Chief Architect X17

Professional 3D Home Design Software

Download and Installation Guide

Step-by-step instructions for downloading and installing the software.

Chief Architect, Inc
6500 N Mineral Dr
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815
www.chiefarchitect.com

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Installation Guide

Chapter 1

This chapter will walk you through installing your Chief Architect software.

System Requirements

In order to install and run Chief Architect X17, your computer system must meet the following minimum requirements:

- 64-bit Windows® 10 / 11; macOS™ Ventura / Sonoma
- Multi-core processor; Mac: M1 or newer
- 8 GB of memory
- 5 GB of available hard disk space
- Video card minimum: 4 GB of RAM; DirectX 12
- Recommended minimum monitor size: 16 inch
- High speed internet for registration, license authentication, deactivation, video access, content downloads
- USB port (if installing from backup USB drive)
- Internet access for license authentication is required once every 14 days.

For more information about system recommendations, visit our website at www.chiefarchitect.com.

Downloading Chief Architect

To download and install Chief Architect X17, begin by signing in to your online Chief Architect account at www.chiefarchitect.com.

Browse to the Digital Locker page, select the version that you would like, click the Download button, and save the installation file to your local hard drive. Select an easy to find **Save in** location on your computer, such as your Downloads folder, Documents folder, or Desktop; then click **Save**.

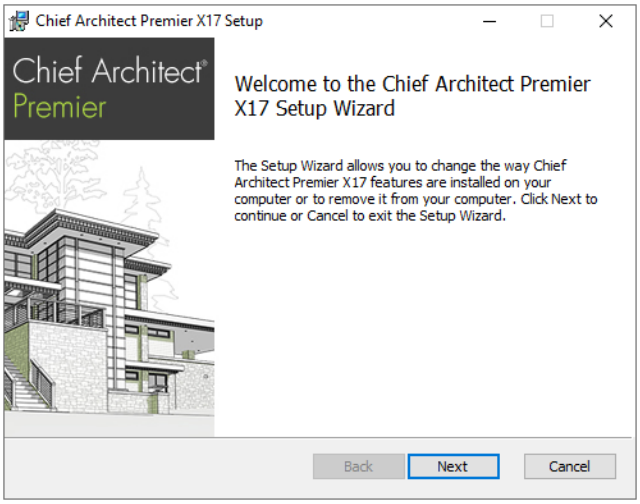
Installing Chief Architect

When the installer file is completely downloaded, browse to its save location and double-click on it to launch the program installer.

If you have a Chief Architect Program USB drive, insert it into a port on your computer:

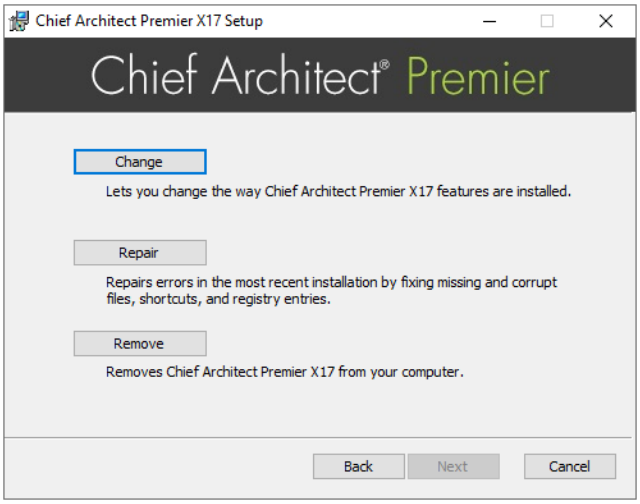
- In Windows, the Setup Wizard will launch automatically. If it does not, press the ***Windows*** key, then type the word Computer and press Enter. Right-click on the USB drive and select **Open** from the menu, then double-click on the Windows Installer file.
- On a Mac, the USB drive will open in a Finder window automatically. If it does not, right-click on the disk icon on your desktop and select **Open** from the menu. Then, double-click on the file with the **.pkg** file extension.

Setup Wizard Welcome



1. Depending on whether or not you have installed the program on this computer before, the text in this window may vary. Click **Next** to continue.

Setup Maintenance

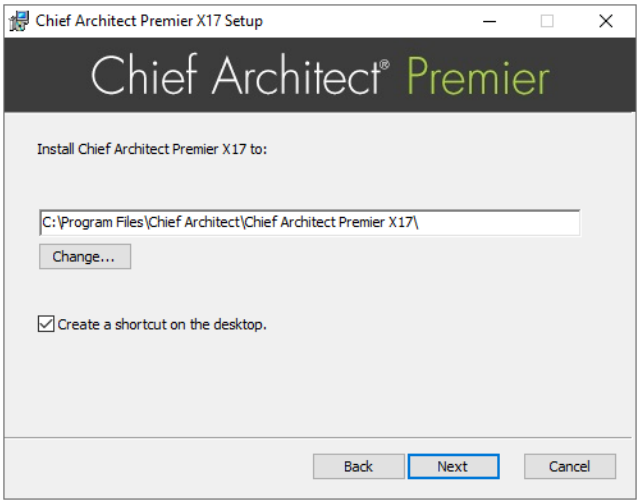


2. If you are installing the program for the first time, this window will not display. If you have installed the program before, it will allow you to reinstall or uninstall the program.

License Agreement

3. Read the License Agreement carefully. You must check the box beside **I accept the terms and conditions of this license agreement** before installing.
   - In the Windows version, click the **Advanced** button if you'd like to specify a non-default installation location, exclude supplementary content from being installed, or choose whether a desktop shortcut is created.
   - Click **Install** to begin installing the software.

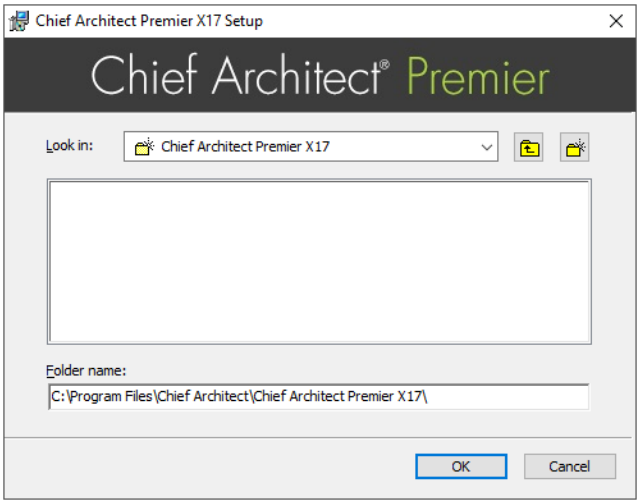
Advanced Options



4. This window is only found in the Windows version, and only if you click the **Advanced** button in the previous window. By default, the Windows version of the program installs in a folder with the same name as the program, for example: C:\Program Files\Chief Architect\Chief Architect Premier X17. You can, if you wish, choose a different destination folder on the local machine.
   - Type a full file path to the destination folder in the text field.

- Click the **Change** button to browse to a destination folder in the next window.
- Uncheck **Create a shortcut on the desktop** if you prefer that a desktop shortcut icon not be created.

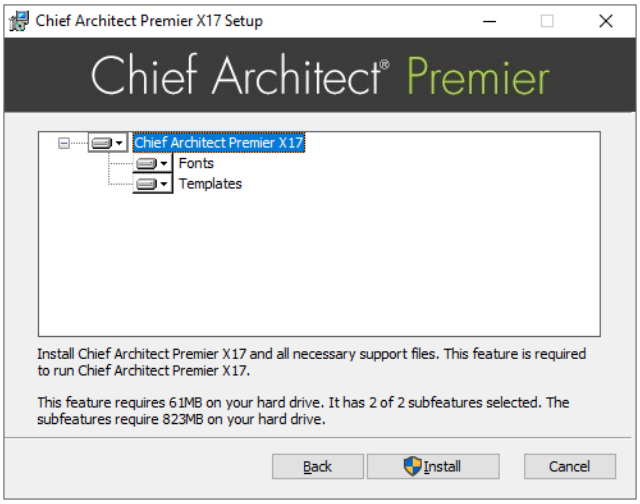
Choose Installation Location



5. This window is only found in the Windows version, and only if you clicked the **Change** button in the previous window. By default, the Windows version of the program installs in a folder with the same name as the program version located at C:\Program Files\Chief Architect\Chief Architect Premier X17.
   - Select a destination folder from the **Look in:** drop-down list.
   - Any folders located inside the selected destination folder display in the field below.
   - The full file path of the installation directory is stated in the **Folder name:** field. You can type a different file path if you wish.
   - Click OK to proceed to the next window.

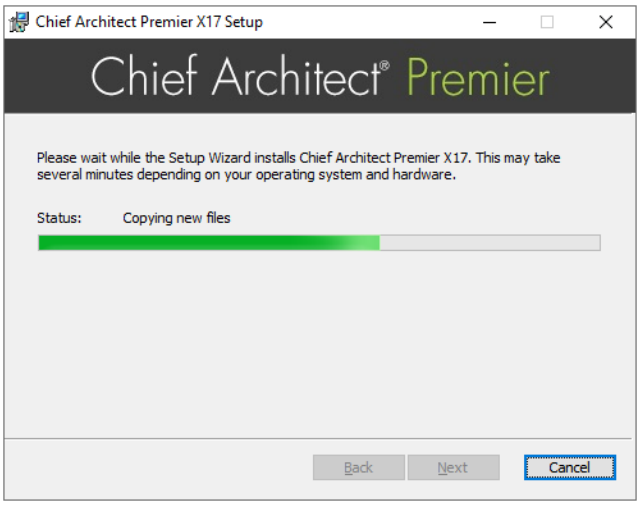
> Note: Regardless of the location that you specify here, the program's library content will be installed in your computer's ProgramData folder.

Choose Items to Install



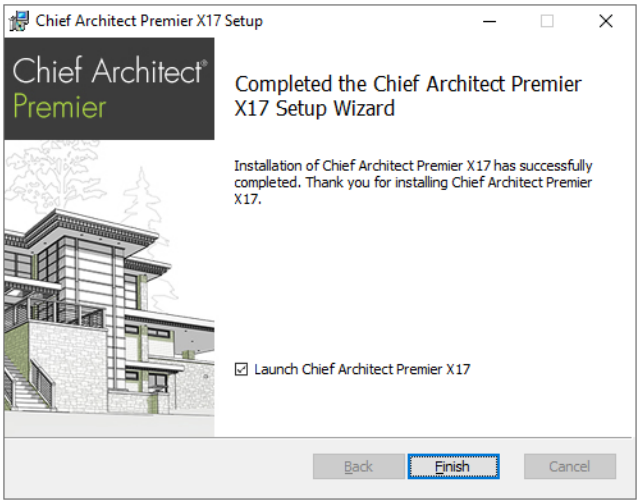
6. You can use this window to specify what features you wish to install.
   - Click on a line item to select it. Information about its contents and hard drive space requirements displays beneath the list of features.
   - Click the drop-down arrow beside a line item to specify how it is installed. By default, **Entire feature will be installed** is selected for all line items.
   - Choose **Entire feature will be unavailable** to prevent a selected subfeature from being installed. When this option is selected, a red X will display beside the line item's drop-down arrow. The top level feature cannot be excluded from installing. If you decide to not proceed with the program installation, click the Cancel button.
   - Click **Install** to install the program and supplemental content as specified.

Install



7. The Setup Wizard will begin copying files to your hard disk after a few moments and a green progress bar in this window will show the status of this process. This may take a few minutes.

Setup Wizard Complete



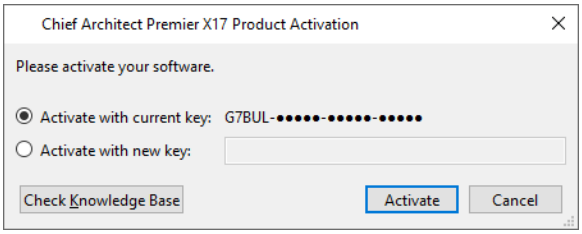
8. When all files have been copied, this window will display.
   - In Windows, click **Finish** to launch Chief Architect.
   - On a Mac, click on **Applications** to open Finder, where you can launch the program.

Starting Chief Architect X17

In Windows, you can use the Start menu or the shortcut on your desktop to start Chief Architect. On a Mac, open Finder and browse to Applications.

Product Activation

When you launch the program for the first time, the Product Activation dialog will open. This dialog will also open if you have previously deactivated your license on the current computer, or if you are converting a Trial Version installation into the full software version.

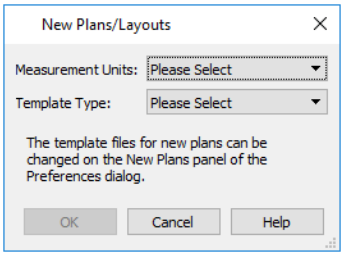


- If you are launching the software for the first time, enter your **Product Key**, which is located in the account information from your download or on your shipping invoice.
- If the program has been previously activated on the current computer, two options will be available. **Activate with current key** will be selected by default and the first five characters of the current product key will display.
- To activate a different license instead, select **Activate with new key** and enter that key in the text field.
- Click the **Activate** button to launch the program. Not available unless a valid product key has been entered.

If your product key is not associated with a User Account on our website, the Create Chief Architect Account dialog will open next. So that you can take full advantage of our online resources, click the **Create License** button and take a moment to associate your software license with an account on our website.

New Plans/Layouts Dialog

After your software license is activated, the New Plans/Layouts dialog will open, giving you an opportunity to set your default units of measurement for new files as well as choose which template plan you would prefer to use.



- Select either "US Units" or "Metric Units" from the **Measurement Units** drop-down list.
- Select either "Residential" or "Interiors" from the **Template Type** drop-down list.

You can change your plan and layout templates at any time in the Preferences dialog.

Troubleshooting Problems

If you encounter problems either downloading or activating your software:

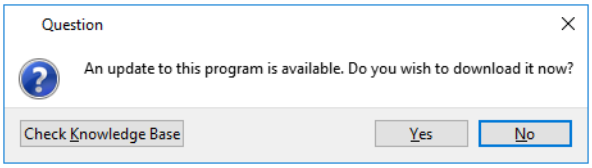
- Make sure that you can visit our website using your default web browser.
- Disable your firewall for the duration of the download, installation, and registration process.
- Disable other security applications, including anti-virus and download manager software, for the duration of the download, installation, and activation process.

> Re-enable all security applications and restore all settings when you are finished installing, and activating the software.

Program Updates

From time to time, Chief Architect releases Chief Architect program updates that are available for download free of charge from the Chief Architect website.

When a program update is available, this dialog will display when the program is opened:



- Click **Yes** to open your default Internet browser to the **Program Updates** section of the Chief Architect website.
- Click **No** to launch Chief Architect.

At any time, you can select **Help> Download Program Updates** from the Chief Architect menu to launch your default Web browser to the Program Updates section of the Chief Architect website.

Program updates are not patches: when an update is installed, the previous version is uninstalled and then the new version is installed. Library content, Preference settings, and information saved in the program's Data folder are not affected by program updates.

If you prefer that the program not check for program updates every time it launches, you can disable this feature in the Preferences dialog.

Installing on Multiple Computers

A license of Chief Architect can only be active on one computer at any given time. If you have been running the software on one computer and wish to run it on a different one, or if you wish to rename your computer, you must deactivate your license first. Once deactivated, you can activate a license on any computer by launching the software and entering a Product Key.

For details, please refer to the End User License Agreement, found in both the program's installer and the Help.

An active Internet connection is required to deactivate a Chief Architect license.

To deactivate a Chief Architect license

1. Launch Chief Architect on the computer where the license is active.
2. Select **Help> Manage License** from the menu.
3. The Manage License dialog confirms that you wish to deactivate the license. Click **Yes**.
4. For Academic and Student licenses of Chief Architect, the Manage License dialog also has a **This is a public computer** check box. When checked, a record of the current Product Key will be removed from the computer when you deactivate the license.
5. After a pause, the program will close.

License activations can also be deactivated in your User Account on the Chief Architect website.

To manage license activations online

1. Sign in to your User Account on our website, www.chiefarchitect.com.
2. Browse to your **Digital Locker: Software Downloads and Product Keys** page.
3. Click the link to **Manage your Active Licenses**.
4. Click the **Turn Off** button to deactivate your license on the computer where it is currently active, making it available for use on another computer.

Uninstalling Chief Architect

Chief Architect can be removed from a Mac by moving it to the Trash. This does not deactivate the license, however, so you may want to deactivate your license before removing the program.

On a Windows® computer, there are two ways that Chief Architect can be removed: from the Control Panel and using the Setup Wizard on the program disk. Please note that if you do not have an active Internet connection, your license will not become deactivated.

To remove the program using the Windows Control Panel

1. Open the Windows Control Panel.
2. Double-click Programs.
3. Find Chief Architect X17 and click **Uninstall**.

To remove the program using the Setup Wizard

1. Launch your downloaded program installer or place the USB drive in a port and select **Install** Chief Architect X17 from the Chief Architect startup window.
2. On the Setup Maintenance page, select **Uninstall** and click **Next**. A message will display, asking if you would like to remove the selected application and its components.
3. Click **Yes** to remove Chief Architect X17.

When Chief Architect is uninstalled, neither the Chief Architect X17 Data folder nor the library content is removed from the system.

If an emergency forces you to reformat your hard drive, reinstall your operating system, or resort to a system restore point, be aware that none of these actions result in a normal program uninstallation or license deactivation.

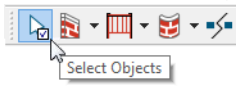
Additional Resources

Chapter 2

There are many forms of help in Chief Architect, including: Tool Tips, the Status Bar, online Help, written tutorials, and product documentation in PDF format. Still more valuable information is available on the Chief Architect website, www.chiefarchitect.com.

Tool Tips and the Status Bar

When you move your mouse pointer over a toolbar button or menu item, a Tool Tip displays a brief description.



More information displays in the Status Bar at the bottom of the program window.

Chief Architect Help

Chief Architect's Help is a browsable, searchable resource that describes the tools and dialogs in the program. It can be accessed in several ways:

- Select **Help> Launch Help** from the menu.
- Place your pointer over any menu item, toolbar button, or selected object. When you see a Tool Tip in the Status Bar, press the ***F1*** function key.
- Click the **Help** button in any dialog.

Reference Manual & User's Guide

The complete contents of the Chief Architect Help is available in PDF format. Select **Help> View Reference Manual** to view it in your default web browser.

In addition to a description of each menu item, toolbar button, and dialog in the program, Chief Architect includes a collection of written tutorials that describe how to create a plan in the program.

These tutorials can be accessed by selecting **Help> View User's Guide** from the program menu.

Tutorial Videos

Chief Architect offers a searchable collection of online training videos that show you how to perform many tasks in the program. Select
Help> View Online Help Videos to launch your default web browser to: www.chiefarchitect.com/videos.

Some Chief Architect Help pages also have links to Tutorial Videos that are relevant to the information on the page.

Chief Architect Website

Our website, www.chiefarchitect.com, has answers to many frequently asked technical support questions. The online Knowledge Base contains a variety of articles describing how to resolve common technical problems and achieve specific design goals. New online tutorials are added regularly, and we invite you to visit our website whenever you like.

ChiefTalk User Forum

Other Chief Architect users have a wealth of knowledge they are willing to share. You can link to the ChiefTalk user forum by selecting **Help> ChiefTalk** from the Chief Architect program menu or by going directly to chieftalk.chiefarchitect.com.