

Sharing Projects in a Work Environment that is Utilizing Cloud/Network Services

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This article also applies to the following legacy products:
Pro | Architectural | Suite

QUESTION

I would like to share a Chief Architect plan, layout, or project with a colleague in my workplace. Is it possible to collaborate using a cloud service or network?

ANSWER

Cloud services (e.g. Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive, Apple iCloud Drive, Dropbox) and network locations are great for sharing files with colleagues; however, Chief Architect does not support nor recommend directly opening or working on files that are saved or synced with one of these services.

To collaborate with colleagues using a cloud service or network location, we recommend always working on a local copy of the Chief Architect file, then uploading/copying the file(s) to the cloud/network when finished. If another colleague needs to work on the project, they will want to copy/download the file to a local file location on their machine before opening or importing it into Chief Architect software.





The information listed below details the recommended process for transferring files to colleagues when using a cloud service or network location, though this process varies

slightly depending on if you're using Project Management or Traditional File Management.

Note: To learn more about Project Management, please see the "Enabling or Disabling Project Management" resource in the [Related Articles](#) section below or access your program's Help documentation.

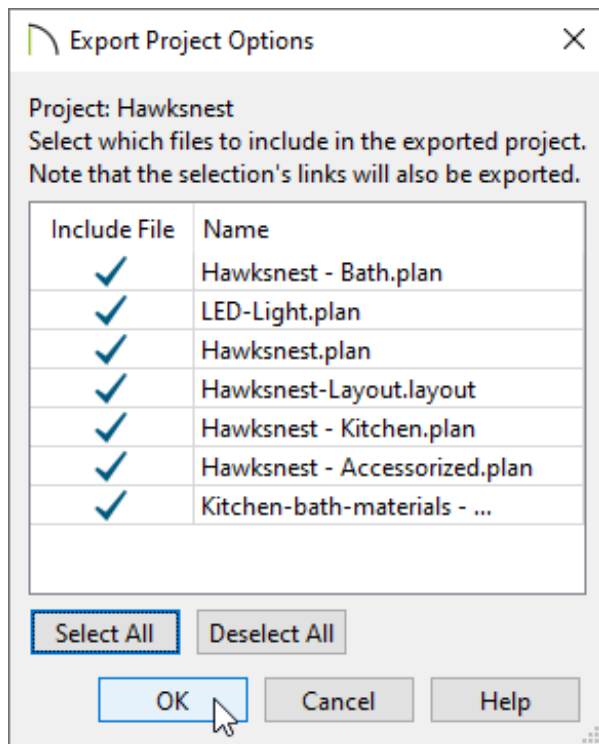
Transferring files to a colleague using Project Management*

**Applies to Chief Architect X17, Home Designer 2026, and newer versions.*

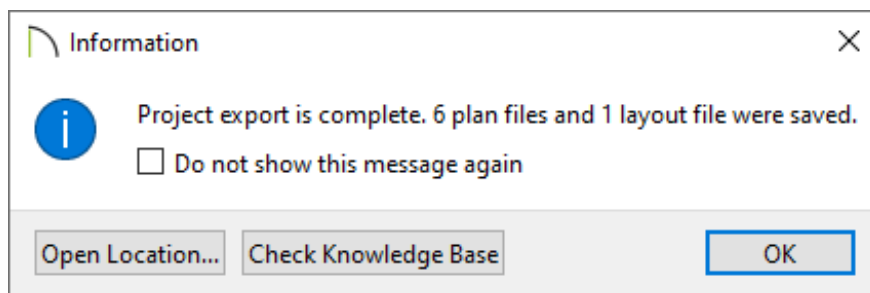
1. With Project Management enabled, select **File> Save Entire Project** , then either navigate to **File> Export> Export Project**  while a plan or layout is open, or access the **Project Browser** , right-click on a single project, and select **Export**  from the contextual menu.

Note: On a Mac, hold down the Control key while clicking to initiate a right-click command. More information about right-click commands on Apple input devices can be found in the following Apple resource: [Right-click on Mac](https://support.apple.com/guide/mac-help/right-click-mh35853/mac) (<https://support.apple.com/guide/mac-help/right-click-mh35853/mac>).

2. The **Export Project Options** dialog will display:



- Check/uncheck the files that you would like to include/exclude using the **Include File** column.
 - You can also click the **Select All/Deselect All** buttons to quickly include/exclude all of the files in the dialog.
 - Click **OK**.
3. In the dialog that appears next, specify a **File name**, a location to save the project to, then click **Save**.
4. An **Information** dialog will appear stating "Project export is complete. [#] plan file and [#] layout file were saved." Click **OK**.





All of the files that were included in Step 2 above, as well as all of the referenced

asset files associated with the project are included in the exported project file.

5. Navigate to where you saved the project, right-click on it, then click **Copy** from the contextual menu. You can also select the file and press **Ctrl+C** on Windows or **Command+C** on macOS to copy the file to the system's Clipboard.
6. Navigate to the cloud or network location that you want to copy the file to, right-click, then click **Paste** from the contextual menu. You can also press **Ctrl+V** on Windows or **Command+V** on macOS to paste the file.

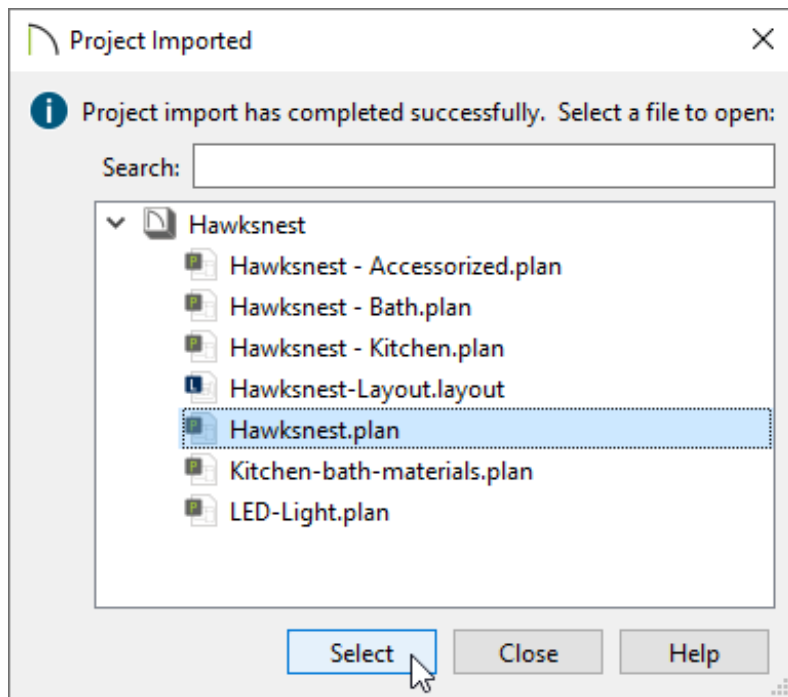
Some cloud services have a separate import/upload function; if you're using a service such as this, select the import/upload function and browse to the project file on your local machine to import/upload the file.


7. Once the project has been pasted and/or synced to the cloud or network location, a colleague who has access to the location can copy/download the file to their local machine, then import it into the program by navigating to **File> Import Project**  or **File> Import> Import Project** .

With Project Management enabled, it's important that you do NOT change or redirect the program's Managed Resources onto a cloud/network or synced location, as this will likely lead to file corruption and/or data loss.

Chief Architect will be unable to provide support or assistance if you have redirected the Managed Resources to a location that is being synced or not local to the system.


8. Upon performing the import process, the **Project Imported** dialog will open and state "Project import has completed successfully. Select a file to open:". You can choose to either open one of the files within the project or click **Close** at this time.

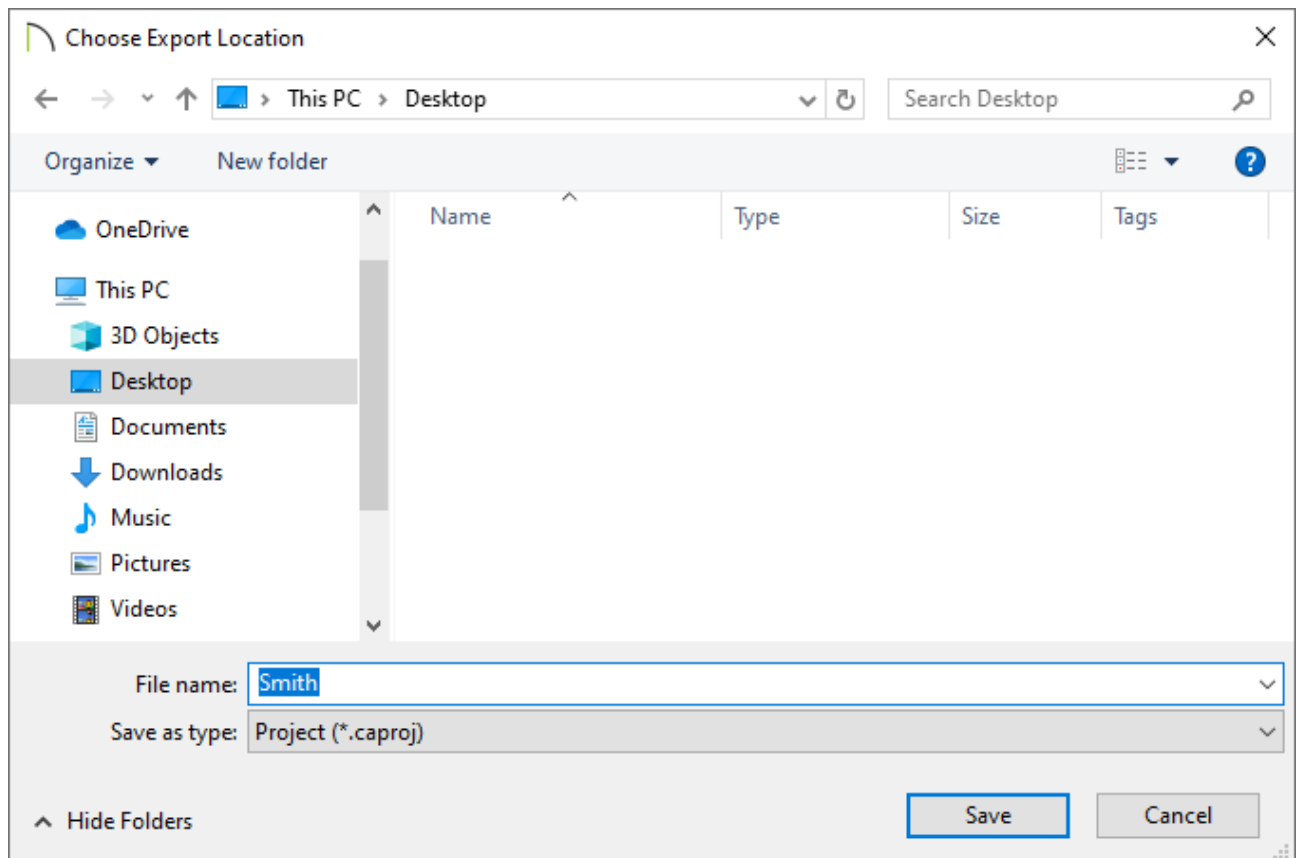


All plan and layout files associated with the imported project will now be listed in the **Project Browser** , while any referenced asset files will be listed in the Asset Management dialog.


It's important to note that when importing projects, existing projects will not be replaced or overwritten, even if the files have the same name. With this mind, it's a good idea to implement some sort of strategy in your office or work environment when collaborating with colleagues; see the [MORE INFORMATION](#) section below.

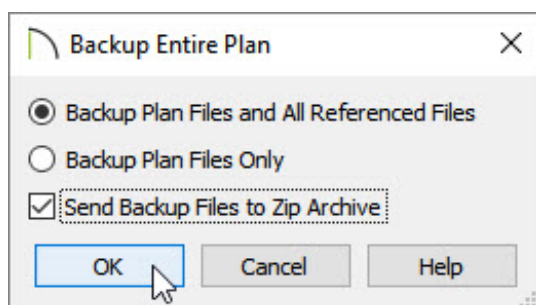
Transferring files to a colleague using Traditional File Management

1. In X17, Home Designer 2026, and newer, navigate to **File> Export> Export Plan/Layout as Project** , and in the dialog that appears:



- Choose a desired location and a **File name**, then click **Save**.
- An **Information** dialog will appear stating "Project export is complete. [#] plan file and [#] layout file were saved." Click **OK**.

In X16, Home Designer 2025, and prior, navigate to **File> Backup Entire Plan/Layout** :



- Select the **Backup Plan Files and All Referenced Files** option, then check the **Send Backup Files to Zip Archive** box to create a compressed (zipped) folder (Recommended).
- Click **OK**.
- Browse to your desired location, then click **Save**.

Note: If the "Send Backup Files to Zip Archive" box was not checked, you will need to create a new, empty file folder on the Desktop for the plan and referenced files to be backed up to:

- On a Windows operating system, right-click in an empty area and choose "New> Folder".
- On a macOS system, right-click in an empty area and choose "New Folder".

If you used either of the tools mentioned above while in a plan, a copy of the plan file, including the referenced asset files such as images, textures, PDF's, and backdrops will be part of the project or compressed (zipped) folder. However, if you used one of the mentioned tools while in a layout, a copy of the layout, all plan files sent to the layout, and the referenced asset files such as images, textures, PDF's, and backdrops will be part of the project or compressed (zipped) folder.

2. Navigate to where you saved the project or compressed (zipped) folder, right-click on it, then click **Copy** from the contextual menu. You can also select the file and press **Ctrl+C** on Windows or **Command+C** on macOS to copy the project or compressed (zipped) folder to the system's Clipboard.

Note: On a Mac, hold down the Control key while clicking to initiate a right-click command. More information about right-click commands on Apple input devices can be found in the following Apple resource: [Right-click on Mac](https://support.apple.com/guide/mac-help/right-click-mh35853/mac) (<https://support.apple.com/guide/mac-help/right-click-mh35853/mac>).


3. Navigate to the cloud or network location that you want to copy the project or compressed (zipped) folder to, right-click, then click **Paste** from the contextual menu. You can also press **Ctrl+V** on Windows or **Command+V** on macOS to paste the file or folder.



Some cloud services have a separate import/upload function; if you're using a service such as this, select the import/upload function and browse to the project file

or compressed (zipped) folder on your local machine to import/upload the file.

4. Once the project or compressed (zipped) folder has been pasted and/or synced to the cloud or network location, a colleague who has access to the location can copy/download the project or compressed (zipped) folder to their local machine.


Never open or work on a Chief Architect file that is stored on the cloud/network or is being synced, especially if the file is in use by another person, as it could lead to file corruption and/or data loss.

5. If the files are part of a project file, navigate to **File> Import> Import Project**  within your software, select the project file, then click **Open**. An **Information** dialog will display stating "Select a location to unpackage the Project." Click **Browse** and choose a local file location to unpackage the files into. All plan and layout files contained within the file will then open in the software automatically.



If the files are part of a compressed (zipped) folder, the folder will need to be extracted before the plan and layout files can be opened. Follow the instructions that apply to your operating system below, then use the **Open Plan**  and/or **Open Layout**  tools to open your files.

- On Windows, right-click on the compressed (zipped) folder and choose **Extract All**. In the dialog that appears, specify the desired location that you would like the files to be extracted to, then click **Extract**.
- On macOS, double-click on the compressed (zipped) folder. The extracted folder will appear beside/on top of the original compressed folder.

MORE INFORMATION

- If you're using Project Management and you're sending files back and forth with colleagues quite often, consider implementing a naming strategy, such as adding a date or revision number to the project name. This is important because if you import a project with the same name as an existing project, both files will exist in the **Project Browser** . You might also consider utilizing the **Replace With** contextual

menu option available for individual files located within projects; however, you should proceed with caution when doing so, as files that are replaced may be unrecoverable.

- Some cloud services will backup your Documents and other local file locations on your system automatically. To check to see if your Chief Architect files are on a cloud service, right-click on a suspected file or folder, then select **Properties** from the contextual menu on Windows or **Get Info** on macOS. If the file or folder is located on a cloud service, it will likely be listed next to the **Where** or **Location** sections under **GENERAL**. For example, files that are located on Microsoft OneDrive will have "OneDrive" in the file path. Several issues can occur if the program's Data folder, which is located within your Documents by default, is stored on a cloud service; see the [Related Articles](#) section to learn more.
- Consider using the information above to share plan and layout template files between colleagues. If you're using Project Management, right-click on the "Plan and Layout Templates" folder located within the **Project Browser** , then select **Export**. If you're using Traditional File Management, create a new plan or layout file based on a template file, then use the **Backup Entire Plan/Layout**  tool mentioned above.

[Return To Top](#)

Related Articles

- 📄 [Enabling or Disabling Project Management \(/support/article/KB-03210/enabling-or-disabling-project-management.html\)](/support/article/KB-03210/enabling-or-disabling-project-management.html)
- 📄 [Exporting Projects and Disconnected Files \(/support/article/KB-03212/exporting-projects-and-disconnected-files.html\)](/support/article/KB-03212/exporting-projects-and-disconnected-files.html)
- 📄 [Importing Projects \(/support/article/KB-03213/importing-projects.html\)](/support/article/KB-03213/importing-projects.html)
- 📄 [Locating Lost or Missing Files on your Computer \(/support/article/KB-00369/locating-lost-or-missing-files-on-your-computer.html\)](/support/article/KB-00369/locating-lost-or-missing-files-on-your-computer.html)
- 📄 [Organizing your Plan and Layout Files \(/support/article/KB-00562/organizing-your-plan-and-layout-files.html\)](/support/article/KB-00562/organizing-your-plan-and-layout-files.html)
- 📄 [Resolving Unexpected Behavior on a Mac by Redirecting the Data Folder \(/support/article/KB-03116/resolving-unexpected-behavior-on-a-mac-by-redirecting-the-data-folder.html\)](/support/article/KB-03116/resolving-unexpected-behavior-on-a-mac-by-redirecting-the-data-folder.html)
- 📄 [Troubleshooting Error Messages Associated With the Program's Data Folder](#)

[\(/support/article/KB-03125/troubleshooting-error-messages-associated-with-the-program-s-data-folder.html\)](/support/article/KB-03125/troubleshooting-error-messages-associated-with-the-program-s-data-folder.html)

📄 [Using the Backup Entire Plan/Layout Tool \(/support/article/KB-00987/using-the-backup-entire-plan-layout-tool.html\)](/support/article/KB-00987/using-the-backup-entire-plan-layout-tool.html)



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