

Log Home Land Checklist

Section 1: LAND PURCHASE



ALREADY OWN OR LOOKING?

Do I already own land, or do I need to find it? If you already own land, all of the below considerations can help you decide where on that land to build. If you don't already own land, this section can help you find the best deals.



REALTORS AND BROKERS

Will local realtors and brokers help? Rather than simply look for land for sale, you can also ask realtors about landowners in the area who may be willing to sell off several acres with an access easement. Check out legal considerations below in relation to this.



BOOTS ON THE GROUND

If I know the general area where I want to build, where can I start looking?

Drive around and seek out "for sale by owner" signs. Look at community bulletin boards at food co-op and grocery stores.



ONLINE RESOURCES

What can I find online? Here are a few websites that specialize in land sales:

- <https://www.land.com>
- <https://www.landwatch.com/>
- <https://www.lotflip.com>
- <https://www.auctionflip.com>
- <https://craigslist.com> (but be careful of scammers, who proliferate on this site).



GOVERNMENT-OWNED LAND

Can I buy government-owned land?

There are two ways to do this, and only in certain states (most of them are west of the Mississippi River). You can look into public land sales administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), or try government auctions of surplus and seized property.



LAND FINANCING

How can I finance land? Financing land can be tricky, because most mortgage companies are limited to a specific acreage size and hesitate to offer loans on land where a house will not serve as collateral. Other options include taking out a home equity loan or asking whether the current landowner would consider financing it.

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Section 2: LIFESTYLE

FAMILY, FRIENDS, WORK

- Why am I building a home in the first place?**
Are you looking for a quiet getaway with no neighbors nearby, or a place near amenities, restaurants, and activities?
- With whom do I want to share my home?**
Should it be a smaller home to go and unwind on your own, or a place where you can often welcome family and friends?
- Will I need internet connectivity so I can work from home and watch streaming services?**
More options are becoming available for internet services in remote areas. Cellular "MIFI" devices and Starlink are just a couple of options that can be affordable and effective, if there is not already a service provider in the area.

OUTDOORS

- How will I use the outdoor space?**
Do you want deck views, an outdoor kitchen, a hot tub? Planning the outdoor space is as important as the indoors.
- Will I be doing some gardening or growing crops?**
This affects the type of agricultural land you should look for.
- What outdoor activities do I want to be near (hiking, biking, fishing, swimming, skiing)?**
Many log-home-friendly areas offer myriad options year-round. Some may be more appealing to you than others, so make sure the things you like best are nearby.

HEALTH AND FINANCES

- Are there adequate medical facilities nearby for health concerns and emergencies?**
Especially for log home owners who are nearing or at retirement age, this is an important consideration.
- Will my home be a personal or financial investment?**
Do you want to rent it out part-time on a vacation site such as Airbnb or Vrbo? Long-term, do you see yourself passing the home down to future generations? Are you more concerned with building equity so you can eventually sell it at a profit?

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Section 3: LOCATION

ENVIRONMENT

How do I picture my surrounding environment?

Do you want to be in a secluded woodland location, near a lake or mountains, near hiking and biking trails, or close to a downtown area?

If this is a second home, how far am I comfortable traveling?

A home that is only a couple of hours away will feel more accessible on weekends.

In what direction do I want the home to face, and what views do I want to enjoy?

Often, the fantastic view at a given location is obvious. Also picture where the sun will shine at certain times of day on your porch, deck, or streaming through your windows.

ACCESSIBILITY

If I'm looking for a secluded location, how accessible is the property, and does that change by season?

Year-round weather, especially on rural roads, can be a top concern.

How will my home be connected to utility lines, water, sewer/septic, and roads?

Price out these services so you can be prepared.

Are the roads leading to my desired property public or private?

To access your build site, you may have to request an easement from the owner of the road leading to your property.

TOPOGRAPHY

If I have found or already own land, what type of slopes and soil exist?

Ask a local soil engineer to conduct a soil test and a percolation test to see how absorbent the soil is (this affects the building of the foundation).

If I'm in a mountainous or wooded area, how will I construct a driveway, and how much parking will I need?

Think about the cost per square foot of your driveway, in addition to where it will be placed, and how steep or windy it may be.

How much land upkeep do I want to deal with?

Think about older trees, stone retaining walls, and weedbeds that may factor in.

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Section 4: LEGAL MATTERS

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- ✓ **Which local agencies do I need to contact to find out about building codes, permits, zoning, and development restrictions?**

Some log homeowners have encountered frustrating sets of rules that can get in the way of the pre-construction process. It's best to know the local rules upfront.

- ✓ **Outside of local agencies, who can offer advice?**

Often, a local realtor, land broker, or developer can shed light on local rules and how to manage through them.

PROPERTY MATTERS

- ✓ **What are the property boundaries?**

Make sure you have a visual on this, as well as how close to the boundaries of the land you are allowed to build.

- ✓ **Are there currently any liens on the property?**

A title search and survey can reveal any issues.

- ✓ **Are there any encroachments on the property, such as buildings or fences?**

A local attorney can help review purchase contracts, zoning issues, and any other issues held by previous owners.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ **Will I want to do any future development on this land?**

If you envision this, find out now what potential legal matters may crop up regarding this.

- ✓ **Will I want to add anything else to my land that may have a legal implication, such as animals, crops, man-made ponds, etc.?**

Know in advance what you may need to be prepared for as you think about your future plans.