Part artists, part technicians, interior designers conceive, rethink, bring to life, lay out, and create interior spaces while taking functional, budgetary, and technical constraints into account. They play a leading role, intervening at all stages of a project: from original sketches (design and visual representation of a space, technical definition) to layout (functionality, volume, materials, lighting, sound devices, etc.) and final delivery of the works in compliance with the social and cultural environment.

Covering design, set design, and decoration, interior design draws from the fine, decorative, and graphic arts equally. Interior designers conceive and lay out both private spaces (individual homes, businesses, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.) and public spaces (museums, shops, hotels, theatrical productions, movie scenes and TV series, etc.). Several years of study are necessary to develop, in addition to creativity, architectural expertise and mastery of regulations specific to the construction industry (partitions, bearing walls, electricity, ventilation, heating, etc.).

However, interior design should not be confused with architecture. The length of study, the scope of action of construction focused on exterior spaces, and the responsibilities of these two professions are not the same.

Interior design programs are offered by both public and private institutions.

Of all countries, France has the strongest tradition in the decorative arts, yet it dares to mix styles and break with tradition. French interior designers are sought after throughout the world and export their talents: Andrée Putman, Pierre-Yves Rochon, Jean-Michel Wilmotte, Philippe Starck, Pierre Yovanovitch, Patrick Gilles, Dorothee Boissier, and Joseph Dirand, to name a few. A number of foreign interior designers have also come to work and opened studios in France, including India Mahdavi (Iran), Luis Laplace (Argentina), Patricia Urquiol (Spain), Joseph Karam (Lebanon), Paola Navone (Italy), and many others.

Several important international networks for interior design education, student mobility, and the profession in general exist. These include (among others) the Fédération Européenne des Décorateurs & Architectes d’Intérieur (FEDAI), the European Council of Interior Architects (ECIA), comprising 14 organizations in EU member countries and the European Free Trade Association; and the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI), founded in 1963, which currently brings together 23 countries and approximately 32,000 members. The major interior design schools are part of the Cumulus international network and offer regular exchange possibilities with their foreign counterparts.

Sources: INSEE - MC - MESRI

Useful links

- APCI – Agency for the Promotion of Industrial Creation: www.apci-design.fr
- CampusArt, online application system for art, design, music, architecture: www.campusart.org
- CFAI, French Council of Interior Designers: www.cfaiz.org
- Cumulus, International association of universities and colleges of art, design, and media: www.cumulusassociation.org
- French Alliance of Designers: www.alliance-francaise-des-designers.org
- FDE, France design education: www.fde.design
- IFD, French Design Institute: www.institutfrancaisduseldesign.fr
- INMA, French National Institute of Arts Professionals: www.institut-metiersdart.org
- Ministry of Culture: www.culture.gouv.fr
- Professional certifications: https://certificationprofessionnelle.fr
- UNAID, National Union of Interior Architects and Designers: www.unaid.fr
BREVET DE TECHNICIEN SUPÉRIEUR (BTS)  
(BACCAULAUREAT + 2 YEARS OF POSTSECONDARY STUDY) – L2
> BTS, after 2 years of study programs offered by public and private high schools and colleges train interior designers and set designers. Available majors include Furnishing and Finishing (15) and Studies and Layout (21).

DIPLÔME DES MÉTIERS D’ARTS (DMA)  
(BACCAULAUREAT + 2 YEARS OF POSTSECONDARY STUDY) – L2
> DMA degree in two years in Home Arts or Architectural Decoration, with specialization in subjects such as décor and furniture, metal, or synthetic materials, is offered by ESAAs (Schools of Applied Arts) and high schools. These programs specialize in specific artisanal crafts and pass on traditional expertise to be used in a professional environment.

DIPLÔME NATIONAL DES MÉTIERS D’ART ET DU DESIGN (DNMADE)  
(BACCAULAUREAT + 3 YEARS OF POSTSECONDARY STUDY) – L3
> DNMADE, delivered after 3 years of study (180 ECTS credits) in an ESA. Students can choose among numerous majors, including: Space (27 different majors), Events (11), and Social Innovation (3).
> DNMADE at the École de Design Nantes Atlantique  
www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/970

DIPLÔME NATIONAL D’ART (DNA)  
(BACCAULAUREAT + 3 YEARS OF POSTSECONDARY STUDY) – L3
> DNA, delivered after 3 years of study (180 credits – ECTS) in an ESA (School of Fine Arts). A dozen or so ESA offer a Design major with a specialization in Space.
To apply through CampusArt:  
Pavillon Bosio: www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/60  
HEAR: www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/387  
ESAD Orléans: www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/310  
ESAD Le Mans: www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/142

LICENCE PROFESSIONNELLE  
(BACCAULAUREAT + 3 YEARS OF POSTSECONDARY STUDY) – L2+1
> Two universities offer this 1-year degree (60 credits – ECTS) in their Science, Technology, and Health departments. The degree allows students to refine their technical knowledge in a specific field, including wood and furnishing; creation and lifestyle design.
>• Degrees registered in the RNCP, Level II (BAC + 3):
  > Assistant Interior Designer  
  www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/1121
  > Interior Designer-Space Design  
  Écoles de Condé  
  www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/949

DIPLOME SUPÉRIEUR DES ARTS APPLIQUÉS (DSAA)  
(BACCAULAUREAT + 5 YEARS OF POSTSECONDARY STUDY) – M2
> This two-year, 120-credit (ECTS) masters-level degree in Design with a specialization in Space is offered by 10 institutions and allows students to enhance their artistic mastery in the field of design.

DIPLOME NATIONAL SUPÉRIEUR D’EXPRESSION PLASTIQUE (DNSEP)  
(BACCAULAUREAT + 5 YEARS OF POSTSECONDARY STUDY) – M2
> This two-year, 120-credit (ECTS) program leads to a masters-level degree and aims at structuring and conducting individual research. Some 15 ESAs offer a Design option with a Space specialization.
To apply through CampusArt:  
Pavillon Bosio: www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/60  
HEAR: www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/387  
ESAD Orléans: www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/310  
ESAD Le Mans: www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/142

INSTITUTION-SPECIFIC DIPLOMAS/MASTERS LEVEL  
(BACCAULAUREAT + 5 YEARS OF POSTSECONDARY STUDY) – M2
> Designer-Creator in the Decorative Arts program offered by the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (ENSAD) in Paris. This is a five-year degree with a major in interior design or set design. Admission is by competitive entrance examination. www.ensad.fr
>• Degrees registered in the RNCP, Level I, BAC + 5:
  > Interior Designer:  
  www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/387  
  www.ensad.fr
  > Design Degree  
  www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/969

Beyond the Master level

INSTITUTION-SPECIFIC MASTER’S  
(M2 + 1, 2, OR 3 POSTSECONDARY STUDY)
> Diplôme Propre aux Écoles d’Architecture (DPEA) in Design for Architecture delivered after one year of study at the École Nationale Supérieure d’Architecture in Grenoble.

MASTÈRE SPÉCIALISÉ (MS)  
(M2 + 1 YEAR OF POSTSECONDARY STUDY)
A post-masters program accredited and labeled by CGE (Conférence des Grandes Écoles), this specialized masters enables holders to develop a second competence in a variety of majors and earn an institution-specific diploma.
> Mastère Spécialisé Expert en stratégie d’innovation par le design/Innovation by design degree offered by the École Nationale Supérieure de Création Industrielle (ENSCI) – Les Ateliers.  
www.campusart.org/artsearch/#/program/871

To apply online:  
www.campusart.org > Find your program