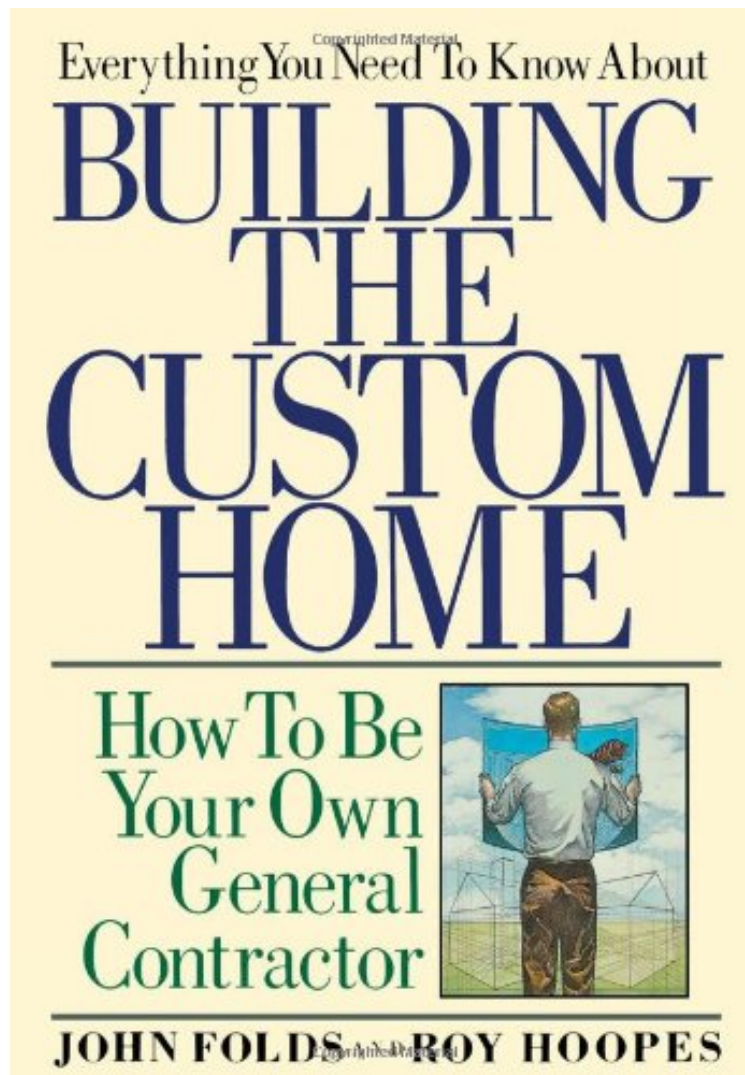


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John Folds : Everything You Need to Know About Building the Custom Home: How to Be Your Own General Contractor before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Everything You Need to Know About Building the Custom Home: How to Be Your Own General Contractor:

71 of 78 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended even if you don't want to be your own GCBy A CustomerThis book covers both house buying and working with contractors. Do not be put off by its title; I

would recommend it even if you are buying a standard house or building an addition to your existing house. Although it seems to be very specific to building a new custom house, in fact it gives excellent advice on all phases of buying a house or lot (including evaluating it, bargaining, financing, etc.) as well as finding contractors, negotiating with them, etc. It assumes you are going to be your own general contractor, but even if you are not, its advice is pertinent and useful. Some of the discussions of contracts and payment schedules may seem a bit nit-picky, but you ought to read "The Home Remodeler's Combat Manual" to show why it can be necessary. I find it much better than Bob Vila's book on house buying, and also better than House Buying Step-by-Step (which was the best among the other books I found at the bookstore). It's unfortunate that its title makes its scope seem so narrow. (I wrote the above in 1995, and don't know if anything even better has come along since then.) 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good book. By Betty G. Harvey Bought the book, but found a dream home before we had the chance to start building. I would recommend it highly if you are thinking about being your own contractor. 62 of 62 people found the following review helpful. An unfortunately titled, but still valuable book. By R. A. Ward This book should probably have been called "How to Prepare Yourself Legally and Financially to Build Your Own Home." The title it does have is not representative of the book's true focus, and I believe does a disservice to those who want a construction book *and* those who would benefit from the legal and financial information it so richly covers. One group is disappointed, while the other skips over it because they think it doesn't apply to their needs. To be blunt, the actual construction process is not very well covered. For instance, owner-builders probably do not know what types of materials are high quality vs. just high price tag vs. "standard" and possibly inadequate. That is a huge hole in the book -- materials overall are skimmed over. The one time they got specific, they almost sounded like a commercial for Andersen windows. I'm sure Andersen windows are just fine, but I seriously doubt that you simply "must" buy them to have resell value in your house. The other huge hole is how to manage the actual building phase -- what to expect, pitfalls and such. Yes, it has a chart, but it's hard to read (it's sideways!), there is no explanation if the numbers signify days or weeks, and in general it is not adequate. There was a very short chapter at the very end on common mistakes, but once again it seemed to skim over that information. Also, I realize that every house is built differently, but it would have been nice to have one example project used throughout the book so that the reader could see a cohesive picture of how that particular house was built. Nothing like a concrete example! In spite of its shortcomings and the rather dated ideas about what makes a home have resell value (this book was written in the early 90s, just as "starter castles" with cavernous ceilings and huge greatrooms were becoming popular), this book offers a ton of good -- and most importantly, timeless -- information. In a nutshell: If you need or want to know about the financial and legal process of building your own house, right down to the surveying, appraising and loans, including sample contracts and forms, then buy this book. If you are interested in a guide on how to actually *build* a quality, custom home that has updated materials lists, a detailed example schedule and realistic work/time/money expectations, worksheets and samples of change orders, contracts for craftsmen and other construction sundries, then do not buy this book.

This book helps the reader save a great deal of money by demonstrating how to manage the project and act as one's own contractor.

From Library Journal The focus of this book is on the legal and financial nuts and bolts of homebuilding such as securing a loan, negotiating with bankers and tradespeople, reviewing contracts, and gauging insurance needs. In these areas, this guide is detailed to a fault, listing--in one instance--the 50 possible title defects against which title insurance provides protection. Briefer coverage is afforded the construction process, although the book does provide a useful review and checklist of the stages of construction. Absent is any description of the actual work involved at each stage or tips on evaluating such work. While this is a worthy addition to larger building or real estate collections, smaller libraries may want something more inclusive like Dave McGuerty and Kent Lester's *The Complete Guide to Contracting Your Home* (LJ 9/1/86).- Bill Demo, Tompkins Cortland Community Coll., Dryden, N.Y. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author Roy Hoopes is the author of the standard biographies of James M. Cain and Ralph Ingersoll. He lives in Bethesda, Maryland.