

PHASE 1 — SCOPE DEFINITION (Do this before you call anyone)

- **Write a one-page project description (what, where, why)** *Include which rooms, what is changing, and what is staying.*
- Decide: cosmetic refresh OR structural / layout change *Structural = likely permit required.*
- **Set your budget ceiling — non-negotiable maximum** *Budget = materials + labour + permit fees + 15% contingency.*
- Identify what you want to keep vs. replace *Cabinets? Appliances? Flooring? Fixtures?*
- Confirm if walls are load-bearing before planning removal *Hire a structural engineer if unsure.*
- List all trades required: framing, plumbing, electrical, HVAC *Each trade adds time and cost.*
- **Write your SMART goal statement for the project** *Specific · Measurable · Achievable · Relevant · Time-bound*

PHASE 2 — PERMIT DECISION (BCBC 2024 Part 9)

- **Check if your project triggers a permit requirement** *See the Permit Decision Flowchart (download #2).*
- Moving or adding plumbing → permit required *Drain relocation, new sink, dishwasher rough-in.*
- Moving or upgrading electrical → permit required *New circuits, panel upgrade, pot light additions.*
- Structural wall removal or addition → permit required *Any wall touching the structure.*
- New deck over 600mm above grade → permit required *BCBC 2024 Part 9 Section 9.8.*
- Contact your local municipality to confirm requirements *Requirements vary by city (Vancouver, Surrey, Burnaby, etc.).*
- **Ask your contractor to handle the permit application** *A licensed contractor submits on your behalf.*
- Confirm permit approval before work begins *Do not allow demo to start without posted permit.*

PHASE 3 — FINISH SELECTIONS (Complete before contractor mobilizes)

- **Flooring selected, ordered, and delivery confirmed** *Longest installation lead time — decide first.*
- **Cabinetry selected and ordered (6–10 week lead time)** *Order before demo starts.*
- Countertop material and edge profile selected *Templated AFTER cabinets are installed.*
- Backsplash tile selected *Coordinate grout colour with countertop.*
- Cabinet hardware (pulls, hinges) selected and ordered *Easy to forget, delays final install.*
- Faucet and sink model confirmed with plumber *Confirm rough-in dimensions before ordering.*
- Appliances: brand, model, dimensions confirmed *Appliance cutouts built to spec — changes are expensive.*
- **Paint colours selected and confirmed** *Choose after all hard finishes are set.*
- Light fixtures selected (confirm ceiling height clearance) *Coordinate with electrician during rough-in.*
- All lead times logged in your project timeline *Late selections = delayed project.*

PHASE 4 — CONTRACTOR SELECTION

- **Confirm contractor holds a valid BC business licence** *Check at BCRegistryServices.gov.bc.ca*
- Confirm contractor carries WCB coverage *Request WCB clearance letter—protects you as homeowner.*
- Confirm contractor carries \$2M+ general liability insurance *Request certificate of insurance before signing.*
- **Get minimum 3 written quotes on the same scope** *Verbal quotes are not binding.*
- Review contract: scope, timeline, payment schedule *Never pay more than 10% deposit upfront.*
- Confirm permit responsibility is in the contract *Who applies? Who pays permit fees?*
- Check references (at least 2 recent, similar projects) *Ask: on budget? On time? Would you hire again?*
- **Confirm substantial completion and holdback terms** *BC Builders Lien Act: 10% holdback for 55 days.*

PHASE 5 — TIMELINE MILESTONES (Kitchen renovation example)

Milestone	Realistic Duration	Owner Action Required
Scope & finish selections final	2–4 weeks	Homeowner confirms all items
Permit application submitted	1–2 weeks	Contractor submits
Permit approval	2–6 weeks	Municipality-dependent
Demo & rough-in (framing, plumbing, electrical)	1–2 weeks	Inspections at rough-in stage
Cabinet installation	1 week	Cabinets must be on-site
Countertop template + fabrication	2 weeks	After cabinets set
Tile, electrical trim, plumbing	1–2 weeks	Final fixture orders confirmed
Paint, hardware, punch list	3–5 days	Homeowner walkthrough
Final inspection + occupancy	1 week	Permit closed out

★ Total realistic kitchen renovation timeline: 10–16 weeks from signed contract to move-back-in.

BCBC 2024 PART 9 — QUICK REFERENCE FOR HOMEOWNERS

- Smokealarmsrequiredwithin 3m of each bedroom after any wall work
Part 9.10.19 — do not skip this.
- CO alarms required if gas appliances present
Required when any fuel-burning appliance exists.
- Egresswindows:min.0.35m²opening, max 1m above floor
Applies to basements and sleeping rooms.
- Vapour barrier required on warm side of insulation
Part 9.25 — required in all BC climate zones.
- Guardheightondecks:min.920mm(occupanciesupto 3 storeys)
Part 9.8.8 — guards on all decks over 600mm above grade.
- Deckledgermustbeboltedtostructural framing — not siding
Common unpermitted deck failure point.
- Stair rise: max 200mm. Stair run: min 235mm.
Part 9.8.4 — applies to interior and exterior stairs.
- AllframinglumbermustmeetMSRorvisualgrade requirements
Stamped lumber required — no unmarked lumber.

Want the companion Permit
Decision Flowchart?

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

Disclaimer: For general information only. Not professional engineering, legal, or construction advice. 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 any decisions.** Shivaji Construction Ltd. accepts no liability for decisions made solely on this checklist without professional verification.
