

1. Provide specifics about you and your experiences that make you stand out above other applicants.
2. Include information about your passions - a creative cover letter can differentiate.
3. Provide a brief summary of your experience - details to be covered in the resume
4. Provide an availability date range; this may be tied to graduation, a move, or desired job change.
5. Research the firm and detail why you are excited to work there/ what attracted you to them.
6. Describe why you think the relationship would be mutually beneficial.
7. Mention how what you have done or are interested in relates to the firm.
8. Describe the reason for wanting employment and how you hope to develop (professionally) over the course of the job.
9. Always include the firm's name at least once and mention one or two firm projects that grabbed your attention.
10. If responding to a job posting, provide specific information to why you are interested in the position.

1. Rely on program/AI spelling & grammar check - review yourself & ask others.
2. Non-specific titles - do the research to know who to address the letter to. If it isn't clear through your research, it doesn't hurt to call.
3. Generic cover letter that resembles a mass mailing - make it specific to the firm and why you want to work there.
4. If you use a template, don't forget to ensure everything is filled in.
5. Mention project types (i.e. historic, healthcare, schools, residential) you want to design that the firm you're sending the letter to doesn't do.
6. Use the wrong firm's name - Check, recheck and then check again to confirm you have the correct firm's name in ALL locations in the letter.
7. Fail to break up your cover letter in an understandable way.
8. Oversell yourself - be accurate in your description of yourself, if you exaggerate your abilities it will come out when you start working.
9. Provide a resume without a cover letter.
10. Be arrogant - Story-telling and tone matter, be aware of how your message may be heard and interpreted by others. There is a fine line between confidence and arrogance.

1. Cover letters supplement resume and portfolio.
2. Show good writing skills; be clear and concise (one page or less).
3. Have more than one person read the cover letter for content, style, grammar and spelling. You definitely don't want basic grammar and spelling mistakes in your letter.
4. Be authentic and genuine.
5. Consider a template or AI to get started, and be sure to review and edit for accuracy and voice.
6. If you can provide a glimpse of who you are in the letter, firms are more likely to review the rest of the material but also understand how you fit into their office and culture.
7. Think about your audience. Tell YOUR story, but do so in a way that resonates with the intended audience.
8. Research the firm to which you are applying and make sure you convey why you are choosing to apply THERE.
9. Let your passion speak through and write about your goals and aspirations.
10. Do your research and pursue only opportunities you are genuinely excited about.

## JOB SEARCH

### JOB BOARDS:

<https://careercenter.aia.org/>  
<https://aianova.org/jobs/>  
<https://www.aiava.org/community/jobs/>  
<https://jobcenter.aiadc.com/>  
<https://www.linkedin.com/>  
 Company websites

### PROGRAMS:

- Photoshop
- InDesign
- Illustrator
- Word processing software
- Web creation software

### BEFORE YOU HIT SEND: DOUBLECHECK...

- Application deadline
- Application submission time limit
- Required Documents
- Job Posting

1. Differentiate your resume graphically.
2. Organize information logically. (i.e. listing experience with most recent first)
3. Highlight problem-solving experience/skills.
4. List school, degree type, and (expected) graduation date.
5. Well articulated past experience or projects (portfolio or professional)
6. Specify responsibilities/contributions to job/volunteer experiences.
7. List hobbies, volunteer/community involvement
8. List interesting jobs/experience outside architecture
9. List experience with architecture specific or professionally applicable software (e.g. Revit)
10. List study abroad/fellowship experience

1. List job title/experience as architect if not licensed.
2. Include typos, spelling errors or be poorly edited or formatted.
3. Use generic templates.
4. Utilize irrelevant or illegible graphics/fonts.
5. Include a list of skills and abilities that is clearly not evident in the work examples.
6. List short tenures at multiple firms. (except for internships during school)
7. List positions without describing responsibilities.
8. Use lengthy personal statements or text descriptions.
9. Exaggerate experience.
10. Include irrelevant or pre-high school information.

1. Treat the resume as a design problem. Consider creating a "brand identity" for your whole application package.
2. Review it several times. Try to put yourself in the shoes of the person reviewing it.
3. Have a mentor/ trusted individual review it.
4. Tailor it for the job you are looking for. Cut the fat.
5. Convey information concisely. Avoid long paragraphs and create something that can be understood quickly.
6. Be specific about your skill sets but also that you're willing to grow and learn.
7. Make sure your name, email, and phone are easy to find.
8. Confirm and confirm by third party that all links to your website/LinkedIn/Portfolio page are active.
9. Create a resume that is a quick hit summary of what makes you an interesting candidate.
10. Highlight your key skills sets, experience, and differentiators.

GPA: Only include GPA if it is stellar.

YES to include Dean's List and other honors

SKILL SET LIST: Include on resume. Be mindful if listing proficiency levels, as it can be seen as subjective.

LENGTH: 1-2 pages maximum

BEFORE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE: Include only if relevant to skill set, shows leadership, and/or special accomplishments

LIVING DOCUMENT: Keep your resume up to date. This provides you flexibility and ease as you go.

MISSION/PERSONAL STATEMENT: Not required, but provides insight on your professional goals and can make you stand out from among other candidates..



1. Include associated skill sets (hand sketches, photography, painting, other artistic skills, etc)
2. List programs used to create images and your portfolio.
3. Provide a concise description of each project.
4. Label your graphics.
5. Clearly note which projects were solo versus group.
6. Provide clear and crisp graphics.
7. Show proficiency on using software and documenting projects and design intent.
8. Include only your best work.
9. Be clear and intentional, sometimes less is best.
10. Include all parts of a project, design process (sketches, models), inspiration images if they're important to the project, final images (plans, renderings, etc).

1. Include team projects/collaborations without explanation of your role.
2. Include your most out of the box pie-in-the-sky student project is probably not super relevant to an employer.
3. Include only renderings.
4. Include only written descriptions.
5. Include bad graphics or vague shots that don't say much about the project.
6. Include projects that you can't say something interesting and meaningful about.
7. Use too many different text sizes/fonts.
8. Provide information in an unorganized fashion.
9. Include work from a firm without explaining your role or crediting.
10. Only include final images.

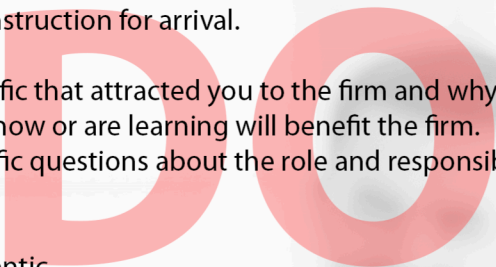
1. Portfolio information should generate interest for additional interview conversation.
2. Treat every page as well as the whole portfolio as a design problem.
3. Embrace negative space.
4. Be graphical on the portfolio. Less script.
5. Have several reviewers: people you know and don't know well and people who are experienced with the hiring process. Also include a non-architect and ask questions based on the review.
6. Do a brain dump of everything then review with peers to edit it down to the most relevant and best information about you.
7. Consider tailoring portfolio to firm you are applying
8. Do not just take your final project boards or graphics and throw them on a page. Think about how the composition should differ based on the format and context of the information.
9. Remember you see your own work all the time, but hiring managers have never seen it before.
10. Your portfolio should be you in graphic form. It should express your skills, through the images, graphics, composition and information you provide.


**PORTFOLIO LENGTH:** Over 50% of firms said less than 20 pages, but in the end it depends on the storytelling process. You could do a curated version for an interview with an extensive digital version to send ahead with a resume.

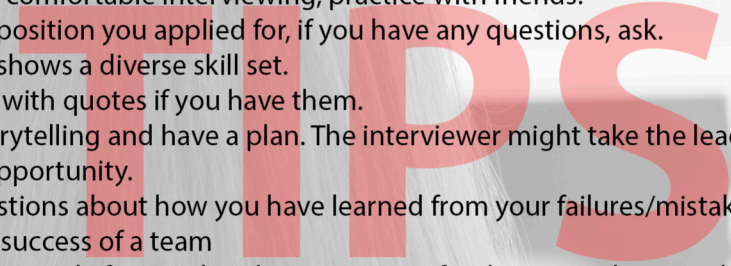
**FILE SIZE:** When sending by email 1-5 MB is preferable, 5-10 is still manageable but some firms do have limits to sizes of files.

1. Provide enough projects/pages to show your range of capabilities and experience without being redundant. 3-6 projects is standard range.
2. Consider less projects with more relevant details.
3. When the portfolio is digital, you could provide a curated version then link to a website with more.
4. Could do an image library section to capture images you are proud of but don't want to include the whole project in your portfolio.
5. If it's less than five pages, call it a work sample.



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1. Be polite, prepared, confident and honest.
  2. Make eye contact and smile.
  3. Arrive early and follow instruction for arrival.
  4. Listen as well as speak.
  5. Convey something specific that attracted you to the firm and why you want to be a part of the firm.
  6. Convey how what you know or are learning will benefit the firm.
  7. Ask questions! Ask specific questions about the role and responsibilities, project process, and company culture.
  8. Silence your phone.
  9. Be yourself and be authentic.
  10. Show enticement talking about your work and interest in being there.

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1. Check your phone.
  2. Be late - notify firm ASAP if you are unexpectedly going to be late.
  3. Act entitled or really nervous.
  4. Blame others.
  5. Show up knowing nothing about the firm.
  6. Interrupt a lot.
  7. Say your parents drove you.
  8. Make demands.
  9. Lie, over inflate or pretend to know something that you don't.
  10. Be disrespectful.

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1. Be ready to talk about yourself both professionally and personally.
  2. Research the firm and people. Interviewers will ask you what you know about the firm. Be ready to explain why you think you want to work with the firm.
  3. If you're not that comfortable interviewing, practice with friends.
  4. Understand the position you applied for, if you have any questions, ask.
  5. Share work that shows a diverse skill set.
  6. Bring references with quotes if you have them.
  7. Practice your storytelling and have a plan. The interviewer might take the lead, but be prepared to steer if given the opportunity.
  8. Be ready for questions about how you have learned from your failures/mistakes and how you contributed to the success of a team
  9. Send a thank you email afterward to the interviewer for their time the next day or at least within 48 hours.
  10. Come relaxed and be yourself. The interviewers were once in your shoes. It's okay if you don't have answers to all our questions.

**1 HOUR:** Most interviews will be 1 hour but some firms have longer interview processes.

**HYBRID:** Almost 50 percent of interviews today are hybrid interviews where you interview in person at the office, but part of your interview may be virtual with someone who was unable to attend the interview in person. About a third of firms only do in-person only interviews. If you have issues being able to be in person, you can always ask if you can do the interview virtually.

**PORTFOLIO & RESUME:** Most firms expect you to bring both copies of your resume and portfolio to the interview. Resume should be hard copy, portfolio can be hard copy or digital. If digital, come prepared and bring your own device ( computer or iPad/tablet) to share it on.

**DRESS TO IMPRESS:** At a minimum, dress in business casual. Some firms may be more formal and business formal will be expected.

**NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS:** Expect two interviews before you are extended a job offer.

**TIMEFRAME:** It may take one to two weeks before you will hear back from the firm. If they don't tell you at the interview, ask as you are leaving. Always follow up with a thank you the next day.

**WHEN IN DOUBT...ASK**