

BUILD WITH US

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20 THINGS THAT YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE STARTING TO BUILD A NEW HOUSE



1 Select your builder and negotiate the terms building contract price. Remember to allow for variations and contingencies on top of the contract price.

2 Apply for building permit.

3 Organise the demolition of the existing building

Pro-tip: Get at least 3 demolition quotes, quote prices can vary significantly from one demolisher to the next. Remember to allow adequate time for the tenant to move out and the abolishment of the power and gas services which can take 4 to 6 weeks.

4 If you are installing a swimming pool, you will need to organize the pool design and pool builder in advance of the demolition.

5 Notify your neighbours about the upcoming demolition and building works. A simple letter drop to all your surrounding neighbours explaining what is happening will go a long way to ensuring good relationships and a smooth building process.

6 Organise all of the required "council permits" such as the asset protection permit, the vehicle crossing permit, the storm water tapping / road opening permit, the hoarding permit, etc, before you start building so there are no hold ups or surprises during construction.

7 If you are building along a site boundary line, you will need to organise "protection works agreements" with the neighbouring property owner.

8 As soon as the demolition is finished and you have a "clean site" you should get the land surveyor to "peg out" the property boundaries and the main "grid lines" for the new house.

Pro-tip: There are more disputes between neighbours over the location of boundary fences than any other issue, so getting a licensed land surveyor to establish the "true boundary lines" before you start building can save you a lot of stress, time and money.

9 Site establishment - Before starting any building works, the builder must install all of the site facilities such as temporary fencing, site power, site toilet, safety signs and water tap.

Pro-tip: Building a proper, well-constructed, plywood hoarding around the building site has huge benefits for both the builder and the owner and starts the project off on a very positive note).

10 Boundary fencing - If the existing fences need to be replaced, I recommend doing this right at the start when it is quick, easy and more economical to do so. This can also help avoid disputes with neighbours later in the project.

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11 Address any potential site drainage issues before you start building. If your building site is flat, has obvious damp patches or is located in an old suburb, it may have some storm water drainage issues and these must be dealt with before you start building your new house.

Pro-tip: Get your builder and plumbing contractor to investigate the site storm water drainage and confirm that they are both fully satisfied with the site drainage plan. If not, the drainage plan must be re-designed before going any further).

12 Organise all the new site services such as sewerage, water, gas, power and Telstra / NBN, before you start building

13 Swimming pool shell - Most pools are located in the backyard and must be installed before the main house building is commenced so the timing of the pool shell will be critical for the house builder to get started.

14 Organize your "landscaping contractor".

Pro-tip: Have site meeting with your landscaping contractor and your builder before any site works commence to identify who is responsible of any "grey areas" such as site drainage, fencing works, retaining walls etc

15 Review the 'soil report' with your builder before they start the concrete footings or slab.

Pro-tip: If you are having "in slab hydronic heating" I recommend installing "polystyrene insulation boards" under the concrete slab. This is relatively inexpensive and can greatly improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the slab heating

16 Before starting concreting works, the plumber should install the new "sewer boundary trap" and the new "storm water connection". Both of these can require substantial excavation works and are best done right at the start

17 Select the main "living area flooring" and the toilet suites before the builder starts the concrete slab

18 Organise the "consulting engineer" who has done the structural design for your house to do the initial "pre-slab building inspection" instead of the usual building surveyor. It is important to get the slab structure "spot on" from the start.

19 Request a copy of the "mandatory building inspection reports" from the building surveyor following each building inspection for your own records

20 Boundary fencing - If the existing fences need to be replaced, I recommend doing this right at the start when it is quick, easy and more economical to do so. This can also help avoid disputes with neighbours later in the project.

Pro-tip: Have a fortnightly site meeting with your builder so you can ask all of your questions and get regular updates from the builder.