



10 Tips to finding your Tiny Home Builder



Just because the Tiny Home industry has the most adorable home designs doesn't mean we have to go losing our minds and forget the reality of research and due diligence. Your dream Tiny home is a very important purchase. For some it may be the largest investment they'll make in a lifetime. You want to make sure the good vibes you feel with a builder will be there throughout the entire process.

#1 References - The Best way to know about a builder is how they worked with their past clients. Not all builders are going to give you a list of their past clients to call. But it's your right to ask for references. Do they have a testimonial /customer review page? Do they have any videos from happy past clients? Check out their Yelp review or check out the Better Business Bureau, google review, etc.

#2 Payments - How do they want you to pay? If you are getting a custom Tiny Home and it takes them more than 1 month to build then you will likely break out payments into progress payments. Often builders will buy all the materials upfront so they can get their orders in to better handle delays, so don't be shocked if they ask for 50% upfront. And they should not be shocked if you ask for proof and progress payments for the remaining 50%. If a custom tiny home builder wants you to pay for the entire build upfront, I'd walk away. Note: This may be different for companies that make models but I'd still push the payments.

#3 Design / Materials / Appliances - Be very clear on your design, where are the light switches and plugs going, what materials are you expecting to be in your home, are you expecting specific appliances? What are your specific kitchen cabinet design choices? Get it all in writing.

#4 Communications - How will you be communicating all your design choices? Be sure you are clear on how you are going back and forth with your communication...using Zoom, facetime, etc. is a great way to see your Tiny Home in progress.

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#5 Certification - Typically most Tiny Homes are built to the ANSI A 119.5 (RV park model) building standard. The most important part of this certification is the 3rd party inspector who verifies that your home was built to the ANSI standard. Experience Tiny Homes is an affiliate of Pacific West Associates who is a 3rd party verification service. For more information on why we recommend Pacific West over others verifiers please go to...

<https://www.experiencetinyhomes.org/certify-my-tiny-home.html>

#6 Delivery - If your home is being delivered by a professional transport company, get to know how your home is covered while in transport.

#7 - Contract - Make sure you have one from your Tiny Home builder. In this contract it should say what each of your responsibilities are. It should have the warranty information and what happens if something fails or needs to be fixed. Be sure to get all the warranty and paperwork for all the appliances.

#8 Visit the build - It is recommended to schedule an onsite visit once if not 2x during the build. If that is not possible then having access to timely live video, pictures and recorded video is an absolute must. The last thing you want to happen is for your home to be delivered and there be an issue that you now have to resolve and your builder is a couple states away.

#9 Trailer - The most important aspect of your Tiny Home is the trailer. It's the foundation of your home and needs to be built with quality. The axles and tires need to be rightsized for your Tiny Home design. If you don't know a lot about trailers (like most of us) make sure to ask your builder where they get their trailer from and why they selected the axles and tires they did. Make sure to have the discussion with your builder of how you will be registering your Tiny Home with the DMV and what paperwork will be provided.

#10 Solar Installation (if applicable) - If you are choosing to power all or some of your home with solar, then you must make sure your Tiny Home builder knows what they are doing. Typical electrical wiring for houses are not the same as electrical wiring from the panels to inverter. Make sure DC solar lines are suited for DC output and encased in metal conduit (especially if you have a wood structure home). Most important make sure whoever installs the solar knows what they are doing.

BONUS TIP: working with a consultant to support you through a builder analysis can take away a lot of the stress involved with having to do this on your own.