

b

black ink
interiors

Design-Build for Profit
Designer's Guide

Jenny Slingerland

welcome
we are glad you're here!

goal of this course:

The goal of this course is to help you generate more income through new build and renovation projects.

what you will learn:

To understand the basic building processes, your roll as designer and what is expected of you by the builder. It will walk you through the selections and documentations, step by step. Through this documentation and creation of a specification book, you will have the tools you need to approach builders and clients confidently. It will also allow the builders to execute your designs and bring them to life.

Part 1 | Design-Build 101

- I* Who Are the Players.
- II* Getting Paid.
- III* Tracking Time.
- IV* Organization.
- V* Budget
- VI* Purchasing.
- VII* Finding Your Builder.
- VIII* Finding Your Architect.
- IX* Understanding Your Client.
- X* Understanding Their Style.

Part 2 | Making Selections

- I* Selections.
 - 1. Exterior Selections.
 - 2. Windows & Doors.
 - 3. Plumbing & Accessories.
 - 4. Appliances.
 - 5. Electrical, Lighting & Mirrors.
 - 6. Cabinetry.
 - 7. Millwork & Hardware.
 - 8. Flooring.
 - 9. Wall Tile.
 - 10. Countertops.
 - 11. Interior Paint & Wallcoverings.

Part 3 | Specification Book (aka "The Spec Book")

- I* Staying Organized.
- II* Create a Finish Schedule.
- III* How to Use Tags.
- IV* Include Specification Sheets.
- V* Finish Schedules.
- VI* Creating Elevations.
- VII* The Spec Book.

Bonus | Kitchen 101

- I* The Work Triangle.
- II* Lighting.
- III* Countertops.
- IV* Backsplash.

Bonus | Bathroom 101

- I* Tile.
- II* Lighting.
- III* Mirrors.
- IV* Benches & Niches.

Bonus | Flooring 101

- I* Tile.
- II* Wood.

part one

getting started

I think it is best for us to start with some basic information about the world of construction. For simplification purposes, I will refer to the projects in this course as “new-build” or “build,” unless I specifically say “remodel.” All the information in the course applies to remodels as well, but I will speak to new-builds for the majority of the course.

/ | Who Are the Players.

Let’s talk about the main players in a new-build.

1. The builder.
2. The architect.
3. The designer.

1. A **builder** is the contractor hired by the homeowner to build their home. Often a homeowner will begin their journey to a new home by first searching out a builder. They may then ask them for recommendations for an architect and designer. It’s always good to build relationships with builders, so they will refer you to their clients.
2. An **architect** is hired by the homeowner to create the floorplan and working documents for the builder to follow to build the home. The homeowner will meet with architect and give direction for their room requirements, layout and style. They will meet several times until the house is just how the client wants. It’s great when a designer is brought on at this stage of the game. This is one of my favorite parts of the entire build process because we are still able to offer suggestions that either the client or architect may not have thought of. This is a good time to do a basic furniture layout so that the architect can put electrical floor outlets in the plan. We typically add floor outlets in the great room/family room and office. If the desk is in the middle of the room, you don’t want to create a tripping hazard by having a cord running from the wall to the desk, so place an outlet where the desk will be.

In some cases, an architect isn’t necessary. In several occasions I was hired to do kitchen and master bath remodels. In these cases, I drew out the floor plan and created a new layout. I gave this to the GC, who then hired a structural engineer to make sure the changes would not affect the stability of the home. If you are new or unfamiliar with construction, I wouldn’t advise doing the new layouts yourself.

go the extra mile:

Ask your client if there is any piece of furniture that is special to them that they want to make sure has a home in the new place. For example, maybe they inherited their grandma's dining hutch that's 6 feet wide. There are so many windows planned in the dining room that there is only a 5' wide wall space. If caught early, we can go back to the architect, ask him to make the wall 6' wide, to accommodate the grandma's hutch. If you wait until after the house is under construction and then think about the hutch, it's likely the window will already be ordered and possibly framed in. At this point, you can either remove the window, pay the builder a change order fee, plus lose the money they spent on the window or put the hutch in front of the window and block it. Which could interfere with how the draperies or motorized blinds function, so think ahead!



tip:

Always have a disclaimer on your drawings that says, "Not for construction. For design purposes only," or something similar. It lets the team in the field know they aren't structurally approved drawings. It is the GC's responsibility to hire the correct people to make sure the plans are sound. I am not a lawyer, so seek legal advice if you want to ensure you are protected from possible lawsuits regarding this issue.

3. The **designer** is brought on to help the homeowner bring their vision to life. It's our job to help guide the client through the selection process, document selections and then translate that into working documents for the builder to execute. Occasionally a designer is brought on first, in which case we would recommend an architect and builder. (This course will not discuss the designer providing project management).



 tip:

A “builder” or “general contractor” are names used for someone who does everything from new builds and large remodels to smaller projects, like a bathroom remodel. They are required to have a contractor’s license. A good way to vet a builder or G.C. is through referrals from people you know and trust. You can also check your state governing body to make sure they are in compliance with the state and have no outstanding complaints against them. In Arizona, it's referred to as the Registrar of Contractors (R.O.C.).

// | Getting Paid.

How are designers paid when they work with a builder? There are many different ways, ask the builder you are speaking with how they have worked with designers in the past. I have worked with builders who have wanted the designer under their umbrella of services. They paid my hourly fees and then charge the client a higher rate. In this case I was contracted with the builder, not the client, and received payment from them.

I have worked with builders who do not want to be a part of the contract with the designer and have us contract directly with the client. In this case we are contracted with and paid directly by the client.

How you chose to bill your client is completely up to you. You may choose to charge a flat room fee or a price per square foot fee. Maybe hourly is best for you? After you have a few build projects under your belt, you will know what works best for you. Let me take a moment here to discuss the importance of time tracking. You will never know if you are profitable if you don't track your hours.

/// | Tracking Time.

We use a tracking app called Timely. We are able to create projects, assign designers to that project and everyone is responsible for tracking their time spent on their projects. There is an area in each entry to record what it is you were working on. For example, let's say I spent an hour sourcing lighting for a kitchen remodel I'm working on. I would enter "1 hour," in the task time and in the "description" area include, "Sourcing lighting for kitchen." At the end of each month we turn our entries into a pdf and send it along with or time billing to our clients, so they can see how we spent our time on their project.

Even if we have charged a flat fee, we still track all our hours, so we can see if we were profitable.

At the end of each project, we are able to see the amount of time we spent on the project and the total time billed. I will be honest here and tell you that if a project is charged by the hour, I review EVERY invoice before it goes. I see exactly who worked on what and for how long. If I feel a junior designer or even a senior designer spent too long on a given task, I will edit the time down. This may also occur when we are making minimal re-selections after a presentation, it is up to you how you want to handle situations like this in your firm, but the bottom line is track your time! That way you're prepared when someone hires you for a consultation and asks how many hours you think it will take you, you can refer back to past projects and give them a more accurate estimate.

Sourcing lighting for kitchen.

Bahamas (Black Ink Interiors)

Choose Tags

Logged time

1h 0m 1h 15m 1h 30m 2h 00m

From & To Copy Timer Plan Move

Memory is not connected

Submit Cancel

*Example of Timely entry

IV | Organization.

The most important thing you can do to have successful build project is to be organized. Document everything! Even information gathered from the discovery call is important. I always review my discovery call information before I go to a consultation, as a refresher.

One of the most important things you can do is take pictures/video during the consultation if this is a remodel. Was the kitchen already wired for pendants? Was there two or three? In the current layout was the sink in the island? Did it have one dishwasher or two? Sometimes important information is forgotten with so much to take in during a consultation, so photos can be a lifesaver when you get back to the office and you're planning the design and layout.

If the consultation is for a new build, you may be meeting at the homeowner's current home, your studio or the builder's office. Instead of walking the home, like a remodel, you will be looking at a set of blueprints. You will discuss the layout; does it function for the client and their needs? What is the time frame? What is your scope of work? What are the budgets for the selections you will be making? Arming yourself with as much information as possible, is the most important thing you can do in this first meeting. Take copious notes. Ask for them to send the floor plan in a .pdf and .dwg (CAD) file, so you have a copy of the plans. This will help you as you create your scope of work.

Listen to what your client is telling you. How do they want their space to feel? What style are they looking to achieve? Have them save images to a shared Pinterest board, where you can see their design preferences. Sometimes people have a hard time describing what they like, so photos are a good way for you to understand what they want.

V | Budget.

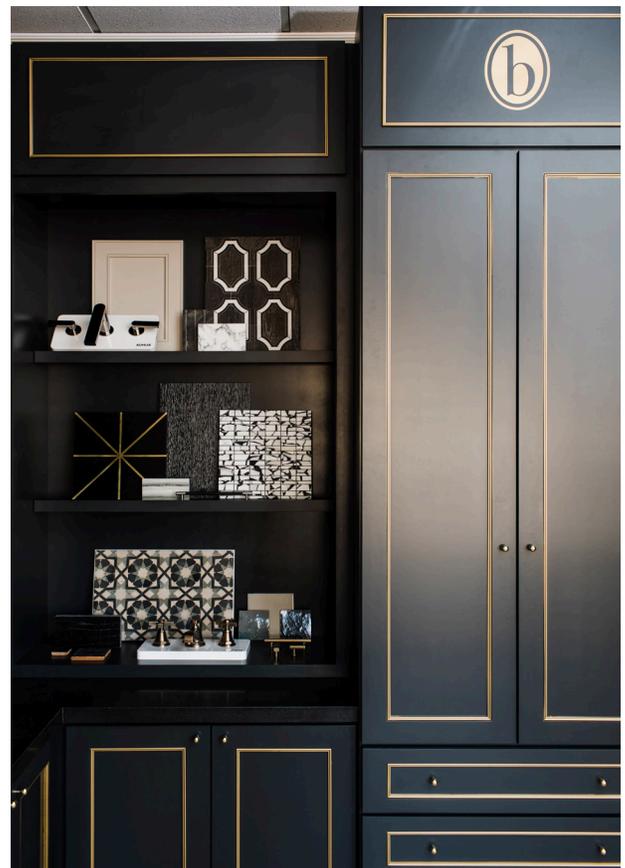
1. Before you get started on selections, you need to ask the builder for the budgets. Typically, they will have the budgets broken down into categories, i.e. plumbing, lighting, tile, countertops, cabinetry, etc.
2. One thing you should know is that most builders and GC's give unrealistic budget numbers. They want to win the bid, so they put low budgets in the contract. For example, clients often don't know what cabinetry for a whole house will cost, so when a builder puts a \$45,000 budget in the contract for cabinetry, the clients think, "Great! \$45,000, that's a lot of money." The problem for us comes when they go to build their dream kitchen and the kitchen alone comes in at \$65,000, just for cabinetry. Now their kitchen has to be "value engineered." In other words, "dummied down." What can we take out that isn't necessary? Pullout drawers? Custom drawer dividers? Pullout spice rack?

I always recommend going to a couple different cabinetry suppliers and getting bids. Some will have less customization, but a better price point. People who want the Lexus, but who can only afford the Camry will need to decide where they will splurge and where they will save. Often the kitchen and master bath are the places they will chose to splurge, it is also where they will see the most return on their investment.

3. Ask your builder if the budget numbers they give you also include labor! I learned the hard way when I saw the \$50,000 tile budget, but didn't know that also included labor, setting materials, etc.

V | Budget.

4. Know their budget and stick to it. Show them items that are in their budget. That being said, there are occasions where I have found something I think they will really love and I will explain, "I think this is the perfect flooring for you, but it is \$2 sq/ft (square foot) more than what we have budgeted right now. It is then their decision to go with the flooring that is in budget, or go over budget, but get the perfect flooring. If they like it enough and want to splurge, they will go for it.
5. Keep in mind that most builders will charge clients 20-25% for a change order. If they go over their set budget, this is a change order. So that flooring you recommended at an additional \$2 sq/ft not only costs the additional \$2 sq/ft, but also an additional 25% on the total cost to cover the change order fee.



Black Ink Interiors

VI | Purchasing.

In most cases, the builder/ GC will want to order the products. Some GC's have a "cost-plus" fee structure. This means if you specify lighting that comes to \$20,000 builder price, the builder will add their percentage, lets say 20% on top of the \$20,000 (\$4,000) and that is how he makes money. With this structure, if they don't order the products, they don't make money.

Some GC's may charge a flat fee and not charge retail pricing. You don't want to tell the homeowner they will be getting builder pricing if that's not the case. This is why you need to talk to the builder/GC about how they bill their clients.

If you are only doing a small powder bath remodel for example and need to change the faucet, lighting and add wallpaper, you may not need to hire a GC. You can simply hire an electrician, a plumber and a wallpaper installer. If this is the case, you can order the products. HOWEVER, sometimes a plumber will not warranty their work if they do not purchase the faucet. If something were to happen, the faucet breaks, and it floods the house, there is a chance the homeowner could come after you for damages. Making \$50 on that faucet doesn't sound so great if you're sued for thousands if something goes wrong. That's not likely to happen, but it could, so know your State laws about what you can and can't do legally without a contractor's license.

This brings up another situation that may arise. Can you markup tradesmen's services. In Arizona, we cannot markup electricians, plumbers, etc., but we can mark up the wallpaper installer, window treatment workroom, etc. This is why it is so important to KNOW YOUR STATE LAWS!

VII | Finding Your Builder.

1. Make a list of builders that are the right fit for you. Research builders in your area that you would want to work with. Are they licensed and bonded? Does their style align with yours? Read their "About" page, and learn about them. What are their company values? Do they have in-house designers? If so, you may want to rethink calling a meeting with them.
2. Now that you have your list of builders, in order of your compatibility, it is time to reach out to them. I think a phone call is the best way to make initial contact. Let them know who you are and ask if you can come in and meet with them for 10-15 minutes. Don't take more time than the time you have asked for. They are busy and have taken time away from their day to meet with you. Stay focused.

Introduce yourself and explain how you can help them...

1. Help the homeowner make decisions in a timely manor.
2. Keep the selections in budget.
3. And most importantly, provide them with the necessary documents they need for a successful project.

Even if you haven't worked in construction before, showing them the spec book will let them know that you know how to make selections, be organized and provide them a finish schedule and drawings.

Be prepared to discuss your design fees. Do you charge a square foot price? Do you charge hourly? Even though you may be contracted directly with the homeowner, the builder will want to know your pricing, so he knows if your fees align with his client's budgets before he recommends you for a job.

Don't be discouraged if your phone doesn't start ringing off the hook after. I waited 12 months before the phone rang. Also, realize there are builders that have a trusted working relationship with certain designers. Often, they have been working with them for years, they know how each other work, they know what each other needs and quite frankly, that's the type of relationship you are hoping to build, so don't be upset. Let that be an inspiration to you.

Don't call one builder and think you're done. You will need to reach out to multiple builders. If I had a penny for every time a builder said they were referring me to a client and my phone never rang, I'd be a millionaire. Often, they will refer two or three designers to a client to interview. Sometimes a client has picked the first designer they met, and I never even had a chance to meet them. Sometimes funding falls through, sometimes they change their mind and buy an existing home instead of building, there are a million reasons why you may never get that job they referred to you.

Don't give up! Follow up and keep the relationship alive, even if the phone isn't ringing. Eventually it will. And when it does, you need to deliver! If you don't, you will either get you fired from the job or they will never refer you again. It's that simple. This is the biggest investment these people will make in their lifetime and if you are slowing things down or messing up selections or elevations, you will be off the job before you know it. This isn't getting the fabric wrong on a \$100 throw pillow. Your mistakes could cost tens of thousands of dollars or more. This is probably a good time to mention that you should have insurance. I have a million-dollar policy that costs me approximately \$1,600 year. Do not get into the construction game without it.

There may come a time when a homeowner hires you before they have hired a builder. This is great! Now you are able to reach out to a builder that has brought you a client and return the favor. It's also a time for you to reach out to a builder you may want to work with, but haven't had a chance yet. They will appreciate that you referred them and will be more likely to think of you next time they need a designer. Always give your client at least two names, if not three. Let them interview them, discuss cost, fees, etc. and see who is the best fit for them. After I refer a builder, I try to stay out of the process, because if something goes wrong, I don't want to be blamed for recommending that person. By giving two or three names, the decision is theirs.

VIII | Finding Your Architect.

- Do you need an architect if you are remodeling? Depending on the scope of your remodel, you may. The builder should help you determine if an architect is needed.
- Follow the same steps for finding an architect as you did in finding a builder, referrals and research! Your builder may have one they recommend as well.



Black Ink Interiors

IX | Understanding Your Client.

Be clear about what your clients want from their remodel/new build. Have them think of their current home and its functionality. What is working for them? What isn't working for them? Are they hoping for a larger, more functional kitchen? Are they looking for an "open living" concept in the main area of the home? Is it important that the kids' rooms are close to the master? Do you want a laundry room that can double as a craft room? Do they want a more spa-like master bath? Make sure the information you gather is relayed to the architect, if it hasn't been already, so he can create a functional home for their lifestyle.

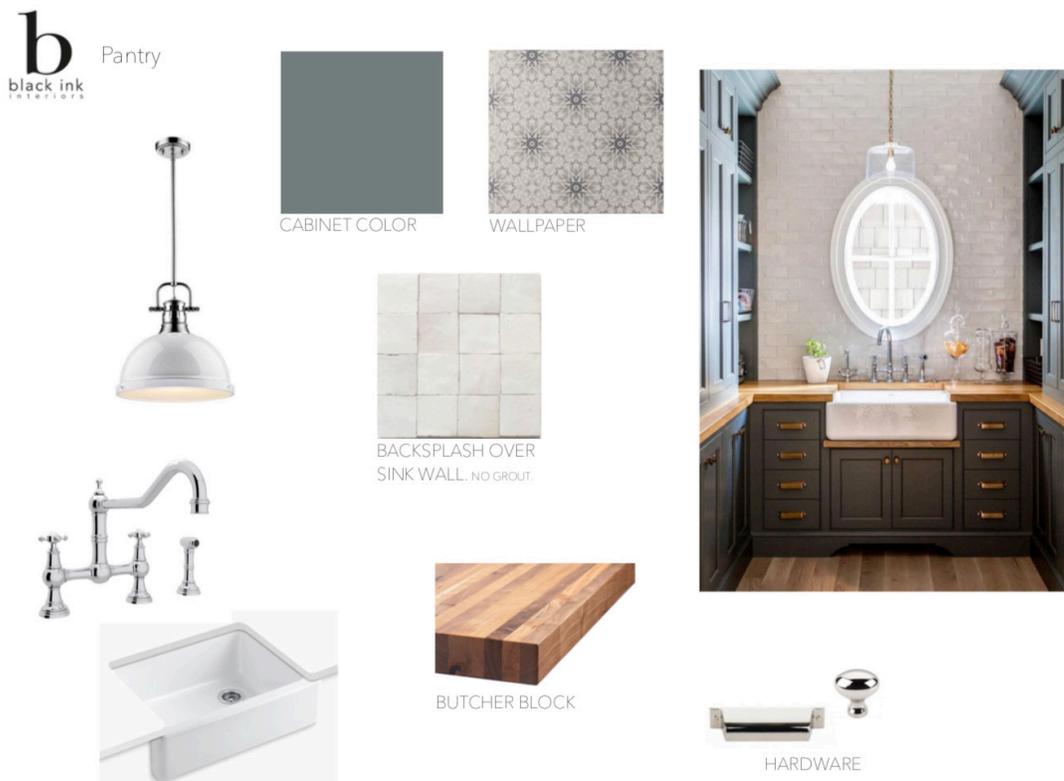
- **What if their wish list is larger than their budget allows?** Help them hone in on what is most important and then offer ways they can save money.
- **Where can you help them cut?** Maybe instead of a high-end kitchen appliance package, a less expensive brand will do. It may not be their first choice, but it may keep them in budget. What if you go for a less expensive backsplash in the kitchen instead of the marble mosaic they had their heart set on?

X | Understanding Their Style.

Encourage your clients to use Pinterest and Houzz to find photos of interiors they like. Kitchens, lighting fixtures, cabinet styles, etc. By creating folders in these platforms, they can share their inspiration with you. I always have them invite me onto the board, so that I can add and make comments on their photos.

When they add an image to a board, ask them to indicate (in the comment section) what it is they liked in the photo. For example, "I like the pendants over the island and backsplash." Or "I like the wood siding and shutters." That way you will know what it was that they specifically liked about that photo.

As you become more in tune with the design elements they want in their home, use the information and images you've collected to create a design concept board. This will help them see all the selections for a room in one place. It will also help you stay on track when you are making selections. Take it to all your vendor meetings. It will help them understand what style you are looking for and help them narrow down the options they show you.



Pantry Design Board

Black Ink Interiors

part two

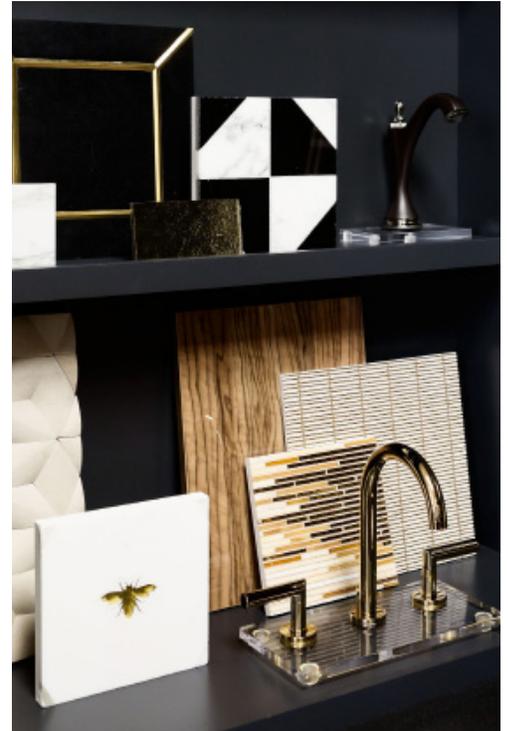
making selections

/ | Selections.

Sit down with the builder and discuss the build timeline. When will he need your final selections? It is critical that everyone is on the same page! You do not want to hold up construction because of missing selections.

Ask your builder if there are vendors/showrooms that they prefer to work with. Is there a specific rep they like? This will help give you direction as you begin making your selections. It is best to call the showroom ahead of time and schedule an appointment with the salesperson. When you visit the showrooms, take your design concept board with you. Show them the images you like and let them steer you towards similar items in their showroom. Let them know your budget. You don't want to waste time looking at expensive plumbing fixtures if your budget doesn't allow for it. They will take notes of the items you like, so they can put together a bid for you. You should also take pictures of the item and then tag with the item's information (item #, finish, color, size, etc.) for your own record. I like to take pictures with my Instagram camera and then type over the photo what room it's for or any other information I may want to remember.

**You will need this for your finish schedule (Part 3).*



Black Ink Interiors

tip:

Always follow the selection process in the order your builder gives you, that said, listed below is the order we typically follow with the builders we work with.

1. Exterior Selections.
2. Windows & Doors.
3. Plumbing & Accessories.
4. Appliances.
5. Electrical, Lighting & Mirrors.
6. Cabinetry.
7. Millwork & Hardware.
8. Flooring.
9. Wall Tile.
10. Countertops.
11. Interior Paint & Wallcoverings.



Black Ink Interiors

1 | Exterior Selections.

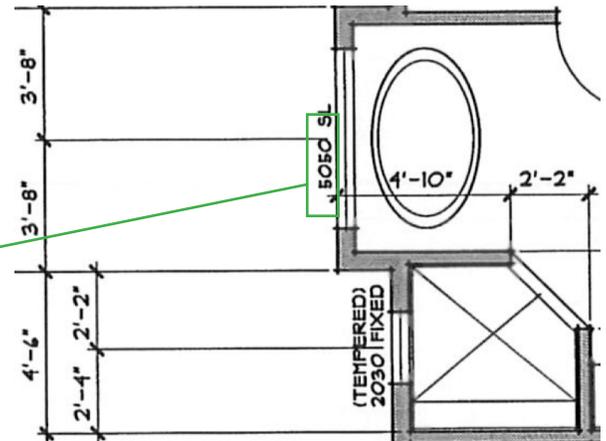
Exterior selections are often made first, as they are needed for submission, along with the floor plans and elevations to the HOA (Homeowners Association) for approval before construction can begin.

Things you will need to decide for the exterior of a home.

- Exterior stone/brick color, finish, and locations.
- Main exterior house paint color.
- Trim color and locations.
- Accent paint colors for shutters, rails, etc.
- Garage door style and color.
- Exterior window frame style and color. (In most cases, the inside color can be different)
- Roof tile style and color.
- Driveway pavers style & color.
- Front door style and color/stain.

2 | Windows & Doors

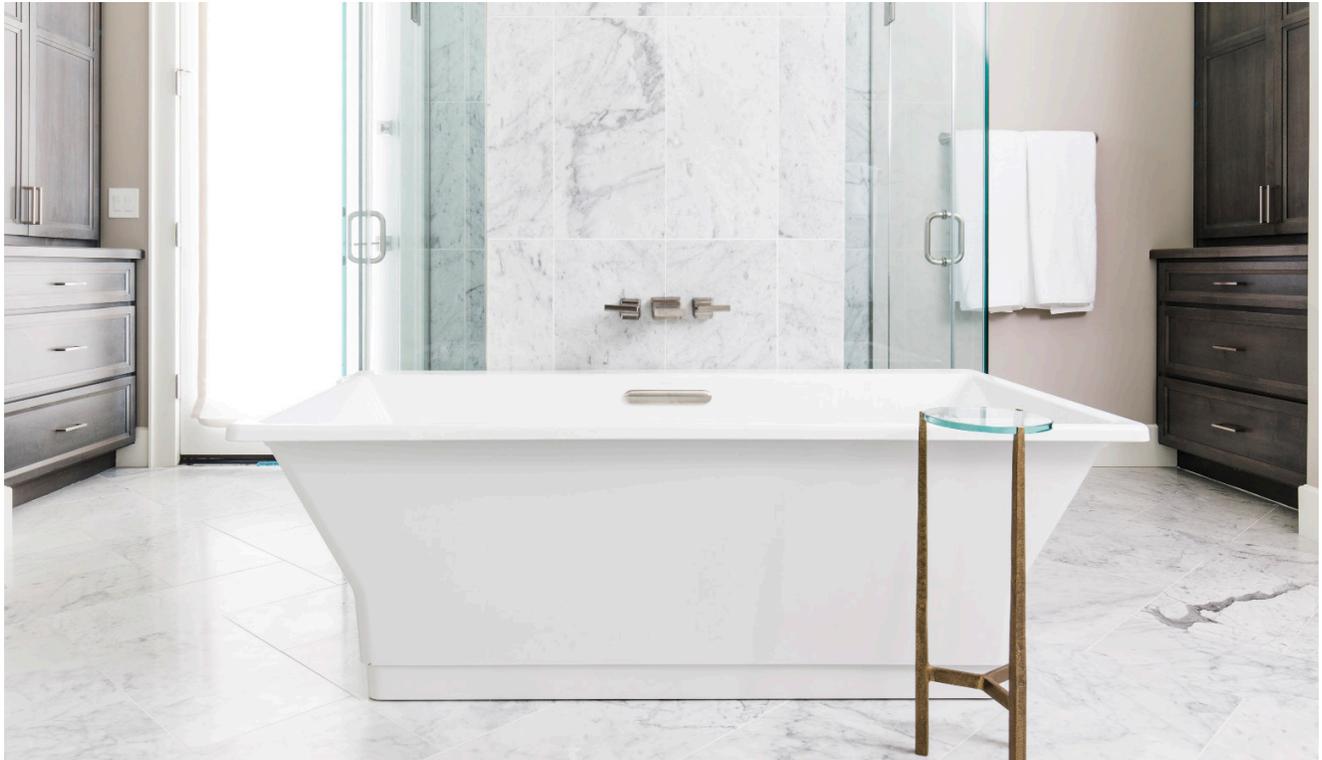
Windows. When looking at a floor plan from a builder the way to determine what size windows have been specified is by looking at the numbers next to it. In the example on the Right, you will see 5050 SL. This means the window is 5'0"W x 5'0"H. SL indicates width first and height second.



Window

Black Ink Interiors

Doors. The front door is often the most important because the builder can't drywall without it. Be sure to keep this in mind when it comes to making selections. If you want to do a custom front door there may be long lead times for manufacturing. The sooner you can have the front door selected, the less likely you will be the cause of holding up the job site.



Plumbing

Black Ink Interiors

3 | Plumbing & Accessories.

- It is critical for the builder and plumber to know if you have any in-ground plumbing, so they can plumb prior to pouring the foundation of the home.
- Do you have a floor-mounted tub filler for your freestanding tub? Where exactly will it be located?
- Where are your appliances going?
- Do you have faucet and a sink in the kitchen island? Most floor plans will have a general kitchen layout, but as you meet with the cabinetry company, often changes are made to the layout. When the new layout affects plumbing or lighting, it's important these changes are given to the builder as soon as possible. If the foundation is already poured, there will be expenses to move or create new plumbing locations.
- For the bathrooms, keep in mind that you will need to call out the shower head heights and valve trim locations in your shower elevations for the plumber (Part Four).



Black Ink Interiors

 tip:

We always recommend making ALL selections within a limited time frame. Even if the builder doesn't need your countertop selections right away, if you select them close to the time you are selecting the tile, you won't forget the colors you selected, as they will be fresh in your mind. Same analogy for plumbing and lighting. Do you want your polished chrome faucet to match the pendants over the island? By making selections in a relatively short amount of time, they will be fresh in your mind as you go from showroom to showroom. It will also prevent you from holding up the job because the builder does not have your selections.

4 | Appliances.

The budget will dictate your appliance package. Appliances can range from less than \$20,000 to over \$100,000. Ask your contractor what showroom he recommends, as he may have a good working relationship with a specific company.

Be sure to ask the sales rep if any companies are offering any package discounts. Often if you buy your entire package through the same manufacturer, they will offer discounts, cash rebate or a free appliance (ie. free dishwasher). Remember, your contractor will need to know where the appliances will be placed for proper plumbing and drainage purposes, prior to pouring foundation. The cabinet supplier will also need to know the selections and locations.

Often the homeowners I work with will make their appliance selections without me. It's a personal choice and unless they ask me to be there, I let them tackle that one on their own. I do however, have the showroom rep email assure the cabinet company knows exactly what appliances are being used.



Kitchen Appliances

Black Ink Interiors

5 | Electrical, Lighting & Mirrors.

- **Outlets.** If you need floor outlets, those need to be wired prior to pouring the foundation. The electrician will want to know the exact locations for the floor outlets. Having a furniture layout is the best way to know where to put the locations for these outlets. The most common areas for floor outlets are in the great room and office.
- **Lighting placement.** Often times a builder will ask you to review the reflected ceiling plan for proper lighting placement. When an architect is laying out the R.C.P. (Reflected Ceiling Plan) (the architectural plan that shows electrical placement on the ceiling, ie. cans, chandeliers, pendants, fans, etc.), he will likely place the lighting in a generic layout. The builder may rely on you to help determine the best locations for your client.

For example, will there be pendants over the island? Will there be two or three? Where is the dining table going to be located, so you know where to hang the chandelier? Occasionally I have seen with an open floor concept, the “dining room” is just an extension of the great room, and the jbox for the chandelier is often too close to a wall or too far from the wall. So, by laying out the dining table in the space, you can indicate the exact location for the dining chandelier.



tip:

Rely on the experts! If you have questions about lighting, ask the electrician. If you have questions about tile install, ask the installer, etc. etc.

making selections

- **Jbox.** A jbox is a junction box that houses electrical wires for wall and ceiling mount fixtures. Should you include a jbox in each bedroom so you have the option of a fan or a chandelier? If you aren't sure, I recommend placing a jbox in the center of the room and having them cap it until you know what type of fixture you want in the space.
- **Bracing.** If you select a heavy chandelier, pendant, fan, etc. let the builder know, they will need to add additional bracing for it.
- **Sconces.** Many architects will indicate a bar light over the vanity sink. If you want to place a single decorative wall sconce over the vanity instead of a bar light, there is no need to change the lighting plan, the jbox location does not change. If, however you want two wall sconces flanking the mirror, you will need to indicate their location on the plan as well as the height of the fixture on your elevation.

When thinking about electrical plans, don't forget to think about motorized window treatments or cove lighting. Check with your client and then mark their locations on the reflected ceiling plan.

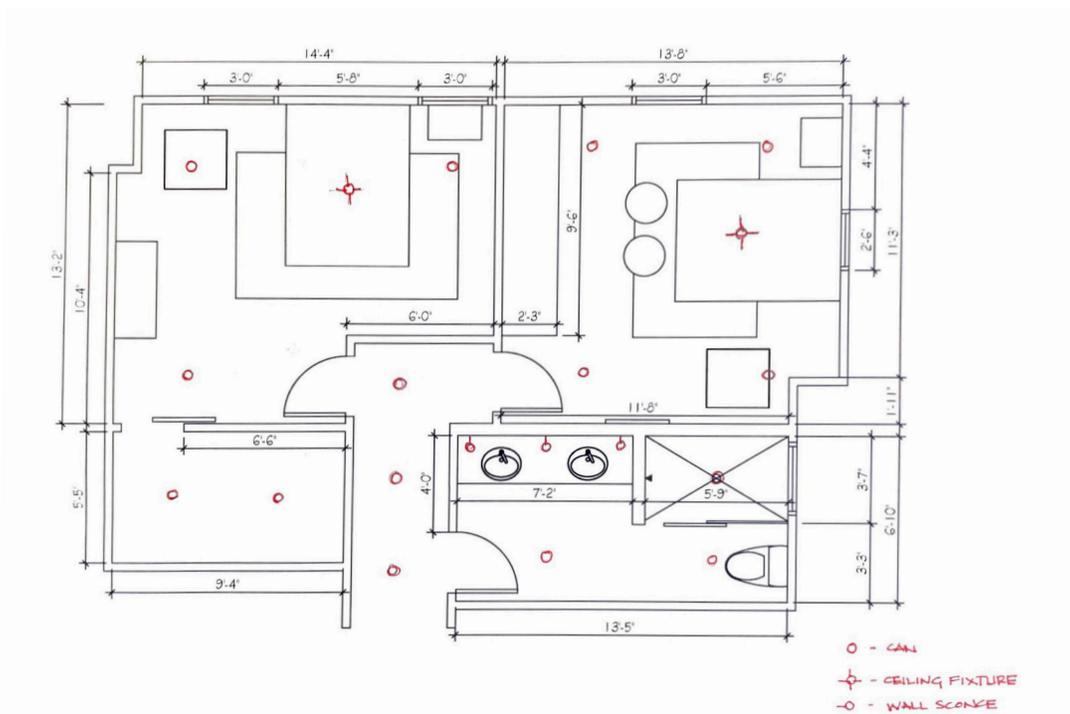


Lighting

Black Ink Interiors

making selections

In addition to the decorative lighting, can locations should be reviewed as well. It is easy to get overwhelmed with all the little circles, but just go room by room and think about it methodically. In a bedroom we typically do four cans, basically in each of the four corners of the room. Don't go too close to the wall, you should be approximately 3' from the wall. If budget is tight you may be limited to the number of cans. In this case, make sure the main areas of the home have good lighting, especially the kitchen and great room/family room. Bedrooms have the benefit of utilizing lamps, a chandelier or a light kit on the fan if necessary.



tip:

When I draw lighting on the plan, I always start with a pencil. The reason is, I try to keep the cans in a line as they flow from room to room. I will draw them out, all lined up, in the great room or kitchen and then may realize that the cans in the dining room or hallway that come off that room, aren't lined up and I have to erase the cans and start over. The pencil allows me to get all the lights where I want them and then the red pen makes it easy for everyone to see the changes we have made. It's not until I am 100% satisfied with the lighting plan that I will go over the pencil with red pen. I always include a legend so they know what type of lights my drawings indicate (more on that later).

making selections

Walk the house with the electrician to make sure there are enough can lights on the reflected ceiling plan. They will give you their professional opinion, which we recommend you take.

It is critical for you to know where the electrical component of the wall sconces are located. This will allow you to document the proper height of the jbox location on your elevation. *See example below

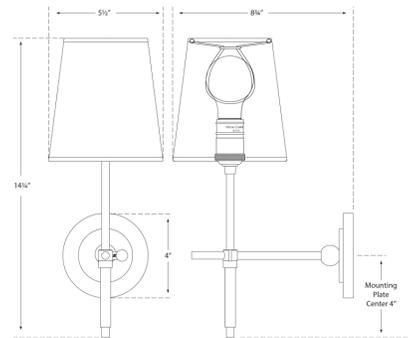
SPEC SHEET



Bryant Sconce
Item # TOB 2002AN-NP

Designer: Thomas O'Brien

Height: 14.25"
Width: 5.5"
Extension: 8.75"
Backplate: 4" Round
Finishes: AN, BZ, BZ/HAB, HAB, PN
Shade Treatments: NP, NP/BT, NP/ST
Shade Details: 4" x 5.5" x 6"
Socket: E26 Keyless
Wattage: 60 A
Note: Requires Smaller Outlet Box



circa LIGHTING®



*Lighting company Spec Sheet

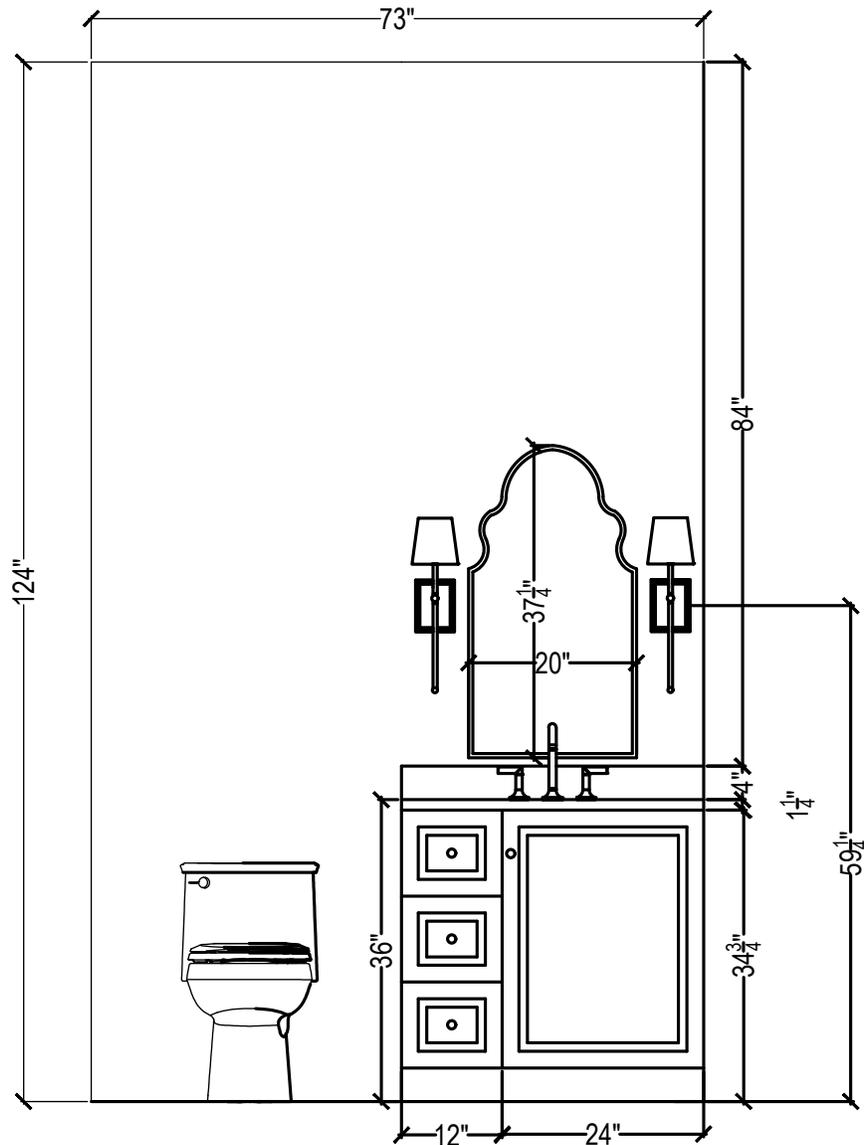
tip:

Make sure that your height After Finish Floor (A.F.F.) is dimensioned to the center of the Jbox in your AutoCAD elevations for installation purposes.

part two

Electrical (cont'd).

making selections



A **GIRLS BATH**
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"

*Example of elevation with A.F.F. height called to center of the jbox.

6 | Cabinetry.

Cabinetry is very involved and may take a few meetings to get everything finalized. Which rooms will need cabinetry? Be sure to take your design concept and other photos to help the showroom determine the style you are trying to create.

- **Kitchen.** Do you want the island and perimeter cabinetry to match? Perhaps you'd like the same style, but a different color?
- **Bathroom vanities.** If you would like custom colors, ask how much it will cost to change the color between bathrooms, there is often an upcharge.
- **Closets.** If you are looking for something beyond the basics that the builder will put in, be sure to discuss options at this time. Think about specialty items like purse dividers, a glass top island, designated shelves for shoes, etc..
- **Built-ins.** Are there special areas in the home that you would like built-in cabinetry? Perhaps the office? Dining room? Mudroom lockers?
- **Entertainment center.** Do you plan on including a custom built-in entertainment center?
- **Hardware.** Most cabinet shops will have options for you to select from. If you don't like their "standard" options, you can ask if they have others for you to select from. Be sure to keep the budget in mind.



Cabinetry

Black Ink Interiors



tip:

For cabinet hardware, I like pulls for drawers and knobs for doors

💡 tip:

“Panel Ready” indicates when an appliance is specified without a finished front, so a cabinet door front can be placed on it to blend in with the cabinetry,



*Image from House Beautiful



Ceiling Detail

Black Ink Interiors

7 | Millwork & Hardware

What is millwork? Basically, it's wood products manufactured in a mill. This can include crown, base, case, doors, etc. You can show the rep your inspiration photos for reference and see if they can match it or if they have something similar. In most cases, they will also have door handles at the showroom for you to select from, for both exterior and interior doors. If you go into the showroom, be sure to call and make an appointment before you stop in, so someone is available to help you.

- Interior door style.
- Trim: base, case and crown.
- Wall paneling.
- Ceiling detail.
- Door hardware.

8 | Flooring.

- What type of materials are they considering for their main flooring? Hardwood? Wood plank porcelain tiles? Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT)? Large format porcelain tile? Carpet? There are a lot of options to consider.
- Are there rooms that you would like to break from the rest of the house? Perhaps running the tile in a different direction? Changing the color or material in a specific area you want to play up?

 tip:

It's fun to play with different patterns and colors in smaller rooms that you don't spend as much time in and won't tire of. We love having fun in powder baths, laundry rooms and mudrooms. as well. Just be sure your floor plan is carefully labeled with the correct flooring tag

Darker flooring will show more dirt than lighter floor. Keep this in mind throughout your flooring selections!





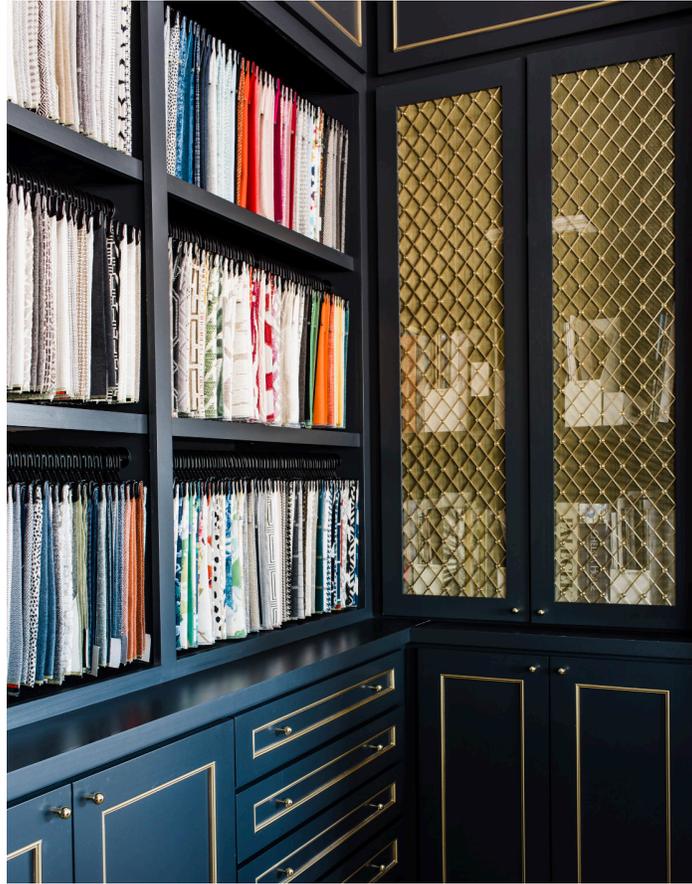
Wall Tile

Black Ink Interiors

9 | Wall Tile.

Wall tiles include backsplashes, accent walls and shower/tub walls.

- **Tools:** Take a notebook or sketch pad with you to the tile showrooms. As you begin making selections, sketch how you envision the tile laying out. Not only on the floor, but also the shower walls. This will be helpful as you begin your selections.
- **Grout.** After you select all the tiles, you will need to select the grout. Some tile showrooms will have grout samples, but we recommend reaching out to a few grout companies and asking for their samples. Some of the grout companies we use are: Custom, Maipei & Laticrete.



tip:

Get samples! Don't be afraid to ask for them! Get a box or tupperware and leave it in the back of your car, so you have all your samples together with you at all times. That way if you happen to be driving past a slab yard, you can swing in and pull out your cabinet and tile samples to see if they have a slab that goes well with your samples. If they will only let you check out the sample, it's important for you to make the decisions that particular piece will affect and then return the sample in a timely fashion. (They will let you know how long you can have the sample). If they do not have a sample on hand, they may be able to order one in for you.



Countertops

Black Ink Interiors

 tip:

Avoid mixing a heavily patterned countertop with a heavily ornate backsplash. Keep one or the other simple, to keep a nice balance.

10 | Countertops.

- As a general rule, we select the countertops after we select wall tile, flooring and cabinetry.
- Take the wall tile, floor and cabinetry samples with you to the slab yard. Hold your samples up to the slabs. They don't have to match exactly, They can compliment one another or be in stark contrast, either is fine.
- Know the types of material you are looking at and the difference between them. If you are unfamiliar with a certain material, ask! The more information you have about the material, the better informed your decision will be. This includes, marble, manmade quartz, granite, quartzite, quartz, soapstone, etc. We will discuss the specifics of countertop options.



11 | Interior Paint and Wallcoverings.

Paint. Although you will have paint selections already in your finish schedule, we strongly recommend waiting to finalize your colors until the drywall is up, and the painter has painted samples on the wall for you to approve.

tip:

We often narrow our selections down to three colors and then paint them on multiple walls in a few different rooms. The light in your home will be dramatically different than that of a paint showroom. Look at the paint at different times of the day and write in soft pencil on the wall by the paint swatch, which one you like better at the different times of the day. That way after a couple days you should know which color will be best.

FYI: When I worked for a custom home builder in St. George, Utah, the homes were built at the base of beautiful red rock cliffs. We had to select paint colors that had a green undertone, to absorb the red reflected into their house from the rocks. If we had just made a paint selection in our office, we would have ended up with walls that turned pink at certain times of the day.

Wallcoverings. Wallpaper is back! If your client is timid to use it in large doses, think about adding it to a powder bath, kid's bathroom, or pantry.



 tip:

Never give wallpaper quantities! Have an installer come and give you quantities in addition to your quote. If it is a new build, send a copy of the room's floorplan and highlight the walls to be wallpapered. Give him the manufacturer's information of the wallpaper.

making selections

Utilize your reps! While you are anxiously awaiting that first call, begin reaching out to reps in your area. What painting company do you like? Let's say it's Benjamin Moore. Great! Call your local rep and ask for a new sample set. Instead of the small fan deck, they will send you a carrying case with 4x4 samples of all their colors. If there are certain colors you love to use, ask for the larger 8x10 sample cards of those colors. If you do not know your local rep, call the corporate office and they can tell you.

Do the same for plumbing. For example, most of our sinks, toilets, tubs are specified from Kohler. I have a wonderful rep who keeps my Kohler "color chips" up to date. These are small finished samples of the colors they offer for their products.

We will take these with us when we go to a slab yard so we can select the best sink color for the countertop.

We like Delta Faucet Company (the parent company of Delta & Brizo) and have the finish samples for both plumbing lines. That way if a client is concerned that their lighting finish isn't going to perfectly match their plumbing fixture, you have the samples to compare.



making selections

Lighting has been a bit harder to get samples of, but Circa Lighting/Visual Comfort do offer samples, reach out to your rep and request them.

Before you even have a client, call a variety of showrooms and schedule an appointment with a sales person. Introduce yourself, tell them you're a designer in town and you want to see what they have for future jobs you will be working on. When I was new to Arizona and didn't even have my first client, I would visit showrooms, not only to stay on top of what was new and trending, but also to keep building the relationship with my rep. That way, when I got my first client, we could hit the ground running.

It's good to stay top of mind with your rep, sometimes their clients need designers. Also, many of the showrooms you visit will have holiday parties or launch parties for new products, be sure to tell them you'd love to be on their mailing list so you can be invited. This will open up new opportunities for you to meet with others in the industry.

tip:

While you're visiting tile showrooms (even before you have a client), if there are some tiles that catch your eye, ask for samples. Begin building a sample library. Don't go in on the first visit and ask for 20 tile samples, but over time, your library will grow.

part three

specification book

A specification book is where all the information you need to provide to the builder lives. For us, this is a large three-ring binder with dividers to keep the selections organized.

I | Staying Organized.

This is key! As you go from showroom to showroom, take photos and notes. Keep all this information together. You will need to pass this information on to the builder.

II | Create a Finish Schedule.

The finish schedule is a spreadsheet that calls out all the selections for your home. It is divided by category and separated in the binder by labeled tabs. It consists of the following categories:



List of Tabs:

- Millwork
- Plumbing
- Appliances
- Lighting
- Cabinetry
- Hardware
- Flooring
- Wall Tile
- Countertops
- Accessories
- Paint

Think of a finish schedule as a recipe for your builder and tradesmen. We are very detailed in our finish schedules and recommend that you do the same. It may seem overwhelming, but this document will cut down on costly mistakes, like ordering the wrong item or quantity. It is also your documentation if something is ordered incorrectly by the builder or tradesmen.

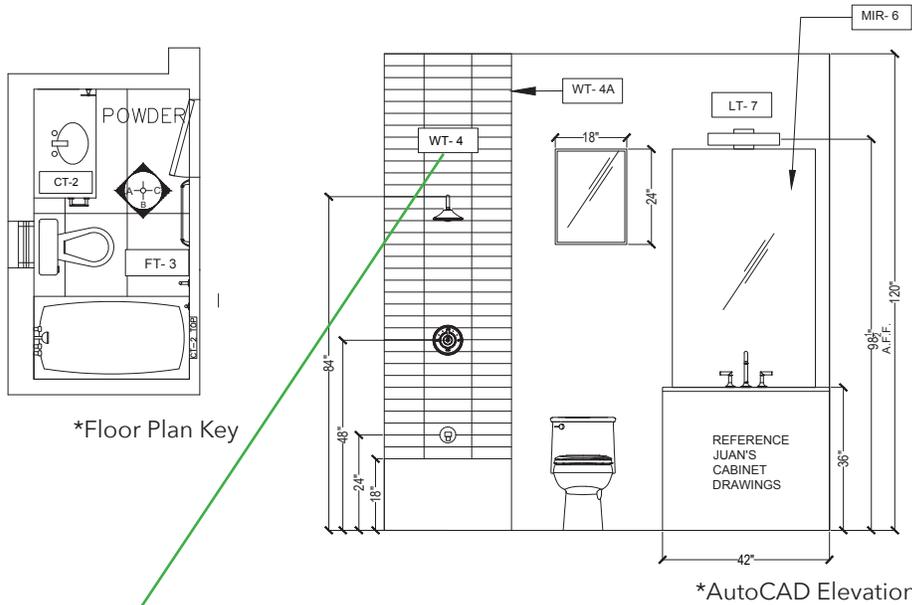


tip:

Below is what we use for abrebations for tags and what those abrebations refer to in the finish schedule.

Tags	Definition
APP	Appliances
BASE	Base Board
CAB	Cabinets
CASE	Case Moulding
CROWN	Crown Moulding
CT	Counter Top
FT	Floor Tile
HK	Hook
HW	Hardware
LT	Lighting
MIR	Mirror
PLUM	Plumbing
PT	Paint
TB	Towel Bar
TP	Toilet Paper
TR	Towel Ring
WC	Wall Covering
WT	Wall Tile

III | How to Use Tags.



Remember:
If you do not indicate the height of the lighting fixtures on your elevations, the electrician will take liberty of making that decision at install and you will end up with a fixture hung too high or too low.

WT-4	-POWDER SHOWER WALLS -POWDER VANITY WALL		STONETALK	3" X 12"	GREY RULLATTA	ARIZONA TILE	STRAIGHT SET	LATICRETE #78 STERLING SILVER. TIGHT GROUT 1/16".	
WT-4A	-POWDER TRIM		JOLLY	TBD	STONE GREY	SCHLUTER	N/A	N/A	INSTALLER TO DETERMINE QUANTITY NEEDED.

Finish Schedule

Black Ink Interiors

IV | Include Specification Sheets.

Specification Sheets are also known as spec sheets or tear sheets. These are documents often found on the product website, that lists technical features, dimensions, and installation guidelines. These are good to reference if you have questions. We recommend printing these and putting behind the coordinating finish schedule. For example, after printing the kitchen faucet spec sheet, place it behind the plumbing finish schedule in your builder binder.

V | Finish Schedules.

b black ink interiors		SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020							
MILLWORK									
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	SIZE	STYLE	SUPPLIER/MANUF	WOOD TYPE	FINISH	NOTES	
DOOR-1	THROUGHOUT HOME		9'0"	SHAKER 4 PANEL	AZ DOOR MILL	MDF	PAINT PT-4		
BASE-1	THROUGHOUT HOME		6.25"	XXXXX	EL & EL WOOD PRODUCTS	MDF	PAINT PT-4		
CASE-1	THROUGHOUT HOME		3.5"	XXXXX	EL & EL WOOD PRODUCTS	MDF	PAINT PT-4		
CROWN-1	THROUGHOUT HOME		6" H	XXXXX	EL & EL WOOD PRODUCTS	MDF	PAINT PT-4		

Millwork

Black Ink Interiors

b black ink interiors		SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020							
PLUMBING									
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	NAME	SIZE	FINISH	MODEL #	SUPPLIER/MANUF	QTY	NOTES
PLUM-1	-KITCHEN FAUCET		PRO FAUCET		CHROME	XXXXX	DELTA	1	
PLUM-1B	-KITCHEN PREP SINK		SINGLE HOLE BAR FAUCET		CHROME	XXXXX	DELTA	1	
PLUM-1C	-KITCHEN PREP (x1) -BAR (x1)		SOAP DISPENSER		CHROME	XXXXX	DELTA	2	
PLUM-2	-KITCHEN POT FILLER		DELTA POT FILLER		CHROME	XXXXX	DELTA	1	
PLUM-3	-BAR FAUCET		DELTA SINGLE HOLE BAR FAUCET		CHROME	XXXXX	DELTA	1	

Plumbing

Black Ink Interiors

V | Finish Schedules.

 SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020									
APPLIANCE									
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	NAME	MODEL #	SIZE	FINISH	SUPPLIER/MANUF	QTY	NOTES
APP-1	-KITCHEN		FREEZER (FREEDOM) RIGHT HINGE	XXXXX	30"	STAINLESS STEEL	SUBZERO	1	
APP-2	-KITCHEN		FRIDGE (FREEDOM) LEFT HINGE	XXXXX	30"	STAINLESS STEEL	SUBZERO	1	
APP-3	-KITCHEN		DISHWASHER	XXXXX	24"	STAINLESS STEEL	SUBZERO	2	
APP-4	-KITCHEN		RANGE TOP	XXXXX	48"	STAINLESS STEEL	SUBZERO	1	
APP-6	-KITCHEN		VENT/HOOD LINER	XXXXX	48"	STAINLESS STEEL	SUBZERO	1	

Appliances

Black Ink Interiors

 SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020									
LIGHTING									
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	NAME	SIZE	FINISH	MODEL #	SUPPLIER/MANUF	QTY	NOTES
LT-1	CHRISTMAS TREE ROOM		FARLANE LARGE CHANDELIER		POLISHED SILVER WITH NATURAL PAPER SHADES	XXXXX	VISUAL COMFORT & CO	1	
LT-2	POWDER		IOTA PENDANT	8.75H x 6DIA	NICKEL	XXXXX	CURREY & CO	2	
LT-3	DINING ROOM		BLAIR - 10 LIGHT CHANDELIER	34.5"H x 33.25"W	ANTIQUE SILVER	XXXXX	CAPITAL	1	
LT-4	GREAT ROOM & ENTRY		LODESTAR CHANDELIER	53"H x 65"W	SILVER LEAF	XXXXX	CURREY & CO	2	

Lighting

Black Ink Interiors

V | Finish Schedules.

 SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020								
CABINETRY								
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	SIZE	STYLE	SUPPLIER/MANUF	WOOD TYPE	FINISH	NOTES
CAB-1	-KITCHEN PERIMETER -BAR/NOOK -MASTER BATH -MASTER LINEN -LAUNDRY -PANTRY -MUD ROOM -BATH 2 -BATH 3 -BATH 4			DOVE WING	BENJAMIN MOORE 960	MAPLE		
CAB-2	-KITCHEN ISLAND -GREAT RM SHELVES -HOOD DETAIL			CUSTOM STAIN	PREMIUM WOODWORK CABINETRY	MAPLE		
CAB-3	-POWDER ROOM			DOVETAIL	SHWERWIN WILLIAMS 7018	MAPLE		

Cabinetry

Black Ink Interiors

 SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020								
HARDWARE								
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	STYLE	SIZE	SUPPLIER/MANUF	FINISH	ITEM #	NOTES
HW-1	DOORS: KITCHEN PANTRY LAUNDRY		ASCENDRA KNOB	1 1/8"	TOP KNOBS	POLISHED NICKEL	XXXX	
HW-2	DRAWERS: KITCHEN		ASCENDRA PULL	5 11/16"	TOP KNOBS	POLISHED NICKEL	XXXX	
HW-3	DRAWERS: PANTRY		CHANNING CUP PULL	3.75"	TOP KNOBS	POLISHED NICKEL	XXXX	
HW-4	KNOBS: PANTRY		ASPEN II ROUND KNOB	1 1/4"	TOP KNOBS	POLISHED NICKEL	XXXX	
HW-5	DRAWERS: LAUNDRY		CHANNING CUP PULL	3.75"	TOP KNOBS	CHROME	XXXX	

Hardware

Black Ink Interiors

V | Finish Schedules.

 SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020									
FLOORING									
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	NAME	SIZE	FINISH/COLOR	SUPPLIER/MANUF	PATTERN	GROUT/JOINT	NOTES
FT-1	-GREAT ROOM -KITCHEN -BAR -NOOK/DINING -HALL TO MASTER -PANTRY -LAUNDRY		NATUREWOOD NATURAL	8" x 67"		FACINGS OF AMERICA	RANDOM	MAPEI #105, DRIFTWOOD. TIGHTEST GROUT JOINT POSSIBLE.	
FT-2	NOT IN USE								
FT-3	-BATH 2 FLOOR -BATH 3 FLOOR -BATH 4 FLOOR		FOSSIL	12" x 24"	BONE	FACINGS OF AMERICA	STRAIGHT SET, SEE PLANS	MAPEI #93 WARM GRAY. TIGHT GROUT JOINT, 1/16"	
FT-4	-BATH 2 SHOWER FLOOR -BATH 4 SHOWER FLOOR		FOSSIL	CUT DOWN TO 2" X 2"	BONE	FACINGS OF AMERICA	MESH	MAPEI #93 WARM GRAY. TIGHT GROUT JOINT, 1/16".	
FT-5	-POWDER SHOWER FLOOR		STONETALK	SPECIAL ORDER 2" X 2"	GREY	FACINGS OF AMERICA	MESH	LATICRETE #78 STERLING SILVER, TIGHT GROUT JOINT, 1/16".	
FT-5A	-POWDER FLOOR		STONETALK	12"x24"	GREY	FACINGS OF AMERICA	1/3 OFFSET	LATICRETE #78 STERLING SILVER, TIGHT GROUT JOINT, 1/16".	

Flooring

Black Ink Interiors

 SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020									
WALL TILE									
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	NAME	SIZE	FINISH/COLOR	SUPPLIER/MANUF	PATTERN	GROUT/JOINT	NOTES
WT-1	-FIREPLACE -FACE OF BAR		OLD NATURAL	13" X 39"	OLD NATURAL	FACINGS OF AMERICA	STRAIGHT SET	BOSTIK, BUFF #H188. TIGHT GROUT JOINT 1/16".	
WT-2	-BATH 2 -BATH 4 SHOWER -KITCHEN		UPTOWN	3" X 12"	SUGAR HILL MATTE	FACINGS OF AMERICA	STRAIGHT SET, HORIZONTAL	BOSTIK H152 WHITE, TIGHT GROUT JOINT, 1/16".	
WT-2A	-BATH 2 -BATH 4 SHOWER -KITCHEN		JOLLY	TBD	BRIGHT WHITE	SCHLUTER	N/A	N/A	INSTALLER TO DETERMINE QUANTITY NEEDED.
WT-3	-BATH 3		UPTOWN	3" X 12"	SUGAR HILL GLOSSY	FACINGS OF AMERICA	STRAIGHT SET, HORIZONTAL	BOSTIK H152 WHITE, TIGHT GROUT JOINT, 1/16".	
WT-3A	-BATH 3 & 4 TRIM		JOLLY	TBD	BRIGHT WHITE	SCHLUTER	N/A	N/A	INSTALLER TO DETERMINE QUANTITY NEEDED.

Wall Tile

Black Ink Interiors

V | Finish Schedules.

 SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020								
COUNTERTOPS/SLAB								
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	NAME	SIZE	EDGE DETAIL	FINISH	SUPPLIER/MANUF	NOTES
CT-1	-BATH 2 VANITY -BATH 2 BENCH -BATH 2 NICHE -KITCHENETTE (BED 2)		FIOR DI BOSCO	1 SLAB	MITER	POLISHED	GALLERIA OF STONE	
CT-2	-LAUNDRY -BATH 3 -BATH 3 NICHE -BATH 4, IF ENOUGH -PANTRY, IF ENOUGH		FANTASY BROWN	2 SLABS	MITER	POLISHED	GALLERIA OF STONE	
CT-3	-KITCHEN ISLAND -BAR TOP		FUSION WOW	122"x74" 2 SLABS	OGEE	POLISHED	STONE COLLECTION	
CT-4	-KITCHEN PERIMETER -LOWER BAR -PANTRY -(NOOK/DINING IF EXTRA)		BELGIAN SAND	3 SLABS	MITER	VELVET	GALLERIA OF STONE	
CT-5	-POWDER -POWDER NICHE TOP		FUSION WOW	REMNANT	MITER	LEATHERED	GALLERIA OF STONE	
CT-6	-MASTER HIS -MASTER HERS -MASTER SHOWER BENCH -GREAT RM BUILT-INS		ARABESCATO OROBICO - BLACK	1 SLAB	MITER	POLISHED	STONE COLLECTION	

Countertops

Black Ink Interiors

 SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020									
ACCESSORY (MIRRORS, TOWEL BARS, HOOKS, TP HOLDERS)									
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	NAME	SIZE	FINISH	SUPPLIER/MANUF	MODEL #	QTY	NOTES
TANK LEVER 1	-POWDER		ARA UNIVERSAL TANK LEVER		CHROME	DELTA	XXXXX	1	
TP-1	-POWDER		MIRABELLE RIGI PIVOT PAPER HOLDER	8-3/4"W	CHROME	DELTA	XXXXX	1	
HK-1	-POWDER (x1) -MASTER (x4) -BATH 2 (x2) -BATH 3 (x1) -BATH 4 (x2)		ARA ROBE HOOK		CHROME	DELTA	XXXXX	10	
TR-1	-POWDER (x1) -MASTER (x2) -BATH 2 (x2) -BATH 3 (x1) -BATH 4 (x1)		ARA TOWEL RING		CHROME	DELTA	XXXXX	7	
TANK LEVER 2	-MASTER BATH		VERO TOILET TANK LEVER		CHROME	DELTA	XXXXX	1	

Accessories

Black Ink Interiors

V | Finish Schedules.

b black ink interiors		SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020					
PAINT/WALLCOVERING							
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	NAME	NUMBER	FINISH	SUPPLIER/MANUF	NOTES
PT-1	-PRIMARY EXTERIOR		VERSATILE GRAY	XXXXX	FLAT	BENJAMIN MOORE	
PT-2	-EXTERIOR TRIM		SPALDING GRAY	XXXXX	SATIN	BENJAMIN MOORE	
PT-3	-TRIM		DOVE WING	OC-18	SEMI	BENJAMIN MOORE	
PT-4	-MAIN COLOR -CEILING COLOR		EDGEComb GRAY	HC-173	FLAT	BENJAMIN MOORE	
WC-1	-GREAT ROOM BEHIND SHELVES		WILD CA	8164-099	VINYL	PHILLIP JEFFERIES	INSTALL HORIZONTALLY

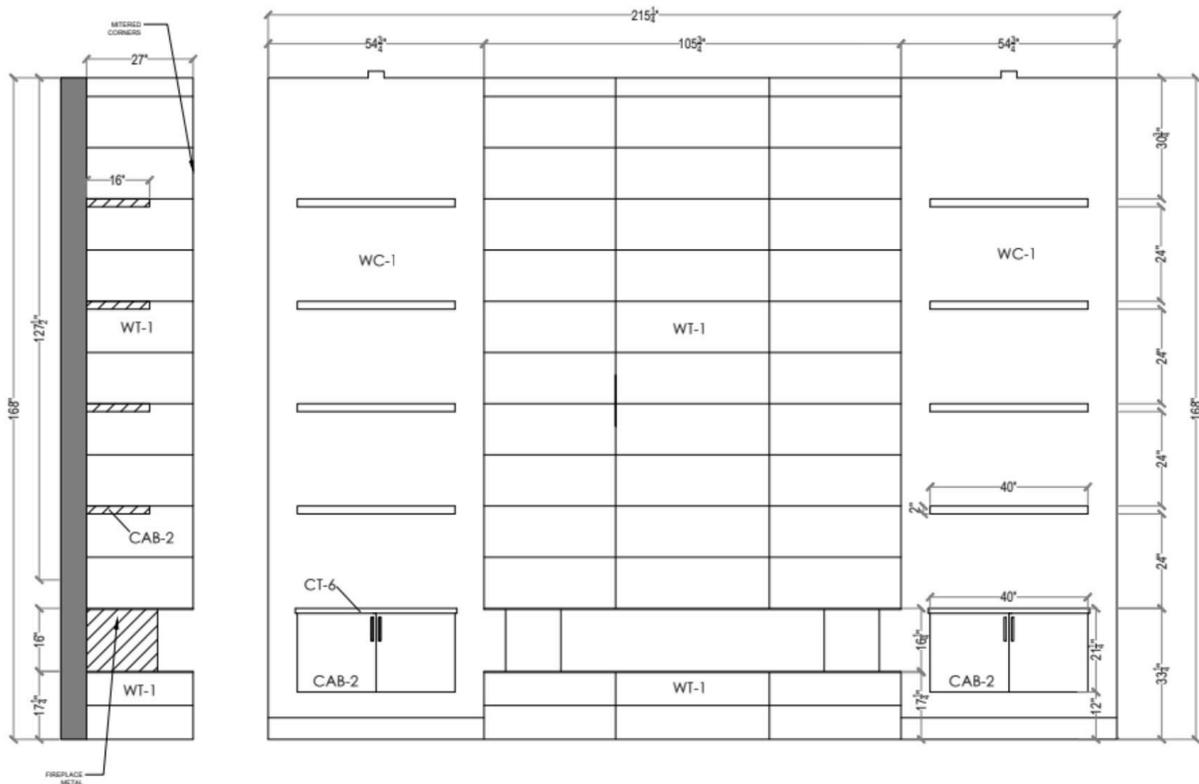
Paint/Wallcovering

Black Ink Interiors

VI | Creating Elevations.

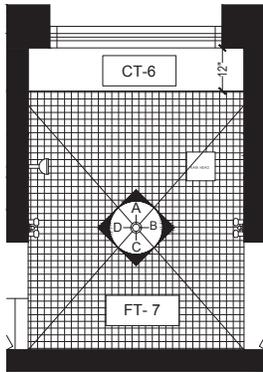
Elevations will help your builder carry out your vision for built-ins, fireplace wall designs, wall tile layouts, plumbing placement, and lighting heights.

- Use AutoCAD for your elevations. If you don't know AutoCAD, work with an AutoCAD drafter (you can find one on upwork.com or fivrr.com) to create a working document. First, sketch out how you want tiles laid out (with dimensions), where you want lighting to be placed, etc. It needs to be easy for the drafter to read.
- Always have a disclaimer on all your drawings that states, "Not for construction. For design purposes only."

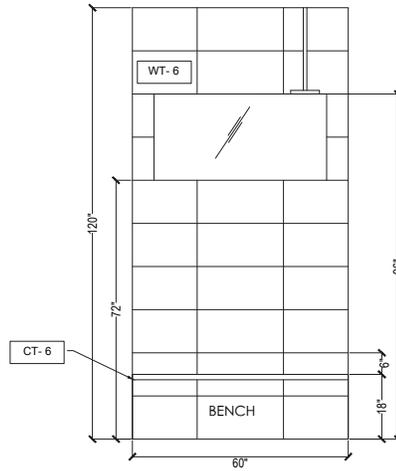


A FIREPLACE ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"

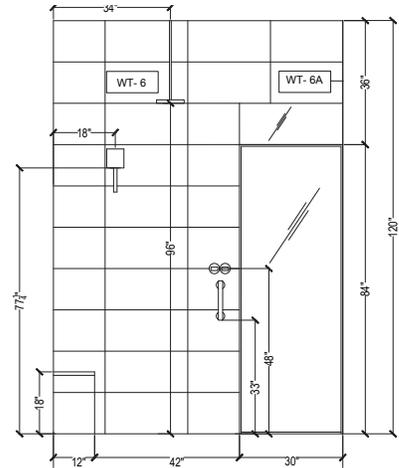
VI | Creating Elevations.



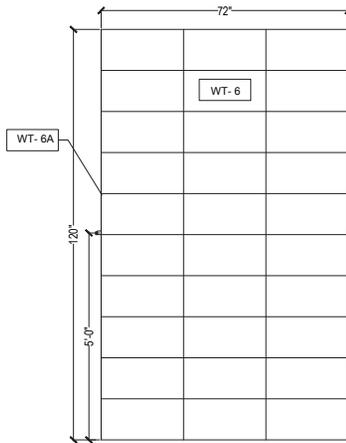
MASTER SHOWER KEY PLAN
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"



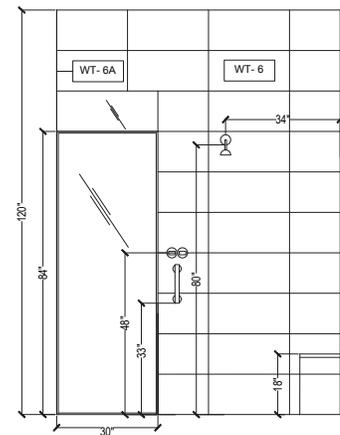
A MASTER SHOWER ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"



B MASTER SHOWER ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"

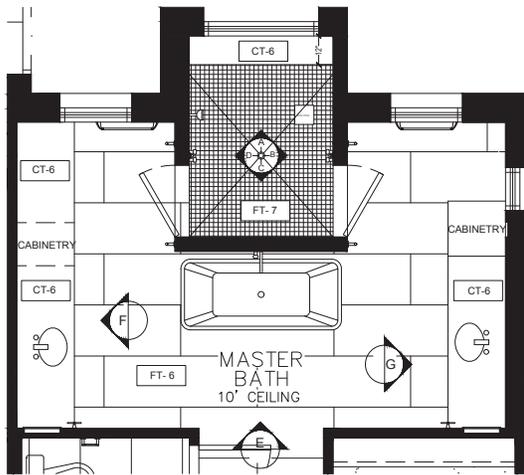


C MASTER SHOWER ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"

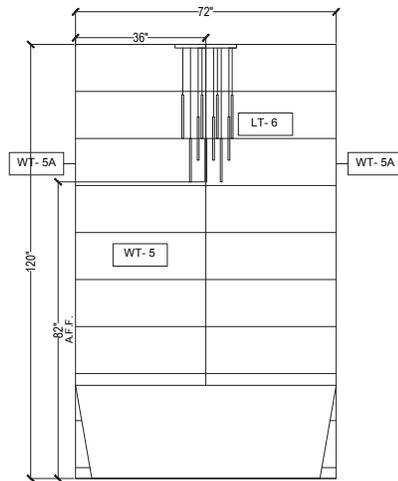


D MASTER SHOWER ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"

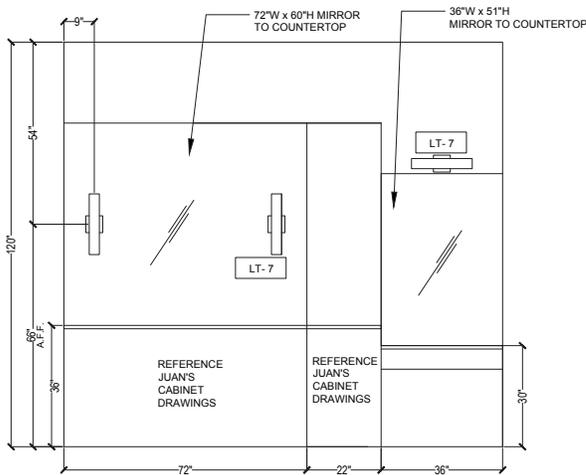
VI | Creating Elevations.



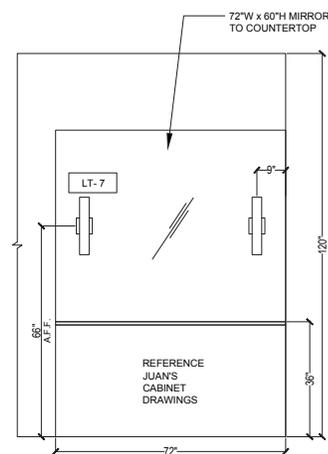
MASTER BATH KEY PLAN
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



MASTER BATH ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



MASTER BATH ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



MASTER BATH ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



tip:

Once you have made a decision, encourage your clients to stick with it. Changes can be costly and delay the project. If changes are made after the binder is complete, be sure to email your builder the necessary documents that he can print and make the updates to his own binder. We indicate changes by highlighting the new item in the finish schedule. There will be change order fees and/or restocking fees if you make changes to the original selections.

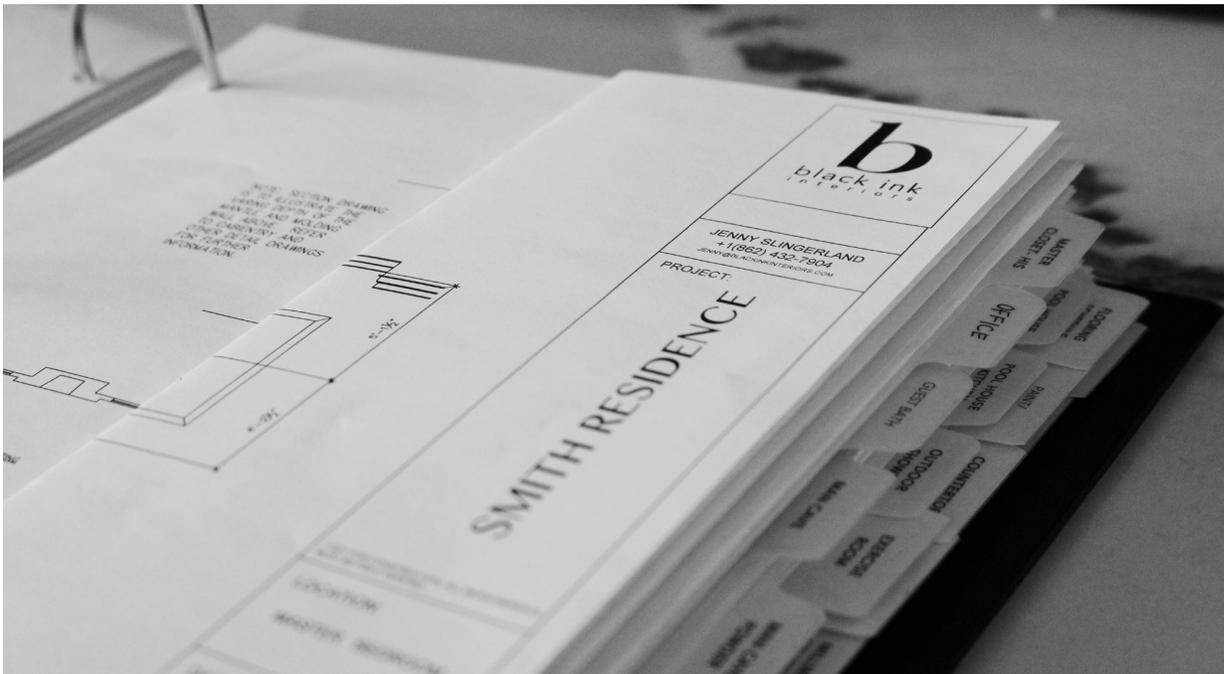
VII | The Spec Book.

The Specification book we create for the builder holds all the information the builder will need to build the house to your specification. Does it take a lot of work? Yes. Is it worth it? 100%! Your builder will love you for it. We will show you how this should be put together.

It is important to turn over a spec book in its entirety, not piece milled. Once you hand over the binder, if changes are made, be sure to email builder necessary documents that he/she can print and update the binder with. Some builders aren't using binders anymore, everything is digital. It's easy to create a dropbox and invite them so they can see all changes in one location.

In an effort to keep ourselves organized, we put the date in front of every client document, so we know which is the most up to date. For example, a finish schedule will be named, "2.14.20_FinishSchedule." We do the same with our CAD plans.

VII | The Spec Book.



The Spec Book Elevation Tabs:

- Design Presentation
- Entry
- Office
- Powder Room
- Dining
- Kitchen
- Living Room
- Family Room
- Master Bedroom
- Master Bath
- Mudroom
- Gym
- Bedroom
- Bath

The Spec Book Finish Schedule Tabs:

- Millwork Schdule
- Plumbing Schedule
- Appliance Schedule
- Lighting Schedule
- Cabinetry Schedule
- Hardware Schedule
- Flooring Schedule
- Wall Tile Schedule
- Countertop Schedule
- Accessory Schedule
- Paint/Wallcovering Schedule

b o n u s

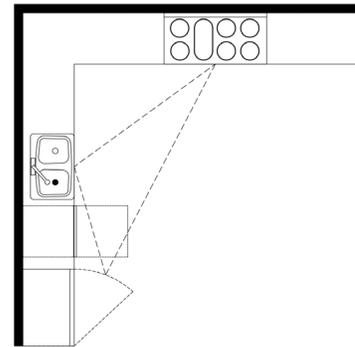
k i t c h e n 1 0 1

In this section, we will be reviewing the basics of designing a kitchen and bathroom.

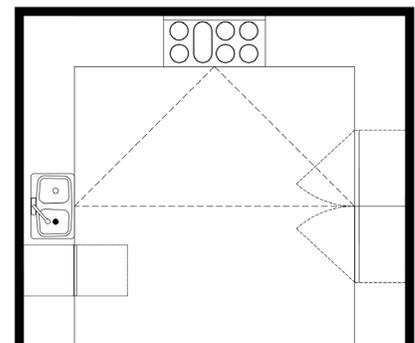
/ | Kitchen 101

- **The Work Triangle.** The work triangle consists of three points of contact between the refrigerator, range, and sink. These three points of contact are your most frequently used spaces, so having them in close proximity is important.
- **The basic rule.** Each 'leg' of your triangle, should measure no less than 4' and no more than 9'. When you add up each side, your triangle should equal between 13'-26'. We've shown the most popular kitchen types.

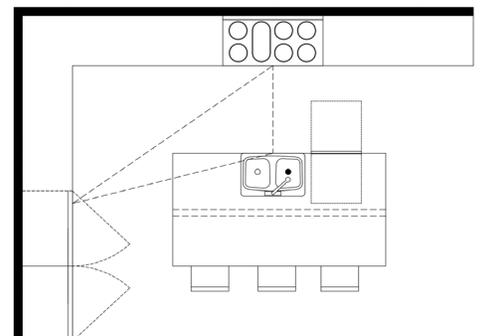
L - s h a p e



P e n i n s u l a



L-Shaped with Island



// | Pendants: Heights, Spacing, and Proportions.

- If your kitchen layout permits the use of pendant lighting, over an island or a peninsula, you will want to know two things: 1. How high they should be hung and 2. The distance they should be spaced. Generally, we like to have 32"-36" of space from the countertop to the bottom of the fixture. You should maintain at least 30" of separation between the two fixtures. If you have three pendants, the same rules apply.
- Make sure your pendants are at least 6" in from the outside edge of the countertop, to create a more intimate space.



Two Pendants



Three Pendants

III | Countertops.

- **Countertops.** From manmade to Mother Nature, there are many options to choose from when it comes to selecting the right countertop. In the next section, you will find the most popular types of countertops with a brief description of each type of material. Natural stone requires sealing. It is an easy process and based on how frequently it is used will determine how often you should seal it. Speak to your fabricator and get their recommendation for your specific countertop selection
- **Countertop Edges.** Once your countertop is selected, you will need to choose an edge detail. You can go for a clean mitered edge, a traditional ogee edge, or a transitional bevel edge. We've provided these three popular profiles pictured.
- **Thickness.** With natural stone, there are typically two thicknesses available, 2cm and 3cm. 3cm is more expensive, because it is thicker. Other than price, there isn't a benefit of one over the other. However, if you want a more European look, you can put the 2cm or 3cm slab down without an edge profile. Which would save you the cost of fabricating the edge.



tip: Based on the size of most kitchens, you will need multiple slabs. Make sure to discuss the seam placement with your fabricator.



Mitered



Beveled

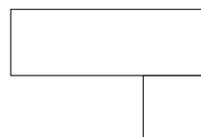


Ogee

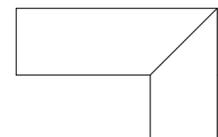
**European edge no edge detail (designer: unknown)*

**most common edges*

When doing a mitered edge, it looks more custom to have the edge truly mitered rather than laminated (where they glue the pieces of slabs together and you see the seam). A mitered edge should be laminated at a 45° angle, rather than creating the edge with two 90° pieces. See drawings below.



Laminated Mitered Edge



Mitered Edge

/// Countertop Surfaces.

**These prices are averages. Your prices may vary based on your location and slab availability.*

M
a
r
b
l
e



- \$25 - \$260 per square foot.
- Natural stone.
- Timeless veining and color options.
- Scratches and stains easily.
- Requires sealing.

Q
u
a
r
t
z
i
t
e



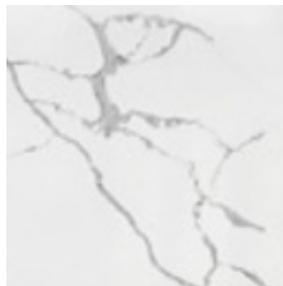
- \$25-\$150 per square foot.
- Natural stone.
- Less likely than marble to scratch and stain.
- Colors and veining vary between slabs.

G
r
a
n
i
t
e



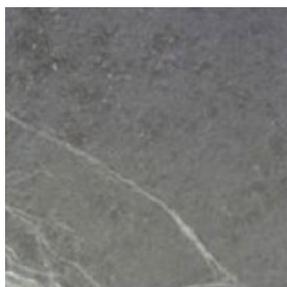
- \$20-\$100 per square foot.
- Natural stone
- Requires yearly sealing

E
n
g
i
n
e
e
r
e
d



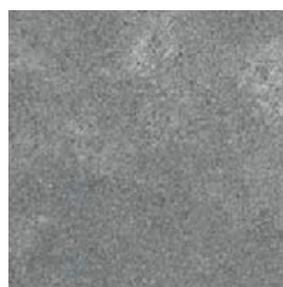
- \$15-\$70 per square foot.
- Man-made material.
- Easy to maintain, non-porous.
- Large selection of colors & patterns.
- Not suitable for outdoors.
- Consistent slab sizes.

S
o
a
p
s
t
o
n
e



- \$70 to \$120 per square foot
- Natural Stone
- Limited color palette.
- Sealing is not recommended.

C
o
n
c
r
e
t
e



- \$65-\$135 per square foot
- Very Durable
- Size, color and thickness is customizable
- Can crack and stain

IV | Backsplash.

- **Materials.** There are many different types of backsplashes to choose from, ceramic, stone, mosaic, porcelain, zellige, etc.. Remember, if you chose a natural stone, it should be sealed.
- **Tile layouts.** Typical backsplashes in kitchens are 18" from the countertop to the bottom of the upper cabinets. If you aren't sure what style layout you want, refer to your inspiration photos. Keep scale in mind as you plan for your backsplash. If the pattern on the tile is large, how will it fit within the the 18" area? Will it be cut in the middle of the pattern? Can you find something that fits the space more appropriately?
- **Slab splash.** If you want a clean, seamless look, carry the countertop up the wall as your backsplash.





- **Grout lines.** Grout thickness typically ranges from "tight" to 1/4". Request the tightest grout joint possible for a clean and modern look.
- **Grout color.** If you would like the grout to "disappear," chose a grout color that matches the tile. If you want to accent the pattern of the tile, opt for a contrasting color. See the photos below for an example of contrasting and matching grout colors.



tip:

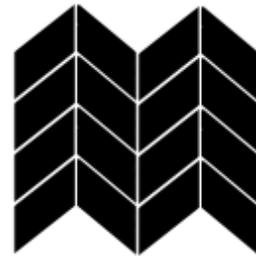
We do not recommend a "picture frame" of a different tile over the stove, this trend is outdated.

IV | TileLayoutExamples.

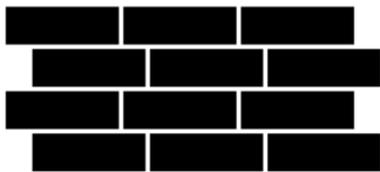
herringbone



chevron



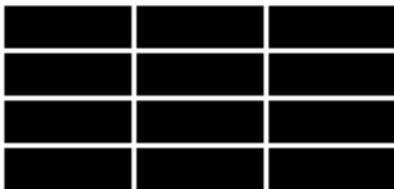
1/3 offset



brick lay



straight lay



b o n u s

b a t h r o o m 1 0 1 .

Like the kitchen, the bathroom you design will likely be in place for years to come so avoid anything too trendy, that you will likely tire of. In this section, we will review shower benches and niches, as well as the do's and don'ts of lighting.

/ | Tile.

- **Bathroom flooring.** Most commonly we use porcelain tile, as it does well in damp areas. Porcelain is non-porous, so it is often the choice for many homeowners. Porcelain tiles that look like natural stone have come a long way, you can get the marble look, without the maintenance of a natural stone. Be aware that natural stone requires special maintenance and will need to be sealed. If you want marble, the master bathroom is a good place to showcase it. Remember if you want to have some fun, the powder bathroom is a great location to have some fun with your floor tiles. As beautiful as it is, we recommend staying away from hardwood floors as they can warp in damp areas.
- **Shower flooring.** It is important in the shower floor to use tile with texture or small tiles (which require more grout) to give traction and prevent slips. We typically use small tiles (.5"x.5" to 2"x2" on mesh), penny rounds or small hexs on the shower floor. Linear drains are now allowing us to be able to carry the bathroom floor into the shower. Just be sure there are enough grout lines to prevent slipping.
- **Shower drains.** Another reason for using small tiles on the shower floor, is that they easily slope toward a central drain (often referred to as an Ebbe drain). Linear drains are used now for a cleaner, more modern look. A linear drain will allow you to use larger tiles (as the slope is not as severe), so having textured tile or having the tile cut down to provide grout locations is imparitive to prevent slippage.
- **Shower Walls.** You can have fun in a shower and play with various shapes and colors or you can give them a simple, clean layout and color palette. Because tilting a shower can be costly, I recommend staying away from a look that is trendy. Something timeless will endure the test of time. Porcelain makes for a good shower wall and floor as there is no maintenance. Natural stone is beautiful in the bathroom/shower but will require maintenance.

- **Walls.** You have less restrictions on the shower wall than you do on the floor because there is no worry of slippage, so you can go as big as you want. Large format tiles have become popular in recent years as they provide a more clean, seamless look.
- **Grout.** You will need to select a grout color and thickness for all tile used in the home. As discussed earlier, you may choose to have the grout blend, by matching the tile color, or having contrasting grout, that will pop.
- **Finish Schedule.** Be sure to keep track of each tile and grout selection you make for your finish schedule. Be as detailed as possible and provide a photo of the item for easy visual referencing. We prefer to make our schedules in a Google Drive Document, although you can make a finish schedule in Microsoft Excel or Word. The digital format will help you make quick revisions and additions.



tip:

Never give tile quantities! That is the installers job. You do not want to be in a position of giving quantities and then on install day discover that you are 20 sq/ft short and the lead time for more tile is two months.



SMITH 1234 N INK DRIVE 2-5-2020

FLOORING									
TAG	LOCATION	IMAGE	NAME	SIZE	FINISH/COLOR	SUPPLIER/MANUF	PATTERN	GROUT/JOINT	NOTES
FT-1	-GREAT ROOM -KITCHEN -BAR -NOOK/DINING -HALL TO MASTER -PANTRY -LAUNDRY		NATUREWOOD NATURAL	8" x 67"		FACINGS OF AMERICA	RANDOM	MAPEI #105, DRIFTWOOD. TIGHTEST GROUT JOINT POSSIBLE.	

// | Lighting.

- **Can Lights.** Review the RCP and make sure there are enough cans in the main area, one in the toilet room (if separate from the rest of the bath), and in the shower (this will be a water proof can).
- In addition to these can lights, you will want to plan for additional lighting over the sink area. This can be in the form of a small can over each sink or more decorative lighting, like pendants or wall sconces.
- **Sconces & Pendants.** Decorative lighting is the jewelry of a bathroom. Have fun with it, especially in the powder bath. If the lighting is for the master or secondary baths, keep in mind that the light needs to be functional as well. No one likes to put makeup on in the dark. So while aesthetics are important, don't forget the functionality of the light as well.



Bathroom Lighting

Black Ink Interiors



Mirrors

Black Ink Interiors

/// | Mirrors

- There are lots of mirror options, with varying size, shape, finish, etc.. The most important thing you have to account for is the size of the mirror in relation to the size of the vanity and mirror wall. The reason for this is, if you have planned for an amazing pair of wall sconces to flank a mirror and your mirror is too wide, the sconces may not fit between the mirror and the wall. Likewise, if you have a small powder vanity, a large scale mirror will overwhelm the room.

tip:

In a powder room, add wallcovering or run tile up to the vanity wall to ceiling. This will give a custom look and a wow factor your guests will remember.



Niche & Schluter Trim

Black Ink Interiors

IV | Benches & Niches.

- **Bench.** Benches are nice to have in a shower, especially if the homeowner is getting older and may need a place to sit if standing is difficult. It also provides a place for a woman to place her foot when she is shaving her legs.
- **Niche.** Niches are imperative in a shower. They are inset in the wall and house shampoo, soap, etc. We always recommend niches instead of corner shelves, as they are more custom. If you have specified a ceramic or porcelain tile on your shower wall, you will need to select a way to trim out the niche and shower side walls.
If you use a natural stone, you do not need to have trim pieces, the installer can smooth/round the edges because a natural stone is the same material throughout.
- **Finishing Edge.** You can use a ceramic pencil liner, moulding piece or metal schluter to finish the shower side walls and niche. Schluter is a much less expensive option and comes in a variety of colors and thicknesses. Your installer will select the correct thickness, you just need to pick the finish/color and indicate it on your finish schedule.

b o n u s

f l o o r i n g

/ | Tile.

C
e
r
a
m
i
c



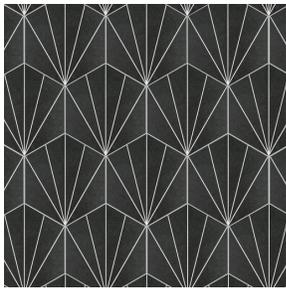
Pros

- \$1-\$50 per square foot
- Slabs of clay hardened through kiln-fired at a lower temperature than porcelain
- Less dense, more porous and softer
- High absorption rate/ avoid using in areas of moisture

Tips

- more affordable but, less durable
- Usually for wall applications only.

P
o
r
c
e
l
a
i
n



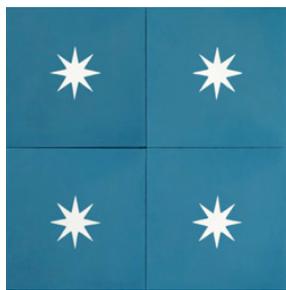
Pros

- \$3-\$120+ per square foot
- refined clay based and kiln-fired
- Hardier, denser, tougher and less porous than ceramic tile
- Low absorption rate
- Easy to clean, low maintenance

Tips

- Glazed "full-bodied" = color running through entire thickness of tile making the tile longer lasting and more resistant to chipping
- Rectified Edge means all tiles are exactly the same size and therefore can have a tighter grout joint.

E
n
c
a
u
s
t
i
c



Pros

- \$5-\$60+ per square foot
- fired red-brown clay
- May be unfinished, finished, matte or glossy
- strong, durable material
- Naturally resistant to mold and bacteria

Tips

- natural: might differ in color tones tile to tile
- Porous: absorbs liquid quickly and won't last as long without a sealant
- Potential for cracking

// | Wood.

V
i
n
i
l



Pros

- \$2-6 per square foot
- Option for scratch resistant and 100% waterproof
- Durable
- Cleaned easily by mopping
- Can be textured to emulate real wood

Cons

- Sharp objects can gauge it
- Can discolor in direct sunlight

L
a
m
i
n
a
t
e



- \$0.50-\$6 per square foot
- layers of high density fiber boards
- Durability with high traffic
- Can be textured and mimic real wood
- Water resistant barrier but not 100% waterproof

- Can be loud without proper under layment
- Can warp because it is not 100% waterproof
- Cannot be mopped
- We do not recommend using.

E
n
g
i
n
e
e
r
e
d



- \$4-\$11 per square foot
- Variety of options
- More stable product than hardwood
- Less prone to changes from temperature and humidity conditions in the room than hardwood

- 3-4 layers of wood glued together to create a 14mm thick plank and then a real wood 4mm thick plank is applied to top the top to allow for sanding and refinishing

S
o
l
i
d
H
a
r
d
w
o
o
d



- \$12-\$20+ per square foot Depending on the species of wood (certain floors will be harder than others)
- Harder the wood = less susceptible to dings and scratches
- Adds value to the home

- Swells in moist conditions and contracts as the area dries
- Can discolor in direct sunlight
- Most expensive (price depends on type of wood)

/// | Carpet.

- **Aesthetic.** Carpet can add color, pattern and texture to a room.
- **Acoustics.** Carpet has the ability to absorb and dampen sound in a room. It can also help prevent echoing in a large room.
- **Insulation.** Because carpet fibers trap air, it is a natural insulator.
- **Cleanability.** For the most part carpet is easy to clean. Maintenance involves vacuuming regularly to remove fine dirt particles that can settle between the fibers of the carpet. Many spills can be cleaned and removed with a clean dry cloth. Professional cleaning is recommended for deep cleaning the carpet but only as needed.



tip:

As you are selecting options for your client keep in mind their lifestyle. Do they have children or pets? If so, think about recommending a stain resistant carpet.



the end
c o n c l u s i o n

I hope that you have found this book helpful! I wish you all the best of luck with your new project!

/ | Final Thoughts.

1. Don't be embarrassed if there something you don't understand. If the builder or tradesmen are using phrases or terms you don't understand, ASK! You will look worse if you don't ask and something is missed, or an error is made as a result.
2. You can only make a first impression once. If a builder is willing to give you a chance, do not let him down. No excuses for missed deadlines, no excuses for being over budget, no excuses for unfinished work. If you prove yourself, he will recommend you for more projects.
3. Remember you are part of a team now, and as such you need to be a team player. Don't throw others under the bus, work as a team to find a solution to the problem. Pointing fingers at each other will get you nowhere and leave you without future jobs.
4. Check, double check and triple check your tag locations on your elevations. Ensure the item information is correct on the finish schedule and that it is properly placed on your elevations. I have been in a situation where I had someone on my team quickly make an edit to an item and I didn't double check for accuracy, only to find out later that the item's information was entered wrong, thus ordered wrong, installed and the item had to be replaced.

tip:

When you are working on a custom home, the things you are specifying are expensive. One wrong number/letter and the item can go from a 36" Subzero fridge to a 30" Subzero fridge. Guess who just bought themselves a new \$10k fridge? YOU! I'm sure you'll love it, they're the best appliances out there, but if you don't have \$10k burning a hole in your pocket, you might want to double check those item numbers and quantities before you send that finish schedule off to the

