

Know your responsibilities

Buying a modular building can involve a range of legal, planning and building obligations. Understanding your responsibilities before you commit can help you avoid delays, additional costs and compliance issues later.

Before you buy, make sure you understand:

- Whether development (planning) approval is required for your project.
- Whether a building permit is required and who will be responsible for obtaining it.
- Your contractual obligations, including payment schedules and project milestones.
- Whether you are legally required to engage a registered builder.
- Which responsibilities will be managed by the supplier, builder or installer, and which will be your responsibility.
- What licences, approvals, certificates and inspections may be required throughout the project.
- What insurance requirements and consumer protections may apply.

Always check with your local government authority before purchasing a modular building to confirm the approvals and building requirements that apply to your circumstances.

Owner-builder checklist

If you are considering managing the installation of a modular building yourself, it is important to understand the responsibilities that come with becoming an owner-builder.

Before starting work:

- ◯ Check whether you are eligible to become an owner-builder.
- ◯ Contact your local government authority or the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to determine whether owner-builder approval is required.
- ◯ Familiarise yourself with your legal responsibilities as an owner-builder.
- ◯ Complete any required owner-builder training or education requirements.
- ◯ Allow sufficient time to obtain owner-builder approval and any required permits.
- ◯ Obtain your owner-builder approval or registration (where required).
- ◯ Obtain a building permit before construction work begins.
- ◯ Arrange any required insurance before commencing work.
- ◯ Ensure all tradespeople engaged are appropriately licensed and qualified.
- ◯ Understand your responsibilities when engaging contractors and tradespeople.
- ◯ Obtain all required compliance certificates, approvals and documentation from licensed tradespeople, including electricians, plumbers and gas fitters.
- ◯ Understand your obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*, including maintaining a safe workplace.
- ◯ Ensure all work complies with relevant building legislation, the National Construction Code and applicable standards.
- ◯ Keep complete project records, including permits, contracts, certificates, invoices and inspection reports.

Remember

As an owner-builder, you are responsible for coordinating approvals, engaging licensed tradespeople, ensuring compliance with building requirements and managing workplace safety. These responsibilities cannot be transferred simply because work is being carried out by a contractor.