

HOMEOWNER FAQs

QUESTIONS CONCERNING SELECTIONS

1. Why must we travel to the Drees Design Center to complete selections?

Drees has been an industry leader in the use of centralized design centers. While many builders ask their customers to travel to suppliers' showrooms all across town to select their building materials, the Drees Design Center enables all selections to be completed conveniently and efficiently in one location. The many selections and enhancements offered in the Drees Design Center provide you the opportunity to personalize your home. Having everything in one location allows you to coordinate the various components. Our Northeast Ohio Drees Design Center is centrally located in Brecksville to be equally accessible to all area customers.

2. Why does Drees not complete selections in the model home like other builders?

Drees believes that your selections are too important to squeeze into the basement or a bedroom of the model home. Our central Design Center is both quiet and private; you will complete your selections at your own pace and you will not be constantly interrupted, as you would be in a model home.

The Drees Design Center includes a wide variety of materials from which you create your unique new home. We employ a professional Design Consultant who is dedicated to knowing our materials and guiding you through this exciting process.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING CONSTRUCTION ISSUES

1. My floor squeaks. Will you repair it?

Your home's floor system is made out of wood, which moves (deflects) when weight is applied to it. Sometimes this can result in a noise. Noises that come and go, usually with changes in heat or humidity, are not considered floor squeaks, requiring repair. Floor squeaks that appear throughout the seasons will be repaired.

2. There are globs of drywall compound and paint on my sub-floor. Will this be removed?

Yes. Prior to installation of flooring, the sub-floor will be scraped and swept as required. Some discoloration may remain.

3. I think that I've found an error in the construction of my home. What should I do?

Chances are your Builder already knows about the problem and is coordinating the remedy with other construction activities. However, there are certain items that are only checked by the Builder at very specific points in time, such as a framing inspection, so it's possible for a customer to "discover" an error of that type prior to the Builder. Certain errors involving color selections, upgrades or other options may be impossible for the Builder to catch. For example, the Builder has no way of knowing whether the "Sienna Sand" color that appears on the selection is the actual carpet color installed in your home. If you note an error in one of these areas, please notify your Market Manager or Builder. Please do not put dots or markings of any kind on the wall to identify an error.

4. During framing, some 2 x 4 studs were bowed and some were cracked. Will they be fixed?

Yes, fixed or replaced. Studs in bearing (load supporting) walls with substantial damage will either be replaced or a new stud will be added to provide support. If the damage is minimal or if it is a non-load bearing wall, the damaged stud will be repaired.

5. I am able to see the grain through the paint on some of my wood trim. Will this be repaired?

No, sometimes the wood grain can be visible through the paint because the grain, which is a natural occurrence of the wood, tends to absorb more of the water in the paint.

6. What will happen to the paint residue on the basement steps?

In our standard plans (unfinished lower level) paint is applied to the walls and ceiling of the stairwell. Because the area is unfinished, paint may fall on the steps. This is not considered to be a problem since the stairs will be carpeted if the lower level is ever finished. (Please note that paint is not applied to textured ceilings.)

7. Some days I see no construction in my home or it appears to be out of sequence. Why?

Before your home is built "on site" it is built within our computer system. This includes a multitude of individual activities scheduled to occur during the construction of your new home. Sometimes weather conditions or material or labor availability will prevent an activity from occurring on its scheduled date. The Builder may need to move up (or back) other activities in the home. In addition, there are times, such as when drywall compound is drying or when one of the many governmental inspections take place, that there are no obvious activities taking place in your home.

During the early stages of construction your home may appear to be ahead of schedule. Do not adjust your planned activities because the construction schedule will likely revert to the original dates.

8. What can I expect from my drywall finish?

Defining drywall finish has historically been difficult, although many warranty programs have tried. We have settled on standards that were first put together by the Indianapolis Home Builders Association. There are two key points.

Drywall is applied in sheets, which are attached to studs, and then taped and finished with joint compound. Due to differences in texture between tape, joint compound and the wallboard itself, there will be inherent differences in the texture when finished, which may be noticeable.

Drywall surface imperfections have many sources. If a stud twists during the drying process, exceeding the flexibility of the gypsum wallboard, a concave or convex imperfection can occur. Other causes include drywall compound not being sanded perfectly smooth, air pockets in the compound, surface abrasions, etc. The standard rule is that if the imperfection is readily noticed by a visual inspection, it should be repaired. "Readily noticed" is defined as being noticeable at a distance of six feet away from the imperfection under normal lighting conditions. "Normal lighting conditions" are defined as indirect sunlight and medium artificial light. High intensity lighting, direct sunlight, artificial light aimed directly at the area, or artificial light aimed parallel to the wall is not considered normal lighting. If your home has a textured ceiling, it may not look exactly like others you may see due to different application techniques that are used.

9. There are differences in the color of my cabinets. Is this a defect?

It is natural for wood to have an inherent grain that will appear in the finished product. The variations in color will appear to be more or less pronounced depending upon the wood species. This also applies to other products such as hardwood flooring and stair rails. We will not replace cabinet doors in an attempt to achieve a uniform appearance.

10. What if I want to do some work in the home myself, such as painting or installing speaker wires?

There are many reasons why we cannot allow our customers to conduct work in our homes. There are liability and insurance issues that must be avoided. Scheduling, inspections, and building codes may be compromised. Certain items may invalidate parts of the Warranty. We are obligated to honor contracts that we have with suppliers and sub contractors. Consequently, we have a non-negotiable policy that prohibits anyone other than our employees and approved contractors working in our homes prior to the closing.

11. I have my own paddle fans and light fixtures. Will Drees install them for me?

Even though our employees are anxious to be helpful, we cannot allow customer provided products to be installed by Drees personnel. Breakage or theft is possible and we cannot be responsible for replacing items that were not purchased from us.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING HOUSE CLEANLINESS DURING CONSTRUCTION

1. Should my house be clean each night after a day's work?

Many trade operations take more than one day to complete; therefore a house will frequently look "under construction" overnight. Trade contractors should remove the bulk of their trash on a daily basis and then are required to broom sweep the house when their trade operation is complete.

2. There was some trash in a bathtub...is that normal?

During construction, tubs should have covers on them and generally be trash free. Unfortunately, tubs can't be cleaned on a daily basis and so they may accumulate some trash from time to time. Note that insulation or cardboard scraps are sometimes put in the tub bottoms for protection.

3. Are trade contractors allowed to smoke or eat in my home?

We discourage smoking in the home at any time; however, once the construction process is in the drywall stage, smoking is prohibited. Trade contractors are allowed to eat lunch in the home and are expected to dispose of their drink cups and food wrappers in trashcans that are provided.

4. Do trade contractors use the toilets inside my home?

All workers are asked to use outside sanitary facilities regardless of whether or not the toilets have been installed in the home.

5. What if I see cleanliness rules being broken during the construction of my home?

Please notify your Market Manager or Builder. Obviously, the Builder cannot be in every home every minute of the day. Once notified, the Builder will address the situation as soon as possible.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING CARPET

1. I can still see carpet seams in my home, is this a problem?

Sometimes a carpet seam can be seen even if it has been installed properly. The seam can certainly be checked for proper installation. Please note that seams in Berber carpet will be more noticeable.

2. How will my carpet be protected once it is installed?

Anyone entering your home must either protect their shoes or remove them before entering the home. Sometimes Market Managers will take prospects through a nearly finished home. If this happens, they will be asked to remove their shoes. If you would like a key to inspect your carpet or your house, please be sure to remove your shoes.

3. My carpet has a stain on it. What will be done?

The first step is to see if normal vacuuming during the final cleaning process will be sufficient. If not, the problem areas will be spot cleaned. In more severe cases it may be necessary to professionally clean the carpet to remove the stain. If the stain cannot be removed, or the carpet has been damaged, the affected areas will be replaced. In the event that the carpet becomes wet, it will be pulled back, the pad will be replaced, if necessary, and the carpet will be cleaned, dried and reinstalled.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING CORRECTIONS

1. Will my house be 100% perfect the first time when complete?

The reality is that this is a physical impossibility. Some corrections will always be required, and that is the reason we perform two internal inspections of the finished home before your Homeowner Orientation.

2. How will you repair dents in my steel exterior doors?

Dents in steel doors are repaired using body putty similar to the way an automobile dent is repaired. After the repair is painted, the repair will generally not be visible, although upon close inspection a slightly different texture may be detected.

3. How will you repair cracks in my concrete foundation?

Cracks in concrete are a natural occurrence. Cracks that leak will be addressed by injecting a hydraulic sealant, which is said to be stronger than the concrete itself. Cracks in basement slabs may or may not be repaired subject to the guidelines you will find in your Warranty.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING WALK THROUGHS

1. When is the best time to visit my home?

By far, the best time to visit your home is during the evening or on a weekend. Safety and the resultant insurance issues are two factors. In addition, home building is an inherently difficult process and we strive to eliminate any unnecessary distractions to the workers. Please do not inspect your home when there is work going on inside.

2. What is the purpose of the Pre-Drywall Inspection?

The Pre-Drywall Inspection has three functions. First, it is to demonstrate what goes on behind the drywall, plumbing, electric, mechanical and structural systems. Second, it allows us to review your options with you to ensure that they are being correctly installed. Third, it provides you the opportunity to pose any questions you may have directly to the Builder. Please note that this inspection is not an opportunity to make changes. Pre-drywall Inspections will be scheduled during normal business hours on a weekday.

3. What happens to the Homeowner Orientation items?

Noted items are expected to be complete within one week, and are subject to re-inspection by you. We want to have all items listed on the Homeowner Orientation completed prior to closing. **Any additional items presented to the Builder after the Homeowner Orientation may not be completed prior to the closing.** The completion of all items is subject to material availability and weather.

4. Can I bring a professional new home inspector to the Orientation?

In order to save your time and that of our Builder, we do not allow home inspectors to be part of the Orientation. You are welcome to hire a new home inspector, but the inspection must be scheduled (through your Market Manager and Builder) to occur within one week prior to the Homeowner Orientation. If a radon test inspector has been hired, the testing must be conducted Friday evening through Sunday to allow the home to be sealed for the requisite 48 hours.

5. When will the Homeowner Orientation be scheduled for my home?

In order to allow our Orientation Representatives sufficient time to travel from one orientation to the next, we have established the following schedule:

Monday: 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Tuesday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

6. After we move in, when will Warranty visits be scheduled?

After closing, Warranty visits are scheduled Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

QUESTIONS HAVING TO DO WITH WEATHER CONDITIONS

1. Will rain ruin the installed drywall, insulation or sub-floor?

Small amounts of moisture will not harm drywall, insulation or sub-floor. If the material gets wet enough so as to damage its integrity or performance, the damaged sections will be removed and replaced. The seams of all sub flooring will be sanded prior to the installation of finished flooring which will remove many irregularities.

2. There is a broken window in my home. When will it get replaced?

Broken windows will be replaced close to the Homeowner Orientation for the following reasons. First, there is a lag time in receiving replacement windows. Second, there is a chance of a window being broken again. If the break is clearly open to the weather it should be temporarily sealed in the interim.

3. Should my windows be closed at night?

Not necessarily. In general, windows should be closed for the evening once the house has entered the drywall phase. However, some windows must be left open for either safety or ventilation requirements when propane heaters are in use or during the drywall finishing stage.

4. What about care and maintenance responsibilities for my home after closing?

Generally speaking, we are responsible for defects in materials and workmanship. You are responsible for maintenance related items. Please refer to your Warranty for more specific information.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING EXTERIOR ITEMS

1. Will my exterior concrete crack, settle, or deteriorate?

Cracking and settling of concrete cannot always be prevented. Cracks will develop inside the control joints and possibly start outside them. Industry standards state that cracks that do not exceed 3/8" either vertically or horizontally are within acceptable tolerances. Individual pad settlement has a tolerance of 1" from adjacent pads. Customer maintenance is suggested if cracks develop. We recommend caulking cracks to control water infiltration. Surface deterioration may occur and so we recommend sealing exterior concrete. Please consult the Warranty section of this handbook for further details.

Driveways that have been poured and covered with blankets during the winter months are subject to discoloration. As the weather warms, the discoloration is typically bleached out by the sun.

Please be aware that road salt will damage the surface of concrete. Do not place or allow salt to be drug onto your

driveway or sidewalks during winter months. Drees Homes recommends sand for this purpose.

WINTER CONSTRUCTION INFORMATION

When winter weather does not allow for driveway and sidewalk installation or the completion of other exterior items, we are often asked for a schedule. Please be aware of how these items are handled per the following:

- All items that are not completed due to winter weather are documented on a "Winter List". The Winter List is maintained and later completed when spring weather permits.
- Exterior concrete can only be placed when the soil beneath these areas has completely thawed. Generally, ten to fourteen consecutive, 24-hour days of above 40° Fahrenheit temperatures are required before exterior concrete can be installed.
- When we begin working a particular street, we normally will complete every driveway and sidewalk on that street before moving to another street or community. This method has proven to be faster and more efficient than jumping from street to street, through many communities in an attempt to complete work in the order of closing dates. Please do not be alarmed when you see work being completed in this manner and we appreciate your patience.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING GRADING & LANDSCAPING:

1. Why doesn't Drees standardly include landscaping?

Landscaping is not generally included with new homes built in Northeast Ohio. This is due partly to the relatively short planting and growing season as well as local custom. There are many good nurseries in the area as well as talented landscapers. Most people choose to consult with one of these professionals and have a yard personally designed and installed after move in.

2. Will Drees do landscaping?

Drees does offer a basic landscaping package for those who desire to have landscaping included in their purchase agreement. In addition, some Drees market homes are landscaped as they near completion. If you are interested in including landscaping with your new Drees home, please inform your Drees Market Manager or Design Consultant.

3. What will my homesite look like at move in if I do not purchase Drees landscaping?

Drees, like most builders in Northeast Ohio provides what is called a 'construction grade'. Your homesite will be graded according to the engineered and approved grading plan and such that drainage patterns are clearly established and there is no standing (ponding) water. The home and all exterior concrete will be backfilled. Some settling and minor erosion can be expected after move-in depending upon the amount of rainfall or snowmelt. All construction debris will be removed from the property, but graded areas may still include gravel and rocks that are less than 3" in diameter.

4. When Drees installs landscaping, what is the warranty?

Drees does not warrant landscaping after closing. The condition of landscaping and lawns will vary widely based upon the amount of care received after closing such as watering, fertilization, aeration, etc. We cannot effectively warrant these materials when so many other factors affect their health. Drees will return to repair standing (ponding) water after closing, if it is determined that the final grade was not completed properly.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for selecting Drees Homes as your builder. Our goal is to make your homebuilding experience as pleasant as possible. We sincerely hope that you will enjoy your new Drees home and community for many years.