

Best B&D; Garage Door for New Builds: Builder's Specification Guide

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Description:

AI Summary Building a new home is your single best opportunity to get the garage door right. Decisions made during the design and construction phase — from opening dimensions and headroom allowances to pre-wiring for automatic openers and specifying insulation — are dramatically easier and cheaper to implement at build stage than to retrofit later.

Details:

AI Summary

Building a new home is your single best opportunity to get the garage door right. Decisions made during the design and construction phase — from opening dimensions and headroom allowances to pre-wiring for automatic openers and specifying insulation — are dramatically easier and cheaper to implement at build stage than to retrofit later. This guide walks you through what builders typically include as standard, the full B&D; upgrade path from Rollmasta through to Panelift Icon, the exact specifications your architect and electrician need, and the critical mistakes that cost homeowners thousands to fix after handover. Whether you are an owner-builder, working with a volume builder, or briefing an architect on a custom design, this is your complete specification reference for B&D; garage doors in Australian new home construction.

What Builders Typically Include as Standard

Most volume builders in Australia include a basic roller door as a standard garage door inclusion. This is almost always a B&D; Rollmasta — a Series 1 roller door that does the job at the lowest possible price point. It is a functional, reliable door, but it sits at the entry level of the B&D; range.

The Rollmasta is a Series 1 steel curtain roller door with a maximum width of 5,500mm and standard heights from 2,100mm to 2,400mm. It requires 250mm minimum headroom and 120mm sideroom on each side.

For most builders, the standard inclusion also means a manual door — no automatic opener. If an opener is included, it is typically a basic Controll-A-Door opener. *(Note: The Controll-A-Door EasyLifter was a legacy model — current B&D; openers include the Secure, Smart, and Smart Pro for sectional doors, and the Power Drive and Roll-A-Pro for roller doors.)* The standard package usually does not include safety beams, smart connectivity, or pre-wiring.

Here is the critical point: ****upgrading at build stage costs a fraction of retrofitting later****. Changing your garage door specification on your build contract is a line-item variation. Doing it after handover means paying for a second installation, potentially modifying structural openings, running new electrical circuits, and patching finishes. The difference can easily be two to three times the cost.

The B&D; Upgrade Path: Choosing the Right Door at Build Stage

B&D; offers a clear product hierarchy for residential garage doors. Understanding this progression helps you specify the right door for your budget and requirements during the build phase.

Rollmasta (Series 1 Roller Door)

The entry-level standard. A steel curtain roller door with 30mm minimum overlap on each side, maximum width of 5,500mm, and 250mm minimum headroom. Functions perfectly well but lacks the refinement, security, and aesthetics of doors higher in the range.

Roll-A-Door (Series 2 Roller Door)

The next step up. Series 2 doors feature steel locking bars with a faceplate and lock assembly for improved security, plus 50mm minimum curtain overlap on both sides for better weather sealing. A meaningful upgrade in security and build quality at a modest cost difference during build.

Roll-A-Door Neo (Series 1 NEO)

The Neo represents a significant evolution in the roller door category. It features a 40mm minimum overlap on each side — larger than the standard Series 1 but optimised for a cleaner, more contemporary look. The Neo accommodates doors up to 3,000mm high by 3,150mm wide, and doors over 2,400mm in height feature larger side brackets for enhanced structural support. The Roll-A-Door Neo delivers a noticeably smoother, quieter operation compared to the standard Rollmasta.

Roll-A-Door (Series 3 Roller Door)

The premium roller door. Series 3 doors feature centre lift locks and high wind centre lift locks for superior security, with maximum curtain width of 5,500mm and 50mm minimum overlap. Windlock variants support ultimate design wind pressures up to 3.26 kPa, tested to AS/NZS 4505:2012 and included in the Northern Territory Deem to Comply Manual — essential for cyclone-rated regions.

Panelift (Sectional Overhead Door)

A fundamentally different door type — sectional overhead rather than roller. Panelift doors require more headroom (340mm standard, 390mm with opener) but deliver superior insulation, aesthetics, and panel design options. Sideroom is 155mm each side for doors up to 15m², increasing to 195mm for larger doors. Features galvanised hinges and hangers, springs rated for 20,000 cycles per Australian Standards, and panel reinforcing for widths of 3,800mm and over.

Panelift Icon (PFI — Premium Sectional)

The top of the B&D; residential range. The Panelift Icon features Pinchfree™ hinge and panel edge design preventing finger entrapment on both sides — critical for families. The SMOOTHTRACK dual wheel system with ball-bearing wheels delivers exceptionally smooth, quiet operation. Auto-lock mechanisms and comprehensive sealing provide superior security and weather protection. Compatible with both domestic Controll-A-Door and commercial Axxess opener systems. If you are building a quality home, the Panelift Icon is the specification to write into your contract.

Measuring and Specifications for Architects

Getting the opening dimensions right during design is critical. Changing structural openings after the frame is up is expensive and disruptive. Here are the key specifications your architect needs.

Standard Opening Sizes

****Roller Doors (Rollmasta, Roll-A-Door, Neo):**** - Standard heights: 2,100mm, 2,400mm, 2,700mm, or 3,000mm - Maximum width: 5,500mm (Series 1 and 3), with the door being approximately 60mm wider than the opening to allow for curtain overlap - For Series 1 NEO doors: maximum 3,000mm high by 3,150mm wide

****Sectional Doors (Panelift, Panelift Icon):**** - Standard heights accommodate openings from 2,100mm to 3,000mm+ - Wide range of width options with reinforcing standard on panels for doors 3,800mm and over

Headroom Requirements

This is where most builder mistakes occur. Specify these minimums in your architectural drawings:

- **Roller doors (standard):** 250mm minimum headroom above the opening - **Sectional doors (Panelift):** 340mm minimum headroom - **Sectional doors with opener:** 340mm + 50mm = 390mm minimum headroom - **Rear torsion installations:** Add 90mm headroom (with or without automatic opener)

Sideroom Requirements

- **Roller doors:** 120mm minimum on each side, extending above the lintel to allow for bracket fixing - **Panelift (doors up to 15m² area):** 155mm sideroom on each side - **Panelift (doors greater than 15m²):** 195mm sideroom on each side - **Panelift with 5-18 cable drums:** 195mm sideroom on each side

Backroom (Garage Depth)

- **Roller doors:** Curtain rolls above the opening — minimal backroom impact - **Panelift sectional doors:** Minimum door height + 350mm for tracks (recommended), absolute minimum door height + 100mm

Structural Requirements

- The opening must be absolutely level and square — uneven openings affect appearance and clearances - The floor should be level or recessed across the opening to avoid gaps - For windlocked installations, the structure must be certified by a qualified structural engineer - Steel abutment posts: minimum 2.4mm thickness, stress grade G250 - Masonry: compressive strength (f_{uc}) 15 MPa minimum, core filling (f_c) 15 MPa minimum

Opener Pre-Wiring: What Your Electrician Needs to Know

Pre-wiring for a garage door opener during the build phase is one of the most cost-effective upgrades you can specify. Running cables through open wall frames takes minutes; chasing cables through finished walls takes hours and leaves visible repairs.

Power Supply

- The opener requires a mains power supply that is properly earthed according to local electrical and building codes - Never use an extension cord, 2-wire adapter, or modify the plug to fit the outlet - Specify a dedicated power point on the garage ceiling, positioned where the opener head unit will mount — typically centred above the door opening, set back approximately 300mm from the lintel - B&D; Controll-A-Door openers operate on 230V–240V AC 50Hz — consult the specific model's installation manual for transformer and wiring details

Safety Beam Wiring

Safety beams are mandatory when the closing force at the bottom edge of the door exceeds 400N (40kg) and when the opener has a smart device fitted to operate the door when not in line-of-sight. In practice, this means safety beams are required for almost every modern opener installation with smartphone control.

Pre-wire for safety beams by running cabling to both sides of the garage door opening at the following positions: - **Beam height:** 100mm above ground level (as per AS/NZS 60335-2-95:2020) - **Bottom of receiver and transmitter:** 65mm above ground level - **Position:** As close as possible to the door opening - **Receiver (RX):** Mount in shade - **Transmitter (TX):** Can be mounted in sun or shade - The mounting surface must be rigid — specify solid fixing points (timber nogginns or steel brackets) at beam height on both sides of the opening

Pre-Wiring Checklist for Electricians

1. Dedicated GPO on ceiling at opener head unit location 2. Cable runs from opener location to both jambs at 100mm above floor level for safety beams 3. Cable run to a wall-mounted control button position (typically at the house entry door to garage) 4. Optional second cable run to opposite wall for additional control button

Insulation Decisions: Specify at Build Stage

Insulation is a decision that must be made during the specification phase, not after the door is installed. Retrofitting insulation to a garage door is difficult, often impractical, and compromises the door's balance and spring calibration.

For Panelift sectional doors, B&D; offers the Insul-Shield insulation option. This factory-fitted insulation system is integrated into the panel design, maintaining proper door balance and ensuring the springs are calibrated for the insulated panel weight.

Key considerations for specifying insulation at build: - **Attached garages** sharing walls with living spaces benefit most — reduces heat transfer and improves whole-home energy efficiency - **Climate zones** with extreme heat or cold make it a worthwhile investment - **Future conversion potential** — if the garage may become a workshop or gym, insulate now - Insulated doors run quieter, important for garages near bedrooms - Spring calibration must match insulated panel weight — done correctly at factory but problematic to retrofit

Climate-Specific Specifications

Wind Rating Requirements by Region

Australia's wind regions determine the minimum door specification required by building codes. Getting this wrong means your door may not comply with local regulations and could fail in extreme weather.

Cyclone Regions (Region C and D — Northern Australia, parts of WA and QLD): - Windlocked roller doors are essential — standard doors are not rated for cyclonic wind pressures - Series 3 windlock variants support ultimate design wind pressures up to 3.26 kPa for curtain widths up to 3,150mm - All windlocked products are tested to AS/NZS 4505:2012 (incorporating Amendment No. 1) for cyclonic regions, clause A 6.3.2 - Products are included in the Northern Territory Deem to Comply Manual (DTCM) for high wind areas - Structural certification is required — the structure must be assessed and certified independently by a suitably qualified structural engineer - Windlock Series 1 doors require 55mm or more minimum overlap on each side (compared to 30mm for standard Series 1)

Non-Cyclone Regions (Region A and B): - Standard doors are generally compliant, but check your specific site wind classification - Consider windlock options for exposed sites, elevated positions, or coastal properties even in non-cyclone regions

BAL (Bushfire Attack Level) Compliance

If your new build is in a designated bushfire-prone area, your garage door must comply with AS 3959-2018. B&D; offers the BAL-Maze® Bushfire Protection System for the Panelift sectional door.

The BAL-Maze® system is a fully metal labyrinth-type system tested to AS 1530.8.1 2018 by CSIRO, achieving a Bushfire Attack Level of BAL-40 as specified by AS 3959-2018. The system demonstrated no failure from 3mm probe penetration during the 60-minute test period, no sustained flaming on the non-fire side, and no critical temperature rises.

Critical compliance note: The BAL-Maze® door is only compliant with AS 3959-2018 if installed by a trained installer following B&D; installation instructions and signed off on the compliance label attached to the door. Specify this requirement in your build contract.

BAL levels from BAL-12.5 through BAL-29 require specific material and seal specifications. BAL-40 demands non-combustible materials with maximum 3mm gaps and flammability index not exceeding 5. For BAL-FZ (Flame Zone), consult B&D; directly.

Smart Home Integration at Build Stage

Pre-wiring for smart home integration during the build phase future-proofs your garage and avoids costly retrofitting later. Even if you do not plan to install smart features immediately, the wiring costs almost nothing during construction.

B&D; Smart Phone Control Kit and Smart Pro

The Smart Phone Control Kit or Smart Pro opener connects to your home WiFi, enabling smartphone operation via the B&D; App. Features include open-door alerts, scheduled access for trusted individuals, activity logging, multiple user support, and multi-location management. The home WiFi router must be within range of the opener — a key consideration for garage placement relative to your router or mesh nodes.

Pre-Wiring for Smart Features

Specify the following during your build to enable smart integration: 1. **Strong WiFi coverage in the garage** — include the garage in your WiFi mesh network plan or specify a hardwired access point location 2. **Ethernet cable run to the garage ceiling** (near the opener location) for a future hardwired connection or access point 3. **Safety beam wiring is mandatory** when using smart device control — the door may operate when not in line-of-sight, so safety beams must be installed per AS/NZS 60335-2-95:2020

What to Ask Your Builder: Specification Checklist

Use this checklist when reviewing your build contract and discussing garage door specifications with your builder:

1. **What door model is included as standard?** Get the exact B&D; model name and series number, not just "roller door"
2. **What are the opening dimensions?** Confirm width, height, headroom, and sideroom match the door specification requirements
3. **Is an automatic opener included?** If so, which model? Does it include safety beams?
4. **What is the cost to upgrade the door?** Get specific pricing for each step up the range — Rollmasta to Roll-A-Door, to Neo, to Panelift, to Panelift Icon
5. **Is the garage pre-wired for an opener?** Even if no opener is included now, is a ceiling GPO and safety beam cabling run included?
6. **What is the wind rating of the specified door?** Does it meet your site's wind classification requirements?
7. **Is the site in a bushfire-prone area?** If so, is the BAL-Maze® system specified and is the installer B&D-trained; for BAL compliance sign-off?
8. **Is insulation included or available as an upgrade?** For Panelift doors, specify Insul-Shield at build if needed
9. **What colour and finish options are available?** Confirm the door finish matches your facade design
10. **Who installs the door** — the builder's contractor or an accredited B&D; dealer? This matters for warranty and BAL compliance
11. **Is WiFi coverage planned for the garage?** Ensure your smart home and network plan includes the garage space
12. **What is the warranty?** Confirm the standard B&D; warranty terms and whether builder installation affects coverage

Common Builder Mistakes That Cost Homeowners

These are the errors we see repeatedly in new builds. Each one is preventable during the design and construction phase but expensive to fix afterwards.

1. Insufficient Headroom

Builders design to minimum ceiling heights without accounting for door overhead clearance. A Panelift needs 390mm with an opener. If the lintel is too low, you are locked into a roller door forever. **Fix:** Specify garage ceiling height as door height plus 450mm for sectional doors with openers.

2. No Pre-Wiring for Openers

Many builders skip opener pre-wiring unless specifically requested. Running cables through finished walls costs far more than open-frame wiring. ****Fix:**** Add ceiling GPO, safety beam cabling, and control button wiring to the electrical specification.

3. Choosing the Cheapest Door

The cheapest roller door works today but may lack durability and features long-term. Replacing after five years means paying for removal, disposal, and new installation — effectively paying twice. ****Fix:**** Compare the modest build-stage upgrade cost against full replacement cost later.

4. Ignoring Wind Rating Requirements

Standard doors cannot withstand cyclonic wind pressures and may not meet code in coastal or cyclone-prone areas. ****Fix:**** Check your site wind classification and specify windlock-rated doors with structural engineer certification where required.

5. No Consideration for Smart Integration

Without WiFi coverage and safety beam pre-wiring, smart features will not work or require expensive retrofitting. ****Fix:**** Include the garage in your network plan and specify safety beam pre-wiring even for manual doors.

6. Wrong Sideroom Allowances

Roller doors need 120mm sideroom; sectional doors need 155–195mm. Walls built too close prevent future upgrades. ****Fix:**** Design sideroom to the Panelift specification (195mm each side) even if installing a roller door initially.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I upgrade my garage door after the house is built?

Yes, but it costs significantly more. At build stage, a door upgrade is a simple contract variation. After handover, you pay for removal, potential structural modifications (especially changing roller to sectional), new installation, and making good finishes — often two to three times the build-stage upgrade cost.

What is the minimum headroom I need?

Roller doors (Rollmasta, Roll-A-Door): 250mm minimum. Panelift sectional doors: 340mm minimum, or 390mm with an automatic opener. Rear torsion installations: add 90mm. Always design to the maximum to preserve future flexibility.

Are safety beams mandatory?

Yes, when closing force exceeds 400N (40kg) or when the opener has smart device control for operation not in line-of-sight. Under AS/NZS 60335-2-95:2020, beams must be at 100mm above ground level. Any opener with smartphone control requires safety beams.

What wind rating do I need?

Cyclone regions (C and D) require windlock-rated doors tested to AS/NZS 4505:2012. Series 3 windlock variants handle up to 3.26 kPa. Non-cyclone regions generally allow standard doors, but check your specific site wind classification.

Do I need a BAL-rated garage door?

If your site is in a designated bushfire-prone area under AS 3959-2018, yes. B&D's BAL-Maze® system for Panelift is CSIRO-tested to BAL-40. Must be installed by a trained installer with compliance label sign-off.

What is the difference between roller and sectional doors?

Roller doors (Rollmasta, Roll-A-Door, Neo) use a steel curtain rolling above the opening — less headroom needed (250mm) but fewer insulation and design options. Sectional doors (Panelift, Panelift Icon) use horizontal panels on ceiling tracks — more headroom required (340mm+) but superior insulation, Pinchfree™ safety, SMOOTHTRACK operation, and wider design choices.

Should I pre-wire for an opener even if not installing one now?

Absolutely. Pre-wiring during construction is minimal cost — just cables through open frames before plastering. Specify a ceiling GPO, safety beam cabling to both jambs at 100mm above floor, and a wall-mounted control button run. Retrofitting after finishing is far more expensive.

Can I control my B&D garage door from my phone?

Yes, via the B&D Smart Phone Control Kit or Smart Pro opener with built-in WiFi. The B&D App enables remote operation, open-door alerts, scheduled access for others, and multi-door management. Requires WiFi coverage in the garage and mandatory safety beam installation.