

# BUYING BUILDING MATERIALS



**HOAP**

HOME OWNERS' ADVICE PAMPHLETS





## BUYING BUILDING MATERIALS

Building a new house, or making additions to your existing house can be an expensive project. You need to plan carefully where you will find suitable and affordable materials closest to your plot.



## STEPS TO FOLLOW BEFORE SELECTING BUILDING MATERIALS

- Step 1** - Prepare a plan for your alteration or addition.
- Step 2** - Use your plan to list what building materials will be needed for the job.
- Step 3** - Work out the amount (quantity) of each type of material that is needed.
- Step 3** - Work out the cost of your building works using the list of the materials and amounts (quantities).
- Step 4** - Decide what materials you will get second-hand.



Your plan can be a rough sketch. However, a formal building plan will make it easier to work out the exact amount materials needed and can save you money in the long run.

A formal building plan is drawn up by an architect-technician or draughtsperson.

Once you have your plan you can ask an experienced builder or a materials supplier to tell you what materials you will need and how much you will need. A materials supplier can also give you the costs for the materials.



## CHOOSING SUITABLE BUILDING MATERIALS

Ask experienced builders and home-owners what materials are most suitable.

- What affordable, commonly-used, good-quality materials are available locally?
- Which materials suit the local weather and temperatures? Will they stand up to the heat, cold, wind and rain?



## SAVING ON COSTS

Add the cost of the materials to the costs of transporting the materials and the builder's labour. This will give you an estimate for the whole project. If this does not fit your budget you can consider the following ways to reduce the costs:

- Reduce the size of the building or rooms.
- Use cheaper or fewer finishes and details.
- Compare prices of building materials or buy when there is a sale.
- Buy good quality second-hand building materials.
- Ask experienced homeowners and builders for advice on how to save on the costs of materials and labour.
- Negotiate a better price for labour with the builder and see if you and your family can do some of the work yourself.
- Groups of home-owners can form savings clubs to buy building materials in larger amounts, share transport and negotiate discount prices.

# THE MOST IMPORTANT ADVICE IS

- Select good quality building materials that suit your needs and conditions
- Work out the correct amount of materials needed
- Estimate the costs of the materials, check your budget

## TIPS:

- Treat second-hand wood with PCP (Penta Chloro Phenol) to kill possible termites and beetles.
- Avoid buying any second-hand asbestos products such as ceiling boards, roofsheets, gutters and down pipes. These cause health problems.



## SECOND-HAND BUILDING MATERIALS

Using second-hand building materials is a good way to save costs. The following materials can easily be obtained second-hand and are safe to use:

- Bricks
- Timber window and door frames (check the wood for rot and beetles)
- Steel frames (check that there are no kinks in the frames as this will lead to rust)
- Structural timber for floors, roofs and ceilings (check the wood for rot and beetles)
- Kitchen sinks

## ALTERNATIVES:

There are many alternatives to commonly-used building materials. Some of these are cheaper or are better for the environment. Below are some examples that could be considered:

BUILDING PART	COMMONLY-USED MATERIALS	ALTERNATIVES
FOUNDATION	600 x 200mm concrete strip footings (in foundation trench dug down to solid bearing ground).	Reinforced concrete raft floor slab, or ground beams on unstable soils.
WALLS	140mm concrete block walls with Damp Proof Course. DPC is placed 150mm above finished ground level and brickforce over windows and doors. Blocks are filled with concrete below floor level.	Brick wall, cavity brick, compacted earth bricks, soil-cement bricks, panels, sand bags in timber frame.
FLOORS	75mm concrete slab on DPM (Damp Proof Membrane) on soil compacted in layers of maximum 300 mm.	100mm concrete slab + steel mesh reinforcing on filled / compacted soil.
WINDOW AND DOORFRAMES	Mild steel window frames with 3mm glass, meranti timber door frames (or Clisco window/door frames with surrounds).	Treated SA Pine, meranti timber or aluminium window /door frames.
ROOF STRUCTURE	SA Pine purlin-rafters or trusses with purlins for roof sheets.	SA Pine trusses or ridge-beam and rafters with battens for tile roofs.
ROOF FINISH	Corrugated iron (zinc), fibre cement (asbestos) on 228 x 38mm purlin-rafters, or 76 x 50mm purlins.	Concrete roof tiles (on 38 x 38mm battens).
CEILING	Rhinoboard (gypsumboard) nailed to underside of purlin-rafters, or 38 x 38mm brandering.	Masonite hardboard, timber, corrugated cardboard with wire, Isoboard
PLASTER AND PAINT	Cement-sand mix, with acrylic / or PVA paint.	Cemcrete, BreatheCoat.
ENERGY	Pre-paid electricity meters with incandescent or fluorescent light fittings, electrical geyser, stove and heaters.	CFLs (compact fluorescent lights), solar water heater, gas or paraffin.



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