



10 TIPS FOR CHOOSING AN ARCHITECT



Melbourne-based architect Nic Owen shares his pearls of wisdom when it comes to selecting the best architect for your dream home

■ EDITED BY / Tom Lockley



Picking an architect to build your home can often feel like an overwhelming task, so we went to the owner of Nic Owen Architects — one of Australia's most forward-thinking architectural firms — to help simplify this. Nic Owen Architects is a young design-focused company located in the heart of Carlton, Melbourne. The group is committed to creating architecture that is a joy to inhabit through the treatment of space, form, materials and light. The practice specialises in residential architecture, which responds to each individual site and environment, creating unique and elegant forms.

- 1 Utilise the internet and publications to search architects and their previous work.
- 2 Review design awards to search for architects and their work.
- 3 Select an architect whose work you admire. The best architects are good at what they do and are not all things to all people. It's best not to approach an architect with a totally different design language than you.
- 4 Try and select an architect who has worked on similar projects to yours. This is not a must, as a good architect is great at design and can tackle most puzzles.
- 5 Meet the architect to ensure you are both on the same page and can work together. Good design is based on mutual trust and building a strong relationship.



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- 6 Don't be afraid to ask for references from past clients — they can be very helpful.
- 7 Visit past works. The architect might be able to provide a list of local projects which can be viewed externally.
- 8 Avoid selecting an architect based on architectural fees alone. In an ideal world, all fees should be the same. However, without a thorough understanding of the architectural services required, it's very hard to compare like for like. The old saying "you get what you pay for" is true. Would you select an artist based on their fees or their work?
- 9 Select an architect who understands your design requests. It is their task to transform these as best they can into practical design concepts for your future home.
- 10 This is your house, so it should be a positive experience. Enjoy the process and you will love your home.

