



EVOKE LIVING
HOMES

— CREATING LIFESTYLES —

FRAME CONSTRUCTION

VS. BRICK AND TILE

THE PROS AND CONS

Building a new home is an exciting time. Carefully planning out and moving into your perfect home is one of the great Aussie dreams.

Yet it can also be overwhelming. From layout, to paint, and finishings to appliances, there are many options to consider.

One that homeowners grapple with the most is choosing between timber & steel framed construction or brick and tile. Making an informed choice between these materials is vital to the strength, durability, integrity and cost of your new home.

As you might imagine, there are advantages and disadvantages to both and finding reliable information can be hard and time consuming. Thankfully we've done the legwork for you and compiled a list of pros and cons that will help you make an informed decision about the best structural material for your home: steel, timber, or brick and tile.

THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND

Why steel is overtaking timber as the preferred building material

The importance of choosing a pest resistant solution

Brick and tiles' kryptonite

How the material you choose can impact your home insurance premiums and other ongoing household costs

TIMBER

THE PROS



FAMILIAR

Timber frames have been used for decades, and up until recently it was the most common building material. This has made it easily available and often a cheaper option.

OFFERS ADDED INSULATION

If the frame of your home is designed and installed correctly, it can be a natural insulator, keeping your house cooler in summer and warmer in winter.

SUSTAINABLE

Timber is eco-friendly made from a natural and renewable material. Although it's best to research timber companies to make sure they are reputable and use ethically sourced timber, free from illegal logging and not taken from important natural habitats.



TIMBER

THE CONS



SUSCEPTIBLE TO WATER DAMAGE, ROT, CRACKING AND WARPING

As a natural material timber is more prone to damage and natural wear and tear. Common household problems such as water leaks and simple fluctuations in temperature can take a devastating toll on timber over time, leaving you with costly, ongoing repair and replacement bills.

COMBUSTIBLE

Obviously timber is a flammable material and would offer no protection in the tragedy of a house fire or bush fire, and would actually add to the fuel load of your home.

A HAVEN FOR PESTS

One in four Australian homes will suffer a termite invasion and it can reduce the value of your home by up to 20%. In Western Australia, the most common termite is the European House Borer, which mostly affects Pine and Oregon timbers. In an effort to reduce risk of infestation, timber is treated to prevent the damage from this pest, so it's less likely that new homes will be impacted.

You need to be aware that timber frames can be a magnet for termites and other pests. If you decide to go for a timber frame option, it is essential that you put a termite protective system in place. It is also recommended that you have your home checked for termite damage every six months.



“I think that when building first started to take off here, bricks were convenient and of course they are robust. But the reality is this kind of construction is also labour intensive and an expert is required to achieve good quality finishes”

Mike Lowe, Innovation Manager, Stratco Australia

STEEL

THE PROS



EASIER TO INSTALL

Steel frames are designed and engineered to fit together easily without any additional fastening. This lowers the cost of labour and, unlike a timber frame, it won't need any cutting, retaining or hammering of long bulky planks.

RESISTANT TO TERMITES AND WATER DAMAGE

Steel is completely resistant to water and will act as a deterrent to termites, white ants and other pests.

RECYCLABLE

Steel is 100% recyclable and is one of the most recycled materials on the planet, reducing our reliance on timber, coal, iron and ore.

DURABLE

Steel frames do not age over time and will not buckle, divide, distort, rot or splinter. Steel is corrosion resistant and will be able to withstand changes in climate or temperature in your region. A steel frame also eliminates any bows in the walls or twisted or warped studs.

LOWERS YOUR INSURANCE PREMIUMS

Steel is virtually indestructible because of its resistance to fire, insects, wind and natural disaster. These factors combine to reduce your home insurance premiums.

RESISTANT TO FIRE

Steel is non-combustible and will not catch fire.

STEEL

THE CONS



HARDER TO MODIFY

Throughout the construction phase of your new home, a builder may have to make small alterations and changes to overcome unforeseen structural obstacles. While timber can be easily manipulated and cut on-site, the sheer strength of steel products sometimes requires specialised equipment, making on-the-run modifications more difficult.

MORE EXPENSIVE

Steel is typically more expensive than timber, mostly due to its higher production cost and the additional labour required for proper installation. Although it's important to note that the additional cost can be offset by reduced home insurance premiums and a more durable, stronger home.

TRANSFERS HEAT

There is a stack of science out there about heat transfer and thermal exchange, but all you really need to know is this: in winter heat escapes your home, and in summer it tries to return. Steel conducts this heat exchange more easily, although it can be easily overcome with adequate internal insulation.





“The inherent strength of steel is undisputable ... it offers complete insect protection and thirdly, the point which many people in Perth will appreciate is, it is a fast form of construction.”

Mike Lowe, Innovation Manager, Stratco Australia

BRICK & TILE

THE PROS



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Brick and tile construction uses the material's natural density and insulating qualities to reduce your reliance on heating and cooling, helping reduce ongoing electricity costs.

DURABLE

Bricks and tiles are known for their durability in harsh conditions that don't require ongoing painting or sealing, and are highly resistant to fire.

LOW MAINTENANCE

Once installed, brick and tile structures require little ongoing maintenance. They won't need paint or other treatments to maintain aesthetics and durability.



BRICK & TILE

THE CONS



LABOUR AND COST INTENSIVE

Bricks and tiles have to be manually layed, one-by-one. It's painstaking work, subject to weather and human error that can create waste and slow your project down. The sheer time adds a significant amount of labour to the overall cost of your project, not to mention time.

ISN'T INDESTRUCTIBLE

While bricks and tiles are robust, the mortar that holds them together can shrink and crack, exposing holes that can harbour moisture or pests. Bricks and tiles also don't allow for flexibility, making them susceptible to cracking should you house experience natural movement or expansion.

HARDER TO REPAIR

Despite their durability, bricks and tiles are prone to racking. While other materials can be easily patched up, even rudimentary repairs to brick and tile work can be a nightmare, sometimes requiring large sections to be removed and re-installed.

ADDS WEIGHT

Using bricks adds a significant amount of weight to the overall housing structure and foundation, meaning more materials and support systems are required. The additional material and labour can significantly increase the cost of your home.

RESISTANT TO FIRE

This is a problem in humid climates where porous brick materials can harbour mold, which is hard to clean and eradicate on brick's abrasive surface.

HOW LONG SHOULD MY HOME TAKE TO BUILD?

Answering that question depends greatly on the builder and material you choose. New data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics revealed that new houses have an average completion time of approximately 28 weeks. The average completion time for new townhouses was approximately 34 weeks.

Meanwhile, average completion times for multi-dwelling developments such as new flats, units or apartments are notoriously volatile, ranging from 15 months to 19 months.

Often these figures have included brick and tile frame homes, which take longer.

However, building companies that specialise in steel and timber frames can work faster, and some are even able to complete a housing project in as little as 15 weeks.

Shop around to find a company that can build you a quality home in a time frame that meets your expectations.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOURSELF

Choosing the right material for your home is a big decision, and everyone's needs may differ. To help guide you, here are some common questions that will help you make the right choice:

- Is my region susceptible to termites?
- What is my climate and how will it affect the structure of my home?
- Am I in a bushfire prone area?
- How much am I willing to pay for ongoing repairs and replacement?
- What is my budget and timeline? How long am I willing to wait and how much am I willing to pay?



Get in touch with us today and have your brand new home in as little as 15 weeks, give us a call on **1300 138 653**, alternatively send us an email at sales@evokelivinghomes.com.au