

## Designs and problems that may occur

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Problems with design work can affect any stage of a building project so it's important there is good communication, an understanding of expectations and plans that can be clearly understood.

If you are the client, you need to be clear from the first meeting about what you want and what you can pay. Keep a written record of your brief to the designer or architect and your expectation of their role. Update your records if your plans change.

## Typical design problems

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Typical problems in the design of building work include:

- design is out of client's budget
- client doesn't like the design but it fits the brief
- designer takes longer than expected to produce any designs
- client thinks they're paying too much for what they're getting
- client decides to hire an alternative designer part way through the project
- design doesn't meet the requirements of the Building Code
- disagreement about who pays for changes to plans and specifications (for example, if they are insufficient for the building consent application or need rework)
- design looks good but is not buildable
- architect or designer and builder disagree on aspects of the build
- design is inaccurately drawn or measured
- products specified are incorrect or inadequate (for example, cladding)
- final cost of the build is much higher than the architect or designer anticipated
- quality of finish is not what the client expected
- completed build does not meet the client's expectations
- [problems occur once the build is completed. \(https://www.nzrab.nz\)](https://www.nzrab.nz)

## Options for resolving design disputes

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A person offering professional services must take responsibility for their advice.

If you have a problem or serious breakdown in communication with your design professional, your options for resolving disputes include:

- talk it through with the other party and try to resolve the problem
- follow any disputes process agreed in your contract
- contact the architect or designer's professional organisation to see if they have a complaints process or dispute resolution procedures
  - [New Zealand Institute of Architects \(http://www.nzia.co.nz/\)](http://www.nzia.co.nz/)
  - [Architectural Designers New Zealand \(http://www.adnz.org.nz/\)](http://www.adnz.org.nz/)

- [Design Association of New Zealand \(http://www.danz.co.nz/\)](http://www.danz.co.nz/)
- [NZ Registered Architects Board \(https://www.nzrab.nz/\)](https://www.nzrab.nz/)
- see if there is a solution under the Consumer Guarantees Act or Fair Trading Act, depending on the nature of the dispute.

[Resolution options \(https://www.building.govt.nz/resolving-problems/resolution-options/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/resolving-problems/resolution-options/) includes specific methods for resolving problems.



New Zealand Government

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