

Practical completion certificate

Issued when the work is complete except for minor defects that do not stop the client using it. Who issues it is set by your contract: usually the contractor gives notice and the client, or the architect or engineer named in the contract, confirms and signs.

Project	_____	Contractor	_____
Site address	_____	Client (owner)	_____
Contract reference and date	_____	Contract administrator, if any (architect, engineer, project manager)	_____

1. Certification

The contractor gave notice on _____ that the works had reached practical completion. Having inspected the works on _____, the [client / contract administrator] certifies that the works reached practical completion on _____, except for the defects and omissions listed in the attached schedule.

- ☐ All inspections required by the building consent have been passed, or are listed below as outstanding
- ☐ The site has been cleaned and the contractor's plant removed, except as listed
- ☐ Keys, codes and remotes handed over: _____
- ☐ Documents in section 3 handed over or dated below

2. Consequences under the contract

ITEM	DETAIL
Defects liability period	_____ months from the date above; the contractor fixes defects notified in writing in that period
Retentions and final claim	_____ % released on practical completion, balance at the end of the defects period; final payment claim issued on or after this date under the Construction Contracts Act 2002
Risk and insurance	Responsibility for the works passes to the client on this date; the client's building and contents insurance should be in place from now

3. Documents handed over (owner-builder work of \$30,000 or more: required by s 362T of the Building Act 2004 and reg 9)

- ☐ Current insurance policies covering the work; guarantees and warranties for materials and services, whether they transfer and how to claim
- ☐ Maintenance information needed to meet the Building Code and keep warranties valid
- ☐ Records of work (Form 6A) from every Licensed Building Practitioner who did or supervised restricted building work (s 88): _____ of _____ received; electrical, gas and plumbing certificates
- ☐ Code compliance certificate applied for on _____ (council decides within 20 working days of a complete application; apply within 2 years of the consent, ss 92 to 95)

For the client / contract administrator (name, signature)	_____	For the contractor (name, signature)	_____
Date	_____	Date	_____

Not legal advice; the contract wording governs. Building Act references checked on legislation.govt.nz and building.govt.nz on 9 October 2026.

Defects and omissions schedule

Attached to the practical completion certificate. Every line has an owner and a date; nothing is 'to be sorted'.

Project

Present

Date of walk-through

Schedule number

#	LOCATION	DEFECT OR OMISSION	AGREED FIX	BY (DATE)	FIXED ON	CLIENT INITIAL
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

A defect is work that does not meet the contract or the Building Code. Scuffs and marks from normal use after handover are not. If the parties disagree on a line, write both views and the contract's dispute clause decides.

Pre-handover building inspection checklist

Walk the job the day before the client does. Mark each item OK, defect (add to the schedule) or N/A.

AREA	CHECK	OK / DEFECT / NA
Exterior	Cladding complete, flashings and sealant continuous, penetrations sealed, no damage	
Roof and gutters	Roofing fixed, flashings, gutters and downpipes clear and connected, no debris	
Joinery	Every window and door opens, closes, locks; glazing undamaged; seals and hardware fitted	
Decks, steps, balustrades	Fixed, level, barrier heights and gaps to code	
Site	Ground falls away from the building, paths, driveway, drainage grates, fences, letterbox; site clean	
Interior linings	Walls and ceilings stopped, sanded, painted; no cracks, nail pops or mismatched sheen	
Floors	Flooring laid, edges finished, no squeaks or lifting, transitions tidy	
Kitchen	Cabinetry aligned, doors and drawers run, benchtop sealed, appliances installed and tested	
Bathrooms and laundry	Tiles and grout sound, waterproofing penetrations sealed, fixtures run and drain, hot water at taps, no leaks under vanities	
Plumbing	All taps, toilets, hot water cylinder, gas appliances tested; no drips	
Electrical	Every light, switch, power point and appliance tested; switchboard labelled; smoke alarms fitted and working; certificates issued	
Heating, ventilation	Heat pump or heating runs; extract fans vent outside; ducting connected	
Doors and hardware	Internal doors hung, latch and swing clear; handles, stops and locks fitted	
Finishing	Paint touch-ups done, protective film removed, labels off, silicone tidy	
Documents	Manuals, warranties, keys, certificates, records of work collected for section 3 of the certificate	

Across 13,567 publicly posted reviews of NZ builders and outdoor and civil construction contractors, clear explanation is praised in 34 to 41% of positive reviews and a follow-up after the job in only about 2%. The handover meeting is where the explanation happens; the follow-up visit, booked for a month later, is the thing almost nobody does.