

DELTA COLLEGE
COUNSELING/ADVISING & CAREER SERVICES
INTERIOR DESIGNER

Salary Range: \$21,480-\$124,890 annually

Personal Interests: Artistic, creative and enjoys communicating ideas

Work Environment: Varies from office to retail setting, with some travel to outside clients

Description

Interior designers plan the space and furnish the interiors of private homes, public buildings, and commercial or instructional establishments, such as offices, restaurants, hospitals, hotels and theaters. They also plan the interiors for additions to and renovations of existing structures. Most interior designers specialize. For example, some may concentrate in residential design, and others may further specialize by focusing on a particular room, such as kitchens or baths. With a client's tastes, needs and budget in mind, interior designers prepare drawings and specifications for interior construction, furnishings, lighting, and finishes. Increasingly, designers use computers to plan layouts that can be changed easily to include ideas received from the client. Interior designers also design lighting and architectural details. They coordinate colors and select furniture, floor coverings, and curtains. Interior designers must design space to conform to federal, state, and local laws, including building codes. Design plans for public areas also must meet accessibility standards for the disabled and the elderly.

Some designers specialize in a particular aspect of interior design, such as furniture, carpeting, or artwork. Others concentrate on particular environments, such as offices, hospitals, restaurants or transportation, including ships, aircrafts and trains. Still others specialize in the renovation of old buildings. In addition to researching the styles in which rooms were originally decorated and furnished,

these designers often supervise the manufacture of furniture and accessories to be used.

Considerable paperwork is involved in interior design, much of it related to budget and costs. The designer must determine quantities and make and obtain cost estimates. In addition, designers write up and administer contracts, obtain permits, place orders, and check deliveries carefully.

Working Conditions

Interior designers work alone but coordinate their efforts with many other people. Designers' working conditions differ with each job, place of employment, employer, and duties. Designers' studios usually provide a pleasant work environment. Some designers work in their homes, subcontractors' offices, and establishments that sell various materials with which they work. A good deal of time is spent at the location for which they are designing.

Training, Other Qualifications

Creativity is crucial in all design occupations. People in this field must have a strong sense of the aesthetic, an eye for color and detail, a sense of balance and proportion, and an appreciation for beauty. Sketching ability is helpful for most designers.

Educational requirements for entry-level positions vary. Some design occupations, notably industrial design, require a bachelor degree. Interior

designers normally need a college education, in part because few clients, especially commercial clients, are willing to entrust responsibility for designing living and working space to a designer with no formal credentials. Delta College offers an Associate in Business Studies Degree in Interior Design.

Interior design is the only design field subject to government regulation. According to the American Society for Interior Designers, 21 states and the District of Columbia require interior designers to be licensed. Michigan does not require licensing at this time, but an interior designer's professional standing is important. It is beneficial to become a member of a professional association.

Job Outlook

Individuals seeking beginning jobs in interior design are expected to face keen competition. Designers will be expected to have more technical knowledge in specialized areas such as energy efficiency, interiors for the handicapped and elderly, and environmental safety. The outlook is favorable for well-qualified interior designers. The increasing demand for interior design is expected to continue. However, interior design is affected more by the overall state of the economy than are many other occupations. Employment of Interior Designers in Michigan is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through the year 2014. An average of 53 annual openings is expected, with some due to growth and others due to replacement of those who retire, die, or leave the labor force for other reasons. Additional openings will occur as workers change jobs or occupations.

Earnings

Interior designers and assistant designers may be paid straight salaries, salaries plus commissions or bonuses, or straight commissions. Most interior designers working for department stores are paid a percentage of their sales. Firms in large metropolitan areas usually pay the highest salaries in this field.

Nationally, the median annual earnings for interior designers were \$40,670 in May 2004. The middle 50 percent earned between \$30,890 and \$53,790. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$23,440, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$71,220.

Earnings for interior designers in Michigan and selected areas in May 2005 were:

Area	Average	Range
Michigan	\$55,870	\$21,480-\$124,890
Ann Arbor	\$45,020	\$12,920-\$78,400
Holland	\$48,560	\$32,260-\$72,650
Warren	\$47,420	\$23,810-\$47,420

Related Occupations

Visual Artists, Architects, Landscape Architects, Engineers, Photographers, and Interior Decorators.

InteriorDesignprofile.doc SC updated 10/07
 Sources: Occupational Outlook Handbook, MI Occupational Information System, 2005 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, Eureka, and the Delta College Catalog.
 Career Center, D 132
 Bay City/Saginaw: (989) 686-9072
 Midland/Auburn: (989) 495-4000, Ext 4. 9072
 Frankenmuth, Birch Run, Reese & Vassar: (989) 758-3400, Ext. 9072
<http://www.delta.edu/careercenter>

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