

Interior Designer

Interior designers create ideas for the design and decoration of the insides of new and existing buildings. They work on houses, offices, civic buildings, leisure centres, hotels, restaurants, shops, ships and aircraft. They make sure the designs are both attractive and practical.

The Work

You could be:

- discussing your client's needs and ideas (or brief)
- advising on colour schemes, furniture, fabrics and floor and wall coverings
- deciding what fittings, such as radiators, door handles and lighting, to use
- producing sample boards and using computer-aided design (CAD) and 3D design software to create drawings, plans and presentations
- calculating and costing quantities of material required, and preparing estimates
- working out a time scale for the project to be completed
- putting together tender packages (bids for work) for contractors and choosing a contractor
- supervising work being done and ensuring designs and work carried out meets building regulations
- keeping up to date with design trends and developments.

Pay

Pay rates vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting salaries for qualified interior designers in the UK tend to be in the range of £20,000 to £25,000 a year. With experience this can rise to £40,000 a year. Senior designers can earn £60,000 and over a year.

Some interior designers work freelance. They charge a fee, which varies depending on the work and their reputation. The better known they are, the more they can charge.

Conditions

- You would work in a design studio or office.
- You would travel to meet clients and visit sites.
- When on site you may need to wear protective clothing, such as a hard hat.
- Hours may be long and irregular.
- You may need to work some evenings and weekends, if you have to meet deadlines.
- You may have to deal with demanding clients.
- You would work both alone and as part of a team, liaising with other professionals, such as architects and painters and decorators.

Getting In

- You usually need an HND (SCQF Level 8) or degree (SCQF Level 9) in interior or 3D: interior design, or an HND or degree in design with a suitable specialism.
- Entry requirements for a suitable HND are usually 2 Highers, and for a degree 4-5 Highers, normally including English and Art and Design.
- You need a good portfolio of designs to get into college or university.
- If you are very talented and have a really good portfolio, you might get into college or university without the necessary Highers.
- You should be competent in using computer software such as AutoCAD, InDesign, Photoshop and SketchUp.
- You could start by taking an NC or NQ (SCQF Levels 4-6) (formal entry requirements not always needed) or an HNC (1-2 Highers needed for entry), in similar subjects. This might get you a job, perhaps as an interior design assistant, or lead on to an HND or degree.
- Depending on the course you do, you may be able to gain membership with the [British Institute of Interior Design](#).

For art school courses you need to apply through UCAS.

There is a lot of competition for jobs. You might find work with a design consultancy, or with building companies and architects. There are also opportunities with hotel and retail companies and office, kitchen and bathroom design companies. You can find jobs advertised online or in the specialist press.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- artistic, creative and imaginative
- adaptable, as you may have to change your designs to suit your client
- able to work within a budget and to deadlines
- accurate and able to pay attention to detail
- confident, to promote designs to clients
- good at negotiating and able to manage staff
- able to accept criticism of your work.

You need to have:

- good communication skills
- spatial awareness
- a good eye for 3D design, colour and texture
- knowledge of computer design packages including 3D design
- practical and model-making skills
- a knowledge of construction materials and building regulations
- project management skills
- a good business sense and marketing skills.

Training

- Training is through experience, on the job.
- [The Chartered Society of Designers](#) and [British Institute of Interior Design](#) offer training and encourage continuing professional development (CPD).

Getting On

- You would probably start as an interior design assistant and move on to be an interior designer.
- In a large firm you might lead a team of interior designers.
- You could move into other areas of specialism, such as exhibition design or TV and theatre set design.
- With experience you might set up your own business or work freelance.
- There may be more employment opportunities if you are willing to work in other areas of the UK.

Getting work as a freelance designer depends on becoming well known and established. This can take some time. You need to build up a good portfolio of work and build up a network of contacts.

More Information

For more information on creative careers see the [Discover Creative Careers Finder](#) website

Contacts

Design Council

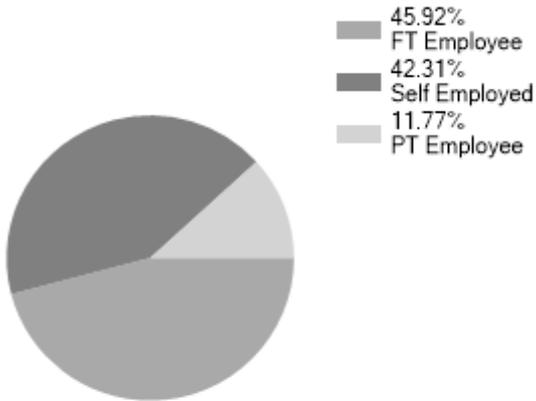
Tel: 0207 4205200

Website: www.designcouncil.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/DesignCouncil

Statistics

Employment Status UK %



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.