

ARCHITECT or DRAFTSPERSON?

If you are building a new home or doing renovations that require a building permit, your plans will probably have to be drawn by a drafter, architect or building designer to obtain council approval.

DRAFTSPERSON

A draftsman will supply you with specialist drawings and documentations if required, for a fee, will organise your building permits. Many in this role study at TAFE to learn the skills required to draw (document) buildings.

ARCHITECT

An architect is a specialist in design, maximising design opportunities for your home, your site and your budget. They will design and supply drawings of your home, organise your building permits, organise all your specifications, and in some cases manage your principle contractor (your chosen builder). This role is achieved by 5-6 years of University studies. Architects will usually spend more time on the design phase of the build, to make sure your design maximises every opportunity and investment you're making in it.

A BUILDING DESIGNER

It depends on the state of Australia whether a building designer has to be formally licensed to use this title, and the license they have will impact the scale of development they can work on – be it individual homes, apartment buildings, or public facilities such as childcare centres etc. There are specific TAFE courses, although building designers are draftspeople who've gone through the licensing process.

ECI Early contract involvement is where you engage builder at design stage therefore leapfrogging the tender process. This allows the builder and the architect to work together to get your build done on budget.

ARCHITECT CHECKLIST

Collate information on your site.

Gather as much detail as possible on your building site. Where does the sun set and rise? What view do you want? Where are your trees on the site? Is it easy access? Where are the utilities? What are the existing ground conditions?

Make a 'wish list' of living spaces.

How many rooms do you need? What sized rooms would suit your lifestyle? Measure your existing home and consider the size - do you need more? or can clever design utilise your existing footprint?

Know your budget.

How much do you have to spend? Before approaching an architect have this price in mind, things like site costs, services, laneways and fees all have to be considered and subtracted from your overall budget, so we can work out exactly how much is left for the build itself.

Prioritise your budget.

For some people aesthetics is important and others want to spend as little as possible on the initial build, whereas some want to minimise the environmental impact and ongoing running costs. Making this decision will help your architect specify the best choices of materials and products for your project.

Consider your timeline.

Got a deadline? Let your architect know! Complex designs take time, they also cost more money and require more approvals from planning authorities. A simpler design = faster build.

Get planning.

Although an architect will come up with different designs and options for your project, think about the style of home you'd like to live in. Creating a digital scrapbook or mood board of houses or interiors you love, is a fantastic place to start and will help guide your architect.