



## DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION TIPS



Designing and constructing a home or investment property involves a major outlay of time and finances so you want to be sure that you are doing it right. Our team at AAD will always ensure we assist you to get the most out of your project but a few handy hints to consider before starting never go astray.

### HANDY HINTS

<b>Choosing Your Site</b>	If looking to reduce costs consider sites typically called a "problem lots"— small, irregular, narrow, or in-fill property lots. These lots are often sold for lower prices, however with the right design and builder it could be the perfect place for your new home. Due to the location of our Brisbane office in hilly, inner-city Paddington, AAD specialises in this type of design.
<b>Preparing Your Site</b>	Where possible try to avoid expensive site preparation processes. It can be cheaper to design your home around a site than to truck in dirt, clear trees, grade a site or blast rock.
<b>Choosing Your Design Team</b>	Work with consultants that you can build a good relationship with. Your project journey will be a lot more comfortable if you have a team that you are able to communicate easily with and that share similar outlooks towards your building project.
<b>Choosing Your Builder</b>	Choosing your builder is just as important as choosing your designer. Make sure you are working with someone that is prepared to build the design with the construction methods specified. In addition, working with an experienced contractor can be invaluable to the process due to their ability to utilise connections with suppliers and subcontractors.
<b>Consider Resale Value</b>	Consider your resale value; sustainable features that reduce costs for potential buyers creates more of a demand for your home. Additionally, a flexible, accessible design will be increasingly sought after with our ageing population that. Don't overbuild for a neighbourhood as it will still collect a price that reflects the surrounding area at resale.
<b>Planning Unique Features</b>	Discuss any unique features of your design with your builder at the beginning of your communications to make sure they can construct them in a way you are happy with prior to commencing your project to avoid any nasty surprises.
<b>Control Your Living Climate</b>	A good architect will incorporate passive design features into your home without you necessarily knowing. Passive design is easy to incorporate at the beginning of a project and difficult to do effectively at the end. Some strategies that might be worth discussing with your architect early on in your project are building orientation, room zoning, cross ventilation and shading.
<b>Thinking Green</b>	Environmental sustainability is the catch phrase of our time, but a home that strives for water, waste and energy efficiency will increase resale value and save you money down the track.
<b>Future Proof Your Home</b>	Families grow, people move home to work, have accidents, and grow old. Altering a home after construction can cost 3 times more than including features at the original time of construction. A house designed to have greater flexibility for future needs can ultimately save money and increase resale value.
<b>Standardise Sizes</b>	Standardising sizes of wardrobes, cabinets, windows and vanities will save you money both in labour and cost per item. Saving money in places like this can allow you to splurge more when it comes to the features of your home.



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<b>Include Outdoor Living</b>	Covered outdoor living areas with good transitions to internal spaces increases resale values and adds flexible living space to any home. Make sure you make the covered area deep enough for any furnishings you might imagine being placed there as well as room to walk around them.
<b>Consider Maintenance</b>	Consider the long term maintenance and repair of your home right from the beginning. Choosing building materials that you won't have to repair, replace, or repaint can save you money long term; there many durable material replicas. Also consider design; can you safely a maintain an atrium; afford to replace a double height window; and find the same materials in 10 years?
<b>Storage Space</b>	Allow for more storage space than you think you'll need. Everyone tends to forget a home for the Christmas decorations, sports equipment and general gadgets that you don't want floating around on floors or benches.
<b>Natural Light</b>	Save on electricity and the energy it takes to raise your finger to the light switch – Install solar tubes or skylights in areas that don't get natural sunlight via windows.
<b>Power Outlets and Prewiring</b>	Now is the time to think about all the times you wished there was a power outlet and ensure you have one there. At the time of construction is also the most cost effective time to prewire for anything you might wish to install in the future i.e. outdoor speaker systems, solar panels or security access panels.
<b>Attention to Detail</b>	Line up the tops of windows and doors to create clean lines of sight around each room which will help create a higher quality finish. Additionally giving some attention to how you finish you ceilings can significantly alter the feel of a room.
<b>Finders Keepers</b>	Collecting salvaged materials such timber boards, used bricks, and feature wood doors can character to a home without the price tag.
<b>Leave Money in the Pot</b>	Be mindful that your budget can change through issues that are out of your control. Leave money aside for things like unforeseeable site difficulties, weather, and material changes.
<b>Avoid Variations</b>	Where possible avoid changes to materials or plans during the building process as these add time and costs to the building process. Take the time to work through exactly what you want in the concept stage of your project before turning the first shovel of soil; it will make for a smoother faster construction experience.
<b>Know the Contract</b>	Commonly building contracts to allow builders to charge up to 20% on variations to the contract in addition to the cost of the difference allowed by the provisional sum. Ensure prime costs and provisional sums are realistic in relation to the quality you expect to avoid additional costs.
<b>Monitor Construction</b>	Monitor construction allowances as your home is being built to ensure you're getting what exactly what was agreed and paid for including everything from structural elements to finishes. For example if you agreed with your builder that you would use a certain brand of insulation, don't settle for a lesser brand unless there is a cost adjustment.