

CHECKLIST · BEFORE BUILDING

Contract Review Checklist

Scrutinise the contract document clause by clause before you sign.
Eighteen things that decide how the next twelve months go.

BEFORE YOU START

The contract is the only moment in your build where you hold all the leverage. Once you sign, almost every term is fixed. Work through this with the contract open beside you, and don't let anyone rush this part — *a builder worth signing with will wait a week.*

18 POINTS TO CHECK BEFORE YOU SIGN

THE PARTIES AND PRICE

- ☐ **Names correct**
Your name and the builder's legal entity name are correct.
- ☐ **Price in writing**
The full contract price is in writing and GST inclusive.
- ☐ **Deposit legal**
The deposit is within your state's legal limit.

TIME AND DELAYS

- ☐ **Build period stated**
The construction period is stated in calendar or working days.
- ☐ **Start trigger clear**
The start date trigger is clear.
- ☐ **Fair extension clauses**
Extension of time clauses are fair and require written notice.
- ☐ **Late penalty paid to you**
Liquidated damages are payable to you if the builder finishes late.

PROGRESS PAYMENTS

- ☐ **Standard schedule**
The payment schedule matches standard industry stage percentages.
- ☐ **Tied to completed stages**
Each payment is tied to a completed and verifiable stage.
- ☐ **Nothing paid early**
No payment falls due before that work is actually done.

VARIATIONS AND ALLOWANCES

- ☐ **Written variation process**
Variations require a written quote and your approval before work starts.
- ☐ **PC and PS listed**
Prime cost and provisional sum items are listed with realistic allowances.
- ☐ **Margin stated**
The builder's margin on variations is stated upfront.

YOUR PROTECTIONS

- ☐ **Warranty insurance**
Domestic building or home warranty insurance is confirmed.
- ☐ **Defects period stated**
The defects liability period is clearly stated.
- ☐ **Dispute process**
A dispute resolution process is included.
- ☐ **Cooling-off understood**
You understand any cooling-off period that applies.

TAKE THESE WITH YOU

Questions for your builder or solicitor

- 1 Can you walk me through the progress payment schedule and what triggers each one?
- 2 How are variations priced, and what margin applies?
- 3 What happens, and what am I owed, if the build runs over time?

If something in the contract doesn't sit right with you, that feeling is usually worth more than a second opinion. Mark it, ask about it, and get the answer in writing before you sign.

KEEP GOING

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