

JUSTYN ROOK CONTRACTING

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# Timelines & Process

Questions about project duration, scheduling, and renovation process

10 Expert Answers from Construction Brain

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## Q1

### How long does it take to install a new kitchen?

**A typical kitchen renovation in Ottawa takes 2-4 weeks for installation once materials arrive, but the complete project timeline from design to completion usually spans 8-12 weeks.** The actual construction phase depends heavily on the scope of work, size of your kitchen, and whether you're doing a simple refresh or a complete gut renovation.

**For a standard kitchen renovation** (new cabinets, countertops, appliances, flooring, and paint), expect about 10-15 working days of active construction. This includes 2-3 days for demolition, 3-4 days for electrical and plumbing rough-in work, 2-3 days for drywall and painting, 2-3 days for cabinet installation, 1 day for countertop templating and installation, and 1-2 days for final connections and trim work.

**More extensive renovations take longer.** If you're moving walls, adding an island, or dealing with structural changes, add another 1-2 weeks. Older Ottawa homes (pre-1960s) often present surprises like outdated electrical panels, cast iron plumbing, or structural issues that can extend timelines. We frequently encounter knob-and-tube wiring in Centretown and Glebe homes, which requires updating before kitchen work can proceed safely.

**The biggest timeline factors are permitting and material delivery.** In Ottawa, electrical permits through the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) typically take 1-2 weeks to process, and if you're doing structural work, building permits from the City of Ottawa can take 2-4 weeks. Material delays, especially for custom cabinets or specialty appliances, often add 4-8 weeks to the front end of the project.

**Seasonal considerations matter in Ottawa.** Spring and summer are peak renovation seasons, so book early if you want work completed during these months. Winter installations can actually move faster due to contractor availability, but material deliveries may face weather delays.

**Professional coordination is crucial** for keeping timelines on track. Licensed electricians must handle all wiring changes, and plumbers are required for any gas line work to ranges or for moving water lines. The sequence matters - rough trades first, then drywall, then finishes. Poor coordination between trades is the number one cause of kitchen renovation delays.

For a realistic timeline on your specific kitchen project, we offer free consultations where we can assess your space, discuss your goals, and provide a detailed schedule that accounts for permits, materials, and the unique characteristics of your Ottawa home.

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## Q2

## How long does basement waterproofing take?

**Basement waterproofing typically takes 3-7 days for most Ottawa homes, depending on the method used and the extent of water issues.** The timeline varies significantly based on whether you're doing interior waterproofing, exterior excavation, or a combination approach.

**Interior waterproofing systems** are the fastest option, usually completed in 2-4 days. This involves installing a perimeter drainage system with a sump pump, which handles most basement water issues without excavation. The process includes breaking up the concrete floor around the perimeter, installing weeping tile and a sump pit, then pouring new concrete. Most of the work happens inside your home, so Ottawa's weather won't delay the project.

**Exterior waterproofing** takes longer at 5-7 days but provides the most comprehensive protection. This involves excavating around your foundation to apply waterproof membrane and install proper drainage. In Ottawa, exterior work is best scheduled between May and October due to our frost conditions and wet spring/fall seasons. Winter excavation is possible but adds complexity and cost due to frozen ground conditions.

**Ottawa's clay soil and seasonal water table fluctuations** make timing crucial for waterproofing projects. The ideal time is late summer or early fall when groundwater levels are typically at their lowest. This gives contractors better working conditions and allows proper curing time before spring melt and heavy rains return.

**Additional factors affecting timeline** include the age of your home (older foundations may need more prep work), accessibility around your foundation, and whether you're combining waterproofing with other basement renovations. Homes built before 1960 often require extra attention to foundation repairs, potentially adding 1-2 days to the project.

**Permit requirements** can add 2-3 weeks to your overall timeline, as most waterproofing work in Ottawa requires a building permit, especially if you're installing a sump pump or modifying drainage systems. The City of Ottawa typically processes these permits within 10-15 business days.

For the most effective approach to your specific water issues and to get an accurate timeline based on your home's unique conditions, it's worth having a professional assessment. Proper waterproofing protects your investment and prevents costly damage down the road.

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**Q3**

## What should I consider when installing a new garage door?

**Installing a new garage door involves several important considerations including proper sizing, insulation needs, safety features, and professional installation requirements - especially given Ottawa's harsh winter climate.**

When selecting a new garage door, **size and fit are critical first steps**. Measure your existing opening carefully, including width, height, and headroom clearance. Standard residential doors are typically 8 or 9 feet wide, but custom sizes may be needed for older Ottawa homes. The door style should complement your home's architecture - raised panel doors work well with traditional homes, while contemporary flush designs suit modern properties.

**Insulation becomes crucial in Ottawa's climate** where temperatures can drop to -30°C. Look for doors with R-values between R-12 and R-18 for attached garages, which will reduce energy costs and prevent your garage from becoming an ice box. Steel doors with polyurethane foam insulation offer the best thermal performance, while aluminum and glass doors work better for detached garages where insulation is less critical.

**Safety features are non-negotiable** and required by current codes. Modern openers must include automatic reverse mechanisms, photo-eye sensors, and rolling code technology. If you're replacing an older system, ensure the new installation meets current Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) requirements - this typically requires a permit for new electrical connections.

**Professional installation is strongly recommended** for several reasons. Garage door springs are under extreme tension and can cause serious injury if handled improperly. The door must be properly balanced and aligned to prevent premature wear and ensure smooth operation. Additionally, if you're adding a new opener or electrical circuit, this work requires ESA permits and inspection in Ontario.

**Material choice affects both performance and maintenance.** Steel doors offer durability and insulation options at moderate cost (\$800-\$2,500). Wood doors provide classic appeal but require regular maintenance in Ottawa's variable climate. Aluminum and glass doors (\$1,500-\$4,000) offer modern aesthetics but limited insulation value.

For your garage door project, start by getting quotes from licensed installers who can assess your specific opening and recommend appropriate options. A properly installed, well-insulated garage door will serve you reliably through many Ottawa winters while adding value and curb appeal to your home.

## Q4

### What is the typical delay for backordered materials?

**Material backorders in Ottawa currently range from 2-8 weeks for most renovation items, though some specialty products can take 3-6 months.** The timeline depends heavily on the specific material type, manufacturer, and whether you're willing to consider alternatives.

**Common delay ranges** we're seeing in the Ottawa market include standard bathroom fixtures (2-4 weeks), kitchen cabinets (6-12 weeks), and specialty tiles or unique finishes (8-16 weeks). Appliances have improved significantly from pandemic levels but can still see 4-8 week delays for specific models or colors. Windows and doors typically run 6-10 weeks, while hardwood flooring varies from immediate availability to 12+ weeks depending on species and finish.

**The biggest factors affecting delays** include choosing popular versus niche products, sticking to standard sizes versus custom dimensions, and manufacturer location. European imports generally take longer than North American products, and anything requiring custom manufacturing will add significant time. We've found that having 2-3 backup options selected during the planning phase can cut project delays in half.

**For Ottawa renovations specifically,** we recommend ordering materials 8-12 weeks before your planned start date, especially during busy season (April through October). Winter ordering can sometimes be faster since fewer projects are starting, but spring deliveries can be delayed by weather. The key is building buffer time into your timeline rather than hoping for best-case scenarios.

**Smart planning strategies** include ordering long-lead items first (cabinets, special-order fixtures), having your contractor provide a detailed material schedule, and being flexible on finishes if timeline is critical. We always recommend confirming delivery dates in writing and having backup options ready. Many homeowners underestimate how a 2-week tile delay can push their entire project back a month due to trade scheduling.

**When working with contractors,** ensure they're tracking all material orders and have relationships with multiple suppliers. Experienced contractors often stock common items or have preferred supplier arrangements that can reduce delays. For complex projects like secondary suites or full kitchen renovations, material coordination becomes crucial to keeping trades on schedule and avoiding costly delays.

For your specific project timeline and material needs, we'd be happy to provide detailed scheduling during a free consultation to ensure realistic expectations and proper planning.

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## Q5

## What is the timeline for a secondary suite build?

**A secondary suite build in Ottawa typically takes 4-6 months from start to finish, including permit approval time.** This timeline assumes a basement conversion or garage conversion, with permits submitted early in the process and no major structural complications.

The process breaks down into several phases that often overlap. **Permit approval** is usually your longest single wait - the City of Ottawa typically takes 4-8 weeks to process secondary suite applications since they require both zoning compliance review and building permit approval. During this time, you can finalize designs and order materials, so it's not entirely dead time.

**Construction phases** generally follow this sequence: rough framing and any structural work (1-2 weeks), electrical and plumbing rough-in (1 week), insulation and drywall (2-3 weeks), flooring and interior finishing (2-3 weeks), kitchen and bathroom installation (1-2 weeks), and final inspections and touch-ups (1 week). Weather can impact timeline if exterior work is needed - foundation modifications or separate entrance construction should ideally be completed between April and November in Ottawa's climate.

**Several factors can extend your timeline significantly.** Older Ottawa homes often reveal surprises once walls are opened - outdated electrical panels, plumbing that needs updating, or structural issues that require engineering consultation. If your property needs zoning variance or committee of adjustment approval, add 2-3 months to the timeline. Complex layouts requiring extensive structural modifications, or high-end finishes requiring special-order materials, can also add weeks to the schedule.

**The permit process is crucial and shouldn't be rushed.** Ottawa requires secondary suites to meet specific standards: minimum ceiling heights (7 feet for most areas, 6'6" for basements), separate entrance requirements, fire separation between units, and proper egress windows. Getting these details right in the permit stage prevents costly changes later. ESA electrical permits and any gas work permits run parallel to the building permit but have their own inspection schedules.

**Smart planning can optimize your timeline.** Start your permit application 2-3 months before you want construction to begin. Order long-lead items like custom kitchen cabinets or special flooring early. If you're planning to rent the unit, start advertising 4-6 weeks before completion - Ottawa's rental market moves quickly, and having a tenant ready helps with your return on investment planning.

For a detailed timeline specific to your property and goals, contact Justyn Rook Contracting for a free consultation. We'll assess your space, explain the permit requirements for your specific situation, and provide a realistic timeline based on current City of Ottawa processing times and our construction schedule.

## What should I consider when renovating a condo in Ottawa?

**Condo renovations in Ottawa require careful navigation of condo corporation bylaws, structural limitations, and city permits - but with proper planning, you can transform your space while protecting your investment and maintaining good relationships with your neighbors.**

**Condo Corporation Approval** is your first critical step. Every condo corporation has specific bylaws governing renovations, and you'll need written approval before starting most projects. Common restrictions include flooring changes (many require carpet or sound-dampening underlayment to reduce noise transmission), kitchen and bathroom relocations, and any work affecting plumbing or electrical systems. Submit your renovation plans to the property management company or condo board at least 30-60 days before your planned start date. Some buildings require you to use their approved contractor list or carry additional insurance.

**Structural and mechanical limitations** significantly impact what's possible in condo renovations. You typically cannot move load-bearing walls, and plumbing relocations are often restricted due to shared waste stacks and water lines. HVAC modifications must work within existing ductwork or building systems. Electrical upgrades may be limited by panel capacity and building infrastructure. The good news is that most cosmetic updates, fixture replacements, and minor layout changes are usually permitted with proper approval.

**Ottawa-specific permitting** still applies to condo renovations. Electrical work requires ESA permits regardless of whether you own or rent the space. Major renovations may need City of Ottawa building permits, especially if you're combining units, adding square footage to balconies, or making structural changes. The condo corporation cannot waive these legal requirements, so factor permit costs (\$500-\$3,000+) and timelines (2-8 weeks) into your planning.

**Noise and disruption management** is crucial for maintaining neighbor relationships. Most buildings have restricted work hours (typically 8 AM - 6 PM weekdays, limited weekend hours). Dust control, elevator protection, and debris removal protocols are usually mandatory. Consider the building's construction - concrete buildings offer better sound isolation than wood frame, but renovation noise still carries through shared walls and floors.

**Timeline and logistics** differ significantly from house renovations. Material deliveries must be coordinated with building management, often requiring elevator bookings and specific delivery windows. Storage space is limited, so materials may need to arrive just-in-time rather than being stockpiled. Factor in additional time for approvals, building access coordination, and potential delays from shared building systems.

**Budget considerations** for Ottawa condo renovations typically run 10-20% higher than similar house projects due to access challenges, stricter requirements, and coordination complexities. A typical condo bathroom renovation ranges \$18,000-\$55,000, while kitchen renovations run \$30,000-\$90,000, depending on the scope and finishes.

For complex condo renovations involving structural assessment, permit coordination, and condo corporation liaison, professional guidance ensures your project proceeds smoothly while protecting your investment. Contact Justyn Rook Contracting for a free consultation on your condo renovation plans.

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## What happens if the renovation project runs over schedule?

**Most renovation projects in Ottawa do run over their original timeline** - it's more common than homeowners expect, with delays ranging from a few days to several weeks depending on the complexity of the work.

### Common Causes of Delays

**Permit processing** is often the first hurdle. While the City of Ottawa estimates 10-20 business days for simple permits, complex projects like secondary suites can take 4-8 weeks or longer during busy periods. Weather also plays a major role in Ottawa's climate - winter conditions can halt exterior work, concrete pours, and deliveries, while spring flooding or summer storms can disrupt schedules.

**Hidden issues** are discovered in about 70% of renovation projects, especially in Ottawa's older housing stock. Once drywall comes down, contractors might find outdated electrical that needs upgrading to current ESA standards, plumbing that doesn't meet Ontario Building Code, or structural issues that require engineering consultation. Each discovery adds time for additional permits, materials, and specialized trades.

**Material delays** have become increasingly common, with custom items like kitchen cabinets, bathroom vanities, or specialty fixtures taking 6-12 weeks longer than pre-2020 timelines. Supply chain disruptions particularly affect mid to high-end finishes that many Ottawa homeowners prefer.

### What Professional Contractors Do

**Experienced contractors build buffer time** into their schedules and communicate proactively. They should provide weekly updates, explain any delays immediately, and adjust timelines realistically rather than offering false hope. A good contractor will also prioritize getting your space functional quickly - for example, ensuring you have a working bathroom even if the final tile work is delayed.

**Quality contractors maintain insurance** specifically for project delays and will work overtime when possible to minimize disruption. They also coordinate multiple trades efficiently and have backup suppliers for common materials.

### Your Rights and Protections

In Ontario, you have specific rights under the Consumer Protection Act. **Contracts should include realistic timelines with allowances for delays beyond the contractor's control** (permits, weather, hidden conditions). However, contractors are responsible for delays caused by poor planning, inadequate staffing, or failure to order materials promptly.

If delays become excessive, document everything and discuss compensation - this might include temporary accommodation costs, storage fees, or price adjustments. **Never accept indefinite delays without explanation** or contractors who stop communicating.

## Next Steps

Before starting any project, discuss the contractor's delay policy, typical timeline buffers, and communication protocols. Ask about their experience with similar projects in Ottawa and how they handle unexpected issues. **For complex renovations like secondary suites or full kitchen remodels, plan for 20-30% longer than the quoted timeline** to reduce stress and allow for quality work.

Want to discuss realistic timelines for your specific project? We provide detailed schedules with built-in buffers and maintain clear communication throughout every renovation.

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Q8

## When is the best time to build a deck in Ottawa?

**The best time to build a deck in Ottawa is late spring through early fall, specifically May through October, with the sweet spot being June through September when weather conditions are most predictable and materials perform optimally.**

**Spring Planning and Summer Construction** work best for deck projects in our Ottawa climate. Starting your planning in March or April allows you to secure permits, finalize designs, and book contractors before the busy season hits. Most homeowners find that beginning construction in **late May through June** provides the ideal balance of warm, dry weather and contractor availability before the peak summer rush.

**Weather considerations** play a crucial role in deck construction timing. Ottawa's unpredictable spring weather, with potential late frost and heavy rains, can delay projects that start too early. Summer months offer the most consistent conditions for concrete footings to cure properly, wood to acclimate, and finishes to apply correctly. Our **frost line depth of 4 feet** means deck footings need to be properly installed and have adequate time to set before any ground freezing occurs.

**Material and contractor availability** significantly impacts your project timeline. Lumber prices tend to be more stable in early summer, and pressure-treated materials have had time to dry out from winter storage. Contractors typically book 4-8 weeks in advance during peak season (July-August), so planning your project for **early June or September** often provides better availability and potentially better pricing.

**Permit considerations** for Ottawa deck projects require 10-15 business days for processing through the City of Ottawa Building Code Services. Decks over 24 inches high or attached to your home typically require permits. Starting your permit application in April for a June construction start gives you buffer time for any revisions or delays in the approval process.

**Fall construction** (September-October) can be excellent for deck building, offering cooler working conditions, motivated contractors looking to fill their schedules, and often better material pricing as suppliers clear inventory. However, you'll want to complete the project before consistent overnight temperatures drop below 5°C, as this affects concrete curing and some finishing products.

**Winter limitations** make deck construction impractical from November through March. Concrete footings can't be poured when temperatures drop below freezing, and most deck materials don't perform well in extreme cold. Even covered work becomes challenging when temperatures consistently stay below -10°C.

For your specific project timeline, contact contractors in February or March to discuss your project and secure a spot in their schedule. This allows you to take advantage of the optimal May-through-September construction window while ensuring proper planning and permit approval. Want to discuss your specific deck project and ideal timing? We offer free consultations to help you plan the perfect timeline for your Ottawa deck construction.

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Q9

## What is the typical payment schedule for a renovation in Ottawa?

**Most Ottawa renovation contractors, including Justyn Rook Contracting, follow a structured payment schedule that protects both the homeowner and contractor while maintaining steady cash flow throughout the project.**

The standard payment structure in Ottawa typically breaks down into **three to five payments** tied to project milestones rather than arbitrary dates. For a typical renovation, you'll see an initial deposit of **10-20% upon contract signing**, followed by progress payments of 25-30% at key completion stages like demolition completion, rough-in inspections, and substantial completion. The final payment of 10-15% is held until all deficiencies are addressed and you're completely satisfied with the work.

**Larger projects like kitchen renovations (\$25,000-\$80,000) or secondary suite conversions (\$80,000-\$200,000)** often use a five-payment schedule to better manage cash flow. This might include: deposit at signing, payment after demolition and permits, payment at rough-in stage (plumbing/electrical), payment when drywall and flooring are complete, and final payment upon project completion. For smaller bathroom renovations (\$15,000-

\$50,000), a three-payment structure is more common.

**Ontario's Consumer Protection Act** provides important safeguards for homeowners. Contractors cannot legally demand more than 10% down payment or \$1,000 (whichever is less) until work actually begins. Be extremely wary of any contractor asking for large upfront payments or full payment before completion - this is a major red flag in the Ottawa market.

**Reputable contractors will never ask for payment in cash** and should provide detailed invoices tied to specific work completion. Each payment should correspond to measurable progress you can verify. For example, you shouldn't pay for materials until they're delivered to your site, and you shouldn't pay for installation until you can see the completed work.

The payment schedule should be clearly outlined in your contract before work begins, including what specific milestones trigger each payment. **Quality contractors understand that homeowners need this protection** and will be transparent about their payment structure. If a contractor pressures you for upfront payment or won't provide a clear milestone-based schedule, consider it a warning sign.

For your specific project timeline and payment structure, contact Justyn Rook Contracting for a free consultation where we'll explain exactly how payments align with your renovation milestones.

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## What is the typical payment schedule for renovations?

### Understanding Renovation Payment Schedules in Ottawa

**Most reputable Ottawa contractors, including Justyn Rook Contracting, follow a structured payment schedule that protects both the homeowner and contractor while maintaining healthy cash flow throughout the project.**

The typical payment structure for renovations in the Ottawa market breaks down into 3-5 installments tied to project milestones rather than arbitrary dates. This approach ensures you're only paying for completed work and materials actually delivered to your site.

### Standard Payment Breakdown

**Initial Contract Signing:** 10-15% deposit to secure your project slot and order initial materials. This should never exceed what's reasonable for material procurement - be wary of contractors demanding large upfront payments.

**Project Commencement:** 25-30% when work begins and materials are delivered on-site. This covers the bulk of material costs and initial labor.

**Mid-Project Milestones:** 25-30% at substantial completion of major phases. For a bathroom renovation, this might be when plumbing rough-in and electrical are complete. For kitchens, when cabinets are installed and countertops templated.

**Near Completion:** 20-25% when project is substantially complete but before final walkthrough. This ensures any punch list items are addressed promptly.

**Final Payment:** 5-10% upon final completion and your satisfaction with all work.

### Ottawa-Specific Considerations

Under Ontario's Consumer Protection Act, contractors cannot legally demand more than 10% down payment or \$1,000 (whichever is less) for contracts under \$50,000. For larger renovations, the deposit is capped at 10% of the total contract value. This protects homeowners from contractors who disappear with large upfront payments.

**Permit and inspection timing** also affects payment schedules in Ottawa. Many contractors tie payments to successful permit inspections - rough-in payment after electrical/plumbing inspection passes, for example. This protects you from paying for work that doesn't meet Ontario Building Code standards.

## Red Flags to Avoid

Never work with contractors who demand full payment upfront, request payment significantly ahead of work completion, or insist on cash-only transactions. Legitimate contractors understand that homeowners need protection and are comfortable with milestone-based payments.

**For your protection**, ensure all payment terms are clearly outlined in your written contract, including what constitutes completion of each milestone. This prevents disputes and ensures everyone understands expectations.

For a detailed payment schedule tailored to your specific renovation project, contact Justyn Rook Contracting for a free consultation where we'll explain exactly how payments align with your project timeline.

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