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AUSTIN NEW CONSTRUCTION BUYER BRIEF

BEFORE YOU VISIT THE MODEL HOME.

New construction has its own price stack, incentives, contracts, timelines, and inspection decisions. A little strategy before the sales office matters.

THE PURPOSE

Use this to understand the decisions that deserve attention before you register, choose upgrades, compare incentives, or sign a builder contract.

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THE FIRST VISIT MATTERS

Decide who is advising you before the tour.

The model home is still a sales environment. Clarify your representation, registration, and communication plan before the builder's process starts moving.

TEXAS 2026

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Written agreement before a residential showing.

Texas law now requires a written agreement before a license holder shows residential property, or before presenting an offer if there is no showing.

1 Your representation

A written agreement can establish representation or, in limited circumstances, a showing-only non-representation status. Representation is what allows your agent to provide advice and other brokerage services within the agreed scope.

2 The builder's sales process

Do not assume the on-site sales consultant is your buyer's agent. The sales office is there to sell the builder's homes, options, and programs. Ask who represents whom before relying on advice.

3 Registration

Builder registration and buyer-agent compensation policies vary. If you want your own agent involved, bring that agent into the process before you register or tour so the working relationship is clear from the beginning.

4 Your first comparison

Compare communities on all-in price, taxes, insurance, HOA or district obligations, lot, commute, completion timing, and what the incentive actually changes - not on the model-home finish package alone.

DIANA'S READ

Bring your own strategy into someone else's sales process.

The goal is not to make the builder adversarial. It is to make sure your decisions are being evaluated from the buyer side of the table.

Community comparison
All-in cost, location, timeline, restrictions, and resale flexibility.

Incentive math
Monthly impact, cash impact, and conditions attached to the offer.

Offer + contract process
Business terms explained; legal questions flagged for counsel when needed.

Inspection + closing coordination
Milestones, access, lender, title, walkthrough, and handoff kept visible.

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Base price is only the first line.

New construction can feel simple because everything is presented in one sales office. The math is still layered. Build the finished number before comparing communities.

Your builder price stack

ALL-IN PURCHASE / OWNERSHIP PICTURE

- Base price
- Lot premium
- Structural options
- Design selections / upgrades
- HOA / district / assessment costs
- Taxes + insurance
- Loan + closing costs

Watch the sequence. An upgrade can change the purchase price, financing, appraisal conversation, and cash required. Keep the current all-in number visible as selections change.

Incentives are math, not magic.

FINANCING INCENTIVE

Rate buydown or lender credit

Ask what the incentive changes in the payment, what it costs, whether it is temporary or permanent, and whether it depends on using a preferred lender.

CLOSING INCENTIVE

Closing-cost contribution

Ask which costs it can actually cover under your loan program and whether unused amounts disappear. Compare the effect on cash to close, not just the headline credit.

PRICE / PRODUCT INCENTIVE

Price reduction, lot, or upgrade credit

Ask whether the value is reflected in the contract price, selections, or another line item, and compare it with the alternatives you would choose without the promotion.

Four questions for every incentive

What does it reduce today? What does it change monthly? What is it tied to? What am I giving up to get it?

Build. Inspect. Verify.

The pretty part is the finished house. The important part is the paper trail, construction documents, deadlines, access, inspection strategy, walkthrough, financing, and warranty handoff that get you there.

01 Contract + construction documents

Confirm the property, plans/specifications, selections, price, deposits, deadlines, financing terms, and documents incorporated into the agreement. Read what you are actually being asked to sign.

02 Design + option deadlines

Track choice deadlines, change-order procedures, upgrade pricing, and when deposits or selections become difficult or impossible to change.

03 Construction milestones

Keep estimated completion timing separate from guaranteed contract obligations. Ask how schedule changes are communicated and what the contract says about delays.

04 Independent inspection strategy

Coordinate buyer-selected inspection access with the builder and contract. TREC's standard inspection SOP applies to substantially completed one-to-four-family homes; earlier phase-inspection scope can differ.

05 Final walkthrough + punch items

Document incomplete or damaged items, confirm agreed corrections, and distinguish cosmetic punch items from issues that need specialist or inspector attention.

06 Closing + warranty handoff

Confirm lender readiness, cash to close, possession, keys, manuals, warranties, service contacts, and the builder's process for post-closing warranty requests.

BEFORE YOU SIGN

Questions worth slowing down for.

Which contract and addenda am I signing?

Which plans, specs, options, and incentives are actually incorporated?

Which deposits are refundable or nonrefundable, and when?

What inspection and access rights are stated in the agreement?

What does the contract say about completion timing, changes, and delays?

What warranty, repair, and dispute procedures will apply after closing?

CURRENT TEXAS FORMS

TREC publishes separate New Home Contracts for incomplete and completed construction, both updated effective July 1, 2026. Do not assume every new-home transaction uses the same document set. Legal interpretation belongs with an attorney.

YOUR NEXT MOVE

Walk into the sales office with a plan.

A Buyer Planning Session gives you a buyer-side framework before the builder starts asking for registrations, selections, deposits, financing choices, or signatures.

01
Your representation plan
Who is advising you, what services are included, and what happens before the first showing.

02
Your builder shortlist
Communities compared on location, all-in price, timing, restrictions, and ownership costs.

03
Your price guardrail
Base price, lot, selections, incentives, and cash limits kept in one current number.

04
Your incentive comparison
A cleaner way to compare rate, closing-cost, price, and upgrade offers without chasing the headline.

NEW CONSTRUCTION PLANNING SESSION

Bring me the builder sheet before you sign it.

Send the community, floor plan, incentive flyer, or model-home link you are considering. We will map the questions worth asking and what should be verified next.

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MAKE AN APPT

Current public guidance referenced: TREC 2026 buyer written-agreement guidance; TREC New Home Contracts (Completed and Incomplete Construction), effective July 1, 2026; TREC Inspector Standards of Practice and consumer inspection guidance. Educational marketing material only - not legal, lending, tax, insurance, engineering, appraisal, or inspection advice.