Architect Encyclopedia Article

Architect

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The path to becoming an architect is not an easy one. It begins in high school with good grades, particularly in such subjects as algebra, calculus, trigonometry, and physics. It then requires at least a bachelor's degree, and possibly a master's degree, from an accredited school of architecture. After a three-to five-year internship, aspiring architects must pass a licensing examination in the state they wish to practice. Along the way, an architect will become comfortable with numbers, measurements, and the principles of engineering. In addition, they develop solid computer skills, including the ability to use computer-aided design and drafting programs.

The architect's job begins with a sketch of the building the client wants, though a landscape architect will design natural environments rather than structures. After imagining the building, the architect—usually working as part of a team—must turn the concept into detailed drawings with realistic features so that the builder can construct it in the way it was envisioned, while staying within the customer's timeframe and budget.

It is not enough, though, for an architect to be an artist and mathematician; an architect also has to have good communications skills. Under conditions that are often stressful, an architect will have to communicate with builders throughout the design and construction process and make sure that they have the needed information. The architect also must communicate with clients to ensure they are satisfied with the results of the project.

See Also

Computer-Aided Design; Landscape Architect; Morgan, Julia.

Bibliography

Ching, Frank, and Francis D. Ching. *Architectural Graphics.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1996.

Piper, Robert J., et al. *Opportunities in Architecture Careers.* Lincolnwood, IL: VGM Career Horizons, 2000.