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At **Steelsmith**, we love educated buyers. The more they know about how steel buildings work, the better we can evaluate their needs down to the smallest details, which allows for their buildings to come out absolutely perfect. Educated buyers make projects progress quicker and smoother because they can better let us know exactly what they want in their building and what hurdles we might have to overcome in the project.

This guide is meant as a starting kit for those interested in purchasing and erecting steel buildings. Inside, we will discuss early stages planning for your building, the type of people who work on a steel building, features and accessories for your steel building, the advantages of using steel for your building, and resources you should use when making your purchase.

How will this help you?

First and foremost, there are many steel building contractors out there that are trying to sell you a building that is a product unsatisfactory to your needs. They make up stories and tell customers whatever they need to hear to sell a building and often in the end provide a structurally insufficient structure that was poorly designed and poorly erected. We want to help you avoid these scams.

Second, we want to help you get your best building for your budget. Whether it is showing you a feature you did not know was available or explaining some of the planning process that will help you expedite your project, providing you the best educational experience helps both of our interests.

Finally, we want to want to show you why Steelsmith is the best steel buildings company out there. We preach value and quality to our customers because we do not just want you to be happy with your building the day it is finished being erected. We want you to be happy and satisfied for the long haul, because that is what steel is known for – **strength, durability, and longevity.**

Where are you building?

This may seem surprising, but many building projects stop before they even get started because the customer doesn't own, or otherwise have rights to build on a piece of land. Many customers have an idea for a building, but they have not even considered where to put it. These customers put hours into trying to plan a building, but it falls apart because they have nowhere to build.

This isn't the only land-related issue some customers encounter. Every local government has their own set of individual codes and standards created for their local climates and environments to ensure that all buildings are made according to a minimum safety standard. In order to build, you will need to acquire building permits to show that your building, and the erection process, meets these standards. You will also need zoning permits, which show that your building is approved to be erected in a specific area. During the initial planning stages, you should also have your land inspected to see if it is suitable for building. Some steel building projects have been ruined because the builders tried to erect a building on land that has been filled in with waste, making it likely to cave in if a structure was built on top of it. Engineers can perform pressure tests on the land (often called boring tests) to check to see if the land is sufficient for building.

Once you have land that is sufficient for building, you will need a concrete foundation for your building to sit on. If you do not already have a concrete slab already on your building site, your steel building company will either be able to do this, or frequently collaborate with a company that does.

What Kind of Help Do You Need?

Steelsmith provides a comprehensive array of steel building services. We have a long history of successfully completed projects that we worked on from start to finish, but we also have worked on individual phases of a steel building project. Sometimes, a building is designed and fabricated, and we finish the project by erecting the building. Other times, the customer already has their own erection crew, so we estimate, design, project manage, and deliver the building for a separate erection crew to put up. We set ourselves apart from other steel building companies by helping in every facet of the steel building process, instead of just one or two services.

Self-Performed Construction:

Steelsmith firmly believes that skimping on a construction and erecting crew is one of the worst mistakes that can be made in the steel building process. While some companies use generic and untrained labor, Steelsmith erection crews are all certified according to factory and OSHA standards, and they also have extensive experience specifically in steel buildings.

Self-Performed Concrete Services:

Designing and pouring a perfect concrete slab is an essential early step for your building, and we can make sure that it is done right. We can also have your land inspected to check whether it is safe and sufficient for building.

Architectural Services:

One of the ways Steelsmith keeps project costs lower than other steel building companies is that we have our own architectural and design team that is integrated into the steel building process. The collaboration between our designers and the rest of our team helps expedite the design process, keeping costs low and gets you the blueprints and drawings faster. Our designers always put in the necessary amount of due diligence so that we avoid costly re-designs farther on in the process. We know that the most inefficient and wasteful expenditures during the building process are correcting the avoidable design mistakes, so our team always looks in-depth into local codes and standards and collaborate with your local building officials to make sure it is done right the first time.

Value Engineering:

At Steelsmith, we are always looking at the real cost of your project, not the initial bottom line. Spending a little extra now could save you exponentially more in the future. While other companies will design a building as cheaply as possible, we care about the cost over the long haul more than when it is initially built. For instance, failing to provide high-quality insulation could save you money on your initial budget, but if you are spending insane amounts on utility bills the savings will dry up quick. We value-engineer buildings to work within your budget without sacrificing quality.

Estimating:

At Steelsmith, we understand how important it is to stay within your budget. This is why it is essential that our Estimators provide the most accurate and detailed cost models using our innovative project control systems. Providing inaccurate costs only leads to unhappy clients, and we are committed to continually providing industry-leading customer service.



What are you looking to build?

Steel buildings provide an enormous range of options for your building need. We have built every type of building you can think of, from commercial buildings for car dealerships to airplane hangars to industrial buildings for oil and gas companies.

Industrial Buildings:

Steel buildings are an extremely common choice for industrial buildings because the speed in which they can be erected, the large clear span roof styles that allow for maximum interior space, and the durability that comes from steel.

Commercial Buildings:

The customizability of steel buildings is one of the most prominent advantages when designing a commercial facility. Commercial facilities can be warehouses that need specific temperature controls for specialty products, or strip malls that need specific features for the future stores and boutiques, or restaurants that require extra building and zoning restrictions to consider Steel buildings.

Recreational Buildings:

Recreational buildings are some of the most interesting and unique structures that we design and erect. Whether you are looking for a structure protect a motocross course, a gymnasium for basketball or indoor volleyball, or an artificial turf field, we can make a steel building that provides superior performance. Whether you need a no frills building or a more complex structure with office space or locker rooms, steel is the best choice for recreational buildings.

Learn More About the Features and Components of Steel Buildings

Framing Types: Steelsmith uses four distinct styles of frames for our buildings: clear span, modular, single slope, and lean-to.

Clear span:

This design is popular for factories, warehouses, and other buildings that require large areas of open space. They are also perfect if you require consistent floor plan changes because the interior walls won't be load-bearing. The weight rests on a series of I-beam main frames that align along the end walls of the building and support a rafter that runs from one end of the building to the other.

Modular:

Modular frames have interior columns and are often the best choice for wide buildings. The interior columns help support the load of the building by sharing the responsibility with the rest of the frame. A Steelsmith representative can discuss whether you whether it is financially prudent to design your building with interior support instead of buildings with completely open floor spaces.

Single Slope:

Single slope frames commonly occur on building additions, retail centers, and office buildings. Opposing sidewalls have different heights, which causes the roof to slope at an angle.

Lean-To:

Lean-to buildings are supported by a separate main building frame, with the focus of the load being placed on the main building frame. We also offer secondary framing systems that maximize the strength and durability of your primary framing system by providing additional support for your roof, walls, and other building features and accessories.

Panel Types:

Your choice of panels depend on several factors ranging from the type of insulation you need to the type of building you are making to your personal aesthetic preference. Steelsmith offers the following panel choices:

Standard PBR R Panel A Panel Concealed Fastener Panel

Roof Types:

Windows: Windows can be the highlight of any building, and we can install whatever type you might need from horizontal sliding windows to skylights.

Doors:

Steel buildings have a wide variety of doors for the wide variety of applications that you might need a steel building for. Whether you need a large garage door to fit an airplane through or a simple pedestrian door, we can make sure it is installed properly.

Building Features and Attributes of Steel Durability/Safety

The most obvious attraction of steel is its industry-leading standards for strength and durability. Steel is the leading building material in terms of strength-to-weight-you simply can't beat its strength and durability. This makes it ideal for buildings that receive heavy use, such as industrial and commercial facilities. Steel buildings are made to withstand the elements, and are designed for your specific climate. Steelsmith designs our buildings for the proper wind exposures and snow loads, so you know that your building can withstand whatever mother nature has to offer. Additionally, they are naturally fire resistant since steel is non-combustible and has a high melting point.





Sustainable Design:

Steel is an environmentally friendly building material. More steel (as measured by weight) is recycled every year in the United States than the next few recycled materials combined. Over half of the steel produced in the United States is recycled, and Steelsmith uses recycled steel in our buildings.

Low Maintenance:

The superior durability of steel means that it is a solid investment going forward. Unlike other building types, steel buildings have minimal upkeep and low levels of routine maintenance compared to other buildings. With steel buildings, you know that you are not going to continue paying for your building long after it is finished.

Value Engineering:

There is a difference between up-front and in-place cost. While some steel building companies attempt to provide you a building at the lowest up-front cost, this is actual a poor engineering practice that will prove costly to you in the long term. Steelsmith designs our buildings to provide you the best value as long as you have your building.

Doing Your Preliminary Research

Do you know who you are talking to on the other end of the phone? If this is your first steel building, you are susceptible to being scammed by a salesman who is never goingto deliver on the building they promise you. They can take your deposit, never do the correct work, and throw a bunch of lawyers at you so they can keep your deposit without giving you anything in return.

How do you know if a steel building company is reputable? How do you know they do great work? How do you know that they are the ones you should place your trust in?

For starters, ask to see samples of their work. The best proof of the quality of their work is to go see it. They should have a large portfolio of successfully completed projects that they can show to you. If no projects happen to be close to you, they should be able to provide ample photos of their work.

After you have seen their work, you should ask for their business references. If their portfolio is as large as they say, they will have current and former clients that can brag about their new buildings and the quality workmanship and customer service of the steel building company.

Additionally, the internet is a valuable research resource where you can learn about the steel building company and salesman with which you are talking. Use your preferred search engine with terms such as "lawsuit" or "scam." Unhappy customers with poor experiences from disreputable companies will likely have published their horror stories online.

You're Going to Need the Proper Permits

Before your building is erected, and before it is even designed, you should start looking into permits.

Zoning Permits:

These permits are concerned about the location of your potential building. Many local municipalities have rules, laws, and regulations about what type of buildings can be built in certain areas, sometimes including the appearance of the building. However, with successful conversations and negotiations with a local building official, exceptions can sometimes be made if you want to erect a steel building that might otherwise not be allowed.

Building Permits:

While zoning permits are concerned with where and what your building will be, building permits are concerned with the construction process itself. The building permits will approve the building process itself, ensuring that it is being done safely and that the building itself is safe.

Time to Get Your Quote

Now that you've learned these basics of steel buildings, it is time to contact Steelsmith so we can get started on your building. Tell us about what you're looking to build, where you are looking to build it, what features you need, and we will tell you about similar buildings we have erected, how we can achieve your building, and why you should trust your building with Steelsmith.

The Final Checklist

Now that you have read through the buyer's guide, here's a reminder checklist of what needs to be accomplished for you to receive your ideal building on-time and on-budget.

- Do you have land that you can legally build on?
- Are you at least in discussions with a local zoning official?
- Do you know exactly what the building is being used for?
- Have you hired a designer/architect with specific experience in steel buildings?
- Do you know your local codes and loads needed for your building?
- What specific safety features might you need?
- Do you have any requirements or preferences for the interior or exterior appearance?
- Have you done background checks on those you have hired to work on your building?
- Have you talked with their references?
- How is the contract structured?
- Is every necessary service included?
- Is the company you are working with also erecting the building?
- Is the erection crew properly trained, factory certified, and OSHA compliant?