

IDFX

Interior Design Fundamentals Exam

THIS BLUEPRINT APPLIES TO EXAMS IN 2026 AND FORWARD

The Interior Design Fundamentals Exam (IDFX) **focuses on programming and conceptual design, and schematic design phases** of interior design, with an emphasis on Health, Safety, and Welfare.

- 3 hours
- 115 questions (15 will be pre-test questions)
- Multiple Choice, Drag and Place, Fill in the Blank, Hot Spot

I. Existing Conditions 14%

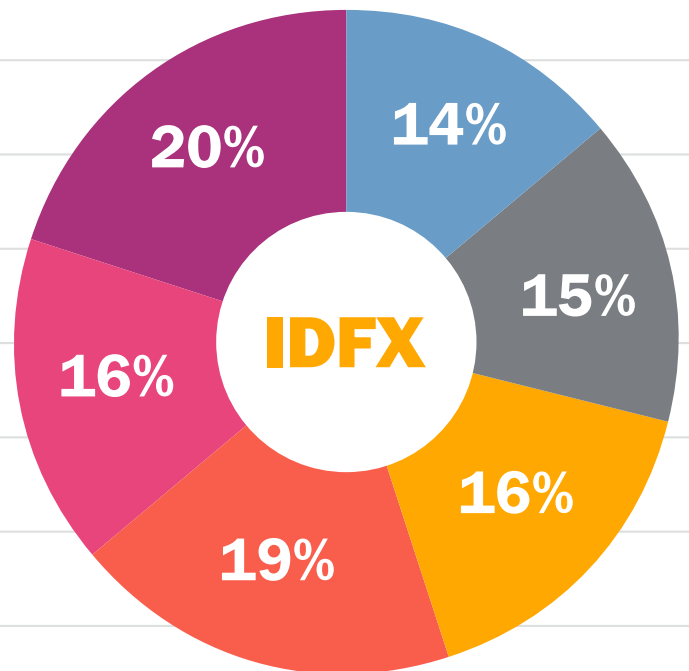
II. Pre-Design 15%

III. Programming 16%

IV. Space Planning 19%

V. Preliminary FF&E and Finishes 16%

VI. Schematics 20%



I. Existing Conditions

14%

Perform Site Analysis

- building location
- building types
- change of use
- environmental impacts (e.g., seismic, air quality, extreme weather, sound)
- historical information
- site conditions and constraints
- solar orientation

- transportation
- views
- zoning

Evaluate Existing Building Conditions

- construction types
- contextual influences (e.g., environmental, cultural, ecological)
- critical interior architectural constraints
- hazardous materials
- occupancy types

Perform Initial Code Analysis

- applicable codes and reference standards
- life safety
- occupancy load
- occupancy types

II. Pre-Design

15%

Establish Best Practices of Design

- client/brand standards
- evidence-based design

- market sectors (e.g., workplace, hospitality, healthcare, government, retail, residential)
- sustainability and wellness
- universal design
- signage and wayfinding

Perform Project Research and Development

- appropriate material usage or application
- contextual influences
- market analysis
- research methods (e.g., case studies, benchmarking, precedent studies)

Determine Design Intent

- client expectations and goals
- color theory
- design concept
- design elements and principles
- informational hierarchy
- spatial awareness
- visioning

III. Programming

16%

Validate Project Program

- adjacencies
- circulation
- gross building components
- occupancy load
- occupancy types
- spatial awareness
- typical square footage allocations

Create Programmatic Diagrams

- adjacency matrices
- block diagrams
- bubble diagrams
- parti diagrams
- stacking diagrams

Determine User Needs

- benchmarking

- cultural context
- demographics
- ergonomics
- human factors
- sensory considerations (e.g., acoustics, lighting, visual stimuli, scent, color response, tactile, thermal comfort)
- specific user needs
- universal design

IV. Space Planning

19%

Complete Space Planning (e.g., floorplan)

- circulation
- human factors
- life safety
- natural daylight and views
- spatial relationships
- structural limitations
- universal design

Create Initial Drawings (e.g., elevations, RCP, finish plans, sections)

- design intent
- graphic standards
- preliminary lighting layouts
- requisite drawings to communicate design intent

V. Preliminary FF&E and Finishes

16%

Identify Finish Materials

- aesthetics
- budgets and lead times
- color theory
- material applications
- material sourcing
- material sustainability
- reference standards and guidelines
- universal design

Identify Significant FF&E

- FF&E customization
- FF&E feasibility
- FF&E impacts to budgets and lead times
- FF&E sourcing
- FF&E special requirements
- how to scope construction (millwork) vs FF&E products
- human factors

VI. Schematics

20%

Refine Design Intent

- client expectations and goals
- design concept
- design elements and principles
- spatial awareness
- signage and wayfinding strategies

Perform Code Review

- applicable codes and reference standards
- life safety
- universal design

Visualize Design

- presentation methods
- visualization software
- visualization techniques
- visualization tools