

## Top tips for a successful build

---

Last updated: 15 March 2016

Use these tips to help your building project run well and ensure you know how to meet your legal obligations.

Plan well, thinking about how the build will work for you now and in the future (and for future owners).

Understand the building stages so you can prepare ahead, know what's happening next, understand timeframes and meet your obligations. Getting your design finalised often takes three to four months and the build another six months or more.

[Stages of the building process \(https://www.building.govt.nz/getting-started/stages-of-the-building-process/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/getting-started/stages-of-the-building-process/)

Contact your council early in the process and establish a good working relationship. They have a lot of information that can help you build it right.

Budget well and be practical by allowing for changes and increased costs, which can be very common. Get help if you need it. Be clear about your budget with your design professional and consider using a quantity surveyor to help you determine costs.

Don't make assumptions. Ask questions if you have them. Write down responses, to help everyone remember.

Involve the right people for your project, so that you get the right results. Some tasks might be simple and others might require you to use licensed building professionals or qualified specialists.

[Choosing the right people for your type of building work \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/planning-a-successful-build/scope-and-design/choosing-the-right-people-for-your-type-of-building-work/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/planning-a-successful-build/scope-and-design/choosing-the-right-people-for-your-type-of-building-work/)

Decide who will be the project manager, whether it's the homeowner, builder, architect or someone dedicated to the role (the size of your project will probably determine how much work is involved). The right person will keep the project running, coordinate subcontractors, keep up with council requirements and stick to the budget.

Even if your job is simple, a contract can protect you if things go wrong. If your project is over a certain amount, you must get a contract (\$30,000 or more, including GST). Make sure you understand what you are signing and get your lawyer to review it first.

[Consumer protection - disclosure and checklist \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/why-contracts-are-valuable/consumer-protection-disclosure-and-checklist/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/why-contracts-are-valuable/consumer-protection-disclosure-and-checklist/)

[Why contracts are valuable \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/why-contracts-are-valuable/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/why-contracts-are-valuable/)

Make a good building consent application, with accurate, relevant supporting documentation, drawings and specifications. It should make the application process smoother and help your build, as the consented documents become the plan everyone will follow.

[Apply for building consent \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/)

Keep good records on site, somewhere safe and accessible to everyone (plans and specifications, building consent, record of work and energy work certificates). You could also keep a brief build diary to note key dates and deliveries.

Have a health and safety plan in place from day one of construction, and make sure everyone keeps to it. Understand your obligations under the health and safety legislation.

Work to your building consent (if you can't, be sure to talk to your council about varying your plans).

[Understanding the building consent process \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/building-consent-process/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/building-consent-process/)

Understand and meet your obligations - from complying with the Building Code and paying people through to inspections and final sign-off (and everything in between).

## Related content

---

## [Rights and obligations in the building process \(https://www.building.govt.nz/getting-started/your-rights-and-obligations/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/getting-started/your-rights-and-obligations/)

It pays to know your rights and obligations in the building process so you can protect yourself and others within the law. Find out what you and others need to do to help the project run smoothly and what to do if things don't go to plan.

## [Projects & consents \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/)

Information to help you plan your building project, get consent, build to the consent and legally complete your project.



New Zealand Government

This information is published by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's Chief Executive. It is a general guide only and, if used, does not relieve any person of the obligation to consider any matter to which the information relates according to the circumstances of the particular case. Expert advice may be required in specific circumstances. Where this information relates to assisting people:

- with compliance with the Building Act, it is published under section 175 of the Building Act
- with a Weathertight Services claim, it is published under section 12 of the Weathertight Homes Resolution Services Act 2006.