

## Top Ten Tips

1. If possible, live in the house for a year before starting the design process. You might be surprised to see what works and what doesn't after seeing the full turn of the seasons in the house.
2. Be realistic about your budget and expectations. Building work and alterations often cost more than you might expect.
3. Find a designer that you get on well with and work together to develop a design that works for you and your budget.
4. Get a budget costing before going as far as planning. Don't expect accurate quotes from builders from early design drawings.
5. Get a good specification and construction drawings then ask for quotes from three reputable builders.
6. Choose the builder you feel confident with, not necessarily the one who has quoted the cheapest price.
7. Once happy with the price, apply for building regulations, sign a domestic building contract with the builder and notify your buildings insurer and mortgage company of the work.
8. Get the building fabric right first; the walls and roof need to last decades but interior finishes can be changed at a later date.
9. Don't place orders for expensive items like kitchens or flooring until you have started the build; you may need to save money on these later.
10. Shop around to get the best prices on items such as kitchens, sanitary-ware, flooring etc. Also ask your builder if they can get the price down with a trade discount.



**Hampshire Architect**

home design, remodelling,  
eco-homes and listed buildings

## Guide to a Successful Home Extension Project

### Building Costs:

Like everything else, construction costs have increased considerably over the last few years, due to recent world events. When building a small extension, you do not benefit from the 'economy of scale' that you get with a large extension or new build, so cost per square metre will be high. Even the smallest and simplest extension will usually cost upwards of £40,000 plus VAT, without adding in the work to the affected area of the existing house and the services and fittings required for new kitchens and bathrooms etc. For supply and installation, expect to pay at least £6,000 for a bathroom or shower room, at least £15,000 for a kitchen, plus £250+ per square metre for plumbing and electrics combined and don't forget flooring, plastering, decorating, VAT and an all-important contingency. For peace of mind, you may wish to consider getting a professional budget costing at planning stage.

### Architects and Designers:

Choosing an ARB registered, and RIBA chartered architect gives you peace of mind, as the title of 'Architect' is regulated.



Other designers and technicians using the word 'architectural' are not generally qualified in design to the same degree. Choose someone you think you can work with, who will discuss and sketch ideas and options with you at the property, rather than just go away and draw the obvious solution.

### Design, Planning & Building Regs:

You need to allow a month or two to work with your architect or technician to develop a design that is right for you. Unless your extension falls within permitted development rights, you will also need to allow a minimum of eight weeks for a planning application to be decided by the local authority. Once planning is achieved, it will then take a month or two to finalise the building regulations / construction drawings and specification with your architect or technician.

**Builders' Quotes:** Once you have your construction drawings, it is advisable to get at least three quotes from comparable reputable builders or to work with a builder you trust and compare their quote to a costing from a quantity surveyor or online service. VAT is payable on domestic extensions and you often need to add this on to builders' quotes. It is also worth keeping a realistic contingency sum available during construction in case of unforeseen problems such as foundation issues or structural issues with the existing house.

**Building Contract:** It is advisable to set up and sign a building contract between yourself and the contractor before work commences, setting out the contract sum and the date for completion of the work. The Joint Contracts Tribunal (JCT) offers a straightforward 'Contract for Homeowner Occupier' ('HO/C' is with a consultant as contract administrator and 'HO/B' is without). The RIBA's Domestic Building Contract offers a more comprehensive option but requires a contract administrator.

**Buildings Insurance:** As well as requiring the contractor to have an appropriate amount of public liability insurance, the contract will require **you** to insure the building during construction work. You must notify your buildings insurer, so that the building is properly insured during the work.

**Mortgage:** Don't forget to ask permission from your mortgage lender before commencing.

**Construction (Design & Management Regulations):** Even as a domestic client, you have a role under these regulations. See: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

**Further Information:** There is more information on the following websites:  
[www.hampshirearchitect.com](http://www.hampshirearchitect.com)  
[www.self-build.co.uk](http://www.self-build.co.uk)  
[www.homebuilding.co.uk](http://www.homebuilding.co.uk)  
[www.nsbrc.co.uk](http://www.nsbrc.co.uk)  
[www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk)



## Other Fees

	Cost (inc. VAT)
<b>Domestic Planning Application Fee:</b> this includes a 'free go' if you get a refusal or need to withdraw and resubmit but does not include 'change of use'. See <a href="http://www.planningportal.co.uk">www.planningportal.co.uk</a> to check if your extension is 'permitted development' or if it requires planning permission. (Fee payable to local authority).	£206 (unless 'permitted development')
<b>Building Regulations Fees:</b> this depends on the local authority or independent inspector and on the size of project. With the local authority a plan charge is payable before work starts, followed by an inspection charge once on site. (Fee payable to local authority or independent building inspector).	£650+
<b>Structural Engineer Fees:</b> you will need structural calculations from a structural engineer, to validate foundation and beam designs etc. Fees shown are for a basic set of structural calculations suitable for submission with your building regulations application. (Fee payable to engineer).	£650+
<b>Party Wall Surveyor Fee:</b> Under certain circumstances, you may need to serve a 'Party Wall Notice' on any adjoining neighbour affected by your project. You can do this yourself or hire a professional. (Fee payable to surveyor).	£500+ (if required)
<b>Quantity Surveyor Fee or Online Estimating Service Fee:</b> optional service to give you peace of mind at planning stage. (Fee payable to quantity surveyor or online service).	£250+ (optional)
<b>Reports for Local Authority:</b> occasionally, specialist reports such as flood reports, bat surveys or heat loss calculations may be required by the local authority. Where there are likely to be problems achieving planning permission, it is often worth appointing a planning consultant.	£250+ (if required)