

Plan room sizes carefully

Blueprint Homes
general manager
Craig Park. Picture:
Gerald Moscarda

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Think about room sizes, ceiling heights and other structural features that can't be changed at a later date is Craig Park's advice to first-time buyers.

Kitchens had become the hub of most homes and the place for daily family activity and entertaining, so a well-designed kitchen that integrated with the main living area was a must, said Mr Park, the general manager of Blueprint Homes.

"For first-homebuyers working with tighter budget constraints, a fourth bedroom could be left out," he said. "A well-designed and functional 3x2 home with study or separate activity works very well.

"Choosing the right builder can sometimes be difficult and time-consuming but ... doing homework on the builder before making a final decision will help minimise any long-term risks.

"The builder's reputation for reliability, quality, efficiency and service is paramount. Open and clear lines of communication are vital."

Quality of workmanship was key to minimise maintenance issues after a client had moved in.

"Budgets vary but 3x2 homes are becoming increasingly popular and not everybody wants the 'McMansion'," he said. "People



The Regent, by Blueprint Homes, is designed to appeal to first-time buyers.



Blueprint's Florentine concept.

who go for quantity should make sure they have a clear understanding of how big the rooms will be. A room that seems large on a plan can feel smaller in reality."

Future resale should be considered to maximise return but

people planning to stay in their first home a few years should remain true to their own needs.

"People tend to move every three to five years and a first home is usually a stepping stone, so a flexible floor plan should cater for changes in lifestyle requirements."

Mr Park's tips to help people achieve their first home include knowing their financial capability, ensuring they get sound advice and always comparing "apples with apples" in different homes.

Blueprint Homes' Smart Move Range and Blue Diamond Series were perfect for first-homebuyers, with prices from about \$120,000.

