

## TIPS FOR CLIENTS



1. Choose carefully and then trust your architect.
2. Make sure that you understand the fee to be paid to your architect and obtain confirmation in writing.
3. State your requirements and budget clearly. Go very thoroughly through your architect's proposals at the design stage and ensure that you understand the design and are happy with it.
4. Once building work has commenced avoid changing your mind.
5. Take an interest in the construction but never give instructions directly to the builder. Only through your architect.
6. Pay promptly when accounts are submitted and certificates issued by your architect.
7. If anything worries you tell your architect at once - If in doubt ask.

## CONTACT



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## THE BARBADOS INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS



### WORKING WITH YOUR ARCHITECT

Adapted from a pamphlet prepared by the Royal  
Institute of British Architects



## THE WHAT & THE WHY!



### 1. WHAT IS AN ARCHITECT?

A highly qualified professional who must have completed a minimum of eight years of study and practical training before becoming registered and able to practice as an architect. Architects practice in partnership or on their own. No job is too small for them. A preliminary discussion with respect to your project is usually free.

The title Architect is protected by law and may only be used by a person registered with the Architects Registration Board. The Barbados Institute of Architects (BIA) is a self-governing organization.

Membership for architects is not compulsory; however, all full members must be registered architects. Architects as professionals have a duty to exercise reasonable care and skill and BIA Members are also subject to the strict BIA Code of Professional Conduct.

First time clients need to know what kind of service they can expect when they engage an architect for their project. The answer is a quality service, quality in terms of design, professional expertise, and overall value.

### 2. WHY USE AN ARCHITECT?

The architect as a skilled designer can contribute flair and imagination when investigating the feasibility of your requirements and in developing design solutions. He or she may find extra light and space, suggest a form of construction and materials particularly well suited to your project, and provide a stylish as well as a practical response to your needs.

Architects are construction professionals with knowledge of the industry and its organization, working methods and standards. An architect can advise and guide you through the complex web of rules, regulations and contractual obligations connected with planning and building.

## VALUE FOR MONEY!



### 3. VALUE

For the client, real value is not just a matter of keeping within the budget and seeing that a project runs efficiently to completion; it is also about how well the building will function in use, its running costs, life expectancy and resale value. The architect can make a positive and often considerable contribution to a project in terms of its cost-effectiveness and ultimate overall value.

### 4. FULL SERVICE

Architects can provide a full service for building projects. This begins with investigating the feasibility of your requirements, developing design proposals and applying for statutory approvals. It may include for the handling of tenders for the building work, administering the building contract, and assisting you when the completed building is handed over by the contractor.

#### 4.1. PARTIAL SERVICE

Although a full service has obvious benefits, the agreement can be as flexible as you wish. For example, you might decide to engage the architect, for certain stages of work, or to carry out specific activities such as preparing a planning application.

#### 4.2. OTHER SERVICES

Architects work with a broad palette of skills, and can provide or arrange other services connected with your project such as interior design, landscaping, or making measured surveys of a site or building which you are thinking of leasing or altering.

### 5. WHAT WILL IT COST?

Architects' fees may vary. The cheapest may not be the best and this should not be the most important criterion in your final selection. Buildings have to fulfill a complex series of requirements and last a long time. It is worth employing the best architect for the job. After an initial meeting to ascertain what your requirements are, an architect will be able to provide a fee proposal or quotation for their service.

## THE PROCESS!



### 6. THE PROCESS OF BUILDING

From a sketch design prepared for your approval, the design will be developed so that a cost estimate can be determined and an application for planning permission made.

6.1. Depending upon the complexity of the project, the architect will advise on the need to appoint additional professional or specialist services for work which is outside the normal expertise of an architect (for example, engineering and quantity surveying). Such appointments are usually kept separate and paid by the client.

6.2. The design is then agreed and frozen and can no longer be changed without causing delays. It is now developed in great detail. Specifications (a document which meticulously describes the standards to which the building must be built and the materials to be used) and detailed working drawings for the builders are prepared. These incorporate information on lighting, electrical, telecommunication, air conditioning, installations and structural engineering requirements. Outstanding approvals are also obtained from the authorities.

6.3. A shortlist of suitable builders will be suggested for your approval. Detailed measurements of all elements in the proposed building are either prepared by the quantity surveyor (if appointed) or the builders, who will cost these to prepare their tenders.

6.4. Once a construction price has been agreed, a contract between the builder and yourself can be signed. From here on the architect will not only be looking after your interests but also making sure that the contract is fairly administered.

6.5. While the builder gets ready to start work, you will need to ensure that the site is ready. Your architect will advise you on insurances, signing the contract and other day-to-day matters. At predetermined stages the architect will certify stage payments for the builder based on the work completed on site. You are then required to honor these payments to the builder.

6.6. On completion, the architect will ensure you understand how everything works. Any defects not apparent at completion are put right after an agreed period prior to the final account being settled with the builder.