Chief Architect®
Architectural Home Design Software

Resolving Unexpected Behavior on a Mac by Redirecting the Data Folder

Reference Number: **KB-03116**
Last Modified: **September 12, 2023**

The information in this article applies to:

PROBLEM

I'm experiencing one or more of the following issues when I use Chief Architect or Home Designer:

- The program freezes or hangs when creating a new plan or layout.
- The program freezes or hangs when accessing the User Catalog in the Library Browser.
- An error message appears when creating a new plan or layout.
- An error message appears stating the program cannot read or write to a library database.
- An error message appears stating it cannot read/find a toolbar configuration.
- Toolbars are missing when opening or creating a new plan.

- The User Catalog is missing in the Library Browser.

What might cause these symptoms?

RESOLUTION

Templates, toolbar and hotkey configurations, and the User Catalog are all stored in the program's Data folder, which resides in the user account's Documents folder by default. The symptoms above indicate that the program is having trouble accessing, reading, or writing to the files in its Data folder. The most common solution is to ensure that Chief Architect or Home Designer has Full Disk Access by following the instructions in KB-03125: Troubleshooting Error Messages Associated With the Program's Data Folder (https://www.chiefarchitect.com/support/article/KB-03125/troubleshooting-error-messages-associated-with-the-program-s-data-folder.html).

If you continue to experience problems after following the steps in the resource above, your Documents folder might be stored in iCloud Drive. Accessing program and plan files over a cloud storage service can cause the symptoms previously mentioned, as well as more severe issues, such as data loss and/or file corruption. In this article, we will cover determining whether your Documents folder is stored in iCloud Drive and, if necessary, creating a new Data folder for the program to reference that is not stored in iCloud Drive.

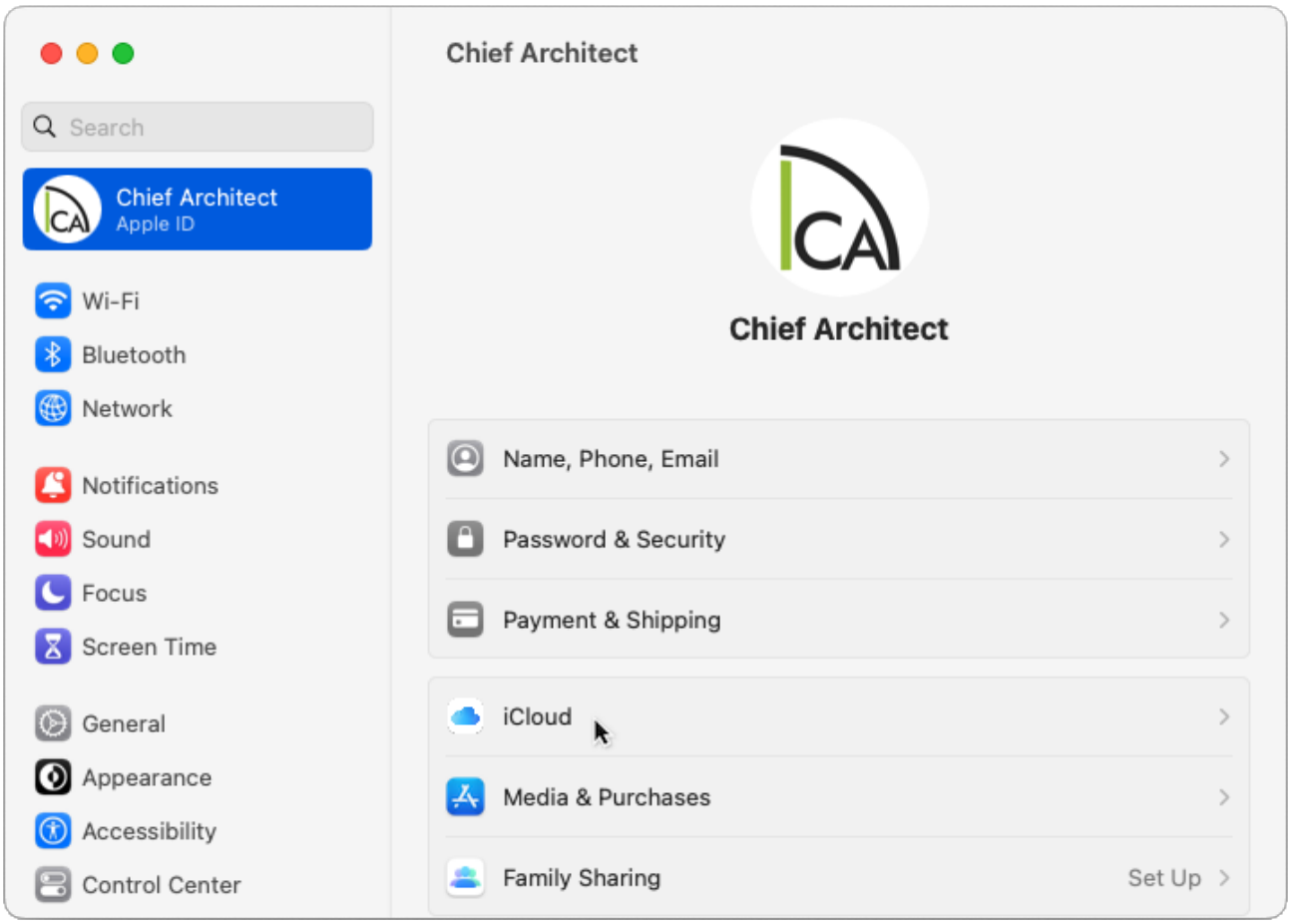
Determining whether your Documents folder is stored in iCloud Drive

1. From the menu bar, click the **Apple** icon located in the top left corner, then click **System Settings**.

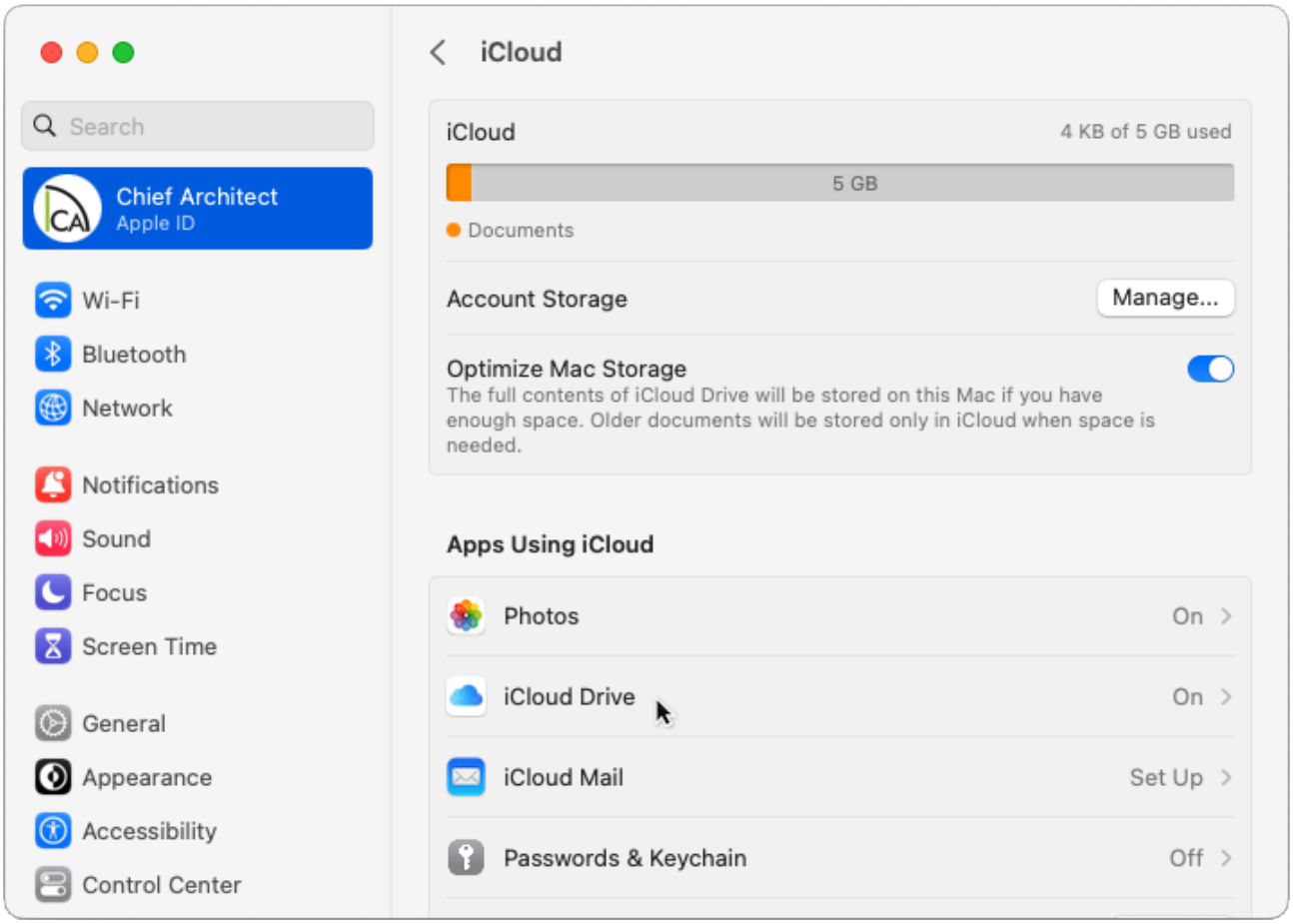
   In macOS Monterey (12.6) or earlier, click System Preferences instead.

2. Click **Apple ID** in the sidebar of the System Settings window, then click **iCloud** in the list on the right.

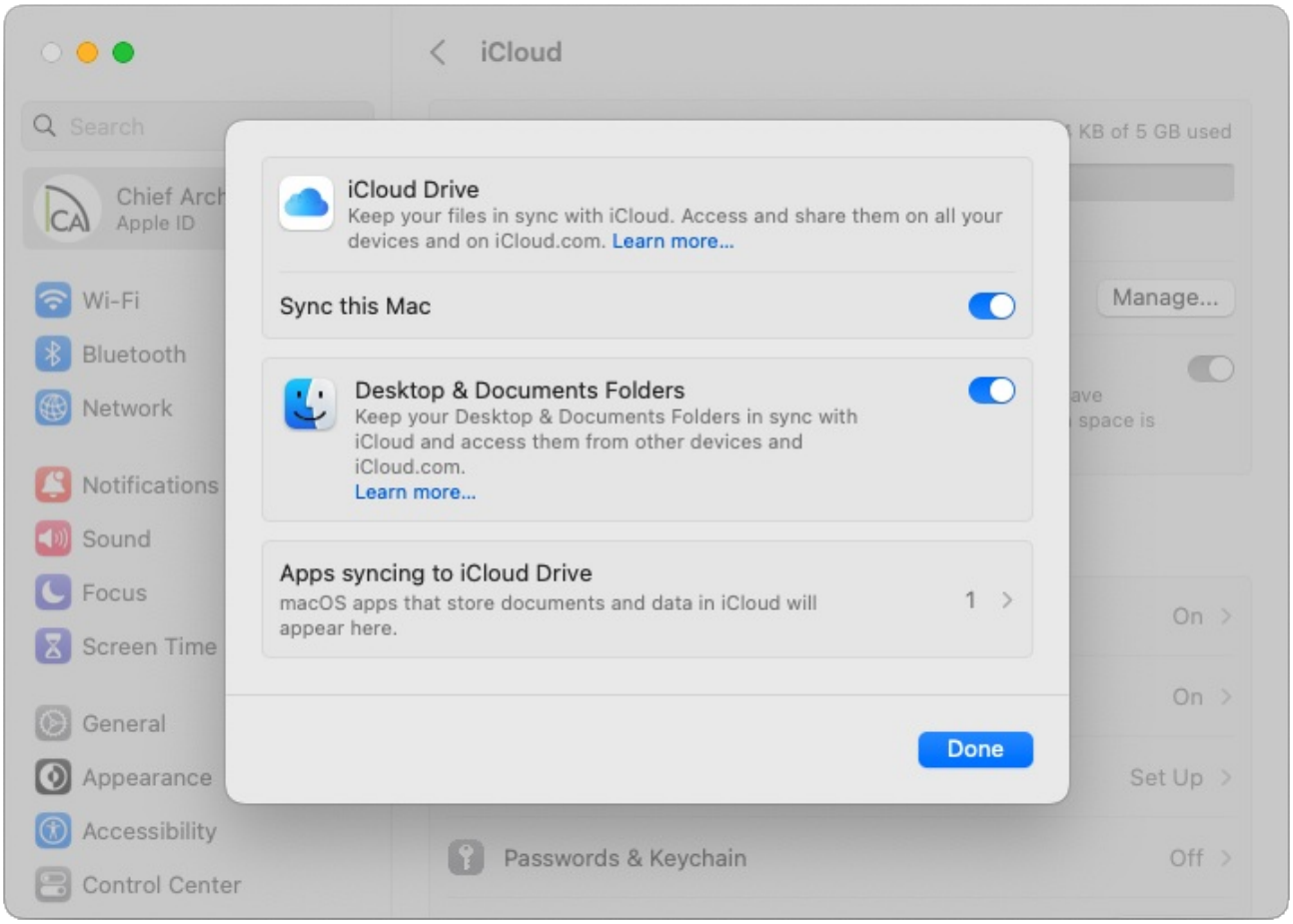
In macOS Mojave (10.14) or earlier, click the iCloud icon instead.



3. If the iCloud Drive is On in the list on the right, click **iCloud Drive**. If it is Off, then your Documents folder is not stored in iCloud Drive, this may not be the cause of the issues you're experiencing, and you can proceed to the steps in the "Troubleshooting Chief Architect Software Closing Unexpectedly on a Mac" resource in the Related Articles (https://kb.chiefarchitect.com/admin/index.php?/front/#Related) section below.



4. If the **Desktop & Documents Folders** switch is toggled on, then your Documents folder is stored in iCloud Drive. If it is toggled off, then your Documents folder is not stored in iCloud Drive, this may not be the cause of the issues you're experiencing, and you can proceed to the steps in the "Troubleshooting Chief Architect Software Closing Unexpectedly on a Mac" resource in the Related Articles (https://kb.chiefarchitect.com/admin/index.php?/front/#Related) section below.



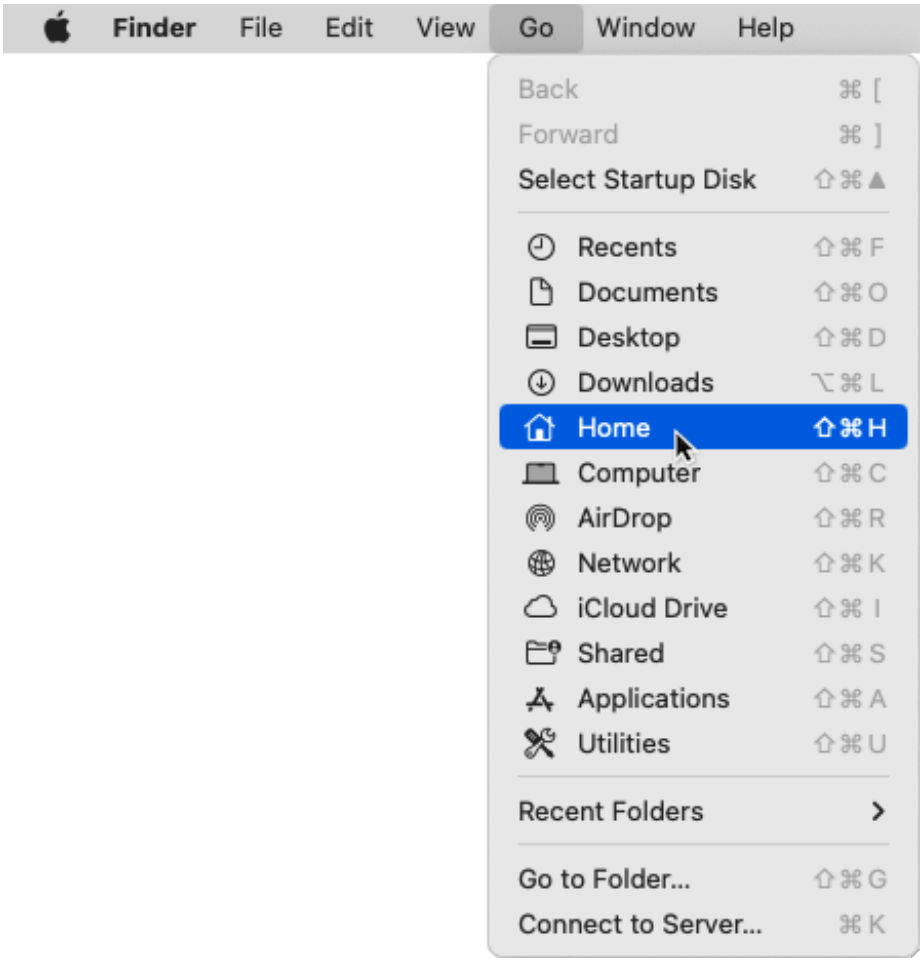
> If you'd like to remove your Desktop and Documents folders from iCloud Drive, you can do so by following the instructions in this Apple resource (https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT206985). For further assistance managing your iCloud storage, please contact Apple Support.

Creating a local Data folder

If your Documents folder is stored in iCloud Drive and you want to keep it there, follow the steps below to create a local Data folder anywhere outside of iCloud Drive. In this example, a Data folder will be created and placed in the Home/User folder.

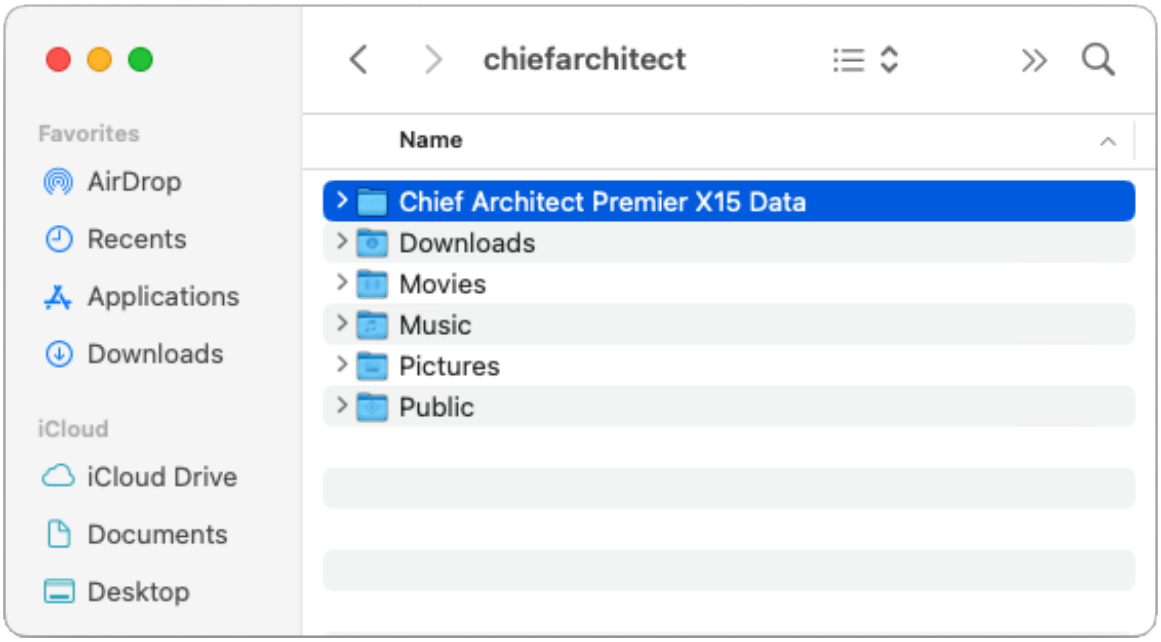
1. Open the Finder app or click once in an open area on the Desktop to make Finder the active application.

2. From the menu bar, click **Go> Home**.



3. From the menu bar, click **File> New Folder**.

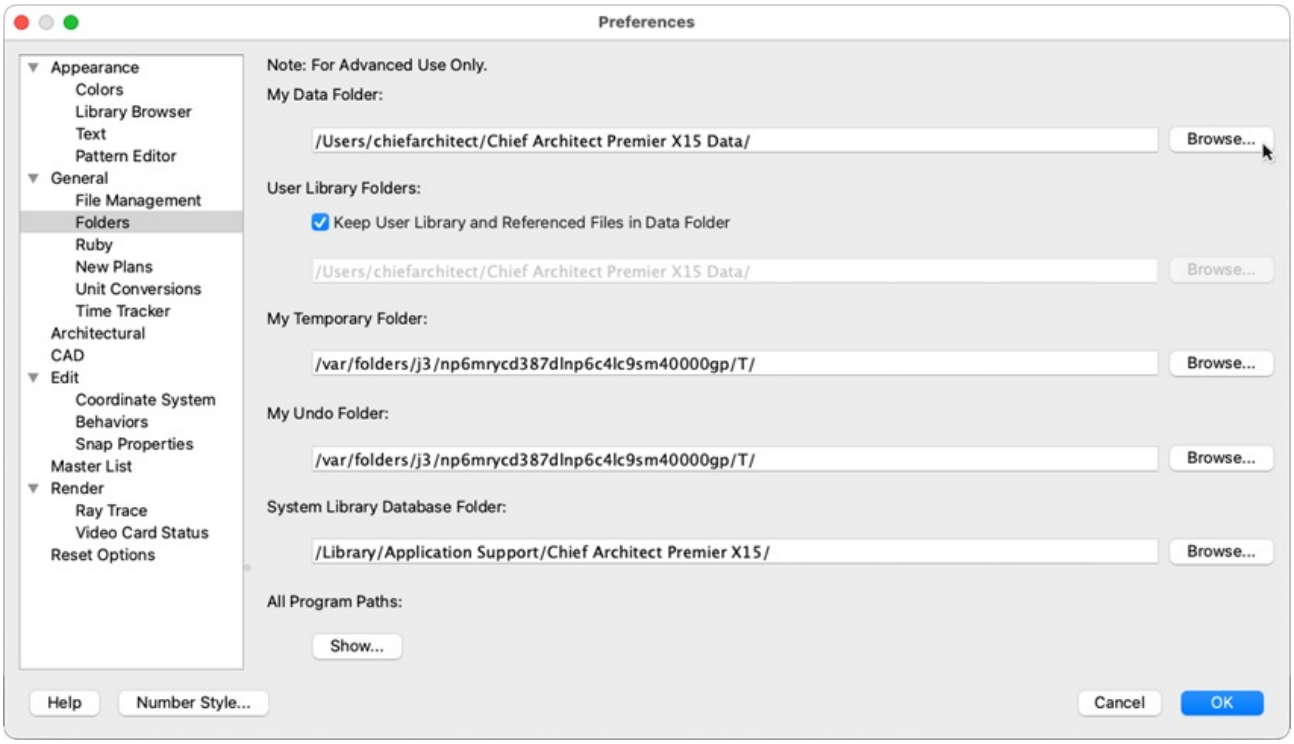
   The name of the new folder will be your program version with the first letter of each word capitalized, followed by the word "Data". In this example, a Data folder is created for Chief Architect Premier X15, so the folder name is: `Chief Architect Premier X15 Data`



Specifying the location of the Data folder in Preferences

1. Open Chief Architect or Home Designer. From the menu bar, click **Chief Architect/Home Designer> Preferences** .

2. On the FOLDERS panel of the **Preferences** dialog:



   - Click **Browse** to the right of the **My Data Folder** file path and select the new Data folder that was created in the section above.

     If the Data folder was placed in the Home/User folder, the file path after selecting the new Data folder will be: `/Users/username/Chief Architect Premier X15 Data/`

   - After specifying the correct folder location, click **OK**.

3. In X14/2023 or later, a message will appear asking "Do you want to copy library files from the old User Library Folder to the new folder? Any files of the same name in the newly selected folder will be overwritten." This message refers to the contents of

the User Catalog folder in the Library Browser, so if you want to copy those files to the new Data folder, click **Yes**. Otherwise, click **No**.

4. A message will appear stating "Changing the user data folder requires a relaunch in order for all the changes to take effect. The data from your old user data folder will not be copied to the new location, the new folder will be reset to factory defaults." Click **OK**, then quit and reopen the app.

> **Note:** If you notice that you're now missing your templates, toolbars, or other data that you had previously customized, please see the "Backing up Chief Architect Content" and "Restoring Chief Architect Content" resources located in the Related Articles (https://kb.chiefarchitect.com/admin/index.php?/front/#Related) section below to learn how to copy and paste these particular files into the new Data folder.
>
> Additionally, if you had previously changed the plan and layout template file paths located on the New Plans panel of the Preferences dialog, you may need to revisit this panel and use the Browse button next to each option to reference the template file(s) that are located in the local Data folder.

If you still receive error messages related to reading and writing files after specifying your new Data folder, please see the "Troubleshooting Chief Architect Software Closing Unexpectedly on a Mac" resource in the Related Articles (https://kb.chiefarchitect.com/admin/index.php?/front/#Related) section below.

Related Articles

- Backing up Chief Architect Content (/support/article/KB-00001/backing-up-chief-architect-content.html)
- Restoring Chief Architect Content (/support/article/KB-00091/restoring-chief-architect-content.html)
- Troubleshooting Chief Architect Software Closing Unexpectedly on a Mac (/support/article/KB-02940/troubleshooting-chief-architect-software-closing-unexpectedly-on-a-mac.html)

Using the Technical Support Center (/support/article/KB-00717/using-the-technical-support-center.html)

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