

What does it mean to be an ARCHITECT?

Architects are responsible for designing our homes, towns and cities. It is a very difficult job, but it leaves a legacy that can last for hundreds of years.

The Key Facts

- ◆ Cambodia is 16th in the world for the rate of urbanization (how quickly cities are growing). This means people are needed to plan cities.
- ◆ The Cambodian government approved \$2.1 billion of construction projects in 2012, while it was only \$1.2 billion in 2011, highlighting the speed of growth.
- ◆ Around 40% of all architecture students in the world are female. However, unfortunately only 12% of those women were estimated to be.

Training

It takes a lot of commitment and determination to become an architect. You need to get a degree, and then do even more training afterwards. An architecture degree is one of the longest degrees you can undertake. You will then need to

spend time gaining experience as an intern before you become a real professional.

Fortunately, the ability to draw well is not as important as many people think. What matters is the accuracy of your design, your ability to figure out the exact measurements required and the quality of the finished design. Maths and science are particularly important subjects to master.

What does the job involve?

Very famous architects like Zaha Hadid (below) are commissioned by cities or even countries to design special buildings.

However, most architects design smaller buildings like homes. As well as spending time in the studio where they sketch their ideas and start new designs, they also have to spend time at the construction sites

for their buildings in order to ensure everything goes according to plan and to change the plan if necessary.

You also need to meet with clients and listen to their ideas. You will have to try and include their ideas into your design.

Communication Skills

Sometimes you will come across clients who are disorganised, rude, indecisive and overdemanding. You need to be able to work with these people or you might lose some work.

Creativity

The ability to create new and original ideas is essential for architects. They are sometimes in charge of designing very important buildings which will be visited by many people.

The Hours

The hours are not too demanding for architects. Most have very regular office hours, and they have no

obligation to work on public holidays.

Engineering

A huge part of an architect's job is similar to that of an engineer. A huge amount of science goes into designing a building that will last for a long time.

The Disadvantages

- ◆ Unless you are very successful, it doesn't earn a particularly high salary compared to other professions with a similar level of training.
- ◆ It takes a very long time before you become qualified.
- ◆ It is a profession which is very dependant on the state of the economy. When the economy suffers, architects feel it.
- ◆ Architecture is a very challenging and demanding field. It takes twice

as long to design a building as it does to build it.

The Advantages

- ◆ It's an opportunity to leave your mark on the world around you.
- ◆ What you do really matters to people. You provide people with safe, attractive buildings to live and work in.
- ◆ It's a really interesting and varied job. It's rare that you do the exact same thing week to week, especially as you gain more experience.
- ◆ Seeing the finished product of all your hard work is an amazing feeling, particularly when other people love it, too.
- ◆ It's a creative job and you will have the opportunity to meet lots of other creative people, which can be very interesting.



