



What is the best preparation for a career in architecture? (Source: Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture)

Admission Considerations

Admission requirements are set by each institution. Typically, admission decisions involve a review of the student's past academic history and test scores. Some undergraduate programs may require a portfolio or interview. Some programs may have "open admission," with minimal entry requirements, but internal review processes for advancement in the program. Most graduate programs will require a portfolio, even if a college graduate's background is not in architecture.

Portfolios

Because architecture is a visual discipline, an individual's portfolio is often an important consideration in admission decisions and, later, in interviewing for jobs.

For admission as a beginning student in architecture, the portfolio should show potential as a visual thinker and personal initiative as a designer. Potential can be demonstrated in many ways, including drawings, fine art work, ceramics, sculpture, graphic design, photography or constructed projects such as stage sets or pieces of furniture. **Probably the least significant component of such a portfolio would be CAD drawings from a high school course that tend to demonstrate technical drafting skills rather than potential.**

Some programs have portfolio reviews periodically to determine advancement within the program, including the transition into the graduate component of a 4+2 program. Not only would these portfolios show potential, but they would document course work completed to date.

Almost all architecture firms review candidate portfolios in the interview process. In this case, they will be looking for accomplishments, potential, the ability to be part of a team, technical understanding, and communication skills, both verbal and visual. **Free-hand drawing as well as digital expertise are typically valued.**

While the portfolio has different purposes and audiences, it should be well organized. Labeling should indicate if work was for a course assignment or if it was completed independently; it is also useful to know when the work was completed and the approximate amount of time involved. Students should document and preserve their work. Submission of original items is not usually necessary, although different programs may have different requirements.

Visually, the portfolio itself is a type of design project, and will reflect the design personality and organizational capabilities of its author.

Freshman Entry Portfolios for architecture fields for top programs in the U.S.:

Cornell College of Architecture, Art, and Planning-

A portfolio must be submitted for an application to be considered. Applicants to the B.Arch. program may submit their portfolio either online via Cornell AAP SlideRoom or in hard copy. Content of the portfolio remains the same regardless of format of submission. Samples of **freehand drawing are required**. In addition to drawings, **please include a variety of work from media such as painting, sculpture, graphics, art photography, woodworking, ceramics, or any other visual media that demonstrate interest, experience, and aptitude in creative and graphic areas**.

Please submit 15–20 items and present the material in a neat, well-organized manner.

Washington University, St. Louis School of Design and Visual Arts-

Optional Portfolio

We encourage you to submit a portfolio of completed artwork. A portfolio is optional for first-year admission; it is required for consideration for an academic scholarship. There are several ways you may submit your portfolio. Our representatives attend many National Portfolio Days held in major cities throughout the country, and we welcome the opportunity to review your portfolio at these events. In addition, you may set up a personal visit to Washington University and have your work reviewed in the College of Architecture. Finally, you may submit your digital portfolio along with your application. If you would like to be considered for an academic scholarship, you must submit a digital portfolio.

Submitting a Digital Portfolio: You may submit images through the Slideroom function of the Common Application. Your digital portfolio must consist of **10-20 pieces of recent work, which may include drawings, two- and three-dimensional pieces, or photographs**.

Michigan Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning-

Two projects represented on one page each. **Graphite only; freehand or drafted**.

One page for each task.

Compose a collection of drawings of where you currently live. Use a minimum of three views with one being an overall plan and at least one describing the inside and one outside. There is no limit on the number of drawings, but they all need to all fit onto one portfolio page (these could be plans or sections or direct drawings from observation, which may include details or zoomed-in views).

Design a Bus Stop. Make it the most wonderful Bus Stop ever! Your design should minimally include a place to wait for the bus that has some shelter from the elements: how much shelter (roof, walls, etc.) and which elements (rain, snow, sun, etc.) are up to you. Locate the bus stop in your neighborhood and show how it would be an enhancing addition to its context. The bus stop is limited to a cubic volume of 12 feet x 12 feet x 12 feet (though it can take less space). Again, all the drawings of your bus stop must fit on a single portfolio page (as space is quite limited, your solution need not necessarily specify materials, but its shape and layout should be clear).

Work may include, but need not be limited to, examples of:

- architectural design or building
- drawing-freehand and/or mechanical
- photography
- interior, industrial, and graphic design
- painting, printmaking, sculpture, and ceramics
- woodworking, sewing, or other crafts
- digital media
- stage design
- two- and three-dimensional pieces
- fashion or costume design