



How Long Does Architectural Design Take?

Clients usually ask how many weeks the drawings will take. In our experience the drawing is the shorter part, and waiting for decisions is the longer one.

Every project is different, so treat this as a map and not a promise. Ask any architect for a written schedule before you sign.

01 Stage one: understanding the project

This is the briefing, the site visit and the first sketches. It moves faster when you bring your lot documents and a clear budget.

Changes made here cost a conversation. Changes made later cost drawings, so take the time to get the brief right.

Bring a short list of must-haves, a rough budget and any photos of the lot. A clear brief early on is a very useful thing to give us at this stage. The brief is cheap to change now and costly to change later, so this stage rewards preparation. Example: if you tell us early that a parent will live with you, we can place a bedroom on the ground floor from the first sketch. Why this works: a decision made in the briefing costs a conversation, while the same decision after drawings costs revised drawings.

02 Stage two: design development

Sketches become plans, elevations and a clearer picture of cost. You review, comment and ask for changes.

A lot of the calendar time sits here, and much of it is waiting for feedback. A client who answers within a few days keeps the schedule moving.

Keep a log of the comments you send. A written list of changes avoids confusion and helps both sides see where the time went. Most of the calendar time here is waiting for your comments, not drawing. Example: send your feedback as one numbered list within a few days instead of in scattered messages over two weeks. Why this works: one clear list lets the architect revise everything in a single pass and keeps the schedule from stretching.

03 Stage three: construction drawings and permits

Worth knowing: Permit processing is outside your architect's control. Ask what is included in the schedule and what is not.

Detailed drawings are prepared for the contractor and the permit office. Engineers join in for structure and utilities.

Agencies set their own pace, so build a cushion into your plans and ask your architect what the schedule includes.

Ask your architect which drawings are needed for the permit and which are for the contractor. Knowing the difference helps you understand what you are paying for. Permit timing is partly outside your architect's control, so the plan needs room for it. Example: ask your architect for a calendar that shows the permit stage separately, so a slow office does not look like a slow design. Why this works: you can see which delays are yours, which are the studio's and which belong to the agencies.

04 Stage four: preparing to build

Before construction starts, confirm the drawings, the budget and the contractor's schedule match.

A short review with your architect at this point can help avoid changes on site.

Treat the schedule as a shared document. When something slips, say so early and adjust the plan together. This last check is where mismatches between drawings, budget and schedule are cheapest to fix. Example: if the contractor's timeline assumes materials that the drawings do not specify, a short review catches it before work starts. Why this works: fixing a paper mismatch costs a meeting, while fixing it on site costs materials and time.

05 What speeds things up

- 1. Send your documents before the first meeting.**
- 2. Name one decision maker in the family.**
- 3. Reply to drawings within a few days.**

Have a project in mind? Book a free 15-minute consultation.

<https://ramadesignstudio.com/#book> | WhatsApp +63 917 812 6815

Read online: <https://ramadesignstudio.com/how-long-design-takes/>