



## How to Hire an Architect

Working with an architect can be a very personal process. Talking about your needs, preferences and budget requires an architect who makes you feel comfortable, and with whom you have open communication. Below are a few tips to help you find the right architect for you.

### Tip 1 – Style and Skill

Architecture firms are as diverse as architects themselves. Reviewing a firm or an architect's past projects can help give you a sense of their style and approach, as well as the types of projects they are known for and excel at.

Think about what is most important to your project. Do you need help imagining what's possible or are you interested in pushing the limits of design? Are you looking for someone who is pragmatic and practical to provide drawings, specs and to project manage the construction process? Once you've listed your priorities, it's time to start looking for an architect who matches your criteria.

### Tip 2 – Search for an Architect

AIA Colorado has a [database](#) full of architects who are licensed to practice in the state, and uphold the highest standards of The American Institute of Architects. You can also ask for referrals from owners of projects you admire. And, many contractors have a list of architects they prefer to work with.

Once you've pulled together a shortlist, visit the architect's website and look through their portfolio. If those projects appeal to you, it might be a good fit.

### Tip 3 – Meet in Person

Choose a few architects, and call to set up time to meet in person. Come prepared to talk about your vision, budget and plans, and ask for their feedback. Consider asking the following questions:

- o How do you collaborate with clients?
- o What services do you provide during the process?
- o Who will I be working directly with?
- o Do you have experience with projects like mine?
- o Can you help me set a budget? How will my budget impact the design?
- o Do you have a list of preferred contractors and other project team members?
- o What are your fees and how will I be billed?
- o Could you share references for similar projects?

### Tip 4 – Hiring an Architect

Once you have found an architect that suits your needs and personality, you should request a contract. Make sure you read it thoroughly and understand all of the provisions and deliverables before signing. Consider having a lawyer review the contract with you.