



Working with an Architect

Clients often have questions on how to select an architect. Your decision should be based on your confidence in the architect's technical competence, professional service and design ability. Here are some suggestions on how to proceed in the selection process.

1. Choose an architect as early in the process as possible. The more information that is shared, the more chance there is for a successful project.
2. Interview at least 3 firms, unless you already have a good relationship with an architect.
3. Ask prospective firms to show you their completed projects.
4. In the interview process, treat each firm equally: ask the same questions and give the same access to your site or existing house.
5. Give each architect a time for notification of your decision, and after you have notified the selected firm, notify the others as to your decision.
6. Begin negotiations with the selected firm on a fee. If you cannot agree, you may want to begin negotiating with your second choice.
7. After you have selected your architect continue to ask questions.

Communications are very important. Tell the architect what you know and what you expect. Ask for an explanation of anything you don't understand. Remember that this is a business relationship and that any good business relationship requires a contract. (The American Institute of Architects has developed a series of contracts that may be useful to you. You may look at the Documents section of our website for information on contract documents.)

Remember that it is very important that the "chemistry" is right between you and your architect. You will want to select the architect who understands what you want and is able to translate that into the design that is right for you.