

**Building  
Advice  
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### **What are the Building Regulations?**

The Building Regulations apply to [building work](#) in England & Wales and set standards for the design and construction of buildings to ensure the safety and health for people in or about those buildings. They also include requirements to ensure that fuel and power is conserved and facilities are provided for people, including those with disabilities, to access and move around inside buildings. Learn more about [compliance and the consequences of not complying](#).

### **Is Building Regulations approval the same as planning permission?**

Building Regulations approval is a separate matter from obtaining planning permission for your work. Similarly, receiving any planning permission which your work may require is not the same as taking action to ensure that it complies with the Building Regulations.

### **Do I need Building Regulations Approval?**

If you are planning to carry out 'Building Work' as defined in Regulation 3 of the Building Regulations, then it must comply with the Building Regulations. This normally means seeking approval of the work from a [Building Control Body](#).

The following types of project amount to 'Building Work':

- The erection or extension of a building
- An alteration project involving work which will temporarily or permanently affect the ongoing compliance of the building, service or fitting with the requirements relating to structure, fire, or access to and use of buildings
- When installing replacement windows using a builder or window company not registered with the relevant Competent Person Schemes.
- The installation or extension of a service or fitting which is controlled under the regulations
- The insertion of insulation into a cavity wall
- The underpinning of the foundations of a building
- When you want to change the building's fundamental use

If your building work consists only of the installation of certain types of services or fittings (e.g. electrical installations in dwellings, heating, hot water, air-conditioning and ventilation, replacement windows, WCs, and showers) and you employ an installer registered with a relevant Competent Person Schemes as designated in the Building Regulations, that installer will be able to [self-certify](#) the work. Therefore, you will not need to involve a Building Control Service. However, this concession is strictly limited to the specific type of installations and does not cover any other type of building work.

The works themselves must meet the current relevant technical requirements in the Building Regulations and they must not make other fabric, services and fittings less compliant than they were before - or dangerous. For example, the provision of replacement double-glazing must not make compliance worse in relation to means of escape, air supply for combustion appliances and their flues and ventilation for health.

They may also apply to certain changes of use of an existing building. This is because the change of use may result in the building as a whole no longer complying with the requirements which will apply to its new type of use, and so having to be up-graded to meet additional requirements specified in the regulations for which building work may also be required.

## **Legislation**

There are a number of pieces of legislation that relate to the standards of premises or construction and, depending on the type of premises and whether any [building work](#) is being carried out, one or more could apply at any given time.

### **New or altered premises**

The Building Regulations are made under powers provided in the Building Act 1984, and apply in England and Wales. The current edition of the regulations is 'The Building Regulations 2000' (as amended) and the majority of building projects are required to comply with them.

The Building Regulations contain various sections dealing with definitions, procedures, and what is expected in terms of the technical performance of building work.

For example, they:

- Define what types of building, plumbing, and heating projects amount to 'Building Work' and make these subject to control under the Building Regulations
- Specify what types of buildings are exempt from control under the Building Regulations
- Set out the notification procedures to follow when starting, carrying out, and completing building work
- Set out the 'requirements' with which the individual aspects of building design and construction must comply in the interests of the health and safety of building users, of energy conservation, and of access to and use of buildings

Checking that the Building Regulations have been complied with is done by [Building Control Bodies](#) – either based in the Building Control department of the local authority or established as an "Approved Inspector" in the private sector.

Certain types of building work close to or directly affecting the boundary or party wall of premises may also be covered by the "[Party Wall Act](#)" which places obligations on people carrying out work.

The recently introduced "[Sustainable & Secure Buildings Act](#)" also has powers that could affect new and altered premises.

Some non-domestic premises may also be subject to Local Acts.

### **Existing premises**

Existing domestic premises (housing) may well be covered by the Housing Act, enforced typically by the local housing authority.

Existing non-domestic premises are also likely to be covered by general fire safety law. For both, see the [Communities and Local Government \(CLG\) website](#).

### **More detail**

For [more detail](#) about the legislation, switch to the Professional User section of the Planning Portal.