

# **Opening Legacy Files**

Reference Number: **KB-00279**Last Modified: **March 6. 2024** 

The information in this article applies to:



# **QUESTION**

I have a number of older plans 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 plans with the .pl# file extensions?

OR

I receive one of the following warning messages:

"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"

How can I resolve this warning?

### **ANSWER**

Chief Architect X9, Home Designer 2018, and newer program versions can open .plan and .layout\* files from prior versions.

\*.layout files are not compatible with Home Designer Architectural, Home Designer Suite, Home Designer Interiors, or Home Designer Essentials.

Files with the older .pl# and .la# file extensions are no longer supported and cannot be opened by Chief Architect X9, Home Designer 2018, or newer versions.

Before opening any files created in earlier versions of Chief Architect, it is important to be aware of changes made in the newest 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 Help.

If you still have an older version of Chief Architect or Home Designer running on a supported operating system, then you may open these .pl# or .la# files in that version, save them as .plan/.layout files, and then open them in the newer version of the software.

The Chief Architect X8 and Home Designer 2017 and earlier versions support opening drawings only from Chief Architect '97 (version 5.0) or newer, but plans created in Chief Architect version 4.0 and earlier could not be opened directly.

Home Designer 2017 and earlier versions support opening drawings from 3D Home Architect® Deluxe versions 3.0 and 4.0 only.

## To open legacy files

1. Launch your Chief Architect X8, Home Designer 2017, or earlier version software program that supports the .plan/.layout file extension.

If you no longer have access to one of the mentioned versions, the <a href="Chief Architect X8 Desktop Viewer">Chief Architect X8 Desktop Viewer</a> (https://digital-locker.chiefarchitect.com/locker/authorized-locker/?

authorization=eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzUxMiJ9.eyJwcm9kdWN0cyl6W3sibmFtZSI6lkNoaWVmIEFyY2hpdGVjdCBWaWV3ZXIgWDgiLLzgqHhXbbjKd1COG6ReclykvQJ4SXHWjFxcn5NjAftBV2HNkeSUp3tl843CBDTyaKTF6nthG9SCPA) can be used to convert files.

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 plans 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 current 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 an older version file has been opened in the newer program, 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 older 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 or Home Designer 2017 and earlier 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)
- <u>Home Designer Minimum System Requirements (https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-01095/homedesigner-minimum-system-requirements.html)</u>
- Organizing your Plan and Layout Files(/support/article/KB-00562/organizing-your-plan-and-layout-files.html)

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