

CHECKLIST · BEFORE BUILDING

Display Home Visit Checklist

A display home is a sales tool built to the highest standard the builder is capable of. Here is how to read one properly.

BEFORE YOU START

Display homes are built slowly, by the best trades, with full supervision and no deadline pressure. Your home will not be. So judge the *detail*, not the styling — the things nobody bothers to fake are the things that tell you the truth.

23 THINGS TO CHECK ON THE DAY

BEFORE YOU GO

- ☐ **Research the builder**
Licence current, insurance in place, recent completed builds you could visit.
- ☐ **Bring your homework**
Wishlist of must-haves, rough budget, list of questions.
- ☐ **Photograph everything**
Phone ready. Salesperson chatter is forgettable; photos are not.

THE BUILD QUALITY

- ☐ **Skirting and architrave joins**
Look for clean mitres, no gaps, smooth caulk.
- ☐ **Cornice corners**
Sharp and consistent, or filled with putty?
- ☐ **Tile lippage**
Run your hand across tiled floors. Edges that catch are poor work.
- ☐ **Window seals**
External seals neat? Any silicone smears?
- ☐ **Door alignment**
Does each door close flush and latch first time?
- ☐ **Cabinet doors**
Do all drawers and doors align? Any gaps or twists?
- ☐ **Paint finish**
Look down a wall in raking light. Roller marks and dimples show up.
- ☐ **Floor squeaks**
Walk slowly across timber or vinyl. Listen for movement.

LAYOUT AND FEEL

- ☐ **Stand in the kitchen**
Does the work triangle make sense?
- ☐ **Open all doors at once**
Do they swing into each other or block walkways?
- ☐ **Sit in the lounge**
Where would your TV go? Can it fit?
- ☐ **Storage**
Open every cupboard. Real-life storage or display-only?
- ☐ **Natural light**
Visit at different times if you can, or ask which way it faces.

THE SALESPERSON

- ☐ **Pressure to sign on the day**
A real builder waits for you to decide.
- ☐ **Verbal promises**
Only count once they are written into your contract.
- ☐ **Vague answers**
Especially on inclusions, allowances and site costs.
- ☐ **Hard upsell on upgrades**
Note which upgrades they push hardest.

AFTER THE VISIT

- ☐ **Write notes**
Within an hour, write what you liked, what you did not, and any concerns.
- ☐ **Email any questions**
Get answers in writing. A verbal answer is not a record.
- ☐ **Score the builder**
Use the Builder Selection Scorecard once you have visited 2 to 3.

TAKE THESE WITH YOU

Questions to email afterwards

- 1 Can I have a copy of your standard inclusions list?
- 2 What is included in your site costs versus left as a provisional sum?
- 3 Can I speak to 2 to 3 past clients who built homes similar to mine?

*Almost everything you are shown in a display home is an upgrade.
Ask which items are standard, and watch how long the answer
takes.*

KEEP GOING

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