Architect Photo Checklist

Architectural documentation spans the full project lifecycle — from existing conditions and design development through construction administration and project closeout. When a client disputes design intent, a contractor deviates from plans, or a liability issue arises, the question is always the same: **can you prove what existing conditions were, that the work conformed to the approved documents, and that deviations were caught and addressed?** This guide gives your team the exact shots to capture on every project.

THE 7 PHASES
Document Every Phase, Protect Every Job

01 PHASE
Existing Conditions Survey

- [ ] Exterior — all four elevations
- [ ] All interior spaces — four-wall shots
- [ ] Structural elements — beams & columns
- [ ] Mechanical, electrical & plumbing systems
- [ ] Window & door conditions & sizes
- [ ] Floor, wall & ceiling finishes
- [ ] Roof condition & drainage
- [ ] Site — topography & utilities
- [ ] Neighboring structures & setbacks

02 PHASE
Pre-Construction & Permit Set

- [ ] Approved permit set on-site confirmed
- [ ] Stamped drawings — all sheets visible
- [ ] Permit card posted at job site
- [ ] Pre-construction meeting documented
- [ ] Site mobilization conditions
- [ ] Existing conditions at start of work
- [ ] Contractor staging areas noted
- [ ] Protection of existing elements
- [ ] Utility locations confirmed

03 PHASE
Foundations & Structural

- [ ] Footing & foundation per structural plan
- [ ] Rebar placement matches drawings
- [ ] Anchor bolt layout per plan
- [ ] Structural steel connections
- [ ] Beam & column sizes confirmed
- [ ] Shear wall layout & nailing per plan
- [ ] Structural deviations noted & photographed
- [ ] Structural engineer site observation
- [ ] Foundation inspection approval

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04 PHASE
Construction Administration — Rough

- ☐ Framing per approved drawings
- ☐ Deviations from approved plans noted
- ☐ Framing inspection card
- ☐ Opening sizes match plan dimensions
- ☐ RFI responses implemented & confirmed
- ☐ MEP inspection card
- ☐ MEP rough-in locations per drawings
- ☐ Submittal approvals on-site
- ☐ Wide shot — all rough work in progress

05 PHASE
Construction Administration — Finishes

- ☐ Exterior envelope per specifications
- ☐ Millwork & cabinetry per drawings
- ☐ Light fixtures per electrical plan
- ☐ Window & door installation per details
- ☐ Tile & flooring per finish plan
- ☐ Hardware per finish schedule
- ☐ Interior finishes per finish schedule
- ☐ Paint colors per approved palette
- ☐ All finishes — wide shots per room

06 PHASE
Punch List & Substantial Completion

- ☐ Punch list items — before & after
- ☐ Finish quality — close-up detail shots
- ☐ Final inspections — all approvals
- ☐ Deficiencies noted with location reference
- ☐ All systems tested & operational
- ☐ Owner walkthrough documented
- ☐ Corrections confirmed complete
- ☐ Certificate of substantial completion
- ☐ Attic & crawlspace final condition

07 PHASE
Project Closeout Documentation

- ☐ Certificate of occupancy obtained
- ☐ As-built conditions vs. drawings noted
- ☐ O&M manuals delivered & photographed
- ☐ Final exterior — all four elevations
- ☐ Mechanical systems — final conditions
- ☐ Keys & access devices transferred
- ☐ Final interior — all rooms complete
- ☐ Warranty documentation photographed
- ☐ Final project — wide shot all areas

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HOW TO USE THIS IN THE FIELD

Turn This Checklist Into Your Daily Workflow

01 Document Existing Conditions Before Demolition Begins

Existing conditions photos are your baseline for every change-order negotiation and every liability dispute. Take more than you think you need — from every angle — before a single wall comes down or a floor is disturbed.

02 Photograph Every Deviation from the Approved Documents

When a contractor builds something differently than drawn, photograph it immediately with the approved drawing visible in the same frame if possible. This creates a clear record of what was observed, when, and what corrective direction was given.

03 Capture Construction Administration Observations Systematically

Date-stamped, location-tagged photos taken at every site visit create the paper trail that supports your CA role. Without them, your field reports are assertions — with them, they become evidence.

04 Before-and-After on Every Punch List Item

A photo of each deficiency when identified and a follow-up photo after correction creates an irrefutable record that the punch list was closed — protecting you from disputes about incomplete work at project closeout.

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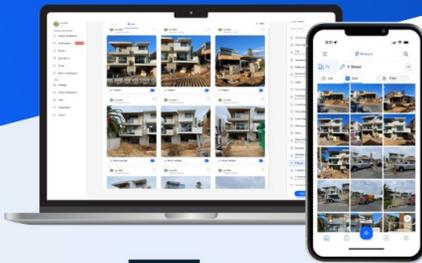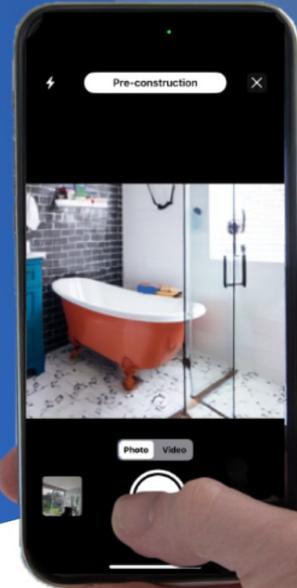
STOP SKETCHY DISPUTES

Time stamped, location stamped records of pre-construction conditions, progress and work completed.

STOP WORK PHOTO CHAOS

Never text another work photo. Never upload to another disorganized drive. Never lose photos in between family pictures.

ASSIGN AND TRACK TASKS

Snap, Tag, Share & Collaborate. Get a list of open items and close them out in real time. Send instant end of day reports.

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