

Chief Architect Premier X18

Professional 3D Home Design Software



Migration Guide

Steps and considerations for migrating to the new program version.

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What's New in Chief Architect X18

Chapter 1

Welcome to Chief Architect X18. This topic has been written to help our upgrading customers make a smooth transition from earlier versions of Chief Architect to Chief Architect X18.

Getting Started Checklist

There are many new features in Chief Architect X18, and many existing features have changed. The following list suggests steps you should take before migrating your files to Chief Architect X18. More information about each of these steps can be found after the list.

1. **Review the List of New and Improved Features by Chapter**

There are a number of important reasons why you should familiarize yourself with the new and improved features in Chief Architect X18:

- New and improved features allow you to produce drawings more efficiently, so it is to your advantage to use them.
- Some changes to existing functionality may affect your accustomed drawing style and thus your productivity if you are not aware of them.
- New features may affect your choice of settings in your template files, as well as your preferred Preferences settings.

See *New and Improved Features by Chapter on page 13*.

2. **Review Migrating Legacy Content**

Legacy users of Chief Architect often have library catalogs and other custom content that they want to continue using. See *Migrating Legacy Content on page 3*.

3. **Review Migrating Legacy Settings**

Before migrating Preferences, Toolbars, or Hotkeys, bear in mind that legacy settings may not be best suited for using the new program version. See *Migrating Legacy Settings on page 3*.

4. **Review Migrating Legacy Templates**

Before migrating Templates, bear in mind that they may not be set up to take advantage of new tools in the new program version. See *Migrating Legacy Templates on page 4*.

5. **Review the Considerations for Legacy Files**

Before opening a plan or layout file created in a previous version of Chief Architect, be aware of potential changes to the file that could occur in the new program version. See *Considerations for Legacy Files on page 4*.

□ 6. Launch Chief Architect X18

Once you have learned about the new features in Version X18 and decided whether to migrate any custom settings from a legacy program version, launch Chief Architect X18. The first time you launch, the Migrate Settings dialog will give you the opportunity to bring legacy settings and content forward into Version X18.

Migrating Legacy Content

Legacy users of Chief Architect often have a wealth of library catalogs and other custom content that they have built over time and want to continue using.

LEGACY LIBRARY CONTENT

There are several ways that legacy library catalogs can be brought into Chief Architect X18.

If you have Chief Architect version X5 through X17 installed on your computer, the Migrate Settings dialog will display after you activate the license, allowing you to migrate library content as well as a selection of other settings for use in Chief Architect X18. If multiple legacy versions are present on the system, only the data associated with the most recent will be migrated.

You can import library files from Versions X1 through X5 at any time by selecting **Library > Import Library (.calib, .calibz)** from the program menu.

CUSTOM GRAPHICS FILES

Chief Architect can use graphics files regardless of where they are stored on your system; however, it is a good idea to keep your data organized in one location. If you have custom graphics files, including textures, images or backdrops that you used in a previous program version, you can copy them manually using your operating system for use in Chief Architect X18.

- Copy custom texture files to the Chief Architect X18 Textures folder located in the Chief Architect X18 Data folder.
- Copy custom image files to your Chief Architect X18 Images folder located in the Chief Architect X18 Data folder.
- Copy custom backdrop files to your Chief Architect X18 Backdrops folder located in the Chief Architect X18 Data folder.

In Chief Architect X1 through X17, custom graphics were saved in the Chief Architect Data folder, as they are in version X18. In version 10, they were located in the program's installation directory, in folders that began with "My". Custom backdrops, for example, were saved in "My Backdrops".

Texture and image files are not listed in the Library Browser. These files can be assigned to material and image objects, however, which are stored in the library so it is important to retain them. There are several tools available for adding materials and images to the library.

Migrating Legacy Settings

The Migrate Settings dialog lets you migrate settings from the most recent legacy installation of your Chief Architect title into Version X18. If you have extensively customized your Preferences, Toolbars, or Hotkeys, you may want to continue using those settings. Before doing so, though, it is important to consider that you may make it harder to take advantage of new tools and functionality in Version X18.

PREFERENCES SETTINGS

Although you can migrate your Preferences settings from Versions X5 through X17 into Version X18, the settings that are available in Version X18 may differ from previous program versions. You should review all the settings in the Preferences dialog to make sure that they are set to suit your drawing needs.

CUSTOM TOOLBAR CONFIGURATIONS

It is possible to migrate toolbar configuration files from previous program versions into Version X18; however, it is also possible that your migrated toolbars will be missing new tools available in Version X18.

Additionally, obsolete toolbar buttons are occasionally removed from the program and will also be removed from migrated legacy toolbars. See *New and Improved Features by Chapter on page 13* for information about new features as well as removed or deprecated tools.

CUSTOM HOTKEYS

Like toolbar configurations, legacy hotkeys can be migrated into Chief Architect X18. Bear in mind, though, that occasionally the default hotkeys are modified to accommodate new features or changes in default system hotkeys.

Migrating Legacy Templates

Chief Architect X18 installs a selection of template plan and layout files that have been set up to take advantage of the program's updated tools and features. Although you can migrate your template files for use in Version X18, for best results it is recommended that you either:

- Use the installed templates when creating new plans and layout files in Chief Architect X18
- Use the installed templates as the basis for creating new custom templates.

If you choose to continue using template files that you used in a previous program version, it is very important that you take the time to review all the default settings in the file, making sure that they will continue to suit your needs in Version X18. See *New and Improved Features by Chapter on page 13*.

Next, make sure that you are aware of changes in Version X18 that may affect legacy files: including templates. See *Considerations for Legacy Files on page 4*.

When you are ready to proceed, make copies of your custom templates in the Chief Architect X18 Templates directory. The Templates directory is located in the Chief Architect X18 Data folder. Next, open each template as you would a regular plan or layout file, by selecting **File> Open**, and then save any changes you make by selecting **File> Save**.

If you do choose to continue using a legacy template plan, it is best to also use a legacy layout template from the same program version, as well. As with a template plan, take the time to go through the layout template's defaults and make sure they are suited for use in Version X18 and that their line weight scales do not conflict with those in your template plans.

Considerations for Legacy Files

As in all software, every new program version introduces changes to its functionality as well as to the user interface. If you choose to bring a project forward, be sure to take a few moments to look it over in the new version and confirm that the new functionality does not require you to make any modifications. Particularly if you have an approaching deadline, you may find it best to finish the current project in the version of the software in which you began it.



Be sure to read this section before opening any plans created in earlier versions of Chief Architect.

Chief Architect X18 can open the **.plan** and **.layout** files from prior versions. Files with the older **.pl** and **.la** file extensions are no longer supported, however, and cannot be opened by Chief Architect X18. Before opening any files created in earlier versions of Chief Architect, it is important to be aware of changes made in the newest version and the effect they may have on your legacy plan and layout files.

Please note that files saved in the latest program version cannot be read by older versions of the software. When a legacy file is saved in the version X18, an unaltered copy of the original file is created in the Chief Architect X18 Data folder, under Archives, which can still be opened in the original version.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X17 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X17 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Snap and Reference Grid Colors

In Chief Architect X17 and prior, the Snap and Reference Grid colors were set in the General Plan and Layout Defaults dialogs. In Version X18, these colors are set globally in the Preferences dialog. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, the Snap and Reference Grid Colors will be reset to use the colors specified in the Preferences dialog.

2. Legacy Compatible Extensions

In Chief Architect X16 and prior, the Legacy Compatible Extensions settings assigned a non-editable program-defined length to extension lines. In Version X18, these obsolete settings have been removed from the program. When a legacy file with Legacy Compatible Extensions enabled is opened in Version X18 and a dimension line set to use this option is edited, Legacy Compatible Extensions will be turned off and the setting permanently removed from its specification dialog.

3. Space Planning Boxes

In Chief Architect X16, enhancements were made to Space Planner room boxes. If a Plan contains legacy Space Planner room boxes that were created in Chief Architect X15 or prior, those boxes will be converted into improved room boxes when the file is opened in Version X18. Up to 50 such boxes can be converted; if there are more than 50 room boxes present, and the rest will be converted into plain CAD polylines.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X16 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X16 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Sun Angle Location and Time Zone

In Chief Architect X16 and prior, the default Latitude, Longitude, and Time Zone used by Sun Angles were set globally in the Preferences dialog and individual Sun Angles could be customized. In Version X18, these defaults are file-specific, set in the General Plan Defaults dialog, and cannot be modified for individual Sun Angles. When a legacy file with a Sun Angle present is opened in Version X18, its Location and Time Zone are set as the defaults. If multiple Sun Angles with different Location or Time Zone data are present, some of them may be altered.

2. Automatic Terrain Height

In Version X18, the Automatic terrain height functionality was updated for use with the Terrain Elevation Reference Point feature. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, Automatic will be unchecked in the Terrain Specification dialog to prevent the terrain from moving relative to the structure.

3. Automatic Fillers for Soffits, Shelves, and Partitions

In Chief Architect X16 and prior, Soffits, Shelves, and Partitions received automatic fillers if they were spaced within 3" (75 mm) of one another. In Version X18, these objects do not receive auto fillers. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, it is possible that some Soffits, Shelves, and/or Partitions positioned close to one another without touching may have small gaps between them.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X15 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X15 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. GPU Ray Trace Samples

In Chief Architect X16, GPU ray tracing is performed using path tracing, which requires more samples than in previous versions but produces more accurate lighting effects more efficiently. When a legacy file from Version X15 is opened in Version X18, the Maximum Samples value is multiplied by 10. When a legacy file from Version X14 or prior is opened in Version X18, Maximum Samples is set at 2000.

2. Dimension Label Positioning

3. In Version X16, improvements were made to the method that determines dimension label positioning. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, it is possible that some dimension labels may be in a slightly different position than in the original version.

4. Door Thickness

In Chief Architect X15 and prior, the Thickness value set in the Door Specification dialog affected parametric door panels in 3D views but not door symbols. In Version X16, this setting affects both types of door panel in 3D. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, any symbol door panels will have the depth specified in the Door Specification dialog when viewed in a camera view rather than the depth of the symbol object.

5. PDF Rotation in Mac Version

6. In Chief Architect X15 and prior, rotation of imported PDF files was not read in the Mac version of the software, while in Version X16, it is. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, imported PDFs may not be oriented at the same angle as in prior versions.

7. Material Emissivity

In Chief Architect X15 and prior, the Emissive property for materials could be set using decimal values. In Version X16, this setting supports whole numbers only. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, any decimal Emissive values will be rounded to the nearest whole number. If this setting is rounded to zero, the change may be noticeable in Standard, Duotone, and Watercolor renderings. See [Properties Panel](#).

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X14 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X14 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Window Casing Reveal

In Chief Architect X14 and prior, window casing had an Overlap Frame setting that controlled where casing was placed relative to the window frame, and windows with different frame Width values for their top, bottom, and sides would also have different reveals. In Version X15, this setting was replaced with a Reveal setting. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, any windows with different Width values will no longer have different reveals.

2. Text Indent and Margins

In Chief Architect X14 and prior, the indent and margins of text could vary depending on the font used. In Version X15, indent and margins are not affected by settings in the font. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, text with varying indent and/or margins may be affected.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X13 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X13 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Stair Walklines

In Chief Architect X13 and prior, Walklines were drawn on the "Dimensions" layer. In Version X14, they are drawn on the same layer as the staircase. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, any Walklines displaying in the file may have different line color, weight, and style attributes.

2. Door Rough Openings

In Chief Architect X13 and prior, if a door's Floor to Bottom height was not sufficient to accommodate its Bottom Rough Opening, the door's Top Rough Opening space would be increased in the model but not in the Door Specification dialog. In Version X14, this no longer occurs: if the Floor to Bottom height is less than the Bottom Rough Opening, the full Bottom Rough Opening is simply not modeled when framing is generated. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, its rough opening is modeled exactly as it was in the previous program version but its Top and Bottom Rough Opening values now reflect how the rough opening is modeled.

3. NKBA Auto Dimensions

In Chief Architect X13 and prior, the NKBA Auto Dimension and NKBA Auto Elevation Dimension tools had restricted default settings that met drawing standards set by the National Kitchen and Bath Association. In order to allow greater flexibility in Version X18, these tools have been merged into the other Auto Dimension tools. In plan files created using a template installed with Version X18, NKBA compliant dimensions can be created using the "Kitchen and Bath Dimension Defaults". In legacy plans opened in Version X18, use the "Legacy NKBA Dimension Defaults".

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X12 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X12 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Default 110V Ceiling Outlet

In Chief Architect X12 and prior, the 110V Outlet tool did not have the ability to place outlets in ceilings. In Version X13, this ability was added, as was the new GFCI Outlet tool. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, the new Electrical Defaults settings for these items will automatically refer to objects in the Version X18 Core Catalogs. You should confirm that these defaults meet your needs. If these default objects are not present in your library, a warning message will inform you of the issue.

2. Sliding Door Hinge Side

In Chief Architect X12 and prior, the fixed or 'hinge' side of sliding doors was described as viewed from the exterior side of the door. In Version X13, the hinge side is described using the more common method: as viewed from the interior side. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, all instances of the %hinge_side% Name-Value Pair in labels, schedules, and the Materials List will use the new method. You should confirm that the Hinge Side information in labels, schedules, and Materials Lists meets your needs.

3. Automatic and Manual Dimension Layers

In Chief Architect X12 and prior, the system default layer for automatically generated dimension lines was "Dimensions, Automatic", and the system default for manually drawn dimensions was "Dimensions, Manual". In Version X18, the system default layer for all dimensions is simply "Dimensions". When a legacy file is opened in

Version X18, automatic dimensions that were on the "Dimensions, Automatic" layer in the earlier version will be placed on the "Dimensions, Legacy" layer while any dimensions that were on the "Dimensions, Manual" layer in the previous version will be placed on the "Dimensions" layer.

4. Gable Lines

In Chief Architect X12 and prior, Gable Lines with a Pitch value of 90° were allowed but did not affect automatic roof generation. In Version X18, they are not supported. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, any Gable Lines with a Pitch of 90° will be removed automatically. This will not affect the current roof or automatic roof generation.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X11 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X11 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Perspective Crop Mode

In Chief Architect X8 through X11, Perspective Crop Mode allowed older functionality governing zooming in cameras from Version X7 and prior to be preserved in saved cameras in legacy plans migrated forward. This deprecated tool has been removed from the program's menu and toolbars in Version X12, although it can be migrated with legacy toolbars and hotkeys. Saved cameras in legacy plans with this behavior enabled may become distorted if you pan or zoom in the view. To permanently disable this behavior in a camera view and resolve the resulting distortion, select **Window > Fill Window** or press the **F6** key.

2. Layout Layer Sets

In Chief Architect X11 and prior, the Send to Layout dialog had a sticky Make Copy of Active Layer Set option that created a new layer set for the layout view to help preserve layer settings in that view. This option was removed in Version X12 to encourage use of the multiple Saved Plan Views. Saved plan views did not exist in Version X9 and prior, however, so if you open a plan originally created in Version X9 or prior, extra care must be taken to make sure layout views do not use the same layer set.

3. Materials List Formulas and Ruby Macros

Name-Value Pairs returned length, area, and volume measurements as Floats. In Version X12, these values are reported using the Measurement class that includes both a numeric value and a unit. Older Ruby code may change behavior when migrated into Version X12. When a legacy Ruby macro or materials list formula is evaluated, the program will automatically check its version and prompt you to migrate it to the newest version.

4. Units of Measurement

In Chief Architect X11 and prior, units of measurement used by the program, including user-defined units, were stored in a file called Units.dat located in the Chief Architect Data folder. Beginning in version X12, this information is saved with other Preferences settings.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X10 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X10 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Marker and Elevation Point Heights

In Chief Architect X10 and prior, the # sign could be added to the label of a Marker or Elevation Point and the label would report the height of the Marker or the Elevation Point's elevation. In Version X18, text macros are used to report this information instead. In legacy plans, any # signs in Marker or Elevation Point labels will be replaced by the `%height%` or `%elevation%` macro.

2. Glass Shower Walls

In Chief Architect X10 and prior, the “Glass Shower” Wall Type was included in installed template files and like other Wall Types, built to the structural layer of floors and ceilings and to the Main Layer of adjacent walls. In Version X18, this Wall Type has the new Partition Wall attribute and instead builds to floor, ceiling, and wall surfaces. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, this Wall Type will be modified to have Partition Wall checked automatically and existing walls will be affected by this change.

3. Fixture Schedules

In Chief Architect X10 and prior, 3D Elevations and Perspectives in Fixture Schedules showed cabinet fixtures inserted into a cabinet. In Version X18, fixtures are shown on their own, even when they are inserted into an object in the plan. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, any fixture schedules showing 3D views of objects may be affected by this change.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X9 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X9 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Parallel Lights

In Chief Architect X9 and prior, Parallel Light sources could be specified for electrical light fixtures and Added Lights. In Version X18, Parallel Lights are no longer supported. In legacy plans opened in Version X18, any Parallel Light sources will be converted to Spot Lights.

2. Brick Ledges

In Chief Architect X9 and prior, brick ledges were not represented in plan view. In Version X18, brick ledges are drawn in plan view on the “Slabs” layer in stem wall and grade beam foundations, and on the “Walls, Foundation” layer in monolithic slab foundations. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, brick ledges, if present, will be drawn.

3. Window Types

In Chief Architect X9 and prior, the %type% text macro for windows reported some Window Types using abbreviations. In Version X18, the abbreviations were replaced with full words. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, the width of Window Schedules may be affected, as may the width of columns in saved Materials Lists.

4. Joist Direction Lines

In Chief Architect X9 and prior, Joist Direction Lines described all platform framing as “joists” and used nominal lumber sizes in whole inches in US Unit plans. In Version X18, the platform’s framing Structure Type is reported and in US Unit plans, the size is described in fractional inches. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, Joist Direction Lines will use the new, more accurate labeling.

5. Custom Schedule Columns

In Chief Architect X9 and prior, custom schedule columns could be created by adding a Sub Category to a type of object on the Categories panel of the Preferences dialog. In Version X18, Sub Categories can no longer be created in this manner. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, any Sub Categories shown as custom schedule columns will be converted to Custom Fields.

6. Registered User Text Macros

In Chief Architect X9 and prior, a selection of Registered User Text Macros could be inserted into Texts, Callouts, and Markers. These macros no longer displayed any data and in Version X18, they are no longer recognized. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, any Registered User macros inserted into text objects are treated as regular text.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X8 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X8 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Layer Names

In Chief Architect X8 and prior, turning off the Modify Name in all Layer Sets option made it possible to assign different names to the same layer in different layer sets. In Version X9, this option was no longer supported. When a legacy file is opened in X18, the layer names used in the currently active layer set will be retained and any other layer names in other layer sets will be discarded.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X7 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X7 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Boxed Eaves

In Chief Architect X8, improvements to the generation of Boxed Eaves ensure that they extend into exterior rooms with “Use Soffit Surface for Ceiling” specified when located between the roof baseline and an interior room. In some legacy plans opened in Version X18, the **Length** value for Boxed Eaves may need to be modified in the Roof Plane Specification dialog.

2. Uppercase Text

The Uppercase option was added to Text Styles in Version X8, whereas in Version X7 and prior, it was an option for Room Labels and Schedules only. In legacy plans opened in Version X8, any Schedules present in the drawing will be assigned a Custom Text Style, as will their associated Schedule Defaults. If any Schedule Default is set to Use Layer for Text Style and no objects are present on that layer, a new Schedule Text Style will be created and assigned to that layer. Room Labels are treated similarly: if any are present, they and their defaults will use a Custom Text Style. If a given Room Label or Schedule has been sent to layout more than once and was set to use different Text Styles in each layout view, it is possible that its appearance may be affected in some views.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X6 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X6 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Built-in Appliances

In Chief Architect X6 and prior, some appliance symbols designed to be inserted into base cabinets had incorrect sizing data. In legacy plans opened in Version X18, these appliances will not fit into the cabinet correctly and will need to be replaced. Built-in dishwashers are particularly affected.

2. Formatting of Bulleted and Numbered Lists

In Version X7, various improvements were made to the way lines of Rich Text are spaced. In legacy plans opened in Version X7, Rich Text objects with bulleted and numbered lists may require adjustments.

3. Chief Blueprint Font

The Chief Blueprint font was improved for Version X6, with decreased top and bottom spacing. The change in spacing may increase the overall height of text objects using this font in X6 files opened in Version X18. X5 and prior legacy files will not be affected by this change.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X5 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X5 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Name-Value Pairs for Doors and Windows

In Version X6, the NVPs `door_style_name`, `door_type_name`, and `window_type_name` were shortened to `style_name` and `type_name`. Any object labels or text macros using these NVPs in legacy plans opened in Version X18 will need to be replaced.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X4 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X4 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Roof Overhangs and Framing

In Chief Architect X4 and prior, roof overhangs were measured to the outside of the subfascia, whereas in Version X5 and later, they are measured to the outside of the fascia or shadow boards, if present. In legacy plans opened in Version X18, this will not affect the appearance of roof planes in floor plan view because in X4 and prior, roof plane polylines represented the projected framing area whereas in Version X18 they represent the total projected area. But, the position of the fascia and subfascia will shift, as will the length of the rafters.

2. Door Swing Direction and Materials

In Chief Architect X4 and prior, exterior doors that swing outward displayed the interior material on the exterior side of the door. This was corrected in Version X5. Doors modified to work around the old behavior could be affected in legacy plans opened in Version X18.

3. Door Swing Direction and Louvers

Improvements to door louver direction may affect louvers in all doors with the exception of bifold doors.

4. Wrapped Door/Window Lintels and Window Sills

In Chief Architect X4 and prior, wrapped lintels and sills extended out further than those that were not wrapped. In legacy plans opened in Version X18, the extents of wrapped lintels and sills will be adjusted so that they equal their **Extend** setting.

5. Cabinet Feet

The offsets for cabinet foot millwork symbols in Version X4 and prior were set per millwork symbol to insert into cabinets effectively. In Version X18, the offset is set in the Cabinet Specification dialogs. When legacy plans are opened in Version X18, cabinet foot offsets are set to 0 and transferred to their containing cabinet, if one exists. Any customized or independently placed cabinet feet will be affected.

6. Object Labels in Cross Section/Elevation Views

If a “Label” layer is turned on in a cross section/elevation view and objects of that type are visible in the view, then those objects’ labels will display in that view when the plan is opened in Version X18.

7. Transparent Materials

In Chief Architect X4, materials assigned to the Transparent Material Class for ray tracing were visible in rendered views even when their Index of Refraction was set to 1.0. When legacy plans are opened in Version X18, Transparent materials with an Index of Refraction of 1.0 are transferred to the General Material class and assigned a Transparency value of 100%. This will not affect these materials’ appearance in ray trace views, but will make them completely invisible in rendered views.

8. Registered User Text Macros

In Chief Architect X4 and prior, a selection of Registered User Text Macros could be inserted into Texts, Callouts, and Markers. These macros reported information that was provided when the program was installed and registered on the computer. In Version X5 and later, the program no longer collects registered user information. When a legacy file is opened in Version X18, any Registered User macros inserted into text objects are treated as regular text.

9. Invisible Beams

The legacy **Invisible Beam** check box was removed from the Wall Specification dialog. When legacy plans are opened in Version X18, any **Invisible Beam** walls will be converted to Invisible Walls.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X3 AND PRIOR

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X3 or prior, bear in mind the following:

1. Text Styles

The appearance of a number of objects that include text - including object labels, the North Pointer, Sun Angles, Joist Direction Lines, the Up/Down arrows for stairs and ramps - can now be controlled using Text Style. Their appearance may be altered somewhat in legacy plans opened in Chief Architect X18.

2. Light Sources

The illumination created by light fixtures and Added Lights was improved in Chief Architect X18. Lighting in legacy plans may appear noticeably brighter when viewed in version X18.

FOR FILES CREATED IN VERSION X2 AND PRIOR

If you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version X2 or prior, bear in mind the following file management changes and structural enhancements:

1. Legacy file formats

Chief Architect 9.5 and prior files were saved in .pl and .la the file formats. These file formats files are no longer supported and cannot be opened in version X18.

2. Material textures, images, and backdrops

Chief Architect X2 and prior installed with a catalog of library content, including a selection of material textures, images, and backdrops. This library catalog is no longer installed with the program because it is now available for download on-demand, so it will be possible to open a legacy plan in version X18 and encounter numerous missing file warnings. To avoid this, we recommend using the **Export Entire Plan** feature in the original program version to create a folder that includes the plan and all associated textures, images, and backdrops before opening this file in X18. This tool is renamed Backup Entire Plan in version X18.

3. Floor and ceiling finish thicknesses

In Chief Architect X2 and prior, floor and ceiling finish layers were not modeled in 3D, and objects such as railings, stairs, landings, cabinets, fixtures, and furnishings measured their Floor to Bottom height from the subfloor. These objects now measure their Floor to Bottom height from the floor finish surface by default, so it is possible that you may notice height changes for these objects - particularly in saved, annotated cross section/elevation views.

4. Riser heights and landing thicknesses

The default Best Fit Riser Height for stairs that do not reach the next level has been updated from 9" (225 mm) in version X2 and prior to 6 3/4" (169 mm) in Chief Architect X18. This may affect the riser heights of stairs, as well as the thicknesses of landings attached to those stairs.

5. Auto Adjust Height

The Follow Terrain option in some specification dialogs was replaced by the Auto Adjust Height check box. If a cabinet, fireplace, fixture, furniture, or other library symbol had Follow Terrain unchecked in version X2 or prior and was located in a room with a floor height other than the default for the current floor, then the object's Floor to Bottom Height will change to equal that room's floor height. The object's position in the model will not change, however.

6. Adjustable Thickness Walls

In Chief Architect X2 and prior, generic, single-layer Wall Types were available for use. When a legacy plan file is opened in version X18 and these Wall Types are detected, they are replaced by an updated, non-generic Wall Type. Framed walls and Railings will also acquire 1/2" (13 mm) thick layers of sheetrock on each side. Railings that define a Deck room with Advanced Deck Framing Built will not acquire sheetrock layers.

7. Stairwells defined by railings

Interior railings that used a generic, single-layer Wall Type drawn in older program versions will acquire layers of sheetrock when the plan is opened in version X18. This can affect the appearance of staircases where they join to a floor platform. To address this issue, select the railing and move it 1/2" (13 mm) away from the top edge of the staircase.

8. Deck rooms

In legacy plans opened in Chief Architect X18, Deck rooms with Advanced Deck Framing built retain the framing but have Automatic Deck Framing turned off by default. Decks with no Advanced Deck Framing built are converted to Balcony rooms.

9. Material definitions and light sources

Settings in the Define Material dialog that affect materials' appearance of brightness have been modified. The **Ambient** setting was removed, and the **Diffuse** setting for materials in legacy plans will be set to 100% when opened in version X18.

The Quality setting for light sources set to use Soft Shadows in ray tracing was also modified. Lights using Soft Shadows in legacy plans will be set to use Medium quality. The Light Diameter of light sources in legacy plans is capped at 4" (100 mm).

10. Structural Member Reporting

When a plan created in Chief Architect X2 or prior is opened in Chief Architect X18, Materials Lists are set to calculate **Total Linear Length**. For a combination of linear length and piece count, select **Mixed Reporting** in the Structural Member Reporting dialog.

11. Fill New Framing Members

In Chief Architect X2 and prior, Fill New Framing Members was view-specific; in Chief Architect X18 it applies to the entire plan. As a result, it is turned off by default in legacy plans opened in version X18.

New and Improved Features by Chapter

The following is a list of new and improved features in Chief Architect Version X18. Where possible, cross-references to additional information are provided.

FILE MANAGEMENT

- The New Project from Template dialog now allows you to assign the new Project to the available search **Folders** as it is created.
- New **Move to Project Browser** and **Merge** options in the Asset Management dialog.
- File size can now be listed when List Mode is active in the Asset Management dialog.
- New **Expand Plans and Layouts On Open** option automatically expands to show a newly opened document's contents in a tree list below its name when Chief Architect Project Management is active.
- The files that open after a Project is imported using traditional file management can now be selected.
- **Export** is now an option in the contextual menu for a selected folder in the Project Browser when Chief Architect Project Management is in use.
- The Enable Editing in Home Designer option has been removed from Chief Architect.

PROJECT PLANNING

- The columns in the Time Log dialog are now sortable.
- Exported Time Log data now includes the Duration for the selection.
- In Progress entries can now be edited as well as exported in the Time Log dialog.
- New **Fill Style** options for Construction Line callouts.

PREFERENCES AND DEFAULT SETTINGS

- The Snap Grid and Reference Grid colors are now set globally in the Preferences dialog.
- "Force Light" and "Force Dark" are now options in the Windows version of the program.
- New **Show Recent and Pinned File Project Names** option in the Preferences dialog.
- The Default Settings dialog list is now searchable.

TOOLBARS AND HOTKEYS

- Custom Toolbar Configurations can now be renamed in the Toolbar Customization dialog.

WINDOW AND VIEW TOOLS

- New **Automatic View Scrolling** keeps the mouse pointer in-view when drawing or editing an object.
- When copying or creating a new Saved Plan View, a Layer Set can now be specified.

DISPLAYING OBJECTS

- The Select All, New, Copy, Merge, Delete, and Reset Names buttons are now included in the Active Layer Display Options side window by default.
- Fill Styles can now be assigned to objects by layer.
- New **Gradient** options for fill styles.
- New **Reset** button for custom colors in the Select Color dialog.
- The standard Chief Architect Select Color dialog is now used in the program's Mac version instead of the macOS Color Picker.

POSITIONING OBJECTS

- New **Nudge Further** functionality moves objects in larger Reference Grid increments than regular nudging.

EDITING OBJECTS

- Custom object labels using NVPs can now be transferred using Style Palettes and the Object Painter.

CAD OBJECTS

- Revision Clouds can now be created with a single click.

WALLS, RAILINGS, AND FENCING

- New **Auto Connect** tools let you prevent a wall end from snapping to other nearby walls to form intersections.
- New **Edit Wall Layer Intersection** edit tools for upper and lower Pony Walls and Foundation Wall footings.
- New Wall Layer Specification dialog and streamlined Wall Type Definitions dialog.
- Brick Ledge Lines can now be located by dimension lines.
- Wall Hatching objects can now overlap one another.
- New **Roof to Exterior of Layer** setting in the Wall Type Definitions dialog.
- New **Build Deck Platform to Exterior of Layer** setting in the Wall Type Definitions dialog.
- The Wall Types of walls saved in the Library can now be assigned to walls in the Wall Specification dialog.
- Foundation wall footings now have their own material component.


ROOMS

- New Ledger Board settings in the Room Specification dialog for Deck rooms.
- Rooms now have editable labels much like other objects.
- The FILL STYLE panel is now available in the Room Type Defaults dialogs.
- The LAYER panel is now available in the Room Specification and Room Type Defaults dialogs.
- Rooms can now display in cross section/elevation and camera views.
- Room Finish Schedules can now include room shapes and fill styles in the 2D Symbol column.

DIMENSIONS

- New **Line Separation** and **First Line Offset** settings in the Auto Story Pole Dimension Defaults dialog.
- The **Grade Level Marker** and **Elevation Reference** settings have been moved from the Auto Story Pole Dimension Defaults dialog to the General Plan Defaults dialog.
- Auto Story Pole Dimensions now have multiple Saved Defaults.
- The Centerline Dimensions tool is now available in Wall Details.

TEXT, CALLOUTS, AND MARKERS

- New "None" option for Callout and Note shapes.
- New **Fill Color** settings for Callouts and Notes.
- The text entry field in the Rich Text Specification dialog now uses the same background color as the current view.
- Enhanced Project Information dialog lets you create custom document-wide Objects and Name-Value Pairs.
- New **Convert to Text**  edit tool for Rich Text.

DOORS AND WINDOWS

- New **Opaque Glass** options in the Door Specification dialog.
- New **Interior** and **Exterior** settings for Hinged and Sliding doors in the Door Specification dialog.
- Garage and Shower Doors are now treated as separate Style Palette Objects.
- The Object Eyedropper and Painter tools now work with for mulled units.
- The Match Properties and Add to Library As edit tools are now available for mulled units.

- New Mulled Unit Defaults dialog.
- New **Show Open in 2D**  and **Show Closed in 2D**  edit buttons for doors and windows.



CABINETS

- Cabinet side configurations can now be transferred using the Match Properties edit tool as well as Style Palettes.
- Shelves and Partitions are now treated as separate Style Palette Objects.
- Base cabinet boxes and countertops can now have different fill styles.
- New **Suppress Automatic Fillers** option in the Cabinet Specification dialogs.

ELECTRICAL

- Light **Color** can now be defined using **Temperature** in degrees of Kelvin.

SCHEDULES AND OBJECT LABELS

- New **Display Label in This View**  edit button.
- New **Edit Label**  edit button.
- The **Schedule Numbers Format** for schedule callout labels can now be specified.
- New controls for an individual object label's Fill Style, Margins, and more.
- New **Fraction Format** options in the Schedule Specification dialog.
- Schedules can now list objects from selected rooms on multiple floor levels without including objects from all floors.
- Cabinet Accessories such as door panels and hardware can now be listed in schedules.
- The 2D Symbol column is now available in schedules for Doors, Windows, Cabinets, and Rooms.
- New "None" option for schedule callout label shapes.

STAIRS, RAMPS, AND LANDINGS




- The Match Properties and Object Painter tools are now available for stairs and ramps.

ROOFS


- The obsolete Fix Roofs tool has been removed from the program.

FRAMING AND TRUSSES

- The defaults for Deck planking and supports are now found in the Automatic Framing Defaults dialog.
- Joist and Roof Truss Direction Lines can now be set to run perpendicular to the framing they affect instead of parallel.
- Joist **Construction** and **Width** can now be specified in the Joist Direction Specification dialog.
- Beams, Posts, and Girder Trusses can now be composed of sistered boards, or plies.
- The **Maximum Subfascia Length** for automatic roof framing can now be specified.
- New **Lookout Spacing** and **Offset from Subfascia** settings.
- New **Include Peak Trusses** option allows you to choose whether to generate roof trusses where hip rafters meet.
- The default size for roof **Ledger** boards can now be specified.
- New defaults dialog for Wall Headers.

- New **Automatically Generated** check box in the Framing, Roof Truss, and Floor/Ceiling Truss Specification dialogs can be unchecked to mark an object as manually edited.
- New **Apply Framing Default Properties**  edit tool.
- New **Connection Style** options for rim joists and wall top plates in the Automatic Framing Defaults dialog.
- The **Open Wall Detail**  tool is now available when a wall framing member is selected.
- The table in the Framing Types Management dialog now has an **In Use** column and can be sorted by column.
- The **Draw, Joists, Rafters, Trusses, and General Framing as Line** setting is now found in the General Plan Defaults dialog.
- The **Truss Base**  tool has been moved from the Roof Tools to the Roof Framing Tools.
- New **Calculate Chords/Webbing in Materials List** setting for trusses.

TRIM AND MOLDINGS

- New **Edit Molding Profile**  tool in the contextual menu of molding profiles in the Library.
- The **Repeat Distance** setting is now available for regular moldings and determines the length of each stick of molding counted in the Materials List.
- The **Edit** button is now available when multiple moldings are selected on the MOLDINGS panel.
- New **Recessed To Sheathing Layer** check box in the Corner Board Specification dialog.

THE LIBRARY

- New **Replace Identical Objects in Plan** option in the Replace from Library dialog.
- Folder paths can now be used in the Library Search.
- New **Has Stretch Planes** and **Uses CAD Block Fill Styles** options in the Advanced Search dialog.


SYMBOL OBJECTS

- The Edit Cutout Polyline edit tool and Cuts Referenced Surface settings are now available for symbols that insert into countertops.
- New **Shaft to Ceiling Hole** settings for roof-mounted fixtures and furniture in the Symbol Specification dialog.
- New **Display Flush in Plan** option for ceiling- and roof-mounted symbols in the Symbol Specification dialog.
- The obsolete Inserts into Corner Cabinet option has been removed from the Fixture Specification dialog.

OTHER OBJECTS

- New **3D Cladding** designation lets you create structural layers in walls, roofs, and more with variations in depth.
- Distribution Regions and Paths now have the Add to Library edit tool.


MATERIALS

- New **Add Pattern to Library** button in the Define Material dialog.
- Roughness can now be assigned to Transparent materials.
- Materials created using the Material Builder now have **Open in Material Builder**  in their contextual menu in the Library Browser.
- The Material Builder dialog now opens loaded with the setting that were in use when it was last closed.

3D VIEWS

- The **Below Grade** settings can now be used in **Technical Illustration** views.
- If no framing is present when a Framing Overview is created, you will be presented with the option of building some.
- New **Use Plan/Detail Background** option for camera backdrops.
- The deprecated Floor Camera tool has been removed from the program.

3D RENDERING

- New **Create/Edit Light Set from Selection**  edit tool.
- New **Sun/Moon Movement Indicator** in perspective camera views with Use Generated Sky specified.
- New **Use Layer Line Width and Style** option for surface edge lines in Technical Illustration renderings.

PICTURES, IMAGES, AND WALKTHROUGHS

- The **.webp** file type is now supported for image import and export.

IMPORTING AND EXPORTING

- New **Import Chief Architect As-Built File**  tool imports drawings from the new mobile app.
- New **Import Room Planner File**  tool imports **.room** files from the RENDR mobile app.

MATERIALS LIST

- The Calculate Materials in Room tool now includes wall finish materials.
- Materials List Polylines can now be listed in schedules.

LAYOUT

- Camera views can be sent to layout using Plot Lines regardless of the current Rendering Technique.

PRINTING AND PLOTTING

- New "Match Print Source" option in the Print View dialog uses the Size and Orientation set in the view's Drawing Sheet Setup dialog.
- New **Collate** option in the Print View dialog.
- New **Save to Project/Assets** option in the Print View and Print Image dialogs when creating a PDF file.

RUBY IN CHIEF ARCHITECT

- Numerous new NVPs for stairs and ramps.
- Numerous new NVP's for wall footings.
- Improved various global NVP's to report full file paths, including folders.
- New **%box_height%** and **%face_height%** NVPs for cabinets.
- New NVPs for cabinet countertop fill and pattern settings.
- New **%exterior_sill_extension%** and **%interior_sill_extension%** NVPs for windows.

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- New %label_position_and_orientation% NVP for layout boxes.
- Removed obsolete %light_info% NVP from electrical and light objects and added %light_intensity% for light sources.
- Numerous new NVP's for corner boards and quoins.
- New %formatted_width_height_depth% NVP for Molding Polylines, cabinet moldings, and room moldings.

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

- New System Information dialog provides convenient access to a summary of system specifications relevant to Chief Architect performance.