



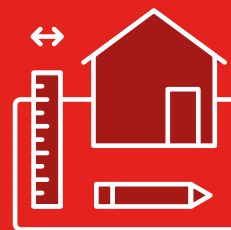
DOORSTEP DIGEST

Building Regulations

Intended to protect people's safety, health, and welfare in and around buildings. They are not the same as planning permission.

Building Regulations

THE DOORSTEP DIGEST SERIES



02

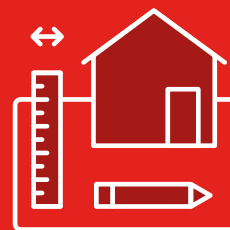
The building regulations are minimum technical standards the government sets that cover the construction, extension, and alteration of most buildings. They are intended to protect people's safety, health, and welfare in and around buildings. They are not the same as planning permission.

Did you know?

- Most building work and many types of home improvement work are "notifiable", which means that you, your builder, or your agent must notify building control before work starts unless the work is carried out by installers registered with a Competent Person scheme who can self-certify that their work is compliant.
- You, the building owner, are ultimately responsible for compliance with building regulations.
- England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland all have different building regulations.
- The building regulations in England and Wales are supported by Approved Documents which provide guidance on how the building regulations can be satisfied in common home improvement situations.
- You can make your application to your local authority, which is part of the LABC network, or to an Approved Inspector or Registered Building Approver.
- Your plans, details and calculations will be assessed, and the work will be inspected on-site for compliance with the building regulations by a building control surveyor or Building Inspector.
- The regulations cover specific topics like structural integrity, fire protection, accessibility, energy and acoustic performance, protection against falls, and electrical and gas safety.
- They also cover drains, ventilation, protection against water ingress, and protection against contamination, including methane and radon gas.
- Some types of building work can be done without notifying building control. These include most minor repairs and maintenance work (although replacing fuel-burning appliances or oil tanks, electrical fuse boxes, or windows and doors). This is often done by members of a Competent Person Scheme.
- Replacing less than 25% of an item (roof, wall, or floor) like-for-like does not require approval. Re-covering the whole roof or replacing all the render does.
- The addition of power and lighting points and alterations to existing electrical circuits does not require approval as long as they aren't around baths and showers.

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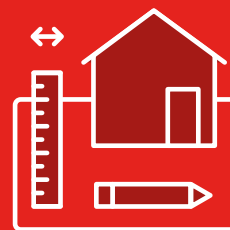
KEY ADVICE

You, the building owner, are ultimately responsible for compliance with building regulations.

- ▶ Replacing baths, toilets, basins or sinks with similar fittings does not require approval, but installing a new en-suite or cloakroom does.
- ▶ Replacing boundary and garden walls, fences, and gates is exempt work.
- ▶ Other types of building work can be 'exempt' from the building regulations, but only if they meet certain criteria.
- ▶ New completely detached garages that are under 30 square metres are exempt if more than one metre from the boundary or non-combustible, i.e. built of masonry with a tiled roof.
- ▶ Converting an attached garage or a loft space always needs building regulations approval.
- ▶ Conservatories can be exempt if they are under 30 square metres, separated from the house by doors, unheated and have a mostly translucent or glazed roof.
- ▶ Fitting a solid insulated roof to an existing conservatory requires approval.
- ▶ Porches that are under 30 square metres and separated from the house by a door are usually exempt. All other extensions, regardless of size, need approval. There is no equivalent of Permitted Development under the Building Regulations.
- ▶ Some agricultural buildings like barns or stables used for keeping animals may be exempt.
- ▶ You must make the application before you start work. If you are using your local authority building control service, you have a choice of routes. With a Building Notice, you'll usually be able to start work around 48 hours after submission, but a Full Plans Notice will take longer.
- ▶ A Building Notice is generally suitable for small alterations and projects - for example, an additional window or removing an internal wall. It's a faster process, meaning you can start 48 hours after deposit (or earlier), but it can't be used if you are going to be building over or close to a public sewer or altering a commercial building. A Building Notice puts more responsibility for knowing and complying with the building regulations on the person carrying out the work (the Principal Contractor) and the property owner.

Building Regulations

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▶ A Full Plans building regulations application comprises drawings, design details, specifications and calculations and it is usually submitted by the architect or plan drawing agent who is designing your project (the Principal Designer). Once received, the council will assess your application and consult with the water and fire services if necessary. Once any queries are resolved, the building control team will issue a Decision Notice within five weeks from the date of deposit (or two months if you've agreed to an extension). A Conditional Approval may be issued, which allows you to provide further information once it's available.

▶ You or your builder must notify your building control provider when you reach various agreed stages on site and request a site visit or inspection. At the end of the project, if no non-compliances have been identified, you will receive a Final or Completion Certificate. You'll need this if you ever sell your home.

▶ If you or a previous owner carried out work without obtaining permission, you may be able to apply to have this approved retrospectively. This is called a Regularisation and is only possible for work carried out on or after the 11th November 1985. You'll be asked for plans and calculations to show what was done, and the work will be inspected. You may be asked to open up various areas of the building so the surveyor can check things that have been covered up, like beams, pipes, and insulation. If everything appears to meet the regulations that were in place at the time the work was carried out, you'll receive a Regularisation Certificate.

You can find more information at www.labcfrotdoor.co.uk.

The NHIC wishes to thank WG2 | Consumer Voice members for contributing to this guide.

Please note that this guidance document produced by the NHIC was correct when created. However, information and regulations may have changed since its publication. Therefore, seeking the most up-to-date information and expert advice is always advisable before making any decisions based on the information provided in this guide.

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