



# How To Build Your Home With ICFs – Tips For Getting Started



## Setting Limits & Establishing Priorities

Congratulations on choosing to build your home with Insulated Concrete Forms (ICFs)!

With this choice, you are creating a stronger, more resilient and more energy-efficient home that will significantly reduce both your consumption of natural resources and your personal contribution to climate change, while still surrounding your family with unsurpassed comfort and safety.

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Planning the process to build your new home can be a daunting task, so here are some tips to help you get started.

## TIP #1 – SET YOUR LIMITS

### Development Guidelines for Your Building Lot

Typically, each building lot has its own set of development guidelines that tell you what you can and cannot build on that lot. A good first step is to verify the development guidelines for your lot, either from your realtor or from your local building department.



### Construction Budget

It's critical to set your budget early on so that you have a framework in place that you can use to manage the many trade-off decisions you'll no doubt be presented with during the construction process.

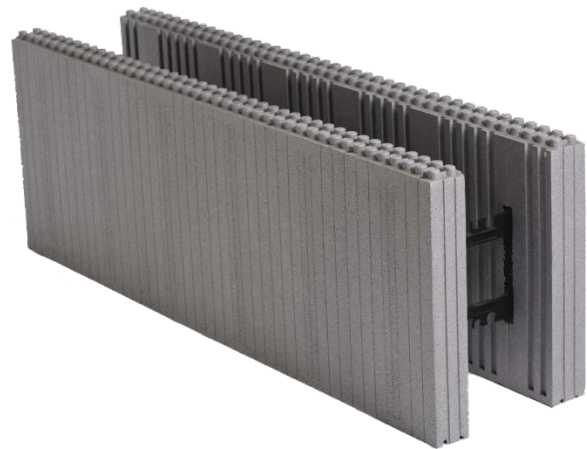
This means that it's also crucial to meet with your financial institution early on. Two important factors to consider are:

- Construction loans are structured differently than conventional mortgages. If you're getting a construction loan, be sure you understand exactly how it works.
- The amount of financing available to you is affected by [the way your home is appraised by the financial institution](#). It's important to ensure that the performance levels of your Logix ICF home are reflected in that appraisal. Some additional tips to help you with that can be found in Tip #2 below.

## TIP #2 – ESTABLISH YOUR PERSONAL PRIORITIES

### Establish Your Desired Energy-Efficiency Performance Levels

By choosing to build your exterior walls with Logix ICF, you'll have an extremely energy-efficient home that will significantly reduce your energy consumption (usually by up to half) and your monthly utility bills, which is great. Now, the first question you want to ask yourself is, "Does this level of energy-efficiency performance satisfy your personal



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aspirations and requirements, or do you want to take your home to even higher levels of energy-efficiency?"

If you're looking to achieve higher levels of energy-efficiency, such as Net Zero, Net Zero Ready or Passive House, your Logix walls are an excellent start. You may also wish to investigate into further enhancing your Logix walls by upgrading to [R-28 Logix Platinum Series](#) and/or adding even more insulating power with Logix slide-in [D-Rv Panels](#). Logix D-Rv panels are 2" thick and add R-8 to the wall assembly's R-value. D-Rv panels are usually placed adjacent to the exterior foam panel so that the majority of the insulation is on the exterior face.

You'll likely also be looking to enhance the performance of other elements of the building envelope, such as windows, roof or slab, to get your desired boost in energy-efficiency.

[Click here](#) to view an infographic that lists many of the enhancements and upgrades you can consider for your home and then cost out.

Also, feel free to [browse the 'High-Performance Homes' section of the Logix Project Gallery](#) for additional ideas and inspiration.



### **Establish Your Desired Levels for Safety & Protection from Climate Events**

Once again, by choosing to build your exterior walls with Logix ICF with its inherent steel-reinforced concrete core, you're building a very strong home that is highly resistant to wildfires, high winds and earthquakes. Where you are building, specifically, will determine what climate event(s) you'll be at risk for as well as the potential levels of those risks.

If you live in an area of relatively high risk for a specific climate event, you may wish to incorporate additional features and enhancements into your new Logix home that will add even more resilience and protection against that threat.

[Click here](#) to view a series of infographics that show the various products and features you can incorporate into the design of your Logix ICF home to further protect your family from various dangerous climate events. If something stands out to you on an infographic, you can even download it and then talk to your home designer about including it in your budget.



## Establish Your Desired Need for Aging in Place & Universal Design

Universal Design (UD) refers to the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. When a living or work space is designed to be accessible, usable, convenient and a pleasure to use, everyone benefits.

By considering the diverse needs and abilities of everyone throughout the design process, Universal Design creates living and work spaces that meet people's needs over the long-term. ICF homes are generational homes so it's important to think long-term during the design process.

Incorporating UD principles into your home design will likely result in many subtle elements that will cumulatively make a big difference as to how flexible and accommodating your living space will be. If you wish to incorporate UD principles into your new home, this should be decided on before the design process starts and before your designer is selected and briefed.



This [award-winning Logix home](#) was built to Net Zero performance standards AND incorporated Universal Design principles too.

## Establish Your Preferences for Personal Lifestyle & Aesthetics of Design

Establish a list of priorities for the rooms and floor plan of your new home. Every family is unique and has its own lifestyle. For this reason, it's important to define what the personal needs and priorities are of your family before you start into the design process.

It's also a good idea to consider the aesthetic styling of your new home. These days, the available style conventions for new home



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design are almost limitless, from Victorian to Contemporary, and Colonial to Neo-Classical, etc. To assist you in this regard, there are many excellent home plan websites where you can browse for inspiration and ideas for your own home.



One final thought – if you intend on having an ICF basement or foundation in your new home design, there is an interesting option available to you to add efficiency as well as cost savings to your build. If you conservatively allocate 45-50% of your [ICF Basement](#) to mechanicals and storage, you'll be left with a full 50% of your new basement to devote to fully livable space. It's important at this point to consider that because with this additional living space, you also have the

option of reducing the square footage of the main floors of your new home if you wish, thereby making it smaller and less expensive.

We hope this article helps you to start the exciting process of planning your new ICF home!

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In the next article, **“How To Build A Home With ICFs – Design Tips (and the Most Common Mistakes To Avoid)”**.