

STEP

3

# WORKING OUT THE PROGRAM FOR YOUR SHOP



**When building  
a shop, activities  
must come in  
a set order, one  
after another.**

**A “program” is a plan – like  
a calendar or timeline –  
that shows the steps you  
need to take and when you  
need to take them.**

**For example, you can’t start building until  
you have agreed your lease. And you  
shouldn’t start building until you have  
a full set of plans either (though people  
often do, this can be a costly error!).**

As in life, things don’t always go according  
to plan, but it is a vital you have a plan  
to start with as it helps you define your  
budget and timings to ensure your shop  
opens successfully on time.

The *Build Your Program Worksheet* on  
the following pages will help you build  
a simple program by filling in a table. This  
program will help you stay on top of all your  
important dates.



## TOP TIPS FOR BUILDING YOUR PROGRAM

### #1: BE REALISTIC NOT OPTIMISTIC

By carefully working out your program, you are able to work out a realistic opening date that allows enough time for your design and build phases. This means each member of your team will have enough time allocated to complete their part of the process and you will be more likely to open on time.

### #2: TWO PROGRAMS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

You will need to keep an eye on two programs: the first is the one we're going to help you build that shows you all the things you need to do and arrange to open your shop and how long they will take. The second is your shopfitter's program that outlines what will happen during the fitout period. While your shopfitter is responsible for looking after their own program, you should keep an eye on it to ensure they aren't running behind!

### #3: DEADLINES ARE CRUCIAL

If you don't set deadlines for each activity, you won't know if you are running behind, and your entire program can blow out costing you time, money and hassles. Make sure you get your team (designer, solicitor, engineers, certifier, shopfitter, etc.) to agree to your deadlines so they know what you are expecting. If they are busy on the dates you require them, you can negotiate new deadlines, but make sure you adjust the rest of your program to work out how that delay will impact the rest of the process.

#### 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.

We can help you build your program from only \$500 + GST.



# BUILD YOUR PROGRAM – WORKSHEET

## So, how long will this thing take?!

Here's an example program to explain the process of creating one.

**When designing a program, what you really need to know is: once you've found the new home for your business, how long will it be until you are open and ready to trade.**

This example program begins after the business owner has decided on their tenancy, negotiated the terms of their lease, and is happy to start spending money on a designer.

Everything that happens before that – finding the perfect spot, checking their budget, talking to the leasing people and so on, could have taken weeks or years.

There are other things happening in the background of this program as well, such as finalising your lease and arranging your Bank Guarantee and insurances, but this program shows how much time an

example business owner needed from go to whoa for their design and build.

This example tenancy is in a major shopping centre, so this program includes *Landlord Design Reviews* and *Category 1 works*.

Have a read through the example program and then it's time to build your own.

## EXAMPLE PROGRAM

*Note: Days are working days (Monday to Friday), so one week = 5 days*

STEP	WHO?	NOTES	DAYS	WEEKS	START DATE	END DATE
Find & brief your designer	You	This could take longer, but you should be able to find someone within a week	5	1	3 Feb	7 Feb
Designer creates concept plans	Designer	Confirm timeframes with your designer!	10	2	10 Feb	21 Feb
Review your concept plans	You	<b>This is important</b> – don't rush it – try to think of everything.	5	1	24 Feb	28 Feb
Landlord reviews plans	Landlord	Don't send the concept until you are happy with it and the designer has made any necessary changes.	5	1	2 Mar	6 Mar
Designer creates preliminary plans	Designer	Check this timeframe with your designer!	15	3	9 Mar	27 Mar
Review preliminary plans	You	As above – <b>this is important!</b>	5	1	30 Mar	3 Apr
Time to order equipment/furniture/lighting	You	Check the lead times for anything your designer has specified so you can order them in time	84	12	6 Apr	29 Jun
Landlord reviews plans	Landlord	Make sure any revisions are included before you send them.	5	1	6 Apr	10 Apr
Send plans to engineers if required	You	Happens at the same time as the landlord is reviewing the plans, so no extra days in this step. May not be needed if your fitout is simple.	5–10	1–2		



STEP	WHO?	NOTES	DAYS	WEEKS	START DATE	END DATE
Designer creates final plans	Designer	Check this timeframe with your designer!	10	2	13 Apr	24 Apr
Review final plans	You	This will be the final set, so they need to have everything you can think of included!	5	1	27 Apr	1 May
Landlord reviews final plans	Landlord	Again, make sure you're happy before sending to the landlord.	5	1	4 May	8 May
Issue plans to building certifier	You	Happens at the same time as the landlord is reviewing the final plans, so no extra days at this step.	5	1		
Issue tender to shopfitters	Shopfitter	Drawing up and issuing the tender will take a few days, and you should leave it with the shopfitters for at least two weeks.	15	3	11 May	29 May
Tender reviews & negotiation	You	When prices come back you will have questions and might want to negotiate with one or more of the shopfitters, that happens this week.	5	1	1 Jun	5 Jun
Landlord sends plans for Cat 1 pricing	Landlord	Happens at the same time as your tender issue and review, so no extra time at this step.	5–10	1		
Landlord sends Cat 1 pricing to you for approval	Landlord	Happens at the same time as your tender issue and review, so no extra time at this step.	5	1		
Cat 1 works carried out	Landlord	This may run late, so allow a little extra time.	5	1	8 Jun	12 Jun
Shopfitter contract & mobilisation	Shopfitter	The shopfitter needs to place orders and send you the safety documentation, and may wait for you to pay a deposit.	5	1	15 Jun	19 Jun
On site works	Shopfitter	Depends on the complexity of your fitout and how long your fitout period is. ALWAYS have the build period one week shorter than your fitout period!	15–25	3–5	22 Jun	24 Jul
Stocking, training etc.	You	This is what that last week is for! Don't forget that you need to get yourself set up, take stock deliveries, train staff and all those other things that often get forgotten!	5	1	27 Jul	31 Jul
Open for Trade!	You	FINALLY!!	1	0	1 Aug	

## Total: 24–26 weeks depending on length of fitout period.

You absolutely might get your fitout completed more quickly, but you must make sure that you have your designer's commitment to push the plans out super fast.

And if your landlord doesn't need to review the plans at every step, even better, you can save some time there. But for your own calculations, start by assuming this exemplar is close to what

you'll need to estimate, and then you can see where you need to squeeze the time to make the program work for the date you want to open up shop.



**Now you've read through the example program, it's time to build your own. At this stage, you'll simply be using the example program to guesstimate how long it will take to go from signing your lease to opening day. But later down the track once you have selected your designer and shopfitter, you can come back and complete this worksheet again to build a more accurate program.**

Check in with your team (designer, shopfitter, engineer, etc.) and make sure your deadlines are realistic and that they work for their schedules. And don't forget, any time you need to alter a deadline, make sure you adjust the remaining deadlines in your program and contact your shopfitter to advise them of the delay as well and determine how it will impact the rest of your program.

## YOUR PROGRAM

*Note: Days are working days (Monday to Friday), so one week = 5 days*

STEP	WHO?	NOTES	DAYS	WEEKS	START DATE	END DATE
Find & brief your designer	You	This could take longer, but you should be able to find someone within a week				
Designer creates concept plans	Designer	Confirm timeframe with your designer in advance				
Review your concept plans	You	<b>This is important</b> – don't rush it – try to think of everything.				
Landlord reviews plans	Landlord	Don't send the concept until you are happy with it and the designer has made any necessary changes. (Refer to 6.1)				
Designer creates preliminary plans	Designer	Confirm timeframe with your designer in advance				
Review preliminary plans	You	As above – <b>this is important!</b>				
Time to order equipment/furniture/lighting	You	Check the lead times for anything your designer has specified so you can order them in time				
Landlord reviews plans	Landlord	As above, make sure any revisions are included before you send them.				
Send plans to engineers if required	You	Happens at the same time as the landlord is reviewing the plans, so no extra days in this step. May not be needed if your fitout is simple.	.	.	.	.
Designer creates final plans	Designer	Confirm timeframe with your designer in advance				
Review final plans	You	This will be the final set, so they need to have everything you can think of included! (Refer to 6.1)				
Landlord reviews final plans	Landlord	Again, make sure you're happy before sending to the landlord.				



STEP	WHO?	NOTES	DAYS	WEEKS	START DATE	END DATE
Issue plans to building certifier	You	Happens at the same time as the landlord is reviewing the final plans, so no extra days at this step.	•	•	•	•
Issue tender to shopfitters	Shopfitter	Drawing up and issuing the tender will take a few days, and you should leave it with the shopfitters for at least two weeks.				
Tender reviews & negotiation	You	When prices come back you will have questions and might want to negotiate with one or more of the shopfitters, that happens this week.				
Landlord sends plans for Cat 1 pricing	Landlord	Happens at the same time as your tender issue and review, so no extra time at this step.	•	•	•	•
Landlord sends Cat 1 pricing to you for approval	Landlord	Happens at the same time as your tender issue and review, so no extra time at this step.	•	•	•	•
Cat 1 works carried out	Landlord	This may run late, so allow a little extra time.				
Shopfitter contract & mobilisation	Shopfitter	The shopfitter needs to place orders and send you the safety documentation, and may wait for you to pay a deposit.				
On site works	Shopfitter	Depends on the complexity of your fitout and how long your fitout period is. ALWAYS have the build period one week shorter than your fitout period!				
Stocking, training etc.	You	This is what that last week is for! Don't forget that you need to get yourself set up, take stock deliveries, train staff and all those other things that often get forgotten! (Refer to 10.4)				
Open for Trade!	You	FINALLY!!	•	•	•	•

## NOTES

## 3.2

# WORKING OUT YOUR PROGRAM – ADVICE FROM KARYN



*Karyn O'Brien, owner of Setting Up Shop and a retail fitout expert, talks you through how working out your program and setting a realistic opening date can help you to budget, negotiate your lease, and get a better quality fitout to boot.*

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**In this document, I help you understand the “why” behind working out your program and give you a bit of extra info about a couple of the more time-hungry aspects of your program.**

You may be finding the process of working out your program overwhelming, but hopefully, after reading this document through, you’ll see why the effort is important and needs to be put in early in your planning stages.

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### Why working out your opening date is important

The leasing manager for the property you are leasing has a job to do and that is to minimise the amount of time that a space is not generating rent. So, their ideal scenario is where one tenant closes down, defits their shop in a week, then the next tenant comes along, fits out in a fortnight and opens for trade. Phew! That way, the landlord only has to deal with 3 weeks where the tenancy is not generating income for the owners.

But it doesn’t usually work out like that. Sometimes the ideal tenant won’t come along quickly enough or they may be in an existing location and have to see a lease out before moving across. Or the design may take longer than expected, and so on. But the leasing manager will likely push for an earlier rather than later opening date. To effectively negotiate, you need to work out the best date for you. **And that means working out your program before you negotiate your lease.**

By working through all the stages required to set up your store before you begin, you can make sure you have allowed enough time to design and build. This means you will have a realistic timeline that allows enough time for each trade and each stage to be completed. If you plan a realistic opening date this will make it much more likely you will open on time ... all of which means less stress for you!

### Time, money and quality – how a realistic opening date can help you have it all

In the simplest terms, every construction project has three main elements: time, money and quality. The standard maxim is that you can only have two of those three things: you can have it fast and great quality, but you will spend a lot of money; or you can have it fast and on budget, but it won’t be great quality. Having a program with sufficient time allowed at the beginning gives you a head start and also a bit of room to work on the money and



quality aspects ... so you can end up having it all.

I must admit that when I was building banks, I could deliver one from first being told the address all the way through to opening the doors within 10 weeks. And in one case I did it in 6. BUT... I had a designer who knew the brand inside out and could design a full branch within a week. I had a robust set of design guidelines that meant I knew the requirements and quality expected. I had 3 shopfitters who regularly tendered for me and knew how to build the branches very quickly. And I had built so many of them myself that I could almost do it in my sleep. Our team also had strict guidelines around the types of properties we would look at, what the base building had to include, what the lease terms would be, and so on. So, big companies have systems and experience that let them do these things more quickly than your typical owner-operator.

Therefore, your program is likely to be much longer than 10 weeks. You may not have all the resources and experience I have under my belt, but with this guide, you can take advantage of some of my experience to give yourself a better shot. And giving yourself more time is a critical piece of advice I can impart that will make a massive difference to the quality (and stress level) of your fitout.

***By working out an accurate program with enough time for each phase, the entire process from step 1 to opening day will run so much more smoothly.***

## **It's vital to set deadlines for each activity**

If you don't set deadlines for each activity, you won't know if you are running behind. And if you're running behind, your entire program can blow out costing you time and money and many hassles as the fitout progresses.

Make sure you get your team (designer, solicitor, engineers, certifier, shopfitter, etc.) to agree to your deadlines so they know what you are expecting. If they are busy on the dates you require them, you can negotiate a new deadline for them, but you will need to adjust the rest of your program so you can work out how that delay will impact the rest of the process.

## **Ordering times**

A big issue that can delay a program is long lead time items. It's very important to talk with your designer about this. Often, furniture, lighting, specialised equipment and materials have to be ordered from overseas. There can be a delay from your date of order of 8, 12, or even 16 weeks, and this delay will depend on the time of year you order as well (e.g. factories in Europe often close down in July/August, and Christmas always throws a spanner in the works, as does Chinese New Year). The last thing you need is to fall in love with a beautiful chair or tile and discover it won't arrive in the country until a month after your opening date!

Tell your designer when you want to open, show them your program, and make sure they only specify items that are readily available.

And for anything that you are ordering direct (furniture and equipment usually), make sure you order them in plenty of time for arrival on site when needed. And make sure you let your shopfitter know when they are due and confirm whether the delivery day suits them. There's no point in having all your furniture arrive on site when the floor is still being installed: you will end up with extra delivery and storage costs!



## Design

Many first-time shop-owners say that the design aspect of their build took a lot longer than they anticipated. In the *3.1 Build Your Program Worksheet*, I have allocated a total of 10 weeks for design, from briefing your designer through to having a final design ready for pricing. That's two and a half months of time just for design. Now, you may be able to compress this timeframe a little, but I don't recommend that without consulting your designer first. They need to be on board with your plans so they can schedule their staff accordingly.

There are also several weeks for review built into this design period. Do not immediately remove them! First off, if dealing with a large institutional landlord, they will need to review your plans as well, and that can take at least week. Second, you don't want to say yes to plans/designs too quickly and then later realise you missed something ... or realise too late that you actually do need more storage / that sink in a different place / hate the colour blue. You run the risk of having your designer head off in the wrong direction when just another day or two may have meant you could give fully considered feedback. See document *6.1 The Design Stages Explained Guide* for more information.

## Tendering

Tendering is another period where you want to allow plenty of time. The best pricing will come when your shopfitters have time to ask lots of subcontractors for pricing – so they might talk to 2 or 3 electricians for example. By giving them enough time, you allow them to get the best pricing for you, and lock it in with the subcontractor. A shopfitter who is asked to price in only a few days is giving you rates that may not be competitive or are just flat out guessing. That will leave either you or them in trouble at the end of the build. For information on this, see *Step 7: Finding A Shopfitter*.

