

What is the Architectural Design Process?

Worksheet

The architectural design process is a five-phase framework - programming, schematic design, design development, construction documents, and construction administration - that guides a project from concept to completion.

Questions

1. Which phase comes immediately after Schematic Design?

- A) Programming
- B) Design Development
- C) Construction Administration
- D) Bidding

2. In which phase are permit-ready drawings produced?

- A) Programming
- B) Schematic Design
- C) Construction Documents
- D) Construction Administration

3. What is the main purpose of the Programming phase?

- A) Finalizing structural details
- B) Gathering client needs and site data
- C) Overseeing construction
- D) Selecting finish materials

4. Who typically reviews contractor questions on site during construction?

- A) The client's lawyer
- B) The architect during construction administration
- C) The city planning board
- D) The interior designer

5. A family hires an architect to design a small home on a sloped lot. What happens first?

6. A city commissions a new library. Why can't construction start right after the concept sketch is approved?

7. During construction, the contractor finds an unexpected utility line under the foundation. Which phase handles this?

8. Define: What are the 5 phases of the architectural design process?

9. Define: What happens during Programming?

10. Define: What is the goal of Schematic Design?

Answer Key

1. B) Design Development - Design Development refines the approved schematic concept before construction documents are drawn.
2. C) Construction Documents - Construction Documents translate the design into buildable, permit-ready drawings and specs.
3. B) Gathering client needs and site data - Programming defines the project's requirements before any design begins.
4. B) The architect during construction administration - Construction administration is when the architect answers field questions and verifies design intent.
5. Programming: the architect surveys the site, interviews the family about needs (3 bedrooms, home office) and sets a budget. Schematic design: 2-3 massing options are sketched to respond to the slope. Design development: the chosen scheme is refined with materials and structural framing. Construction documents: detailed plans, sections and details are drawn for permit submission. Construction administration: the architect visits the site to confirm the framing matches the drawings.
6. The concept sketch only covers schematic design. Design development must lock in structure, HVAC and materials. Construction documents translate that into buildable, permit-ready drawings with dimensions and specs. Only after permits are issued can construction begin, with the architect still administering the contract.
7. This falls under construction administration. The architect reviews the field condition, issues a change order or revised detail (an RFI response), and confirms the fix doesn't compromise the design intent.
8. Programming, Schematic Design, Design Development, Construction Documents, Construction Administration.
9. The architect gathers client needs, site data, codes and budget to define the project's requirements.
10. To explore early massing and layout concepts that respond to the site and program.

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