

1 Building a 45 m² House Without Planning Permission: What Homeowners Must Know

The new 45 m² planning exemption opens the door to a range of possibilities for homeowners across Ireland.

From creating a home for an older parent, to independent living for an adult child, or additional space for family and guests - a well-designed 45 m² house can add real value to your property and your lifestyle.

NO PLANNING PERMISSION REQUIRED DOES NOT MEAN NO REGULATIONS.

Where the exemption applies, the home must still satisfy the applicable Building Regulations and Building Control requirements.

This guide explains the 10 key things to understand before you build.



2 Does a 45 m² House Without Planning Permission Need a Commencement Notice?

Planning exemption is not the same as Building Control exemption.

A project may be exempt from planning permission and still have Building Control obligations. The correct route should be established before work begins.

KEY POINTS

- ✓ The applicable Building Regulations still apply.
- ✓ Commencement and Building Control requirements should be checked before work starts.
- ✓ Professional oversight, inspections and certification may be required.
- ✓ Completion documentation should be retained for the finished home.



3 Fire Safety in a 45 m² Modular House

Fire safety is one of the most important parts of the Building Regulations.

Even a compact 45 m² home must protect lives, property and neighbouring buildings.

KEY FIRE-SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Safe means of escape with suitable doors and windows.
- ✓ Appropriate smoke and heat alarms.
- ✓ Fire-resistant construction and internal linings where required.
- ✓ Fire stopping around services and concealed spaces.
- ✓ Protection of boundaries and appropriate separation from other structures.



4 Structure and Stability in a 45 m² Home

Your home must be strong, stable and safe in all conditions.

The structure must be designed to withstand the relevant loads and remain safe for the lifetime of the building.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Foundations designed for the ground conditions.
- ✓ Structural design and calculations by appropriately qualified professionals.
- ✓ Steel-frame system designed and specified for the project.
- ✓ Floors, walls and roof designed to work together as a stable structure.
- ✓ Materials durable and fit for purpose.



5 Foundations, Radon and Drainage

A solid start is essential.

The foundation, radon protection and drainage systems must keep the home dry, safe and healthy for the long term.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Foundations designed for the actual site conditions.
- ✓ Appropriate radon barrier and radon measures.
- ✓ Effective drainage to protect the building.
- ✓ Ground levels and falls designed correctly.
- ✓ Surface water managed safely away from the home.



6 Insulation, Airtightness and Energy Efficiency

A 45 m² home must meet the applicable energy-performance requirements.

Good insulation and airtightness help create a warm, comfortable home with lower running costs.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ High-performance insulation to floor, walls and roof.
- ✓ Airtight construction to reduce uncontrolled heat loss.
- ✓ High-performance windows and doors.
- ✓ Thermal bridging minimised through careful detailing.
- ✓ Heating, hot water, ventilation and renewable systems considered as part of the overall energy design.



7 Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality

Good ventilation keeps the home healthy by removing excess moisture and stale air.

A well-insulated, airtight 45 m² home needs a ventilation system suited to its design and use.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Background ventilation where required.
- ✓ Mechanical ventilation or extract where appropriate.
- ✓ Control of condensation and moisture.
- ✓ Effective ventilation to kitchens, bathrooms and utility areas.
- ✓ Ventilation equipment correctly sized and commissioned.



8 Heating, Hot Water and Energy Systems

Heating and hot-water systems should be efficient, reliable and suited to the size of the home.

Modern systems can help reduce running costs and carbon emissions.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Efficient heating system designed for the dwelling.
- ✓ Hot-water system with suitable efficiency and capacity.
- ✓ Appropriate controls and zoning.
- ✓ Renewable-energy measures considered as part of the full design.
- ✓ Electrical capacity checked for heating, hot water, cooking, PV and other loads.



9 Electrical Safety and Services

All electrical work must be safe, reliable and carried out to the applicable Irish standards.

This protects your home, your family and your investment.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Electrical installation by an appropriately qualified contractor.
- ✓ Adequate sockets, lighting and dedicated circuits.
- ✓ Consumer unit and protective devices correctly designed.
- ✓ Capacity of the electrical supply checked.
- ✓ Testing, certification and records provided on completion.



10 Beware of Cheap Imports That May Not Comply

Not all modular or prefabricated buildings are suitable for use as permanent habitable homes in Ireland.

A low advertised price can become very expensive if the building, foundations, services or documentation do not satisfy the applicable requirements.

BEFORE YOU BUY, CHECK:

- ✓ Exactly what is included in the advertised price.
- ✓ Whether the structure and materials are suitable for Irish conditions.
- ✓ Whether the fire, insulation, ventilation and energy specifications are appropriate.
- ✓ What calculations, certification and test documentation will be supplied.
- ✓ Who is responsible for foundations, drainage, services and Building Control compliance.
- ✓ **Build once. Build right. Choose quality. Choose compliance.**

Thinking about a 45 m² home?

Talk to A-Rated Houses before you build.

