

House Plan Check List

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The most important part of building a new home or addition is the *plans*. Complete, well prepared plans are always preferred by builders and subcontractors, bankers and appraisers. When the plans contain enough information, everyone has a better chance of doing a complete job.

Any plan that's prepared without the necessary information will almost surely yield unsatisfactory results. Cutting corners on plans for the sake of time or money is more like *house plan murder* than good economics.

This checklist contains the elements that should be included in a complete set of house plans. Covering these items in a set of plans will remove surprises and misunderstandings for you and your builder. Further, it is important to note that to obtain financing from FHA, VA or FmHA (Farmers Home) every item on this list must be included in the plans.

- 1. **Site plan: drawn at a scale of 1"=20' or larger**
 - a. location of house on property
 - b. driveway, all walkways, terraces & decks
 - c. all easements (*areas reserved for utilities & drainage*)
 - d. topographical information at corners of property & house, and arrows to indicate storm drainage (rain water runoff)
 - e. building lines
 - f. septic tank & drain field location and code compliance (if applicable)
 - g. well location and code compliance (if applicable)
 - h. for remodeling or additions, show the location of all existing structures including the driveway and other pavement.
- 2. **Specifications** — also called Description of Materials
 - a. soil test: for bearing capacity to determine foundation design (*This soil test information is not used to determine septic tank requirements. That's a percolation test.*)
 - b. percolation (perc) test: to determine septic tank workability and capacities (*perc test information cannot be used to determine foundation requirements*)
 - c. roof truss detail
 - d. model numbers or identification of appliances, plumbing fixtures, and other machinery to be included in the house.
 - e. floor covering code compliance
 - f. room finish schedule (*not a requirement but a preference*)
- 3. **Floor plan** (at least the following)
 - a. electrical code compliance
 - b. minimum room size compliance
 - c. interior storage (closets) compliance
 - d. kitchen standards compliance
 - (1) counter space requirements
 - (2) workability of appliance locations
 - e. door and window fire code compliance (egress)
 - f. sufficient dimensioning & labelling to facilitate construction
 - g. plumbing fixture clearances
- 4. **Cabinet elevations** and other interior views as needed
 - a. kitchen cabinets
 - b. bathroom cabinets
 - c. fireplace
 - d. built-in bookcases and desks
 - e. stairs
- 5. **Exterior elevations** (outside views)
 - a. at least 4 views & other views as necessary to show technical aspects of house such as:
 - b. exterior materials
 - c. roof slopes
 - d. overhangs
 - e. ventilation
 - f. chimney height
- 6. **Foundation plan:** to be designed in accordance with soil test results (see item 2a.)
- 7. **Cross sections & framing details:** should indicate wall and roof framing techniques for each different situation of bearing walls and beams.
- 8. **Duct route diagram** (duct plan)
 - Required for FHA, VA and FmHA
 - Not required for conventional financing*
- 9. **Heat loss/gain calculations:** ("j" form) determines BTUH capacity for heating/air conditioning system. Required for FHA, VA and FmHA.
 - Not required for conventional financing*
- 10. **Building Code Compliance & Certification:**
 - Certification that the plans meet the applicable building and energy codes. (*i.e. CABO and Model Energy Code.*)

