SHEEPDOG Construction

BUILD STANDARDS / FINISHES / BUDGET

The Sheepdog Client Guide

Built with discipline. Finished with distinction.

A practical guide to the work we coordinate, the standards we protect and the choices that shape your home and property.

Compare materials and planning ranges, identify the details that matter most, and prepare for a clear conversation about scope and budget.

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CLIENT PLANNING GUIDE / NOVEMBER 2026

01 / HOME, INTERIORS & PROPERTY

The work we coordinate

Define the home and property as one scope. Sheepdog can coordinate the following work from early planning through completion, as agreed for the project.

AREA	EXAMPLES OF WORK
Home construction	Custom homes, guest cottages, additions and full house-and-lot coordination.
Renovations	Whole-home, kitchen, bathroom, interior and exterior work; porches, patios and outdoor living.
Interior finishes	Design direction and layouts; custom cabinetry, tile and built-ins; flooring, lighting, trim, doors, hardware, paint and drywall finish.
Site & access	Clearing and demolition; foundation and masonry work; grading, drainage, drives, culverts, pavers, hardscape preparation and soil stabilization.
Farm & equestrian	Barns, arenas, fencing, pastures, irrigation, water access and equipment, livestock or service routes planned together.
Project coordination	Scope and trade coordination, selections, scheduling, supervision, communication, documented changes, walk-through and closeout.

The written scope identifies the services, design responsibilities, sitework and allowances included in the project. Rural structures and property improvements receive their own scope and pricing within the overall plan.

02 / THE SHEEPDOG STANDARD

Structure & water protection

The finish level can vary. Structure, moisture protection, proper preparation and careful installation form the construction baseline.

SYSTEM	STARTING SPECIFICATION & WHY IT MATTERS
Exterior walls & sheathing	**2x6 framing where appropriate; ZIP System or comparable sheathing and flashing.** Resolve the complete wall assembly, with careful seams, openings, penetrations and transitions.
Framed floors	**AdvanTech or a comparable high-performance subfloor.** Panel selection, floor support and fastening contribute to a solid finished floor and help address movement, swelling and squeaks.
Structural components	**Engineered components where required.** Match beams, headers, trusses and floor systems to the actual loads and spans, with design and installation requirements resolved before field work.
Crawl-space moisture	**Encapsulation and dehumidification where appropriate.** Consider drainage, humidity, access and maintenance together as part of the foundation and moisture-control plan.
Roof & flashing	**Quality roof system with written warranty terms.** Review the covering, underlayment, flashing and ventilation together, and confirm installation, coverage and maintenance expectations.
Wet-area waterproofing	**Schluter or a comparable suitable system.** Define the waterproofing behind or beneath the finished tile and coordinate the system, tile installation and plumbing scope.

These are recommended starting specifications. Final assemblies, products, engineering, installation details and warranty coverage are confirmed for the project in writing; equivalent systems may be specified.

03 / THE SHEEPDOG STANDARD

Comfort, finish & site standards

Coordinate the assemblies, site and installation details before selecting the final cosmetic layers.

SYSTEM	STARTING SPECIFICATION & WHY IT MATTERS
Insulation & air control	**Project-specific high-performance wall and roof assemblies.** Set the insulation targets, then coordinate air sealing, windows, HVAC and humidity control. Confirm the R-values, materials and installation for the complete design.
Doors & windows	**Andersen or comparable quality as selected.** Review the actual units, sizes, opening types, hardware, exposure and installation details. Daily function, appearance and weather protection all belong in the decision.
Drywall & preparation	**Level 4 or Level 5 as specified.** Match the finish to the surface and lighting. Large smooth walls or critical lighting may call for Level 5. Resolve substrates and surface preparation before finish work.
Grading & drainage	**Laser grading where accuracy is needed.** Review home pads, drives, culverts, lawns, pastures and service routes together. Set intended levels and water movement before individual improvements are fixed in place.
Soil stabilization	**Hydroseeding or suitable erosion-control seeding after sitework.** Plan stabilization for disturbed soil and coordinate pasture, landscape and maintenance needs with the property scope.

A simple home can carry beautiful materials and carefully made details. Put custom work where it matters most while protecting the construction beneath it.

04 / A COMFORTABLE BUDGET CONVERSATION

How we use your budget

Sharing your budget helps us give useful guidance from the beginning. A range is enough to start, even while the details are still taking shape.

Your budget guides the planning. Your written agreement authorizes the work.

01 Start where you feel comfortable.

Share the range you would feel comfortable investing. An optional firm ceiling helps us understand your limit. Include sitework, fees and a reserve when discussing a whole-project budget.

02 The scope is the basis for the price.

We develop pricing from the defined work, specifications and trade input, including management, overhead and profit. Your stated maximum does not automatically become the proposed price. If the scope exceeds your range, we explain the gap and practical options early.

03 You decide what to approve.

The written proposal identifies the work, allowances and exclusions. Sharing a budget authorizes no spending. Scope changes, along with their price and schedule effects, are documented for approval before the changed work proceeds.

Start with a range and the property.

Bring your priorities, plans if available and a comfortable investment range. The project brief on page 13 gives you one place to record the range, an optional ceiling, reserve and what your budget covers.

05 / A STARTING POINT FOR PRICING

New-home planning ranges

These preliminary ranges describe finish and customization levels. They include contractor coordination, supervision, overhead and profit; they are not fixed-price packages.

PER HEATED, FINISHED SQUARE FOOT OF THE MAIN HOME

DIRECTION	RANGE / SF	WHAT THE BUDGET SUPPORTS
Practical	$225-$285	Stock cabinetry, standard fixtures, practical flooring and simple trim. Fewer custom details.
Custom standard	$285-$365	Semi-custom cabinetry, upgraded main rooms, durable finishes and selected custom features.
Heirloom custom	$365-$475	Quality cabinetry, meaningful millwork, attractive tile and a few handcrafted or signature details.
High custom	$475-$650	Premium materials, extensive custom work, refined doors and windows, and more developed interior detail.
Estate / specialty	$650-$1,000+	Rare materials, specialty trades, advanced systems and highly individual architectural or interior work.

HIGHLY LIMITED SCOPE / INDIVIDUAL REVIEW

The $175-$225/sf scenario is limited to very simple, tightly defined work with few selections and little custom detail. Feasibility, scope and project fit must be confirmed individually before using it as a budget.

Keep the basis clear. Main-home construction labor and materials are included in the planning basis. Site-specific work, service connections, design and approval costs, porches, garages and other structures require separate scope. See pages 9 and 11.

Final pricing depends on the plans, site, engineering, selections, schedule and trade pricing. The written proposal establishes the actual specifications, allowances and inclusions.

06 / WHAT THE CHOICES LOOK LIKE

Compare the actual materials.

Use these examples to discuss expectations before estimating. They describe choices to price, rather than automatic inclusions or a required package.

CATEGORY	PRACTICAL	CUSTOM STANDARD	HEIRLOOM CUSTOM
Kitchen cabinetry	Stock cabinetry; standard sizes and limited modifications.	Semi-custom cabinetry; improved storage and selected built-ins.	Quality cabinetry with custom work where it adds function and character.
Counters	Laminate or entry-level stone selections, as scoped.	Stone or quartz selections within a clearly stated allowance.	Selected natural stone, distinctive edges and slab backsplash details.
Flooring	LVP, carpet, laminate or basic tile, as specified.	Durable LVP, engineered wood or upgraded tile.	Wood or premium engineered flooring, with selected tile in important spaces.
Bathrooms	Standard fixtures, fiberglass tub/shower units or limited tile.	Selected tiled showers and upgraded fixtures in main bathrooms.	Custom tile, cabinetry and more detailed work in the primary bath.
Trim & doors	Simple profiles, standard doors and straightforward hardware.	A more complete, coordinated door, trim and hardware package.	Meaningful millwork, feature built-ins and carefully resolved details.
Lighting	Standard fixtures and a focused decorative-lighting allowance.	Coordinated fixtures, task lighting and dimmers where selected.	A layered lighting plan and signature fixtures in the main spaces.

Confirm the whole selection. A cabinet allowance should identify the layout, storage, hardware and installation. A tile allowance should address the tile, pattern, extent and labor. A fixture photo alone does not define the finished room.

07 / CUSTOM DETAIL, CHOSEN INTENTIONALLY

One home. Different priorities.

Higher finish levels involve more custom work, specialty materials and coordination. Individual features can be selected across levels; the price band does not include every example.

HIGH CUSTOM

- Custom cabinetry and built-ins in important rooms.
- Premium wood flooring, stone counters and developed tile details.
- More refined doors, millwork, window selections and exterior details.
- Individually specified lighting and comfort systems.

ESTATE / SPECIALTY

- Rare stone, imported tile and specialty glass, steel, masonry or timber work.
- Steam showers, heated floors and specialty plumbing.
- Panel-ready appliances and extensive custom cabinetry.
- Whole-house controls, audio, security or advanced comfort systems.

EXAMPLE / A DELIBERATELY MIXED FINISH PLAN

SPACE	DIRECTION	WHERE TO PUT THE DETAIL
Kitchen	Heirloom	Custom island or storage where it makes daily use better.
Primary bath	Custom	Tiled shower, selected fixtures and a practical layout.
Secondary rooms	Practical	Durable flooring, simple trim and standard fixtures.
Laundry & closets	Practical	Straightforward cabinetry and shelving.
Main living spaces	Heirloom	A few meaningful built-ins, light and crafted details.
Exterior & porches	Custom	Proportion, durable materials and selected detailing.

This is an illustration, not a priced package. Foundation, framing, weather protection and proper installation keep the same construction baseline throughout the home.

08 / RENOVATIONS & THE COMPLETE SCOPE

Renovations & project scope

Existing conditions, demolition, protection and tie-ins need their own scope. Use affected area for early comparisons, then price the actual work.

PROJECT TYPE	RANGE / SF	MAIN COST CONSIDERATIONS
Light cosmetic refresh	$75-$150	Paint, flooring and fixtures with minimal structural or utility changes.
Standard remodel	$150-$250	Kitchen/bath updates, finish upgrades and moderate trade work.
High-end remodel / addition	$250-$425+	Custom details, structural work, relocated services and higher finishes.
Complex custom addition	$425-$650+	Foundation/roof tie-ins, kitchens or baths, utility upgrades and exterior matching.

These are preliminary comparisons, not a room-specific quote. Price partial-home work by itemized scope. Count each cost once and identify what is inside the construction agreement.

Define the complete project budget.

SITE & UTILITIES

Clearing, grading, driveways, connections, well and septic.

PROPERTY WORK

Barns, arenas, fencing, irrigation and landscaping.

OWNER COSTS

Land, financing and purchases outside the construction scope.

ADDITIONAL SPACES

Porches, decks, garages, basements and detached buildings.

DESIGN & APPROVALS

Drawings, engineering, permits and required reviews.

PROJECT RESERVE

Funds held for unresolved conditions and project uncertainty.

09 / WHERE THE MONEY GOES

What raises cost. What helps.

Two homes with the same square footage can cost very differently. These are the decisions to work through before cutting the details you care about.

WHAT ADDS COST	A PRACTICAL WAY TO RESPOND
Rooflines & footprint. Dormers, valleys, corners, high pitches and added transitions.	Simplify the shape and roof before removing the spaces and details you value most.
Large or specialty openings. Oversized glazing, folding doors and premium window systems.	Choose sizes and locations deliberately; price specialty units early.
Cabinetry & millwork. Built-ins, custom storage and detailed trim throughout the home.	Concentrate custom work in key rooms; simplify secondary spaces.
Bathrooms & service moves. More wet rooms or relocated plumbing, electrical and HVAC.	Keep layouts efficient and review utility changes before the plan is settled.
Stone, tile & specialty finishes. Material selection, pattern, labor and the area to be covered.	Use a signature material where it matters; simplify elsewhere and price the complete installation.
Site & service conditions. Long drives, poor access, drainage, retaining walls and utility runs.	Review the land and connection requirements before fixing the house budget.
Existing-home tie-ins. Demolition, concealed conditions and matching existing work.	Investigate what can be seen, define assumptions and keep a reserve for unresolved conditions.
Late changes & thin allowances. Unresolved selections, unrealistic allowances and redesign during work.	Make selections early, check what allowances cover and agree on changes in writing.

One or two well-made signature details can give a home character. Custom work in every room is a different scope and needs a different budget.

10 / WHEN THE VISION EXCEEDS THE BUDGET

Close the gap with real choices.

When the desired scope prices above the available budget, we need to change area, design, selections, timing or the investment. Re-labeling the estimate does not change the work.

ILLUSTRATION / SAME SCOPE, DIFFERENT BUDGET

Desired scope	Available budget	Gap to resolve
$900,000	$650,000	$250,000

CHOICE	WHAT IT ACTUALLY CHANGES
Reduce the area	Build fewer square feet while protecting the rooms and finish details that matter most.
Simplify the design	Reduce roof complexity, corners, oversized spaces and specialty exterior features.
Tailor the finishes	Choose standard materials in secondary spaces and reserve custom work for key areas.
Phase selected work	Defer agreed extras such as an outdoor kitchen, some built-ins or later landscape work.
Increase the investment	Keep the scope and finish expectations when the larger budget is available.

SIZE / FINISH LEVEL / TOTAL BUDGET

More area + fixed budget	Simplify design, finishes or other scope.
Higher finishes + fixed budget	Reduce area or phase selected work.
More area + higher finishes	Increase the total investment.

11 / FROM FIRST CALL TO FINAL WALK-THROUGH

How a project takes shape

Define the full scope early, then carry the agreed standards, selections and responsibilities through the work.

PHASE	WHAT HAPPENS
01 Initial conversation	Discuss goals, location, priorities, timing and a comfortable investment range.
02 Site review	Review access, drainage, grading, utilities, existing structures and general feasibility.
03 Scope planning	Define the home, sitework, demolition, driveway, finishes, property work and allowances.
04 Standards review	Review construction assemblies and the finish choices that can be tailored.
05 Design & selections	Coordinate layouts, cabinetry, tile, doors, windows, fixtures and exterior details.
06 Proposal & agreement	Set the written scope, pricing basis, allowances, exclusions, terms and schedule assumptions.
07 Construction	Coordinate trades, supervision, communication, quality and documented changes.
08 Final walk-through	Review the finished work, punch list, closeout information, warranties and maintenance.

Start with the essentials. Send your property location, plans if available, priorities and a comfortable investment range. We will discuss fit and the next step. For paid planning, the scope, deliverables and fee are agreed in writing before work begins.

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12 / BRING THIS TO THE CONVERSATION

Your project brief

Complete what you know today. A range is enough to start; a firm maximum and reserve are optional. Record your priorities and the next useful action.

NAME / PROJECT

PROPERTY LOCATION

COMFORTABLE TARGET OR RANGE

FIRM MAXIMUM / OPTIONAL

RESERVE WITHIN TOTAL / OPTIONAL

THIS RANGE COVERS

☐ Whole project ☐ Construction only

PROJECT SCOPE / DESIRED TIMING / PLANS OR PROPERTY STATUS

TOP PRIORITIES / MUST-HAVE DETAILS / MAIN QUESTIONS

WHERE WOULD YOU INVEST, SIMPLIFY OR PHASE?

CATEGORY	INVEST	SIMPLIFY	LATER	NOTES
Kitchen & cabinetry	☐	☐	☐	
Bathrooms & tile	☐	☐	☐	
Floors, trim & doors	☐	☐	☐	
Windows & lighting	☐	☐	☐	
Porches / exterior	☐	☐	☐	
Barns, arena & land	☐	☐	☐	

NEXT ACTION / PERSON RESPONSIBLE / FOLLOW-UP DATE