Getting Your Backyard Shack Approved

THE SALES PROCESS

What happens after I sign a contract?

- The first step is obtaining your engineering, which your dealer will provide and usually takes around 24-48 hours. The engineer will specifically sign off on your building to suit your property.
- A soil test will be required and this can be done by you or the dealer (if they offer the service).
- A site plan will need to be drafted up showing the location of the shack on your property. This needs to be done via an architect or draftsperson.
- The DA (development application) if needed, and the BA (building application) need to be submitted via your local private certifier. This process can be done via you or the dealer (if they offer the service). The approval process will also require additional steps such as: energy efficiency rating reports, plumbing and drainage etc. These steps should be discussed with your private certifier to obtain what would be required for your local council/state regulations.
- Once your approval is granted, the manufacture of your Backyard Shack can commence, your manufacture payment would be due and the process started.
- 10 days prior to delivery of your Backyard Shack your delivery payment would be due, and once paid, BlueScope will deliver your new Backyard Shack to your site.
- At this point you should have received all documentation from your dealer, relating to the construction of your Backyard Shack.

What Backyard Shacks Supply with your Shack

- Complete building kit to lockup stage using 100% BlueScope materials, including frame, cladding, roofing, external doors, windows, roof & wall insulation.
- An internal Bill of Materials will be supplied listing the required components to fit out your shack. Total m2 of plasterboard, lineal meterage of skirting boards, architraves, cornice etc. will be listed, so you can cost and source the internal fit out.
- Delivery to your site.
- Full engineering plans for frames, roof, sub floor or slab for region C2 and N3 wind code areas.
- Full architectural elevations ready for submission to council.
- Indicative electrical and plumbing plans for DIY.
- Engineering plans for soil classifications A&S, M & MD.

Note: internal fixtures, internal doors, plasterboard, kitchens, bathrooms, laundries etc. are not included. The only internal inclusions will be the bare internal stud frame walls, and ceiling battens.

Backyard Shacks .com.au

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THINGS YOU'LL NEED

Site Plan

A site plan is an architectural plan, usually from an aerial perspective, that is a detailed engineering drawing of proposed improvements to a given lot. A site plan usually shows a building footprint, parking, drainage facilities, sanitary sewer lines, water lines, lighting, and any landscaping elements.

A site plan is a "graphic representation" of the arrangement of buildings, parking, drives, landscaping and any other structure that is part of a development project.

A site plan is a set of construction drawings that a builder or contractor uses to make improvements to a property. The site plan verifies that local development codes are being met and as a historical resource for future reference. Site plans are often prepared by a design consultant who must be either a licensed engineer, architect, licensed builder or land surveyor. These plans are a council/private certifier requirement for an application submission.

Soil Test

Soil testing or 'Site Classification' as it is correctly known, is carried out on your building site to estimate the expected soil movement and hence foundation movement due to extreme moisture changes.

There are three methods of site classification given in Australian Standard AS2870 'Residential Slabs and Footings' and these are:

(i) Visual assessment of the performance of existing buildings and knowing the footing type used on those buildings.

(ii) Identification of the soil profile compared with established data of building performance on a similar soil profile.

(iii) Laboratory testing and computation of expected soil movement.

A soil test is undertaken by drilling 3 small diameter bore holes within the area that the home is to be built and from the soil profiles obtained a site classification and foundation depth will be nominated.

The standard requires that all sites be classified basically as either:

Class A – Most sand & rock sites with little or no ground movement.

Class S – Sites with slight ground movement.

Class M – Moderately reactive clay or silt sites which can experience moderate ground movement.

Class H – Highly reactive clay sites which can experience high ground movement.

Class E – Extremely reactive sites.

Class P – Sites which include soft soils, landslips, collapsing soils and the like.

Backyard Shacks can provide engineering for soil classifications A, S & M. For any other soil classifications, you would need to consult a local engineer to provide RC Slab/Footing engineering to suit your site.

Energy Efficiency rating (QLD, VIC, TAS, SA, NT, WA)

House energy rating through the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) uses computer simulations to assess the potential thermal comfort of Australian homes on a scale of zero to 10 stars. The more stars, the less likely the occupants need cooling or heating to stay comfortable.

What is rated?

A dwelling can be rated before or after it is built. The rating depends on:

- the layout of the home.
- the construction of its roof, walls, windows and floor.
- the orientation of windows and shading to the sun's path and local breezes.
- how well these suit the local climate.

Energy consumption by hot water systems, lights or household appliances is not part of the rating because those fittings are usually replaced several times during the life of the building.

What the stars mean:

- **Zero stars** means the building shell does practically nothing to reduce the discomfort of hot or cold weather.
- A **5 star rating** indicates good, but not outstanding, thermal performance.
- Occupants of a **10 star home** are unlikely to need any artificial cooling or heating.

Typical ratings – Houses built in 1990 averaged about 1 star on the NatHERS scale. Before the introduction of national energy efficiency regulations for houses in 2003, less than one per cent of Australian houses achieved 5 stars, many well designed houses are now being built above 6 stars or more.

BASIX report (NSW equivalent of an energy efficiency rating)

In most cases you will need a BASIX certificate if you are lodging a development application for a new home in NSW or for any alteration and addition to an existing home.

A BASIX certificate is obtained after completing the sustainability assessment for your project using the online BASIX assessment tool available on line. Usually a building professional does this. Once the design of your project has met the BASIX requirements and the fee paid, a certificate will be issued.

If a proposal successfully meets the prescribed targets relating to water consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and thermal performance, the applicant can print a BASIX Certificate. The certificate confirms that the proposed development will meet the Government sustainability requirements if it is carried out in accordance with the commitments made during the assessment. These commitments, along with information which identifies and describes the proposal, will be shown on the BASIX Certificate.

Engage local building certifier or Council certifier

Home-owners or lessees are responsible for appointing a licensed Building Certifier. They can give this responsibility to another person such as their builder. However, to ensure that their interests are protected, it is best to engage a certifier themself.

A building certifier, also known as a building surveyor, is needed to ensure the building plans and work is completed in accordance with the building legislation and the Building Code of Australia. The Code covers issues such as structural safety, and health and fire protection, but does not address quality of the work or finish.

A plumbing plan certifier is needed to ensure the plumbing and drainage plans comply with the standards required before the work is completed.

Certifiers must be licensed. There are three different classes of license:

- a principal building surveyor may certify any building work;
- a general building surveyor may certify a building up to three storeys and with a floor area up to 2000 square metres; and
- a plumbing plan certifier may certify plumbing or drainage plans for commercial work.

Possible DA (Development Approval) from local council

If you are building or undertaking some types of renovation you may need to submit a development application (DA) to the Planning and Land Authority for approval.

Often people are assisted in this process by industry professionals such as architects, draftspersons and building certifiers.

Some developments can be exempt from requiring development approval. New houses, additions and alterations to existing houses, and some smaller projects like pergolas, carports and fences can be exempt as long as they meet certain requirements.

Development applications are lodged online through your local Council web site.

Mandatory BA (Building Approval) A BA application must be lodged with the permit authority or local council.

THE BUILD PROCESS – DIY SECTION

Back Yard Shacks, through Ranbuild, manufacture and supply a diverse range of high-quality and attractive Back Yard Shacks to provide you with the best quality shack for your needs and at a value for money price!

Choose from our wide range of styles, shapes and sizes built for a range of uses only limited by your imagination. Our Shacks are built tough and with good looks to give a beautiful aesthetic that will match your existing home or standalone within the surrounding environment and will give years of safe, reliable performance and protection.

Back Yard Shacks, through their extensive Ranbuild national dealer network, can help assist in assessing the best Shack design for your needs. Our dealers can also help with advice on correct wind loads for your region, access heights and entry points, local authority approvals and the build process to ensure you receive the best Shack for your application. All our kit buildings come with comprehensive and detailed construction instructions.

Building Your Shack

The decisions have been made, the money handed over, the delivery time sorted. All that remains is to build the actual shack. Each Back Yard Shack kit will come with detailed instructions that are specific to the particular model and roof type including draft electrical and plumbing plans but to help you out, here's a list of tips and tricks to help you make the building process as easy as possible.

The following is general advice only, always follow the specific guidance provided by your Accredited Back Yard Shacks Dealer.

Before you start

Double-check that all your paperwork is in order. Even if you believe you are exempt from seeking planning or building approval, get in touch with your local council to make sure you are meeting all their guidelines. Costs vary depending on your local area so always best to check first.

If you are an owner-builder, make sure that you have met all your legal obligations before you begin work. A small amount of inconvenience now can save a lot later.

To assist finding information on your Local Government building codes and submission applications process, the links below will take you to the local council web sites in each state:

Federal Government links to all Australian Local Councils
http://australia.gov.au/services/service-task/contact/contact-my-local-council

Qld State Councils
http://www.qldcouncils.com.au/qld-councils-theme/map/map2.html

NSW State Councils
http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/dlg_localgovdirectory.asp

Victoria State Councils
http://www.vic.gov.au/government-economy/local-councils.html

Tasmania Councils
http://www.lgat.tas.gov.au/page.aspx?u=221

South Australia Councils
http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?u=210

Western Australia Councils
http://dlg.wa.gov.au/Content/Directory/Default.aspx

Northern Territory Local Councils
http://www.localgovernment.nt.gov.au/home/council_information

ACT Council
http://www.act.gov.au/browse/topics/land-building-and-housing

Laying the foundations

Our range of Shacks come with plans for either a concrete slab or elevated sub floor (floors built on piers and beams or joists), depending on your preference and building site. Unless your yard is perfectly flat, you'll need to cut and fill to provide a level surface for the slab or sub floor. A Dingo digger or bobcat will make short work of clearing, levelling and digging the build site. Read all the safety instructions and pay attention to the training before you start – accidents with diggers are at best expensive.

Digging tips

- For a small job, some companies do half-day hires. If there are other excavations happening in your local area, it's worth asking if they will quote on a price to fit your small job in, which can be both reasonably cheap and time-saving.
- For a large job, or if you're unfamiliar with the equipment, consider hiring an excavator to do the work. Although they're not cheap, they'll be faster than you, and you won't need to worry about damage to the equipment, your property, or yourself.
- If you don't have a use for all the excavated material, advertise it locally on community noticeboards or websites. Usually someone will have a need for free fill, which can save you removal costs.

Work with the footing plan supplied with your Shack and make sure that your concreters, brickies and hired help have copies of it beforehand, too.

Keep your slab continuously moist while it cures – the longer you can do this for, the stronger it will be. Wetting it down with the hose will do. If you can do this for at least a week, it will be about 30% stronger than a fast-curing slab, and minimize cracking. Obviously elevated sub floors may need brick and timber work so employing a professional brick layer may save time and avoid costly mistakes

Erecting your shack

Take time to check all of your Shack parts off against the bill of materials as soon as possible after your Shack arrives. You don't want to be partway through erection when you discover something is missing and the sooner you spot a problem, the easier it is to fix.

Begin with the framework, attaching them to your sub floor or concrete slab. Then proceed to erect one wall at a time, bracing as required and following the assembly instructions, especially where bolt tensions, stiffeners and bracing are concerned.

Leave doors and windows until the end, and make sure that you have your frame inspected before cladding internally if necessary. Finish up with the guttering and other trades, such as electrical and plumbing (see Call in the professionals, below).

For a small shack, this is a reasonably easy job for two people if you're reasonably experienced at DIY jobs or come from a trade background. A small Shack can even be managed by one person but help is always handy. If you're tackling a bigger job or are not an experienced builder, it's not too late to hire someone who is. A construction tip you need to be aware of is that unless you're employing a licensed builder, you will usually need to be an approved owner-builder.

Building tips

- Read all the way through the assembly instructions before you begin, then refer to them regularly throughout the build. Getting things wrong can be expensive, and Shack kits are a lot less intuitive to build than your standard flat pack.
- Do wear heavy work boots, gloves, eye protection and other safety gear as required, and apply sunblock regularly. Although this seems obvious, most DIY building injuries come about through people forgetting basic precautions.
- Don't try to build on a windy or wet day. Ideally, wait for a cool, still weekend for maximum safety and comfort.
- Assemble the first frame following the detailed steel marking plan corresponding to the panel layout.
- Tailors have an adage: 'measure twice, cut once'. The same idea is important in building. Every bit of extra time you spend measuring or checking your alignment before fixing any frame work, screws, bolts or fittings is time well spent: you can't undo holes made in steel or concrete and mistakes will show as a poor finish.

Call in the professionals

No matter what your skill level, unless you're a professional tradie, there are some jobs you're legally not allowed to do. Connecting roof run-off to the storm water drains must be done by a licensed plumber, and installing electricity must be done by a licensed electrician.

You can get around the need for a plumber by managing your water runoff in other council-acceptable ways, which can include water tanks and infiltration trenches. Both of these increase the rainwater available to your garden. Talk with your local council to see what's acceptable in your area.

For most Shack uses, you'll want power for the lights, power points, stove and fridge and the usual domestic appliances and maybe an external sensor light if you don't already have one – so you don't fall over the garden hose on the way into the Shack. If you plan to use your Shack as a workspace, place your power points logically and minimize the need to run cords across the area. If it's just lights, and a few domestic power points, you're looking at a fairly simple and inexpensive job.

Power tips

- Give your electrician a full list of what you plan to run in the garage and the current ratings of your major tools. This will help your sparkie determine the best wiring plan for your Shack.
- If you plan for a telephone line or data cables in the Shack, your electrician will need to allow for separate conduits at least 150mm from the power conduits. This will add to the cost, but it's worth getting it right at the start, which is usually cheaper than trying to fix things later.