

Trade Licensing Guide – NSW

Use this guide to verify which licensed trade
you need for your home improvement job



Is Your Tradesperson Licensed?

Have you ever asked a tradesperson for their licence? If the answer is no, then you could have been using an unqualified and unskilled contractor. As the home owner you may become liable for any unlicensed work that is carried out, any damage they cause or any accident or injury that occurs during works. You also have no legal recourse with unlicensed trades, if for example they carry out sub-standard work.

In NSW, anyone doing residential building work over \$1,000 in value or specialist work must have the appropriate licence. Specialist trades must be licensed regardless of the cost of the work. This applies to: electrical wiring, plumbing, draining, gasfitting, air conditioning and refrigeration work.



What is a Trade Licence?

Licensing proves that the contractor has passed the relevant state exams for their trade. Licensing of trades was introduced to protect you from unskilled and unqualified trades. To qualify for a licence a contractor will typically have to be in possession of one or more qualification/s.

These are designed to establish, maintain and improve standards in the relevant trade. Possession of a licence also allows a contractor to advertise their services to the public, and they are legally obliged to display their licence number on any form of advertisement.

Checking a Licence

A trade licence is typically a credit card sized and will display the contractor or business name, registered address, licence number and expiry date. It will also detail any restrictions or denote the class of licence issued. This indicates what scope of work the licence holder is allowed to carry out.

Australia has state-specific licensing governed by regulatory authorities who administer licences for trades in their jurisdiction. Most have a facility that enables you to run an online licence check or you can just as easily give them a call.

Visit hipages.com.au for more information on [licensing authorities](#) in your state or territory or visit To check a licence visit Licensedtrades.com.au for Australia's only comprehensive tradie licence check facility.

Licence Scope

Licence holders are only authorised to carry out the work detailed on their licence – so an electrician cannot carry out refrigeration work, for example. The range of work that is able to be carried out by the licence holder is called ‘scopes of work’ – a description of the conditions and restrictions that apply to a licence.

Trades subcontracting to builders or working for an owner builder are still required to hold a licence. Uncertificated or unqualified trainees also need to be under the supervision of a certificated or qualified person, who has been authorised by the employer to act as supervisor.



Types of Licences

In NSW there are a number of different types of licences:

- **Contractor Licence:** holder can contract and advertise to carry out the work described on their licence card. Licences endorsed with a Q indicate that the holder is also a Qualified Supervisor.
- **Qualified Supervisor Certificate:** holders can supervise and carry out the work as described on their certificate.
- **Nominated Supervisor:** holders of a contractor licence or a qualified supervisor certificate who supervise the residential building work or specialist work. All companies, partnerships and unqualified individuals holding a contractor licence must nominate a supervisor.
- **Tradesperson Certificate:** issued in the classes of plumbing, draining and gasfitting, allowing a person to undertake work with minimum supervision. All work they complete must be signed off by the holder of a contractor licence or qualified supervisor certificate.

In NSW a range of bodies regulate and issue licences, including:

- NSW Architects Registration Board
- NSW Fair Trading
- Security Licensing & Enforcement Directorate (SLED)
- WorkCover Authority of NSW

Licences by Trade or Job

What Trade or Job	Licence Required	Licensing Authority	Job Scope
Air-conditioning	Air-conditioning work	NSW Fair Trading	Install, maintain and service air-conditioning systems.
Architects	Registered architect	NSW Architects Registration Board	Service related to design phase, contract documentation and administration.
Asbestos	Asbestos removal licence - Friable Class A asbestos removal licence & Non friable Class B (bonded) asbestos removal licence	WorkCover Authority of NSW	Removal of friable and non friable asbestos.
Awnings	Erection of prefabricated metal framed home additions and structures	NSW Fair Trading	Erection of pre-fabricated metal-framed home additions and similar structures.
Balustrades (metal)	Metal fabrication	NSW Fair Trading	Preparation, fabrication and erection of metal components in building work.
Bathroom Resurfacing	Minor maintenance	NSW Fair Trading	Resurfacing or application of a protective coating to bathroom tiles, basins or baths.
Benchtops	Minor trade work or Stonemasonry	NSW Fair Trading	New, repair or replacement work.
Bricklaying	Bricklaying	NSW Fair Trading	Erection of structures using either bricks or blocks.

What Trade or Job	Licence Required	Licensing Authority	Job Scope
Building	Building	NSW Fair Trading	Not necessarily limited to the construction of garage, carport and shed construction/erection (including kits), bathroom, kitchen or laundry renovations, screened, glass or pool enclosures, atriums, conservatories, house lifting , removal and resiting of dwellings, saunas and steam rooms.
Carpentry	Carpentry	NSW Fair Trading	Cutting, placing or erecting timber in construction work; or the assembly or fixing of stairs, windows, doors, floors, etc.
Carports	Building, Carpentry or Erection of prefabricated metal framed home additions and structures	NSW Fair Trading	Additions and structures, including any building work related to the erection of such additions or structures.
Cladding	Joinery (internal) or Carpentry (internal & external)	NSW Fair Trading	New, repair or replacement work.
Concreting	General Concreting	NSW Fair Trading	Laying and placement of concrete.
Decking	Building, Carpentry or Erection of prefabricated metal framed home additions and structures	NSW Fair Trading	Additions and structures, including any building work related to the erection of such additions or structures.
Decorating (applied)	Decorating	NSW Fair Trading	Painted or applied decorations such as murals, frescos and wallpaper.
Demolition	Demolition or Restricted demolition	WorkCover Authority of NSW	Demolish or partially demolish any building, structure or installation with limits.

What Trade or Job	Licence Required	Licensing Authority	Job Scope
Doors (install)	Joinery or Carpentry	NSW Fair Trading	Work including making and installation of doors.
Ducting	Minor trade work	NSW Fair Trading	New, repair or replacement work.
Drainage	Draining work - Tradesperson certificate, Contractor licence or supervisor certificate	NSW Fair Trading	Work on a house drain connected to a septic tank, effluent system and sullage system.
Electricians	Electrical or Disconnection and reconnection of fixed electrical equipment (Restricted)	NSW Fair Trading	Installing, repairing, altering, removing or adding to an electrical installation or the supervising of that work.
Excavation	Excavating	NSW Fair Trading	Removal of earth or rock to form a hole or trench for building and/or structural landscaping work.
Fencing	Fencing or Carpentry or Stonemasonry or Metal fabrication or Structural landscaping	NSW Fair Trading	Erection of fences and gates, using a variety of materials within or on residential property boundary lines.
Flooring	Carpentry	NSW Fair Trading	Only for load bearing timber flooring.
Formwork	Carpentry	NSW Fair Trading	Construction of formwork in preparation for concreting.
Garages	Building	NSW Fair Trading	Garage construction and erection.

What Trade or Job	Licence Required	Licensing Authority	Job Scope
Garage Doors	Minor trade work	NSW Fair Trading	New, repair or replacement work.
Gasfitting	Gasfitting work: Qualified Supervisor Certificate, Contractor Licence, Tradesperson Certificate	NSW Fair Trading	Install, alteration, extension or repair of a gas installation.
Gates	Fencing or Metal fabrication	NSW Fair Trading	Erection of gates, using a variety of materials, within or on residential property boundary lines.
Gazebos	Building or Erection of prefabricated metal framed home additions and structures	NSW Fair Trading	Additions and structures, including any building work related to the erection of such additions or structures.
Glazing	Glazing	NSW Fair Trading	Installing glass or similar materials in windows, door panels or screens.
Graffiti Removal	Minor maintenance/cleaning	NSW Fair Trading	Non-structural cleaning of existing works, structures and buildings.
Guttering	Roof plumbing	NSW Fair Trading	Fixing, installation, renovation, alteration, repair and maintenance of guttering.
Irrigation	Plumbing (urban irrigation) or Structural landscaping (restricted)	NSW Fair Trading	Work including the connection of the system to a water main.
Joinery	Joinery	NSW Fair Trading	Making and installing non-structural timber items such as doors, windows, stairs, cupboards and built-in furniture.

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Kitchen Benchtops	Stonemasonry, Minor trade work	NSW Fair Trading	New, repair or replacement work.
Landscaping	Structural landscaping	NSW Fair Trading	Construction of driveways, paths, paving, retaining walls and non-habitable shelters not associated with dwelling construction.
Painting	Painting	NSW Fair Trading	Clear, resin based or pigmented liquid product applied to a surface by brush, roller or spray gun.
Patio (building)	Building or Erection of prefabricated metal framed home additions and structures	NSW Fair Trading	Additions and structures, including any building work related to the erection of such additions or structures.
Paving	Structural landscaping or Minor trade work	NSW Fair Trading	New, repair or replacement work.
Pergola (building)	Building or Erection of prefabricated metal framed home additions and structures	NSW Fair Trading	Additions and structures, including any building work related to the erection of such additions or structures.
Pest Control	Pest management technician or fumigation certificate of competency	WorkCover Authority of NSW	Occupational use of pesticides and fumigants.
Piering	Underpinning piercing	NSW Fair Trading	Installation of a column or post supporting a superstructure, such as beams or floor bearers.

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Plastering (dry)	Dry plastering	NSW Fair Trading	Internal installation of rigid building sheeting or boards.
Plastering (wet)	Wet plastering	NSW Fair Trading	Application of plaster and/or other materials to internal or external walls and ceilings.
Plumbing	Plumbing work: Qualified Supervisor Certificate, Contractor Licence, Tradesperson Certificate	NSW Fair Trading	Work on building pipes, fixtures, fittings, materials or appliances other than the sanitary drain.
Pressure Cleaning	Minor maintenance/cleaning	NSW Fair Trading	Non-structural cleaning of existing works, structures and buildings.
Refrigeration	Refrigeration work	NSW Fair Trading	Maintain and service a refrigeration system.
Renovations (kitchen, bathroom & laundry)	Kitchen bathroom and laundry renovation	NSW Fair Trading	Installation, refurbishment, restoration and repairs of a kitchen, bathroom or laundry.
Retaining Walls	Structural landscaping, Bricklaying, Stonemasonry, General concreting	NSW Fair Trading	Bricklaying, Stonemasonry, General concreting licence holders can only build retaining walls not requiring approval under the Local Government Act 1993.
Roof Plumbing	Roof plumbing	NSW Fair Trading	Fixing, install, renovation, alteration, repair and maintenance of guttering, downpipes, roof flashing and roof coverings.
Roof Slating	Roof slating	NSW Fair Trading	Fixing of roof slates to the exterior surface of roof and fascia structures.
Roof Tiling	Roof tiling (including bedding & pointing)	NSW Fair Trading	Fixing of roof tiles to exterior surface of roof and fascia structures.

What Trade or Job	Licence Required	Licensing Authority	Job Scope
Saunas	Building	NSW Fair Trading	Construction and erection.
Scaffolding	Scaffolding (high risk work licence) - Basic scaffolding (SB), Intermediate scaffolding (SI), Advanced scaffolding (SA)	WorkCover Authority of NSW	Erection, alteration or dismantling of a temporary structure erected to support platforms from which a person or object could fall more than four metres.
Security Equipment	Security Licence, Home building, Metal fabrication (grills)	Security Licensing & Enforcement Directorate (SLED), NSW Fair Trading	Installation of security equipment.
Shade Sails	Minor trade work	NSW Fair Trading	Erection, repair or replacement work.
Sheds	Building or Erection of prefabricated metal framed home additions and structures	NSW Fair Trading	Additions and structures, including any building work related to the erection of such additions or structures.
Shower Screens	Glazing or Joinery or Minor trade work	NSW Fair Trading	New, repair or replacement work.
Skylights	Roof slating	NSW Fair Trading	Installation of skylights.
Solar Panels	Building and Electrical	NSW Fair Trading	Building (install) and electrical (wiring).
Splashbacks (install)	Minor trade work	NSW Fair Trading	New, repair or replacement work.

What Trade or Job	Licence Required	Licensing Authority	Job Scope
Stonemason	Stonemasonry	NSW Fair Trading	Construction using natural or artificial stone.
Swimming Pool (building)	Swimming pool building	NSW Fair Trading	Construction, renovation, alteration, repair, extension, maintenance of a swimming pool.
Swimming Pool (repairs and servicing)	Swimming pool repairs and servicing	NSW Fair Trading	Pool plumbing and equipment installation, solar heating installation, pool cleaning and non-structural alterations and repairs.
Swimming Pool (fencing)	Building or Fencing	NSW Fair Trading	Erection of fences, using a variety of materials within or on residential property boundary lines.
Tiling (wall & floor)	Wall and floor tiling	NSW Fair Trading	Affixing of tiles for functional or decorative use on internal or external surfaces of buildings.
Underpinning	Underpinning piling	NSW Fair Trading	Construction of a new support structure under a wall, column or footings of a building without removing the superstructure.
Ventilation (mechanical)	Minor trade work	NSW Fair Trading	New, repair or replacement work.
Verandahs (building)	Building or erection of prefabricated metal framed home additions and structures	NSW Fair Trading	Additions and structures, including any building work related to the erection of such additions or structures.
Waterproofing	Waterproofing, or Wall and floor tiling	NSW Fair Trading	Protective treatment of a dwelling designed to prevent the penetration of water or moisture into the dwelling.
Windows	Glazing, Joinery, Carpentry	NSW Fair Trading	Install, repair or replacement work.



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It does not extend any warranty as to the suitability of this information for your specific circumstances.

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