

HOW TO CHOOSE AN ARCHITECT

Have you made the decision to build a new home or addition, remodel your kitchen or bath, or reconfigure your home's interior to create more functional or appealing space? You may have spent significant time poring over online resources and shelter publications looking for appealing designs that inspire you. Now, how to do you begin?

Hiring an architect streamlines what can be a complicated process, saves you time and money, and gives you a chance to view in advance what the outcome will be. Choosing the right architect for you and your project should be taken seriously. **At Slocum Hall Design Group, we suggest you consider the following before making your final decision:**



Resources + Consultants

Your architect should have established relationships with several resources and contractors, and offer to introduce you to those best suited to your project. In addition, your architect can help choose fixtures and finishes for your home as well as select specialized product and service providers.

Project Management

Like a symphony, there are countless small tasks each professional is expected to perform during a project. It should be a harmonious arrangement, making sure the builder is held to clear expectations and that the correct bath fixtures arrive before the plumber needs them. The architect handles these countless details all while keeping in perspective the larger vision for the project.

Communication

Your initial meeting with your architect will reveal a certain communication style. An open line of communications is crucial; it helps an architect interpret your needs and your taste. When hiring an architect, ask for a specific schedule of updates or meetings so that in addition to the conversations that arise naturally during a project, you know you will be more formally updated on a regular basis.

Design aesthetic

Architects will sometimes boast a signature style or expertise, such as "green," "modern," or "traditional;" most will try to adapt to a client's needs. Look closely at the architect's portfolio to determine if an individual design aesthetic emerges, then discern if their style or expertise appeals to you or the needs of the project.

Cost

It is common for architects to base their fees on a percentage of the total project cost. The percentage can range anywhere from 5% to 20% depending on the scope and complexity of the project, the specific services for which you've contracted and the prestige of the firm you've hired. Often, the initial charges for design are invoiced monthly by the hour or on a fixed retainer basis until the total project cost is determined. Make sure the fee structured is clearly communicated and agreed upon before you sign a contract.

Personality

Your architect is a person with whom you should expect to interact on a frequent basis, someone who will enter areas of your home not often shared. The person or team selected should be trustworthy with the personal details of how you live.



You'll find an architect can elevate your new home or renovation to a design aesthetic you may not have imagined possible, while at the same time managing the schedule and costs of implementation. Invite into your vetting process those architects whose work you have seen or who come highly recommended. **At Slocum Hall Design Group, we hope to be among them.**