

TOP 10 TIPS FOR BUILDING YOUR

DREAM HOME



We want our customers to be the most educated about the building industry that they can be, so that we can work together to build **YOUR** dream home. That's why we have compiled a list of the top ten things you need to know before building.

1. GO WITH A BUILDER YOU CAN TRUST

This might be one of the most important decisions you make in the home building process. Whichever builder you choose, you're going to be working with them for many, many months. It's important to get the choice right at the outset to head off problems down the road.

When it comes to finding the right builder, honesty and transparency are critical. How long have they existed? Do they have a strong track-record of building high quality homes?

To ensure your chosen builder is reputable check if they are a member of the **Master Builders** and **Housing Industry Association (HIA)**. Bonus points if they've won awards from these associations.

2. MAKE SURE YOU DEAL WITH A PROFESSIONAL 'NEW HOUSING CONSULTANT'

This person will be your first point of contact with the company and probably the one you have most contact with during and after you have signed up to build your home.

Ask how long they have been with the building company and worked in the wider building industry. Do they bounce around from company to company a lot? Worse yet, is this their first job straight out of High School?

Trust your gut. If you think something is suss don't be afraid to look elsewhere.

3. HAVE YOUR FINANCES IN ORDER

You may not know that a construction home loan is structured differently than a regular home loan. Then again you might know all about home finance (*you smarty pants!*). Buying a home is a pretty big deal after all, so be sure to do your research.

Find out what the average deposit is, learn what interest rates are (*especially the difference between fixed and variable*) and how they will affect the amount you end up having to pay!

Also be sure to speak to **AT LEAST 2** different lenders to make sure you are getting the right advice.

Some builders may have in-house finance, so make sure you are 100% happy with the builder before you use their finance wing. Remember that you don't necessarily have to use their finance options if you don't want. It's often just an easier process if you do.

4. HAVE A REALISTIC BUDGET IN PLACE

This one is important, but often overlooked.

Actually, it's so important we're going to say it again **"have a REALISTIC budget in place"**.

Budget is the top priority when choosing a home design.

The builder will understand the costs involved, so always work closely with them on what you can afford.

Pro Tip: You can save money by choosing an existing design and making minor custom changes. Builders often have a wide range of existing designs to suit.

We know it's difficult but be willing to compromise for the sake of budget. Costs can change and it's better to be precautionary when setting your budget. No one wants you to be paying way more than budgeted for, or worst yet not being able to pay at all! It sucks. So be sure to be realistic.

5. THE RIGHT LAND

Okay, so if you've followed the steps so far, you're basically an expert on home finance, know what you can afford, have chosen your builder and have a rough idea of design you want (*look at you go!*). So where are you going to build your new home?

Deciding where to build involves many factors, such as:

- Access to public transport,
- School catchment areas,
- Distance to work,
- Where other family members live,
- Parks or playgrounds,
- Or even capital growth potential of the area.

Word of warning: sometimes cheaper blocks require more site works or restrict certain designs. Another common mistake is failing to consider the orientation of a block.

Orientation essentially means what direction the block is facing; does it receive morning sun? Does it receive afternoon sun? and so on. In Australia, the ideal orientation is north facing. This ensures your house will receive enough natural light and warmth during colder months and protects it from excessive heat during the warmer months.

Keeping orientation in mind could save you thousands of dollars later down the track in heating and cooling expenses, so get those compasses out!



6. LOOK AT HOME DESIGNS THAT MEET YOUR NEEDS

This might sound obvious, but the bigger the house, the more material and labour it takes to build. To put it another way, a bigger kitchen means more cabinets, benchtops, and flooring and all this means more money. Now do this for all the other rooms in the house, and it adds up quickly.

Does your Master Bedroom really need an oversized walk-in closet when the space could be added to your Bedroom or Master Bathroom?

The addition of a Home Office or Theatre Room sounds enticing, but only plan to build a room that will actually get used. What good is a wasted home gym where the treadmill is used to hold clothes from last season?

Often an unused room becomes a dumping ground to place those things that never get used. If you plan on adding a spare room, make sure that it is a room that can transition well from one type to the next.

7. CHECK YOUR PLANS & SPECIFICATIONS

Have you checked all the plans and specifications thoroughly? Like more than once?

Make sure you fully understand the plans and all the symbols used. Ask questions. It's better to clear up any issues you have now before bricks start getting laid!

Don't sign off on the plans until you are 100% happy they are what you want and what you can afford (*don't forget rule 4!*).

8. DON'T GO FOR THE CHEAPEST QUOTE

Even though it's tempting, don't try to save money by choosing the cheapest quote.

“ *The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten* ”

Always get a quote from at least one other builder before making your decision. If possible, compare what company the builder uses for windows, bricks, cabinets etc.

Also, the bigger the company does not always mean it is the better choice. Compare from a range of builders, small, medium, and large.

9. MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHAT IS INCLUDED

When comparing quotes make sure you are comparing “*Apples with Apples*”.

Check to see what is and isn't included in the quote.

One of the common mistakes is the builder not including the crossover to the driveway. You only find this out when you get your keys, and the driveway is not complete (*whoops!*)

Handy tip for you 4x4 drivers out there: check the height of the garage roof to make sure you have enough clearance.

10. GET EVERYTHING IN WRITING

This is one is important for your own piece of mind and helps ensure you stay on top of what is going on.

Try to document all discussions in adequate detail and have them confirmed in writing. Keep all your property documentation in good order from day one. Verbal agreements may hold little weight should a dispute arise.

Keep this tip in mind after you've made your decision and are working with your chosen builder.

11. ONE FINAL THING

This one is not technically a tip but is important to remember during the whole process...

Have fun! You're building your dream home after all.

P.S. If you found this helpful be sure to share with your family and friends.

