



Building Homes of Our Own

Insider gameplay sheet for getting a permit and lot prepped for Urban #111

1. Sign-in (there is also a Tutorial here if you want a full explanation of game play).
2. "Ok" loan.
3. Select "Urban."
4. Select Lot #111.
5. "Purchase lot" before doing anything else.
6. Go to Footprint tab and select "House."
7. Scroll to last Footprint, place it on lot, but not too close to the fence. Be sure to cover a tree or two.
8. Don't select "Second Story." (It's easier to build a one-story house the first time around.)
9. Choose "Foundation" (basement).
10. Choose "Outdoor."
11. Select and place a spa - anything else will be tough on your budget (save those for the mansion next two levels). (You can put a garage, which is good for house value, but if you skip the garage, you can add asphalt tiles for a driveway at the Landscaping phase later on and get a good value.)
12. Go to Resource box on far left of Work Space Bar (Yellow box with icons).
13. Select "Community" button.
14. Scroll over Leader and woman in middle. (Points for attending meeting.)
15. Close Community meeting window.
16. Select "Expert" button in Resource box.
17. Roll over, then single click on "Architect/Land Planner." Then single click big screen to hear about the Architect/Land Planner.
18. Choose "Proceed," then purchase Plan when offered.
19. Close Expert window after reviewing plan information.

20. Go to Resource box and select "Codes & Zoning."
21. At the top of that pop-up box, select "Permit" icon on right.
22. Permit should be stamped "Approved."
23. Hit "Complete" button in the white text area of bottom Work Space Bar.
24. Go to next tab, "Site Prep."
25. Highlight "Tree removal," then select "Purchase."
26. Hit "Purchase" again to chop down individual trees by clicking on top of trees (if you want).
27. Hit "Complete" button.
28. Go to "Grading" on tab.
29. Hit "Purchase."
30. Hit "Complete," and you move to the second phase.
31. Check your Budget Watch (file cabinet drawer on right side of Work Space Bar) to see how your money is holding out. The Options box above (second file cabinet drawer) gives all the potential costs if you want to pre-plan.
32. Now you're onto the floor plan. Must include a Living Room, Kitchen, Bedroom and bath on first floor. Place 3 bedrooms and 3 baths. Don't forget to put in closets, interior doors and hallways. Windows also count for a lot.

Note: Remember to fill in all the tiles within the footprint, including the darker blue rim tiles!

33. Watch your budget as you add items. Save game if you want, by going to "Menu" in the Resource Box.
34. Once your floor plan is complete, click on and complete the rest of the items under "The House" by following the instructions in the Work Space Bar text box. (Best materials are aluminum siding, asphalt roof, aluminum windows, wood doors. For interior, select classic kitchen; classic bath, economy bath and powder room; vinyl kitchen floor, tile bathroom floor and wood floor everywhere else. For amenities, security system, noise proofing.)
35. When you get to the point of purchasing the spa or other outdoor feature you selected in "The Site" phase, be sure you have enough money...you probably will. If you don't, you can cancel this purchase. Purchase prices are in Options box.

Remember that you are accruing interest and overhead in each phase, so take that into consideration when checking how much you have left.

36. Landscape is a nice feature. Add trees, flowers, bushes. Be sure to add 5 trees at least. "Asphalt" to make a driveway (you need to add at least 5 tiles for it to register as a driveway).

37. Hit "Complete" (and you'll move to "The Sale" phase).

38. Write ad, set sale price at around \$255,000 - \$265,000 (or about 10%-20% above your loan amount). The game will have calculated the Fair Market Value of your house based on decisions you have made, but this would be a reasonable price for a house on this lot, if you have done things well.

Potential buyers will make offers on your house.

Tip: You should be able to tell with the first round of potential buyers if you have priced your house appropriately. If the buyers are all offering significantly less (or more!) than the price you set, the next round of offers should be in the same general realm. Use the offer amounts to revise your price if you can afford it. If you have a one-story house, you should have a fair amount of money left in your budget. Just make sure that you don't lower your price so much that you have a negative balance when you accept an offer, or you will go bust.

39. Check buyer credit reports. Remember, the buyer must have a good credit rating AND meet the bank's criteria to be approved (Julia Spicer will always be approved; Susan Ascher is also a good bet). If you don't think that any buyers have a chance of getting the loan, you can reject all offers and get a new set of buyers. However, you will be charged interest and overhead for the additional time it will take to sell your house.

40. Choose offer, cross fingers.

41. If offer is accepted, you are shown your profit.

42. Next, the game gives you a score based on how well you dealt with design/layout, community concerns and the environment around you. If your score is 70% or above, then your house appears on the cover of Builder Magazine, and you get a general critique. You are then offered the option of moving to the next level.

If your score is below 70%, you get a want ad, and have to go to the first level again.

Important: You can go bust if you mismanage your money, and you can sell the house and earn a profit, but still not make a score of 70% if you do not address all concerns and make good design decisions.

There's also a Library and a Lab in the Resource box. With 11 lots in total, there are several different challenges to play, different footprints, different budgets, different combinations of rooms, and different solutions.