

# Resources for the Architect Registration Examination

Contributed by the AIA Knowledge Resources Staff

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## SUMMARY

The Architect Registration Examination (ARE), the licensing exam for architects, culminates years of training, education, and internship. The depth and breadth of the material tested requires substantial preparation. Exam participants cite the childhood game of Hangman as a motivational simile, as passing each of the nine tests earns you one more letter, to eventually spell out A-R-C-H-I-T-E-C-T.

## THE EXAM: GATEWAY TO LICENSURE

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) administers the exam, which is the final step on the pathway toward licensure.

According to NCARB, the test “assesses candidates for their knowledge, skills, and ability to provide the various services required in the practice of architecture. . . . No single examination can test for competency in all aspects of architecture, and the ARE is not designed for that purpose. The ARE concentrates on those services that most affect the public health, safety, and welfare.”

## COMPONENTS OF THE ARE

NCARB currently administers ARE version 3.1. ARE version 4.0 will launch in July 2008. For more information on ARE 4.0 and what it means for current test takers, go to [NCARB's Web site](#). The current version comprises two sections (graphic and multiple choice) of nine divisions.

**The multiple-choice section** includes six divisions: Pre-Design; General Structures; Building Design/Materials and Methods; Construction Documents and Services; Lateral Forces; and Mechanical and Electrical Systems. Cumulatively, these tests cost \$612, take 14 hours to complete, and include 485 questions.

**The graphic section** consists of three tests: one each on Site Planning, Building Planning, and Building Technology. These tests cumulatively cost \$459 and take 13.25 hours to complete.

## ARE TIMING

The ARE is structured on a “rolling clock”; each test taker has five years from the date they pass their first exam to complete all nine tests. NCARB's Web site states, “You may take any division of the ARE at any time, and in any sequence you choose.”

In June 2007, NCARB amended Resolution 07-8, making all sections of the exam accessible to candidates as follows: “To begin taking the ARE an applicant shall have fulfilled all requirements for eligibility established by his or her jurisdiction and shall have enrolled in IDP by establishing a Council record.” Therefore, emerging professionals can proceed through the Intern Development Program (IDP) and ARE processes concurrently. For more information, see the [AIA news brief](#) on this topic.

## RESOURCES

A variety of study options are available to accommodate participants' different learning styles. This list of resources for ARE candidates is not exhaustive, but it catalogs common study methods.

### NCARB Material

- [The ARE page on NCARB's Web site](#)
- [Guidelines](#) on the current exam format
- NCARB [study guides](#)

### Third-Party Study Guides

- [Architecture Exam Review](#), by David Kent Ballast, AIA
- [Kaplan study guides](#)
- [Archiflash](#)<sup>®</sup>, a flash-card study system produced by National Academic & Licensing Study Aids

### Resource Web Sites

- [ARE information on aia.org](#)
- [Emerging Professionals Companion](#)
- [ARE study materials from ArchVoices](#)

**Consultants**

- Richard Chylinski, FAIA  
([www.archexamprep.com](http://www.archexamprep.com))
- Marc Mitalski, Assoc. AIA  
([www.prepa-r-e.com](http://www.prepa-r-e.com))
- William A. Amor, NCARB, AIA  
([www.amorstudyguides.com](http://www.amorstudyguides.com))

**AIA COMPONENT STUDY PROGRAMS**

Your local AIA component is a great place to look for support. Some AIA local components issue study materials to members through a lending library, help organize study groups, provide study space, and offer test-specific tutorials and classes. Participating components include

- [The Boston Society of Architects](#)
- [AIA District of Columbia](#)
- [AIA Denver](#)
- [AIA San Francisco](#)
- [AIA Austin](#)
- [AIA Minnesota](#)
- [AIA Chicago](#)

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**Key Terms**

- Leadership
- Licensure
- Professional development