

# Architect interview checklist

Architecture firms usually start with a portfolio review, then a technical discussion with a senior or principal architect, sometimes a short design or drafting test, and a final HR conversation.

## 10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

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**1. Walk me through your design process from client brief to handover.**

What it checks: Whether you understand the full project stages and your role in each, not just the concept design you show in a portfolio.

**2. Tell me about a time a client changed the brief late in the project.**

What it checks: Whether you manage scope changes professionally, explaining impact on cost and time and documenting the change clearly.

**3. Why do you want to work at our architecture practice?**

What it checks: Whether you know the firm's work and design approach and can link it honestly to your portfolio and goals.

**4. What do you study during a site analysis?**

What it checks: Whether you understand how a site's physical, climatic and legal conditions shape design decisions before any drawing starts.

**5. Describe a time your concept design was rejected.**

What it checks: Whether you take criticism well, understand the reasons behind it, and use it to improve the design.

**6. What salary do you expect, and are you registered with the Council of Architecture?**

What it checks: Whether you have realistic pay expectations for your level and the professional registration needed to practise as an architect.

**7. Explain FSI and how it affects what you can design on a plot.**

What it checks: Whether you can apply basic development control concepts correctly, which every practising architect uses on day one of a project.

**8. Tell me about a time a project went over budget. What did you do?**

What it checks: Whether you handle cost problems honestly and can value engineer without destroying the design intent.

**9. Are you comfortable with regular site visits and outstation projects?**

What it checks: Whether you are prepared for the site side of architecture and can travel when projects require it.

**10. How do you design passively for a hot and humid climate?**

What it checks: Whether you apply climate-responsive design principles to reduce energy use and improve comfort, not just rely on air conditioning.

## TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

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- Curate your portfolio to 10 to 15 strong pages and include at least one working drawing set, not only renders, because firms hire for production skills too.

- For each portfolio project, be ready to explain the brief, site constraints, your exact role, key decisions and what changed during construction.
- Revise FSI, setbacks, and basic building services, and read the development control rules of the city where the firm mainly works.
- Expect a short test in AutoCAD or Revit, or a quick hand sketch, and practise drawing a detail like a staircase section from memory.

## THE DAY BEFORE

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- ☐ Confirm the time, venue or video link and the interviewer's name
- ☐ Plan your route and leave time for traffic, or test your camera, microphone and internet
- ☐ Keep copies of your resume, ID proof, certificates and photographs in a folder
- ☐ Iron your clothes and charge your phone and laptop
- ☐ Do one final run-through of your introduction, then stop and rest

## ON THE DAY

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- ☐ Arrive 15 minutes early, or log in 5–10 minutes early for a video call
- ☐ Greet everyone politely, including the receptionist or coordinator
- ☐ Listen to the full question, pause, then answer in a clear structure
- ☐ Take brief notes of names and key points
- ☐ Ask your prepared questions and confirm the next steps before you leave