

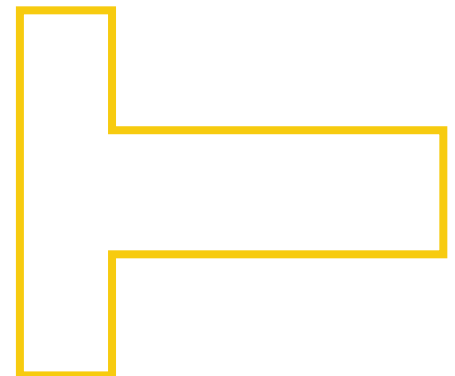
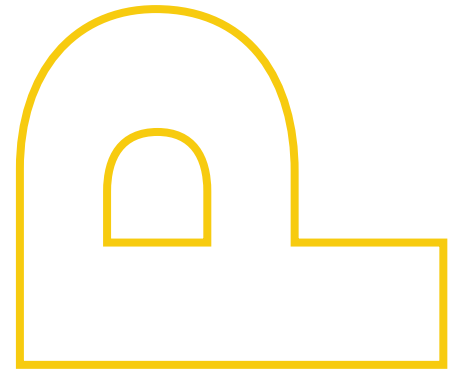
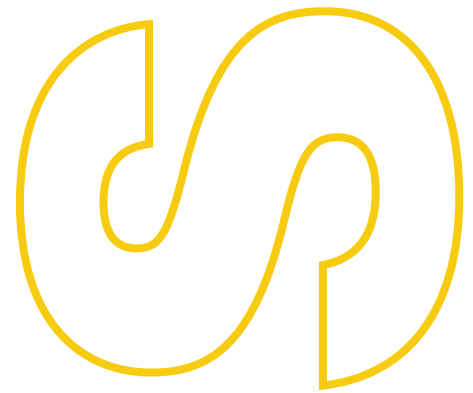
PART 1

**THE APPLICATION GUIDE
TO ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL**

HOW TO

PREPARE

FOR ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL



TO HELP YOU
PREPARE FOR
ARCHITECTURE
SCHOOL

Tip #1: Research. Research. Research.

There are many paths to becoming a licensed architect. If that's your goal, it's important to know which schools offer degree programs accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB). Additionally, you should also assess what area of focus a school emphasizes. For example, some schools are art intensive, some are technology focused and others are community centered.

Tip #2: Take an art class.

It's a common misconception that studying architecture will be extremely math intensive. While every program has different requirements, art and/or design is a staple in most programs. Architecture is a blend of art and science and so cultivating art skills early will definitely give you a leg up. As a student, you'll discover that an architecture degree can lead to many careers.

“Going into architecture my first semester, I wish I had taken more art classes before college.” —Architecture Student

Tip #3: Get social.

Social media is a great way to expose yourself to design content from around the world. Check out student work on Instagram @imadethat_, keep up with what's happening at architecture schools on Instagram @studyarchitecture, and get a preview of what student leaders are doing with their design and service work on Instagram by following @aiasorg.

Tip #4: Explore some architectural sites.

This can often be done right where you live. Architecture is everywhere. From historic homes found in the south to skyscrapers lining city streets, each building found in your neighborhood contributes to the social, political and environmental story of your community.


“Architecture is literally everywhere. It's the best major because you can literally go anywhere and make an impact.” —Architecture Student

Tip #5: Visit a few schools.

If time and money permits, it's always best to visit the school's campus so you can see the student work, take a tour of the school, and ask questions in person. See the next page for a short list of questions you can ask the admissions department.



QUESTIONS TO ASK THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE




In addition to some of the standard college admission questions, here are a few architecture specific questions to ask.

What degree programs do you offer in architecture and related fields?


This question is important for two reasons.

Reason 1: There are numerous paths to become a licensed architect. Here is the quick rundown.

Associate degrees (A.A., A.S., A.A.S): This 2-year degree can be an entry point directly into the architecture workforce or a starting point to gain some foundational skills and transfer to a 4-year institution. It is not NAAB accredited and will not satisfy the education requirement for initial licensure.




Bachelor of Art or Science in Architecture (B.A. or B.S. in Architecture, Architectural Studies, Environmental Design, Architectural Engineering...etc.): This 4-year degree is a common precursor to the NAAB accredited M.Arch. It develops a comprehensive knowledge of the discipline of architecture but is not NAAB accredited and will not satisfy the education requirement for initial licensure in most states. If you're unsure about becoming a licensed architect, one of these degrees could still encompass everything you enjoy about design and construction.



Bachelor of Architecture (B. Arch): This 5-year degree is the most popular undergraduate degree that will satisfy the education requirement for initial licensure. Students develop a comprehensive knowledge of the discipline of architecture as well as foundational professional knowledge and a basic understanding of related fields. Most of the 55 U.S. licensing boards require that architects hold a professional degree from a NAAB-accredited program and this is the only undergraduate NAAB accredited architecture degree offered in the U.S.

Master of Architecture (M.Arch): This 2-year or 3-year degree is a graduate level degree and can be paired with a B.A or B.S. in Architecture or a bachelor degree in a non-related field. This is the most popular graduate degree that will satisfy the education requirement for initial licensure. A student will develop an understanding of architecture including knowledge of the academy and the profession as well as some level of specialization.

Master of Science (M.S. in Architecture): This 1-year or 2-year degree is a graduate level degree and is commonly a post-professional degree, meaning it comes after the completion of a B.Arch or an M.Arch. It is usually research focused and predicated on independent inquiry. It is not NAAB accredited and will not satisfy the education requirement for initial licensure.



Doctor of Architecture (D.Arch): This 3-year or 4-year degree is a graduate level degree and, much like the M.Arch, can be paired with a B.A or B.S. in Architecture or a bachelor degree in a non-related field.

Reason 2: Although you may only be interested in architecture, understanding how architecture interacts with related fields will make you a better architecture student. Architecture degree programs are often housed in larger colleges or schools and may have some overlap with programs in art, architectural history, building construction, engineering, interior design, landscape architecture and/or urban planning. As such, you may decide to pursue work or graduate study in one of those fields.

Are there any additional admissions requirements?

Many schools require an additional major-specific essay, but some schools of architecture also require students to submit a portfolio. A portfolio is a collection of your design work to date. This traditionally includes architectural drawings, photography, models, technical solutions or other artistic mediums. A few schools also recommend students participate in on-campus interviews.

Do you have an estimate of any additional expenses that are not included in tuition and fees?

Often times architecture students are required to purchase a specific laptop, a drafting board, and/or specific software and art supplies. Some schools require students to travel for studio projects and other schools require a semester of study in another country. It is a good idea to plan ahead for these expenses and add these expenses into your total cost of attendance. If you are hoping to save money, a good follow up question would be about the availability of computers and materials available for students to use free of charge.

What policies do you have to ensure student wellbeing?

The truth is, architecture schools are notorious for being rigorous and time intensive. Schools know this and should be able to articulate measures they take to ensure students are managing the balance between schoolwork and college life. Each school should have a studio culture policy

and should be able to share how they implement that policy. Some schools close studios at certain hours to instill healthy work habits while others offer one-on-one mentoring for students to share successes and failures.

Does this program allow me to gain practical work experience while I am a student?

Depending on degree type, some programs will facilitate work experience. Some schools offer co-op programs that integrate working in an architectural practice as part of your degree and some programs offer the Integrated Path to Architecture Licensure (IPAL). IPAL schools provide a few students with the opportunity to complete the Architectural Experience Program® (AXP®) and the Architect Registration Examination® (ARE®) required for licensure at the same time they are completing the degree.

Does this program offer study abroad or interdisciplinary opportunities?

An architectural education is dependent on a well-maintained balance between how much time you spend studying, and how much time you spend seeking inspiration from the world around you. Traveling outside of the United States can be helpful in finding that balance. Make sure the program you choose encourages opportunities to develop soft skills outside of the classroom because architects have to work well with people outside of their discipline.



STUDENT ADVICE

“Don’t compare yourself and your portfolio to other people’s. Everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses.”

“Don’t limit yourself to architecture here in the states. Take advantage of study abroad programs at your school. I spent a semester in Spain and traveled to five other European countries while I was there.”

“Be sure to check out how your credits transfer ahead of time. I attended a community college for two years and so it was really important to contact my current school to make sure my credits would carry over.”

“My professor often says that ‘architecture school is the time to have fun and try new things,’ because although architecture school can be wildly hectic, it is also the best time to try crazy designs before going into the workforce and potentially not having enough time to be super creative.”

“Don’t be afraid to go outside of the architecture school. Other majors don’t bite!”

STUDENT ADVICE

“Ever since I took AutoCAD/Revit classes in high school, I knew I wanted to do something in CAD. Second semester freshman year I switched majors to Building Construction with a focus in virtual construction design. I’ve been studying building science and creating sophisticated 3D models. Finding a program like this in college is a great option for those who aren’t sure if they want to become an architect but enjoy building design.”

“Tour the schools you are applying to. Architecture schools, in particular, have very different methods of teaching so consider your options and then determine which teaching methods and classroom/studio styles you like best.”

“When I got to architecture school, my professor repeatedly told me, ‘you don’t have to be an artist to be an architect.”

“When you go on school tours, pay attention to the faculty. They are the ones who will teach you how to read the built environment.”

“Going into architecture my first semester, I wish I had taken more art classes before college.”

For additional help in choosing an architecture school, check out the StudyArchitecture Quiz at <https://www.studyarchitecture.com/quiz/>. For questions, please contact info@acsa-arch.org.

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STUDY
ARCHITECTURE



THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS