

Architect

Nature of Work

The role of an architect involves numerous job descriptions including production drawings, design, specifications, construction document production, computer-aided design, and project management. These tasks apply to design in many different types of fields such as building, energy conservation, historic preservation, interiors, site planning, facilities management, landscape design, graphics, and urban planning. The design element of architecture requires sensitivity to the environment. Architects learn to discover new and creative ways of problem solving under diverse and changing conditions with known and unknown constraints.

Education and Training

The architect needs to prepare for his or her career in high school by taking a broad range of courses which should include art, English, history, social studies, mathematics, physics, foreign languages, business, and computer science. It is helpful to have freehand drawing skills as well as rudimentary drafting ability and an interest in the natural and built environments. It is important to apply early to a school of Architecture (accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board), as admission is often competitive. The bachelor degree involves a five-year undergraduate and graduate program, or a four-year liberal arts degree (undergraduate) followed by a two to three-year graduate degree.

Advancement Potential

Advancement within the field of architecture often involves becoming a registered architect. This is accomplished by passing a state board licensing test which can be taken after fulfilling certain obligations (which vary from state to state). The obligations typically include internship for at least a three-year period under a professional architect. At the upper levels of advancement there are job opportunities such as firm management, business development, and marketing.