

Opening Legacy Files

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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.

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

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**.

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.

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


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 *3D Home Architect*® 5.0 and later versions are not compatible with Chief Architect, as these products were not developed by the same company.

- [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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