



DARLINGTON
— DESIGNS —



38 Questions to Ask Your Home Pool Contractor

By Darlington Designs

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Introducing the Darlington Way

Choosing a pool building specialist for your pool installation project is an important decision that will affect your home improvement experience as well as the quality of the finished product.

At Darlington Designs, we believe that trust and careful craftsmanship are key to a job well done. We prioritize consistent, clear communication with our clients throughout the pool installation process to ensure that expectations are met. As a one-stop-shop for all your design and building needs, Darlington Designs manages every aspect of pool installation. By handling both the design and construction of your pool, we can provide the quality assurance that your project deserves.

If you've started thinking about your pool project and next steps, then we want to help you to be fully informed throughout the decision-making process. This eBook includes a list of the most important questions to ask when choosing a home pool contractor. The questions are divided into the categories of Communication, Logistics, and Experience, with answers from our experts at Darlington Designs. There's also a brief section on project-specific questions, which we

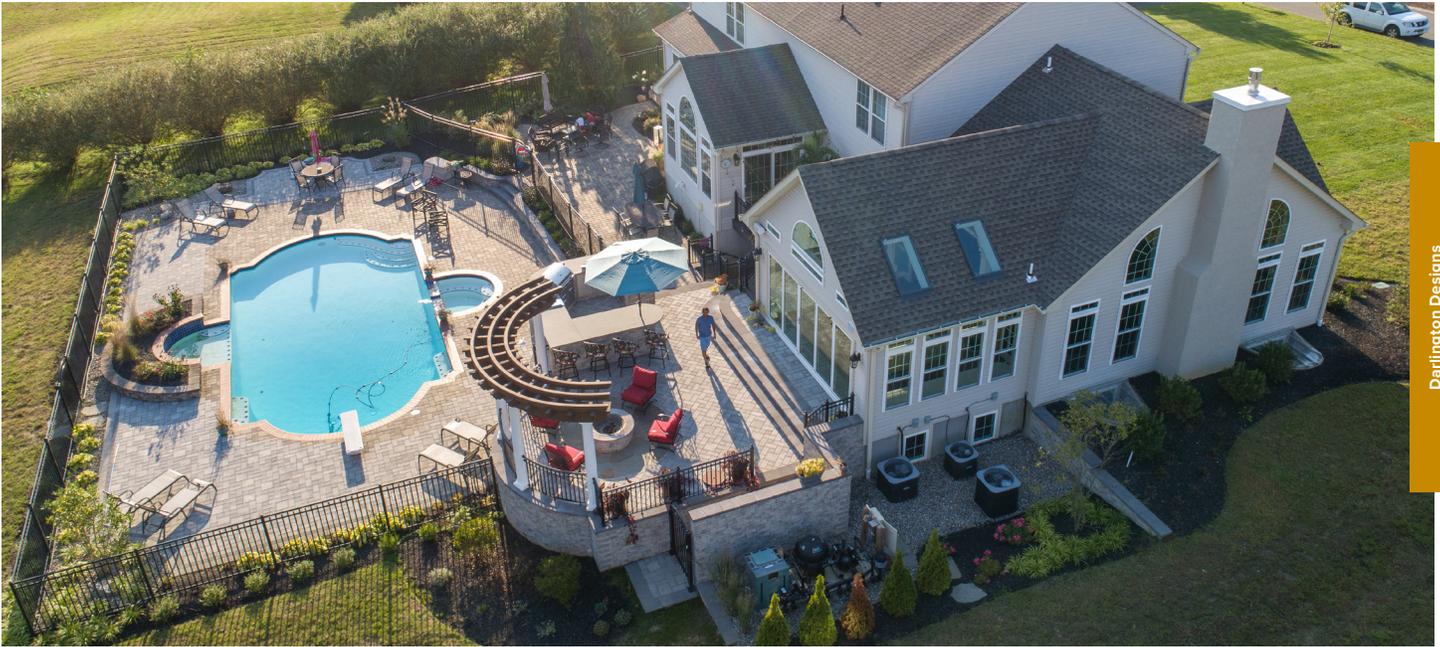
encourage you to discuss with us at your free home design consultation. We hope that this list serves as a useful reference and guide as you consider the options for your upcoming project!



Darlington Designs

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We create beautiful spaces where you can enjoy life's best moments with friends and family.



I. Communication

1. Who is my point of contact during construction?

Having a single point of contact throughout the pool installation process is an essential aspect of the Darlington Experience. Once you have a contract with us, you'll enjoy access to a designated Project Manager with whom you can communicate anytime during project construction. Because we provide all building services for each project, you avoid the headache of dealing with multiple vendors during pool installation. Your Project Manager will keep you apprised of the process and can answer any questions that arise along the way.

2. How will I be notified of daily changes to the schedule, say like in the event of inclement weather?

Our priority is to get your project completed on time and according to the agreed-upon conditions. However, sometimes inclement weather or other unforeseen events can affect the daily schedule. When weather is involved, Darlington Designs does not make schedule changes until the morning of. In these cases, you will receive communication by 9 am that day with an update. We will request your preferred mode of communication for such notifications when drawing up the project contract.

3. What access to my home will be required during construction? What is the process for communicating those needs to me in advance?

At Darlington Designs, we never build the same pool or outdoor space twice because all our projects are created with the homeowner's specific vision in mind. That means that each building process varies depending on the scope and unique characteristics of each project. Access to the inside and outside of the property may be required. In an effort to avoid inconveniencing you, we communicate with you in advance about access needs during construction.

4. Do I need to notify the neighbors of anything and will they be inconvenienced during this process?

We take great care to minimize the impact of construction on neighbors. We will communicate with you about any project activities that could unduly affect you or your neighbors ahead of time. It's also important to keep in mind that larger construction projects often require extensive staging, which may involve the use of a large area onsite.

5. Does your supervisor have a good mastery of English?

Yes, our supervisors are fluent or native English speakers. All Darlington Designs supervisors are vetted, experienced professionals who are committed to the highest standard of quality.

6. Will I receive regular updates? How often?

Before your project even begins we will be in contact with you about materials, product selections, and start date.

Once construction begins, you will receive project updates on a weekly basis. These updates include information about the crew's progress on the project, next steps, and any upcoming access requests.

Crews are required to take daily photos of the site, which are uploaded for review by our Designer, Operations Manager, Production Coordinator, and Project Manager.

7. Is your foreman on site daily?

Each day, a foreman will be on site to oversee workflow and progress on the project. Our foremen are highly skilled individuals who are responsible for coordinating the day-to-day construction activities.

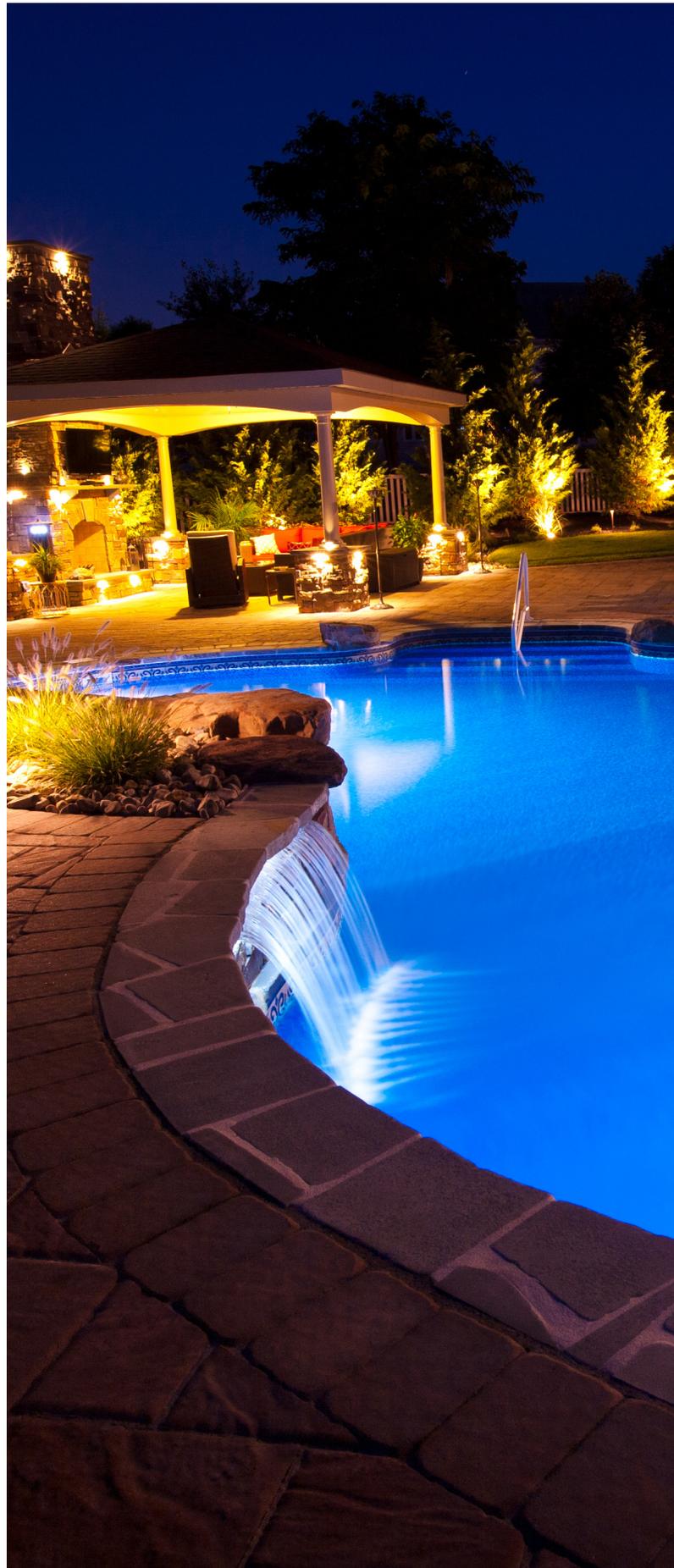
We also have a Project Manager who makes weekly site visits to review the work being carried out. The Project Manager provides additional support to the crew members while also acting as the customer's point of contact. Finally, a Production Coordinator will handle the logistics of ordering materials, making deliveries, and coordinating access with the customer.

8. What are the work hours for the crews? Do they work weekends?

Our crews work Monday through Friday, 7:30-5:30 pm. This regular schedule allows us to advance quickly and ensure quiet in the evenings when most people have come home from work. We do not work on Saturdays except in special cases, such as to make up for an inclement weather day during the

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Enjoy the ambiance of an intimate evening by the pool.





week. Our crews do their best work when they can recharge and enjoy time with their families!

9. Who is the point person for after-hours notifications?

Having a single point of contact throughout the pool installation process is an essential aspect of the Darlington Experience. Once you have a contract with us, you'll enjoy access to a designated Project Manager with whom you can communicate anytime during project construction. Because we provide all building services for each project, you avoid the headache of dealing with multiple vendors during pool installation. Your Project Manager will keep you apprised of the process and can answer any questions that arise along the way.

10. Will I have a dedicated team working on my project?

Yes. The team will consist of your Designer, Project Manager, and Production Coordinator in addition to the crew. assigned to carry out all the building activities associated with your project.

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A luxury fire pit acts as the signature piece for this outdoor area.



II. Logistics

1. What other potential charges might be in the project that may not appear in the contract?

Items that would incur additional charges are detailed in each project contract. For example, some townships require sealed architectural plans for permitting purposes. This and other requirements specific to your township would qualify as additional costs to be invoiced apart from the project payments. Also, of course, upgrading material or making change requests that add to the scope of the project would be outside the original contract pricing.

2. Can you provide me with an approximate schedule of construction from start to finish so I understand the plan and duration?

Every project is different, which means that the duration of your project will depend on its size and complexity. For example, a landscape install could take as little as three days, whereas our longest projects have a duration of three to six months. A pool typically takes about two months to build. Our design experts can provide you with a detailed timeline and budget in your project contract.

3. How do we handle any changes that I might want to make during construction?

At Darlington Designs, our goal is to make your vision a reality. We understand that for this to happen, sometimes changes need to be made along the way.

Your Designer will check in with you on a weekly basis via phone and/or email to update you on the project progress, which is a great time to discuss additional features or other desired modifications. A Project Manager will also be on site at least once a week. You can reach out to either the Salesperson or the Project Manager with requests.

We encourage you to contact us through your Designer as soon as you realize that you want a change so that we can update your contract accordingly (please see the question on change orders about this process). Letting us know about these requests early on will also help to save on unnecessary expenses.

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A bird's-eye view of a pool construction underway, amidst acres of lush green grass.

4. What happens to repair my underground sprinkler system if that gets damaged?

Any property with an existing irrigation system carries the inherent risk for damage during the building process. Darlington Designs is a licensed New Jersey Irrigation Contractor specializing in irrigation systems, which allows us to make repairs as needed during construction. However, irrigation repair costs are not typically included within the scope of contracted work and would be billed separately.

5. When you start my project do you work straight through without interruption until completion?

Each building schedule is different based on the scope of the specific project. Darlington Designs' one-stop-shop approach means that we provide all our services in-house, from design to construction and everything in between.

This approach allows us to streamline scheduling and minimize gaps from "dead time" during construction, which sets us apart from your regular general contractor. Because a general contractor may be subject to working with different subcontractors each with their own schedules, this increases the likelihood of an interrupted workflow and a longer total time for project completion. By contrast, Darlington Designs adheres to a regular schedule where each member of our team works in tandem to get the job done in a timely fashion.

6. How is trash and debris managed?

Dumpsters may be required on the property for construction work. Since most townships do not permit dumpsters to be placed on the street, Darlington Designs will place a dumpster on-site according to its workflow needs.

7. What are your steps for resolution if there are any problems or issues during the project?

If you have immediate concerns, it is best to call the office during business hours. We will follow up with an email that documents the issue and proposes a plan of action.

8. Who will be responsible for the permits?

Obtaining permits can be a complicated and involved process for larger projects. When permits are required, Darlington Designs manages the permit application process on your behalf for a predetermined fee. All permit-related costs will be added to the contract.

9. What if I decide to change materials? What is your change order policy?

Darlington customers enjoy the flexibility afforded by our change order policy. You can request different materials or make modifications to the project during construction through our change order process. All changes must be requested in writing and signed by the customer. Once we approve the change order, it will be added to the contract. We believe that this process is crucial in establishing transparency and clear expectations so that project obligations can be met.

10. What are the reasons for project delays, how are they handled?

Darlington Designs strives to adhere to the building schedule, but many factors can have an impact on both start and completion dates. Inclement weather, change orders for additional work, obtaining permits, and township inspections are all examples of events that can affect a project timeline. In the event of a delay, you will be notified by your Project Coordinator.



III. Experience

1. How long has your company been in business?

Darlington Designs has more than 15 years of experience in the design and workmanship of beautiful outdoor living spaces.

2. What are the top five reasons I should hire you for my project?

When you choose Darlington Designs, you'll enjoy the benefits of our high calibre, personalized service:

- If you want to create a communal space to gather with friends and family, then we're the company for you. We'll help you build your dream backyard space so you don't need to travel to a far away place to feel like you're on vacation!
- All designs are unique and built with your specific vision in mind. We pride ourselves on our ability to integrate exterior buildings with outdoor elements on the property.

- We are a one-stop-shop for all your home improvement and outdoor living projects. By handling both the design and build aspects of your project, we offer the convenience of a streamlined process.
- Single-source accountability means excellent communication and transparency during construction.
- Finally, we are a trusted contractor/builder in the area with the high craftsmanship standards.

3. How long have your Foremen been with the company??

Our construction Foremen have been with the company for four to 10 years. Our hiring strategy is to bring in new Foremen for entry-level positions so that they can learn 'The Darlington Way'. For supervisory positions, we make a point to promote from within so that only the most experienced lead our projects.

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Embrace the experience of partnering with a company you trust to get the job done.

4. What type of training do you have for your crews?

Our crew members learn about our unique approach to craftsmanship through intensive on-the-job training. When our foremen need to master a new skill or process, we bring in our Production Operations Manager and outside experts to provide on-site training.

5. How long have the crewmen been in your employ? And what experience do they have?

Entry-level crewmen have been with the company for one to five years. We hire workers with prior experience, especially for the higher-level crews (for example, carpentry).

6. I would like to see three projects you have constructed that are at least three years old. Can we arrange to see them?

Darlington Designs has been in business for over 15 years, and we have plenty of documented projects (some award-winning) to display our previous work. Most customers find that this is sufficient to give them a range of design options we offer. You can find most of them on our website, but others are available at request.

7. Are there any pending claims against your company?

No, we are glad to say that past customers have been satisfied with our work. This is an important question to ask any potential pool contractor.

8. Do you have staff employees or contract?

We believe that the best way to ensure a high quality quality service is to invest in our team. That’s why all our staff are full-time, year-round employees with Darlington. They are paid as W2 employees with workmen’s compensation.

9. Can I have a copy of your certificate of insurance?

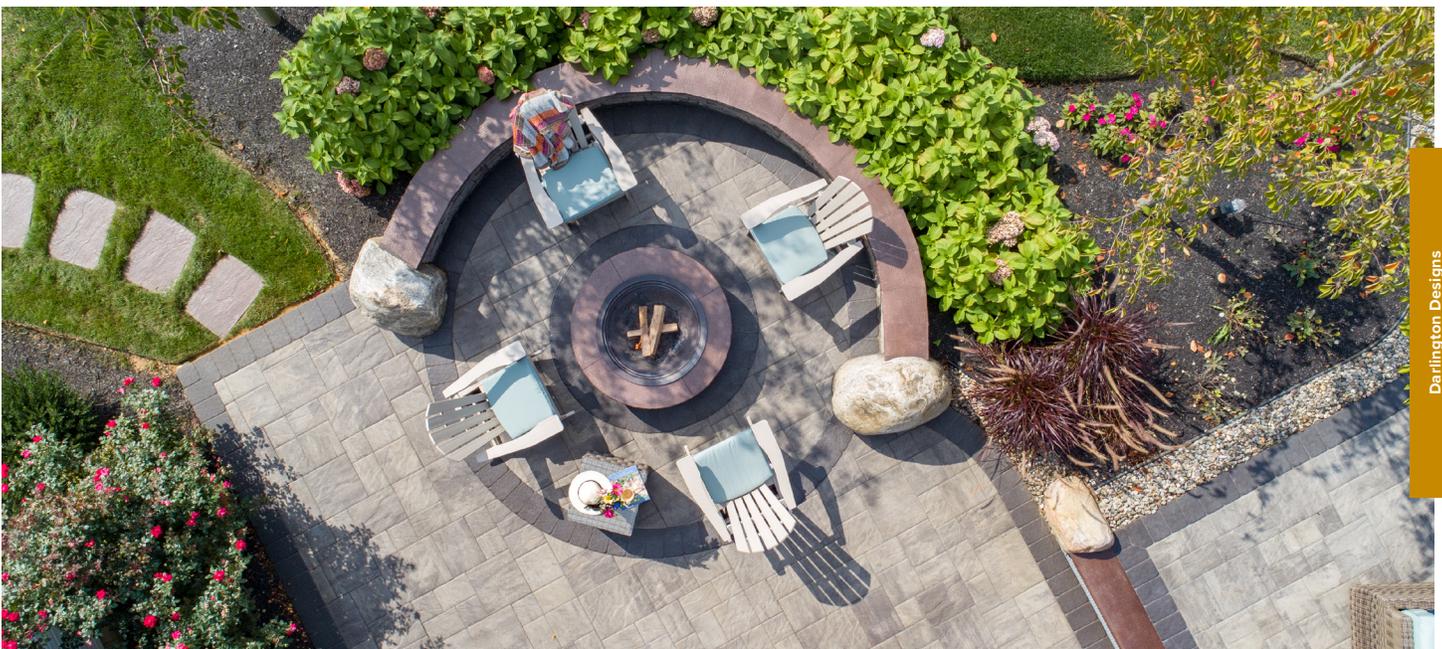
Yes, we are happy to provide a copy of this certificate upon request.

10. Can I have a W9 for your company?

Yes, we are happy to provide a copy of our W9 upon request.

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The perfect, cozy gathering spot for friends and family. Roast marshmallows, or simply sit back and relax!



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IV. Project-Specific

1. What areas of my property are going to be impacted and/or utilized during construction?
2. If a variance is needed, do you recommend a specific land use attorney?
3. What is our timeline for completion?
4. Who will need to have access to my home and for what reasons?
5. How and where will the tools and materials be stored if the job spans multiple days?
6. What is the payment schedule?
7. Where will deliveries and supplies be staged?
8. How will I know how to take care of everything after the job is completed?

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Each of our designs is specially crafted and one-of-a-kind.





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The Darlington Experience

Not all pool contractors are alike and not all results are equal. When deciding on a pool contractor, it's important to vet any company thoroughly. You should feel comfortable and informed before making a final decision about your project. We hope that this list will help you in your decision-making process by equipping you with the right questions to ask a potential contractor.

If you choose to partner with Darlington Designs, you'll enjoy the luxury of what we like to call The Darlington Experience. The Darlington Experience is all about transparency, commitment, and the quality craftsmanship that your project deserves. We make every effort to guarantee your satisfaction, not only with the final product but with the entire experience as well. With our customized, one-stop-shop approach to pool design and building, Darlington Designs can bring your unique vision to life! You can start turning your dream into a reality with Darlington Designs.

**To schedule your complimentary consultation,
please give us a call at [856-442-0440](tel:856-442-0440).**



DARLINGTON
— D E S I G N S —

105 Market Pl
Glassboro, NJ 08028

info@darlington-designs.com

856-442-0440