



UNSW  
SYDNEY



Family &  
Community Services  
Ageing, Disability & Home Care



## DIYmodify Factsheet

# Home Modification Quotes

### GETTING QUOTES FOR PROJECTS UNDER \$5,000.00

- The NSW Fair Trading Department regulates building work in NSW. They have special rules for building work under \$5,000.00.
- Individually, the home modifications in DIYmodify App will be under \$5,000.00 each. This Fact Sheet and pro-forma letter are for doing these projects which are under \$5,000.00.
- If you do all five home modifications detailed in the DIYmodify App at the one time, it is possible that the total cost will be over this amount and you will need to have a different process.

### Before Starting

- Make sure you have followed each of the steps as shown in the App and that you have the heights and locations clear for where you want your home modification.
- If you need to buy any specific products, make sure you know the brand and model number and that it is readily available.
- Before any work starts, make sure your home and contents insurance policy covers doing renovation work.
- If you are renting your home or your home is covered by strata title, make sure you have in writing the Owner's or Strata Management Committee's permission to do the home modification. There is a 'Asking Permission Letter' that has been prepared to help you do this.

## Regulatory Requirements

- If there is no specialist work, such as electrical or plumbing work including gas, sewerage or water, then the builders or tradespeople you need do not have to have a license if the work is under \$5,000.00.
- If there is work that might affect electricity or plumbing (either gas, water or sewerage) then you are strongly advised to make sure your builder or tradesperson knows what they are doing and has had experience in similar work.
- If there is electrical, plumbing or other specialist work, the tradesperson must have the relevant licenses or registration. If your work is going to need these specialist tradespeople, check that they have these. You can check here:  
<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/check-builder-or-tradespersons-licence>
- You will not require a Home Building Compensation Fund (previously called Home Warranty Insurance) certificate if the total work is under \$5,000.00.
- The five home modifications included here (grab rails, threshold ramps, handrails, hand held showers and level shower access) do not require the approval of Local Council or an accredited private certifier. However, you should get the permission of your landlord or Strata Management Committee to do them. For more information, see:  
[DIYmodify Factsheet: Home Modifications in rental and strata properties](#)

## Getting the Builder

- You want to be confident a good job will be done and that the builder or tradesperson will do it within the National Construction Codes guidelines, to a high standard and most importantly to how you have instructed them.
- Have written instructions of what you require. If you step through the DIYmodify App, it will show you what information you need to find out. The builder will need to see the product you want them to use if you have already bought it or the details of the product needed such as the brand, model number and measurements of it, if the builder is purchasing it.  
(NOTE: There can sometimes be an advantage in having the builder buy what you want as they will get a discount on it.)
- The builder will want to know where you want the home modification, what the surrounding materials are, if there are electrical switches or powerpoints close by, or sewerage or gas pipes. They will also want to know at what heights and distances you want things to be.
- For work under \$5,000.00, you may decide to go with a preferred builder or tradesperson – someone a family member, neighbour or friend has said does good work.

- Make sure you give the builder clear instructions – best to have it written down so there is no confusion as to what you want done, where you want it done and how you want it done.
- If you are uncertain or do not know any builders or tradespeople, you could get three quotes. Do not get too many quotes as builders are reluctant to spend their time working out how much a job will cost if they have little chance of getting the job.
- You must provide the same information to each builder – you want to compare apples with apples!
- If you have a written explanation of what you want, they will all have the same information. Ask for not only the total (Lump Sum) price, but also their possible starting date, how long it will take them and how long their quote will be valid.
- You might also want to ask them for some references – people they have worked with and who you might talk to, to check the work was done well.
- The cheapest price is not always going to be your best option. Knowing when the builder can start and expects to finish a project can also be important. Knowing that you might get along with them while they are doing the work, can also be important.
- If you have written out what is required, once you have decided on the best builder or tradesperson, you can use this as written confirmation of what they will do and both you and the chosen builder can sign it. Both you and the builder will have a clear idea of what work is going to be completed, how much it will cost and how long it will take.

## **Arranging Payment for the Builder**

When you have decided on a builder, don't pay them all the money up front. Keep some for when they have finished the job and you are happy with it. Discuss with the builder what the first payment should be and why this would work. The rest of the money can be paid when they have fully completed the project. Make sure you write this division of the payment into your instructions to them.

## **Checking the Work Before Final Payment**

Make a list of any work you are not happy with. Explain to the builder, what these problems are and that you expect them to fix it before you can pay them their final payment. If there are any disputes about this, you are best to go directly to the regulatory body in your State or Territory.

## TEMPLATE LETTER FOR QUOTE REQUEST

To...	(Put the person's email address here)
Cc...	(Copy in anyone else you think should receive this information – a family member or friend)
Subject	(Put the name of your project here and the suburb – don't put your full address) GRAB RAILS, ASHFIELD

I want to:

(Select from the examples below or write your own. Delete those which do not apply)

Supply and fix a grab rail at my house OR Fix a grab rail in the existing bathroom  
(I have the grab rail already.)

Supply and Install a handheld shower OR Install only a handheld shower.

Supply and fix a handrail OR Fix only a handrail.

Supply and fix a threshold ramp OR Fix a threshold ramp

Make an existing shower level

Please could you provide in writing a Lump Sum price to do this work, advise as to when you could start and how long it will take you to complete.

It would also be appreciated if you could give me a few names and phone numbers of your past clients so I can view some of your work.

Regards,

SIGNED

PAYMENT ON START-UP.....

PROGRESS PAYMENT.....

PAYMENT ON COMPLETION.....

*\*\*This information was correct at time of printing.*