

INTERIOR DESIGN

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES/INFORMATION

INTERIOR DESIGN

Commercial Design Including:

- Offices
- Retail
- Healthcare
 - Hospitals and clinics
 - Medical offices
- Hospitality
 - Restaurants
 - Bars and Clubs
 - Hotels and Motels
 - Resorts
 - Theaters

Civic Design:

- Airports
- Government Facilities
- Educational Institutions

Residential Design:

- Single-family Houses
- Apartments
- Condominiums

In-store Design

Design Specialties Including:

- Bath
- Kitchen
- Lighting
- Ergonomic Design
- Green Design
- Elder Design

Renovations

Sales/Marketing

Management

Education

Design firms
Architecture firms
Design divisions of corporations/institutions
Carpet manufacturers
Furniture and home stores
Federal government departments
Colleges and universities
Self-employed/freelance

Create a portfolio of your work while in school. Make the most of studio time.

Complete an internship to gain relevant experience. Join relevant student organizations and seek leadership roles. Become a student member of the American Society of Interior Designers.

After finishing a design degree and gaining required experience, prepare to take the qualifying exam administered by the National Council for Interior Design Qualification.

Research state requirements to become certified, registered, or licensed.

Learn to understand both the artistic, creative side and the business, technical side of design to assure success in the field. Study human and environmental interaction.

Consider studying abroad to gain multicultural experience.

Become familiar with Computer Aided Design (CAD) software.

Gain an understanding of state and federal building statutes and safety codes.

Develop strong communication skills which are important when interacting with clients and writing work proposals.

Understand the importance of learning to listen attentively to others and providing excellent customer service.

Learn to work well with different types of people including clients, architects, contractors and other service providers.

Gain experience working in a fast-paced environment and meeting deadlines. Plan to work on multiple projects at a time.

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Conduct informational interviews with designers in a variety of settings to learn about particular areas of interest.

Build a network of contacts, especially if considering freelance work, to keep up with industry trends and build clientele.

Interior designers are four times as likely to be self-employed than people in other specialty professions. Most others work in small firms of 1 to 5 employees. (BLS)

Earn a graduate degree in design to increase opportunities to work as a university professor.

Engage in scholarly research to expand the knowledge base of the profession.

AREAS RELATED TO INTERIOR DESIGN

Those with training in interior design may pursue the following career fields if they have the right combination of experiences. Some areas may require additional training or graduate degrees. If these areas interest you, take relevant coursework, complete internships, and get involved in related activities to prepare for the fields. For example, someone trained in interior design who wants to work for a design publication should develop strong writing skills, consider minoring in journalism or English, work for a campus or community newspaper, etc.

Some related fields are:

- Set design for stage and screen
- Lighting design
- Furniture design
- Product development
- Journalism, e.g. design magazines
- Illustration/rendering
- Computer rendering
- Facility management
- Historic preservation
- Floral design
- Landscape design
- Architecture (degree required)
- Engineering (degree required)