

Step 3

Choose a Building Lot

What appeals to you? Sun exposure, level lot, sloped lot drive by access, location for a shed, etc? Check out the options and pick the one that best suits your needs.

Once you've settled on a housing subdivision or general area in which to build, personal preference goes a long way in choosing a lot. A lot that is close to a subdivision entrance will have more traffic noise than a lot on a cul-de-sac, but it offers quicker access in and out of the neighborhood. Secluded cul-de-sacs offer safety for families with small children, but their design makes snow removal difficult, and their wedge-shaped lots can have narrow front yards. If a lot is narrow at the front, a home's width may require placement farther back on the property. However, if you're considering a shed, or other structure, wedge-shaped lots that are wider in back can provide additional space.

Corner lots have traffic on two sides and are typically larger, requiring more landscaping and yard maintenance. If there are sidewalks on both sides, you've got more snow to clear in the winter. On the positive side, corner lots allow a side-load garage. They also bring higher visibility to a home, so you'll need a design with street appeal on two sides instead of just the front.

Lots at the end of a T-shaped intersection must contend with oncoming headlights from night time traffic. Homes on these lots should be designed to minimize unwanted light in living and sleeping areas.

Before proceeding, you should have chosen a house plan or have a good idea of the dimensions of the house you plan to build. Make sure the plan fits within the buildable area of the lot. Watch out for lots with rock outcroppings, embankments, or other physical characteristics that will reduce the buildable area. Check for unusual setback lines or utility easements. Easements usually run along one side of the lot. Consult with your builder or developer to check the location of easements.

Your lot's relationship to the sun can play a major role in how you live your new home. With southern exposure at the rear of the home a house could benefit from sunshine most of the day and allows you to enjoy your backyard. An eastern exposure takes advantage of morning sun, while a western exposure captures the afternoon sun.

