

Saving Costs

INFORMATION SHEET



As cost savings require a great deal of effort and time from you, the following ideas are not for everyone but if you want, or need, to reduce your build costs then this list will help:

1. Undertake Some of the Work Yourself

If you have some skill and time, then you might want to consider undertaking some of the non essential tasks that make for a finished home. Painting is the most obvious. Just be aware that finish is everything, so if you can't "cut-in" to save your life this probably isn't for you! Our advice is don't be tempted to take on more technical tasks such as tiling or laying of laminate flooring. Other trades follow on directly after such activities and you could hold up the whole build.

2. Supervise Non-essential Contractors Yourself

There are certain things that you might ask your builder to do but which are not essential to the smooth onward progression of the overall project. For example, your builder will be happy to arrange the fencer but he will charge you a margin. There is nothing to stop you from engaging and supervising your own fencer, landscaper, carpet layer, paver etc... It's not as convenient but it may well be cheaper.

3. Concentrating on the Essentials

If you have insufficient finances to complete everything, then we suggest concentrating on the essential main works and leaving the non-essential work until a later date. You can still live in a beautiful house. You just won't have a finished deck, paved area, pergola or paving for a few months. At Blue Gum, we are always happy to return later to finish such items off when funds become available.

4. Supply Your Own Fittings and Fixtures

If you have the time to trawl through showrooms and surf the internet, it can often pay to supply your own fixtures and fittings – such as taps, bath wares, tiles etc... Be aware however that you will not have access to the builder's discount (anywhere from 5% to 20%), that you must ensure that your builder is not held up waiting for you, and that you keep your builder in the loop as to what is being selected (e.g. the plumber will need to know where to put his pipes to accommodate your tap ware).

5. Supply Your Own Carpets

We suggest you have your builder quote separately for carpet supply and laying. Although the builder will again have access to discounts, they will also add a margin. It is possible you will be able to organise the supply and fitting for less.

6. Become a Bargain Hunter

Builders unfortunately do not have the time to track down specials and sale items. If you do, then pursue them with vigour! There are plenty of bargains to be had or negotiated. Just keep your builder in the loop.

7. Remove or Reduce

If your quotes are coming in high, and you've considered all of the above, and you still need to reduce costs then speak to your architect and preferred builder. There are always ways of reducing the cost of a build. At the heavy end, there is the option of a re-design – maybe reducing the overall size of the project or removing certain elements such as a garage or bathroom. At the less severe end, you can reduce the level of detail – timber reveals rather than plaster, an unlined garage, half-height tiles rather than full tile, different flooring and so on.

Our view on this is that we are here to help our clients build homes. We would rather spend a few days battling cost saving ideas around to get the project back on the rails, than see it sink due to a lack of imagination and application.

If you find yourself in need of ideas, feel free to call us.

FINALLY, A FEW WORDS OF CAUTION...

Don't forget that (1) work you undertake yourself will not be covered by any builder's guarantee; (2) you will not have access to the discount available to the builder; (3) make sure any items you supply are of a good quality; (4) make sure your cost saving does not hold up your builder; and (5) don't forget, it all takes time and effort.