

Use this flowchart BEFORE hiring a contractor. Permit requirements vary by municipality — always confirm with your local building department.

- START
- YES / likely permit
- MAYBE — check further
- NO permit likely needed

KITCHEN RENOVATION [BCBC 2024 Part 9]

Q 1 Are you moving, adding, or removing any walls?

→ YES	PERMIT REQUIRED	Structural alteration	Building permit required. Confirm load-bearing status with engineer.
→ NO	NO PERMIT LIKELY	Layout stays same	Move to Q2.

Q 2 Are you relocating or adding plumbing (sink, dishwasher, gas line)?

→ YES	PERMIT REQUIRED	Plumbing / gas permit	Plumbing permit required. Gas work requires TSSA-registered gas fitter.
→ NO	NO PERMIT LIKELY	Fixtures stay in place	Move to Q3.

Q 3 Are you adding new circuits, pot lights, or upgrading the electrical panel?

→ YES	PERMIT REQUIRED	Electrical permit	Electrical permit required. Must be performed by licensed electrician.
→ NO	NO PERMIT LIKELY	No electrical changes	Move to Q4.

Q 4 Is this a cosmetic change only? (Paint, backsplash tile, hardware, countertop on same layout)

YES	NO PERMIT LIKELY	Cosmetic only	No permit required. Confirm with your municipality for certainty.
→ NO	CHECK WITH MUNICIPALITY	Scope exceeds cosmetic	Permit likely required — confirm with municipality.

DECK — NEW BUILD OR EXPANSION [BCBC 2024 Part 9 Section 9.8]

Q 5 Is the deck surface more than 600mm (24 inches) above grade at any point?

→ YES	PERMIT REQUIRED	Building permit required	BCBC 2024 Part 9 — guards, ledger attachment, and footings must comply.
→ NO	CHECK WITH MUNICIPALITY	Low-grade deck	Permit may not be required, but check with municipality. Ledger still must be structurally sound.

Q
6

Is the deck attached to the house structure (ledger board)?

→ YES	PERMIT REQUIRED	Ledger attachment permit	Bolted to structural framing only — not to siding or sheathing. Permit required.
→ NO	CHECK WITH MUNICIPALITY	Freestanding deck	Freestanding decks under 600mm may not require permit — confirm locally.

Q
7

Are you adding stairs from the deck to grade?

→ YES	PERMIT REQUIRED	Stair code applies	Rise max 200mm, run min 235mm (BCBC Part 9.8.4). Guard required if > 600mm.
→ NO	NO PERMIT LIKELY	No stairs	Deck-only scope — apply questions above.

BASEMENT RENOVATION [BCBC 2024 Part 9 Sections 9.5, 9.10, 9.25]Q
8

Are you adding a bedroom or secondary suite to the basement?

→ YES	PERMIT REQUIRED	Permit required	Egress window required (min 0.35m ² open area, max 1m above floor). Suite may require separate permit.
→ NO	NO PERMIT LIKELY	Storage or utility	Move to Q9.

Q
9

Are you framing new partition walls or adding insulation?

→ YES	PERMIT REQUIRED	Building permit required	Vapour barrier required (Part 9.25). Smoke alarms within 3m of bedrooms.
→ NO	NO PERMIT LIKELY	No framing changes	Move to Q10.

Q
10

Are you adding or moving plumbing (bathroom, laundry, wet bar)?

→ YES	PERMIT REQUIRED	Plumbing permit required	Drain, vent, and water supply changes require permit and inspection.
→ NO	NO PERMIT LIKELY	No plumbing changes	Cosmetic scope only — confirm with municipality.

UNIVERSAL RULE: When in doubt — apply for the permit.

Unpermitted work: voids insurance, flags title, risks removal order, reduces resale value.

LOWER MAINLAND PERMIT CONTACTS

Municipality	Building Department	Website
City of Vancouver	604-873-7611	vancouver.ca/permits
City of Surrey	604-591-4311	surrey.ca/permits

City of Burnaby	604-294-7130	burnaby.ca/permits
City of Richmond	604-276-4000	richmond.ca/permits
District of North Van	604-990-2480	dnv.org/permits
City of Coquitlam	604-927-3441	coquitlam.ca/permits

Get the full Renovation Planning Checklist →

Sign up free at shivajiconstruction.ca/blog. Get both downloads + the full Homeowner Series.

Disclaimer: General information only. Not professional engineering, legal, or construction advice. Permit requirements vary by project and municipality. Based on BCBC 2024 Part 9, BC Lower Mainland, June 2026. **Always consult a licensed contractor and your local building department before work begins.** Shivaji Construction Ltd. accepts no liability for decisions made solely on this flowchart without professional verification.