

Ten things to know before starting work on your home

A concise guide for renovations, extensions, conversions, new homes and substantial external works. Every property and appointment is different.

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| 01 | Define the outcome | Separate the changes you need from the features that would simply be nice to have. |
| 02 | Set a complete budget | Allow for construction, professional fees, approvals, contingency and VAT where applicable. |
| 03 | Understand the building | Measured, condition and specialist surveys reduce avoidable assumptions and surprises. |
| 04 | Check permissions | Planning, building regulations, listed status, covenants and landlord consent may apply. |
| 05 | Consider neighbours | Party-wall matters, access, boundaries and working arrangements deserve early attention. |
| 06 | Develop the design | Room layouts alone may not provide enough detail for dependable contractor pricing. |
| 07 | Choose the right team | Clarify who designs, coordinates, prices, inspects and makes decisions. |
| 08 | Compare like with like | Issue consistent tender information and record every qualification and exclusion. |
| 09 | Plan how you will live | Occupation, temporary facilities, security, dust, pets and storage affect delivery. |
| 10 | Control decisions | Late changes to finishes, layouts and services can affect both cost and programme. |

Before speaking to contractors

Prepare a short written brief, establish your budget basis and gather any drawings, surveys, approvals and photographs already available.