



Sun Path: Why the Same Plan Performs Differently

The same floor plan can feel cool and bright on one lot and hot and dark on another. The difference is often the sun's path across your site.

Results depend on your lot, your neighbours and your design. A sun study is a tool, not a guarantee.

01 What the sun path is

The sun rises in the east and sets in the west, but its height and position change through the year. At midday it is high in the sky, and a study of your own lot shows how that affects your walls.

Where the sun falls on your walls and windows changes how hot they get. The sun's height changes through the year. Example: the sun is higher in summer, so an overhang that shades at noon may not shade in the afternoon. Why this works: understanding this helps you design shade that works.

02 Why the same plan differs

Free choice: Orientation costs almost nothing at the design stage.

A plan with the living room facing west will take the afternoon sun, while the same plan turned around may stay cool. Trees, neighbouring buildings and slopes also change the shade.

Orientation is one of the few choices that cost almost nothing at the design stage. Orientation is a free design choice. Example: turning the living room from west to north can change how warm it feels at 4 p.m. Why this works: you cool the house with a decision, not with equipment.

03 How we study it

We look at the lot, the north direction and the surroundings, and test where the sun hits at different hours and seasons. A simple model with a lamp can show this clearly.

We then place rooms and openings to suit. A simple study makes the sun visible. Example: a model with a lamp shows where a window gets sun at 3 p.m. Why this works: you test the design before you build it.

04 What you can do

Visit your lot at different times of day and note where it is hot and where it is cool. Tell your architect what you notice.

Ask for a sun study before the plan is fixed. Your own observations add real data. Example: note

when the sun reaches the back corner of the lot on a hot day. Why this works: your architect adds your experience to the study.

05 Use it with other tools

Combine orientation with shade, ventilation and materials. Each helps a little, and together they help a lot.

Ask your architect how each part of the design responds to the sun. No single tool solves heat. Example: shade, cross-ventilation and light-coloured finishes each help a little. Why this works: together they lower the heat without a single costly fix.

06 Ask for a sketch

Ask your architect for a simple sketch showing the sun at morning, noon and afternoon on your plan.

Share your own experience of the lot with your architect. You know the place better than any model.

07 Ask your designer

- 1. Which way does this plan face?**
- 2. Where does the afternoon sun hit?**
- 3. Can a sun study be done before the plan is fixed?**

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

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