

# HOUSE RULES



# Which house will rule?

Would you hand over your house keys to a bunch of strangers to transform your home? This is the exciting premise behind Channel Seven's new reality series House Rules.

The Australia-wide competition from the makers of My Kitchen Rules will see six teams from around the country put their homes on the line and their skills to the test in a fight for supremacy and a life-changing prize.

## **NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Michelle and Steve**

## **VICTORIA**

**Nick and Chris**

## **QUEENSLAND**

**Amy and Sean**

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**Carly and Leighton**

## **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**Jemma and Ben**

## **TASMANIA**

**Jane and Plinio**

Together, they'll travel the country, hand over the keys to their own homes and leave their competition rivals to transform every room in their house any way they want.

It's the key to a whole new life, but will they open the door to their dreams, or their worst nightmare?

Host Johanna Griggs will be at the helm as six brave teams gamble with the most important possession in their lives.

Acclaimed designer Carolyn Burns-McCrave and experienced build supervisor Chester Drife will be overseeing the teams, who have only one week to completely transform each home. Teams will be given a designated zone in the house to work on.

Two expert judges – architect Joe Snell and Home Beautiful editor Wendy Moore – will score each teams' renovation. But the last word will go to the home owners!

Without knowing who was responsible for each zone – the home owners will score them all. Will they love what they see? Or will they hate it?

Scores will be revealed at the Homebase in Melbourne, where the eliminations will also take place.

The last team left standing will walk away with a life-changing prize. More details about the show will be revealed soon.

Keep up-to-date with all the House Rules news on the show's official website [www.houserules.com.au](http://www.houserules.com.au)





# Michelle & Steve

# NSW

After nearly three decades together, Michelle and Steve have endured their fair share of ups and downs.

Financial hardship brought on by a bad investment and rising interest rates saw them lose their last home but the Aussie battlers survived.

They were holed up in a tiny two-bedroom unit for seven years, but after scrimping and saving they had enough for a deposit on their current home. "It was tough," Steve says. "I kept thinking we keep getting knocked down all the time. But buying this house and recovering financially and getting over that dark period is our greatest achievement."

The couple have owned and renovated five properties during their 28 years together. But their current home in Sydney's northern beaches is their most ambitious project yet.

Michelle and Steve bought the 1950s dilapidated coastal weatherboard house in May 2012. "There were rats and cockroaches," Michelle, 48, recalls. Steve, also 48, adds: "Even though it was rundown, we could see the potential."

After a lick of paint and some elbow grease, the three-bedroom home Michelle calls their "own private Idaho" has improved immeasurably.

But there's still plenty of work to do. They need a new kitchen, roof and deck and their bathroom is in dire need of an overhaul. Also, the lower level is an empty shell which they'd love to convert into a granny flat.

Mortgaged to the hilt, their renovation dreams had been put on hold until now. "Had it not been for this show, the renovations probably would never have even happened," Michelle says. "We wouldn't have been able to afford it."

But that doesn't mean that handing over their keys to the other contestants will be easy. "I'm nervous because I'm very particular with my taste, but at the end of the day I've just got to trust them and hope they do the right thing by us," Michelle says.

The pair describe their style as simple and relaxed with a beachy, coastal feel. Preferring clean, white colour schemes, their worst nightmare would be black walls and fixtures.

Steve, who works in the building industry as an OHS Manager, is an experienced handyman who learnt a lot of what he knows from his late bricklaying father Keith. "He started me laboring. I would work mixing cement, chipping cement off bricks when I was eight, nine years old."

Michelle, a stay-at-home mum, is a passionate renovator who studied interior design for six months at TAFE. "I love it," she enthuses. "It's a creative outlet for me."

When they're not working on the house, the pair enjoy spending time with their two children, daughter Alex, 20, and son Jesse, 18, who have inherited their love for renovating.

As the oldest team in the competition, Steve and Michelle are ready to battle it out with the young guns. "Our age and wisdom will definitely be a major strength," Steve says. "We get things done no matter what. We see everything through to the end."



# Nick & Chris VIC

Moving out of home for the first time and into their own pad was a major step for Victorian brothers Nick and Chris.

Last year they purchased a 1970 Californian Bungalow in Melbourne's northern suburbs. While the pair couldn't wait to move into their new home, their mother Sue was devastated. "When we told her we'd bought the house, there was no congratulations," Nick, 21, laughs. "She was like, 'You're leaving me!' And she started bawling her eyes out."

Like good Greek boys, they didn't go too far and live just a short 15 minute drive away.

Both their parents instilled in them the importance of owning property as a foundation for the future. "I always wanted to own a house before I was 28," Chris says. "I bought it when I was 26, so that's not a bad effort."

They never set out to buy a home together, but after Chris discovered Nick was about to buy a "hero tradie car" he convinced his brother to invest with him. "I was like you can't buy a ute, you need to buy a house with me," Chris says.

Initially, they looked at buying apartments off the plan, but settled on a three-bedroom house they could fix themselves utilising Nick's skills as a carpenter.

However, their mortgage has left them with no money for renovations. "Our plans have been put on hold till we get a better handle on the mortgage," Nick says.

But scoring a place on House Rules means their home will get a much-needed makeover, albeit one they have no control over. "It's a gamble," Nick says. "From a carpenter's point of view, of course you're going to worry about giving your keys to a bunch of strangers. But the good thing is I'll be able to fix anything we don't like."

Their dream is to turn their home into the ultimate bachelor pad: a comfortable space with a focus on entertaining. Describing their style as contemporary, the pair want their home decked with all the mod-cons. "Our vision is to completely modernise the house," Chris says. "We like open plan living with a focus on comfort."

While they love the high ceilings, they're not a fan of the late 80s extension and the floating floors. "The ceilings in the extension are lower," Chris says.

Their worst nightmare would be seeing the walls painted any shade of green. "It's a crap colour," Nick says.

The brothers believe that being the only siblings on the show will be an advantage over their rivals. Ultra-competitive, they're in it to win it. "We're both perfectionists and work well under pressure," Nick says.

Flying the flag for Victoria is a huge honour for them both. "We feel a sense of pride to be representing our state," Chris says.

Nick adds: "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity and we're taking it with both hands."

Chris, a sales/marketing manager, and Nick enjoy playing sport and working out in their spare time.



**HOUSE  
RULES 7**



# Amy & Sean QLD

Aged care manager and former personal trainer Sean strives to see the positive in any life situation, including the time he broke his jaw two years running playing AFL.

"As silly as it sounds breaking my jaw was a good thing as it awoke me to the sort of character Amy was as she didn't leave my side during the entire ordeal which made me realise just how much she cared for me and how deeply I loved and depended on her," says Sean, 26.

Sean proposed to Amy, his girlfriend of three years, during a speech at her 30th birthday. The engaged couple, who are both originally from Victoria, are hoping their 1950s three-bedroom Queenslander can be transformed into a warm, open haven which brings the outside in.

"It's a Queenslander style house so it's still on stilts. We would like to raise it to utilise the space underneath and build a deck on the back to bring the outdoors in," says personal trainer Amy, 30.

Amy, a former professional dancer who has travelled the world dancing in musical theatres at Universal Studios and on luxurious cruise ships, met Sean through her younger sister Sally, who was in the same year at school as Sean.

While Amy and Sean are renovating rookies, the pair don't see themselves at a disadvantage because they're both hard workers with lots of enthusiasm.

"As we have never renovated before we are not afraid to look silly, or ask a question which others may consider dumb and we are not stuck on ideas which have worked previously," says Sean.

"We will come into this full of energy, with a good work ethic and ask fresh questions which perhaps the others haven't thought about."

Amy views the couple's strengths as having different personalities which complement each other.

"Sean is a big list writer who always has a step-by-step plan to get to the end product whereas I think that everything will get done in the end if you put in the hard work," says Amy.

"We both work well together as Sean gives me the organisation we need and I supply the calm, can-do attitude when Sean gets upset that we haven't finished everything on the list by the end of the day."

Although Sean is comfortable handing over their keys to the other contestants, he does admit to being nervous about messing up the others' homes.

"Amy and I would be happy in a basement somewhere," laughs Sean. "So we are not too worried about what our fellow contestants will do to our home, but I do have nerves about working on their homes as I would hate to let them down."

Sean, who opted to do charity work at a Cambodian orphanage after finishing high school instead of going to schoolies, is hoping to create a country home with an industrial modern tone where "friends can feel welcome and comfortable enough to walk in and take something out of the fridge".

The couple hope to join forces and set up their own personal training business together soon and see House Rules as a test to see if they could work professionally together without jeopardising their relationship.



HOUSE  
RULES 7

# Carly & Leighton SA

Carly met her Prince Charming, Leighton when he knocked at her front door hoping to rent her spare room.

"It was love at first sight at the front door," Carly, 31, a flight attendant for Rex Airlines and part-time retail assistant, jokes.

"Six weeks later we didn't need that spare room because he'd moved in. We got together very quickly but we are best friends, soul mates and still together two-and-a-half years later."

Although Carly, who grew up on a potato and cereal farm in the Murray Mallee region of South Australia, admits she has no renovating experience, and the other teams will probably view them as "The Country Bogans", she is confident Leighton, 32, a carpenter for his family's building company, will be able to make up for her lack of experience.

"Leighton's talent for renovating is amazing and unlike me he has done thousands of renovations and is a real work horse, so he has all the skills we need. I will just have to listen to him and do what he tells me," she says.

Leighton, who grew up in the western suburbs of Adelaide, is looking forward to working with Carly, but admits he will have a hard time taking orders from her as they do their best to "transform a s\*o\*o box into a palace", he chuckles.

Leighton also concedes that he will be a tough marker when it comes to judging the other teams' renovations and will lose his temper if Carly distracts him whilst building.

Leighton and Carly recently bought a 1957 sandstone house in Warradale, Adelaide, which overlooks a beautiful park. It has never been touched and the couple hope to open up the living area, transforming it into an entertainer's pad and love nest with lots of earthy colours and minimalistic features.

"Our decorating style is definitely open plan, minimalistic and natural," Leighton explains.

When they're not working, the couple spend all their spare time on the River Murray either in their house boat, or waterskiing. Leighton, who shares his father's passion for boats, riverboats and waterskiing, has passed on his enthusiasm for the river to Carly.

"Every spare second Leighton and I get is spent on the River Murray," says Carly. "It was there that we fell in love and one day hope to buy a house to raise kids."





# Jemma & Ben WA

For newlyweds Ben and Jemma, House Rules will be a honeymoon of sorts after the pair postponed their holiday plans to be on the show.

"We were meant to be going to Canada and Hawaii," says Jemma, 26.

"The honeymoon can wait. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," adds Ben, 27.

The couple met as teenagers nine years ago. After a year-long trip across America in 2011, Ben proposed on Christmas Eve at the Rockefeller skating rink in New York.

Following their engagement, the proud West Australians were keen to buy their first home. "We wanted to be in a good suburb close to the city but that meant buying a crappy house we could renovate," Jemma says.

It didn't take them long to find what they were looking for; a 1950s three-bedroom house in Perth's suburbia which they bought in January 2012.

It may be the perfect size but the Italian-inspired design complete with white pillars and two concrete lions isn't exactly their cup of tea.

Their wedding last November and buying in their preferred location has left them with no spare cash for the much-needed renovations.

The house has many issues ranging from poor drainage, minimal storage and an internal bathroom with no air and light.

"The house is still in its original state and everything is extremely old," Jemma says. "We've done some minor renovations but we haven't had the time or the money to do anything major."

Paying off a hefty mortgage has meant the energetic duo have had to curb their lifestyle, in particular Jemma, who has a fondness for designer shoes and handbags. "I have very expensive taste and like the finer things in life," Jemma admits. "But now we spend a lot of Friday nights at home cooking instead of going out."

With Ben a qualified carpenter who runs his own business, the pair have a definite advantage in the competition. "I'm the muscle, she's the brains," he laughs.

Jemma, a law clerk who runs a spray tanning business on the side, brings a flair for style and design to the equation.

Neither of them are apprehensive about handing over their house keys to complete strangers. "We're excited more than nervous," Jemma says. "It'll be interesting to see what other people do to our house."

Describing their style as simple and modern, the couple hope they end up with a practical living space where they can start a family. "This home is like our temple, it's where we want to start a family," Jemma says. "But we don't want to start a family in the condition it's in. It's not functional for two people let alone a baby."

In her spare time, Jemma enjoys exercising and hanging out with their Old English Sheepdog Lola. Ben meanwhile loves going to the beach and is a keen go-kart racer having represented his state in the sport.



# Jane & Plinio

# TAS

After meeting at Plinio's sister's barbecue and falling in love 20 years ago, the two embarked upon a road trip around Australia.

Growing up in country Tasmania on a remote commercial pheasant farm, fishing store manager Plinio, 47, hadn't seen "much of the world" until he met Jane, 45, a Melbourne girl who had just moved to Hobart after getting work with the Salamanca and Zootango Theatre companies.

"My contracts were at an end so I went back to Melbourne and Plinio followed me," reveals Jane.

"We travelled all around Australia in an old HiAce van, starting with the east coast, then up through the middle and later through Western Australia when I was five months pregnant with our son, Jarra, 16, who we named after the beautiful eucalypts from that region."

Keen to continue travelling, the pair relocated to Melbourne before Jane became pregnant with their second child, Nina, eight. Moving again to Yamba, northern New South Wales, the couple were married not long after they bought their first home there.

Eventually getting "itchy feet" again the couple sold their home in Yamba and returned to Tasmania where they purchased a three bedroom weatherboard home in New Town in December 2010.

Both "anti-materialists" and self-confessed "late starters", the couple hope House Rules will revamp their house which "desperately needs a renovation", admits Plinio.

Although Jane, a high school drama teacher, has never renovated before, she hopes her years of constructing theatre sets and ability "to see the possibilities of a space and how it can create a real mood", will help her and Plinio throughout the competition.

Plinio, on the other hand, whose favourite tool is a sledgehammer because "you feel a bit like Arnold Schwarzenegger when you are wielding one," has always kept himself busy with practical jobs. He spent his 20s working during the house boom. "I did everything from stacking bricks to pouring fittings, plastering and a lot of painting," he says.

Despite having more practical renovating experience, Plinio reveals he is a self-confessed procrastinator who will need Jane to help him make the big decisions.

Family orientated, the hardest part of the competition will be missing their children. "We will just have to get over that, they will be fine," says Jane. "But my head will be at home thinking about them."

Describing their decorating style as uncluttered, Plinio and Jane would like to open up the small, dark rooms in their house and transform it into a modern space whilst still retaining the house's original 1930s features.

Keen to embrace their green principles, Jane hopes to pot indigenous plants in their garden and design a house which is eco-friendly.





# Johanna Griggs

# HOST

Johanna Griggs knows more than a thing or two about renovating, making her the perfect choice to host House Rules.

Away from the world of television, she's a keen renovator who runs a construction company with husband builder Todd Huggins. "Renovating is ridiculously good fun," she says. "And it's my life away from TV."

But she's quick to add renovating isn't easy, as the contestants will discover on House Rules. "Even though it's something we love to do, I'd be lying if I didn't say it can be extremely stressful," Johanna says. "There are so many things you can't control on a building site."

"But the upside is that most days you can actually see tangible change. I love the fact you can look at a room and feel a great sense of satisfaction at what you can achieve. You put your heart, soul, blood, sweat and tears into what you produce and when you realise you've done it together it's an incredibly satisfying and addictive feeling."

Six teams from around Australia have bravely handed over their keys to strangers but it's something Johanna herself could never do. "I admire anyone who has the courage and faith to do that but I'm way too anal and would have a heart attack just thinking of what they might do."

Johanna will continue to host Seven's Better Homes and Gardens, a job she's enjoyed since 2005.

During that time she has also hosted the network's Brisbane International, APIA Sydney International (formerly the Adidas then Medibank International), Australian Open and Melbourne Spring Racing Carnival telecasts. From 2001-2007 she was one of the hosts of Sportsworld. She also presented the sport news on Seven Sydney's weekend bulletins in 2009 and 2010.

Prior to her move to television, Johanna represented Australia in swimming, winning bronze at the Auckland Commonwealth Games in 1990 and a silver at the 1991 World Championships.

After announcing her retirement from swimming in May 1993, Johanna joined the Seven Network. She reported for shows such as Sportsworld and Sydney Weekender, and hosted The AFL Half Time Show.

In 1994 and 1995, Johanna hosted Seven's Summer of Tennis, and worked as a presenter of the 1994 World Swimming Championships from Rome. Later that year Johanna presented the Weekend Sports News and then became the network's first national female (and youngest ever) sports presenter.

Johanna took time out to care for her two sons, returning to television in 1998. She was a regular panellist on Foxtel's Beauty and the Beast and on ABC's sports panel show, The Fat and Good News Week.

Johanna returned to Seven in 2001 after successfully co-hosting the Network's Olympic Sunrise program in 2000. That year she hosted the Adidas International Tennis broadcast, followed immediately by the Australian Open.

In 2002, she became the first solo female host of any Olympics Coverage in this country when she fronted Seven's coverage of the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics, and in 2006 she again hosted the event in Turin. She also hosted Seven's coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

In 2007, she was appointed to the Board of Events New South Wales and in 2009 received an Honorary Doctorate of Letters - Honoris Causis - from Macquarie University in NSW for services to swimming, media and charity fundraising.

Johanna says she's looking forward to this new chapter in her career. "I'm truly excited about the challenge," she says of hosting House Rules. "I've been in this industry for 20 years now and this is the first time I've had a go at this style of show."

"I'm expecting lots of drama, lots of laughter and hopefully some incredibly creative, clever Australian skills on display. But because we are dealing with people's own homes, I'm expecting the stakes to be high, the competition to be tough and the results incredible."



# HOUSE RULES 7

# Carolyn Burns-McCrave

# DESIGNER

Carolyn Burns-McCrave likens joining House Rules as its resident designer to being the character Alice from the children's classic *Alice in Wonderland*.

"I feel like Alice down the rabbit hole, it's as if I'm in an altered dimension because being on television is so completely out of step with my normal life," Carolyn admits.

Creating her own interior design business, Burns-McCrave Design, with her husband Leonard six years ago, Carolyn says she feels most at home "focusing on floor plans, layering fixtures and finishes and creating inviting spaces for clients' homes and businesses".

Carolyn loves being an interior designer and gets a kick out of making things beautiful whilst giving her clients the best version of their style.

"I take great delight in figuring out what my clients want and giving them a well thought out floor plan that will cater to all their practical needs," says Carolyn. "It's about layering all the beautiful things that make it look as if it has all been thrown together when in fact it has been styled within an inch of its life."

Recalling her favourite childhood memories as "going to display homes and looking at beautifully designed houses", Carolyn has always been obsessed with interior design.

She admits she spent most of the 80s moving her parents' furniture around, sponging a few too many walls, using baking paper to trace over real estate floor plans and obsessing over how she could make her parents' friends' houses better.

Completing a Diploma of Arts in Interior Decoration and Design, Carolyn spent the next eight years working at top Melbourne Interior Design firm SJB Interiors, before eventually setting up her own business.

Carolyn says it's a hard ask designing for other people and feels this will be what the House Rules contestants will struggle with the most.

"People are going to have set ideas about what they want to create and the teams that will be able to step outside of their own heads, and think about the couple they are designing for, are going to be the ones with an edge."

Carolyn is excited about the concept of House Rules – the contestants handing over their house keys to strangers to renovate - and admits if she wasn't a designer she would jump at the chance.

"Admittedly it is a leap of faith, but let's face it these houses are just physical spaces that are being filled and you are never going to know how good your house could be until someone takes you there."

Designing and renovating her own house, a 1950s cottage, from top to bottom with her cabinet maker husband, Carolyn loves mixing expensive designer furniture, such as her original Herman Miller Noguchi coffee table, with simple furnishings from Ikea to give a layered, personal look which she notes is in vogue at the moment.

Carolyn currently resides in Melbourne with her husband Leonard and their two children Fintan, 10, and Lorcan, eight.



# HOUSE RULES 7



# Chester Drife

# BUILDER

As the resident build supervisor on House Rules, Chester Drife has some simple words of advice for the show's contestants.

"Formulate a plan, execute it quickly, be resourceful and be willing to adapt to change," says Chester.

Chester will be overseeing each of the teams' projects, alongside designer Carolyn Burn-McCrave. This is his first major television role and he's thrilled to be part of the show. "I like dealing with people and I love building," he says.

The 34-year-old knew early on that a career in building was for him. "I was always good at doing stuff with my hands and problem solving. It's just what I was born to do."

After growing up on his mum's beef and dairy farm near Albury-Wodonga, Chester moved to Melbourne when he was 16. Once he finished high school, he began his apprenticeship and worked for several high-end architectural companies before he began his own business in 2002.

Chester's Construction & Carpentry has been going strong ever since. "Seeing the business flourish has given me a lot of satisfaction," he says. "Building is something I'm really passionate about. It's wonderful taking someone's dream and watching it take shape and seeing the looks on people's faces once the project is complete."

Chester admits he's too much of a "control freak" to hand over his house keys to a bunch of strangers. "I couldn't do it because my home is my dream. I have to live in it every day. There's no chance I could do it. These contestants are a brave lot that's for sure!"

According to Chester, the biggest hurdle facing the contestants will be the time constraints. "Time will certainly not be on their side," he says. "It will be chaotic as they try to get their zone done on time. It will certainly put their skills and relationship with each other to the test."

Chester says each team needs to follow their gut even if it means going against the House Rules left by each home owner. "The biggest struggle is going to be balancing what the owners want with what is going to be the best result. Some rules may need to be broken. But they just need to go with their instincts when it comes to deciding what's right for each zone."

When he's not working, Chester enjoys extreme sports like sky diving and snowboarding. "I want to base jump one day," he admits.

He's also a keen traveller, having taken 2012 off to journey through Europe, Israel and the United States. He's hoping his next stop will be South America.



# Wendy Moore JUDGE

Having worked in the magazine world for more than 20 years, Home Beautiful Editor Wendy Moore is one of Australia's foremost experts on style and design.

Now in its 87th year, Home Beautiful has established itself as the country's favourite homemaker magazine.

Wendy, who took over the reins in 2006, says it's a job she relishes. "I love looking at the homes and all the amazing ideas. It's so inspirational."

Her new role as a judge on House Rules, alongside renowned architect Joe Snell, is the perfect fit. "Home Beautiful is all about homes and this is about people's own homes."

Wendy says she's looking forward to seeing what the six teams will do during their renovations. "I want to see great design and innovation. I want practical, liveable solutions. The work has to be high quality. They're working on real people's homes so they have to make sure everything is done right."

When it comes to judging, Wendy doesn't plan on holding her opinions back. "I am a pretty honest person. If I do have something brutal to say I will have a reason for saying it. My aim is to be constructive and truthful."

Wendy has worked for some of the country's biggest-selling magazine titles including Australian Women's Weekly, Woman's Day and Burke's Backyard Magazine. But helming Home Beautiful remains a career highlight.

Wendy is not only passionate about providing her readers with an endless source of inspiration, but also ensuring they have the practical tools needed to create a home they love to live in. "It's my dream magazine and it has always been the one I wanted to work on. It's a magazine I have a personal passion for."

Wendy, who was born and still resides in Sydney, considers the inner west home she shares with husband Peter and twin girls, Darcy and Britt, her sanctuary. "Our home is quite calming so I've gone with a calming colour scheme throughout the house."

It has undergone some renovations in recent years including the addition of a home office and a kitchen makeover, which they managed to achieve for less than \$2500.

"It was a fairly dated solid pine kitchen. We polished the floorboards, painted the cupboards in gloss white and got some nice brass handles and painted the tiles white. With a fresh coat of paint and some nice light fittings, it went from being out-dated to French provincial. We spend so much time in there now."

The House Rules contestants will be handing over their keys to a bunch of strangers but it's not something Wendy could ever see herself doing. "Not a chance but that's what I love about this show," she says. "We are dealing with real homes. Our contestants have a real emotional connection to their houses and the tension that comes from handing over their keys to someone else is gold."

In her spare time, Wendy enjoys surfing, running and gardening.





# Joe Snell JUDGE

Sydney-based architect Joe Snell is extremely excited about being a judge on House Rules as he believes putting architecture under the spotlight will benefit everyone.

"Most people think that architecture is this massive thing, but hopefully by watching House Rules they will realise it is just about making your day a little better," says Joe.

As the son of an architect, Joe has always been surrounded by sketches of buildings and floor plans. However, it was only once he did a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Architecture, that he realised it was the career for him.

"Once I learnt what architecture was about from someone other than my father I could envision myself being an architect," he says.

He went on to complete a Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Sydney, as well as studying at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen before joining his father's firm.

In between degrees, Joe went to London and became a real estate agent for two years. "Being a real estate agent made me a better architect as I actually learnt what people really wanted in a house," says Joe, a recipient of national design awards in retail, commercial, event and retail projects.

Enthusiastic about assessing the House Rules contestants' handy work, Joe will be looking at four things in particular.

"I want to see how the contestants use the natural light of the house, how they manage the cross ventilation of air flow, how they use and interpret the space of the house and their employment of scale and proportion," says Joe.

Joe admits that renovating other contestants' houses is not going to be easy and believes the hardest part for the teams will be deciding who is going to be the leader and trusting their decisions as well as being able to think in 3D terms when it comes to space.

"Thinking in 3D is a real art which you need to learn," says Joe. "It means you are able to interpret the space of the house in both the horizontal and vertical sense and be able to look at the house as a whole rather than just in terms of the individual zone a team is renovating."

Joe hopes the contestants will be brave in their design decisions and are able to interpret the taste of the contestant's house they are renovating.

"I will tell the truth about the space as I see it, regardless of who renovated it, and I will not sugar coat it, but that doesn't mean I will be a horrible judge," says Joe.

As well as architecture, Joe has a passion for lighting and has created exhibits for Vivid Sydney, an annual festival of light, music and ideas.

Joe currently resides in Sydney with his Danish wife Laura and their two boys Asger, 4, and Bjorn, 2.



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