



STEP  
**10**

**MONITORING  
THE BUILD OF  
YOUR SHOP**

**To help you  
monitor the build  
of your shop  
fitout, we've  
prepared some  
notes to guide you  
and a checklist  
for you to  
run through .**

**Typically, builders don't  
like clients coming on  
site. Mainly that's because  
clients often look to  
change things when they  
see the build coming  
together. But it's important  
you aren't dissuaded from  
supervising the fitout and  
ensure you keep an eye on  
the build.**

## TOP TIPS FOR MONITORING YOUR BUILD

### #1: CHANGE CAN BE COSTLY

You should be wary of making changes during the build as these will end up costing you time and money – time you don't have now that you're into your fitout period and money that will throw your budget into disarray.

### #2: IF SOMETHING'S WRONG, SAY "STOP!"

What if something looks bad? Make your shopfitter stop work immediately and have a conversation about it!! Try to be precise about what looks bad. Is the wall crooked? Have they done something wrong? Is it poor workmanship? Or have you just realised you hate the colour paint that was chosen? Whatever it is, make them stop as soon as possible, before it gets too hard to fix the problem.

### #3: TAKE PHOTOS AS YOU GO

Photos are very useful for recording issues as they arise or defects that need rectifying, but they can also be fun to look back on. Plus, you can use them across your social media to build excitement.



#### GET HELP

If you're feeling overwhelmed by the details or need help with any aspect of setting up your shop, give us a call on 0424 113 116 to find out how we can help.

# TIPS FOR MONITORING YOUR FITOUT – GUIDE

**While a good shopfitter will monitor the build themselves, coordinate trades and watch out for defects, it's best you keep an eye on things, too.**

## INSTRUCTIONS



**Read through the points below and try to apply them to your fitout. Then proceed to the checklist on the following page.**

You're on the home stretch now. With some careful management, soon you'll be ready to open up your shop!

**Each of these 4 tips will help you communicate better with your suppliers and ensure a better outcome for your shop.**

### **ASK FOR A SET OUT**

A good first step is to have your shopfitter "Set Out" the shop for you, particularly if you can't quite visualise the fitout as it will appear in 3D simply by looking at the plans.

A Set Out is when the builder takes critical measurements from the plans and marks them on the floor of the tenancy. They can easily add to this to show you more details, such as counter depths, equipment locations and so on, so you can walk around all the items and get more of a sense of how the space will function when your fitout is complete.

Lots of people find it hard to read plans and translate them into reality, so don't worry about asking for a Set Out – it's much better for you and the shopfitter to understand the space long before the walls are actually built! But make sure you let your shopfitter know at the tender stage if you want a Set Out, as they will need to allow a little extra time (a couple of hours) to add in any details you might need to see.

### **MONITOR YOUR SHOPFITTER'S PROGRAM**

The shopfitter will draw up a program, similar to your project program, that shows what's happening on each day of the build. Some shopfitters are more sophisticated than others with programming, but they should all be able to give you a breakdown. If they can't, then you should be very worried – how will they be able to manage the build if they don't know what's happening when?

On that note, you need to make sure your shopfitter knows when everything you have ordered directly is due to turn up on site. They will need to make sure the works for the item are completed – e.g. has the gas supply been extended to where your combi oven is to go? Has the floor been completed before your display modules are due to arrive? Are the electrical connections for your signage in place? You may need to work with the shopfitter to determine the best delivery date that suits both the build program and your supplier. The shopfitter may also have works to schedule in after the delivery, such as connections, so make sure you keep on top of the supplier so the dates don't slip.



The real monitoring starts when they have works underway onsite. Bring the program with you and check where they're at. Is there meant to be a painter on site? Is he there? If he's not, is it because he didn't turn up, or did the shopfitter push him back? Ask questions when things aren't running according to the plan, but be aware that things can change during the build and your shopfitter may have good reasons to make changes.

The main thing to determine is that if someone is not there who should be according to the shopfitter's program, that your shopfitter knows why and knows when they're coming, and isn't just letting the site sit around idle. If one trade or supplier is delayed, a good shopfitter can usually schedule something else in instead so you don't lose time due to such delays.

## DO "DEFECTING" AS YOU GO

"Defecting" simply refers to when you check the work for defects.

Many shopfitters will do one defects inspection at the end of the build. But that can be too late for some trades. For example, in the course of your three-week fitout, an individual tradesperson might only be on your site for one or two days, and it can be very difficult to get them back to fix a problem as they are likely to be booked up for more work after your fitout as well. It is far better if the shopfitter is defecting their work once they are finished rather than waiting for everything to be done.

Also, some trades' work can be "built in" and is therefore hard to access at the end. Tiling is a good example of this – once equipment is installed, it's a real pain to get the tiler back in to fix something – like poor alignment or gaps in grouting – because the equipment is all in the way. Keep an eye out for any defects as the days go by – checking to see how the work is coming along and letting your shopfitter know if you have any concerns.

## HEAD OFF LANDLORD INTERFERENCE

Some landlords stick their noses in a bit too much during the build, and you should watch out for this too.

Make sure your shopfitter knows that you will only pay for work that has been directed by you or your project manager, not by the landlord. Otherwise your project may go well over budget and you may not get the fitout you planned!

# MONITORING YOUR FITOUT – CHECKLIST

**While your fitout is being built, this is the time to make sure that everything is proceeding as close to on-time and on-budget as possible.**

## INSTRUCTIONS



**Refer to this checklist when visiting the site. Keep asking questions until you are satisfied with how the build is progressing.**

Be polite but not *too* polite. At the end of the day, this is *your* shop that's being built. No one else will ever be as invested in it as you are, and so you are entitled to push to ensure standards are met and that you are being communicated with clearly.

## Take your time on site and check:

### FINISHES

- ☐ Are they using the specified materials flooring/tiles/paint colours?
- ☐ Is the quality of work acceptable? Does it need an extra coat of paint?
- ☐ Is the grouting of tiles smooth?
- ☐ Are edges and joins neat and well finished?

### LAYOUT

**The shopfitter should always have a copy of the plans onsite, but take your own copy with you and make sure:**

- ☐ Are walls and doorways in the correct position? ☐ Do the doors swing the right way?
- ☐ Are the counters and joinery in the correct position?
- ☐ Are the changes in floor/wall coverings/tiles/paint for back and front of house in the correct position?
- ☐ Are location of connections for power and plumbing in the correct position?

## TIMING

- ☐ Looking at the program the shopfitter provided and the date of your visit, have all the tasks due to be completed by that time been finished?
- ☐ Do the tasks that are supposed to be underway look like they are happening?
- ☐ Are the appropriate trades onsite on the day for the work that is due to be happening?
- ☐ If the answer to any of these questions is “no”, then ask the shopfitter why the work is not completed/underway.
- ☐ Ask the shopfitter how this will impact the program and sequence of works to come?
- ☐ Ask how it will impact the timing of the works/deliveries from any contractors you have directly arranged yourself such as signage installation or kitchen equipment delivery. You may need to reschedule so that there is not a clash of workers onsite.
- ☐ Ask the shopfitter can they still make the original date for all their works to be completed.

## CLEANLINESS

**It's very important to keep the building manager/landlord onside by minimising the impact your fitout has on the surrounding areas.**

- ☐ Make sure that there is no dust etc. being traipsed out of the tenancy and into public spaces or this will cause issues for the building manager/landlord.
- ☐ Is there a mat inside the tenancy to keep dirt inside?
- ☐ Is the shopfitter regularly sweeping outside the fitout if some dirt transference cannot be avoided?

## SAFETY

**Although it is the shopfitter's responsibility to ensure the safety requirements of the building manager/landlord are implemented, don't be afraid to ask questions**

- ☐ Do you believe that the workers are working in a safe manner?
- ☐ Do you need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) to visit the site? Your shopfitter should have a spare hardhat and vest you can wear if required. You will usually need to wear flat, closed-in shoes for a site visit.

## NOTES

# THE FINAL WEEK – ADVICE FROM KARYN



*Karyn O'Brien, owner of Setting Up Shop and a retail fitout expert, talks you through your last week of prep to set you up for a great start.*

“

**You're nearly there!**

**In your program, we allowed one week after your fitout is complete for you to finalise all the little bits and pieces that you need to be prepared for open day. And in your final week, you'll likely be preparing to open by stocking, training and testing.**

But before you begin those activities, there are some certification and fitout-related responsibilities you need to take care of (see documents 10.4 and 10.5 in this Step).

Once your fitout is complete and you have completed your defect inspection – and all your paperwork and certifications are in order too – it's time to get ready to trade.

The last few days will be busy and exciting. The shop has now been handed over to you by the shopfitter, and you can start to get ready to open!

”

## This last week, it's time to do the following things:

- ☐ Take delivery of stock
- ☐ Install any final equipment, especially POS, security and any other direct items
- ☐ Induct and train staff
- ☐ Merchandise the store
- ☐ Food and Beverage businesses – do a soft open: test all equipment, cook the menu, practise serving etc.
- ☐ Roll out your marketing and social media
- ☐ Take lots of photos while everything is pristine
- ☐ **Have an opening party for everyone who helped you get here!**

# CERTIFICATION & DEFECTING – GUIDE

**Your fitout is complete, but there's still paperwork for you to get in order before you can open.**

## INSTRUCTIONS



**Run through all of the items in this *Certification & Defecting Guide* to make sure your shop is ready to open. This will help you avoid last-minute stress and delays ... and make sure your fitout is in the best possible condition for your opening day.**

A big part of most final certifications is the management and operational side of the business. But building work forms part of this too. This checklist will help you to ensure your fitout is complete and high quality and that you get your documentation ready in advance.

## Make sure you attend to:

### 1: LANDLORD REQUIREMENTS FROM THE FITOUT GUIDE

Your landlord may have a long list of things for you to provide before they will let you open. These should be listed in your Fitout Guide, or you may be sent the list in the week or two before your opening date. Send this list straight on to your shopfitter and get them to start assembling all the documentation! This is often called an Authority To Trade or similar.

Not all of the things on your Landlord's list will be provided by the shopfitter, so make sure you're on top of all your paperwork. The Landlord will want to make sure:

- your lease is all finalised
- insurances and bank guarantees are in place, and
- any money you owe them (first month's rent, Cat 1 works if applicable, etc.) have been paid.

### 2: CERTIFICATE OF CLASSIFICATION (C OF C)

You will also need to get the Certificate of Classification (C of C) or Certificate of Occupancy from your Certifier – that will let you know that everything has been constructed in accordance with all the relevant codes and regulations. For the Certifier to issue the C of C they will want all of the individual trade certificates, and they may want to come out to inspect the tenancy as well. Make sure your builder has the certifier's email address and tell them to cc in the certifier for every certificate they send you.

NB: many shopfitters will not release these certificates unless their payments are up to date, so make sure you're on top of their bills!

---

### 3: OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE FOLDER

---

Get an Operation and Maintenance folder from your shopfitter. This will have all your drawings in it as well as maintenance and cleaning information for everything they delivered in their contract. You might want to include this in the contract you sign with them as some shopfitters don't provide them an Operation and Maintenance folder as standard. It's very handy to have this info on site down the track.

---

### 4: HEALTH INSPECTION

---

Food and Beverage businesses will want to have booked in the Health Inspection a week or so before the last week so that the council food safety officer can come through and send you the paperwork before you are due to open. It can take a few days to get the final sign off, and you will need it to be able to trade.

---

---

### 5: DEFECTING YOUR FITOUT

---

Run through the defecting checklist on the following page. Hopefully you will find that any major problems have been picked up along the way during your site visits, but it is always worth doing a final defect inspection once the cleaning has been completed.

Some shopfitters will ask you to defect before the cleaners have gone through so they don't have to clean twice. That's fine, but don't let that be the only inspection, as sometimes they will explain away a problem with "that'll come out in cleaning" and it doesn't. If you are restricted to one defect inspection you may regret it.

Take photos of any problems and make notes, and then send the defect list through to the shopfitter formally. That way you don't run the risk of forgetting anything. It's always better to bring someone else along when defecting if you can – they may pick up things you don't see as they aren't as familiar with the space and how it's been evolving over the past months.

Your landlord may also do a defects inspection. Their standards are usually very exacting and they can have some strange requests at this late stage. I highly recommend having your shopfitter there for the landlord's defects inspection as it is their work that is being reviewed. They will also know all the terminology, know what can and can't be fixed, and make excuses where needed!

Note: this is why you keep part of the final payment from the shopfitter – in case they have to fix anything! If you have some money left (5-10% is the norm) then you can use that to pay someone else to fix any problems if your shopfitter vanishes. This has to be in the contract though – don't withhold payment unless you have it writing that you can.

---

# DEFECTING – CHECKLIST

## INSTRUCTIONS



**First, run through all of the items in the *Certification & Defecting Guide on the previous page*. Then print out this checklist and take it with you when you visit your store.**

Take photos of any problems you find and make sure you notify your shopfitter formally (via email with attached reference photos) when notifying them of the issues that need to be rectified.

### SHOP FRONT – EXTERNAL

- ☐ IT wall treatment installed
- ☐ Signage illuminated
- ☐ Footpath dining furniture fits
- ☐ Window vinyl correctly applied
- ☐ Door has safety vinyl panel at a minimum

### SHOPFRONT – INTERNAL

- ☐ Door handle operational
- ☐ Door lock operational and keys supplied
- ☐ Door stop installed if required

### WALLS

- ☐ Edges sealed and unchipped
- ☐ Tiles straight and grout tidy
- ☐ All gaps around pipework or benches etc. sealed with silicon
- ☐ Any holes in walls from moving of screwed in items filled in
- ☐ Smooth finish to plasterboard joins
- ☐ Enough coats of paint for quality finish
- ☐ Skirting boards installed flush and painted

### FLOOR

- ☐ Smooth floor finish
- ☐ Good transition at doorway
- ☐ Good transition/seal Back of House/Front of House
- ☐ Cleaning instructions for flooring provided

### CEILING/LIGHTING

- ☐ Smooth finish to plasterboard joins
- ☐ Enough coats of paint for quality finish
- ☐ Lighting divided into correct circuits for control
- ☐ Corners with walls well finished

### JOINERY/FIXTURES & FITTINGS

- ☐ Cupboards and drawers operate smoothly and shut flush
- ☐ Kickboards installed and painted

### SERVICES

- ☐ Air conditioning operates correctly
- ☐ Fire Exit signs installed and illuminated
- ☐ Fire extinguisher/s or sprinklers installed as required

### GENERAL

- ☐ Cleanliness

## CONCLUSION

# OPENING DAY – ADVICE FROM KARYN

*A final, encouraging word from Karyn O'Brien, owner of Setting Up Shop and a retail fitout expert.*



“

**You made it!**

**Many retailers say that opening a shop is one of the most stressful things they've ever done. Hopefully, by using this guide and knowing what steps to take at each stage of setting up your shop, that stress has been eased for you.**

While you've had to build a team along the way to get your shop to opening day, now is the time for you to shine! You may not be a designer or builder, but you are a retailer. And

once you open those doors to customers, your business is in your hands.

I love watching people I work with finally getting behind the sales counter or into their kitchen and start doing their thing – selling their products, helping their customers, cooking their food, running their business. It's such a great payoff after months of hard work, planning, budgeting and programming. And sometimes I'm lucky and get to watch their business grow, expand and develop over the course of a few years.

”

## Congratulations on setting up your shop!

