

04

Build & Live

Track site decisions, variations, inspections, practical completion and your move into the finished home.

THE CONSTRUCTION & HANDOVER WORKBOOK →

Stay organised from site commencement to moving day

This practical workbook helps homeowners track decisions, costs, inspections, defects and handover information throughout construction.

Stage 4: Build & Live

Keep written records, use the approved communication process and make decisions against the drawings, contract, budget and long-term design intent.

At a glance

Step	Focus
01	Establish your construction system
02	Record construction milestones
03	Use a site-meeting record
04	Track requests for information
05	Control variations
06	Track selections and samples
07	Inspections and quality checks
08	Practical completion and defects
09	Collect your handover package
10	Plan the first year in your home

01 Establish your construction system

Agree at the beginning:

- Who gives instructions to the builder
- Who can approve costs and changes
- Where drawings and correspondence are stored
- How often site meetings occur
- How requests for information are answered
- How progress photographs are recorded
- How urgent matters are escalated

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact	Responsibility
Owner representative			
Builder / site manager			
Architect			
Principal Certifier			
Structural engineer			

02 Record construction milestones

Use this checklist to track progress through the major stages:

- ☐ Site establishment
- ☐ Demolition
- ☐ Excavation and footings
- ☐ Slab or subfloor
- ☐ Wall and roof framing
- ☐ Windows and external doors
- ☐ Building enclosed and weatherproof
- ☐ Services rough-in
- ☐ Insulation inspection
- ☐ Linings and waterproofing
- ☐ Joinery and internal finishes
- ☐ Fixtures, lighting and appliances
- ☐ External works and landscaping
- ☐ Practical completion inspection
- ☐ Occupation Certificate
- ☐ Handover

03 Use a site-meeting record

Meeting details

- Date:
- Attendees:
- Current programme status:
- Current cost status:
- Work completed:
- Work planned next:
- Safety or access matters:

Decisions and actions

Item	Decision / action	Responsible	Due

04 Track requests for information

No.	Question	Raised by	Required by	Status

Good record keeping

Confirm important site conversations in writing. Record the decision, drawing reference, cost, time effect and person responsible.

05 Control variations

Before approving a variation, confirm:

- What is changing and why
- Whether it is required or optional
- The complete price, including margins and tax
- Any effect on the programme
- Whether consultant or approval updates are needed
- Whether another item can be adjusted to protect the budget
- That approval is recorded in writing

Variation register

No.	Description	Cost	Time effect	Approved?

06 Track selections and samples

Item	Product / finish	Colour	Approved	Needed on site
External finish				
Flooring				
Cabinetry				
Benchtops				
Paint				
Lighting				

07 Inspections and quality checks

Your contract, certifier and consultant scopes determine who inspects what. Ask early; do not assume every item is inspected by the same person.

Potential checkpoints include:

- Footings, reinforcement and structure
- Waterproofing
- Termite protection
- Insulation and energy measures
- Stormwater and drainage
- Building envelope and flashing
- Balustrades and safety items
- Services testing
- Completion and certification

Inspection record

Date	Stage	Inspector	Outcome / action

o8 Practical completion and defects

At practical completion:

- Walk through systematically
- Refer to the contract documents and approved selections
- Photograph each issue
- Give defects clear locations and descriptions
- Agree who will rectify each item and by when
- Confirm remaining certificates, manuals and approvals
- Understand the defects-liability process

Defects register

Location	Issue	Photo	Due	Complete

09 Collect your handover package

- ☐ Occupation Certificate and final approvals
- ☐ Approved plans and final drawing set
- ☐ Survey or works-as-executed information, if applicable
- ☐ Engineering and inspection certificates
- ☐ Waterproofing and trade certificates
- ☐ Warranties and receipts
- ☐ Appliance manuals
- ☐ Paint colours and finish schedules
- ☐ Keys, remotes and access codes
- ☐ Meter and service information
- ☐ Maintenance instructions
- ☐ Builder and consultant contacts
- ☐ Defects list and completion dates

10 Plan the first year in your home

First month

- Learn how the home responds to sunlight and ventilation
- Set up efficient heating, cooling and hot-water controls
- Read product-care instructions
- Report urgent defects through the correct channel

Before the defects period ends

- Review previously reported items
- Check doors, hardware, sealants and finishes
- Note water-entry, drainage or condensation concerns
- Arrange the agreed defects inspection
- Keep dated photographs and correspondence

Ongoing

- Clean gutters and drainage points
- Maintain external finishes as specified
- Service mechanical systems
- Care for landscape and shading
- Monitor energy and water use
- Keep your handover records together

Final project reflection

- What works beautifully in everyday life?
- Which design decision has made the biggest difference?
- How is the home performing through the seasons?
- What would you approach differently next time?
- May Residential Studio photograph the completed home?
- Would you be comfortable providing a testimonial?

A considered home keeps evolving

Good handover is not the end of the design relationship. It is the beginning of learning how your home performs and supports the way you live.

Related guide

Need to step back?

If you are still preparing to build, review 03 — The Construction Preparation Guide before using this workbook. It will help you check approvals, documentation, pricing, selections, builder engagement and contract preparation before construction begins.

These notes provide general organisational information. Follow your project contracts, approvals and advice from appropriately qualified professionals.