

	Mobile Homes	Modular Homes	Stick-built Homes
Building Codes	Homes built in a factory following the Federal Government HUD Code. HUD Code requires that all mobile homes be manufactured on a non-removable steel chassis (steel building platform).	Homes built in a factory and treated as traditional homes that follow the local building code and regulations. In Maryland, every modular home is registered with the state in addition.	Traditional homes are subject to the local buildings code and regulations.
Floor Plans/Design	There is very limited customization. Normally a mobile home is purchased after it has been built. Typical styles include single- double- and triple-wide units, on a single level.	Most builders can provide 100's of <u>sample plans</u> to help guide your home selection. Modular homes are normally highly customized in their interior and exterior appearances. <b>Full custom modular builders, while rare, offer the ability to design from scratch or accept private architect's renderings for conversion by the factory to modular.</b>	Most custom builders can provide sample plans they've built, offer design services, or direct you to plans on the Internet. You can also hire an architect to design your home according to your preference. In either case, full customization is standard. Larger builders/developers offer select plans only for their lots.
Maintenance Cost	Indoor construction eliminates most weather-related problems. Minimum HUD Code compliance generally results in a home that is not as durable as other homes. Common building materials and suppliers help to offset the cost of more frequent repairs.	Climate controlled indoor construction eliminates most weather-related problems, including black mold. Framing likely will never be exposed to direct moisture (rainfall). Manufacturers must over-build modular components to withstand highway travel to job sites. The resulting square/level/plumb structure is less prone to settling, cracks, and stress on components.	Since they are built on-site in all types of weather, the quality of the product varies greatly. In-the-field "modifications" mean looser tolerances and more unknowns. Research has shown that traditional homes are more likely to require repairs and higher maintenance costs.
Energy Efficiency	Getting better.	Part of the over-building process for road-worthiness includes screwing and gluing drywall and sheathing for tensile strength and reduced racking. This creates a tighter building envelope that is draft-resistant and energy efficient. Heavier 2x6 exterior walls containing R19 insulation are standard, as are dual-pane windows w/ low-E glass.	Choices run the full gamut. In order to compete with the economies of modular building, many stick builders will offer cheap "builder-grade" construction and material finishes.
Green-ness	Getting better.	Because homes are built on an indoor assembly line, jobsite impacts (waste, soil erosion & destruction) are greatly reduced. Most factories are resource-efficient recyclers of scrap materials, and most can readily source "greener" product lines from their suppliers. Want low-VOC paint?... just check the order box.	It is physically impossible to duplicate indoor building outdoors. But you can get close. If you can find a stick builder that is not just "green-washing", you will pay incrementally more than any modular because of the lack of economies of scale (unless your builder is a large developer, but then, you wouldn't have these options anyway).
Resale Value	Generally mobile homes depreciate in value since it is very hard to improve or expand an existing mobile home.	Modular homes increase in value over time. Once they are completed it is near impossible to tell the difference between traditionally built homes and modular homes. These homes can also be improved or expanded.	Traditional homes will increase in value over time. They can be improved and expanded to accommodate new owners preferences.
Timeframe	Typically there is no waiting time. You can have a mobile home delivered virtually the same day since they are normally in stock and waiting for a buyer.	This normal timeframe is 8-14 weeks. There are some time savings since construction can begin in the factory at the same time your foundation is being created on your site. Weather has almost no impact on the schedule.	The normal timeframe is 6-12 months. Since all construction occurs on site, work projects can not start until the previous project is completed. The work schedule is dependent on weather conditions.
Appearance	They can be in any color but typically all look similar since they are almost always one story buildings. They can be single, double or triple wide.	The same as any traditional site-built home. You can add any style of window, door, wall or architectural feature you prefer. Once completed you can not tell the difference between modular and traditional homes.	The appearance can be customized to the home owners preference. Traditional homes can accommodate any architectural preference.
Building Process	Assembly-line manufacturing saves time and money which results in much lower prices to the consumer. Labor costs are also greatly reduced since the same craftsmen work on each home and master their section of work.	Assembly-line building. In a manufacturing factory. The removes delays cause by the weather and vandalism damages. This more efficient process reduces the cost when compared to traditional homes.	The most costly building process which requires almost the entire house to be custom constructed. It will require more people which will take more time since they do not work on the same type of house everyday. It is also vulnerable to weather delays and vandalism costs. This process is the most likely to result in damaged building products like warped wood from rain exposure.
Aliases	mobile homes manufactured homes HUD homes trailer homes	prefab homes systems-built homes pre-built homes offsite construction manufactured home	traditional homes stick built homes site built homes