



7 pitfalls of building or renovating and how to avoid them.

1. **Insufficient planning** – ensure your home is flexible and can cater to changes in family requirements as time moves on. Take into account your current lifestyle and any future plans ie, a caravan, boat, growing children. Which actually leads to the next point.....
2. **Doing it on your own** – initially this can look attractive as it appears to save you money. However this is a major task, is risky and can end up costing you a lot of money. Architects, draftmen and interior designers are able to assist you along the journey. Often people don't know what they don't know, so professionals are able to help you plan and make the right decisions to ensure your home functions today and is also prepared for the future. An interior designer can often save you money by directing you to alternative fittings, fixtures and materials to meet your budget, and you can often get access to their trade discounts.
3. **Compromising on materials that will cost you in the long run** – when you're working to a budget (and we all are!) it's imperative that you don't cut back where it's going to cost you more in the long run. Ensure you get the right advice on where you can save and where to invest. This is especially important on the fundamentals (that are often more difficult to change later on), items such as flooring, windows, building materials and walls.
4. **Having a contract with prime costs** – ensure that all prime cost items are either fully specified before the contract is signed so the fixed cost is in the contract, or research the item and allow a good allowance for the prime cost so it's realistic. The objective is to have no prime costs in your building contract, so it's worth doing the work upfront to make this happen as it saves you money in the long run.
5. **Over-capitalising** – it's so easy to do, so knowing the areas to invest in over items that are less important is critical to ensure you don't over capitalise. Your overall objective helps determine this too – are you building your 'forever' home, or planning on selling in a year or two? This affects your materials, fitting and fixture specifications as it determines many different elements that go into a build, as well as the overall design and building materials.
6. **Restrictive building contracts** – some contracts won't allow you onsite during the build. This is not in your best interest as there are many things that can pop up during the build that are not as obvious until you are onsite. Don't work with a builder that doesn't allow you on site.
7. **Avoid contracts that charge a fixed fee every time you request a variation.** Variations are inevitable. The objective is to try to minimise them as much as possible, but unforeseeable things happen, so you don't want to be locked into a contract where you are charged a fixed fee just because you need a variation.

To discuss how our experience with new builds and renovations can assist you, call Frances on 0401 194 095 for a chat.



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