

9. Completion - move in and enjoy

Client's Guide To Architecture Series

"Every good building results from a good architect, a good builder and a good client" How can you be a good client? This series follows the [Anatomy of Project diagram \(blog 54\)](#) and we'll conclude with Completion Stage. This has also been referred to as Defects Liability Period.

Here you have the reality at last. Time to enjoy and celebrate. How does the architect ensure proper completion for you?

Completion Certificates

- The building contractor will invite the building surveyor to issue a Certificate of Occupancy. This is needed to satisfy that the statutory building code has been complied with, and the building is safe to occupy.
- Your architect will need to issue a Certificate of Practical Completion to confirm that, as far as they are aware, the building contract has been carried out, any immediate defects have been identified and a plan for rectification agreed. Instruction manuals should be provided to you by the builder and 50% of the retention money is released to the builder. The site and new building should be left clean and tidy.
- The owner takes on insurance responsibility and the builder's insurance cover ceases.



Furnishing and Celebration

- If you have an interior designer, they will be ensuring that furniture is provided or the client maybe organising this themselves. Any audiovisual installation is often carried out at this time if it is not in the original contract.
- This is a good time to celebrate the completion of the project, and many clients have held an opening event or some other celebration. This often includes the wider client body and any of that have contributed to funding the project together with the building team and professionals involved.

Defects Liability Period (DLP)

- The Certificate of Practical Completion is also the start of the 12 months defects liability period where the contractor remains responsible for any defects that occur. Any urgent defects are to be rectified immediately, and others need to be remedied before the end of the 12 months defect period. Your architect remains involved to assist with identifying these and asking the builder to resolve them.
- At the end of this 12 months period, when any defects that have been identified have been rectified, your architect will issue a final certificate complete the contract and to approve the release of the remaining retention money.

Final Account

- The final account for the cost of the works, including any agreed, variations, is normally resolved during the DLP by your architect as the contract administrator.

Whole of Life Cost

- Every building has an ongoing cost. Cleaning is always needed. Maintenance such as cleaning gutters should be a regular contract. Designing to an efficient plan reduces the wasted space and saves money here in the long term
- When sustainability is designed in, energy cost is minimised. This also includes adaptability to new uses in the future and enabling it used often each week.
- Enjoy your building!

