

Interior Designers & Interior Decorators

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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Interior Designers & Interior Decorators - [NOC 2021: 52121 / NOC 2016: 5242]

Interior Designers & Interior Decorators may also be called:

- interior design technician
- home decorating consultant
- interior design consultant
- kitchen designer
- office space planner
- project manager, interior design
- retail space planner

1. What Would I Do?

Interior Designers & Interior Decorators come up with ideas and produce artistic, practical and safe designs for interior spaces in residential, commercial, cultural, institutional and industrial buildings. Duties may include:

- speak with clients to find out their needs, preferences, safety requirements and purpose of space
- develop detailed plans and 3-D models showing arrangement of walls, dividers, displays, lighting and other fixtures using computer-assisted design (CAD) software and graphics software
- develop plans, elevations, cross sections and detailed drawings

- advise on selection of colours, finishes and materials, floor and wall coverings, interior and exterior lighting, furniture and other items, taking into account physical comfort and efficiency and occupational health standards
- estimate costs and materials
- prepare plans for final interior designs according to current practices and codes
- may also specialize in designing interiors for trade shows and exhibitions

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Interior Designers & Interior Decorators**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

2. Am I Suited For This Job?

Interior Designers & Interior Decorators should be:

- *creative*
- *organized*
- *good with people*

They should have:

- *design sense*
- *good communication skills*
- *sense of colour coordination*
- *spatial perception skills*
- *drawing ability*

Interior Designers & Interior Decorators mostly work indoors, in offices, retail stores, and clients' spaces. Local travel is common to reach job sites.

Sources:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Interior Designers & Interior Decorators**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- **Career Cruising** – Profiles for 'Interior Designer' and 'Interior Decorator'
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

WorkBC reports that in British Columbia the **median** annual salary for Interior Designers & Interior Decorators is approximately \$54,226 with the median hourly rate of \$26.00/hour.

JobBank Canada lists hourly wages for BC's regions where Interior Designers & Interior Decorators can expect to make:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	19.00	26.00	40.00
Cariboo Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kootenay Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lower Mainland–Southwest Region	18.00	26.00	31.25
Nechako Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Coast Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Northeast Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Thompson–Okanagan Region	19.00	26.00	40.00
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: JobBank Canada <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/wages-occupation/26385/BC>

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/wages-occupation/26385/BC>

Salaried interior designers often receive benefits, such as dental coverage and sick days. Self-employed designers must provide their own benefits. Interior decorators who work for decorating firms, retail stores, or suppliers often work on commission. They earn a percentage of the fee paid by the client. Some earn a base salary plus commission.

Sources:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Interior Designers & Interior Decorators**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- **Career Cruising** – Profiles for 'Interior Designer' and 'Interior Decorator'
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

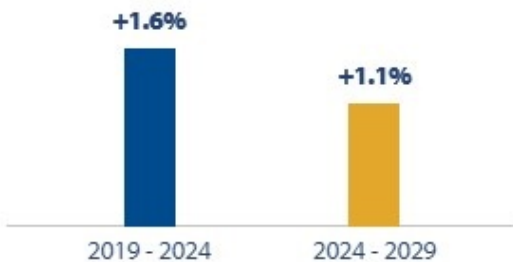
Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library

4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

B.C. Labour Market Outlook (2019-2029)

Provincial outlook

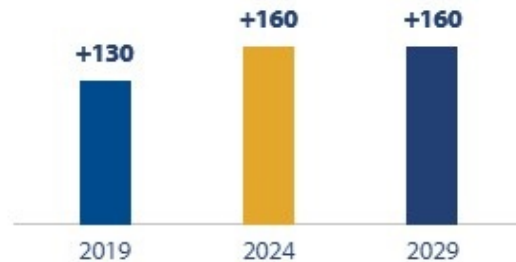
Forecasted average employment growth rate



Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Job openings

10 year expected job openings: **1,580**



Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Composition of job openings

Replacement of retiring workers:
60.5%
950 openings



New jobs due to economic growth:
39.5%
620 openings

Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/careers/5242>

The Regional Employment Outlook 2019-2029

Cariboo

Employment in 2019: **50**
 Average annual employment
 growth(%) 2019-2029: **2.5%**
 Expected number of job openings
 2019-2029: **20**

Kootenay

Employment in 2019: **30**
 Average annual employment
 growth(%) 2019-2029: **1.2%**
 Expected number of job openings
 2019-2029: **10**

Mainland / Southwest

Employment in 2019: **3,300**
 Average annual employment
 growth(%) 2019-2029: **1.5%**
 Expected number of job openings
 2019-2029: **1,260**

North Coast & Nechako

Employment in 2019: **N/A**
 Average annual employment
 growth(%) 2019-2029: **N/A**
 Expected number of job openings
 2019-2029: **N/A**

Northeast

Employment in 2019: **N/A**
 Average annual employment
 growth(%) 2019-2029: **N/A**
 Expected number of job openings
 2019-2029: **N/A**

Thompson-Okanagan

Employment in 2019: **340**
 Average annual employment
 growth(%) 2019-2029: **1.3%**
 Expected number of job openings
 2019-2029: **120**

Vancouver Island / Coast

Employment in 2019: **520**
 Average annual employment
 growth(%) 2019-2029: **0.5%**
 Expected number of job openings
 2019-2029: **160**

Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/careers/5242>

Sources:

WorkBC Career Profile for Interior Designers & Interior Decorators

<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

5. How do I become an Interior Designer or Interior Decorator

Interior Designer:

In B.C., interior designers are not regulated or licensed by the provincial government. However, many interior designers in BC choose to complete NCIDQ certification - National Council for Interior Design Qualification - as governed by the Council for Interior Design Qualification (CIDQ) (<https://www.cidq.org/>). NCIDQ certification requires:

- completion of Bachelor's degree from a Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) accredited interior design program (<https://accredit-id.org/accredited-programs/>)
- successfully passing NCIDQ exam
- completion of 3520 hours of qualified interior design experience

For more details, see: <https://www.cidq.org/paths>

After receiving NCIDQ certification, designers usually apply to become a 'Registered Member' of the Interior Designer's Institute of British Columbia (IDIBC) (<http://www.idibc.org/>). When IDIBC grants registration, a designer may then use the title ***Registered Interior Designer (R.I.D.)***.

For more details, see:

http://www.idibc.org/members/become_a_member/

<https://www.idibc.org/professional-resources/membership/how-to-join/>

*Designers who have completed their Bachelor's degree but are still preparing for NCIDQ examination may choose to register with IDIBC as an '*Intern*' member.

For more details, see: <https://www.idibc.org/professional-resources/membership/categories/>

Internationally Trained Interior Designers

Eligibility for NCIDQ Certification / Registration with Interior Designer's Institute of British Columbia (IDIBC)

Candidates with an interior design education (degree, diploma or certificate) or Bachelor's degree (minimum) in architecture earned abroad **may** qualify for the NCIDQ Exam (<https://www.cidq.org/paths>) and possibly for registration with IDIBC.

- candidates must have their transcripts translated and evaluated by an education evaluator**
- education must include 60 semester credits of interior design coursework

**Approved evaluators include:

- International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES) available through the BC Institute of Technology (BCIT) <http://www.bcit.ca/ices/>
- WES World Education Services Canada <https://www.wes.org/ca/>
- ECE Educational Credential Evaluators <https://www.ece.org/>

Interior decorators

In B.C., interior decorators are not regulated or licensed by the provincial government. Some form of post-secondary education is usually required by employers, either a college certificate or diploma in interior decoration. Decorators may choose to seek 'Accredited Membership' with the Decorators & Designers Association of Canada (DDA Canada) (<https://ddacanada.com/>) by *fulfilling one of these three requirements:*

- completion of a certificate or diploma program from a recognized educational institution (<https://ddacanada.com/membership/recognized-institutions/>)
- OR**
- completion of courses in the area of decorating or design **and** a minimum of 5 years' work experience in the industry **plus** a portfolio and letters of reference
- OR**
- minimum of 10 years' work experience in the design/decorating field **plus** a portfolio and letters of reference

For more details, see: <https://ddacanada.com/membership/accredited-membership/>

Sources:

WorkBC Career Profile for Interior Designers & Interior Decorators
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

6. How Do I Find A Job?

Where would I work?

- *architectural firms*
- *interior design firms*
- *retail establishments – furniture retailers*
- *construction companies – home builders*
- *hospitals*
- *airlines*
- *hotel and restaurant chains*
- *may be self-employed*

Finding Advertised Jobs

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

Local Newspapers

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and, in *The Province* on Sundays.

Online Job Postings

- **Interior Designers Institute of British Columbia IDIBC**
<https://www.idibc.org/job-board/>

- **Interior Designers of Canada IDC**
<https://www.idcanada.org/career-centre/>
- **Indeed.ca**
http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
<https://ca.indeed.com/Interior-Design-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>
- **Eluta.ca : search Jobs at Canada's Greenest Employers**
<http://www.eluta.ca/search-greenest> -
- **Neuvoo**
<http://neuvoo.ca/en>
- **BC Jobs.ca**
<https://www.bcjobs.ca/>

Finding "Hidden Jobs"

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below will help you *with finding jobs in this "hidden" job market.*

Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of employers who are in this industry. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Decorators & Designers Association of Canada (DDA Canada) -**
membership directory
<https://ddacanada.com/directories/find-a-decorator-and-designer/>
- **Interior Designers of Canada**
<https://www.idcanada.org/interior-design-101/#find>
- **Interior Designers Institute of BC IDIBC –**
<https://www.idibc.org/professional-resources/membership/membership-directory/>
- **Reference Canada**
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "Interior Designers" OR

"Interior Decorators" and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

NOTE: *You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).*

Networking, Volunteering and Temporary Agencies

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

Networking and the Hidden Job Market:

When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain "Canadian experience." They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.

Volunteer opportunities

- **Volunteer BC**
<http://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/>
- **GoVolunteer.ca**
<http://govolunteer.ca/>
- **Habitat for Humanity, Greater Vancouver**
<https://www.habitatgv.ca/> (can volunteer at ReStores)
- **Interior Designers Institute of British Columbia**
<https://www.idibc.org/about/volunteer-opportunities/>

Consider volunteering as a set dresser / set designer for local theatre groups, for example:

- **Metro Theatre Vancouver**
<https://metrotheatre.com/volunteerproduction/>
- **United Players.com Vancouver**
<https://unitedplayers.com/volunteer/>

For a detailed list of theatre groups, see:

<https://www.vancouveractorsguide.com/community/theatre-companies>

For additional tips see:

- **Networking for Employment**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Networking for Employment]
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]

7. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your experience. Use the library catalogue, <http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

For more information see:

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

8. Where Can This Job Lead?

With experience, designers and decorators may progress to senior positions or as self-employed consultants.

9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **Interior Designers Institute of BC IDIBC**
<http://www.idibc.org/>
- **Interior Designers of Canada IDC**
<https://www.idcanada.org/interior-design-101/#become>
- **Eco Canada**
<https://eco.ca/career-profiles/sustainable-interior-designer/>
career profiles: Sustainable Interior Designer

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.