

THE NEW CONSTRUCTION

TRAP LIST



THE CHEAT SHEET: 10 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU SIGN

Take this with you to the model home. If they stumble on these answers, proceed with caution.

1. "When does my Earnest Money go 'Hard'?" (Goal: Find out when it becomes non-refundable. If it's immediate or less than 21 days, that is a high risk.)

2. "Is there a Financing Contingency, and how long does it last?" (Goal: Ensure it lasts long enough for your loan to be fully underwritten—ideally 30+ days.)

3. "What is the Lot Premium for this specific site?" (Goal: Separate the 'Base Price' from the 'Dirt Price' immediately.)

4. "Can I have a Pre-Drywall Inspection with my own private inspector?" (Goal: If they say "No" or "Only after we finish," that is a major red flag.)

5. "What are the HOA restrictions on renting?" (Goal: Protect your future resale value or ability to rent the home out later.)

6. "Are there any easements on this lot?" (Goal: Find out if a utility company can dig up your backyard or if you can't build a fence.)

7. "Is the Closing Date in the contract guaranteed?" (Goal: They will say "No," but ask "How much notice do you give for delays?" You need at least 30 days notice to adjust your own moving plans.)

8. "Does the preferred lender offer a float-down rate lock?" (Goal: If the build takes 10 months and rates drop, you want to be able to capture the lower rate.)

9. "What is included in the 'Standard' features vs. 'Upgrades'?" (Goal: Ask specifically about: Blinds, Refrigerator, Backyard Fencing, and Landscaping/Sprinklers. These are often excluded.)

10. "If I lose my job during construction, do I get my deposit back?" (Goal: The answer is usually "No," but asking it upfront clarifies the risk level.)

⚠ The "Red Flag" Zone Run (or call Irina) if you see these:

- Builder refuses to allow a private inspection.
- Earnest money is non-refundable immediately upon signing.
- Site agent says, "You don't need a Realtor, I can handle the paperwork for you."
- Price escalation clauses (Builder can raise the price after you sign).