

# Becoming an Architect



The process to becoming a licensed architect consists of three main components:  
Education • Experience • Examination

## EDUCATION

To become a licensed architect, in almost all states it is necessary to obtain a degree accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) ([www.naab.org](http://www.naab.org)). There are over 100 institutions in the United States that offer NAAB accredited programs.

### Accredited Professional Degrees

- *Bachelor of Architecture* (150 semester credit hours - typically 5 years)
- *Master of Architecture* (168 credit hours, of which 30 semester credit hours must be at the graduate level - typically 6-7 years)
- *Doctor of Architecture* (120 undergraduate hours, minimum of 90 graduate-level semester credit hours)

Many schools offer different program tracks depending on your undergraduate degree. It is not necessary to have an undergraduate degree in architecture to pursue a professional degree in architecture.

### Undergraduate Degrees

A pre-professional degree is a Bachelor of Science major in architecture or its equivalent. Students with other backgrounds, such as liberal arts, can also apply for professional degree programs.

### Portfolio Requirements

Admission to architecture programs usually requires a portfolio showing drawing and design skills.

### Nearby NAAB Accredited Architecture Programs:

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities - School of Architecture in the College of Design (M. Arch.)

<http://arch.design.umn.edu>

Iowa State University - Department of Architecture (B. Arch., M. Arch.)

<http://www.design.iastate.edu/architecture/>

North Dakota State University - Department of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (M. Arch.)

<http://ala.ndsu.edu>

University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee - School of Architecture and Urban Planning (M. Arch.)

<http://www4.uwm.edu/SARUP>

The professional degree in architecture allows the graduate to pursue many different paths.

For those interested in architecture, but not licensure, there are two-year technical degrees in architecture and drafting, as well as related fields such as interior design and industrial design.





## WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE AN ARCHITECT?

Architects complete a variety of tasks for every project. For example:

- Drawings - buildings, landscape, interiors
- Design
- Programming
- Project Management - meetings with clients, consultants, team members
- Coordinating with other disciplines: Landscape Architects, Interior Designers, Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, and Structural Engineers
- Construction Administration
- Materials research

## EXPERIENCE

Practical experience is required for licensure, during which time you are an intern completing the Intern Development Program (IDP). IDP covers all aspects of building: design through construction.

Interns are required to complete hours working in the following categories: Pre-design; Design; Project Management; and Practice Management. Areas covered in the categories range from schematic design to construction documents. IDP hours typically take three to five years to complete.

## EXAMINATION

The Architect Registration Examination (ARE) tests knowledge, skills and abilities to practice architecture and evaluates whether you have the skills necessary to protect public safety. Many jurisdictions allow you to start testing immediately after completing your accredited education, and may also allow you to complete the ARE and IDP concurrently.

The ARE is comprised of seven examinations: Schematic Design; Construction and Documents & Services; Structural Systems; Site Planning and Design; Building Design and Construction Systems; Building Systems; and Programming, Planning & Practice.

## RESOURCES

American Institute of Architects (AIA)

<http://www.aia.org>

American Institute of Architects — Minnesota

<http://www.aia-mn.org>

American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS)

[www.aias.org](http://www.aias.org)

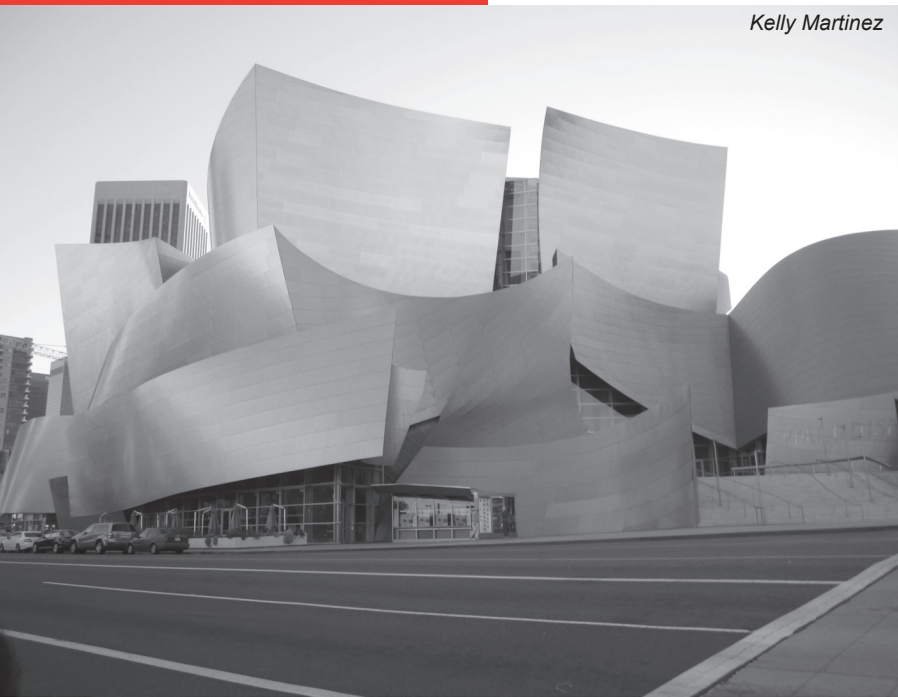
National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB)

[www.ncarb.org](http://www.ncarb.org)

National Architectural Accreditation Board (NAAB)

[www.naab.org](http://www.naab.org)

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This brochure was created by the AIA Minnesota Architecture in the Schools Committee and is intended as a guide for students interested in pursuing a career in architecture. AIA Minnesota is a society of the American Institute of Architects and an advocate for the value of the architectural profession. To find a Minnesota architect please visit us on the web at [www.aia-mn.org](http://www.aia-mn.org).



## AIA Minnesota

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