Opening Legacy Files

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The information in this article applies to:

PREMIER   INTERIORS | PRO   ARCH   SUITE

QUESTION

I have a number of older projects I created using 3D Home Architect® Deluxe, Chief Architect 9.5 or earlier, or Home Designer 6.0 or earlier. Will Chief Architect or Home Designer software open these older files with the .pl# file and .la# extensions?

OR

I receive one of the following messages:

- "#272011612 - This version of Chief Architect can only read plans written by Chief Architect Version 10 or later, or Home Designer 7.0 or later."

- "This version of Chief Architect can only read plans written by Chief Architect 97 or later, Home Designer 6.0 or later, or 3D Home Architect 3.0 or 4.0."

What should I do?

ANSWER

Chief Architect X9, Home Designer 2018, and newer program versions are compatible with .plan and .layout* files, but legacy .pl# and .la# files are not supported and cannot be opened.

If you have access to Chief Architect X8, Home Designer 2017, or a prior program version, you can open .pl# or .la# files, then save them as .plan or .layout files to be used in a newer version. The Chief Architect X8 Desktop Viewer (https://digital-locker.chiefarchitect.com/locker/authorized-locker/?authorization=eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJwcm9kdWN0cyI6W3sibmFtZSI6IkNoaWVmIEFyY2hpdGVjdCBWaWV3ZXIgWDgiLCJw LzgqHhXbbjKd1COG6ReclykvQJ4SXHWjFxcn5NjAftBV2HNkeSUp3tl843CBDTyaKTF6nthG9SCPA) can also be used for this process.

*.layout files are available in Chief Architect Premier, Chief Architect Interiors, and Home Designer Pro.

> Before opening legacy files created in discontinued versions, it is important to be aware of changes made in your current version and the effect they may have on your legacy files. For details, see the "Before you Begin" section of the What's New chapter in your software's documentation.

Note: Chief Architect X8, Home Designer 2017, and prior program versions support opening files from Chief Architect '97 (version 5.0) or newer, but plans created in Chief Architect version 4.0 and prior could not be opened directly. Home Designer 2017 and prior versions also support opening drawings from 3D Home Architect® Deluxe versions 3.0 and 4.0.

To open legacy files

1. Launch Chief Architect X8, Home Designer 2017, or a prior version that supports the .plan and .layout file extensions.

   If you don't have access to one of the mentioned versions, the Chief Architect X8 Desktop Viewer (https://digital-locker.chiefarchitect.com/locker/authorized-locker/?authorization=eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJwcm9kWN0cyI6W3sibmFtZSI6IkNoaWVmIEFyY2hpdGVjdCBWaWV3ZXIgWDgiLLzgqHhXbbjKd1COG6RecIykvQJ4SXHWjFxcn5NjAftBV2HNkeSUp3tl843CBDTyaKTF6nthG9SCPA) can be used for this process.

2. From the menu, select **File> Open Plan** 📁 or **Open Layout** 📒, navigate to the file's location on your computer, select it, then click **Open**.

   > **Note:** These older projects had individual files for each floor or layout page.
   >
   > For example: *.pl1 was Floor 1, *.pl2 was Floor 2, etc.
   >
   > All of these files must be named the same, and be in the same location, in order for them to open correctly in the newer program version. Once the file is saved in the newer version, it will be a single .plan or .layout with all of the floors/pages located in the same file.

3. Once the file is opened in the newer version of the program, select **File> Save** 💾. The file will convert to a .plan or .layout file.

4. This file can now be opened in your current Chief Architect or Home Designer version.

Please bear in mind that after a legacy version file has been opened in a newer version, the plan may not appear exactly as it did when it was initially created.

For example, textures and 3D symbol objects from the discontinued version may not be recognized. There may be missing electrical and other object defaults, and warning messages may display on opening the file, as well as taking 3D camera views, in regards to these objects.

While you could try to replace all of the missing textures, objects, and defaults using materials and symbols from your current version's Library Browser, the real advantage of being able to view the legacy file is to reference dimensions and object placement.

In order to have all of the capabilities available in a current version plan, such as Wall Types and other features, recreating the plan may be necessary and is recommended.

> Files created in versions prior to Chief Architect '97 (version 5) or 3D Home Architect Deluxe 3.0 will not open successfully in Chief Architect X8, Home Designer 2017, and prior versions.
>
> Files created in 3D Home Architect® 5.0 and later versions are not compatible with Chief Architect, as these products were not developed by the same company.

Related Articles

- Chief Architect Minimum System Requirements (/support/article/KB-02761/chief-architect-minimum-system-requirements.html)
- Home Designer Minimum System Requirements (https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-01095/home-designer-minimum-system-requirements.html)
- Organizing your Plan and Layout Files (/support/article/KB-00562/organizing-your-plan-and-layout-files.html)

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