

New Home Build Sequence

Stages, durations and trades from design through to handover

#	Stage	Typical duration	Trades / parties	What happens
PRE-CONSTRUCTION				
1	Design & documentation	8:16 wks	Architect / draftsman, engineer	Concept, design development, working drawings, structural engineering, energy rating assessment.
2	Town planning approval	6:16 wks	Council / private certifier	DA or complying development. Not always required for code-compliant single dwellings.
3	Building permit / CC	2:6 wks	Building surveyor / certifier	Construction Certificate or building permit. Required before any work on site.
4	Tender & builder contract	4:8 wks	Builder, QS	Tender to 2:3 builders, review quotes, sign contract, pay deposit (cap varies by state).
SITE WORKS				
5	Site establishment	1:2 days	Builder, surveyor	Fencing, site shed, toilet, signage, set-out, temporary power and water.
6	Demolition (if existing)	1:2 wks	Demolition contractor	Disconnect services, asbestos survey where required, demolish and remove from site.
7	Excavation & earthworks	3:10 days	Excavator	Cut/fill to level, basement dig (if applicable), retaining wall sub-base.
8	Termite treatment	1 day	Pest controller	Pre-slab chemical or physical termite barrier per AS 3660. Installation certificate required.
SLAB & FRAME				
9	Footings / slab prep	3:7 days	Concreter, plumber, electrician	Footings dug, formwork, reo, plumbing rough-in under slab, vapour barrier.
10	Slab pour	1 day	Concreter	Pour, screed, trowel. Cures 7+ days before frame goes up. Slab stage: progress claim typical.
11	Frame (timber or steel)	1:3 wks	Carpenter / frame erector	Wall frames, roof trusses, internal walls. Bracing and tie-downs.
12	Frame inspection	1 day	Building surveyor	Mandatory inspection. Frame stage: progress claim typical.
LOCKUP				
13	Roof structure & sheet/tile	1:2 wks	Roof tiler / metal roofer	Sarking, battens, tiles or sheet, ridge, gutters and downpipes, fascia.
14	External cladding / brickwork	2:6 wks	Bricklayer / cladder	Brick veneer, weatherboard, Hebel, fibre cement. Sometimes runs before roof.
15	Windows & external doors	3:5 days	Window installer	Frames in, flashed, glazed. Required for lockup milestone.
16	Lockup milestone	Milestone	Builder	House is weathertight and lockable. Lockup stage: progress claim typical (proportion varies by contract).
FIT-OFF (ROUGH-IN)				
17	Plumbing rough-in	3:7 days	Plumber	Hot/cold water, waste, gas lines in walls and floors.
18	Electrical rough-in	3:7 days	Electrician	Cables, GPO boxes, switch boxes, switchboard. Data, TV, alarms run now.
19	HVAC rough-in	2:4 days	HVAC installer	Ducting, refrigerant lines, indoor unit brackets.
20	Insulation	2:3 days	Insulator	Wall and ceiling batts after rough-ins complete.
21	Plasterboard hang & set	1:2 wks	Plasterer / gyprocker	Sheets fixed to frame, joints set, cornice fixed, sanded ready for paint.
FIX-OUT & FINISHES				
22	Internal carpentry / fix-out	1:2 wks	Carpenter	Skirting, architraves, internal doors hung, wardrobes, stair balustrade.
23	Waterproofing	2:3 days	Waterproofer	Bathroom, laundry, balcony membrane. Must cure before tiling. Inspection requirements vary by state.
24	Tiling (wet areas + floors)	1:3 wks	Tiler	Wall tiles, floor tiles, grout. Bathrooms, laundry, kitchen splashback, outdoor.

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25	Render & external finishes	1:2 wks	Renderer	Cement render, acrylic finish, texture coat to external walls.
26	Painting	1:3 wks	Painter	Prep, sealer, two topcoats internal. External walls, fascia, eaves.
27	Kitchen & joinery install	3:7 days	Cabinet maker	Cabinetry, stone benchtops, vanities, wardrobes.
28	Plumbing fit-off	2:4 days	Plumber	Tapware, toilets, basins, sinks, dishwasher, HWS, gas appliances.
29	Electrical fit-off	2:4 days	Electrician	GPOs, switches, light fittings, fans, oven/cooktop hookup, switchboard energise.
30	HVAC fit-off	1:2 days	HVAC installer	Indoor units, outdoor compressor, commissioning, controls.
31	Flooring (timber, carpet)	3:7 days	Floor layer	Timber/laminate floors, carpet. Usually last to avoid damage.
32	Glass, mirrors, shower screens	1:2 days	Glazier	Shower screens, mirrors, splashbacks (glass), balustrade glass.
EXTERNAL & HANDOVER				
33	Driveway & paths	3:7 days	Concreter / paver	Concrete, exposed aggregate, pavers, crossover to street (council permit may apply).
34	Fencing	1:2 wks	Fencer	Boundary fences, gates, side returns.
35	Landscaping & turf	1:3 wks	Landscaper	Topsoil, garden beds, plants, irrigation, turf or synthetic grass.
36	Final clean	1:2 days	Cleaner	Builder's clean: glass, floors, kitchens, bathrooms. Detail clean sometimes separate.
37	Pre-handover inspection	1:2 days	Builder + owner	Walk-through, defect list, snag items. Independent inspector recommended.
38	Occupation certificate	1:3 wks	Building surveyor / council	Final inspection; OC issued. Required before legally occupying the home.
39	Handover & keys	1 day	Builder + owner	Final payment, warranty documents, manuals. Practical completion.
40	Defects liability period	13 wks : 6 mths	Builder	Builder returns to fix defects identified during the period. Statutory warranties continue under state law (check current periods).

NOTES & PRINCIPLES

- Typical single-storey build: 6:10 months on site. Two-storey: 9:14 months. Custom architectural: 12:18+ months. Indicative only.
- Progress claims are usually structured: Deposit, Slab, Frame, Lockup, Fix-out, Practical Completion. Percentages vary by contract.
- Stages can overlap: cladding often starts before roof completes; tiler can start in wet areas while painter works elsewhere.
- Trade order varies regionally and by builder preference. This is a typical sequence for a residential build.
- Mandatory inspections vary by state (e.g. footings, frame, wet-area waterproofing, drainage, final/occupation). Confirm with your certifier.
- Pre-construction (design, approvals, contract) often takes longer than construction itself.

Disclaimer: This sequence is general information, not legal, financial, building or insurance advice. Stages, durations and statutory requirements vary by state and project. Seek qualified advice for your specific build before acting.

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