

# Why Gardo Design Group?

Gardo Design Group, LLC is a residential design firm with over 100 years of combined experience among its staff. When it comes to choosing a new home design, the number of options can be overwhelming yet exciting. Experience has taught us that your choice in a new home design is the first and most important choice in building your dream home. It is our goal at Gardo Design Group to help make your choice of a new home design with confidence.

## Gardo Design Group – What We Do

Gardo Design Group offers a large portfolio of existing home plans to select from. Our design team can assist you with modifying any of these plans to meet your specific needs, or we can create a truly unique design incorporating your ideas into your personal dream home

## Gardo Design Group - A Name You Can Trust

Gary W. Gardo, CPBD, the firm's principal partner, has designed some of the areas most popular and recognizable homes. Since 1975 Gary has been working with builders and residents to fashion their ideas into the Mid-South homes of today. His years of tenure as lead designer at the area's most prolific firm brought him to the attention of the largest home builder in the region, and in 1992 was hired to head their design department.

Over the ensuing years as he saw hundreds of his designs built, Gary gained valuable knowledge into the construction process; knowledge gained from close collaboration with framers and estimators, plumbers and code officials, cabinet makers and building inspectors -- the whole gamut of professions needed to turn his designs into your home.

Gary formed Gardo Design Group, LLC in 1999. Joining him, as partners in this new endeavor were two associates of his over the past few years. Tom Bindbeutel, a long time colleague (Tom and Gary have been working together since 1986), is an expert at all things CAD (Computer Aided Design) and is highly skilled at turning Gary's designs into the construction documents needed for a builder to construct a home. Dan Block, the third partner, began working with Gary and Tom in 1994. Dan is a 9-year veteran of the Seabees, the U.S. Navy's construction battalion, and a former building superintendent with a local homebuilder. Dan's wealth of carpentry and construction experience is a valuable asset to the production department.

Chris Vaughn, CPBD, is the most recent addition, joining the firm in the Spring of 2001. Chris received his BS in Architectural Engineering at the University of Memphis and brings with him over 15 years of valuable design experience. Chris began his career in 1986 working alongside Gary and Tom at another local design firm.

Gardo Design Group has its offices in the Trinity Place complex at 7990 Trinity Road, Suite 110 in Cordova, located at the northwest corner of Trinity and Germantown Parkway. E-mail: [gdgplans@midsouth.rr.com](mailto:gdgplans@midsouth.rr.com)  
Phone: (901) 844.7990 Fax: (901)844.7993 Visit our website @ [gardodesigngroup.com](http://gardodesigngroup.com).

Gardo Design Group is affiliated with the *American Institute of Building Design (AIBD)*, the *National Council of Building Design Certification (NCBDC)*, the *Memphis Area Home Builders Association (HBAM)* and the *Southern Building Code Congress International (SBCCI)*.

# What is a Building Designer?

A Building Designer is first and foremost a professional familiar with all facets of the building trade, whose plans and designs represent the particular needs, style and budget of the client.

The work of a Building Designer is varied and may consist of residential, both single and multi-unit, and commercial structures as permitted by the architectural statutes of each state. A Building Designer's approach to any problem is based on the practical, functional and economical solutions that will best fulfill the client's requirements, while translating these factors into a concept that is both aesthetic and utilitarian.

A qualified Building Designer offers a complete array of professional services. The Building Designer's prime task is to furnish preliminary and detailed designs for the proposed structure, ranging from the initial concept to complete working drawings and specifications that will comply with all applicable building codes and regulations.

A Building Designer may supply or arrange additional services such as selecting contractors and overseeing construction. A Building Designer may be retained to provide all or any part of the planning, design, and construction process, as the client desires. These services are subject to the policies and services of the individual designer.

During the initial planning stage, the designer confers with the client to ascertain type, size, and ultimate usage of the structure. The Building Designer may offer recommendations regarding the site, interior and exterior layout, materials to be used, the range of services, and architectural and exterior treatments.

The Building Designer may provide of time and costs to be incurred in preparation of the drawings, specifications, and construction estimates.

When the design concepts are accepted by the client, the designer may present a contract detailing the extent of the services to be furnished and outline the related responsibilities, fees, and structural, mechanical and electrical considerations.

When retained to do so, a Building Designer may assist the client by preparing and publishing bid proposals for construction, and may also interpret and explain bid proposals to the client with any recommendations. As the client's agent, a Building Designer may in some states conduct on-site inspections of construction, ensuring that all work meets the recognized standards and protects the client's interests.

*A member of the American Institute of Building Design has met the requirements of the AIBD By Laws and the work experience standards deemed necessary to gain comprehensive knowledge of the profession of building design.*

The American Institute of Building Design maintains a registry of Building Designers who have demonstrated outstanding competence in the field. Those persons so certified are permitted to use the title of Certified Professional Building Designer, which can only be appointed by the National Council of Building Designer Certification. Certified members are deemed qualified to perform services required in any portion of planning, design and construction, as permitted in their state of residence or practice.

For more information regarding AIBD designers in your area, or AIBD membership information, please call or write to, The American Institute of Building Design, 991 Post Road East, Westport, Connecticut 06880, (800) 366-AIBD.

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# Where do I start?

It's a really good idea to establish a budget first. Visit several financial institutions and speak with lending officers. There's no need to commit to any one institution at this point, but a financial loan officer can be invaluable in helping you evaluate your budget. Banks rely on criteria beyond a simple income statement in order to qualify potential home builders and home buyers. They can save you time and effort, and help you determine what you can realistically afford to spend or borrow, if need be. It's important that you know your budget before you start into the design phase.

To better communicate your ideas and aspirations to us consider creating a scrapbook. Collect as many photos, brochures, articles and magazine clippings as you can which help to describe what you'd like your home to look like, inside and out. Keep in mind, this can be a lengthy, ongoing, ever changing process. Take as much time as you can with it. A good scrapbook can take months to assemble.

As your scrapbook takes shape, take a look at your lifestyle and develop a wish list of rooms and features you would want in your new home. Use your current home as a model – are the bedrooms too small, the kitchen too dark? Does your grandmother's antique buffet fit in the dining room? How is the "flow" from one room to another? There are many things to think about. Use the comparison form included in this packet to get started.

If you don't already own a building lot, at some point you will need to find one. Hopefully you have included some features about "where" you want to build on your wish list of "what" you want to build. You will want to make sure your design ideas blend with the area or neighborhood you have in mind. Also, check to see that your design falls within the price range of the existing neighborhood because this is something the bank may scrutinize. Thoroughly investigate the site itself. Is it construction ready, or will you be responsible for the installation of water, electric, gas, and septic or sewer? Make sure you do your homework before you purchase the property.

It's never too early to talk to contractors. Always ask for references, and follow up on them. Visit completed projects and speak with the owners. Ask questions about their satisfaction with the contractor's performance and fees charged. Once you've decided on a General Contractor, or a contractor for a particular portion of your project, i.e., a mason, be prepared to wait for his/her availability. There are probably some projects ahead of yours. If the contractors are good, they're busy.

During all of these steps, it pays to keep in touch with your banker(s). They can be very helpful in keeping you on track with your budget as well as trends and information about the housing market. At some point you'll be talking with them about any money you'll be borrowing. Keep in mind that some banks are better than others are with construction loans and mortgages. Even if you are established with a bank, it pays to shop. You will also want to let the bank know whether you'll be acting as the General Contractor or not. Some banks may have an issue with this, so it's good to get it on the table early.

As you start to pull together your building site, finances and design ideas, you'll want to get in touch with us at Gardo Design Group to schedule an initial meeting. Take a look at the outline of the design process we've provided, it details the steps involved in taking your ideas to actual construction documents. The key to getting through this phase of your project is to be realistic about your budget. It can be frustrating, but our goal is to keep as much of your custom home intact while staying within your budget.

# Steps in the design process.

1. Initial interview meeting:
  - a. Meet at our office to discuss the scope of your project.
  - b. Bring with you any ideas and pictures you may have that reflect the style/look that you want for your new home.
  - c. Also bring a copy of your lot survey and deed restriction if you have already purchased your property.
  - d. Extensive notes will be taken by us of things such as your budget, square footage requirements, design ideas, etc.
  - e. This step usually takes around 2 hours.
  - f. After the meeting, we will review your information and mail you a design agreement with our required fee. A retainer of 50% will be required to initiate the design process.
2. A site visit at the lot: (optional)
  - a. If needed, this would be done before any time is spent drawing preliminary plans.
  - b. The site will be evaluated for overall lay or slope of the land, the location and direction of the best views and objectionable ones, potential home location, direction of the sun's path across the property, sunny/shady/windy areas, trees to be saved, any special natural features noted and the logical entrance to property for the driveway.
  - c. Setback lines and easements will also be discussed.
  - d. This meeting will last between 30 minutes and 1 hour.
3. We will then review all of the information compiled and begin the preliminary design process:
  - a. First a rough concept sketch will be drawn on the site plan to determine the best size and shape for the lot.
  - b. Then a larger sketch will be started of the ideas that first come to mind, a basic floor plan will be started and overlays of other ideas may be drawn to show alternatives.
  - c. Generally all floor plan levels will be sketched and the start of a front elevation will be generated.
4. Once the sketches are prepared and copies made a review meeting will be arranged to present our ideas to you for discussion:
  - a. Additional overlay sketches may be drawn during this meeting as additional ideas and changes are discussed.
  - b. A copy of all drawings will be given to you to take home to digest and discuss the information further. This step should be a minimum of a week, since it sometimes will take at least that much time for you to think of all the possibilities to discuss at the next meeting.
5. The next review meeting will be held to discuss the changes made to the plans since the last meeting and any new ideas that came to mind after that meeting.
  - a. Again, overlays may be drawn of the potential new ideas.
  - b. The front elevation will be discussed along with any ideas about the rear and side elevations.
  - c. The review meetings will generally take 1-2 hours.
6. This may lead to another review meeting:
  - a. Generally all the changes discussed to date will have been made to this point and all the exterior elevations will have been roughly outlined.
7. Final preliminary plans:
  - a. Once all the changes have been made to the floor plans and exterior elevations, the final square footage will be calculated.
  - b. Copies will be made of these drawings and the site plan for your use in obtaining preliminary pricing from your builder.
  - c. This gives you the opportunity to make sure that what you are still within your budget. Also, the builder may have suggestions on things such as material changes that could help to keep the project within budget.
  - d. This phase will generally take 3-5 weeks.
  - e. The time spent in design and review meetings will be compiled and any additional money owed will be paid at this time.
8. Construction Plans:
  - a. When we get the go-ahead to start the construction plans, a second retainer of 40% will be paid to the designer to begin.
  - b. All the drawings necessary to complete the project will be drawn, as outlined in the design agreement.
  - c. After all these steps have been taken, prints will be run of the complete set of plans. A total of 5 sets are provided to you at this time, which are included in the fee.
  - d. The balance of the design fee will be due at the time of delivery of the plans.
  - e. Additional sets of prints will be run as needed after this and will be charged according to the number of sets.

# DESIGN QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YOUR NEW HOME

A. Do you already own a piece of property? (*please give description*) \_\_\_\_\_

If so, we will need you to supply survey information such as:

1. Topographic survey (*which shows the contour of the land*) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Tree survey (*if any*) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Site plan (*showing all easements and building set back lines*) \_\_\_\_\_

If you do not have this information, we can help you in obtaining it. If you do not already own a lot, we would be happy to help you select one.

B. Are there any Architectural Control Restrictions which govern your property? If so, please supply a copy of the covenants so that we may review. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. Will you be wanting any major site improvements? (*tennis courts, pools, terraces, etc.*) \_\_\_\_\_

## II. EXTERIOR

A. What type of exterior elevation do you desire? (*European, Traditional, Contemporary, etc.*) \_\_\_\_\_

B. What exterior materials do you want? (*stucco, brick, wood, etc.*) \_\_\_\_\_

C. What type of roofing material would you like? (*asphalt shingles, cedar shakes, etc.*) \_\_\_\_\_

### III. FLOOR PLANS

#### A. Garage

1. How many cars do you need to accommodate? *(and what type of cars)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you need extra storage space? *(if so, how much and what for)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you need a golf cart space or workshop? *(if so, what size?)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### B. Back Hall

1. Would you like a ½ or full bath located here? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you need a side door or back stairway located here? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you need any other special features? *(storage closets, broom closets, hobby rooms, etc.)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### C. Kitchen

1. Approximately what size do you need? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you want the sink located near a window or on an island? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you want a breakfast bar? *(if so, how many should it seat?)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What appliances do you need besides the usual manor appliances? *(warming drawers, microwave, extra oven, etc.)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What type of cabinet finish do you want? *(stain or paint)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you need a desk? *(if so, for what will it be used for)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you need a standard cabinet pantry or walk-in pantry? *(if walk-in, approximately what size?)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What kind of floor finish do you want in the kitchen? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. How do you want the kitchen shaped? *(“U” shape, “L” shape, with island, galley)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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10. Do you want the kitchen open to another room? (*breakfast, family room, sunroom*) \_\_\_\_\_

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**D. Breakfast**

1. How many people will the breakfast room need to accommodate? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Do you need room for any furniture in the breakfast space besides the table? (*hutch, bakers rack, etc.*)

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3. Is there any special ceiling treatment or feature you would like incorporated into the breakfast room?

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**E. Laundry**

1. What approximate size do you want the laundry room? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Please list all the features you want in the laundry room, (*washer, dryer, sink, folding table, wet hanging closet, fold down iron, sewing table, laundry chute, broom closet*)

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**F. Family Room**

1. Approximately what size would you like the family room? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Do you need any base cabinets or bookcases? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Do you want a fireplace? (*if so, in what material would you like it finished?*) \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What floor, wall and ceiling finish would you like in this room? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Do you want any special ceiling treatment in the family room? (*vaulted, beamed, tray, etc.*)

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6. Do you want a wet bar located here? (*if so, do you want a large sit down bar or a small cabinet bar?*)

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7. Do you want the family room open to or closed off from the kitchen? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you need a back stair in the family room area? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**G. Sunroom**

1. Do you need a sunroom?*(if so, approximately what size and shape would you like?)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. To which rooms would you like it to connect? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**H. Living Room**

1. What size would you like the living room to be? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you need a fireplace?*(if so, in what material would you like it finished?)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What kind of ceiling would you like in the living room?*(8'0", 9'0", 10'0", vaulted, two story, tray)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What floor finish do you want in the living room? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you require any special features in the living room?*(wet bar, built-ins, etc.)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**I. Dining Room**

1. Approximately what size do you need the dining room to be? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many people will the dining room need to accommodate? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Would you like any special ceiling treatment in the dining room? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you need a butler's pantry, or china cabinet area? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you need a fireplace in the dining room? \_\_\_\_\_

**J. Foyer**

1. Approximately what size would you like the foyer to be? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you want a staircase in the foyer? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you have a preference for the shape of the stair?*(straight, "L" shaped, curved, etc.)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What type of ceiling do you want in the foyer?*(one story, tray, two story, etc.)*\_\_\_\_\_
5. What type of floor material do you want in the foyer?\_\_\_\_\_

### **K. Study/Library**

1. Do you want a Study/Library room?*(if so, approximately what size do you want this room?)*\_\_\_\_\_
2. What wall finish do you prefer?*(Sheetrock, wall paper, wainscoting or full paneling, other)*\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you want cabinets and book cases?*(if so, approximately how many linear feet?)*\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you need a fireplace in the room?*(if so, in what material would you like it finished?)*\_\_\_\_\_
5. Where would you like this room located?*(off the foyer, master bedroom, etc.)*\_\_\_\_\_

### **L. Master Bedroom**

1. Where do you want the master located?*(upstairs or downstairs)*\_\_\_\_\_
2. Approximately what size do you need the master bedroom to be?\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you need a sitting area to be part of the room or separate, or neither?\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you need any built-in cabinets or bookcases in the bedroom?\_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you need a fireplace in either the bedroom or sitting room?\_\_\_\_\_
6. What kind of ceiling do you want in the master bedroom? Flat, tray, vault?\_\_\_\_\_
7. Are there any special features you need included in the master bedroom?*(wet bar, built-in T.V.)*\_\_\_\_\_
8. How many furniture walls will you need in the bedroom?\_\_\_\_\_

## M. Master Bathroom

1. Do you want one large bath, or his and hers separate baths? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you want a whirlpool tub or a standard tub? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you want separate sinks and vanities, or separate sinks on one vanity? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you need a make-up table? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you need a bidet? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What type of shower do you want? (*regular or steam*) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you want any special ceiling treatments or lighting in the master bath? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What floor material do you want in the master bath? (*carpet, tile, marble, etc.*) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## N. Master Closet

1. Approximately how much linear footage of hanging space do you need? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you want one large closet or separate his and hers? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you need any built-in drawers or shelves in the closets? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you prefer to access the closets from the bedroom, bathroom, or between? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you need any specialty items? (*ironing board, stackable washer/dryer, or cedar closet*) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## O. Secondary Bedrooms

1. How many other bedrooms will you need? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Approximately what size will these rooms need to be? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Will these rooms need walk-in closets, desks, bookcases, vaulted ceilings or window seats?

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**P. Secondary Baths**

1. How many full bathrooms will you need? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. How many ½ baths will be needed? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q. Other Rooms**

1. Will you need any other rooms finished such as children's playrooms, recreation rooms, exercise rooms or any other? *(if so, where would you like these rooms located?)*

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**IV. GENERAL**

A. How much total square footage do you presently have?

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B. How much square footage do you believe you will need?

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C. Approximately what is your approximate budget range for the new home?

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D. Approximately what date do you need to be in your new home?

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