

What's New in Chief Architect X5

Welcome to Chief Architect X5. This guide has been written to help our upgrading customers make a smooth transition from earlier versions of Chief Architect to Chief Architect X5.

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Before You Begin

There are many new features in Chief Architect X5, and many existing features have changed. These changes affect the way Chief Architect functions, so it is very important to be familiar with them.

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Chief Architect X5 can open the **.PL1**, **.LA1**, **.plan**, and **.layout** files from prior versions. 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. For details, see “For Files Created in Version X3 and Prior” on page 4, “For Files Created in Version X2 and Prior” on page 5 and “For Files Created in Version 10 and Prior” on page 6.

As with any software, it is always best to finish any current projects you may have in progress in the version of the software in which you began them. If you do decide to bring a project forward, be sure to take the time to verify that everything in your drawing is correct when it is opened the new program version.

Getting Started Check List

The following checklist suggests steps you should take before migrating your files to Chief Architect X5. More information about each of these steps can be found after the checklist.

- ☐ 1. Check for and Install Program Updates
- ☐ 2. Migrate Legacy Library Files
- ☐ 3. Migrate Custom Graphics Files
- ☐ 4. Review the New Features List
- ☐ 5. Review Your Preferences Settings
- ☐ 6. Create new custom Template Plan and Layout files

- ☐ 7. Set up Custom Toolbar Configurations
- ☐ 8. Export Entire Plan
- ☐ 9. Check www.chiefarchitect.com for more information

1. Check for and Install Program Updates

Program updates contain improvements to the original release version and we recommend using the most current version available. By default, Chief Architect checks for program updates every day when you launch the program. Please note that program updates are available for download, which means that you need internet access to acquire them.

You can check for updates at any time:

- Select **Help> Download Program Updates** from the menu.
- Visit the Program Updates page on the Chief Architect Web site at www.chiefarchitect.com.

2. Migrate Legacy Library Files

Library content from previous program versions cannot be installed or copied into the Chief Architect X5 library. If you upgraded from version X1 or later and have custom library content on your computer from that program version, the program installer will locate it and ask if you want to migrate it into the Chief Architect X5 library.

You can import library files from versions X1 through X4 at any time by selecting **Library> Import Library (.calib, .calibz)** from the program menu. In addition, library files from versions 10 and prior can be imported by selecting **Library> Convert Legacy (.alb) Library Files** from the program menu.

3. Migrate Custom Graphics Files

If you have custom graphics files, including textures, images or backdrops, that you were using in a previous program version, you can copy them manually using Windows Explorer for use in Chief Architect X5.

- Copy custom texture files to the Chief Architect X5 Textures folder located in the Chief Architect X5 Data folder.
- Copy custom image files to your Chief Architect X5 Images folder located in the Chief Architect X5 Data folder.
- Copy custom backdrop files to your Chief Architect X5 Backdrops folder located in the Chief Architect X5 Data folder.

In Chief Architect X4 through X1, custom graphics were saved in the Chief Architect Data folder, as they are in version X5. In version 10 and prior, 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.

4. Review the New Features List

There are a number of important reasons why you should familiarize yourself with the new and improved features in Chief Architect X5:

- 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" on page 7.

5. Review Your Preferences Settings

Any changes that you made to the Preferences settings in your previous version do not migrate into Chief Architect X5. You should review all the settings in the **Preferences** dialog to make sure that they are set to suit your drawing needs.

6. Create new custom Template Plan and Layout files

Chief Architect X5 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. For best results, it is recommended that you either:

- Use the installed templates when creating new plans and layout files in Chief Architect X5
- Use the installed templates as the basis for creating new custom templates.

If you choose to continue using custom template files that you created in a previous program version, it is very important that you take the time to carefully review all the default settings in the file, making sure that they will continue to suit your needs in X5. First, make copies of your custom templates in the Chief Architect X5 The Templates directory is located in the Chief Architect X5 Data folder in Windows Explorer. 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 X5 and that their line weight scales do not conflict with those in your template plans.

7. Set up Custom Toolbar Configurations

It is possible to migrate toolbar configuration files from previous versions to Chief Architect X5; however, it is not recommended because it is likely that you will be missing new tools available in version X5.

Instead, we recommend that you set up your custom toolbars the way you would like them in Chief Architect X5. You may find it most effective to customize your toolbars as you get used to working in the new program version, rather than beforehand.

8. Backup Entire Plan

Before migrating a legacy file created in Chief Architect X4 or prior, it is a good idea to open the plan in the program version in which it was created and use the Backup Entire Plan tool (Export Entire Plan in version X3 and prior) to export the plan with all associated support files, including textures, backdrops and images.

9. Check www.chiefarchitect.com for more information

If you have additional questions about the changes in Chief Architect, up to date information is available in the Support section of our web site. You can also post questions on the Chief Talk web forum at www.chieftalk.com.

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 before you open legacy files in Chief Architect X5.

☐ 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, they are measured to the outside of the fascia or shadow boards, if present. In legacy plans opened in Version X5, 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 X5 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 display interior material on exterior side of door. This was corrected in Version X5. Doors modified to work around the old behavior could be affected in legacy plans opened in Version X5.

☐ 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 X5, 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 X5, the offset is set in the **Cabinet Specification** dialogs. When legacy plans are opened in Version X5, 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 X5.

☐ 7. **Invisible Beams**

The legacy **Invisible Beam** check box was removed from the **Wall Specification** dialog. When legacy plans are opened in Version X5, 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 before you open legacy files in Chief Architect X5.

☐ 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 X5.

☐ 2. **Light Sources**

The illumination created by light fixtures and Added Lights was improved in Chief Architect X5. Lighting in legacy plans may appear noticeably brighter when viewed in version X5.

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 before you open legacy files in Chief Architect X5.

☐ 1. **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 X5 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 X5. This tool is renamed Backup Entire Plan in version X5.

☐ 2. **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.

☐ 3. **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 X5.

☐ 4. **Auto Adjust Height**

The Follow Terrain option in some specification dialogs was replaced by the Auto Adjust Height checkbox. 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.

☐ 5. **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 X5 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.

☐ 6. **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 X5. 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.

☐ 7. **Deck rooms**

In legacy plans opened in Chief Architect X5, 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.

☐ 8. **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 X5.

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).

☐ 9. **Structural Member Reporting**

When a plan created in Chief Architect X2 or prior is opened in Chief Architect X5, Materials Lists are set to calculate **Total Lineal Length**. For a combination of lineal length and piece count, select **Mixed Reporting** in the **Structural Member Reporting** dialog.

☐ 10. **Fill New Framing Members**

In Chief Architect X2 and prior, Fill New Framing Members was view-specific; in Chief Architect X5 it applies to the entire plan. As a result, it is turned off by default in legacy plans opened in version X5.

For Files Created in Version 10 and Prior

In addition to the above recommendations, if you wish to open files created in Chief Architect Version 10 or prior, these additional steps are also suggested before you open legacy files in Chief Architect X5.

☐ 1. **Select the desired Layer Set**

Before migrating a legacy file created in Chief Architect Version 10, open it in Version 10 and make sure that the active layer set is one that is useful in most situations. Extensive changes to layer sets since Version 10 allow only the active layer set to be migrated in Chief Architect X5.

☐ 2. **Set up your Legacy File Conversion Preferences**

Several different preference settings allow you to control how legacy files from Version 9.5 and prior are migrated into Chief Architect X5. You may want to do some experiments with these settings so that you fully understand how they affect your older plans when they are read into Chief Architect X5:

- ☐ a. **Set your legacy text and dimension conversion fonts** - Set your Legacy Text Conversion and Legacy Dimension Conversion fonts in the **Preferences** dialog before opening any old plans. Use the same settings here that you had in your preferences for your previous version of Chief Architect so that your text and dimensions will look the same.
- ☐ b. **Set your legacy plan and layout page setup information** - Page Setup information can be done on an individual plan basis. Use the Page Setup preference for legacy plans and layouts so that your plans and layouts are set up the same way they were in your previous version. Note: You should make sure you leave the scale for layouts at 1 to 1.
- ☐ c. **Set your legacy layer conversion settings** - Significant changes have been made to improve the setup and control of layers. Preference settings have been provided to control how your legacy plan layers are converted when you open a previous version plan in Version X5. By default, layers should be converted into the new format so that they more closely match the defaults that we provide in the template plans. You can modify these settings so that your layers more closely match how they looked in your previous version.

☐ 3. **Replace problem symbols**

In recent versions of Chief Architect, any symbols placed in a plan are saved with the plan file and can be read by Chief Architect X5. If you open a plan file created in an older version of Chief Architect and notice problems with a symbol, however, you can either delete it or replace it with a new symbol from Chief Architect X5 library.

New and Improved Features

The following is a list of new and improved features in Chief Architect Version X5.

Installation

- Can now choose to migrate some or all library content from the previous program version.

Program Overview

- Moved all tools in three-level submenus for easier access.

File Management

- Backup Entire Plan tool now backs up inserted .pdf files.

Preferences & Default Settings

- Can now export and import plan default settings.
- The **3D Settings** dialog was renamed **3D View Defaults** and can now be accessed via the **Default Settings** dialog.
- Expanded ability to edit defaults settings in all views.

Toolbars & Hotkeys

- Removed ability to assign same name to multiple custom toolbars.

Layers

- New “Casings, Exterior” and “Casings, Interior” layers for door and window casings.


Creating Objects

- When creating an object on a layer that is not turned on, you can now choose to **Cancel**.
- Polyline- and Spline-based objects can only be created when their components have the same layer and display attributes - including line style and color.

Editing Objects

- Corner Boards and Quoins added to the **Delete Objects** dialog.
- Can now delete Manual and Automatic Dimensions separately in the **Delete Objects** dialog.

Walls, Railings & Fencing

- The Railing and Handrail tabs in the **Wall Specification** dialog were renamed to improve usability.
- New settings to specify profiles for top, middle and bottom rails as well as beams over railings.
- Can now specify the height of bottom rail or shoe on Railings and Deck Railings.
- **No Shoe** and **Raise Shoe** settings were renamed **Include Bottom Rail** and **Raise Bottom Rail**.
- Can now control the material of a railing’s overhead beam, as seen in 3D views.
- **Align With Above/Below**  edit tools now work with Invisible Walls.
- New Named Values for walls.
- **Bearing Wall** checkbox was renamed **Create Wall/Footing Below** to improve clarity.
- Legacy **Invisible Beam** checkbox was removed from the **Wall Specification** dialog. Invisible Beam walls in legacy plans will be converted to Invisible Walls when opened in version X5.

Rooms

- Improved feedback in the **Room Specification** dialog if the selected room has multiple rooms with different floor heights located directly above it.

Doors and Windows

- Can now display door and window casing in floor plan view.
- Can now specify the **Depth** of door and window casing.
- New “Casings, Exterior” and “Casings, Interior” layers.
- Can now specify wrapped lintels and sills on windows with recessed casing.
- Improved usability of **Extend** setting for lintels and sills.
- New **Reverse Interior/Exterior** option in the **Door Specification** dialog. Don’t use with custom muntins.
- Improved how Bi-fold doors, their hinges, and their louvers are generated.

- Can now show Bi-fold doors as open in 3D views.
- New **Show in Plan** setting lets you control the display of the concrete cutout for doors and windows in floor plan view.
- Improved **Louver direction** behavior for doors.
- Improved how door materials are handled with the swing side is changed.
- Improved display of window frames and sills in floor plan view.
- Windows can now have a lintel without also having a sill.

Foundations

- New **Show in Plan** setting for doors and windows lets you control the display of their concrete cutout in floor plan view.


Roofs

- Can now specify roof Ridge Caps.
- Can now specify Shadow Boards for roof fascia.
- Added option to generate automatic frieze on eaves only, gables only, or both.
- Both the projected and actual areas of roof planes are stated in the Roof Plane, Ceiling Plane, and Roof Hole/Skylight Specification and dialogs.
- In floor plan view, roof plane polylines now reflect the thickness of the fascia and shadow boards rather than the extents of the framing.
- Redesigned **Change Roof Pitch or Height** dialog.


Stairs, Ramps & Landings

- No Shoe for Rail setting was renamed **Include Bottom Rail on Landings** for greater clarity.



Framing

- The bottom plates of framed interior walls are now specified as **Treated** if built on a monolithic slab foundation.
- **Posts**  now use their default size when placed under a floor or ceiling beam instead of inheriting the beam's width.
- Framing members can now display Start and End indicators when selected.

Electrical

- Improved how **Auto Place Outlet**  tool positions outlets for appliances.
- Obsolete Soft Shadows **Quality** setting removed from **Electrical Service Specification** dialog for light sources.

Trim & Moldings

- Can now specify whether automatic frieze molding generates under eaves only, gables only, or both.
- Improved offset for Cabinet Feet.
- Handrail profiles no longer require that the bottom edge be drawn on the left.
- New **Auto Place Corner Boards**  and **Auto Place Quoins**  tools.
- Corner Boards and Quoins added to the **Delete Objects** dialog.

Cabinets

- New **Specify Appliance** setting allows multiple front appliances in the same cabinet.
- Can now assign multiple door and drawer styles to a single cabinet.
- New **Offset** setting for Cabinet Feet.
- New “Double False Drawer” option for cabinet fronts.
- Drawers and Double Drawers automatically change to False Drawers when a cooktop appliance is inserted into a cabinet.
- “Plain” cabinet doors renamed “Slab” cabinet doors.

Other Objects


- New **Pyramid**  Primitive shape tool.

The Library


- New **Update Library Catalogs** option checks for updated Core, Manufacturer, and Bonus Catalogs content.

3D Views






- **3D Settings** dialog was renamed **3D View Defaults** and can now be accessed via the **Default Settings** dialog.



- Backdrop name now displays in **3D View Defaults**.
- New **Isometric Overview** tools.
- Can now include floors below the current floor in Floor Overviews.
- New Plan Display tab in **Camera Specification** dialogs allows control of camera symbol size, Clip Plane Indicator length, and focal point display.
- New Label tab in **Camera Specification** dialogs.
- **Wall Elevation**  tool now recognizes room definition created by invisible walls and railings.
- Can now modify a saved camera without saving your changes.
- New **Clip To Sides** setting lets you limit the side-to-side extents of cross section/elevation views.
- Can now save **Cross Section Slider** settings with saved cameras.
- New position text field in **Cross Section Slider** dialog.

Rendering & Ray Tracing



- New **Use Generated Sky** option creates a panoramic backdrop of a daytime sky.
- New Progressive Ray Tracing improves ray trace quality the longer you let it run.
- Removed settings from the **Ray Trace Options** dialog that were made obsolete by Progressive Ray Tracing.
- Can now **Stop**  a ray trace in progress without cancelling it.
- New option to specify a saved ray trace image's size in inches (mm).
- Can now specify the line color of Line Drawing in the Watercolor Rendering Technique.

Dimensions

- New **Running Dimension**  tool.
- New **Auto Interior** , **Auto NKBA** , **Auto Elevation** , and **Auto NKBA Elevation Dimension**  tool..

- Manually-drawn **Dimensions**  and **Automatic Dimensions**  now have separate parent tools and submenus.
- Can now delete Manual and Automatic Dimensions separately using the **Delete Objects** dialog.
- Improved how dimensions locate door and window casing.
- Can now specify whether and how furniture is located by dimensions in floor plan and cross section/elevation views.

Pictures, Images, & Walkthroughs

- Can now import .pdf files.
- New **Create Walkthrough Path**  tool with editable Key Frames.
- The **Resize Picture**  edit tool is now available for selected metafile boxes and pdf boxes, and was renamed **Point to Point Resize**.

Importing & Exporting

- Can now specify whether imported .dxf/.dwg drawings are placed at their original location or at the origin (0,0).

Printing & Plotting

- The default **Print Range** in the **Print** dialog is now **All** by default and your last choice for this setting is remembered between program sessions.

Schedules & Object Labels

- Can now display object labels in cross section/elevation views.
- Can now rotate object labels independent of the actual object.
- Improved differentiation and description of Angled Front cabinets in schedules.

Ruby Console

- New Named Values for walls, rooms, roof planes, Added Lights, and view names.