

# CONVERTING A PATIO OR CARPORT INTO A HABITABLE ROOM

## Building Information Sheet #13

### What Do I Need To Know and Do To Convert My Existing Patio or Carport Into a Habitable Room Such as a Family Room, Games Room, Sunroom Or Bedroom?

The primary requirement for a habitable room is to ensure moisture does not enter into the structure through the floor, the walls and the roof. The Building Code of Australia (BCA) specifies the manner by which this can be achieved and will normally necessitate modifications and additional works to be carried out to the existing patio or carport.

Most existing patios and carports do not achieve many of the requirements. It is usual that major modifications are necessary to achieve the requirements of the Building Code of Australia for a room to be used for habitable purposes.

Use the following information as a checklist to assess how your existing patio or carport compares to the minimum requirements of the Building Code of Australia for habitable rooms.

**A Building Permit is required prior to conversion work commencing. Please refer to Information Sheet 2 for details.**

#### WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR A PATIO?

1. All habitable rooms in a building shall be lined and be provided with a ceiling.
2. Minimum height of habitable rooms in a building shall not be less than 2400mm.
3. The brick external walls of a habitable room shall be constructed so as to prevent moisture penetration.
4. Where a concrete slab or paved floor is laid on the ground or on filling, moisture on the ground shall be prevented from reaching the inner surfaces of the floor and adjacent walls by the insertion of damp-proof courses or membranes or by other approved damp-proofing means. This may require the replacement of the flooring with a suitable concrete slab with new waterproof membrane.
5. Natural ventilation shall be provided by means of permanent openings or windows, doors or other devices which are capable of being opened and shall comply with the requirements of the BCA.
6. Natural lighting shall be provided in all habitable rooms of buildings. Natural lighting shall be provided by means of windows or doors provided with glass having an aggregate area of not less than one-tenth of the floor area of the room concerned.
7. Extensions built over windows to existing internal rooms may be lightened by way of a glazed area or other opening facing directly into an adjoining room if they comply with the BCA.
8. Hard wired smoke alarms may be required if the habitable room is a bedroom in accordance with Part 3.7.2 of the BCA.
9. Energy Efficiency Certification of compliance or verification to show the proposed habitable room will comply with the energy efficiency measures as described in the BCA.

#### WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR A CARPORT?

1. A carport may be converted to a habitable room if there is sufficient space elsewhere on the lot to provide a vehicle shelter.
2. Generally, carport floors are constructed without a waterproof membrane, a membrane must be provided for a habitable room. This may require removal of the existing floor, or if the ceiling height can be maintained at 2.4 metres a membrane may be laid over the existing floor and a new floor added.

3. The walls of the new addition must prevent “moisture” penetration. The floor to ceiling height must be a minimum of 2.4 metres. The window light area must be a minimum of one-tenth floor area and the window opening area must be one-twentieth of the new floor area.
4. Should a meter box exist within the proposed enclosure, it must be relocated to an external wall.
5. Hard wired smoke alarms may be required if the habitable room is a bedroom in accordance with Part 3.7.2 of the BCA.
6. Energy Efficiency Certificate of Compliance or verification to show the proposed habitable room addition will comply with the energy efficiency measures as described in the BCA

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