Accessing Your Archive Files

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The information in this article applies to:

PREMIER   INTERIORS | PRO   ARCH   SUITE

QUESTION

Recently, I experienced a computer malfunction while working in the software and now when I try to open my plan file, an error message tells me that it cannot be opened by the program. What can I do to recover at least some of my work?

ANSWER

In the event that file corruption has occurred, and you're unable to successfully open one of your project files, you may be able to reference a backup copy located in the Archives.

> **Note:** Archive files should not be viewed as a substitute for regularly saving your work, nor should they be considered an alternative to your own file backup routine. It's important to understand that Archive files may not reflect the progress you have made in a given project, the state of the model, or any other criteria that you might consider to be important.

To open and save an Archive file

1. Launch the program and select **Open Plan** 📁 or **Open Layout** 📁.

2. Browse to your program's Data folder, which is located in the Documents directory by default, and open the **Archives** folder.
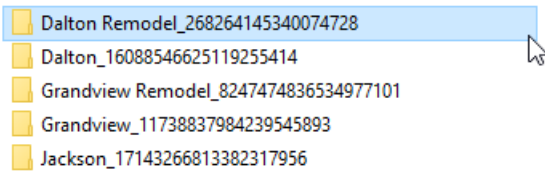
   For example, the file path for Chief Architect Premier X16 on a Microsoft Windows machine may be:

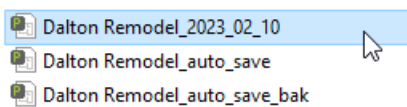   C:\Users\ [YOUR USERNAME] \Documents\Chief Architect Premier X16 Data\Archives

And on an Apple macOS machine:

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/Users/ [YOUR USERNAME] /Documents/Chief Architect Premier X16 Data/Archives
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3. Locate the Archive folder with the name of the file that you're hoping to recover and open it.

4. Open the most recently saved file in this folder.

Note: Every time a drawing is created and saved, Archive files that keep a historical archive of your plan are automatically created or updated. Files can be archived by hour, day or most recent save. They are renamed according to which archiving option is selected in the Preferences dialog. In the image above, the Archive file is titled Dalton Remodel_2023_02_10, which is a daily archive.

As you work, Chief Architect products automatically create Auto Save files at regular intervals when changes are made to a file but are not saved. These Auto Save files are appended _auto_save.plan or _auto_save.layout.

Auto save files created as a result of an improper program shutdown are appended _auto_save_bak.plan or _auto_save_bak.layout. If your computer shuts down accidentally, you can recover some of your work by opening the _auto_save_bak file.

5. Note any error or warning messages that may appear, and examine it for missing data or other problems. If the file appears to be affected by corruption, close it without saving and open the file that was saved prior to that one.

6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 until you find a version of the file that does not appear to have any problems associated with it, then select **File> Save As** from the menu.

7. In the **Save Plan File** dialog that opens, choose an appropriate location to save the file to, specify a desired name for the file, then click **Save**.

Do not save this file in the Archives folder, nor in the programs Data folder.

Please see the "Organizing your Plan and Layout Files" resource in the Related Articles section

below to learn more about the recommended practices for where to save your files.

8. Going forward, this newly saved file is the one that you will work with.

> If you have retrieved an archive file that contains views that have been sent to a layout*, some views may need to be re-linked. Please see the "Message: Could not successfully open all of this layout's associated plan files" resource in the Related Articles section below if you experience this message when opening the associated layout.
>
> *Layouts are available in Chief Architect Premier, Chief Architect Interiors, and Home Designer Pro.

In Chief Architect Premier, Chief Architect Interiors, and Home Designer 2025 and newer products, you can specify how many Archives are created on the FILE MANAGEMENT panel of **Preferences** . However, it is important to note that these settings cannot guarantee full, exact restoration of your plan files under all circumstances.

Related Articles

- Backing up Chief Architect Content (/support/article/KB-00001/backing-up-chief-architect-content.html)
- Managing Your Archive Files (/support/article/KB-00775/managing-your-archive-files.html)
- Message: Could not successfully open all of this layout's associated files.(/support/article/KB-00022/message-could-not-successfully-open-all-of-this-layout-s-associated-files.html)
- Organizing your Plan and Layout Files (/support/article/KB-00562/organizing-your-plan-and-layout-files.html)
- Restoring Chief Architect Content (/support/article/KB-00091/restoring-chief-architect-content.html)