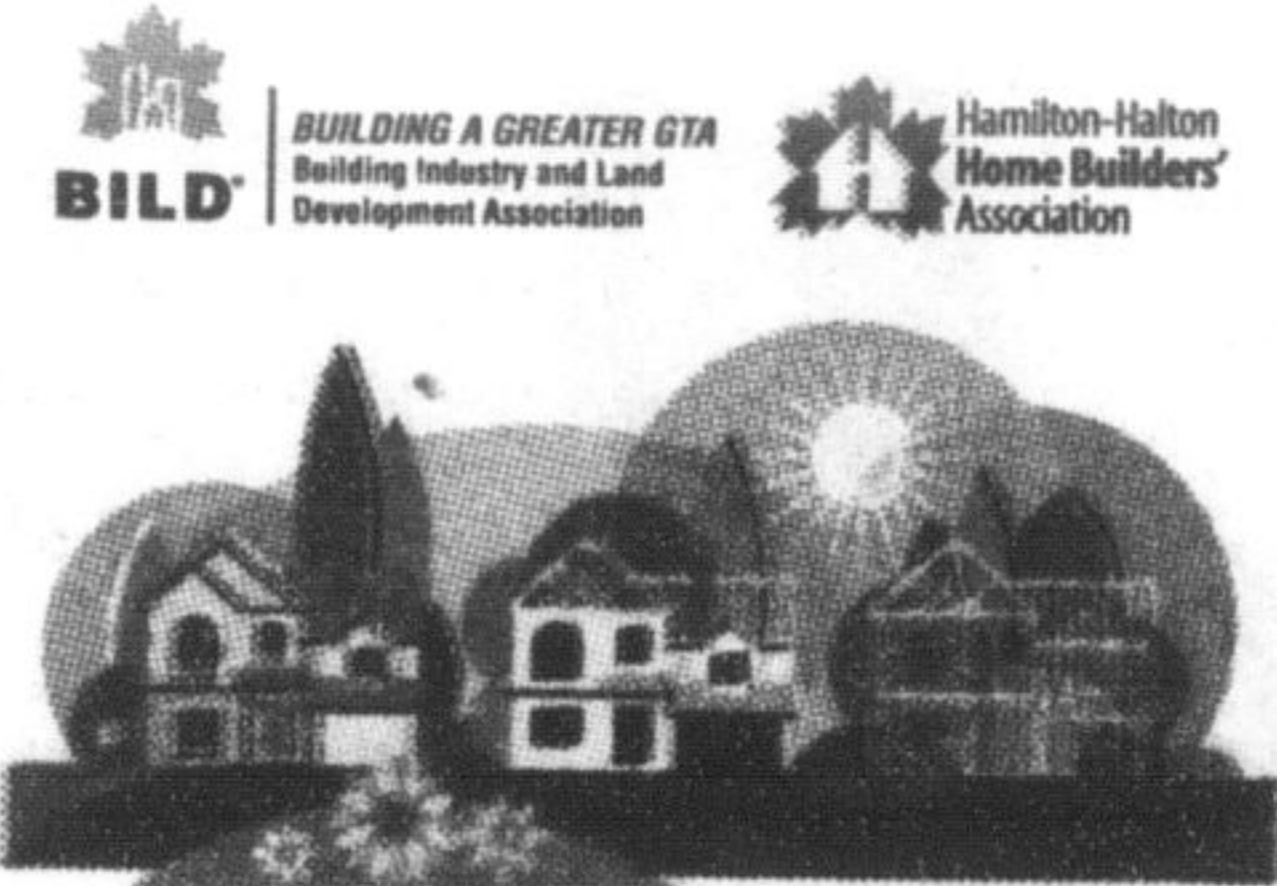




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DEADLINES

BOOKINGS: Monday 5 pm prior to publication AD MATERIALS: Tuesday 10 am

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Features and finishes

Today's new homes set new standards for value, character and individuality. A new home comes with a full range of quality features and finishes included in the base price. Professional new home builders also offer a variety of options and upgrades to suit any budget.

Coming up with your final list of features and finishes can take time. It is also often a balancing act between what you really want and what you feel you can spend on upgrades. Don't rush. Instead consult with your builder. Professional new home builders are committed to working closely with their customers to develop a clear and realistic vision of their new home.

Many builders offer design services to help you fine-tune interior layout and overall look of the home, down to the smallest detail. They may have a décor centre to assist you in selecting specific features and finishes. They may connect you with their network of supplier experts, who will help you make informed decisions.

The best time to consider any extras is before construction of your home begins. Here are some of the new home features to look for and discuss with your builder.

Windows - Windows are one of the most distinguishing features of a brand new home. Large windows bathe your home in light. Bold designs add character, and finishing details complement your décor inside and out. And thanks to recent advances in window technology, the beauty of today's windows goes hand-in-hand with energy performance,

low maintenance and homeowner comfort.

Floor coverings - Today's floor coverings offer more than a neutral background for your interior décor; they are an integral part of the character of your home. New home builders often combine different types of flooring in creative ways, matching them to the style and intended use of each room or area, as well as to your budget. Natural stone and ceramic tiles grace foyers, bathrooms, kitchens and informal living areas. Tough laminates find their way into children's rooms, hallways and home offices. Traditional hardwood flooring adds the warmth and feel of real wood. Carpeting comes in a plethora of textures and colours. Linoleum or vinyl with a tile or stone look lets you maximize your budget and still get the appearance you want.

Fixtures and faucets - With kitchens and bathrooms being key to home buyer decisions, new home builders pay careful attention to the details. From laminates to granite, they offer a number of attractive, durable counter options and upgrades. Sinks are available in many configurations, materials and colours; some are moulded right into the counters. Faucets range from contemporary practical to Victorian ornate to futuristic sleek.

The cost of top-of-the-line products can add up quickly. A wise approach is to set a firm budget for kitchen and bathroom upgrades and work with your builder to achieve the greatest overall value for your investment.

Article provided courtesy of The Canadian Home Builders' Association www.chba.ca.

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