

Preparing an architectural brief

The architectural design brief is the beginning of the design process. It is an essential point of reference not only for the architect, but also for the client involved in the design and implementation of the project. It is important that the brief not only fulfils the aesthetic aspirations of the client but also the functional requirements and needs. Moreover, some aspects will be dictated by local authority regulations, planning requirements and conservation restrictions.



1 **PAIR WORK** The importance of an architectural brief. Student A is the architect and Student B is the client. Ask and answer the questions below. Here is a checklist of questions that you, as an architect, can ask your client:

Initial questions about the client:

- Full contact details of the client – address, phone number, email. Full site address.

About your client:

- What kind of ideas do you have about design and/or materials? Do you have any images from magazines/internet that show us a style that you like?
- Are there any particular design features that are important to you?
- What kind of style do you require for the project, e.g. contemporary, traditional, industrial, elegant, minimal, etc.
- Do you have any specific materials or surfaces in mind that you would like to see included in the project?
- Do you have specific time requirements for the project to be complete?
- Do you have any specific accessibility requirements, for example, is anyone in your family disabled?
- Do you have any specific considerations toward sustainability and energy efficiency? Is there a particular system you would like to use? (i.e., solar panels, etc.)
- What are your budget requirements?

About the occupants:

- How many people will be living in the new home?
- Do you foresee new additions to the home (Children? Elderly people?)
- Are there any pets that will need to be accommodated?

About the lifestyle:

- Describe your lifestyle and the kind of spaces that you need. For example, work from home, frequent entertainments, etc.
- How much time do you spend in the different areas of your home (indoors and outdoors)?

Indoor spaces:

- Number of floors / rooms / spaces and use for each?
- Do you have any preferred room layouts or orientations, (i.e. a south-facing kitchen)

Outdoor spaces:

- Do you have any specific ideas or plans for the outside spaces that you would like us to consider?

Adapted from: www.firstinarchitecture.co.uk

2 **GROUP WORK** Preparing an architectural brief.

Here is a list of materials and equipment that could be used in remodelling a mountain cottage. Discuss your choices in groups, then write your "Architectural Brief" laying down your ideas. Below draw a sketch of your ideal cottage.

PART OF THE BUILDING	MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT
Roof	Clay tiles, slate, thatch, metal
External cladding	Stone, bricks, gypsum plaster, mortar plaster
Kitchen flooring	linoleum, ceramic, marble
Sitting room flooring	Solid wood, ceramic, marble, carpet
Bedrooms flooring	Solid wood, ceramic, marble, bricks
Bathrooms flooring and wall coating	Laminated wood, ceramic, marble, stone, mosaic with glass chips
Cabinet	Ceramic, laminated wood, linoleum
Internal staircase	Iron, marble, chestnut wood
Heating system	Fireplace, central heating + fireplace, central heating, wood pellets stove
Window framing	Solid wood, aluminium, single glazed windows, double glass windows
Internal cladding	Wallpaper, cork plaster, gypsum plaster, wood
Balconies	Iron, wood, stone