal / wood / glass / single / double / operator / backup / keypad?

Interior doors - MDF / wood / pocket / barn / painted / stained?

Door hardware - brand / color / lever / knob?

Windows - aluminum / vinyl / wood-clad / mitered glass / glass block?

Glass - single pane / double pane / low-e / tinted?

### 6. Shell enclosure:

Insulation - batt / blown / foam / rigid / sound control?

Drywall - details / smooth / textured / corners / wallpaper?

Porch ceilings - drywall / bead board / stucco / T&G?

Exterior cladding - stucco / siding / brick / stone?

Exterior details - chimney / moldings / foam / precast / shutters?

Soffits - aluminum / Hardee / stucco / T&G / corbels / exposed rafters?

Roofing - shingle / tile / metal / flat / waterproofing?

## 7. Finishes & Features:

- Bath Accessories - mirrors / shower glass / toilet accessories?
- Cabinets & countertops - builder / custom / door style / granite / solid surface?
- Painting - paint or stain trim / flat satin gloss / garage floor?
- Trim & millwork - base / casing / crown / sills / built-ins / beams / traditional / modern?
- Stairs & railings - treads / risers / handrails / traditional / modern?
- Shelving & storage - MDF / cabinets / stained / garage organizers?
- Tile - backsplash / counters / fireplace / showers / tubs?
- Flooring - carpet / tile / wood / stone / shoemolding?
- Miscellaneous options - aquarium / fireplace / wine cellar / wrought iron / shades?

## 8. Outdoor Living & Property:

- Balconies & decks - wood / stone / railings?
- Drainage & Gutters - drain piping / rainwater collection / gutters?
- Exterior options - boathouse / fountain / mailbox / summer kitchen?
- Fencing & walls - gates / garden / privacy / retaining / fencing?
- Screening - fixed / roll-up / pool enclosure?
- Swimming pool - deck / patios / equipment / spa / water features?
- Driveway & pavers - concrete / pavers / brick / turf?
- Landscaping - irrigation / well / lighting?
- Property maintenance - lakefront / mowing?

## 9. Completion & Closeout:

- Final Cleaning / Punch List
- Homeowners Manual / Demonstration
- Maintenance - service / concierge?
- Warranty - builder's / aftermarket?