# IDFX

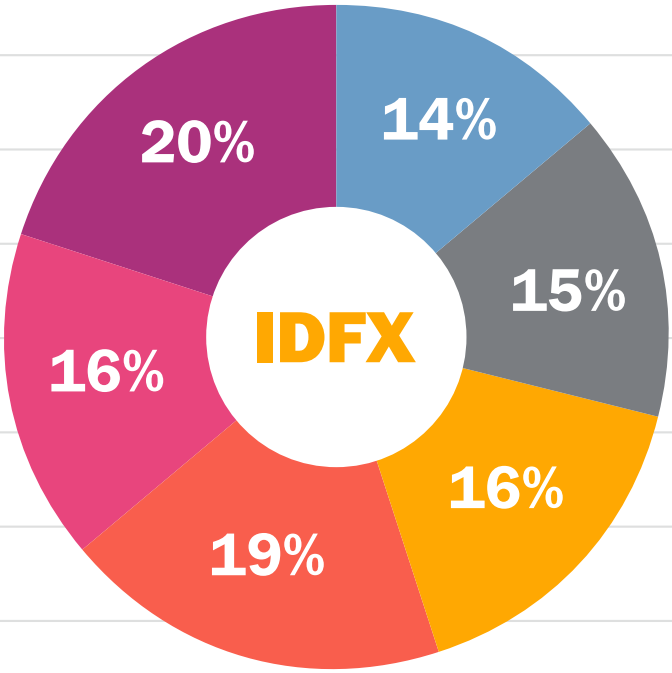
## Interior Design Fundamentals Exam

**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

CIDQ NCIDQ Examination

- 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