Creating a Stairwell

Reference Number: **KB-00757**

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The information in this article applies to:

PREMIER   INTERIORS

QUESTION

What is the best way to create a stairwell in the program?

ANSWER

When stairs are created in Chief Architect, they begin on the current floor and draw in an upward direction. The program seeks the exact height of the floor above and will snap to that height if at all possible; and, it will produce stairs with consistent treads and risers in the process.

There are a couple of ways to create a stairwell, an opening in the ceiling that allows the staircase to reach the floor above. The easiest is to use the Auto Stairwell tool; however, it is also possible to create a stairwell manually.
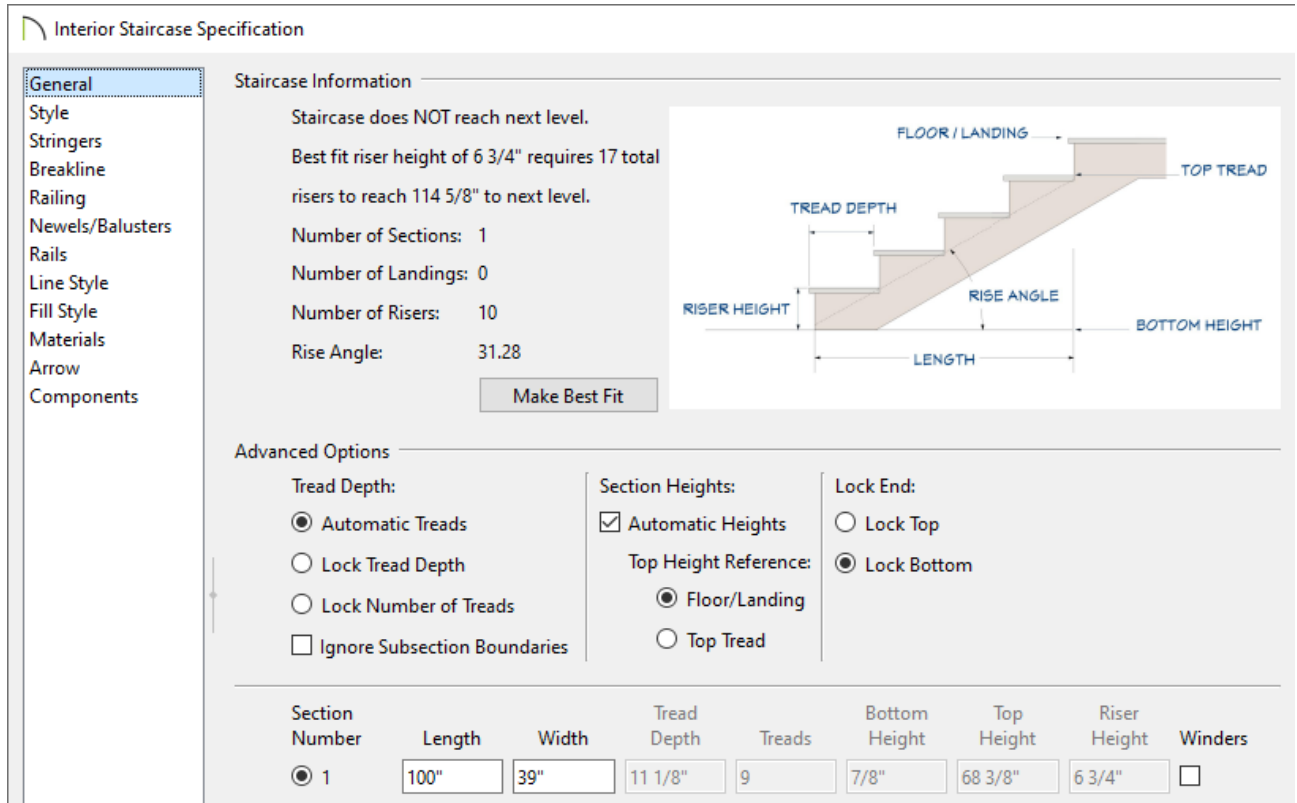
To create an automatic stairwell

1. On any floor of the plan other than the top floor, select **Build> Stairs> Draw Stairs**

 from the menu, then click and drag a length of stairs in floor plan view.

2. Click on the staircase to select it and click the **Open Object** edit button.

3. On the GENERAL panel of the **Staircase Specification** dialog:

- Check to see if the staircase reaches the next floor.

- If the staircase does not reach the next floor a message will display *"Staircase does NOT reach next level."* If this is the case click the **Make Best Fit** button to extend the staircase.

- If the staircase does reach the next floor, then the message will say so.

- If the staircase is too steep then the message will say *"Steep staircase reaches next floor."* and similarly if it is too shallow. This problem can be fixed by increasing or decreasing the number of treads.

- Click **OK** to close the dialog and apply your changes.

4. With the staircase still selected, click the **Auto Stairwell** 📊 edit button to create an opening in the floor above.

   This tool automatically creates an Open Below room on the floor above the staircase, which is defined by railing walls. It will also automatically change the room label for the room to say Stairwell.

   > **Note:** The Auto Stairwell tool will only be available if a room exists on the floor directly above the staircase, and it does not already have its room type set to Open Below.
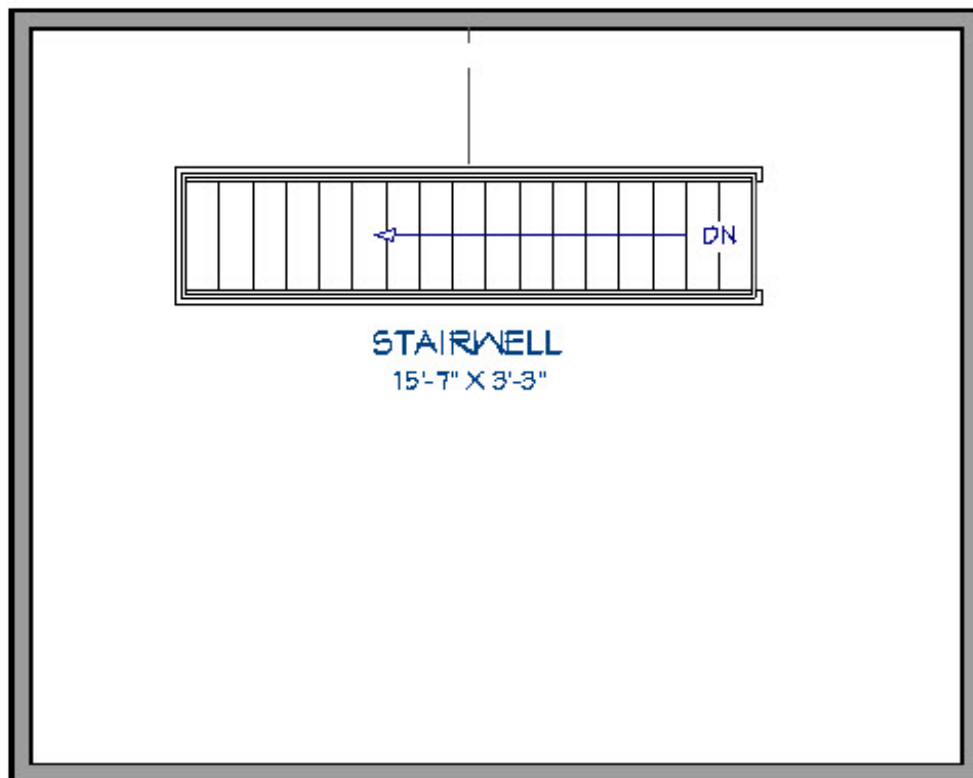
> If the stairwell is located in the middle of the room and not touching any other walls, a Room Divider wall will appear connecting the stairwell to an exterior wall.

To create a stairwell manually

1. Once your stairs are in place, select **Tools> Floor/Reference Display> Up One**

Floor ⌂ from the menu.

2. Select **Tools> Floor/Reference Display> Reference Display** ⬙ from the menu or press the **F9** key on your keyboard to turn on the Reference Floor Display. This allows you to see walls and other objects on the floor previous floor.

3. Next, select **Build> Wall** 🔃 or **Build> Railing and Deck** ▥, choose your desired wall or railing tool, then draw a room around the stairs. The stairs will display as red lines as part of the Reference Display.

4. Select **Build> Door> Doorway** ▬ from the menu, then click on the railing at the top edge of the stairs to place a doorway opening on that edge if one does not already exist, and then resize the doorway as needed to fit the stairs.

5. Click in the room created by the railing to select it, then click the **Open Object** ⊓ edit button.

6. On the GENERAL panel of the **Room Specification** dialog, change the **Room Type** to **Open Below**, then click **OK**.

To save a staircase to the User Library*

Applies to X16 and newer versions.

1. Once your stairs are defined to your liking, you can select them, then click the**Add to Library** 📚+ edit button.

> **Note:** Landings that are part of a staircase will not be added to the library. Complete stair configurations will also not be added to the library.

2. Your stars will be added to your User Catalog for future use.

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Group Selecting Objects (/support/article/KB-00623/group-selecting-objects.html)

Modifying the Display of Stairs in Plan View (/support/article/KB-03036/modifying-the-display-of-stairs-in-plan-view.html)

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