

New Home Construction Homebuyer's Guide & Tips for Planning

Customizing your home during the design stage of a new home provides several advantages. First, you can have your electrical wiring and components tailored to conform to both your current requirements and long term needs. Second, designing for your long term electrical wiring has a financial benefit, as installation is at its lowest cost if done during the build process. Third, all of the electrical wiring and boxes installed during the building of your home will be properly concealed, for the cleanest appearance.

We have provided the following tips for getting the most out of your home electrical design:

- 1. Room Layouts:** Imagine your furniture layouts for each room. Upon review of your standard electrical plan with your sales representative, you will see the approximate outlet locations. Based on your furniture placements, you might want to consider adding additional outlets for convenience. (Extension cords are helpful, but are a nuisance, and an eyesore.)
- 2. Home Offices & Entertainment Rooms:** For each room in your new home, you will want to plan for the electrical devices that will be used. We highly recommend that you include separate dedicated circuits in home offices and entertainment rooms, along with additional outlets to accommodate the extra devices. By customizing your electrical plan you may avoid the hassle of overloading your circuits and tripping breakers. You may also want to consider USB combination outlets, which include both standard power receptacles and USB charging ports in one unit.
- 3. Bedrooms & Rooms with Wall Mounted TVs:** If wall mounted televisions are not accounted for during the design, the solution is often the use of extension cords. We can prevent this problem by locating the outlet at the spot and height that the television will be mounted. This prevents unnecessary use of extension cords, and conceals the wiring for a cleaner look. We can also provide a "recessed" style outlet that will allow you to flush mount the television.
- 4. Garages, Utility Rooms, & Hobby Rooms:** Heavy power equipment, such as table saws, welders, air compressors, and car charging stations tend to use a significant amount of power. It is, therefore, important to account for the use of any such equipment in the design of your home. It is common to add refrigerators or stand alone freezers in utility rooms or garages. Such devices require dedicated circuits to avoid overloading and tripping existing lines. Discuss the use of these items with your sales associate to ensure that the electrical requirements will be met.
- 5. Exterior of your home:** Now its time to take a mental walk-through of the outside of your home. What lighting or equipment will be in use? The outlets that come standard are "convenience" outlets only. They may not be able to handle heavy loads. Examples of commonly installed items that usually have higher requirements are:
 - Holiday Lighting:** A separate circuit and additional outlets that are switched will allow for easy operation, expedient locations for connecting the lights, and a reduced risk of tripping the breaker.
 - Fountains:** Fountains that include a cleaning/pump system should be on a separate circuit to avoid tripping lines.
 - Future above ground spas, BBQ stations, & detached buildings:** Plan ahead by discussing with your sales representative any future additions. Adding circuits and sub-panels now could avoid complications when adding these items.

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6. **Kitchen & Bar area:** Modern kitchens tend to use an increasing number of high powered appliances. Some, such as instant, single-cup, coffee makers may require a separate circuit to avoid overloading the line and tripping the breaker. We highly recommend planning for future appliance purchases.

7. **Interior Home Lighting:** Lighting requirements will vary greatly depending on how each room will be used. There are a number of questions to consider when choosing the style and quantity of lighting used. "How bright do I want my kitchen and baths to be?" "Will my closets have enough light?" "Will I entertain guests in this room?" You will also want to think about the color temperature given by different types of lighting. This impacts the ambiance of the room. Your sales representative will explain what the "standard lighting" will be. Take the time to discuss how the rooms will be used and what your options are.

Family, Living Rooms & Dens/Study: Take furniture placement into account to determine if additional outlets are beneficial. For example, will you have a floor lamp? You can choose to have an outlet switched for lamps. Would an outlet in the floor be helpful? If so, the best time to install it would be before the foundation is poured. Digging up the concrete afterward is time consuming, messy, and expensive.

8. **Medical Equipment:** Many home medical devices draw a lot of power and, therefore, require dedicated circuits to avoid overloading issues. Even when medical equipment does not require much power, we recommend dedicated circuits to prevent power loss to the much needed devices in the event that another item causes a tripped breaker.