



Buyer's Guide to Building
YOUR DREAM BARN



QVC

QUARRY VIEW CONSTRUCTION, LLC

Building on Promises Kept



Whether you plan to build a horse barn for your equine friends or a barn workshop for your woodworking passion, you want a smoothly run project that takes your vision and transforms it into reality.

In this guide, you'll get the inside track on building details consumers often overlook as well as what to look for in a barn contractor.

◆ Create a barn wish list ◆

Wish lists aren't just for kids at Christmas. Avoid feeling “shoulda, coulda, woulda” after the barn is built by creating a list that outlines the structure's function and features as well as its look and feel.

Whether you want to include a rec room for the kids or construct a barn that matches your home's exterior, mapping out your needs in advance will save you time and money. In addition to space and function needs, consider these features:

Doors - From sliding wooden doors to charming Dutch doors, the right entrances/exits ensure your barn is safe and efficient while boosting its charm appeal.

Windows - Well-chosen windows do more than let in natural light; they also create better ventilation, which can lower energy costs.

Cupolas - Installing a cupola is about more than adding a dash of old-world charm. Along with providing a finished, decorative touch, the right cupola can increase air flow for a more energy efficient building.

Horse Stalls - If the barn will be home to your equine friends, you can choose from a variety of stalls. For example, European-style structures allow horses to better socialize with each other and human visitors. An experienced barn builder can often guide you to the safest, most efficient option for you and your horses—something a general contractor may not be able to help you with.

Additional Upgrades & Amenities - Whether you want recessed lighting in the barn's game room loft or ceiling fans to ventilate your woodworking shop, make a list of all the niceties that will make your new barn space everything you've dreamed.



↔ **Scope out utility needs** ↔

It's one thing to build a barn—it's another to build the perfect space you've always wanted. You want the structure to be functional and comfortable, which typically means considering utilities early in the planning process.

Electricity is often high on the needs list, regardless of the barn's function. You may need electricity to power lights, fans, or portable veterinary equipment, or perhaps to equip a full kitchen.

Water is another must-have for many new barns. You may need water hookups for things like faucets, hot water heaters, bathing stalls, bathrooms, or automatic waterers. If you add water hookups, you'll also need to consider factors like drainage and sewage.

↔ **Consider zoning and building codes** ↔

You could end up costing yourself lots of extra time, money, and frustration if you don't first check out local zoning and building codes. For example, zoning restrictions could limit the ability to include a living space in the barn or rent out the structure for events, like weddings.

Aesthetic considerations could be a factor, too. The town, borough, or township might dictate factors like the minimum/maximum roof slope or types of gutters allowed.

Depending on the jurisdiction, the barn plans may also require an architect's seal, so it's essential to partner with a barn builder able to obtain that certification so you stay compliant with local regulations.





◆ Tap a barn contractor's expertise ◆

If you're investing time and money to build your dream barn, it's worth it to look for a specialty barn builder rather than a general contractor. While general contractors may be able to plan and build a simple barn, they may not have the skills, expertise, and supply chain to construct a barn that combines charm and durability. For example, a skilled barn builder using old-world craftsmanship will understand how to create quality mortise and tenon joints or install standing seam roofing.

◆ Choose a barn builder who leverages modern tech tools ◆

Modern technology allows barn builders to plan and build with more accuracy, so you get the structure you want and deserve. This is true even when barn builders use old-world craftsmanship and attention to detail.

It might sound counter-intuitive, but technology is the perfect complement to the old-world craftsmanship a quality barn builder puts into every project. For instance, drones allow builders to collect aerial photos and video to assess a site before, during, and after the construction process.

Barn building specialists may also leverage the power of 3D modeling software. Model images of your barn project will give you a realistic view of the structure before construction, so you're less likely to scratch your head in confusion while looking at traditional architectural renderings. 3D models also eliminate guesswork from the building process itself, so crews can more accurately build according to your specifications.





◆ Don't go for the low-ball bid ◆

It doesn't matter whether you want a small barn to house your workout equipment or a large equestrian center, you want the best value for your money. It's natural for many consumers to gravitate toward a bid that appears easier on the bank account.

But if you want to make the most of your investment, it pays to look beyond the bottom line and consider the value a contractor will deliver throughout the life of the project:

- Will the crews be on time?
- Will the crews be respectful toward you—and your neighbors?
- Will they treat your property like it was their own?
- Can you trust the contractor to make good on errors?
- Will the contractor be able to handle change orders without giving you extra hassle or charging unreasonable overages?
- Will the contractor have your best interests at heart?

◆ Check out online reviews ◆

Unbiased online reviews are often as reliable as a word-of-mouth recommendation. Reviews and ratings on sites like Houzz, Facebook, and Angie's List can help you develop a better sense of whether a contractor is reputable.

Search for reviews that indicate the barn contractor performed the work on time and within budget. If the reviewer stated there were issues during the project, look for an indication the contractor took steps to correct the problem.

If you'd feel more comfortable getting additional information from a contractor's prior clients, never hesitate to ask directly for references. A reputable barn builder will be happy to provide them.

Ready to start your project? Be sure to keep the checklist on the following page handy.

Checklist: Potential Questions to Ask Before Hiring a Barn Builder

- ✓ Do you hold a valid contracting license?
- ✓ Can I see your insurance certificate?
- ✓ Will you send me references for similar projects?
- ✓ Do you offer a labor warranty?
- ✓ Can you check zoning regulations and obtain necessary permits, or am I responsible for that?
- ✓ Will I work with the same contact at your company from start to finish?
- ✓ Can we reduce costs by doing some of the work ourselves?
- ✓ Once building begins, how often will your team communicate with me?
- ✓ Will a supervisor be onsite every day?
- ✓ Can you take care of repairs in the future?



General resources used

Post-frame advantage

The chronicle of the horse