

Set and Exhibit Designers

SOC: 27-1027 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$66,280 Median Salary	31,300 Employment	+2.0% Growth Rate
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■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Bachelor's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 15.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.
This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■ Work-Life Balance

5.1/10 - Fair work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.0/10	Investigative	5.6/10
Artistic	9.6/10	Social	7.4/10
Enterprising	6.2/10	Conventional	4.4/10

■ Top Skills Required

Computer skills, Creativity, Interpersonal skills, Organizational skills, Problem-solving skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Set and Exhibit Designers create and plan **scenery, displays, and exhibits for theaters, museums, trade shows, and events**. They design visual concepts, select materials, and coordinate construction to bring creative ideas to life. Their work is critical in arts, entertainment, education, and marketing.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy design, creativity, and hands-on project development.

What Do Set and Exhibit Designers Do?

These professionals conceptualize, design, and oversee the creation of sets, exhibits, and visual displays.

Common responsibilities include:

- Meeting with clients, directors, or curators to understand design needs
- Developing sketches, models, and detailed design plans
- Selecting materials, colors, and textures for visual impact
- Coordinating construction, assembly, and installation of sets or exhibits
- Ensuring designs comply with safety standards and budget constraints
- Collaborating with artists, engineers, and technical staff
- Updating designs based on feedback or logistical requirements

Key Areas of Set and Exhibit Design

Designers may focus on specific venues, media, or thematic presentations:

- Theater and Performance Sets: Designing stage scenery and props
- Museum and Exhibition Displays: Planning educational or thematic exhibits
- Trade Shows and Commercial Exhibits: Creating promotional and branded displays
- Event and Temporary Installations: Designing setups for special events or exhibitions
- 3D Modeling and Visualization: Using software to render designs and plans

Skills and Abilities Needed

Set and exhibit designers combine artistic, technical, and project management skills.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires formal education and practical training:

- Bachelor's Degree (common): Theater design, interior design, industrial design, or related field
- Internships or Apprenticeships: Gaining hands-on experience in set construction or exhibit design
- Portfolio Development: Showcasing design concepts, models, and completed projects
- Professional Development: Workshops or training in CAD, visualization, or specialty design techniques
- Continuous Learning: Staying updated on trends, materials, and technology in design

Where Do Set and Exhibit Designers Work?

They are employed in organizations that produce visual displays, performances, or exhibitions:

- Theaters and Performance Companies
- Museums and Cultural Institutions
- Trade Shows and Convention Centers
- Event Planning and Exhibition Firms

- Freelance or Independent Design Services

Work environments include studios, workshops, theaters, exhibition halls, and on-site installation locations.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires creativity, technical knowledge, and collaboration. Designers must manage budgets, deadlines, and client expectations while bringing artistic visions to reality.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy creative design and visual storytelling
- Are detail-oriented and technically skilled
- Can collaborate with artists, engineers, and clients
- Are organized and able to manage multiple projects
- Want a career producing immersive or visually compelling environments

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in art, design, theater, or architecture
- Build hands-on experience through internships, workshops, or volunteer projects
- Develop skills in CAD, 3D modeling, and visualization software
- Create a portfolio showcasing design concepts and completed projects
- Learn about materials, construction methods, and safety regulations

Set and exhibit designers transform concepts into immersive, functional, and visually compelling environments, supporting art, education, entertainment, and marketing through innovative design.

*Generated by StartRight • Data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics & O*NET*

Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/arts-and-design/set-and-exhibit-designers.htm>