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## Building Success 101

*Q: What's the difference between an option and an upgrade?*

A: Options, also called standard options or specifications, are typically products or finishes (such as flooring or lighting) that are already included in the quoted, advertised, or negotiated price of a new home. Builders often allow buyers to choose among standard options to "customize" the new home. An upgrade (or upgraded option) is a more expensive and/or higher performing alternative beyond a standard option. The upgrade almost always adds to the cost of the house and may add to the time needed to complete it.

## Building is Better

Is it better to build a new home or remodel an older one? No one will be surprised to hear us argue that building a new home is the better choice, just as a remodeling contractor would argue the opposite.

So, with our professional bias disclosed, here are some totally objective reasons why we believe buying a new home provides greater benefits than remodeling.

**Better Construction.** Today's new homes, specifically those offered by a professional builder dedicated to high performance and durability, are better built than those of even a decade ago, and much better built than those of a generation ago.

In every aspect, from windows and doors to structural and mechanical systems, a new home today is built to deliver a higher, more integrated level of comfort, convenience, flexibility, and efficiency. As a result, a new home stands up better to inclement weather conditions, requires less maintenance, and costs less to heat and cool than an existing home. Even when older homes are upgraded with new products and systems, the outdated structural and mechanical elements cannot integrate these products for their optimum performance.

**Lifestyle Flexibility.** New homes are designed to accommodate changing lifestyles and household circumstances. Open floor plans with bonus or extra rooms enable homeowners to use and re-use spaces as home offices, nurseries, in-law suites, art studios, or workshops to suit practical needs and whimsical passions throughout the life of the home.

By contrast, home remodeling is typically done to address an immediate need, such as making room for an in-home business or an elderly parent, which may not suit a future need or stage in life. New homes are designed and equipped to allow the owners to age in place. This type of design is the owners' best insurance against the need for future big remodeling projects or moves to another home.

**Financial Stability.** Because of their superior construction and lifestyle flexibility, new homes hold their value better than older ones, especially those that have not been remodeled to modern standards. Even the older home that has been well remodeled to accommodate a specific need --

such as the room for the in-home business or elderly parent -- will not appeal to future buyers who don't share the same household circumstances. By contrast, a well-designed and built new home will appeal to a large population of potential buyers, if and when that time comes. At the very least, the new home will show a greater increase in value because of its mass appeal.

**Pride in Ownership.** Whether you buy a new home or remodel your existing home, you are a homeowner. However, a new home differs from an older home because of the choices that professional builders allow the new owner to make. If you decide to build, you can suit your personal tastes and needs. When you tailor a new home from the ground up, you not only have the pleasure of achieving a 'perfect fit' but also the long-term satisfaction of having created a more satisfying, comfortable, and convenient home. The element of personal creativity adds great pride in ownership.

**The Hassle Factor.** Living through a remodeling project can be very stressful on a family's day-to-day routines. Although a new-home project presents some challenges, it is done without intruding on existing home life. New owners can relax (at least a little), maintain normal family life and enjoy the creative process instead of dreading the dirt and noise. With the right builder, visiting the new house under construction, witnessing its progress, and moving into a space in which everything is brand new is an exciting and fulfilling experience.

As a professional builder, we favor building a new home over remodeling an existing house and we believe that our preference is not mere bias. We think we have set out some persuasive and objective arguments to make our case!

Warm Regards,

*Todd*

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