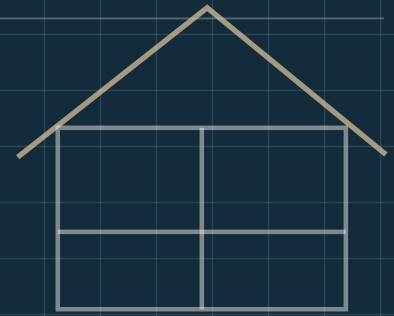




Before You Build, Build Your Plan.



NEW HOMES / EXTENSIONS / RENOVATIONS / GRANNY FLATS

Whether you're building from scratch, extending, renovating or adding a granny flat, a successful project starts long before construction begins.

Taking charge is rewarding, but it also means managing budgets, schedules, trades and hundreds of decisions. Preparation makes the difference.

A LITTLE ABOUT ME

I'm **Fabian**, a carpenter with over **20 years of experience** in the building industry.

Throughout my career, I've worked closely with owner-builders, helping them manage projects from start to finish.

My role has gone beyond carpentry: recommending and coordinating trades, budgeting, scheduling, inspecting workmanship and helping organise sign-offs.

I've seen how quickly projects can run into trouble without proper preparation - and how much smoother they run when important decisions are made early.

3 MISTAKES TO AVOID

01

Starting without a complete plan

Late decisions can lead to design changes, delays and expensive rework.

02

Underestimating the true cost

Permits, site preparation, services and unexpected issues can push budgets off track.

03

Poor trade coordination

Wrong booking order or missing materials can bring the whole project to a standstill.

THE LESSON I KEEP COMING BACK TO

Good planning and management are just as important as good construction - if not more so.

WHERE DO YOU START?

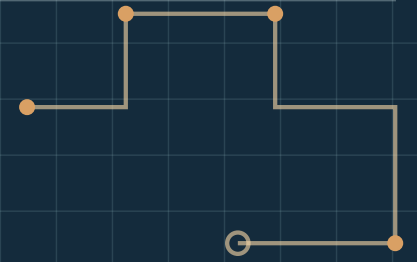
- ☐ Do I understand the stages of my project?
- ☐ Do I know what must happen before work starts?
- ☐ Have I considered costs beyond construction?
- ☐ Do I know how to sequence the trades?

THE FIVE PILLARS

- 01 PLANNING
- 02 BUDGETING
- 03 SCHEDULING
- 04 TRADE MANAGEMENT
- 05 SITE MANAGEMENT



The Owner-Builder Roadmap.



8 STAGES / ONE CLEAR PLAN / FROM IDEA TO HANDOVER

You already have the land or property. Now what? Here is the overall journey, from defining the job to completing your final paperwork.

Your budget, schedule and trade planning will evolve along the way - this is a map, not a rigid timeline.

YOUR PROJECT AT A GLANCE

START HERE, THEN WORK FORWARD

01

DEFINE THE PROJECT

Decide what you are building, your must-haves and where the project begins and ends.

OUTPUT: A CLEAR PROJECT BRIEF

02

CHECK FEASIBILITY

Investigate planning controls, easements, site access, services and potential constraints.

OUTPUT: KNOWN SITE LIMITS

03

DESIGN & COST-TEST

Explore design options, seek the right technical advice and test costs before finalising plans.

OUTPUT: A REALISTIC DESIGN DIRECTION

04

SORT THE APPROVALS

Check permits, owner-builder eligibility, insurance and required inspection arrangements.

OUTPUT: CLEAR APPROVAL PATH

05

BUILD THE MASTER PLAN

Refine the budget, obtain comparable quotes, set allowances and map trade and material timing.

OUTPUT: BUDGET + BUILD SCHEDULE

06

PREPARE THE JOB

Confirm trades, order long-lead items and plan site access, facilities, deliveries and safety.

OUTPUT: SITE READY TO START

07

BUILD & CHECK

Coordinate work, monitor quality and costs, record changes and arrange required stage inspections.

OUTPUT: CHECKED WORK + RECORDS

08

FINISH & HAND OVER

Close out defects, collect trade certificates and obtain applicable final approvals before use.

OUTPUT: COMPLETE PROJECT FILE

YOUR FIRST ACTION

Write a one-page project brief. List what you plan to build, your top three priorities and an initial spending limit.



PILLAR 01 / PLANNING STEP 01 OF 5

Define Your Project.

START WITH A CLEAR VISION / CREATE A PROJECT BRIEF



Know exactly what you want to achieve before working out how to build it. Whether it's a new home, extension, renovation or granny flat, clear decisions now can help prevent expensive changes and delays during construction.

START BY ANSWERING FIVE QUESTIONS

YOUR FIRST PLANNING EXERCISE

01 WHAT IS THE END GOAL?

Clearly describe what you want to build, why you want it and how you plan to use the finished space.

02 WHAT ARE YOUR MUST-HAVES?

Identify the features, rooms and practical requirements you cannot compromise on.

03 WHAT IS OPTIONAL?

Separate essentials from the nice-to-haves that could be removed or changed if the budget tightens.

04 WHAT ARE YOUR LIMITATIONS?

Consider your starting budget, timeframe, property constraints and the time you can commit.

05 WHAT WILL YOU MANAGE?

Decide which project responsibilities you can realistically take on and when you'll need qualified help.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The clearer the brief, the easier it is for your designer and trades to understand the job and give relevant advice.

PRO TIP / CREATE A ONE-PAGE PROJECT BRIEF

Before engaging a designer or requesting detailed quotes, write a one-page description of your project. Include your intended outcome, **must-haves**, **optional extras**, **approximate budget** and **preferred timeframe**.

Use it as the reference point in conversations with professionals. Keep it flexible: your brief may change as feasibility, cost and design information becomes clearer.



PILLAR 01 / PLANNING STEP 02 OF 5

Know Your Property.

CHECK THE SITE / UNDERSTAND THE LIMITATIONS

Before committing to a design, understand what your property will allow. Every site is different. Overlooking restrictions or physical conditions can lead to redesigns, delays and extra construction costs.

SIX THINGS TO INVESTIGATE

BEFORE YOU LOCK IN YOUR DESIGN

01 PLANNING RESTRICTIONS

Check zoning, overlays, easements and relevant council controls. Confirm which approvals your project may require.

02 GROUND & DRAINAGE

Consider soil conditions, site slope, drainage, stormwater and the condition of any existing structures.

03 SITE ACCESS

Check whether delivery trucks, excavators and machinery can safely reach and work within the building area.

04 EXISTING SERVICES

Identify water, sewerage, electricity and stormwater locations, capacities and possible connection costs.

05 PHYSICAL OBSTACLES

Look for retaining walls, large trees, underground services, neighbouring structures and restricted working areas.

06 WEATHER & SEASON

Consider local rainfall, heat and wind patterns, and how the intended start date could affect exposed work.

PRO TIP / DO NOT OVERLOOK SITE ACCESS

A design can work on paper while access proves difficult on site. Restricted access may mean extra labour, equipment or delivery costs. After heavy rain, a previously firm driveway can become boggy; assess whether a suitable **crushed-rock access track** or other temporary protection may be needed.

PRO TIP / TIMING CAN SAVE YOU MONEY

Investigate your area's seasonal weather patterns before setting the start date. Where possible, plan weather-sensitive tasks for more favourable conditions and allow time for delays. There is no single best building season for every Australian location.



PILLAR 01 / PLANNING STEP 03 OF 5

Budget Before Design.

COST-TEST THE IDEA / ALLOW FOR THE HIDDEN EXPENSES

Know what you can afford before committing to what you want to build. Establish a spending limit, seek early cost advice and include costs beyond the headline construction quote. An early estimate is not a fixed price.

SIX BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

BEFORE DETAILED PLANS

01 AVAILABLE BUDGET

Determine your total spending limit, including savings and any approved finance.

02 BUILDING COSTS

Estimate labour, materials, equipment and the major stages of construction.

03 PROFESSIONAL FEES

Allow for designers, engineers, surveying, permits, inspections and insurance.

04 OFTEN-MISSED EXPENSES

Include temporary site services, waste removal, deliveries, hire and site access.

05 CONTINGENCY

Keep an allowance for unforeseen conditions, price changes and necessary variations.

06 YOUR INVOLVEMENT

Be realistic about your available time and which work requires qualified or licensed trades.

HIDDEN COSTS / EARLY CHECKLIST

Which of these have you allowed for? Not every item applies to every job.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Skip bins and waste disposal | ☐ Delivery, unloading and storage |
| ☐ Temporary fencing and site security | ☐ Site clearing, excavation and set-out |
| ☐ Portable toilets and amenities | ☐ Utility and drainage connections |
| ☐ Temporary power and water | ☐ Temporary crushed-rock access in wet weather |
| ☐ Scaffolding, cranes and equipment hire | ☐ Extra hire, labour or return visits after delays |

PRO TIP / WORK BACKWARDS FROM YOUR BUDGET

Start with your available money and develop a design around it, rather than designing first and hoping you can afford it. Get early advice on expensive structural work, site preparation and major materials.



PILLAR 01 / PLANNING STEP 04 OF 5

Build The Right Team.

ENGAGE PROFESSIONALS EARLY / CHOOSE RELIABLE TRADES

Owner-building does not mean knowing everything or doing everything yourself. Your role is to coordinate the process and know when specialist advice is needed. The professionals involved will depend on your project.

WHO MIGHT YOU NEED?

THE PEOPLE BEHIND A GOOD BUILD

01 DESIGNER OR ARCHITECT

Develops the design and documents the proposed building work.

02 LAND SURVEYOR

Confirms boundaries, levels and the information needed for site planning or set-out.

03 GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEER

Investigates ground conditions to inform footing and foundation design.

04 STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Designs or specifies structural elements such as footings, beams and supporting walls.

05 BUILDING SURVEYOR / CERTIFIER

Carries out a regulatory role in approvals and required building inspections.

06 OTHER SPECIALISTS

May include a planner, energy assessor, bushfire consultant or arborist.

PRO TIP / GET ADVICE AT THE RIGHT TIME

Engaging people out of sequence can mean repeated work and extra fees. For example, final structural design may need relevant ground information first. Before appointing anyone, confirm their scope, fees, timeframes, required credentials and insurance.

PRO TIP / THE CHEAPEST TRADE IS NOT ALWAYS THE BEST VALUE

An unreliable tradesperson can delay other trades, cause tension on site and lead to expensive rework. **Vet trades before they start, not after problems appear.**

- Check references and past work
- Verify relevant licences and insurance
- Compare the same quote scope
- Confirm availability and duration
- Assess communication and reliability



PILLAR 01 / PLANNING STEP 05 OF 5

Plan For Problems.

SPOT THE RISKS / KNOW YOUR BACKUP OPTIONS

You cannot prevent every surprise, but you can be prepared. Spotting likely problems early gives you time to find solutions before they affect the budget, schedule or workmanship.

SIX COMMON SOURCES OF TROUBLE

WHAT COULD INTERRUPT THE BUILD?

- 01** HIDDEN STRUCTURAL ISSUES

Renovations can reveal damaged framing, rot, inadequate supports or concealed defects.
- 02** INCOMPLETE DOCUMENTATION

Missing details or conflicting drawings can create confusion, variations and rework.
- 03** MATERIAL LEAD TIMES

Windows, steel, trusses and specialty products may need ordering well in advance.
- 04** TRADE SCHEDULING

One delayed trade can force several others to reschedule their work.
- 05** INSPECTIONS & APPROVALS

Missed mandatory inspection stages can delay work or require finishes to be removed.
- 06** SITE & WEATHER CONDITIONS

Drainage, access, underground services and severe weather can add time and cost.

PRO TIP / HAVE A BACKUP PLAN

Ask yourself: What if the windows arrive late? What if excavation reveals unexpected ground conditions? What if a trade becomes unavailable? Can my contingency cover the extra work? Good project management means recognising risks and adapting when plans change.

YOUR ACTION / WRITE A FIVE-RISK LIST

PRINT & COMPLETE

For each risk, consider the likely cost or delay, what you can do now and what your backup plan would be.

POTENTIAL PROBLEM	COST / DELAY	PREVENTION / PLAN B
01		
02		
03		
04		
05		



PILLAR 01 / BEFORE CONSTRUCTION

Permits & Responsibilities.

CHECK THE RULES / KNOW YOUR OBLIGATIONS

Approvals are part of planning, not paperwork to sort out later. Before you start, confirm what is allowed on your property, which permits you need and what accepting the owner-builder role legally means. Rules vary between Australian states and projects.

SIX CHECKS BEFORE WORK BEGINS

01 PLANNING PERMISSION

Ask council whether zoning, overlays, siting or land-use rules require a planning permit. Do not assume the same rule applies to every extension or granny flat.

02 BUILDING PERMIT

Confirm with your building surveyor or certifier whether a building permit is needed, what drawings are required and which inspections or final certificates apply.

03 OWNER-BUILDER ELIGIBILITY

Check whether you can legally act as owner-builder and need a certificate or consent. Thresholds and conditions differ by state and project type.

04 CONTRACTS & TRADE LICENCES

Check which written contracts, registrations and compliance certificates are required. Some work must be carried out by licensed or qualified specialists.

05 INSURANCE & FUTURE SALE

Check insurance for construction and liability, plus any home warranty or resale obligations. The required cover depends on the work and jurisdiction.

06 SAFETY & INSPECTION HOLD POINTS

Clarify site safety duties and qualified supervision. Schedule mandatory inspections and never conceal work contrary to permit conditions or directions.

VICTORIA / CURRENT EXAMPLE (OCT 2026)

The Building and Plumbing Commission currently requires owner-builder consent for domestic building work valued over \$20,000, subject to eligibility and exemptions. The estimated value includes labour and materials.

A qualifying small second dwelling (granny flat) may not require a **planning permit** in many cases, but a **building permit is still required**. Check your particular site and project before proceeding.

VERIFY ONLINE:

[BPC Victoria >](#)[Victorian Planning >](#)[Safe Work Australia >](#)



PILLAR 02 / BUDGETING STEP 01 OF 02

Know Your Numbers.

BUDGETING / FIVE HABITS THAT PROTECT YOUR MONEY

A budget should be a living plan, not a number you write down once. Build in realistic costs, understand what is included in quotes and keep checking what you have paid, committed and still need to spend.

THE FIVE BUDGETING HABITS

01

Budget by Category

Separate design and approvals, site works, structure, services, finishes, equipment, external works and other costs. Avoid relying on one large construction figure.

PRO TIP / USE A TRACKING SHEET

Record your estimate, accepted quotes, payments and forecast cost to finish.

02

Compare Your Quotes

Confirm scope, inclusions, exclusions, GST, materials, timing and payment terms. Check **prime cost items** and **provisional sums** that may change.

PRO TIP / COMPARE LIKE FOR LIKE

The lowest price may leave out work included in another quote.

03

Protect Your Contingency

Unexpected site conditions, changes and delays can stretch costs. Consumer Affairs Victoria suggests adding **15%** to a detailed estimate for unplanned costs; your risk may differ.

PRO TIP / KEEP IT SEPARATE

Do not spend contingency funds on optional upgrades.

04

Plan Your Cash Flow

Map when deposits, supplier invoices, trade payments and any loan drawdowns fall due. Total project funding is not the same as having cash ready today.

PRO TIP / LOOK AHEAD

Check upcoming payments before committing to new purchases.

05

MONITOR COSTS UNTIL COMPLETION

Track paid amounts, committed work, approved variations and forecast remaining costs. Save quotes, receipts and invoices, and check your budget regularly - especially after unexpected expenses.

REMEMBER: Money still in your account may already be committed to work not yet invoiced.



PILLAR 02 / BUDGETING STEP 02 OF 02

The Hidden Costs.

BUDGETING / PRINTABLE OWNER-BUILDER CHECKLIST



Small costs can add up to thousands. Tick each relevant expense once you have allowed for it in your budget. Not every item will apply to your project, and the list is not exhaustive.

WHAT HAVE YOU ALLOWED FOR?

42 POTENTIAL EXPENSES

01 PLANNING, PERMITS & FEES

- ☐ Planning and building permit fees
- ☐ Soil testing and land surveying
- ☐ Engineering and design fees
- ☐ Energy assessments and specialist reports
- ☐ Required inspections and certifications
- ☐ Owner-builder fees and applicable insurance
- ☐ Council levies, bonds and asset protection fees

02 SITE SETUP & AMENITIES

- ☐ Temporary fencing and site security
- ☐ Portable toilet hire and servicing
- ☐ Temporary power supply and usage
- ☐ Temporary water supply and usage
- ☐ Skip bins and waste removal
- ☐ Site signage and safety equipment
- ☐ Site storage and weather protection

03 ACCESS & WEATHER

- ☐ Crushed rock or road base for access
- ☐ Temporary access tracks or ground protection
- ☐ Drainage works and water pumping
- ☐ Machinery recovery or extra equipment hire
- ☐ Wet-weather clean-up and site repairs
- ☐ Extended hire due to weather delays
- ☐ Rescheduled deliveries and trade visits

04 EQUIPMENT & DELIVERIES

- ☐ Scaffolding and working platforms
- ☐ Excavator, crane and machinery hire
- ☐ Delivery, unloading and transport
- ☐ Extra material handling and storage
- ☐ Material waste, damage and replacement
- ☐ Equipment transport, fuel and consumables
- ☐ Excess soil and demolition waste disposal

05 SERVICES & EXTERNAL WORKS

- ☐ Electricity connection or upgrades
- ☐ Water and sewerage connections
- ☐ Stormwater drainage and connections
- ☐ Telecommunications connections
- ☐ Driveways, paths and retaining walls
- ☐ Landscaping and site reinstatement
- ☐ Boundary fencing repairs or replacement

06 UNEXPECTED BUILDING COSTS

- ☐ Hidden structural damage
- ☐ Rock or unsuitable ground conditions
- ☐ Asbestos assessment and licensed removal
- ☐ Changes to plans or engineering
- ☐ Additional work arising from inspections
- ☐ Rectification of defective workmanship
- ☐ Finance, holding costs and completion delays

PRO TIP / ASK WHAT IS MISSING

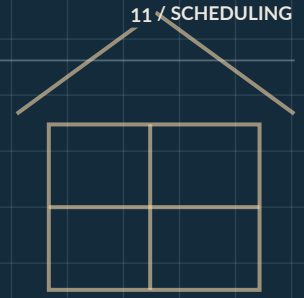
When reviewing a quote, ask: "What is not included, and what other costs could arise?" Use this checklist to update your own budget before you commit. Small, repeated expenses can quickly erode your contingency.



PILLAR 03 / SCHEDULING STEP 01 OF 02

Time Is Money.

SCHEDULING / SIX HABITS FOR A MORE RELIABLE BUILD



Construction is a chain of dependent tasks. Trades, materials, deliveries and inspections must come together at the right time. One missed delivery or unfinished task can push several other jobs back.

SIX HABITS FOR KEEPING THE JOB MOVING

01

Create a Master Schedule

Break the job into stages. Set realistic durations and identify which work and approvals must be complete before the next task begins.

PRO TIP / ALLOW BREATHING ROOM

Include time for incomplete work, inspections and unexpected delays.

02

Plan Long-Lead Materials

Windows, trusses, structural steel and cabinetry may need design sign-off, shop drawings, manufacture and delivery well before installation.

PRO TIP / WORK BACKWARDS

Confirm supplier lead times, then calculate when each order must be placed.

03

Sequence Your Trades

Work must happen in the right order. For example, required in-wall work and inspections generally come before internal linings conceal them.

PRO TIP / CHECK SITE READINESS

Confirm preceding work, materials, access and required inspections.

04

Allow for Local Weather

Rain, extreme temperatures and wind can affect excavation, concrete work, roofing, site access and how long exposed work takes.

PRO TIP / THINK SEASONALLY

Plan weather-sensitive stages around local conditions where practical.

05

Keep Trades Informed

Book early, reconfirm start dates and tell affected trades when progress changes. Last-minute surprises can cause costly rescheduling.

PRO TIP / MAKE THE QUICK CALL

Confirm readiness and timing before the trade travels to site.

06

Review the Schedule Often

Treat the schedule as a working document. Track progress, reforecast completion dates and update suppliers and trades after delays.

PRO TIP / PLAN YOUR NEXT TWO WEEKS

Review critical tasks and outstanding material orders every week.

REMEMBER: A good schedule is one you update as the job changes.



PILLAR 03 / SCHEDULING STEP 02 OF 02

Sequence & Supply.

SCHEDULING / CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCE AND ORDERING GUIDE

Know what needs to happen next - and what needs ordering beforehand. This is a typical overview for home construction. Renovations, extensions and granny flats often overlap or reorder stages; always follow your approved plans and required inspections.

CONSTRUCTION STAGES AT A GLANCE

STAGE	TYPICAL WORK	PLAN WELL AHEAD
01 Site Preparation	Set-out, access, clearing, excavation.	Machines, fencing, amenities and waste.
02 Foundations	Footings, reinforcement, drainage and slab.	Steel, concrete, plumbing and inspections.
03 Structural Frame	Walls, beams, bracing and roof framing.	Timber/steel frames, trusses and lifting.
04 Weatherproofing	Roofing, windows, doors and cladding.	Windows, doors, roof and wall systems.
05 Services Rough-In	Electrical, plumbing and HVAC rough-ins.	Service plans, fixtures and inspections.
06 Internal Linings	Insulation, plasterboard and wet areas.	Insulation, linings and waterproofing.
07 Fit-Out & Finishes	Joinery, tiling, painting and flooring.	Cabinetry, tiles, flooring and appliances.
08 Completion	Testing, rectification and sign-offs.	Final trade bookings and documentation.

PRO TIP / WORK BACKWARDS FROM INSTALLATION

Confirm specifications and current supplier lead times before setting order dates. Custom items may require final dimensions and approved shop drawings; avoid non-refundable orders until details are confirmed.

YOUR PRE-TRADE CHECKLIST

TICK BEFORE EACH TRADE STARTS

- ☐ Previous work is sufficiently complete
- ☐ Materials and equipment are available
- ☐ Drawings and specifications are current
- ☐ Other affected trades are informed
- ☐ Required inspections and approvals are done
- ☐ The work area is safe and accessible
- ☐ Start date and expected duration confirmed



PILLAR 04 / TRADE MANAGEMENT STEP 01 OF 02

Find the Right Trades.

TRADE MANAGEMENT / QUALITY, RELIABILITY AND REAL VALUE

You are building a team, not just collecting quotes. Reliable tradespeople bring workmanship, clear communication and an understanding of what must happen next. The wrong choice can create delays, disputes and avoidable costs.

01 FIND YOURSELF A GREAT CARPENTER

An experienced carpenter who knows the wider building process can be a valuable ally. They often work alongside many different trades and understand how the job fits together.

- Trade sequencing and site readiness
- Spotting problems before they escalate
- Practical materials and methods
- Recommending other reliable trades
- Preparing for the next stage
- Keeping the work moving

PRO TIP: A great carpenter adds practical advice, but does not replace specialists. Agree any advisory role and fee upfront.

02 Find Quality Trades

Start with trusted recommendations from previous clients, builders, friends and trades with experience on similar jobs.

PRO TIP / GOOD TRADES KNOW GOOD TRADES

Ask your carpenter who they would trust on their own project.

03 Vet Before Booking

Check references, similar work, required credentials and insurance, availability, and how well they communicate.

PRO TIP / MEET THEM ON SITE

A site meeting helps you judge how carefully they assess the work.

04 Compare Written Quotes

Get three written quotes for the same plans and scope. Check inclusions, exclusions, GST and how extras are charged.

PRO TIP / LOWEST IS NOT ALWAYS BEST

Missing work, poor quality or no-shows can wipe out savings.

05 Spot the Warning Signs

Watch for vague quotes, missing credentials or references, pressure to sign and repeatedly missed commitments.

PRO TIP / DOCUMENT YOUR SHORTLIST

Record references, quoted scope, credentials and availability.

MONEY-SAVING PRO TIP / CONSIDER SOURCING YOUR OWN MATERIALS

Supply-and-install quotes can include sizeable material markups. Ask for a detailed materials list and an optional **labour-only quote**, then compare total prices with suppliers. You may find worthwhile savings, particularly on material-heavy jobs.

Compare the whole cost: GST, delivery, trade discounts, handling, shortages, returns, damage and responsibility for product suitability and warranties. Agree responsibilities with your tradesperson before purchasing.



PILLAR 04 / TRADE MANAGEMENT STEP 02 OF 02

Good Work, Great People.

TRADE MANAGEMENT / CLEAR COMMUNICATION AND MUTUAL RESPECT

Managing trades is about people as well as building. Clear expectations, regular communication and genuine respect help good tradespeople do their best work, while small problems are addressed before they become expensive.

FIVE HABITS FOR A BETTER BUILDING SITE

01

Set Clear Expectations

Agree scope, timing, supplied materials, payment terms, site access and who makes decisions before work begins.

PRO TIP / GET IT IN WRITING

Confirm important conversations, changes and agreed terms by message or email.

02

Keep Communication Open

Reconfirm start dates, discuss upcoming work and warn affected trades about delays, decisions and deliveries.

PRO TIP / STAY A STEP AHEAD

Review the coming week and clear obstacles before trades arrive.

03

Respect Their Time

Have the work area ready, make decisions promptly and pay correctly and on time under agreed terms.

PRO TIP / BE ORGANISED

A reliable owner-builder makes it easier for good trades to keep returning.

04

Handle Problems Early

Raise concerns calmly; refer to plans, listen, agree on a solution and record changes before extra work proceeds.

PRO TIP / SOLVE, DO NOT CONFRONT

Be firm about quality while keeping conversations professional.

05 / LOOK AFTER YOUR TRADIES

PRO TIP / A COFFEE, A SNACK AND A FRIDAY ARVO BBQ

Shout a coffee and a snack at smoko, or thank the team with a Friday afternoon BBQ **after work has finished**. A little hospitality can lift morale, build trust and encourage open communication. It complements - not replaces - fair pay, clear agreements and safe working conditions.

YOUR ACTION / WEEKLY TRADE CHECK-IN

At the start of each week, confirm:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Trades booked and dates reconfirmed | ☐ Materials and deliveries organised |
| ☐ Decisions and inspections identified | ☐ Outstanding issues discussed |
| ☐ Payments and variations reviewed | |



PILLAR 05 / SITE MANAGEMENT STEP 01 OF 02

A Site That Works.

SITE MANAGEMENT / SAFE, TIDY AND READY FOR THE NEXT TRADE

A well-organised site helps good trades work efficiently. Plan access and storage, protect materials, control waste and prepare the site for the next day. Your systems should also protect workers, visitors and neighbours.

FIVE SITE MANAGEMENT ESSENTIALS

01

Plan Site Layout

Organise vehicle access, delivery zones, bins, amenities, safe walkways and space for machinery. Plan material storage before loads arrive.

PRO TIP / KEEP MATERIALS CLOSE

Store materials near where they will be used, but never in the way of trades, machines or safe access routes.

02

Deliveries & Storage

Confirm unloading access, check delivered quantities and damage, and store moisture-sensitive materials correctly.

PRO TIP / DRY MATERIALS, HAPPY TRADIES

Keep porous materials off the ground and protected as directed by suppliers. Wet or damaged stock delays work and frustrates trades.

03

Keep the Site Tidy

Agree on regular clean-up, clear waste and keep paths free of trip hazards. Even tidy trades can miss things.

PRO TIP / FIVE-MINUTE NIGHT CHECK

Walk the site each evening. Check access, waste, storage and what tomorrow's trades will need.

04

Prioritise Safety

Plan security, amenities, hazardous work, emergency arrangements and competent supervision. Protect existing occupied areas too.

IMPORTANT / KNOW YOUR DUTIES

Safety obligations vary by project and state. Confirm your responsibilities and use competent professionals.

05 / LOOK AFTER YOUR NEIGHBOURS AND EXISTING HOME

Keep neighbours informed about noise, traffic and large deliveries. For extensions and renovations, protect floors, doors, furniture and occupied areas. **A friendly heads-up often prevents needless tension.**

YOUR ACTION / DAILY SITE CHECK

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Safe access and site security | ☐ Deliveries and unloading arranged |
| ☐ Clear paths and tidy work areas | ☐ Waste and site hazards addressed |
| ☐ Materials dry, safe and protected | ☐ Site ready for tomorrow's trades |



PILLAR 05 / SITE MANAGEMENT STEP 02 OF 02

Check Before You Cover.

SITE MANAGEMENT / QUALITY, INSPECTIONS AND CLEAR RECORDS

The best time to fix a problem is before the next stage covers it up. Regular progress checks, correctly timed inspections and clear records help you catch issues early, without replacing professional assessments.

FIVE WAYS TO PROTECT QUALITY

01

Review Work as You Go

Compare visible work against approved plans and specifications. Notice damage, missing details and work about to be concealed.

PRO TIP / CHECK BEFORE COVERING

Confirm preceding work and required inspections are complete before linings, cladding or finishes hide it.

02

Book Required Inspections

Your permit or relevant authority sets inspection requirements. Confirm stages, give notice and keep inspection records.

PRO TIP / SCHEDULE INSPECTIONS

Build inspection hold points into your programme. Do not conceal work contrary to permit requirements or directions.

03

Know What Is Being Checked

Regulatory inspections assess compliance; they are not necessarily a full check of workmanship and finishes.

PRO TIP / HAVE YOUR CARPENTER THERE

If possible, have your carpenter on site to answer questions and help fix minor issues. This may prevent a repeat visit.

04

Raise Defects Early

Discuss concerns promptly, refer to drawings and agreed scope, then document any fix or variation before proceeding.

PRO TIP / DON'T PASS IT ON

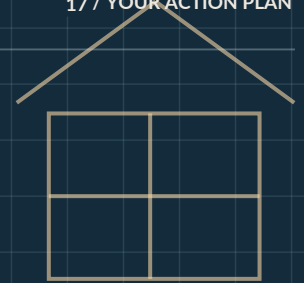
Poor framing or unfinished work can hold up the next trade. Resolve issues before they are covered.

05 / DOCUMENT YOUR BUILD

Keep permits, plans, variations, inspection reports, certificates and invoices organised. **PRO TIP - Take photos before walls, floors and ceilings are closed up;** photos help locate concealed services, but do not replace formal inspections.

YOUR ACTION / BEFORE THE NEXT STAGE

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Visible work matches approved plans | ☐ Certificates and results collected |
| ☐ Damage and defects addressed | ☐ Unresolved issues documented |
| ☐ Required inspections completed | ☐ Photos taken; next trade ready |



YOUR NEXT STEP / PUT YOUR BLUEPRINT TO WORK

Make Your Next Move.

YOUR ACTION PLAN / FIVE Pillars, ONE CONFIDENT START

You don't need every answer today - you need a clear place to start. Use these five pillars to turn what you've learned into practical next steps for your new home, extension, renovation or granny flat.

YOUR FIVE-PILLAR STARTER CHECKLIST

01

Planning

Define your project; find out what your site allows.

- ☐ One-page project brief drafted
- ☐ Site limits and approvals checked

02

Budgeting

Make the full cost visible before you commit.

- ☐ Hidden costs added to budget
- ☐ Contingency and cash flow planned

03

Scheduling

Map what happens next and what must arrive first.

- ☐ Main construction stages mapped
- ☐ Long-lead items identified

04

Trade Management

Choose the right people and set clear expectations.

- ☐ References and credentials checked
- ☐ Written scopes and quotes compared

05

Site Management

Keep access, materials and quality under control.

- ☐ Access and storage plan made
- ☐ Inspections and photos planned

YOUR ACTION / CHOOSE THREE FIRST MOVES

Pick three tasks you can start this week. Write down who will do each one and when.

01	_____	BY: _____
02	_____	BY: _____
03	_____	BY: _____

KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING

If you subscribed to email updates, watch for practical tips to avoid delays, organise trades and keep your build moving. Reply and tell me what you're building and where you're up to.