

Chief Architect®  
Home Designer® 2020

# Download & Installation Instructions

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# Installation

This section will help you install your Home Designer software.

- System Requirements
- Downloading Home Designer Software
- Installing Home Designer
- Starting Home Designer
- Troubleshooting Problems
- Program Updates
- Installing on Multiple Computers
- Uninstalling Home Designer Software

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## System Requirements

In order to install and run Home Designer 2020 software, your computer system must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Windows® 64-bit 10/8/7; macOS® High Sierra or Mojave
- Multi-core processor
- 4 GB of memory
- 5 GB of available hard disk space
- Video card minimum: 1 GB of memory;  
OpenGL 3.3 on Windows; OpenGL 4.1 on Mac
- Recommended minimum monitor resolution: 1152 x 864
- High speed Internet for registration, license authentication, deactivation, video access, content downloads

Internet access for license authentication is required once every 14 days. For more information about system recommendations, visit our Web site at: [HomeDesignerSoftware.com](http://HomeDesignerSoftware.com).

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## Downloading Home Designer Software

To download and install Home Designer 2020, begin by logging in to your Home Designer account at [HomeDesignerSoftware.com](http://HomeDesignerSoftware.com).

Browse to the Digital Locker page, click the Download button, and save the file to your local hard drive. Select an easy to find Save in location on your computer, such as your Downloads folder, Documents folder, or Desktop; then click Save.

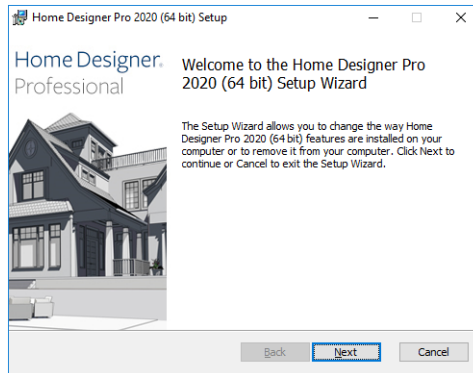
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## Installing Home Designer

When the installer file is completely downloaded, the Setup Wizard will launch automatically.

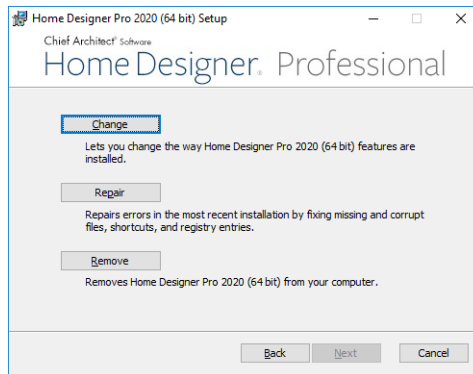
If it does not, browse to the location where you saved it, then double-click on the file with the title of your Home Designer program in its name, followed by a version number.

### Setup Wizard Welcome



1. If you have not installed the program before, the Welcome window will display. Click **Next** to continue.

### Setup Maintenance



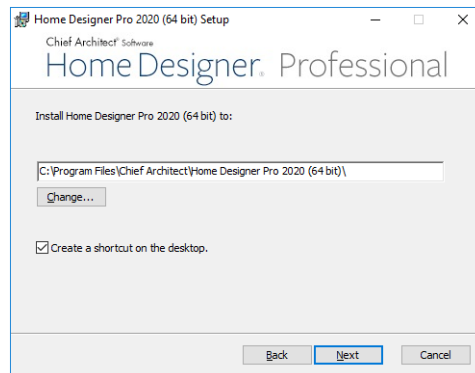
2. If you are installing the program for the first time, this window will not display. If you have installed it before, this window will display, allowing you to reinstall or uninstall.

## License Agreement



3. Read the License Agreement carefully. Before installing, you must **accept its terms and conditions**.
  - In the Windows version, click the Advanced button if you'd like to specify a non-default installation location, exclude supplementary content from being installed, or choose whether a desktop shortcut is created.
  - Click **Install** to install the software. The Setup Wizard will copy files to your hard disk, which may take a few minutes.

## Advanced Options



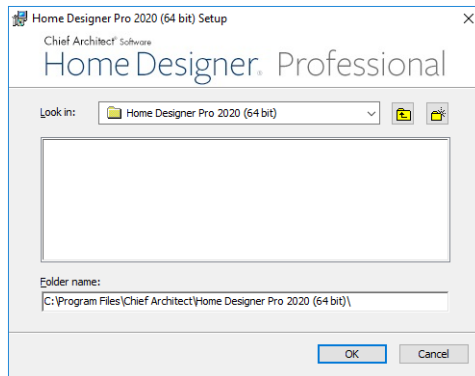
4. This window is only found in the Windows version, and only if you click the **Change** button in the previous window.
 

By default, the Windows version of the program installs in a folder with the same name as the program version located at C:\Program Files\Chief Architect.

You can, if you wish, choose a different destination folder on the local machine.

  - Type a full pathname to the destination folder in the text field.
  - Click the **Change** button to browse to a destination folder in the next window.
  - Uncheck **Create a shortcut on the desktop** if you prefer that a desktop shortcut icon not be created.
  - Click **OK** to proceed to the next window.

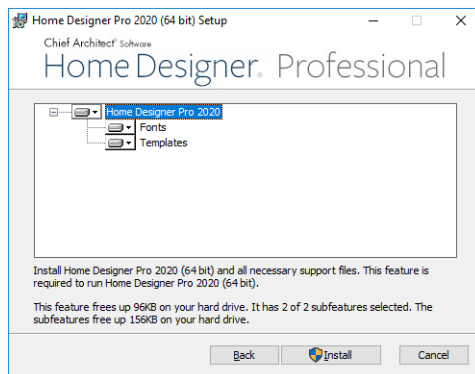
## Choose Installation Location



5. This window is only found in the Windows version. By default, the Windows version of the program installs in a folder with the same name as the program version located at C:\Program Files\Chief Architect.
  - If you prefer a different folder on your hard drive, click the drop-down arrow to the right of the **Look in:** location and navigate to it.
  - Any folders located inside the selected destination folder display in the field below.
  - The full pathname of the installation directory is stated in the **Folder name:** field. You can type a different pathname if you wish.
  - Click **Next** to proceed to the next window.

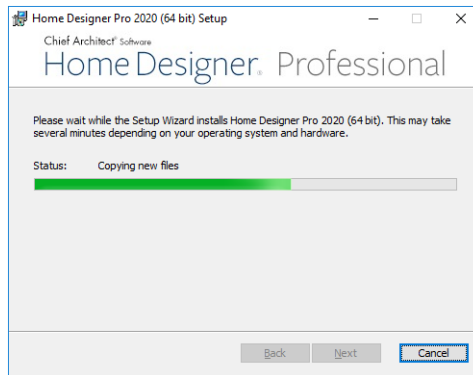
Note: Regardless of the location that you specify here, the program's library content will be installed in your computer's ProgramData folder.

## Choose Items to Install



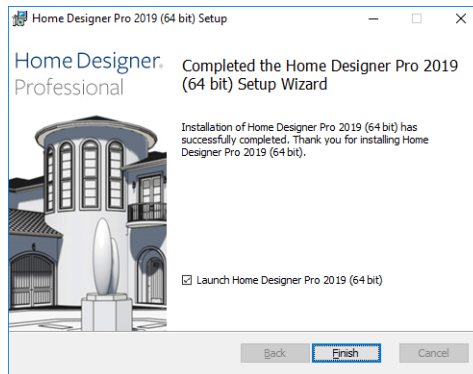
6. You can use this window to specify what features to install.
  - Click on a line item to select it. Information about its contents and hard drive space requirements displays beneath the list of features.
  - Click the drop-down arrow beside a line item to specify how it is installed. By default, **Entire feature will be installed** is selected for all line items.
  - To prevent a selected feature from being installed, choose **Entire feature will be unavailable**. When this option is selected, a red X will display beside the line item's arrow.
  - Click **Install** to install the program and supplemental content as specified.

## Install



7. The Setup Wizard will copy files to your hard disk after a few moments and a green progress bar in this window will show the status of this process. This may take a few minutes.
  - The installer checks your hard drive for enough space to install the software successfully. If it does not find enough space, a warning message will display.

## Setup Wizard Complete



8. When all files have been copied, this window will display.
  - In Windows, click **Finish** to launch Home Designer.
  - On a Mac, click on Applications to open Finder, where you can launch the program.

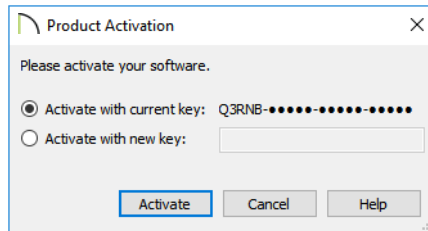
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## Starting Home Designer

In Windows, you can use the Start menu or the shortcut on your desktop to start Home Designer.

On a Mac, open Finder and browse to Applications.

When you launch the program for the first time, the **Product Activation** dialog will open.



- If you are launching the software for the first time, enter your **Product Key**, which is located in the account information from your download or on your shipping invoice.
- If the program has been previously activated on the current computer, two options will be available. Activate with current key will be selected by default and the first five characters of the current product key will display.
- To activate a different license instead, select Activate with new key and enter a different Product Key in the text field.
- Click the **Activate** button to launch the program. Not available unless a valid Product Key has been entered.

If your Product Key is not associated with a User Account on our web site, the **Create Home Designer Account** dialog will open next. You can also open this dialog later on by selecting Help> Create Home Designer Account.

So that you can take full advantage of our online resources, click the **Create Account** button and take a moment to associate your software license with a User Account on our web site, [HomeDesignerSoftware.com](http://HomeDesignerSoftware.com).

### Migrating Settings and Content

If you have a Home Designer version 2012 through 2019 on your computer, you will have an opportunity to migrate Preference settings, toolbars, library content and more into Version 2020. For details, click the Help button in the Migrate Settings dialog.

### Downloading Library Content

If you do have not previously installed the program or migrated content forward, you will be prompted to download Home Designer Core Catalogs. The Core Catalogs contain a variety of objects, materials, and more to add detail to your designs so it is recommended that you download this content. Depending on your internet connect, the download may take some time, so it is best to do so when you can leave the program running until it is finished.

You can also download the Core Catalogs at any time by selecting **Library> Install Core Content** from the menu.

For information about downloading catalogs individually, see:

[www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00048/downloading-library-catalogs.html](http://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00048/downloading-library-catalogs.html)

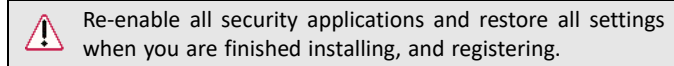


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## Troubleshooting Problems

If you encounter problems either downloading or registering your software, the following suggestions may be helpful.

- Make sure that you can visit our web site using your default web browser.
- Disable your firewall for the duration of the download, installation, and registration process.
- Disable other security applications, including anti-virus and download manager software, for the duration of the download, installation, and registration process.




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## Program Updates

From time to time, Chief Architect releases downloadable program updates at [HomeDesignerSoftware.com](http://HomeDesignerSoftware.com). When the program is launched, a dialog will inform you if an update is available.

- Click **Yes** to open your default web browser to the Program Updates section of the Home Designer web site.
- Click **No** to launch Home Designer.

At any time, you can select **Help> Download Program Updates** from the Home Designer menu to launch your web browser to the Program Updates section of the Home Designer web site.

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## Installing on Multiple Computers

A license of Home Designer can only be active on one computer at any given time. If you have been running the software on one computer and wish to run it on a different computer, or if you wish to rename your computer, you must deactivate your license first.

For details, please refer to the **End User License Agreement**, which can be found in the program's Help as well as in the program installer.

### *To deactivate a Home Designer license*

1. Launch the program on the computer where the license is active.
2. Select **Help> Manage License** from the program menu.
3. Click **Yes** to confirm that you wish to deactivate the license.
4. After a pause, the program will close.

### *To manage license activations online*

1. Visit [HomeDesignerSoftware.com](http://HomeDesignerSoftware.com) and log in to your Account.
2. On the My Account page, click the link to the **Digital Locker**.
3. Click the **Make Available** button to deactivate your license on the computer where it is currently active, making it available for use on another computer.

## Uninstalling Home Designer Software

Home Designer can be removed from a Mac by moving it to the Trash. This does not deactivate the license, however, so you may want to deactivate your license before removing the program.

On Windows computers, there are two ways to remove Home Designer: from the Control Panel and using the Setup Wizard on the program disk. Please note that if you do not have an active Internet connection, your license will not be deactivated.

### *To remove the program using the Control Panel*

1. Open the Windows Control Panel.
2. Navigate to Programs and Features.
3. Find the Home Designer program in the list and click **Remove**.

### *To remove the program using the Setup Wizard*

1. Launch your downloaded program installer or place the disc in the DVD drive.
2. On the Setup Maintenance page of the Setup Wizard, select **Remove** and click **Next**.
3. A message will ask if you would like to remove the selected application and its components. Click **Yes**.

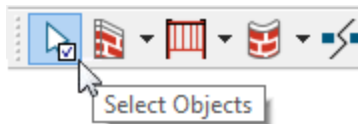
# Additional Resources

There are many forms of help in Home Designer, including: Tool Tips, the Status Bar, online Help, written tutorials, and product documentation in PDF format. Still more valuable information is available on Home Designer's web site, [HomeDesignerSoftware.com](http://HomeDesignerSoftware.com).

- Tool Tips and the Status Bar
- Home Designer Help
- Reference Manual & User's Guide
- Tutorial Videos
- Home Designer Web Site
- HomeTalk User Forum

## Tool Tips and the Status Bar

When you move your mouse pointer over a toolbar button or menu item, a Tool Tip displays a brief description.



More information displays in the Status Bar at the bottom of the program window.

## Home Designer Help



Home Designer's Help is a browsable, searchable resource that describes the tools and dialogs in the program. It can be accessed in several ways:

- Select **Help > Launch Help** from the menu.
- Place your pointer over any menu item, toolbar button, or selected object. When you see a Tool Tip in the Status Bar, press the **F1** function key.
- Click the **Help** button in any dialog.

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## Reference Manual & User's Guide

The complete contents of the Home Designer Help is available in PDF format. Select **Help> View Reference Manual** to view it in your default web browser.

In addition to a description of each menu item, toolbar button, and dialog in the program, Home Designer includes a collection of written tutorials that describe how to create a plan in the program.

These tutorials can be accessed by selecting **Help> View User's Guide** from the program menu.

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## Tutorial Videos

Home Designer offers a searchable collection of online training videos that show you how to perform many tasks in the program. Select **Help> View Online Help Videos** to launch your default web browser to: [homedesigner.chiefarchitect.com/videos](http://homedesigner.chiefarchitect.com/videos).

Some Home Designer Help pages also have links to Tutorial Videos that are relevant to the information on the page.



Click to view related online training videos

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## Home Designer Web Site

Our web site, [HomeDesignerSoftware.com](http://HomeDesignerSoftware.com), has answers to many frequently asked technical support questions. The online Knowledge Base contains a variety of articles describing how to resolve common technical problems and achieve specific design goals. New online tutorials are added regularly, and we invite you to visit our web site whenever you like.

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## HomeTalk User Forum

Other Home Designer users have a wealth of knowledge they are willing to share. You can link to the HomeTalk user forum by selecting **Help> HomeTalk** from the Home Designer program menu or by going directly to [hometalk.chiefarchitect.com](http://hometalk.chiefarchitect.com).

Chief Architect strives to make our documentation as helpful as possible for all of our customers. Please send any questions, comments, or feedback to [documentation@chiefarchitect.com](mailto:documentation@chiefarchitect.com).