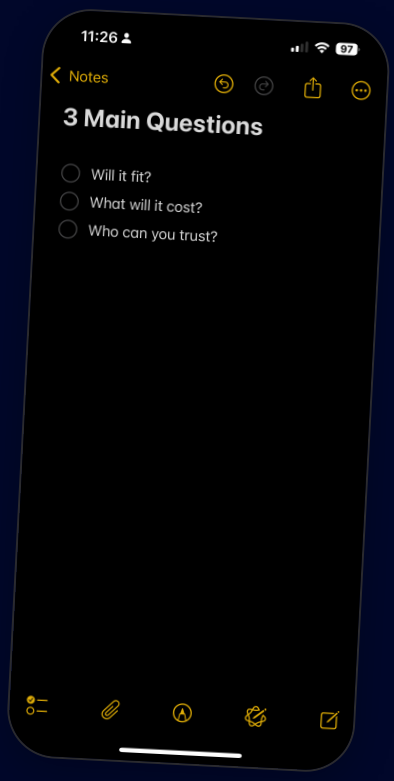
The Straight-Up Guide

Will it fit?
What will it cost?
Who can you trust?

Everyone asks me these three things about home lifts. This guide has my answers, and worksheets to work them out for your own house. Use it on any lift company, including us.



Liam, Rise Lifts
142+ home lifts installed for other brands.
Now we've got our own.



My note from the 28th.
This guide answers it.

RISE LIFTS

Read this first

Most free home lift guides say a lift "adds value", then end with a phone number.

I've installed 142+ home lifts for other brands, and at every kitchen table I get asked the same three things.

We also read 178 lift guides, here and overseas. The useful stuff exists, but it's written for builders and buried. This guide explains it the way I would on site.

It's built around the three questions on the cover. Each part answers one, with a worksheet or two to fill in for your own house.

It's not a quote

It isn't engineering advice either. Every lift is made to its site, and yours has to be measured by whoever installs it.

The figures are published Australian ranges, checked October 2026, with sources on page 44.

It's not an ad either

Everywhere else in the guide, our own lift gets a short note marked "Ours", so you can skip it or compare it.

Pages 42, 43 and 45 are the only pages about us.

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Already getting quotes
The quote workbook and the 15 questions.
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Highlighted pages are worksheets. Photocopy them before you write on them.

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Before the three questions

Do you even need a lift?

On owner forums, the answers include a downstairs bedroom and moving earlier. Lift companies rarely mention either. This table puts all six options side by side.

Option	Suits	Space and building work	Published cost in Australia	When it's the wrong answer
Stairlift	One person who can get onto a seat; a straight or gently curved stair	Rail on the stair treads; no building work; the stair stays narrower for everyone else	Quoted per staircase; curved rails cost more; no supplier publishes a price	Wheelchairs; two people; a tight winder stair (one was cancelled on site)
Platform lift	A short rise: a split level, a few steps, a porch	Open platform: automatic to about 1 m of rise (AS 1735.14); press-and-hold to 2 m open or 4 m enclosed (AS 1735.15)	About $20,000 to $50,000, by rise and type (our trade estimate; none published)	Floor to floor in a two-storey house
Shaftless or vacuum lift	An existing home with a spot for a floor opening; one or two people	A hole cut through the floor; no shaft, no pit; under about 0.8 m2, or a 0.75 to 0.93 m tube	Vacuum: around $60,000 and up (our trade estimate). Shaftless: none published	Wheelchairs; a floor you can't cut; more than two levels for a shaftless lift (vacuum: 2 to 5 stops, 160 to 205 kg)
Home lift, integrated or a tower	Any home with the footprint; wheelchairs; two to five levels; a long stay	A builder's shaft inside the walls, or a tower that stands on its own; a pit from none to 300 mm; headroom above	About $25,000 to $120,000 installed, by levels, cabin and site (published ranges, October 2026)	Nobody needs it for ten years and you'd rather not maintain it; no spot without losing a room
Downstairs bedroom and bathroom	A home with the land and a floor plan that allows it	A building project in its own right: extension or conversion, plumbing, permits	Get a builder's estimate; no independent range verified for this guide	A narrow block; a heritage overlay; when upstairs holds the only living space
Moving to a single-level home	When the house itself is the problem	None, but single-level homes are scarce in tightly held suburbs	Worked example, page 26: about $80,000 to $230,000 at the same price; less if you downsize	When you love the street; when the sums on page 26 say so

Before the three questions

Falls, and staying put

Falls were the leading cause of injury hospitalisation in 2024-25.

People over 65 were hospitalised for falls 12 times more often than adults aged 25 to 44, and stairs and steps accounted for 16,596 admissions.

About four in five Australians over 55 want to stay in their own home as they age. Owners who got it right call the lift "a lifesaver", and the ones who waited wish they'd decided sooner.

The scorecard over the page tells you which way to go.

My notes

- [ ] A lift bought ten years early is ten years of servicing before anyone needs it.
- [ ] If you're building now and nobody needs a lift yet, build the space in (page 15) and wait. It's cheap to do now and dear to do later.

Liam

Worksheet: circle one answer per line

The readiness scorecard

Add up part A and part B, then read your outcome. There are no right answers.

Part A: the need

Question	0	1	2	Score
Who finds the stairs hard today?	Nobody	Someone, sometimes	Someone, every day	☐
Who will live here in ten years?	We plan to move	Not sure	Us, and we're staying	☐
Where are the main bedroom and a bathroom?	Both downstairs	One up, one down	Both upstairs	☐
Could a downstairs bedroom and bathroom be made?	Yes, easily	Only with an extension	No	☐
Is a walker or wheelchair likely here?	No	Possibly	Yes, or already	☐
Any fall, or near miss, on the stairs?	No	A near miss	A fall	☐
			Part A total (out of 12)	☐

Part B: the timing

Question	0	1	2	Score
What's happening to the house?	Nothing planned	A renovation within two years	Building or a big renovation now	☐
When could the money be ready?	Not yet	In one to three years	Within a year	☐
How long do you plan to stay?	Under five years	Five to ten	Ten or more	☐
Is there an obvious spot? (page 9)	Not that I can see	Maybe one	Yes, one or more	☐
			Part B total (out of 8)	☐

Worksheet: the readiness scorecard

Your outcome

Find the first line that matches your two totals.

If	Outcome	Do this next
A is 7 or more	**Plan now**	If B is 5 or more, start with part 1, then 2, and price the building work as well as the lift. If B is 4 or less, start with part 2 (page 19), then 1.
A is 6 or less, and B is 5 or more	**Build the space in now, the lift later**	Put the pit, the rail wall, the space and the power in now (page 15), and keep the drawings.
A is 6 or less, and B is 4 or less	**Prepare and wait**	Do the fit test (page 11) and file this guide. Look again in a year, or sooner if someone's health changes.
"Downstairs bedroom" scored 0, whatever else	**A lift may not be the answer**	Price a downstairs bedroom and bathroom first. A lift wins only if it costs less or keeps a room you need.

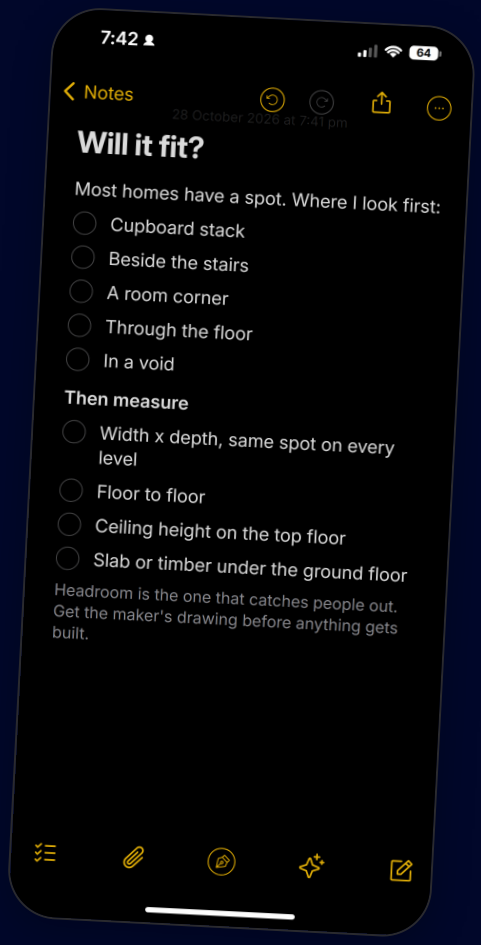
> **If you're doing this for Mum or Dad, score their house with them at the table, then take the scorecard to any lift company.**

Part one

01

Will it fit?

Where lifts go in a house, the eight numbers that decide it, and what changes between an existing home and a new build.



RISE LIFTS

Section 01

Five places a lift goes

Most homes have a spot for a lift. These are the five places I look first, and page 11 has the eight numbers that decide it.

1. **Cupboard stack.** Two cupboards, one above the other, become the shaft, and nothing else in the room changes. It's the cheapest one to plan into a new build.
2. **Beside the stairs.** It shares the space the stair already uses. Check what's under the landing first.
3. **A room corner.** It takes a corner of two rooms, one above the other.
4. **Through the floor.** It's easy in a new build. In an existing home, an engineer checks the joists or slab before anyone cuts.
5. **In a void.** A tower stands in a double-height space and carries its own rails, so there's no shaft to build.

Wherever it goes, the pump needs a cupboard

Put it on the plans, near the shaft. One owner's architect and builder forgot, and found out on install day.

Section 02

Integrated or a tower?

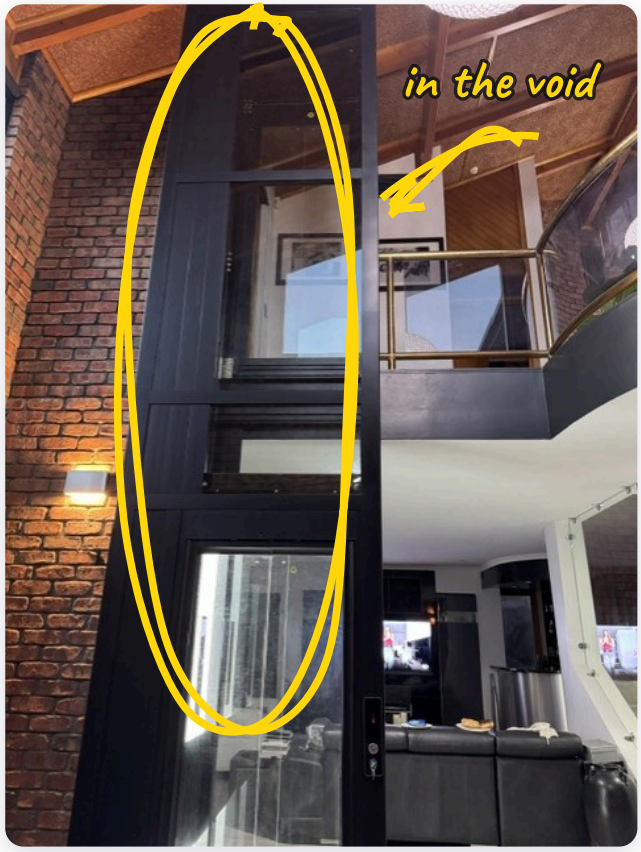
There are two ways to house a home lift.

An **integrated** lift is built into the house. Your builder builds a shaft inside the walls, and all you see is a door.

A **tower** stands on its own, usually glass or steel, in a void or a room. It carries its own rails, so it needs less building work.



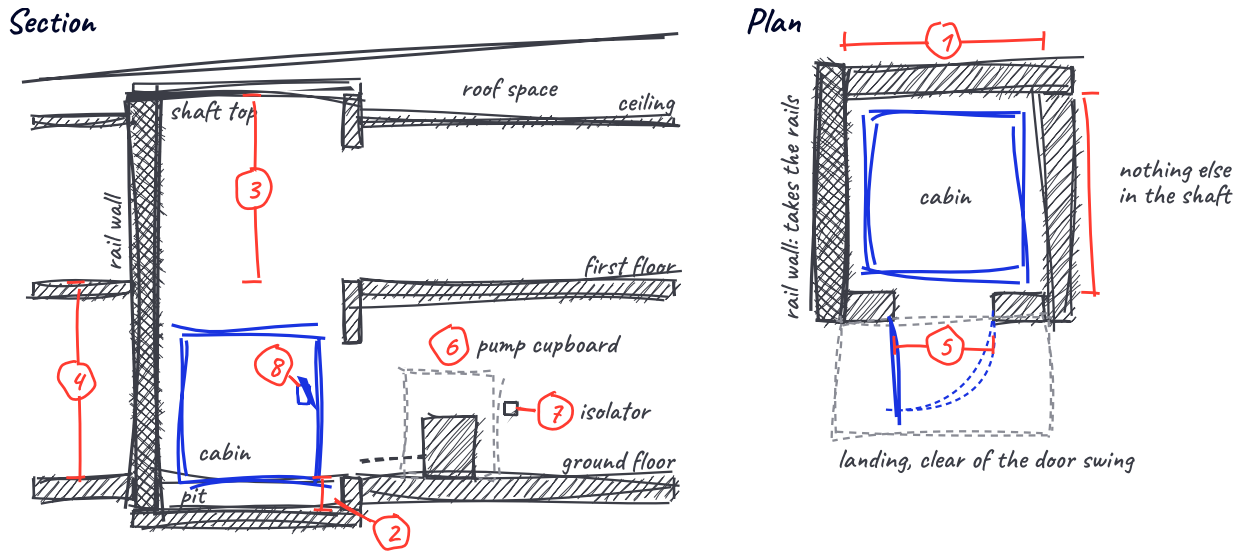
Integrated: just a door in the hallway. **Not a Rise Lifts lift.** Installed by our team as contractors for another lift company.



A tower in a void, in a warehouse conversion. **Not a Rise Lifts lift.** Installed by our team as contractors for another lift company.

Worksheet: measure up to three spots

The eight numbers that decide it



Not to scale, and not your house: build to your supplier's drawing. Where the figures come from: page 44.

What to measure	Typical in Australia, 2026	Spot 1	Spot 2	Spot 3
(1) **Footprint** inside the shaft	Under 1 m square to about 1.6 x 1.6 m. A wheelchair cabin wants about 1.1 x 1.4 m inside.			
(2) **Pit** from the finished floor	None for vacuum and shaftless. Screw 37 to 50 mm, hydraulic 50 to 180 mm, traction 100 to 200 mm.			
(3) **Headroom** top floor to shaft top	2,225 to 2,600 mm, often up into the roof space.			
(4) **Floor to floor** surface to surface	Tape it down the stairwell. Each model has a travel limit, and five levels can go over it.			
(5) **Door opening** the hole, each level	About 900 to 1,000 mm wide and 2.0 to 2.1 m high, plus the swing. Ask for the clear width too.			
(6) **Pump cupboard** near the shaft	Hydraulic: a vented cupboard, sleeved to the shaft. Other drives: a slim cabinet.			
(7) **Power** check your switchboard	Single-phase (one main switch on your board), its own 15 to 30 A circuit with an RCD, and an isolator.			
(8) **Phone** 4G signal or nbn point	A 4G SIM or nbn unit with its own battery. Test it from inside with the doors shut.			
○ **Slab or timber?** under the spot (page 12)	Slab feels solid, no vents. Timber sounds hollow.			
○ **A wall for the rails?** which wall (page 12)	Double brick, block, concrete or steel. Not veneer or studs.			
○ **Who rides it?** and with what	A walker, a wheelchair, a carer alongside?			

Ours: every RISE 300 is made to its site. The pit is 150 mm, or 50 mm with a 400 mm ramp into the cabin.

Section 03

Existing home or new build

The lift is the same either way. The building work isn't, and that's where the surprises are.

In an existing home, check these

Slab under the spot	No vents low in the outside walls, and the floor feels solid underfoot. A pit means scanning for pipes, then cutting and coring the slab (a waffle-pod slab also needs an engineer's detail), or choosing a lift that needs no pit and ramps in.
Timber floor	Sounds hollow underfoot, with vents or a hatch. An engineer designs trimmers for the opening, and the pit is a small concrete box on the ground below.
A wall for the rails	Cabin lifts fix their rails to one wall. Double brick, core-filled block, concrete or steel will take them; brick veneer and stud walls won't. Give it a knock: plasterboard sounds hollow, masonry sounds dead and feels cold. If there's no such wall, your engineer adds steel, or you use a tower that carries its own rails.
The ceiling over the top landing	This is the one that catches retrofits out. The shaft top usually goes up into the roof space, which works with a roof above but not with a bedroom.
Heritage overlay, or a shaft outside	Either can need planning approval as well as a building permit, and so can a shaft top above the roofline. An outside shaft costs more and corrodes near the coast.
Getting it in	Rails arrive long. Check the path from the street, and whether a crane or scaffold is needed.



This tower carries its own rails, so it needs no rail wall. It stands beside a floating stair. **Not a Rise Lifts lift.** Installed by our team as contractors for another lift company.

Section 03

In a new build, you get to choose

Each of these is easy while the house is going up, and dear to add later.

- ◯ Pit formed before the pour, measured from the finished floor you've chosen
- ◯ Sleeve from the pump cupboard into the shaft, cast in or left in the wall
- ◯ Shaft up with the frame, plumb and square, and checked before the lift is made
- ◯ A wall for the rails, designed in
- ◯ Shaft head framed through the ceiling: the truss designer gets the lift drawing first
- ◯ Power, isolator and phone cable run while the walls are open
- ◯ Door openings framed to the lift drawing; floor levels match at every landing

Building work: cost and order

The builder's bit. Shaft, pit and openings cost about $5,000 to $20,000 or more, and a hard retrofit costs several times that.

The electrician's bit. About $500 to $1,000 to run a dedicated circuit to the lift with an RCD (our trade estimate), and more if your switchboard needs an upgrade. One main switch on your board means single-phase, which every lift we checked runs on.

The order in an existing home: drawing, permit, builder's preparation, install (a week to four weeks on site), three certificates.

Ours: usually 10 to 12 weeks from assessment to first ride (October 2026).

When to decide

In a build, each lift decision has a deadline. Miss it and the house gets built around a guess.

1 Concept	**Choose the spot, the type and the supplier.** Get the shaft drawing, the cupboard and its sleeve onto the plans; the engineer gets the maker's loads.
2 Design	**Sign the lift drawings.** Shaft, pit, rail wall, openings, cupboard and sleeve go onto the drawings the builder prices from. Floor finishes fixed at every landing.
3 Permits	**Shaft and cupboard on the permit drawings.** Adding them later means an amended permit. Order the lift so its lead time (months) ends when the shaft does.
4 Slab	**Hold point 1: the pit is checked against the drawing before the pour.** Depth from the finished floor; tanked; sleeve and conduits in.
5 Frame	**Shaft up, plumb and square, never smaller than drawn.** Rail wall to the maker's loads; headroom set before the trusses are made.
6 Lock-up	**Hold point 2: the lift company measures the finished shaft before it's lined,** confirms it in writing against the drawing, and only then orders the lift made.
7 Fit-off	**Site ready:** shaft dry, clean, lit and lockable, power at the isolator, nothing else running through it. Then the install.
8 Handover	**Three sign-offs: lift, electrical, building.** Keep every certificate (page 35).

This is the typical order from published supplier and planning guidance. Your builder's program and the supplier's drawings set your dates. Lead times are set per order, so ask for yours early.

Section 04

Years away? Build the space in now

If nobody needs a lift yet, these let you add one later without pulling the house apart.

- [ ] Cupboards stacked to a size most cabin lifts fit, with a removable floor between
- [ ] A tanked pit formed now and covered over
- [ ] A wall for the rails, and the shaft head framed to full headroom (trusses can't be cut later)
- [ ] A sleeve and a conduit to the cupboard, capped
- [ ] Door openings framed and lined over; no services through the stack
- [ ] Photos before lining, kept with the drawings



Install day, in a shaft built to the drawing. **Not a Rise Lifts lift.** Installed by our team as contractors for another lift company.

Ask the surveyor

Check fire and smoke separation where the shaft cuts a floor or meets a party wall, and whether you need a smoke alarm at the top landing. A shaft top above the roof can need planning approval.

> **Don't leave the lift till later, and don't take "it'll fit" from anyone without a drawing.**

Worksheet: fill it in, hand it to your builder or architect

The builder and architect brief

Fill in what you know and write "TBC" for the rest. Get the lift drawing before the structure is designed.

Homeowner _____ Site address _____ Date _____

From the homeowner

Who the lift is for, now and in ten years
Walker or wheelchair? A carer alongside?
Levels, and the spot (page 9)
Lift supplier and model, or "not chosen yet"
Install now, or the space for later (page 15)? Budgets

From the lift supplier's drawing (ask for it, don't guess)

Item	Figure or detail	Drawing ref. and date
Inside shaft size, and the tolerance		
Pit depth from finished floor; tanked or drained		
Headroom: top finished floor to shaft top		
Rail wall: which wall, material, fixings, loads		
Door openings: size, handing, landing in front		
Power: circuit, isolator position, phone or SIM		
Pump cupboard: size, vent, distance, sleeve		

Questions for the builder

- ◯ Hold points: your pit check before the pour, the lift company's measure before it's made?
- ◯ Is the lift in your contract or bought direct (page 34)? If it's late, who pays?
- ◯ Shaft dry, clean, lit and lockable, power on, before install?

Questions for the architect or designer

- ◯ Shaft on the plans at the supplier's size, with the cupboard and sleeve?
- ◯ Pit and headroom on the section, against the roof framing?
- ◯ Which wall takes the rails? Pump away from bedrooms?

Signed off before anything is made

Shaft built to drawing rev _____ dated _____. The lift company measured the finished shaft on _____ and confirmed in writing the lift will be made to it. Released for manufacture on _____. Expected delivery: _____

Tear out along this line

Section 05

Who does what

Lift companies aren't builders, so your contracts need to say who does each job below.

Job	Lift co.	Builder	Electrician	Surveyor	You	Notes
Measure and installation drawings	●	○				Drawing first, then a measure of the built shaft before the lift is made
Design registration of the lift	●					By the maker or importer, with a state regulator
Building permit for the shaft		●		●	○	A registered building surveyor; ask for a pit inspection before the pour
Engineering: openings, pit floor, rail wall		○			●	The project's engineer, to the maker's loads, before the slab is designed
Shaft, pit, waterproofing, openings		●				To the lift drawing and its tolerances
Circuit, isolator, switchboard work			●			Licensed electrician to the isolator, the lift company from there; Certificate of Electrical Safety in Victoria
Phone line or SIM for the cabin	○				●	Often your account; ask who pays the ongoing cost
Delivery, install and commissioning	●	○				Site ready first (page 14); about a week to four weeks on site
Making good: plaster, paint, floors		●				Almost never in the lift price
Final inspection and certificate		○		●		Closes the building permit. Keep it
Handover: manuals, service plan, warranty	●				○	Page 35 lists what to get before the final payment
Servicing and the service record	●				○	Usually yearly. Keep the record with the house

● does it ○ helps. On an architect-led job, the architect coordinates the first four rows.

Section 05

Where jobs slip

Jobs slip where one trade hands over to the next.

Unless a contract says otherwise, the lift company is responsible for the lift and the builder for the building, and you hold the permits and the insurance (tell your insurer).

The trouble starts at the handovers:

- A shaft out of tolerance
- A pit too shallow for the floor finish
- A drawing changed after the pour
- A lift that turns up months after lock-up

> **One owner paid $8,700 in rework when the lift that arrived didn't match the contract.**

My notes

- [ ] Get it in writing before anyone starts: if the shaft and the lift don't match, who pays to fix it?

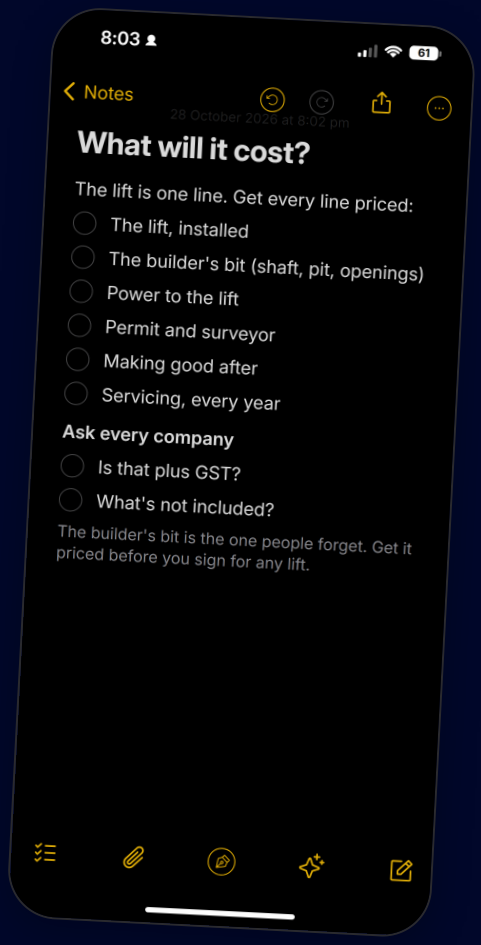
Liam

Part two

02

What will it cost?

The lift is one line on a bigger bill. These pages price every line, then add up what a lift costs to own over ten years.



RISE LIFTS

Section 06

What moves the price

Five things decide most of what you'll pay.

- **Levels.** Every extra floor adds a door, a landing and travel.
- **Integrated or a tower.** A tower costs more as a lift and less as building work.
- **Your house.** A retrofit through a slab, or with no wall for the rails, costs more on the builder's side.
- **The cabin.** It's the last thing you choose, and the easiest place to overspend.
- **The years after.** Servicing, call-outs and parts add up (page 23).

GST on a home lift

Lifts are quoted plus GST, but most companies take it off for someone with a disability or a medical condition, with a letter from their doctor. Page 26 has what to get in writing.

> **The same two-stop lift came in anywhere from $19k to $70k, depending on what was in the price. Check what each quote includes before you compare prices.**

Published supplier prices, October 2026.

My notes

- [ ] Get the builder to price the shaft before you sign for any lift.
- [ ] Ask every company: is that plus GST?

Liam

Section 06

What's in the price, and what usually isn't

Check each quote says which is which, in writing.

Usually in the lift price

- ◯ The lift, its doors and controls
- ◯ Delivery and installation
- ◯ Commissioning and testing
- ◯ A warranty, and sometimes the first year's servicing

Usually not

- ◯ The shaft, pit and openings (your builder)
- ◯ Power to the lift (your electrician)
- ◯ The permit and surveyor
- ◯ Making good: plaster, paint, floors
- ◯ Crane or scaffold, and GST if it says "plus GST"

Six of the 72 supplier documents we read said what was left out.

Then check what each quote leaves out

Tick what each quote says in writing.

- ◯ Building work
- ◯ Electrical work
- ◯ Permit and engineer
- ◯ Plus GST or not
- ◯ Crane or scaffold
- ◯ Servicing after year one
- ◯ If the site isn't as drawn
- ◯ Expected lead time

Ours: the RISE 300 is from $42,000 + GST for two levels into your builder's shaft, or $51,000 + GST as a glass tower (October 2026), with the first 12 months of servicing included. The builder and electrician are lines 2 and 3.

Worksheet: one column per quote

The whole job, line by line

Ask every company, us included, to price the whole job, then fill this in.

What	Who does it	Typical, Australia 2026	Quote A	Quote B	Quote C
1. The lift, installed and commissioned	Lift company	$25,000 to $120,000			
2. Shaft, pit, openings and the engineer	Builder	$5,000 to $20,000+			
3. Power to the lift and any switchboard work	Electrician	$500 to $1,000; more with a switchboard upgrade			
4. Building permit and surveyor	Surveyor	Ask before you sign			
5. Making good plaster, paint, floors	Builder	Almost never in the lift price			
6. Delivery access crane, scaffold	Builder or lift co.	Agree who pays first			
Installed total (1 to 6)					
Servicing, per year after the first	Lift company	$325 to $1,500			
Call-out fee in and out of warranty	Lift company	Ask, in writing			
Cabin phone or SIM ongoing	You	Ask who holds the account			

Typical figures are published Australian prices, October 2026. Page 23 adds up ten years.

Worksheet: the ten-year cost

Ten years of owning one

"Is it a money pit?" is the second thing people ask. Almost no supplier answers it: one overseas company out of 84 publishes a yearly running cost.

Worked example

Line	Assumption	Ten years
Installed total, two-level lift with building and electrical work	$65,000 all in	$65,000
Servicing, years 2 to 10	$800 a year, inside the published $325 to $1,500	$7,200
Call-outs outside warranty	Two over ten years at $400	$800
Battery for emergency lowering	Replaced twice at $500 (an assumption: ask)	$1,000
Cabin phone SIM	$10 a month	$1,200
Ten-year total		**$75,200**
Per month, over ten years		**about $627**

This is an example, and every assumption is shown. Running costs come to about 14% of the ten-year total.

Yours

Line	Your figure	Ten years
Installed total (page 22)		
Servicing per year x 9		
Call-outs: how many, at what fee		
What wears: batteries, ropes, oil (ask)		
Phone or SIM		
Insurance and power (ask for the watts)		
Ten-year total		
Per month		

Section 06

Three things that change the ten-year number

They're all in the service contract and the warranty terms, so read those before you sign.

The service contract

How often (most say yearly, some six-monthly), what a visit includes, the price, and whether the warranty lapses if you skip one. Get it in writing before you sign.

"Operator error"

Owners report call-outs charged under warranty as operator error, and one was asked to guarantee a fee before being let out. Ask what the warranty excludes, and who decides.

What wears

Batteries, ropes or cables, seals and oil all wear out. Most makers don't publish when. Ask for the list, the cost of each, and whether the parts are generic.

Do the same ten-year sum for a stairlift or a downstairs bedroom if you're still weighing them up (page 4), so you compare ten years with ten years.

My notes

- [ ] Don't just compare prices. Read the service contract too: the yearly fee, call-outs and what voids the warranty. A cheap lift with dear servicing can cost more over ten years.

Liam

Section 07

Help paying for it

Every funding route runs through an occupational therapist (OT). Start there.

Support at Home (aged care at home)

The government's in-home aged care program since November 2025. Home modification funding has three tiers: up to $500, $2,000 and $15,000, the top one a cap over a person's lifetime. An OT must prescribe it and a contribution usually applies. Ramps and stairlifts are named as examples; home lifts aren't confirmed, so count on part-funding at most. **Start:** My Aged Care, 1800 200 422.

Veterans (DVA)

The Rehabilitation Appliances Program can provide stair, platform and vertical lifts through DVA-contracted suppliers, with prior approval after an assessment. Vertical lifts only for accepted conditions, and the lift stays DVA property. Gold Card, or White Card for an accepted condition. **Start:** your GP or OT, or 1800 838 372.

NDIS

Home modifications over $25,000 are "complex", and installing a lift is a named example. They need an OT's assessment, usually building approvals, and funding only where reasonable and necessary under your plan. **Start:** your planner or support coordinator.

Victorian schemes

We found no Victorian scheme that funds a home lift. SWEP, the state's equipment program, funds some home modifications on an OT's referral, so ask the OT. If a supplier mentions "rebates", ask which program, by name.

Section 07

GST, and stay or move

GST

Lifts are quoted plus GST. Most lift companies take the GST off when the lift is for someone with a disability or a medical condition and you give them a letter from your doctor.

NDIS-funded lifts can be GST-free too, through the participant's plan and a written agreement.

> **Either way, get "GST-free" written on the quote, and check the contract doesn't let them add the GST back later.**

Stay or move: two Melbourne examples

Moving costs, selling and buying at the same price	$1.0M home	$2.4M home
Agent commission at 1.6% to 2.5%	$16,000 to $25,000	$38,400 to $60,000
Marketing and auctioneer	$2,600 to $10,600	$2,600 to $16,100
Conveyancing, both ends, and styling	$3,400 to $13,000	$3,400 to $13,000
Removalist, local four-bedroom move	about $1,550	about $1,550
Stamp duty on the next home (Victoria)	$55,000	$136,000
Total spent just to move	**$78,500 to $105,000**	**$182,000 to $227,000**

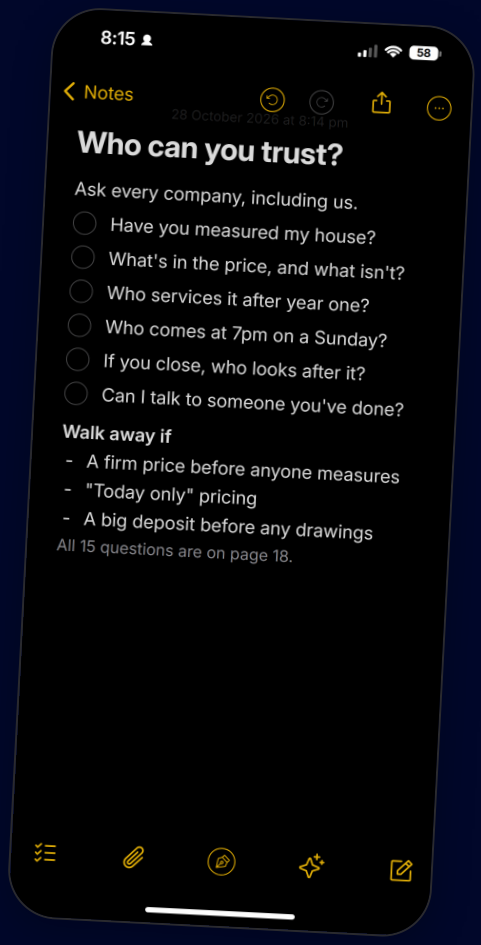
We worked these out from published rates. Victorian duty at the SRO general rates, no concession. Selling costs from published estimates, 2024 to 2026. Buy cheaper and the duty falls; a pensioner or concession card holder pays none up to $600,000 and less to $750,000, once. Your figures will differ.

Part three

03

Who can you trust?

Every lift company says it's the one to trust. These pages show you how to check for yourself.



RISE LIFTS

Section 08

Walk away if you hear

- [ ] A firm price before anyone has measured your home
- [ ] "Today only" pricing, or pressure to sign at the kitchen table
- [ ] Nobody can say what servicing costs after the first year
- [ ] "Lifetime" anything, with no written terms behind it
- [ ] A big deposit before there are drawings
- [ ] "GST-free" promised, but not written on the quote (page 26)
- [ ] Vague answers about what your builder has to do

Lift companies go broke too

Two Australian home lift companies went into liquidation in the last quarter of 2025. The loudest complaints we read were about companies that didn't come when a lift stopped, and parts that never arrived.

A lift lasts decades, so pick a company that will still be around to look after it.

My notes

- [ ] Watch whether they ask about the people who'll use it, or only about the stairs. The good ones ask about the people first.

Liam

Section 09

Five kinds of lift, compared

Every comparison we found was written by someone selling one of them. This one uses the same lines for all five, from the makers' own published specs.

	Hydraulic	Traction	Screw and nut	Vacuum	Cable, shaftless
How it's housed	Integrated in a builder's shaft, or a tower; pump in a cupboard nearby	A builder's shaft; the machine sits in the shaft, a control cabinet beside it	Comes with its own shaft structure	A free-standing tube, 0.75 to 0.93 m across, through a floor hole	Rails on their own, no shaft; a floor opening with a safety lid
Pit	About 100 to 180 mm; some 50 mm with a ramp, some up to 300 mm	150 mm on the product checked; 100 to 200 mm on one guide	37 to 50 mm, or none with a ramp	None	None
Headroom	Published figures run from about 2,225 to 2,600 mm above the top floor, by product; check the drawing			Not published	Not published
Power	Single-phase, own circuit, isolator	Single-phase on the product checked	Single-phase; three-phase optional	Single-phase	Single-phase; some plug into a 10 A point
In a power cut	Lowers on battery to a floor; door releases	A rescue device lowers it; standard or optional: ask	Lowers on battery	Comes down without power	Lowers on battery
Noise	No published figure; the pump runs on the way up only	No published figure	One distributor claims 40 dB, no method given	One distributor claims about 75 dB	No published figure
What wears	Ropes, seals, hoses, oil, the lowering battery	Ropes, brakes, the rescue battery	One maker warrants the screw and nut for 10 years	A main seal about every five years	Cables about every five years, per one maker
Typical fit	2 to 6 levels, to about 12 m; 300 to 500 kg; wheelchairs with a carer	Up to 6 levels on the product checked; 400 to 630 kg; new builds	2 to 6 levels; 250 to 500 kg; shallow floors, retrofits	2 to 5 stops; 160 to 205 kg, the smallest here	Two levels; two people; fitted in 1 to 3 days

From the published specs of 12 home lifts sold in Australia, checked 27 October 2026. "Not published" means we found no figure, so ask for one.

Section 09

Choose the installer, then the drive

Every type has good installs and unhappy owners.

In the owner reviews we read, what separated them was the installer: whether the drawings were right, the lift matched the contract, someone came when it stopped and the parts arrived.

So check the company before you compare drives.

Ours

The RISE 300 is an oil hydraulic lift. A pump in a cupboard nearby lifts the cabin on a ram and ropes, so there's no counterweight in the shaft and nothing above the ceiling.

The pump runs on the way up only. In a blackout the cabin lowers on battery to the lowest landing.

It's rated 400 kg, 5 people, and the design is verified to AS/NZS 1735.18:2002.

Worksheet: three quotes, the same lines

Compare three quotes

This table includes the lines quotes usually leave out. Where a quote doesn't say, write "not stated" and ask them.

Line	Quote A	Quote B	Quote C
Company and model; who makes it, imports it, installs it			
Price installed and commissioned; plus GST or including?			
What the price includes, as a list			
What it leaves out: building, electrical, permit, making good			
Levels, travel, rated load, cabin inside size			
Pit, headroom and shaft size on their drawing, with its date			
Power needed, and the phone type			
In a power cut: what happens, how long the battery lasts			
Expected lead time, and how they keep you updated			
Days on site; floor and dust protection			
Warranty: years for structure, parts, labour; what voids it			
Servicing: how often, the yearly price, what a visit includes			
Call-out fee, and a response time in writing			
Their own technicians or a contractor? Where are parts held?			
If the company closes: can others service it? Generic parts?			
Payment stages; deposit size; what protects it			
The AS 1735 part the design is verified to			
Documents at handover (page 35); an owner you can phone			
Ten-year total (page 23)			
Your score out of 10, and why			

We answer every line above in writing before you sign. If another company's quote answers more of them than ours, tell us and we'll fix ours.

Section 10

15 questions to ask any lift company, including us

Under each one is what a good answer sounds like. A company that answers all fifteen straight goes on your shortlist.

1 **Have you measured my home, or is this a phone price?**

"Measured, and here's your drawing." A firm quote before a visit is a red flag.

2 **What exactly is in the price, and what isn't?**

A written list of what they do, and a separate list for your builder, electrician and surveyor.

3 **Who services it after the first year, and what does that cost?**

The installing company, with the yearly price and what a visit includes, in writing now.

4 **When it stops at 7 pm on a Sunday, who comes, and how fast?**

A response time in writing. "24-hour line" can mean an answering service and a technician the next day.

5 **Which part of AS 1735 is it designed to?**

"AS/NZS 1735.18, or AS 1735.14 or 15 for a platform lift." The design is also registered with the regulator, which means an engineer verified it; it isn't an inspection of your install.

6 **If your company closes or sells, what happens to my warranty, parts and servicing?**

Straight answers on whether other technicians can service it, whether parts are generic, and who holds the drawings.

7 **What happens in a power cut?**

The cabin lowers on battery to a floor and the door releases. The light, alarm and phone run on the battery, and they can tell you how long it holds.

Section 10

15 questions, continued

8 **How deep a pit and how much headroom, on your drawing?**

Numbers from their drawing for your home, and what changes if your floor can't give them.

9 **What voids the warranty?**

The written terms: missed services, "operator error", who decides, and what a disputed call-out costs.

10 **Where are the spare parts, and how long do they take?**

A place and a number of days. One owner waited 12 months for parts that never came.

11 **How long will you be in my house, and what protects my floors?**

Days on site, dust barriers, daily clean-up, and their list of what the builder must finish first.

12 **How do the payments work, and what protects my deposit?**

Stages tied to milestones, the last payment when the lift works, and what the contract says about delay.

13 **Can I see one working, and phone someone you've installed for?**

A lift you can see working, in person or on video, and an owner you can phone.

14 **What if I don't like it, or it doesn't do what you said?**

A written remedy with a time limit: what it covers, what it doesn't, how long you have.

15 **What will it cost me over ten years?**

A number for the lift, the building work and ten years of servicing. If they can't give you one, work it out on page 23.

Our own answers to all fifteen are on page 42.

Section 11: before you sign

Protect yourself

Your money

The building work is domestic building work. In Victoria, work over $10,000 needs a written major domestic building contract with a builder registered with the Building and Plumbing Commission, and for contracts from 1 July 2026 Home Warranty insurance on each contract over $20,000.

That insurance sits on the builder's contract, not on a lift you buy direct, so ask what protects that deposit. Keep deposits small until drawings exist.

Two ways to buy the lift

Direct from the lift company: you hold the lift contract. A late lift is your delay on the building job, and the lift sits outside the builder's insurance and defects period.

Through your builder, as a provisional sum: inside the builder's program, insurance and defects period, with the builder's margin on it. Find the clause in your contract.

Insurance and emergencies

Tell your home insurer you've put in a lift. A home lift isn't a fire escape, and most won't take a stretcher, so the stairs are still the way out. If someone can't use the stairs, ask the paramedics for advice.

Section 11

If the company closes

We don't know what customers of the two lift companies that closed in late 2025 got back (page 28).

In recent collapses in other industries, like the caravan companies the ABC reported on in October 2026, most customers with deposits got nothing.

Before you sign, ask whether another technician can service the lift, whether the parts are generic, whether you'll hold the drawings and manuals, and whether the maker's warranty is separate from the installer's.

Get these before the final payment

- [ ] The lift's commissioning record
- [ ] Certificate of Electrical Safety
- [ ] Building permit, and the certificate of final inspection or occupancy permit
- [ ] Manual, service schedule, warranty terms, the emergency number on the wall, the door release key and the log book
- [ ] The drawings as built

My notes

- [ ] Tie every payment to something you can see: drawings, a measured shaft, a lift on site, a lift that works.

Liam

Section 12: after handover

Living with a lift

What owners ask once the lift is in, answered before you buy.

Power cuts and getting stuck

Every lift we checked gets you to a floor in a blackout. A battery can go flat without you knowing, so ask how the lowering battery is tested at each service, and whether the door unlocks.

The cabin phone must work without your power or internet: a 4G SIM unit with its own battery doesn't need your nbn (3G units died in 2024). The owners stuck longest were the ones whose company didn't come.



A landing door finished to match the room. **Not a Rise Lifts lift.** Installed by our team as contractors for another lift company.

Noise, and where the pump goes

Home lift makers don't have to publish a noise figure. Two products in our sample print one, neither with a test method. Ask to hear one running.

A hydraulic pump runs on the way up only. Keep the cupboard and the rail wall away from bedrooms: the owners who complained of vibration had the pump on the wrong wall.

Section 12

Servicing, and your part

A service visit

A visit usually checks how it runs, the doors and sensors, levelling at each floor, the safety gear, the mechanical and electrical parts, and any noise or wear, and the technician keeps a record. Most makers service yearly, some six-monthly.

Will Mum use it?

Parents who won't "ruin the house" with a stairlift come up again and again in owner discussions. A lift is easier to accept when the cabin looks like joinery and the door matches the room.

Your part

- ◯ Service it on time and keep the record
- ◯ Test the phone from inside, doors shut, monthly
- ◯ Tell your insurer, and keep the papers with the house

Your lift's service record

Date	Service, call-out or repair: by whom	Phone tested?	Notes, parts replaced

Worksheet: hand a copy to every company you talk to

Your decision summary

Fill it in once and every company quotes on the same brief.

Name	Address	Date

Who'll use it in year one, and in year ten	
Walker, wheelchair, a carer alongside, pram, shopping	
Our scorecard outcome (page 7), and why	
Levels to serve; floor-to-floor heights	
Our spot, the second choice, the pump cupboard	
Slab or timber; a wall for the rails (page 12)?	
Integrated or a tower?	
Existing, renovating or new; builder or architect?	
When we'd want it working	
Budget for the lift; budget for the building work	
Funding we're chasing (page 25)	
Must-haves and must-nots	
Our three must-ask questions (page 32)	

Finish

Then, in this order

Four steps from here to a lift you're happy to sign for.

1. Get the lift's drawing from each company on your shortlist (ours comes with the free assessment, page 45).
2. Have your builder price the building work to that drawing.
3. Fill in pages 22 and 23 for each, then page 31, and ask the questions on page 32.
4. Sign nothing until page 34 is clean.

Years away?

Keep the summary and the fit sheet (page 11) with your house plans. If you're building, give the brief on page 16 to the builder and ask for the build-the-space-in list on page 15.

Then forget about lifts for a while.

Finish

Glossary

These are the words you'll hear in quotes and on site.

Integrated; tower	Integrated: in a shaft inside the walls; you see a door. Tower: its own frame, often glass, in a void or room.
Shaft	The walled space the lift runs in, built by your builder.
Pit	The recess below the lowest floor; none to about 300 mm, measured from the finished floor.
Headroom	Clear height from the top finished floor to the underside of the shaft top; roughly 2.2 to 2.6 m.
Finished floor level	The surface you walk on, not the slab under it. Pit, sills and headroom are measured from it.
Section	A drawing of the house sliced through, so you see the floors, pit and headroom at once.
Lock-up; fit-off	Lock-up: roof, walls, windows and doors on. Fit-off: the finishing trades after that.
Check measure; commissioning	Check measure: the lift company measures the built shaft before the lift is made. Commissioning: the final testing before handover.
Hold point	A stage where someone checks the work before the next step.
Tolerance	How far the built shaft can differ from the drawing and still take the lift.
Rail wall	The shaft wall the rails fix to; it has to take their loads (page 12).
Brick veneer; double brick	Veneer: one brick skin over a stud frame. Double brick: two brick walls; either can take rails.
Trimmer; lintel	Trimmer: framing that carries cut joists around a floor opening. Lintel: the beam over a door opening.
Structural and clear opening	The hole in the wall, and the smaller gap inside the door frame. A wheelchair needs the clear figure.

Finish

Glossary, continued

Landing door; door hand	The door at each floor; the hand is its hinge side, seen from the landing.
Power unit	The pump and valves of a hydraulic lift, in a cupboard near the shaft.
Sleeve	A conduit from the cupboard into the shaft for the hose and cables.
Isolator	The switch where the house electrician's circuit ends and the lift's wiring starts.
Autodialler	The cabin phone that calls for help: a 4G SIM unit or an nbn phone, with its own battery.
2:1 roped hydraulic	A ram lifts a pulley; ropes over it move the cabin twice as far as the ram. No counterweight.
Traction; machine-room-less	A motor winds ropes over a sheave; machine-room-less means the machine sits in the shaft.
Screw and nut	A motorised nut climbs a long threaded screw. Very shallow pit.
Vacuum lift	A cabin in a sealed tube, moved by air pressure. No pit or shaft; small.
Shaftless lift	A cabin on its own rails through a floor opening; two levels.
Design registration	A regulator's record that an engineer verified the design. Not an approval or an inspection.
AS/NZS 1735.18	The Australian and NZ standard for automatic passenger lifts in homes (2002, under review).
Building surveyor	Issues your building permit, inspects at set stages and issues the final certificate.
Provisional sum	An estimate in your building contract, adjusted to the real cost later.
Making good	The plaster, paint and floors around the lift afterwards.

> **If a word on a quote isn't in here or in your contract, ask what it means and what it costs. Ask what "standard installation" covers, too.**

About us

Our answers to the 15 questions

Rise Lifts is a Melbourne home lift company run by an installer. I've installed 142+ home lifts for other brands, and the RISE 300 is our first. These are our answers to the questions on page 32.

1 Measured, or a phone price?

Measured. The free assessment is one visit by an installer, not a salesperson. You get your drawing, a written lift plan and a 3D render to keep.

2 What's in the price?

A fixed price for everything we do, and a list of what your builder and electrician do. From $42,000 + GST for two levels into your builder's shaft, or $51,000 + GST as a glass tower (October 2026), including the first 12 months of servicing.

3 Servicing after year one?

We do, at least every 12 months under RiseCare. The first year is included, and after that the price is in writing at your assessment.

4 At 7 pm on a Sunday?

The cabin phone gets you help straight away, and most entrapments are sorted on the phone. Otherwise a local technician comes out. You're never alone when something goes wrong.

5 Which standard?

The design is verified to AS/NZS 1735.18:2002.

6 If you close?

Any experienced, qualified lift technician can service it. Before you sign, we put in writing which parts are generic and who holds the drawings.

7 In a power cut?

The cabin lowers on battery to the lowest landing and you step out.

Our answers, continued

8 Pit and headroom?

The pit is 150 mm, or 50 mm with a 400 mm ramp into the cabin. Headroom is set on your drawings. It takes 400 kg, or 5 people, over 2 to 5 levels.

9 What voids the warranty?

3 years on parts and labour while the lift is serviced every 12 months, and 10 years on the structure while we service it under RiseCare. The full terms are in your contract. The Australian Consumer Law applies too.

10 Spare parts?

We hold spare parts locally.

11 How long in my house?

About a week on site for most RISE 300 installs, though your shaft and access can change that. It's usually 10 to 12 weeks from assessment to first ride (October 2026).

12 Payments and my deposit?

A deposit starts the drawings, then stages through production, delivery, install and handover, the last when it works. The deposit size and what protects it go in writing before you sign.

13 See one, phone an owner?

The RISE 300 is our first lift, and we don't have a showroom. At your assessment we'll tell you in writing how many are in.

14 Don't like it?

Under our Love It Guarantee you have 90 days from handover: we remove the lift and refund what you paid us. It doesn't cover building work, permits or making good. Terms are at riselifts.com/love-it-guarantee.

15 Ten-year cost?

We answer every line on page 31 in writing before you sign, and give you our figures for page 23.

Finish

Sources and limits

Where the figures in this guide come from. We used primary sources where they exist, checked on 27 and 28 October 2026.

1 AS/NZS 1735.18:2002, Passenger lifts for private residence, automatically controlled (current, pending revision); AS 1735.14-1998 and AS 1735.15:2021 for platform lifts.

2 OHS Regulations 2017 (Vic), reg 125 and Schedule 2 item 1.4 (design registration of lifts); WorkSafe Victoria guidance. Victoria has no item registration for lifts.

3 Victorian Building Authority, Building Practice Note BP-01 (April 2022); Building Act 1993 (Vic); council guidance on surveyors and final certificates.

4 Consumer Affairs Victoria: major domestic building contracts over $10,000; Home Warranty insurance for contracts from 1 July 2026 over $20,000; the Building and Plumbing Commission.

5 Energy Safe Victoria: Certificates of Electrical Safety for electrical installation work.

6 Published specifications of 12 home lifts sold in Australia, accessed 27 October 2026: pit, headroom, power, emergency lowering, servicing, lifespan, noise claims.

7 SafeWork NSW guidance on lifts: emergency communication; inspection and maintenance records.

8 LiftQuotes (independent Australian comparison site), Home Lift Cost in Australia and Home Lift Space Requirements, 18 March 2026.

9 Price, servicing, lead-time, GST and builder-preparation pages of eight Australian home lift suppliers, October 2026. We don't name competitors in this guide.

10 Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: Support at Home; AT-HM scheme tiers and the $15,000 lifetime cap; My Aged Care, 1800 200 422.

11 Department of Veterans' Affairs: Rehabilitation Appliances Program, stair, platform and vertical lifts; 1800 838 372.

12 NDIA: home modifications, minor and complex (over $25,000), examples including lifts; reasonable and necessary criteria.

13 ATO: GST Act 1999 ss 38-30, 38-38, 38-45 and Schedule 3; NDIS Supports Determination 2021; Care Determination 2017; ATO guidance on NDIS, home care and medical aids; GSTD 2021/2; ATO ID 2006/37.

14 State Revenue Office Victoria, duty general rates and pensioner concession. Computed for a principal place of residence, no concession.

15 Which Real Estate Agent and OpenAgent commission and marketing estimates (Victoria); Finder conveyancing (October 2024); Muval removalist estimates. "10 to 25% resale value" claims found only on supplier pages.

16 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Falls (injury hospitalisations, 2024-25).

17 AHURI, ageing in place for older Australians; Productivity Commission, Housing Decisions of Older Australians (2015).

18 ASIC published notices: two Australian home lift companies entered liquidation on 16 October 2025 and 2 December 2025.

19 Owner reviews and homeowner discussions, 84 pages, 27 October 2026: ProductReview.com.au, CHOICE Community, Houzz, Mumsnet, Homeone, Whirlpool. Paraphrased.

20 Rise Lifts product register for the RISE 300 Series, October 2026: levels, load, drive, pit, battery lowering, design verification, warranty, servicing, prices, payments and timeline.

21 ABC News, explainer on deposits when a company collapses (Queensland caravan industry), 24 October 2026. Not about lift companies, and cited only as such.

22 business.gov.au, The 3G network is closing down: Telstra and Optus closed 3G on 28 October 2024, Vodafone earlier in 2024.

23 NCC 2022 Volume One, E3D7 Passenger lift types (ABCB): 1,000 mm travel for low-rise platform lifts; 2 m unenclosed or 4 m enclosed for constant-pressure lifts.

24 Survey of 84 overseas home lift resources (UK, US, NZ, Europe), 27 October 2026: one publishes a yearly running cost, one a noise figure.

25 Rise Lifts trade estimates, October 2026: platform lifts about $20,000 to $50,000, vacuum lifts around $60,000 and up, installed; an electrician's dedicated circuit to the lift with an RCD about $500 to $1,000. From our installing work; estimates, not quotes.

Limits. This is general information for Australian homeowners, checked October 2026. It isn't engineering, legal, tax or financial advice, or a quote. Standards, programs and prices change. AS/NZS 1735.18 is paywalled and we haven't read it, so we don't pin any requirement on it. Every lift has to be measured, drawn and approved for its own site.

About the photos and notes. Installed by members of the Rise Lifts team while operating as independent contractors for other lift providers. These photographs demonstrate our installation experience and workmanship. The lifts shown were not supplied by Rise Lifts. The note on the cover is Liam's real screenshot; the notes on the part openers are his, typed up the same way.

Version 3, October 2026. Rise Lifts Pty Ltd, ABN 31 699 817 797, hello@riselifts.com. Research files and the full source list on request. If you find an error, tell us and we'll fix it in the next version.

Your next step

Claim your free $450 home lift assessment.

One visit to your house, and you keep everything we give you, whichever company you choose.

What you get

Your drawing

The shaft, pit and openings for your spot, for your builder to price.

A written lift plan

A fixed price for everything we do, and a list of what your builder and electrician do.

A 3D render of your lift

Sent after the visit, so you can see it before you decide.

At the visit

- Find the best spot for a lift
- Measure it, floor to floor
- Check the rail wall and the pump cupboard
- Answer your questions

Bring this guide filled in, and your builder if you like. You won't be asked to sign anything.



Liam

Love it, or we remove it and refund everything you paid us.

Our Love It Guarantee runs for 90 days from handover. It doesn't cover building work, permits or making good. Terms at riselifts.com/love-it-guarantee.

Book my free assessment

Or call 1300 492 003, Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm. Victorian homes with two to five levels.

RISE LIFTS