

# Architects

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## 1. Working as an Architect [NOC 2151]

### *Job Description*

Architects plan and design the construction and renovation of buildings. You can choose to specialize in a type of construction such as residential, commercial, industrial or institutional.

As an architect you do the following:

- Consult with clients to determine style and purpose of building
- Conceive and design buildings
- Develop design specifications, building materials, costs, and construction schedules
- Prepare bidding documents, participate in contract negotiations, and award construction contracts
- Monitor activities by contractors and on construction sites to ensure compliance with specifications
- Conduct feasibility studies and financial analyses of building projects

Source:

*WorkBC Career Profile for Architects (NOC 2151)*

<https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/2151>

### *Industry Overview*

Demand for architects is expected to grow. This is due to a large number of architects retiring in the coming years, and an anticipated increase in construction projects. The largest architecture sector is non-residential (projects such as

hospitals, schools, retail buildings, restaurants, hotels, and office buildings). The second largest sector is residential construction, especially multi-family units.

## **Job Outlook in BC**

### **Architects, NOC 2151**

#### **Employment Outlook - Architects, NOC 2151**



Chart from WorkBC

JobBank Canada reports that for the 2016-2018 period, the employment outlook is expected to be good for Architects (NOC 2151) in British Columbia. Employment growth is expected to be strong and a large number of people are expected to retire.

The **Employment Outlook for BC** provides job openings projections for Architects in two BC regions:

| <b>Region</b>              | <b>2015-2025 Estimated Job Openings</b> | <b>2015-2025 Average Annual Employment Growth</b> |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Vancouver Island           | 150                                     | 0.5%  |
| Lower Mainland / Southwest | 1200                                    | 1.5%  |

Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/2151>

You can learn more about working as an architect in BC from

- *WorkBC Career Profile for Architects (NOC 2151)*  
<https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/2151>

- **Career Cruising** (profile for 'Architect')  
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

### ***Types of Employers***

Most architects work for architectural firms and building contractors, but you may also work for government agencies and real estate companies..You may also be self-employed.

### ***Salary***

The *median* annual salary for architects in BC is \$66,176. There is a huge range in incomes. If you work as an intern after graduation from an architecture program you generally earn between \$40,000 and \$60,000 a year. After completing this training period your annual salary is between \$50,000 and \$100,000, although some make more than this.

The highest incomes are earned by architects who are the principal architects at a firm, or who become partners in large firms. Because you are often paid by the project, a slow down in construction generally means lower earnings. Self-employed architects might make as little as \$30,000 a year, while busy principal architects in large successful firms can bring in as much as \$300,000 a year.

**Source: Career Cruising** (profile for 'Architect')  
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

Job Bank Canada provides hourly wages for Architects in BC regions:

**Hourly Wages for Architects, NOC 2151**

| <b>Wage Estimates</b>                             |              |        |       |
|---|--------------|--------|-------|
| Location  | Wage (\$/hr) |        |       |
|   | Low          | Median | High  |
| <b>British Columbia</b>                           | 22.66        | 31.73  | 52.00 |
| <a href="#">Cariboo Region</a>                    | N/A          | N/A    | N/A   |
| <a href="#">Kootenay Region</a>                   | N/A          | N/A    | N/A   |
| <a href="#">Lower Mainland - Southwest Region</a> | 23.00        | 31.73  | 52.00 |
| <a href="#">Nechako Region</a>                    | N/A          | N/A    | N/A   |
| <a href="#">North Coast Region</a>                | N/A          | N/A    | N/A   |
| <a href="#">Northeast Region</a>                  | N/A          | N/A    | N/A   |
| <a href="#">Thompson--Okanagan Region</a>         | N/A          | N/A    | N/A   |
| <a href="#">Vancouver Island and Coast Region</a> | 22.66        | 31.73  | 52.00 |

Source: Job Bank Canada <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>

***Working Hours***

Working hours vary greatly. Some architects work 7 to 8 hours a day, 5 days a week; others might work 12 hours a day, 6 days a week. If you are self-employed, your hours depend on how much business you have.

Source: Career Cruising

**2. Skills, Education and Experience**

***Skills***

- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Innovative, imaginative, creative
- Detail-oriented
- Good spatial perception
- Computer aided design
- Drafting (CADD) programs

Sources: WorkBC and Career Cruising (Profile for Architect)

## ***Education and Experience***

In order to work as an Architect in BC you require:

- A post-secondary education certified by the Canadian Architectural Certification Board <http://cacb.ca/en/home/>
- Completion of an internship (3720 hours) under the supervision of a registered architect (see: [http://internship.aibc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/AIBC-IAP-Graphic\\_revised2017.pdf](http://internship.aibc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/AIBC-IAP-Graphic_revised2017.pdf))
- Completion of the architect registration examination
- Registration with the Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC)

## ***Qualifications***

***This occupation is regulated in British Columbia.***

In order to practice in B.C., you must either obtain a Certificate of Practice (licence) from the ***Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC)***, or work for a person or firm that holds a current Certificate of Practice.

More information on registration and licensing:

- **Architectural Institute of British Columbia**  
<http://aibc.ca/registration/>

## ***Internationally Trained and Accredited Architects***

The Broadly Experienced Foreign Architect (BEFA) Program is an alternative pathway for internationally trained architects to obtain your license. The program is administered by the ***Canadian Architecture Certification Board (CACB)***.

The BEFA Program streamlines the licensing through a three-step process that includes a review of eligibility, an on-line assessment, and an interview with registered architects.

More information:

- **Canadian Architecture Certification Board – BEFA Certification**

<http://cacb.ca/en/broadly-experienced-foreign-architect-befa-certification/>

<http://cacb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/03-BEFA-Overview-Process.pdf>

### 3. Finding Jobs

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers, trade journals, and electronic sources, as well as through professional associations' publications.

#### ***Local Newspapers***

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun & The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section is in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and in *The Province* on Sundays.

#### ***Job White Pages***

Available in print at the Central Library or online at

#### **JOB Freeway.com**

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/jobfreewaycom>

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

**NOTE:** Access at VPL locations only

#### ***Online Job Postings***

- **Indeed.com**

[http://ca.indeed.com/advanced\\_search](http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search)

- **Neuvoo.ca**

<http://neuvoo.ca>

- **WorkBC**

<https://www.workbc.ca/JobSeekers/SearchResults.aspx>

- **BC Jobs.ca**

<https://www.bcjobs.ca/>

### ***Professional Associations' Career Resources***

- **Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC)**

<https://aibcclassifieds.wordpress.com/category/career-opportunities/>

- **Ontario Association of Architects**

<http://www.oaa.on.ca/professional+resources/classifieds/employment+opportunities>

- **Royal Architectural Institute of Canada RAIC: job board**

<https://www.raic.org/raic/job-board>

### ***Identifying the Right Position***

When you browse job advertisements, you'll find a range of different job titles that are relevant. For architects, look for these related job titles (from NOC):

- Architectural Standards Specialist
- Chief Architect
- Consulting Architect
- Industrial and Commercial Buildings Architect
- Residential Architect
- Project Architect

### ***Creating a List of Potential Employers***

You can use directories to produce lists of employers who work in the architecture sector in Vancouver or the Lower Mainland. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Architectural Institute of British Columbia, Membership Directory**

Includes the AIBC register of members and the directory of member firms.

Available at the Central Library 720.6 A67a

Also available online at: <http://aibc.memberpro.net/main/body.cfm?menu=directory>

(click on "search for a firm")

- **Business in Vancouver. "Book of Lists"**

Available at the Central Library, see lists of top architects and construction companies. 338.9711 B97b or Online at <http://www.biv.com/lists>

- **Canadian Construction Association Membership Directory**

Online at: <http://www.cca-acc.com/en/membership/search-corporate-members>

- **Greater Vancouver Home Builders Association, Membership Directory.**

Available at the Central Library 380 Bu9CBg or Online at:

<http://www.gvhba.org/>

- **On-Site Heavy Construction News**

Available at the Central Library 690.5 H44 or online at

<http://www.on-sitemag.com/>

- **Reference Canada**

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "architects" and click LOOKUP. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

***NOTE:** You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).*

## **4. Applying for a Job**

Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume or curriculum vitae and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your relevant experience.

Use the library catalogue, <http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

To learn about applying for jobs in Canada, use the following pathfinders which are available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**  
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>  
[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**  
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>  
[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]
- **Networking for Employment**  
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>  
[Search Networking for Employment]
- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**  
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>  
[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

## 5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

### *Industry Associations*

Associations for architects in BC and Canada provide assistance to individuals. Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC)**  
<http://www.aibc.ca/>  
Provincial regulatory body for licensing and registration of architects in BC
- **Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB)**  
<http://cacb.ca/>
- **Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC)**  
<http://www.raic.org/>

## Architects

### *A guide for newcomers to British Columbia*

Voluntary national association representing architects, faculty, and graduates of accredited Canadian Schools of Architecture from across Canada

- **Eco Canada:** career profile of Sustainable Architect  
<http://www.eco.ca/career-profiles/sustainable-architect/>

## ***Industry Journals***

Search the Vancouver Public Library catalogue for journals related to your profession. You'll find recent editions at the Central Library:

- **ArchitectureBC** / Architectural Institute of British Columbia  
Available at the Central Library, 720.9711 A673n or online at  
<http://aibc.ca/resources/publications-otherdocuments/architecturebc/>
- **Canadian Architect**  
Available at the Central Library, 720.5 C212 or online at  
<http://www.canadianarchitect.com/>
- **Construction Canada** /  
Available at the Central Library, 692.05 S74 or online at  
<http://www.constructioncanada.net/>
- **Journal of Commerce**  
Available at VPL Central Library, 338.47 J86 BU or online at  
<http://journalofcommerce.com/>

**Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.**

*Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.*