

BEFORE YOU HIRE AN ARCHITECT

Questions worth answering first

By Rochelle
for R.Studio Architects



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INTRO

You don't need to have all the answers before approaching an architect — but having clarity around a few key things can make the process smoother, more efficient, and far less stressful.

This short guide isn't about testing you or getting things “right”. It's about helping you understand what architects need from you, and what you should feel comfortable asking in return. Think of this as preparation — not pressure.

This guide is here to help you start the conversation with confidence.

— Rochelle

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF FIRST

Before approaching a professional, ask yourself:

- What problem am I trying to solve?
- Am I renovating, extending, or building new?
- Do I have a realistic budget range in mind?
- Am I clear on my priorities (space, cost, timeline, quality)?
- Who will be making final decisions?
- How involved do I want to be in the process?
- Am I open to professional guidance, not just confirmation of my ideas?

You don't need perfect answers – but vague ones often lead to confusion later.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD FEEL COMFORTABLE ASKING AN ARCHITECT

Questions to ask an architect:

- What services do you offer – and what is not included?
- How do your fees work, and how are they structured?
- What does the process typically look like from start to finish?
- How involved are you during construction?
- How do you handle changes or evolving briefs?
- Who will I be dealing with day to day?

A good professional will welcome these questions – not avoid them.

A FEW IMPORTANT REALITIES

A few honest things worth knowing:

- Architects don't control construction costs – but they can help manage risk
- Good design takes time – rushed decisions often cost more
- Clear communication matters more than perfect drawings
- Trust and transparency go both ways
- A good professional relationship should feel collaborative, not adversarial

*If you feel unsure or overwhelmed, that's normal.
The right professional relationship should make things feel clearer, not more confusing.*

What the process generally looks like:

Most architectural projects move through a number of defined stages, from early briefing to construction and close-out. Understanding this upfront helps align expectations around time, cost, and decision-making.

1. Brief & Feasibility
2. Concept Design
3. Design Development
4. Technical Documentation
5. Construction
6. Close-Out

The timing and cost of each stage varies by project. This is covered in more detail in Renovation Reality Check.

FINAL NOTE

There is no such thing as a stress-free build — but there is such a thing as a well-informed one.

If you'd like to talk through your project before formally appointing anyone, I offer a 90-minute consult focused on clarity, feasibility, and next steps.

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