Start with the space you need, then work through the property, design, permissions, budget and written scope before choosing a builder.

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR HOMEOWNERS

How do I plan a house extension in the UK?

From first idea to a buildable plan.

A clear sequence beats a rushed start.

Use this guide as a checklist. It is general information, not planning, design, engineering, legal or cost advice for a specific property.

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Before you start: define the need

A good extension plan starts with a household need, not a set of bricks. Decide what the new space should make easier, how it should connect to the rest of the home, and what you need to understand before spending on drawings or committing to a build.

Write down the room or rooms you hope to add, who will use them, what must stay, what could move, how you want to use daylight and garden access, and what level of disruption you can accommodate. A clear brief helps designers and builders discuss the same project.

01 Define what the extra space needs to do

List the everyday problem first: a larger kitchen, a family dining area, an extra bedroom or a better connection to the garden. Note what must stay, what could move and how the new space should connect to the existing rooms.

02 Set a workable brief and budget

Separate must-haves from nice-to-haves. Think beyond the build itself: design and engineering, approvals, utilities, finishes and contingency can all affect the overall project budget. There is no reliable universal extension price; the property and agreed scope need to be assessed.

BUDGET NOTE

There is no reliable universal extension price. Compare project-specific quotations with matching scope, assumptions and exclusions.

03 Check the property and constraints

Record the house type, approximate space available, boundaries, access, drainage, trees and nearby neighbouring rooms. Consider whether the home is listed or in a conservation area, and whether planning conditions or other restrictions may apply.

04 Explore design and approvals

A designer or architect can turn the brief into drawings. Check early whether planning permission, building regulations approval, or both may apply. Permitted-development rights are conditional, and depend on the proposal, property and local constraints. Planning permission and building regulations are separate processes.

Permissions and technical checks

Planning permission and building regulations are distinct. A proposal may qualify for permitted development in some circumstances, but rights are conditional and can be affected by the property, earlier work, location, restrictions and the design. Confirm current rules for the exact address with the local planning authority before starting.

Building regulations deal with technical standards. An extension may need approval even if planning permission is not required. Confirm the appropriate process with building control or an approved professional. Other checks may also matter, such as listed-building consent, conservation-area restrictions, party-wall matters, drainage or utility requirements.

The rules depend on where you live

This guide is for UK homeowners but is not a single UK-wide rules summary. Planning and building-control systems differ across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The official links at the end provide starting points; the relevant local authority or building-control body can confirm requirements for your proposal.

05 Get comparable, written quotations

Where possible, give each builder the same drawings and specification. Ask for a written quotation that makes it possible to compare the actual work, not just the bottom-line figure.

- Scope of work and specification
- What is included and excluded
- Assumptions, provisional sums and items still to be selected
- Who arranges design, engineering, permissions and inspections
- How changes and additional work will be agreed and priced before proceeding
- Payment stages, programme assumptions, access and site responsibilities

If something is unclear, ask for it to be explained in writing before accepting. Do not assume two quotations include the same specification or responsibilities.

06 Plan the work before it starts

Agree the final scope, responsibilities, access arrangements, anticipated sequence and how communication will work. Check what parts of the home may be affected and confirm the payment terms in writing before committing.

Think through day-to-day disruption

Ask which entrances, rooms, utilities or garden areas may be affected, what access is needed and how the working area will be separated. The answers depend on the design and sequence; confirm the arrangements with the project team before work starts.

Common questions

Do I need planning permission for a house extension?

Sometimes. Some proposals may fall within permitted development, but this depends on the design, property history, location and local restrictions. Check with your local planning authority before starting. For a home in Sheffield, the council explains local constraints and ways to check.

Are planning permission and building regulations the same?

No. They are separate checks. Planning permission concerns whether the development is acceptable in its location and design. Building regulations address technical standards such as structure, fire safety, access, energy performance and drainage. Requirements depend on the work.

Can I plan an extension before I have drawings?

Yes. You can begin with a simple brief: what space you need, why, what must stay and an approximate budget. Drawings and professional input may be needed to assess design, approvals and costs before a final scope is agreed.

How much does a house extension cost in the UK?

There is no single reliable UK-wide price. Size, ground conditions, structure, drainage, access, glazing, services, specification and approvals affect the work. Avoid treating a broad online range as a quote for your home; get an itemised quotation based on a defined scope.

What should a builder’s extension quote include?

Ask for the scope of work, what is included and excluded, assumptions, any provisional sums, who is responsible for design and approvals, how variations will be agreed and priced, and the payment terms. Compare like with like.

Start with a clear conversation

All Round Builders works with homeowners across South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire. If you are considering an extension, discuss the space you need, your home and possible next steps. A project-specific quotation depends on an agreed scope and assessment of the property.

Explore the extension service and request a callback:
allroundbuilders.online/extensions

Useful official links

England and Wales: when planning permission is needed

https://www.gov.uk/planning-permission-england-wales

England: building regulations approval

https://www.gov.uk/building-regulations-approval/how-to-apply

Scotland: adding a house extension

https://www.mygov.scot/add-extension-house

Scotland: building warrant

https://www.mygov.scot/building-warrant

Northern Ireland: when to apply for planning permission

https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/planning-permission-when-apply

Sheffield: planning permission guidance

https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/planning-development/applications-advice/need-planning-permission

Sheffield: building-control work

https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/planning-development/building-control/works-require

Guidance and rules can change. This booklet was prepared on 7 November 2026. Always verify the current requirements for your home and proposal with the relevant official body. It is general information and not a substitute for professional advice.