



Tradie terms glossary

Plain-English meanings for the slang and jargon you will hear on site.

Rough-in	First-fix work (cabling or pipework) done before the walls or slab close up.
Fit-off	Second-fix: installing the fittings once the building is near finished.
Set-out	Marking out exactly where everything goes before you build. Get it wrong and everything after it is wrong.
Isolate	Turn off and lock out the power, gas or pressure so it is safe to work on.
Prove dead	Test that a circuit is actually de-energised before you touch it.
SWMS	Safe work method statement: the document setting out hazards and controls for high-risk work.
Smoko	A short break for a feed and a drink.
Chasing	Cutting a channel into a wall to run cable or conduit.
Plumb	Perfectly vertical. Level is perfectly horizontal.
Fall	The slope on a drain that lets water and waste flow away.
Noggin	A short timber block fixed between studs for bracing or fixing.
Packer	A thin piece used to shim something into position.
Snots	Blobs of mortar squeezed out of brickwork joints.
Leading hand	An experienced worker who supervises part of the crew.
White card	The general construction induction card you need before working on a construction site.
Logbook	Your record of on-the-job competencies, signed off by your supervisor.
GTO	Group training organisation: employs you and places you with host employers.
RDO	Rostered day off, common on commercial and enterprise-agreement sites.