



Buildin' on up



From music notes to nail guns, founder of Front Porch Properties Rachael Turner made a leap to change a successful career and chase her dreams into a male dominated industry. This is how she did it.

Since she was a little girl, Rachael Turner has been passionate about houses and building. “I was always doodling and sketching floor plans and house elevations. After running my music school for 10 years, I had this fire inside me urging me to pursue my passion for design and construction,” she says.

Years on, during the build of her own dream house with her husband and in-between intentional disaster relief work, Rachael realised it was time to make the transition to different types of instruments and swap the white ivory keys and hammer time to a different type of hammer time, sawdust included. “After that, we bought, renovated and sold a couple of houses. They did quite well and I knew I was playing right into my strengths and just loved the entire process,” she says.

The transition wasn't easy, and we're not

talking calluses and the physical demand, it was the mental grind that set the realisation of the change in stone. Entering a new industry or workplace can be daunting in itself and starting as fresh as a blank canvas came with its own challenges. “Starting again in an entirely new industry, with no contacts or family in the industry was definitely hard. I really had to mentally commit to the journey and not back down no matter what,” she says.

This was one test, being a female in a male oriented industry was the next. “In the early days, being a woman in the construction industry, (a piano player at that!) was certainly intimidating and difficult. I definitely had to work hard to prove myself,” she says.

Years on, Rachael has settled into the workforce and blokey environment, hitting home that women really can kick-on in any arena.

READ MORE ABOUT RACHAEL'S ROCK-SOLID CAREER ADVICE AT STYLEMAGAZINES.COM.AU

QUICK TOOLBELT TALK:

Best place to cool off in Brisbane?
Our new back deck we built at home this year. Beautiful breezes in the afternoons!

Favourite road trip song?
I'm actually more of an audio book girl! I hate the feeling of wasting time driving, so for me, long commutes are a perfect chance to multi-talk and to listen to a book/podcast and learn something!

What is your most treasured possession?
A couple of weeks ago I was in the Bahamas helping with the re-build after Hurricane Dorian. I spent several days helping an elderly lady clean out her very damaged home. There was one beautiful serving dish in her kitchen that was completely buried in mud but remained unbroken. She gave it to me as a gift to remember her and my time in the Bahamas. I will treasure this for many years.

What's something about you that would surprise people?
I have my motorbike license and every year my husband and our friend go on an annual motorcycle trip somewhere in the world.

Biggest building fail?
On a job a few years ago, a crane truck was delivering a huge load of timber and building materials. He parked awkwardly on the curb, and in order to avoid the crane toppling over, he dropped the load he was carrying, right on top of one of my carpenters' utes! Let's just say the ute was ruined and I don't think that guy still has his job!