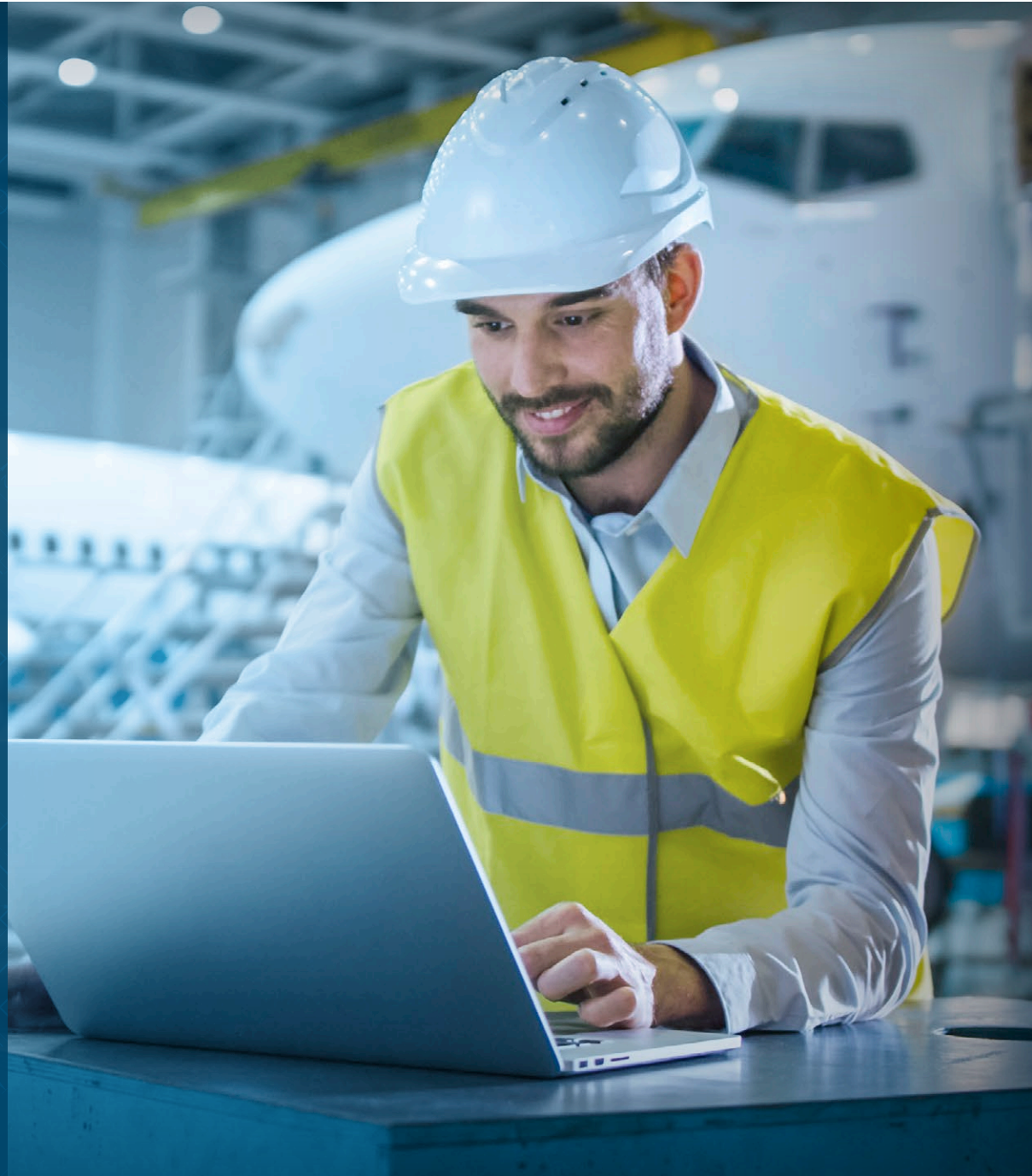


# Making the Switch from AutoCAD® to DraftSight

DraftSight® makes getting started easy. Everything AutoCAD users need to know to be productive and transition quickly.



# AutoCAD® to DraftSight

When you are struggling with your legacy CAD relationship you can evaluate the pain of staying or seek a better opportunity. DraftSight makes transitioning easy. You won't experience the drop in production you may find with other CAD software, since the look and feel are so familiar for AutoCAD users.

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# Introduction

When you are struggling with your legacy CAD relationship you can evaluate the pain of staying or seek a better opportunity. According to the Jon Peddie Research CAD Report, "CAD is communication, and miscommunication is expensive. For that reason, CAD customers tend to standardize on a particular platform." Breaking up is hard to do, we get it, but the grass really may be greener on the other side.

Consider your opportunity with DraftSight – a proven CAD solution with the professional tools, functionality, and DWG file compatibility you need with choices in product and license flexibility, (including choice of network and perpetual licenses) at a fraction of the price. DraftSight makes transitioning and getting started easy and supports full collaboration with other CAD users.

DraftSight, brought to you by Dassault Systèmes, has been trusted by millions of users worldwide. DraftSight provides a familiar, intuitive 2D drafting experience with options for advanced productivity tools, 3D design capabilities, parametric constraints, and flexible licensing options.

Having a range of products to choose from helps you find the best CAD solution for your needs, at the best value. To see which features are available in each product offer, visit [DraftSight.com](https://www.draftsight.com) and learn about our [Features](#).

# Hit the Ground Running

AutoCAD users find themselves getting up to speed with DraftSight almost immediately. You won't experience the drop in production you find when switching to other CAD software, since the look and feel are so familiar for AutoCAD users.



# User Interface

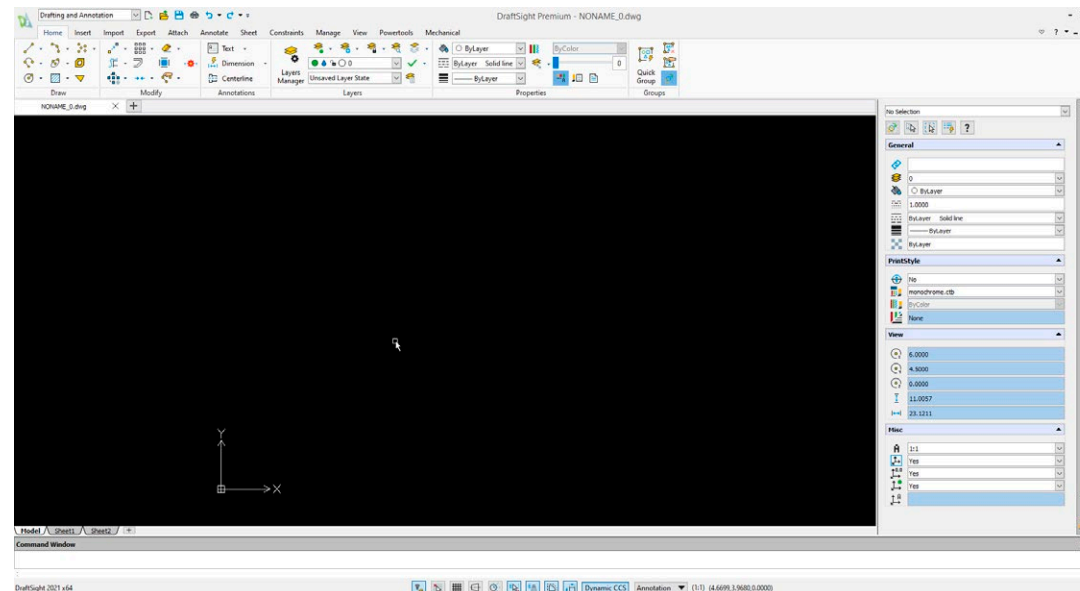
*Be productive right away with a familiar user interface.*

DraftSight's user interface is designed to make the transition easy and efficient for AutoCAD users. You'll find familiarity everywhere you look. All your commands are within easy reach from the **Ribbon** that you already work with. Frequently used tools are in the **Quick Access Toolbar** as you would expect.

You'll also find collapsible **Palettes** that can float or dock, and multi-functional tabs for open files and drawing spaces. The **Command Window** is where it should be, and you'll even find a somewhat less crowded **Status Bar**.

If you prefer more screen space instead of menus and palettes, DraftSight has a **CleanScreen** mode, just like you already use.

Navigating through your design will also feel familiar. All the **Zoom** and **Pan** tools you're used to are available as commands, but you'll likely continue to use the real-time versions from your mouse wheel.



DraftSight's familiar user interface helps AutoCAD users feel right at home and productive right away.

# DraftSight Speaks AutoCAD

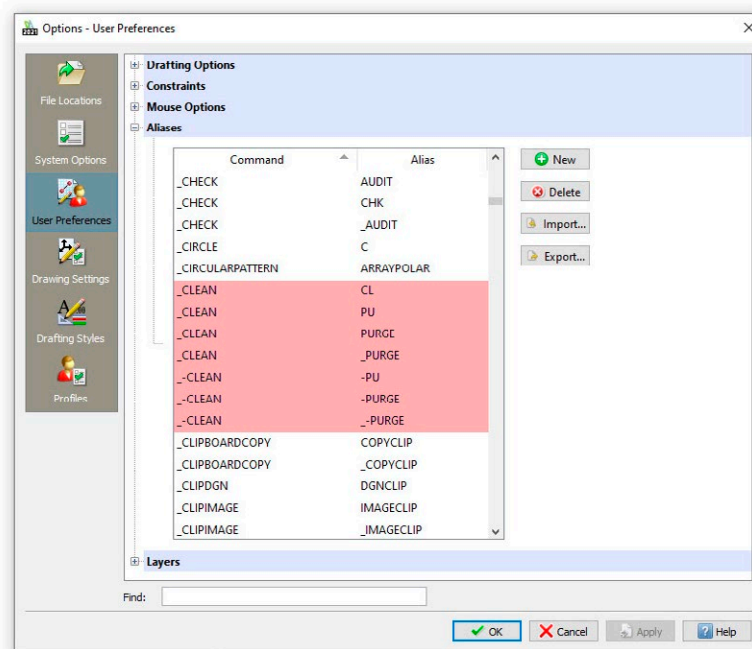
*Transition quickly by using the same commands that you already know.*

DraftSight not only has a familiar look and feel of AutoCAD, but it's also designed to speak the same language, so you can continue to use the commands you already know, making the already fast transition that much easier.

Most command names in DraftSight are different than their AutoCAD counterpart, but DraftSight has mapped the **Command Aliases** to match the name (and alias) of the AutoCAD command.

For example, The PURGE command in AutoCAD is called **CLEAN** in DraftSight. But you can go ahead and type in PURGE and DraftSight will run its **CLEAN** command. Imagine the time savings you'll experience by not having to learn an entirely new set of commands!

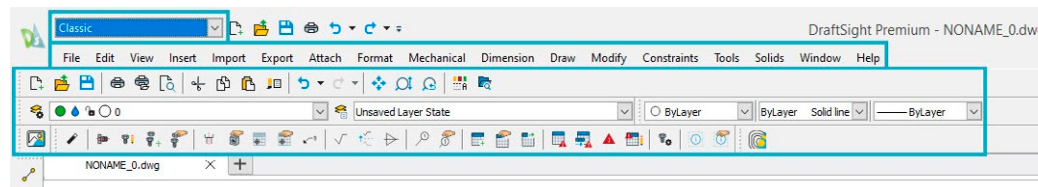
And don't worry if you've customized your AutoCAD aliases – you can do that in DraftSight too!



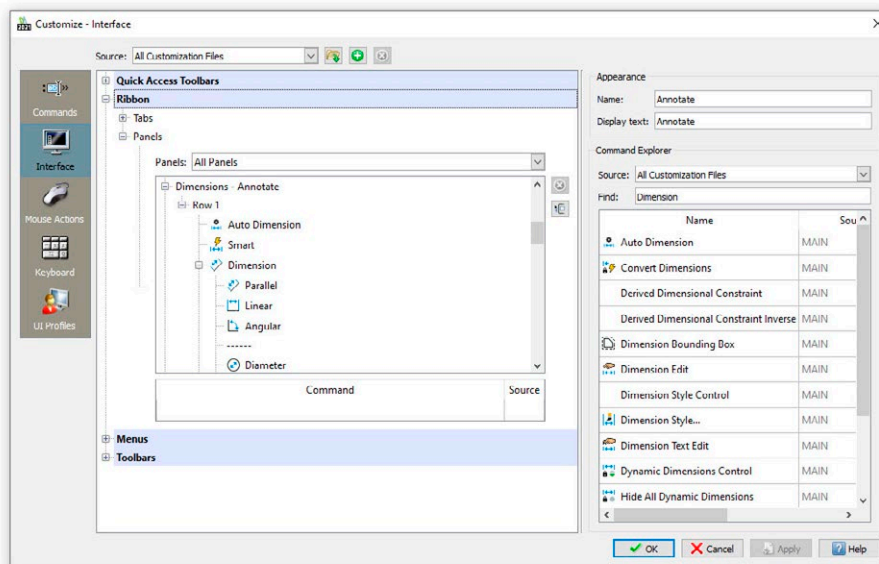
# Customize the User Interface

*Increase your efficiency by setting up the user interface to suit your workflow.*

Many AutoCAD users started prior to the inclusion of the **Ribbon**. While AutoCAD has made it harder to return to that environment, DraftSight has made it easier. If you're someone who prefers the pull-down menus and toolbars, it's just a matter of switching to the **Classic Workspace**.

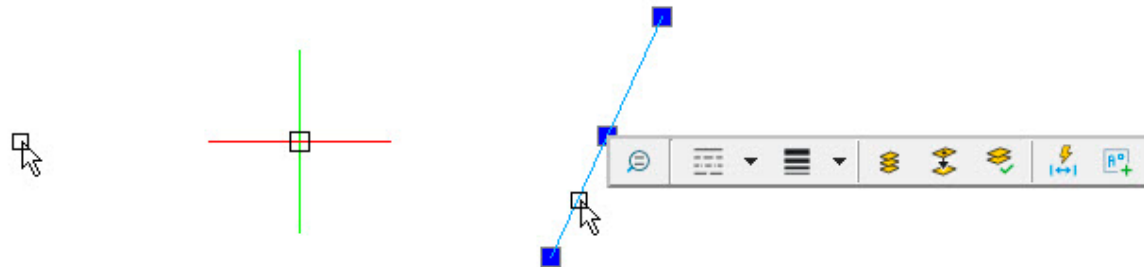


If you prefer using the **Ribbon** menu but want to add or remove elements to better match your workflow, you can do that in DraftSight too. In fact, whichever type of menu you prefer, you can customize them to your liking.

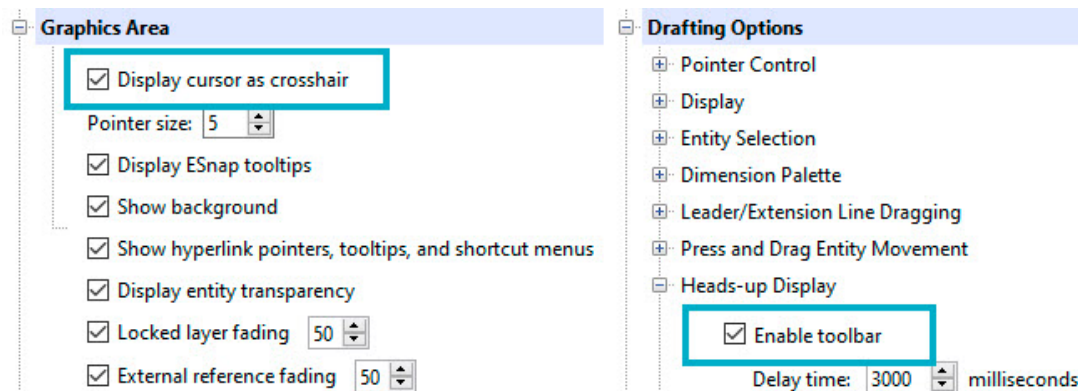


While the DraftSight user interface should be extremely familiar to AutoCAD users, there are a couple of elements that will be different.

DraftSight displays a Pointer to indicate your cursor position when no command is active. It only changes to the crosshairs when needed for a command. Similarly, DraftSight displays a Heads-Up Display menu when entities are selected, allowing quick access to frequently used tools.



If you prefer to revert these elements back to what you're used to, turning them off is as easy as unchecking a box in your DraftSight Options.



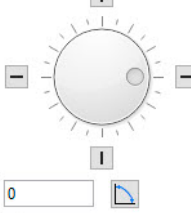


# Drafting Tools

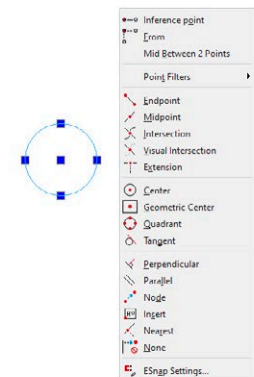
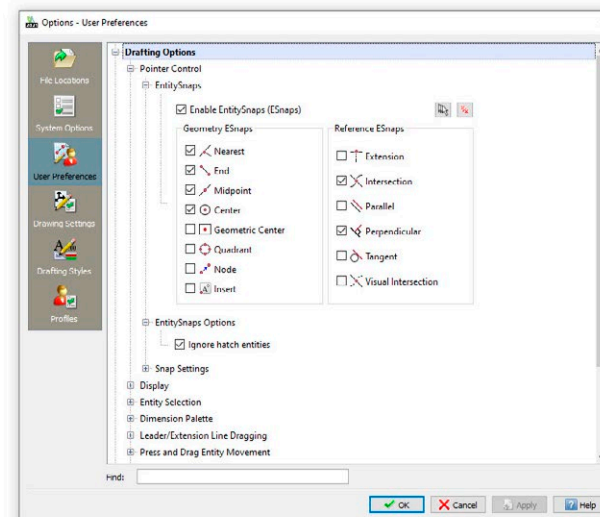
*Design with confidence by utilizing familiar tools.*

Professional CAD programs provide tools and settings that aid the user with their drafting accuracy. AutoCAD users will feel right at home in DraftSight as they perform various drafting tasks.

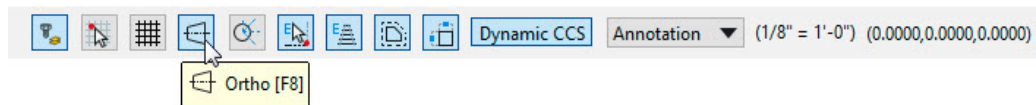
The starting point for any project is making sure the drawing units are set properly. DraftSight provides all the settings you're used to.

<b>Base angle</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Clockwise	<b>Length</b> Type: <input type="text" value="Architectural"/> Precision: <input type="text" value="0'-0 1/16"/>
	<b>Angle</b> Type: <input type="text" value="Decimal Degrees"/> Precision: <input type="text" value="0"/>
<b>Units scale</b> Block units format: <input type="text" value="Inches"/>	
<b>Preview</b> 1 1/2", 2 1/16", 0" 3" < 45	

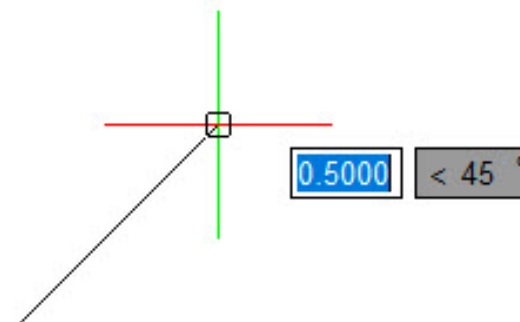
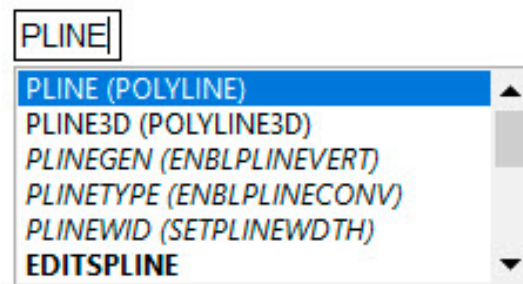
AutoCAD users will also find all their familiar Object Snaps (called **Entity Snaps** in DraftSight). They work the same way; set as running snaps or selected individually via the right-click menu.



The **Status Bar** contains the icons for toggling various settings such as **Snap**, **Grid**, **Ortho**, etc. and they are even mapped to the same function keys as you're used to, so you won't be slowed down by having to learn a different workflow.



If you use Dynamic Input in AutoCAD, you'll find the same functionality with DraftSight's **Quick Input**. The **Command Line** even provides the same **AutoComplete** and **Search in String** capabilities to help you find the right **Command** or **System Variable** you need.



# All That You Expect

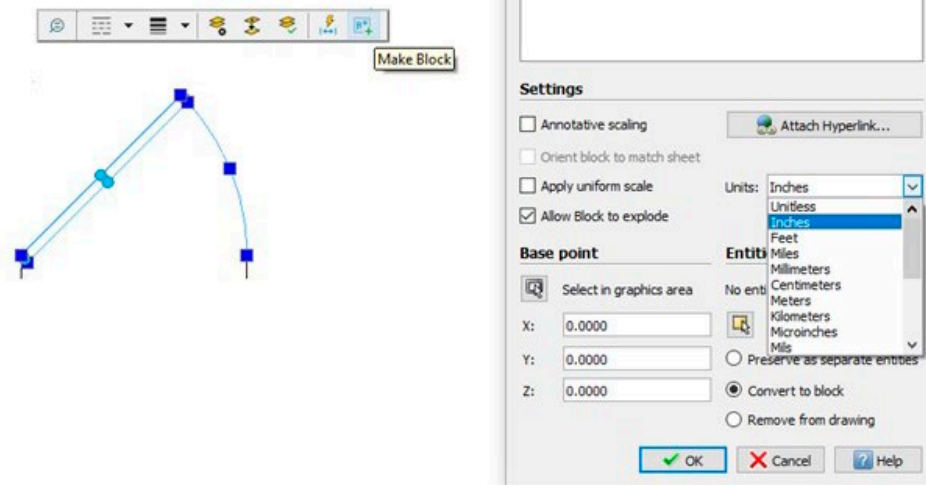
In addition to the Lines, Arcs, and Circles that are common to all CAD programs, DraftSight allows the AutoCAD user to maintain their preferred workflow by providing many of the complex tools they're used to.

# Blocks, Dynamic Blocks, and Attributes

*Save time by utilizing your existing block libraries.*

Use your existing AutoCAD block libraries with confidence as you transition to DraftSight. All the features you're used to are there for you. You can **Insert**, **Scale** and **Rotate** your blocks from either the **Insert** dialog, or the **Command Window**.

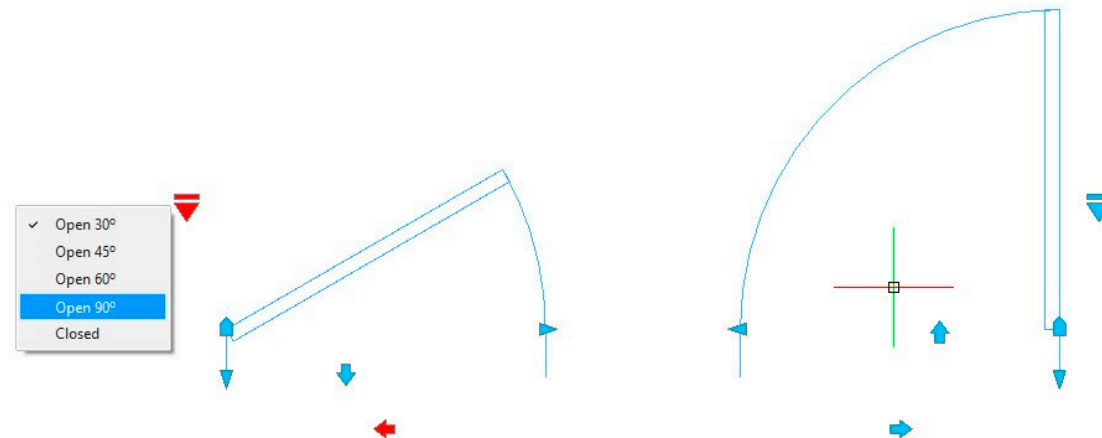
Creating **Blocks** may be even easier in DraftSight, by accessing the **MakeBlock** command directly from the **Heads-Up Display**. There you'll find all the settings that you're used to using when you're making new blocks.



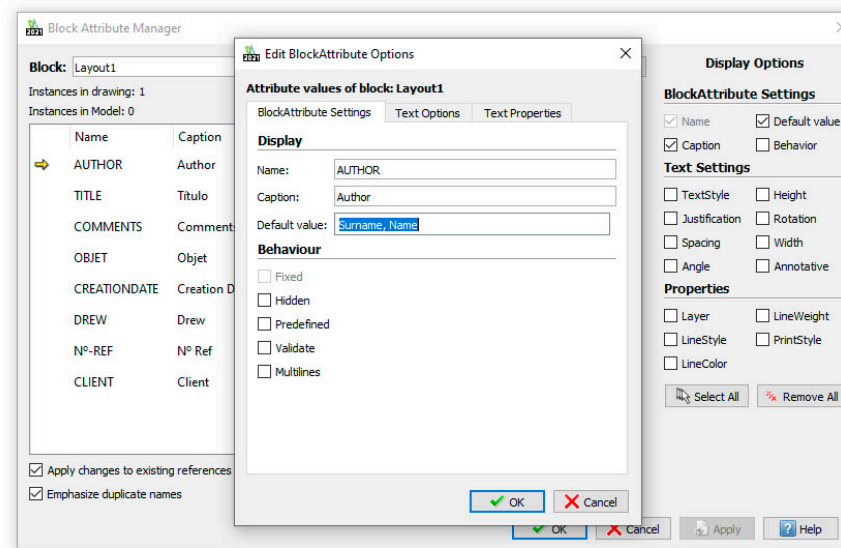
DraftSight also supports inserting and manipulating AutoCAD Dynamic Blocks. You'll be able to access all the actions and parameters as you always have.



**Attributes** are one of the most powerful features of using **Blocks** in your drawings. DraftSight fully supports them from your existing library and allows you to create them within new blocks.



You can edit your **Attribute** information the same way you would in AutoCAD, and DraftSight even has the powerful **Block Attribute Manager**. And, since DraftSight speaks AutoCAD, you can even access it with everyone's favorite command, **BATTMAN**!



# Reference Files

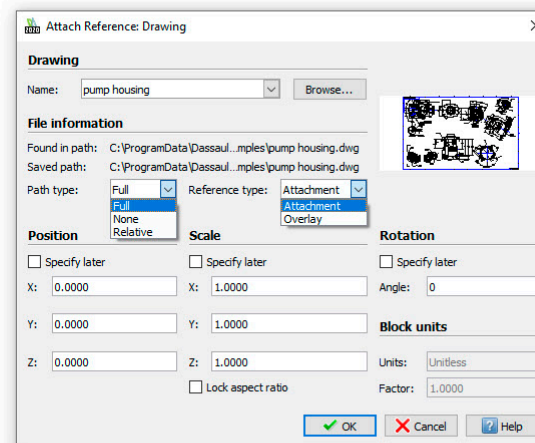
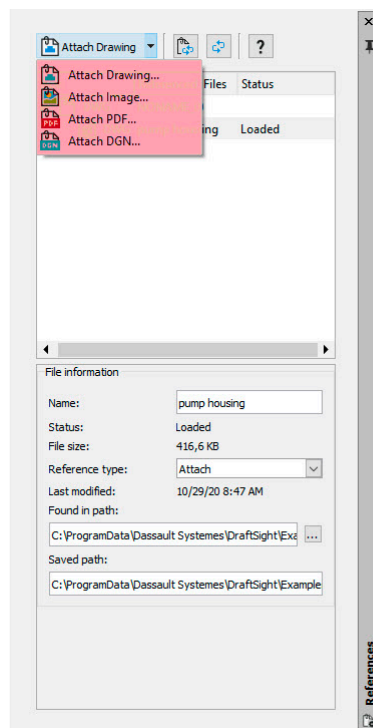
*Maintain your important reference structure.*

If your AutoCAD workflow includes attaching external DWG files as a reference (**XRefs**), you can continue to use them, since they're fully supported in DraftSight, along with all the features you may be used to.

As you would expect, you can choose between **Overlay** and **Attach**, what kind of pathing to use, clip them, fully open them from the host drawing, or simply edit in place. Even the **Dialog Box** and **References Palette** will have a familiar feel.

You're not confined to just DWG files either, as DraftSight also supports other file types, such as DGN and PDF, along with most common image formats such as JPG, TIF, etc.

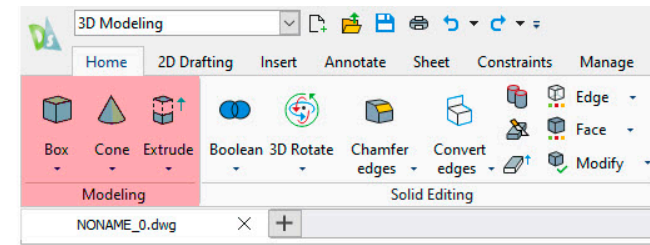
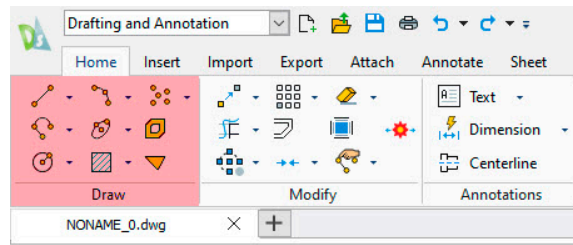
So, however, you interact with **XRefs**, you'll feel right at home in DraftSight.



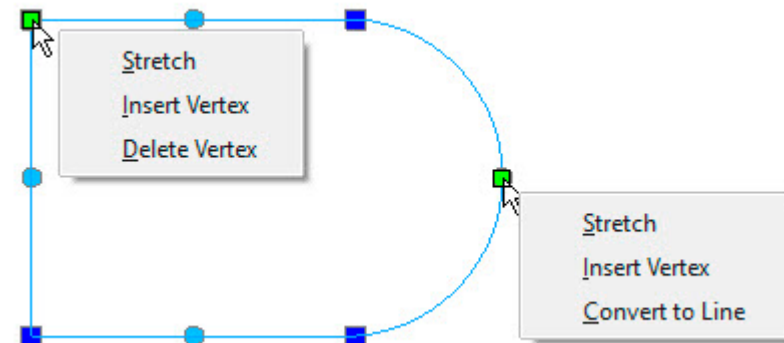
# Entity Creation and Modification

*Use drawing elements and editing tools that you know and understand.*

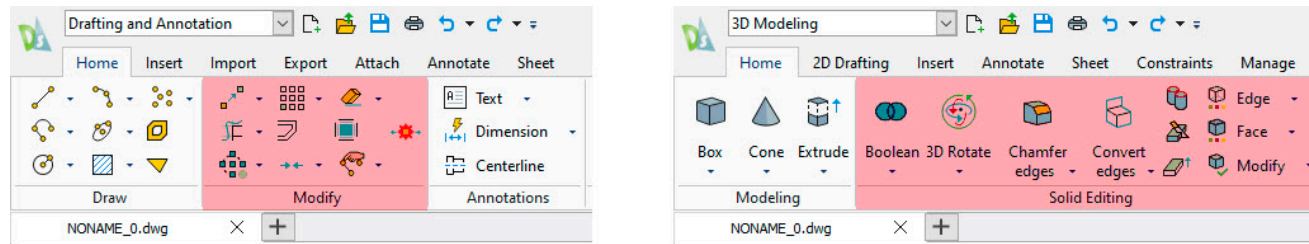
AutoCAD users will find the same entities in DraftSight that they are used to using, and they all work the same way. Whether it's 2D **Lines**, **Arcs** and **Circles**, or 3D **Solids**, **Faces** and **Meshes**, DraftSight provides all the tools you need to accurately create your design.



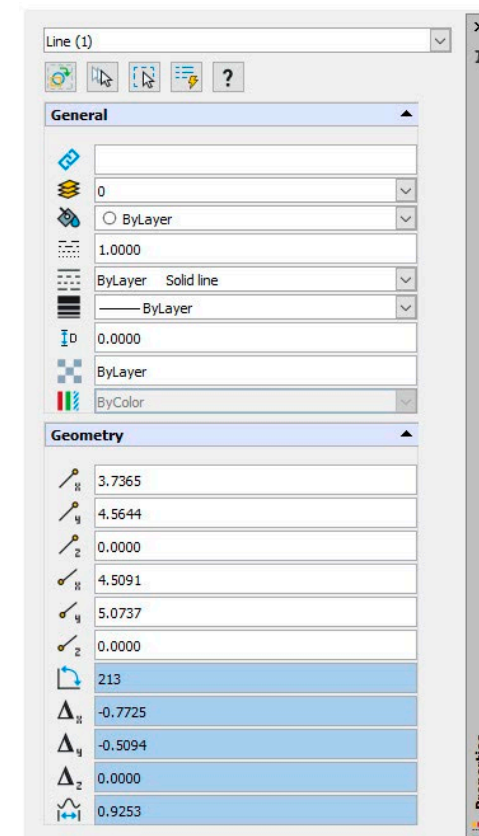
Modifying your geometry is also a familiar task. You can **Copy**, **Move**, **Stretch** or **Scale** your entities, along with all the other **Modify** commands you already know. If you prefer the time saving method of utilizing **Grips** to edit your geometry, you can do that too.



3D modelers will appreciate most of the same editing commands that they're used to. From **Extrusions**, **Lofts** and **Sweeps** to all the familiar **Boolean** operations, DraftSight makes the transition easy.



Of course, entities aren't just geometry, they also have various properties that you may need to modify, such as their **Layer**, **LineColor**, **LineStyle**, or **LineWeight**. All these are easily changed from the **Properties Palette** – just like you're used to doing in AutoCAD.

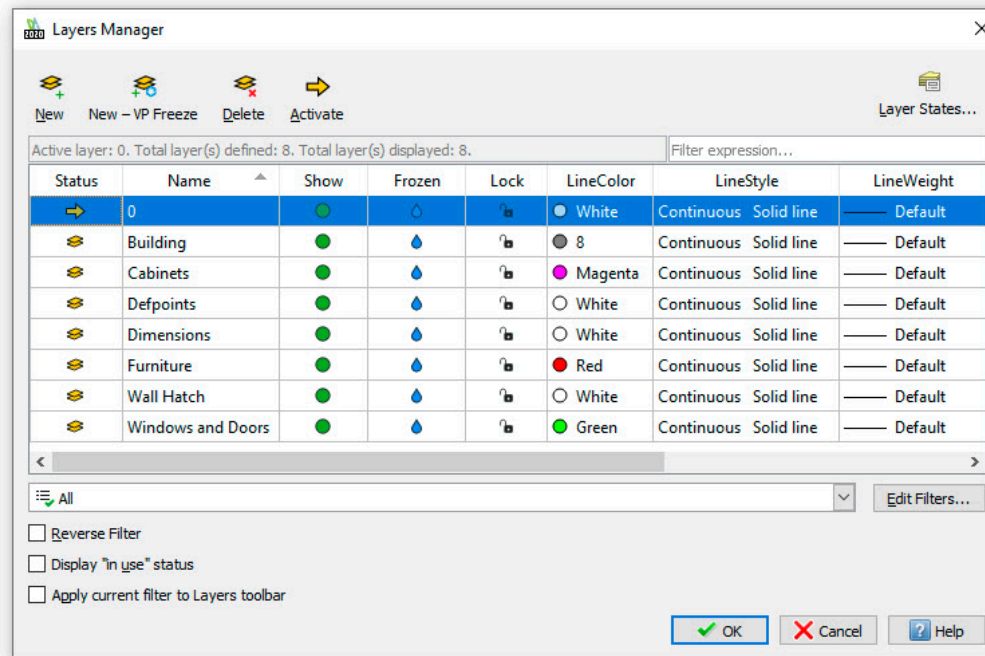




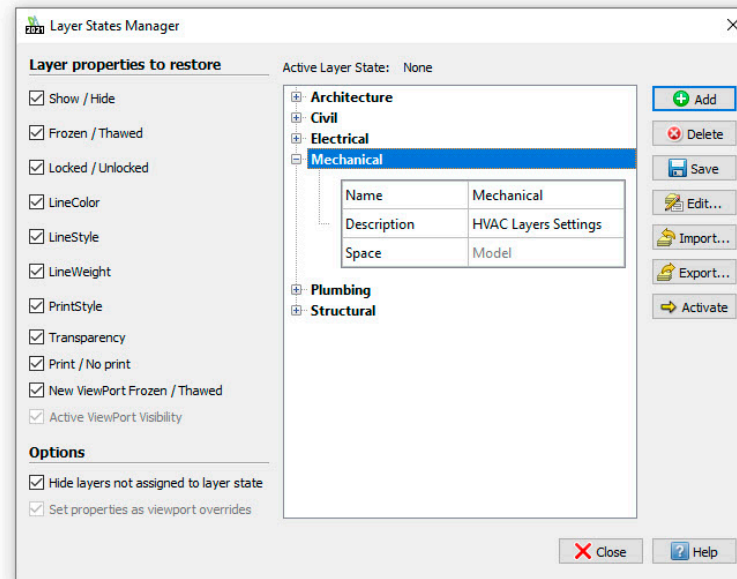
# Layers

*Keep your drawings organized by using the same layers and tools.*

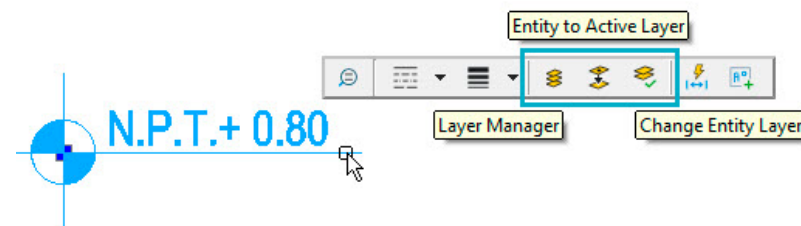
Organizing your drawing files by **Layer** is one of the core tasks for most drafters. DraftSight fully supports all AutoCAD layer naming, states, and properties that you're used to. **Show**, **Freeze**, or **Lock** them both in **Model Space**, and independently in **Sheet Viewports**. You can even continue to maintain those states with the familiar **VISRETAIN** System Variable.



If you use **Group Layer Filters** in your drawings, you'll still have access to them in DraftSight. The same goes for your **Layer States**. You can even import the same saved **LAS** files that you might be using throughout your department.

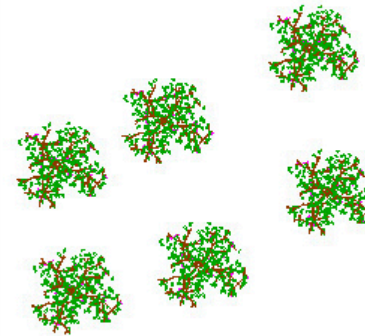
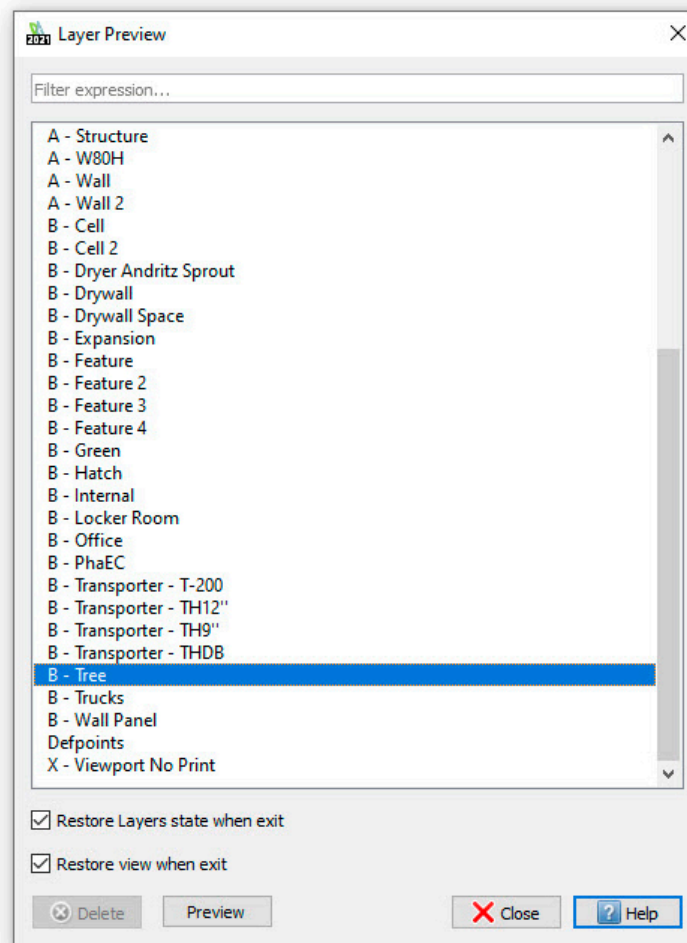


Access to the **Layer Manager**, **Set to Active** and **Changing Layers** is fast and easy with DraftSight's **Heads-Up Display**.



Finally, if you like the AutoCAD Layer Walk feature, you'll love the DraftSight version called **Layer Preview**.

In short, you'll experience almost no change while working with **Layers** in DraftSight.

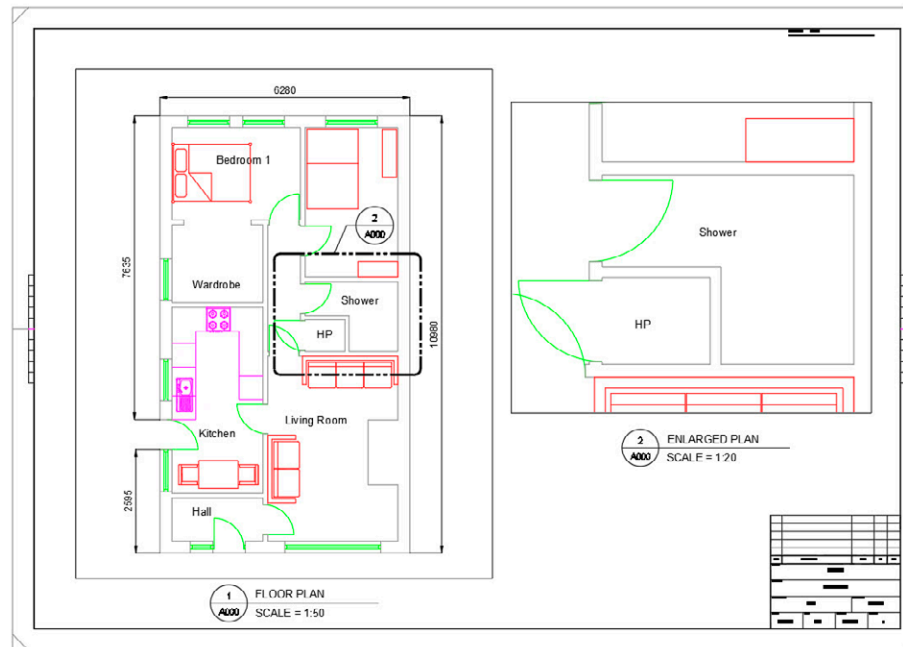


# Sheets, Viewports, and Output

*Avoid costly rework by using the same setup methods.*

The DraftSight environment will be familiar to any AutoCAD user. You'll still create your designs in **Model Space**, and you'll annotate them and set them up for plotting in **Sheets** ("Layouts" in AutoCAD).

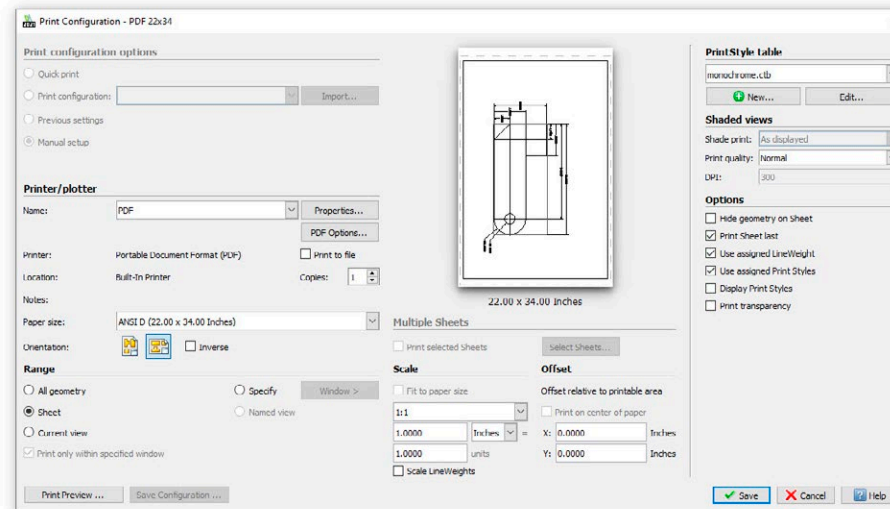
You'll still view your design in **Sheet Space** through scalable **Viewports**. And if you use the **Annotative** feature for your **Text**, **Notes**, **Blocks**, or **Hatches**, you'll be glad to know they still work the same way.



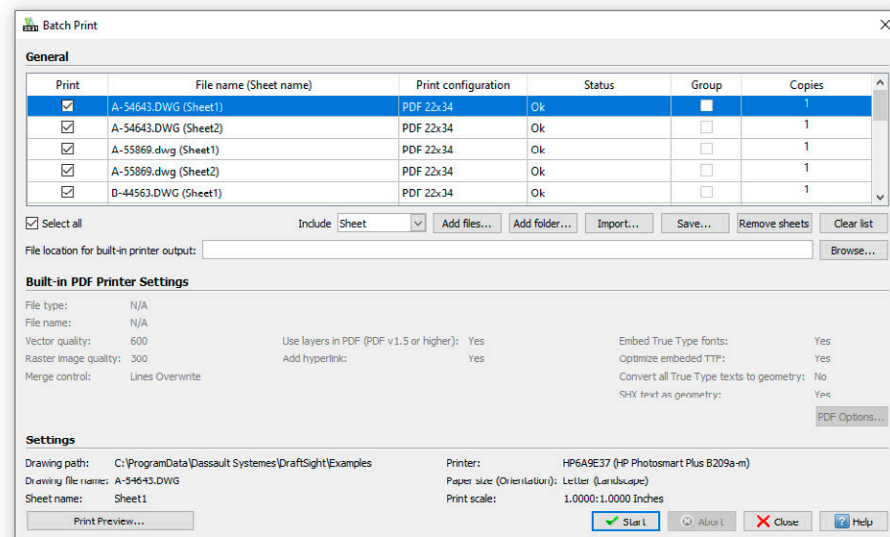
The output of your **Sheets** should be comfortable to you as well. You'll setup your printing parameters from the **Print Configuration Manager**. You may be glad to find that DraftSight saves each "setup" to an external file, instead of within the DWG file – which reduces the chances of different parameters within a setup.



You can **Print** or **Plot** just as you're used to, with all the same controls, including support for both **CTB** and **STB** based files.



And, if you prefer to take advantage of the AutoCAD Publish command, you can do that in DraftSight as well with its **BatchPrint** command.



# More Than You Expect

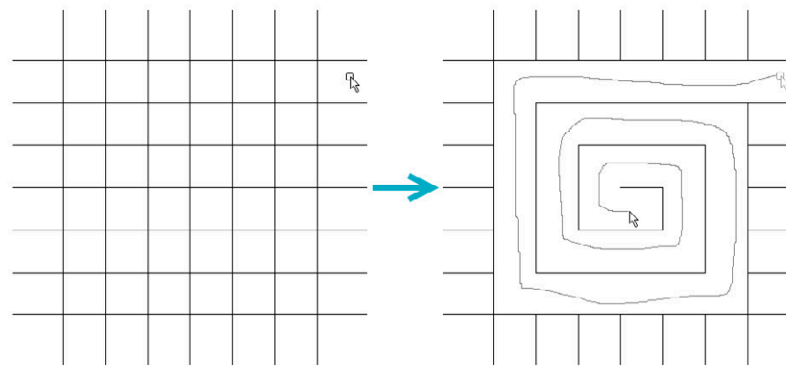
DraftSight was created for Solidworks users, so there are some productivity features that are common to both. It also has some additional drafting tools that you won't find in AutoCAD. With DraftSight, you not only get what you expect, but more – and all at a fraction of the price.

# PowerTrim

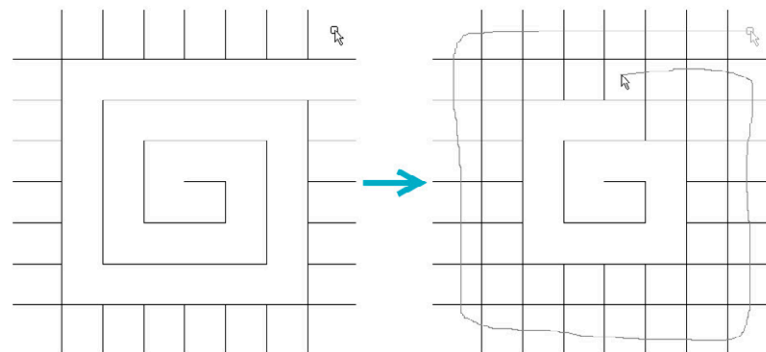
*Save time by using the PowerTrim command to efficiently edit your geometry.*

Found only in DraftSight, the **PowerTrim** tool allows you to quickly and accurately trim multiple entities by simply dragging your pointer across them.

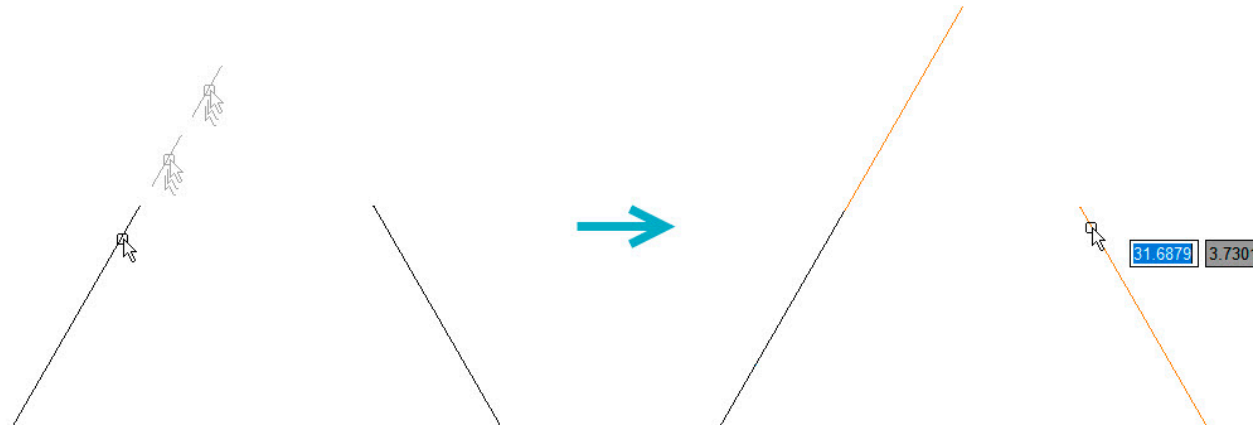
Since **PowerTrim** automatically considers everything in your drawing to be a cutting plane, you can save time and lessen your frustration by not having to identify and select those entities individually.



You can even change the behavior of **PowerTrim** to make it **Extend** entities in the same manner, simply by holding down the shift on your keyboard.



By selecting individual entities, you can also use **PowerTrim** to extend or shorten them along their current paths, or let it do the work of finding and extending to an inferred intersection point.



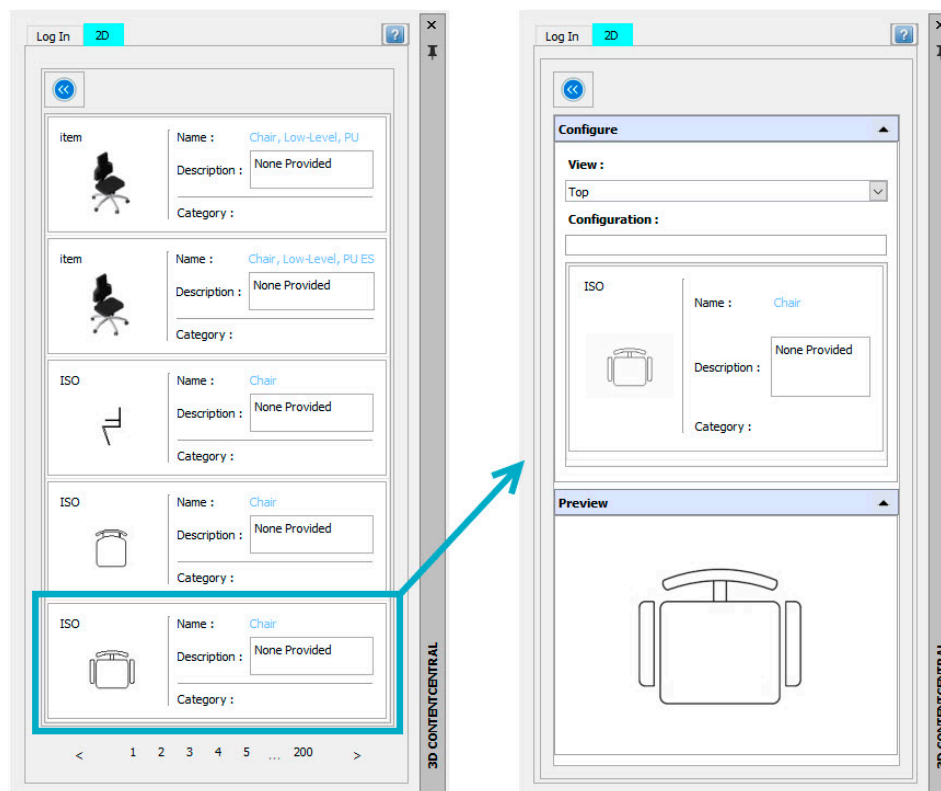
# 3D ContentCentral

*Access free 3D and 2D content from the integrated 3D ContentCentral palette.*

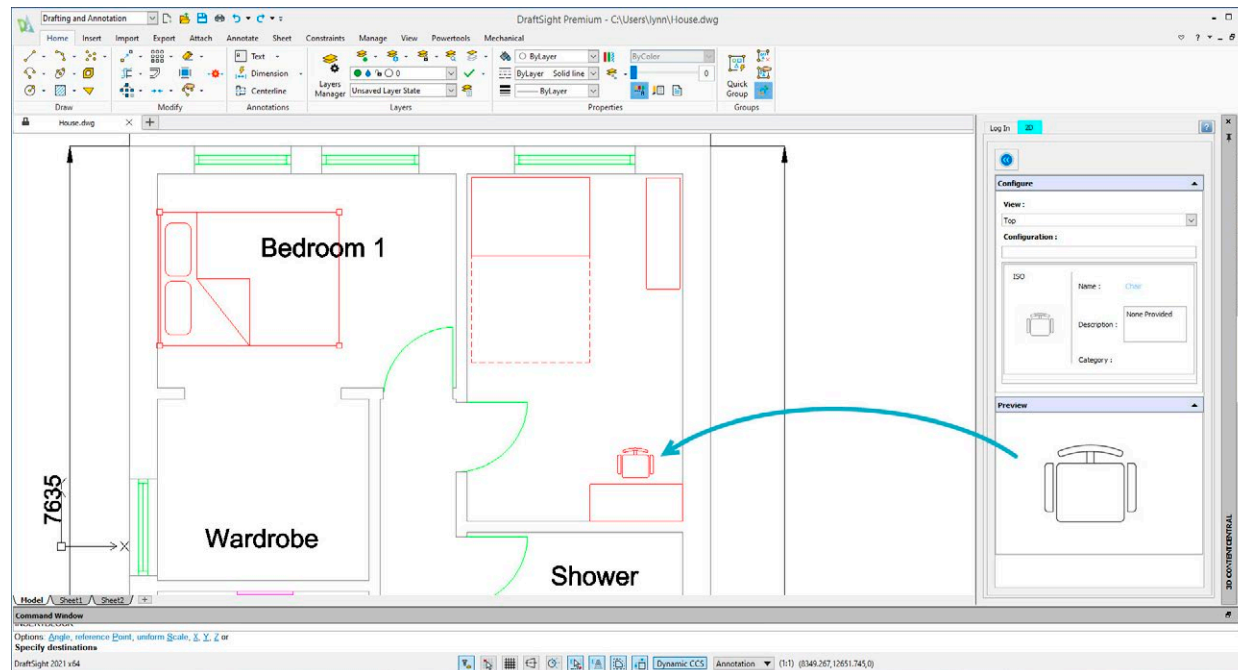
DraftSight lets you easily search for and automatically download both user contributed and supplier-certified 2D and 3D parts and assemblies, 2D blocks, library features and macros.

After creating your free account and logging in, simply enter your search term, and the **3D ContentCentral** palette will display all the matches from its huge library of content.

In our example, we've searched for "Chair", and quickly found a block to use in our design.



Simply drag and drop the block into your DraftSight drawing, and set the **Scale**, **Rotation**, and its location.



By joining millions of other CAD users in the **3D ContentCentral** community, your access to the blocks, parts, or models you need has never been easier.



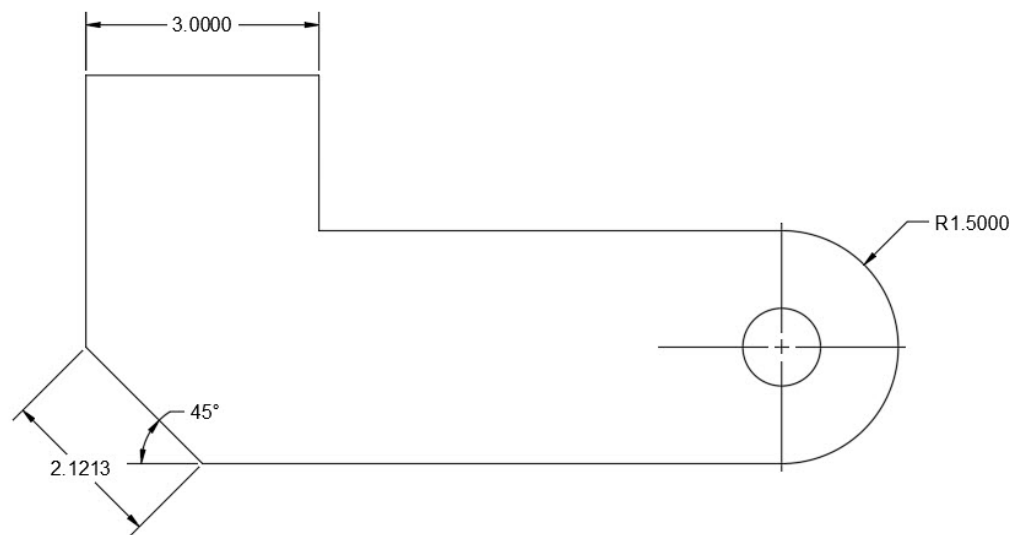
# Dimension Tools

*Increase your productivity by utilizing time saving dimension tools.*

In addition to the traditional individual Dimensioning commands, DraftSight adds two powerful tools that can save you time by automating your tasks.

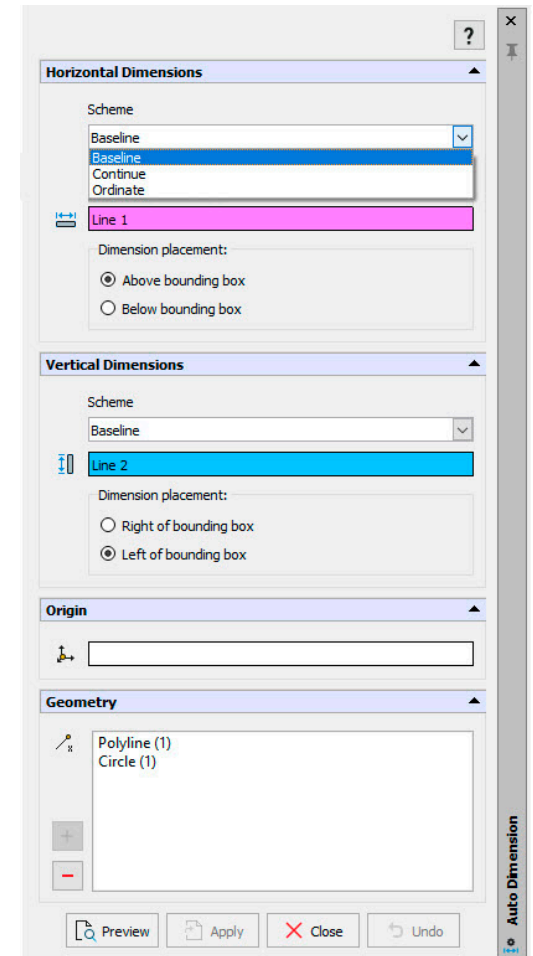
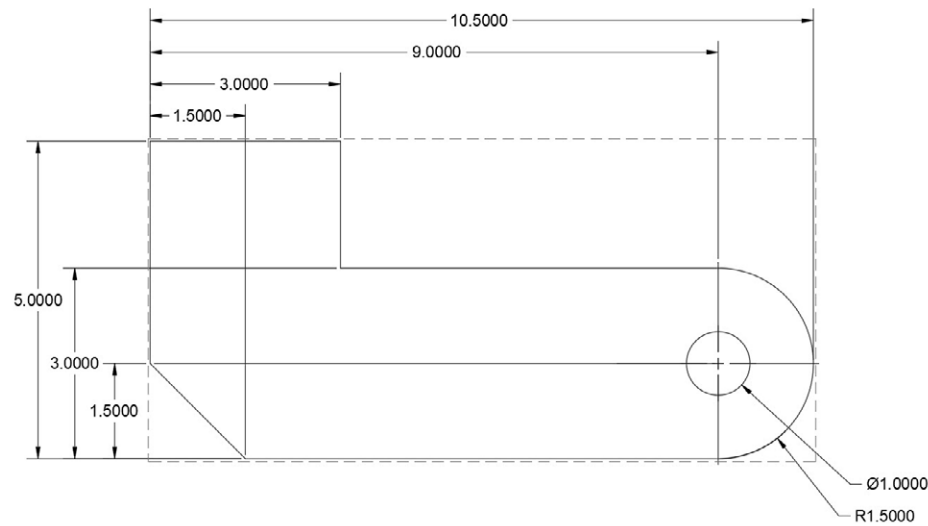
The **Smart Dimension** tool inserts the proper type of **Dimension** by detecting the type of entity you select.

With **Smart Dimension**, you no longer have to stop your command and select a new one just to use a different type of **Dimension**.



DraftSight also features an **Auto Dimension** tool, which can often eliminate the extra work of adding dimensions to your design.

Simply select the entities you want to dimension with a **Bounding Box**, then set various options in the **Auto Dimension** palette. Preview your settings and apply the **Dimensions** when you're satisfied with the result.

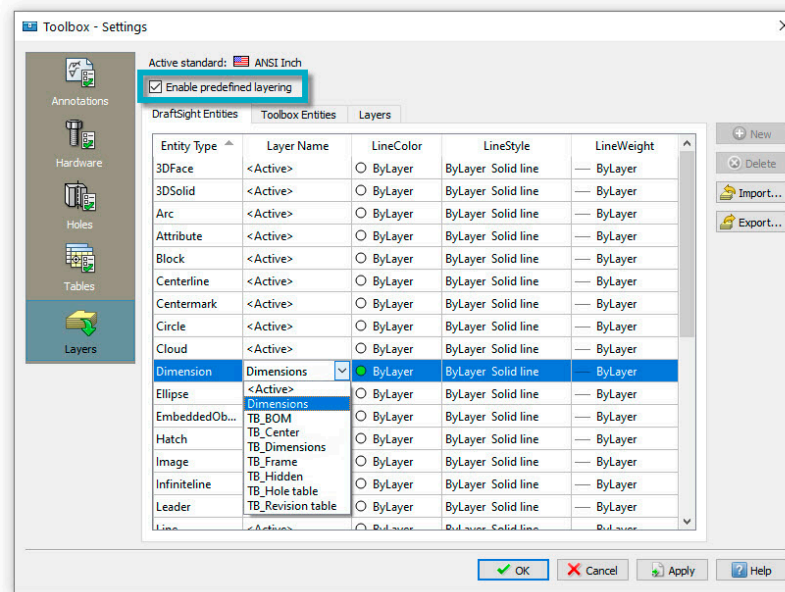


# Toolbox Layers

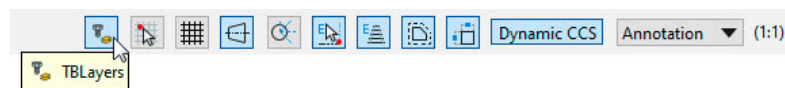
*Maintain your drafting standards by setting the layer for the type of entity.*

The **Toolbox Layer Settings** feature allows you to set which **Layer** a specific entity is placed upon. It helps you maintain your layering standard and removes the need to change the active layer prior to adding different entities.

It was designed to set layers for **Mechanical Toolbox** specific entities, but it also allows access to any standard DraftSight entity. Mapping your layers is as easy as finding them in a list, then selecting the layer from a pulldown menu. Should you choose, you can also specify the **LineColor**, **LineStyle**, or **LineWeight** as well.



Make sure the **Enable Predefined Layering** box is checked, or turn it on from the **Status Bar**, and you'll no longer have to worry about changing your active layer whenever you draw those types of entities.

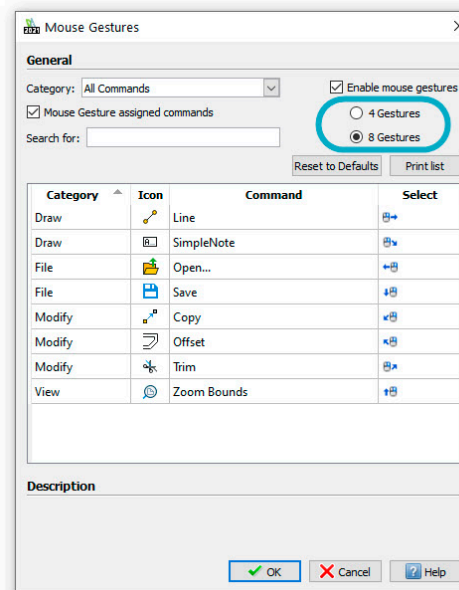
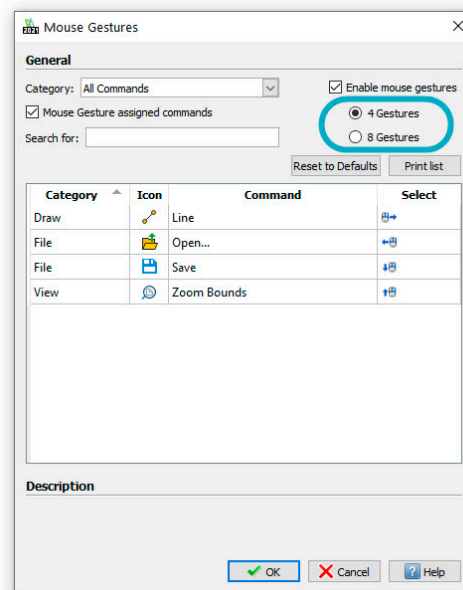


# Mouse Gestures

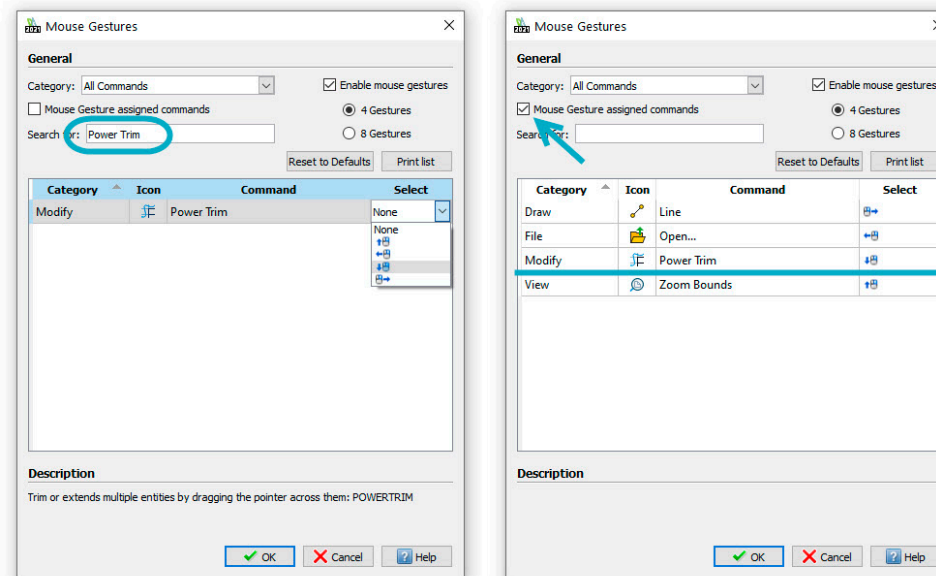
*Increase your productivity by accessing your most frequently used commands with mouse gestures.*

Found only in DraftSight, **Mouse Gestures** provide a fast and convenient way to speed up your drafting technique. When it's enabled, you can access various commands by simply holding down the right mouse button and moving the mouse in the proper direction.

DraftSight allows either four gestures, which correlate to moving the mouse forward, back, left, or right, or eight gestures, which add the diagonal directions.



Each **Gesture** has a default command, but the real power comes when you customize them. By mapping your favorite commands to a **Gesture**, you can remove the need to navigate through a menu to click on its icon.



When you execute a **Gesture**, DraftSight will display a **Gestures Navigation Guide** if you keep the right button depressed. The guide will show you which command you about to begin and allow you to accept it or choose another.



With **Mouse Gestures**, you can keep your eye on your work, which can increase your efficiency and productivity.

# Ecosystem

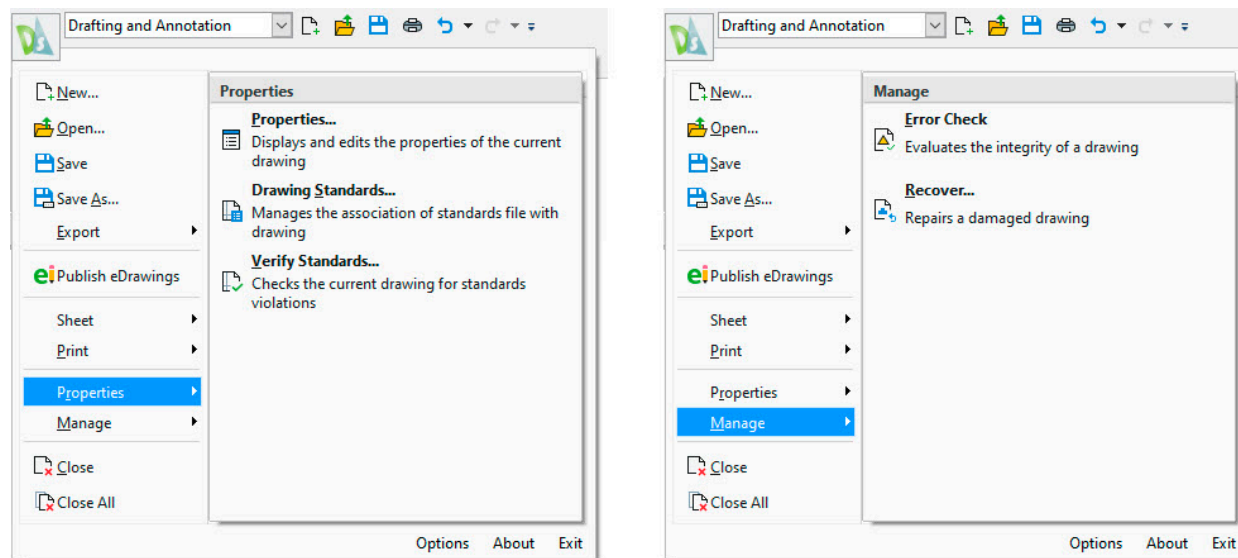
There's more to CAD software than just commands. You need to feel comfortable and have confidence in the software too. DraftSight provides a familiar environment, and lets you continue with the most important aspects of your CAD experience.

# DWG File Format

*Open and edit your existing AutoCAD files in DraftSight with no need for translation.*

DraftSight uses and fully supports the DWG file format. Anything you're used to doing with an AutoCAD DWG file, you can do in DraftSight.

Keep your DWG files lean and fast using the **Clean** (Purge) command to remove unused entities and styles. Maintain your DWG file's integrity by using **Error Check** (Audit) on occasion.



Save your DWG file to any previous format you desire – all the way back to R12! Use it to create a **DWS** file (**Standards**) or keep yourself organized by saving to a **DWT** file (**Template**). Should your workflow require you to do so, you can also save your file to either the widely used ASCII version of a **DXF** file, or the less common Binary variant – again, all the way back R12 if you need to.

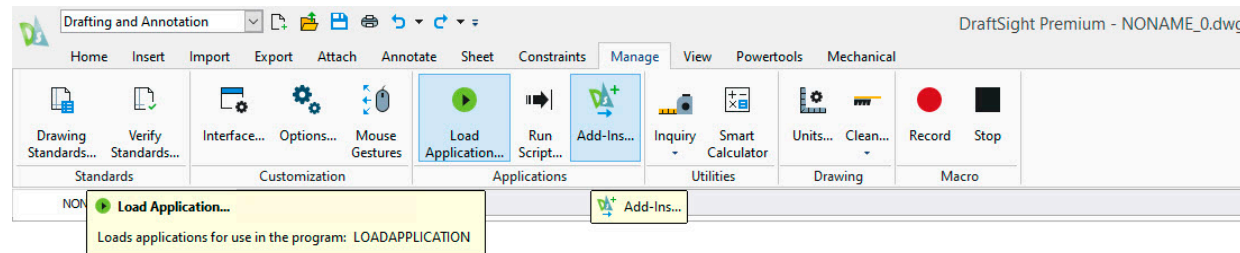


# Customize with API's

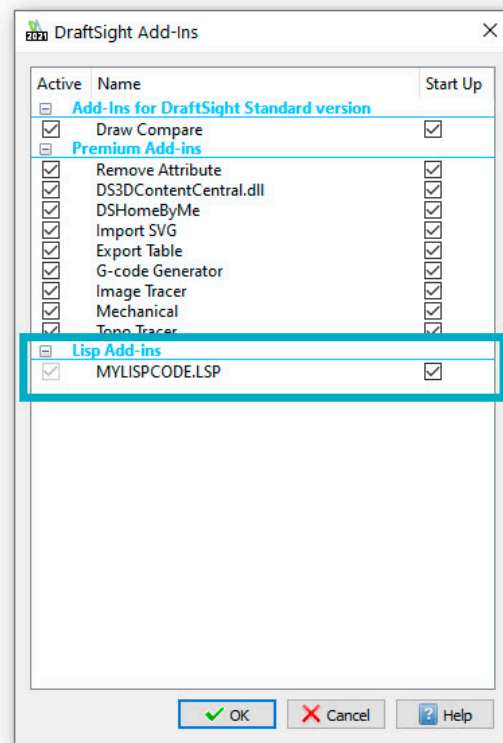
*Extend the power of DraftSight by automating tasks through various API's.*

DraftSight makes it easy to load and use your favorite AutoLISP® or Visual LISP® code to automate tedious or repetitive tasks. Use the **Load Application** interface found in the **Manage** tab of the **Ribbon**.

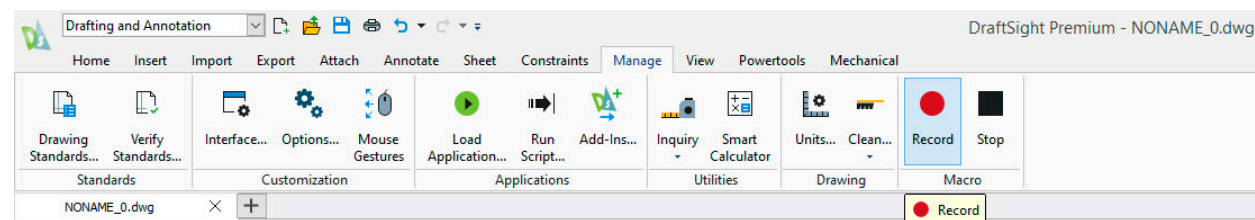
In addition to LISP based files, you can also load Dynamic Link Libraries (.dll files) that may have been created in the .NET environment with the C# or VB.NET languages.



Once loaded, you have the option to have them load every time you open a drawing by checking the **Start Up** option in the **Add-Ins** interface.



If you're not well versed in the external API's DraftSight uses, you can still easily automate repetitive tasks with the powerful **Macro Recorder** feature. Also found in the **Manage** tab, just click on the **Record** tool when you're ready. Perform whatever commands you want to repeat, then simply **Stop** the recording. Play back the **Macro** whenever you need to reproduce your drawing tasks.

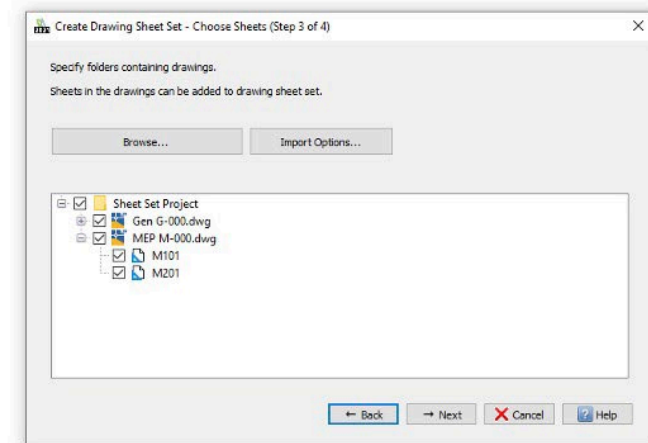
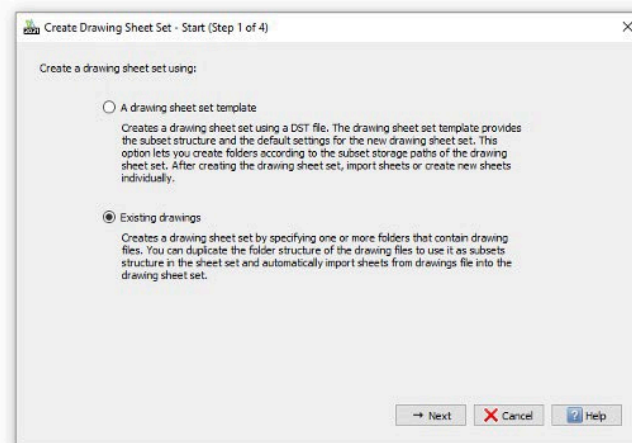


# Sheet Set Manager

*Create, organize, and manage sheets within a drawing sheet set.*

Take control of your projects by utilizing DraftSight's new **Sheet Set Manager**. AutoCAD users will be able to transition their existing projects with ease since your existing .DST files will work exactly the same in DraftSight.

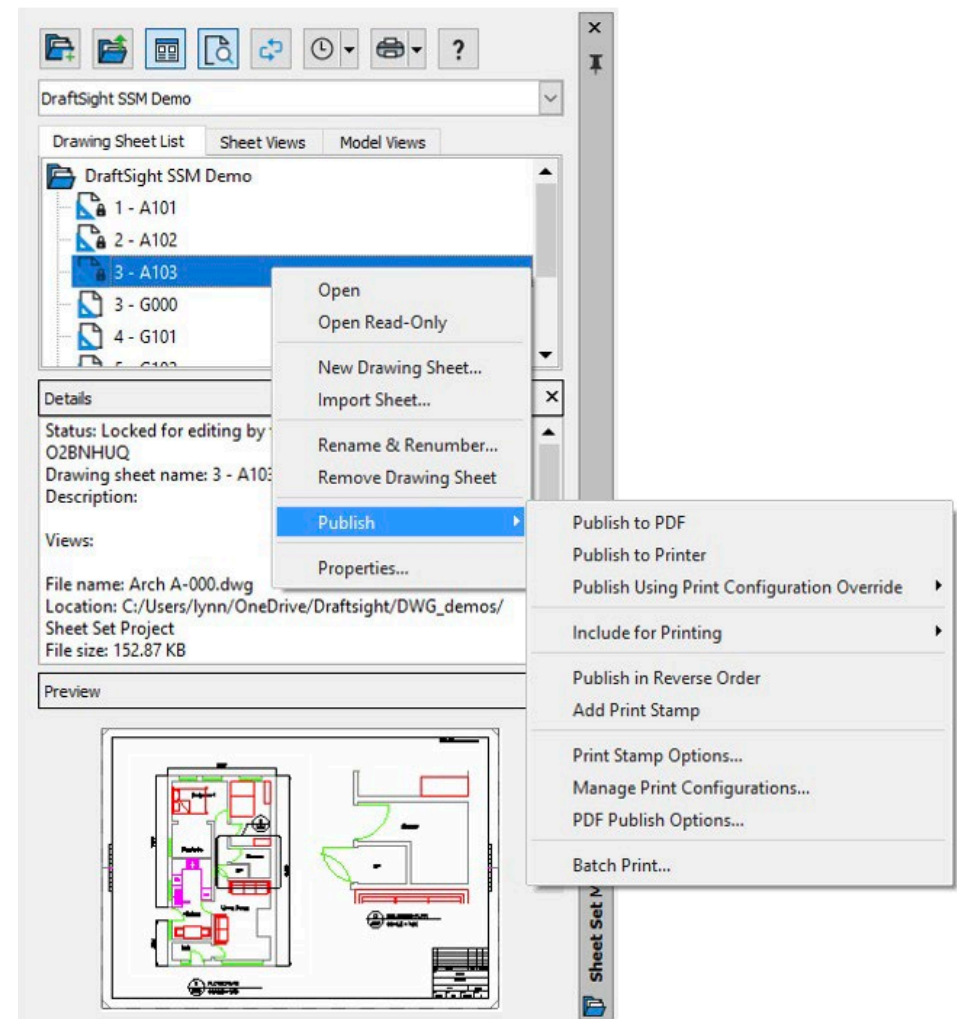
Creating a new **Sheet Set** is easy too. The creation wizard will guide you through the process by using either a **Sheet Set Template**, or by choosing existing drawings.



All the **Sheet Set Manager** tools and features you're used to are available as well. In addition to the **Drawing Sheet List**, you have tabs for both **Model** and **Sheet Views**. Individual sheet details and thumbnails can be shown if you desire, as well as a list of recently accessed **Sheet Sets** for quick access.

Easily manage your project's sheets using the same functionality you're already familiar with, such as **Removing, Importing, or Renaming and Renumbering** your sheets.

You can also take full advantage of the **Sheet Set Manager's** electronic output features. Quickly **Publish** your set to PDF or to a physical printer or large-scale plotter. You can choose or manage the correct **Plot Configuration**, control the order of the set, or even add a custom **Plot Stamp**.



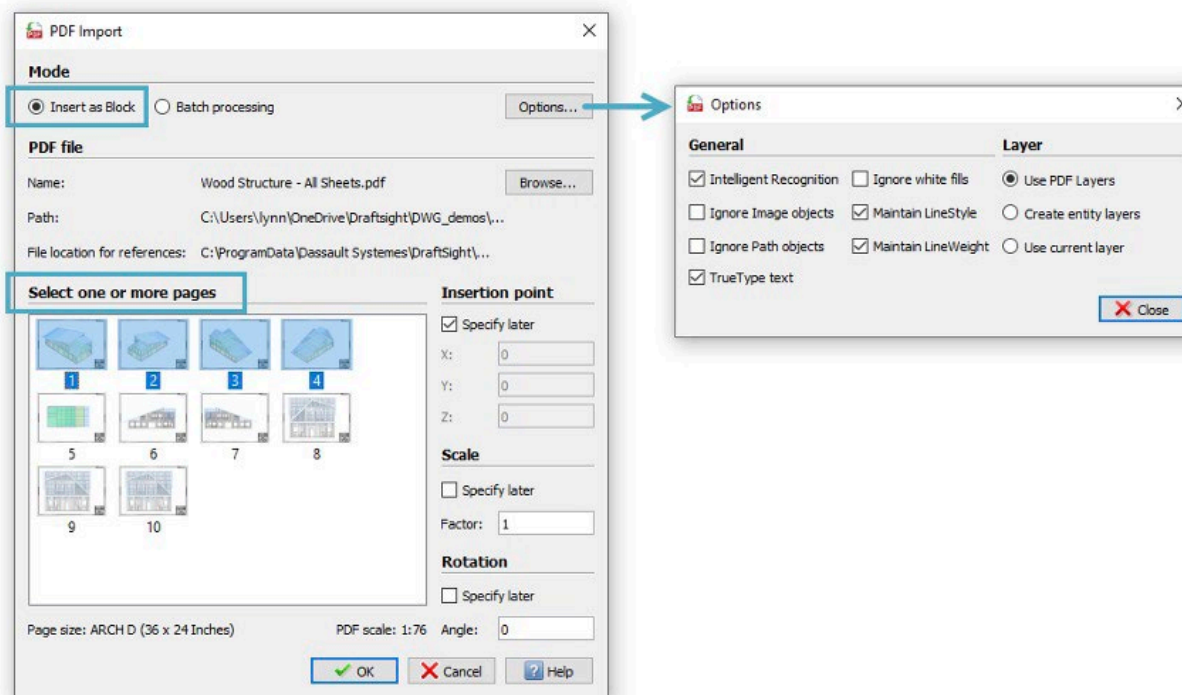
# PDF Import

*Insert content from PDF files as blocks into your drawings.*

AutoCAD users who may be frustrated with some of the limitations of the PDF Import tool will find greater flexibility in DraftSight.

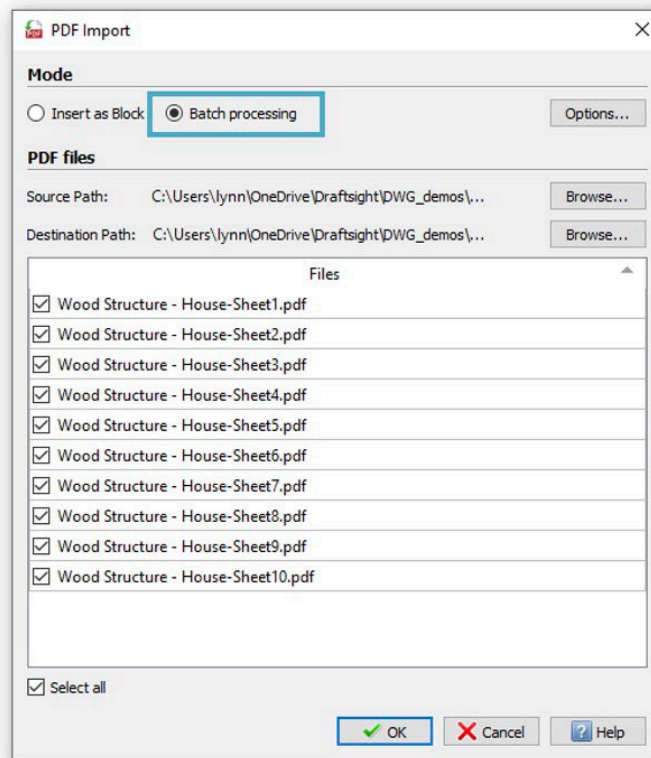
Unlike AutoCAD, DraftSight offers two separate modes you can use to **Import** your vector-based PDF geometry. Both offer similar **General** and **Layer Options**, along with the ability to specify the **Insertion Point**, **Scale**, and **Rotation**, however DraftSight **Inserts** the geometry as a block. If you want individual entities, just **Explode** it once inserted.

Also, you're not limited to importing only a single page of a multi-page PDF. With DraftSight, you can select as many of the pages that you want – which can represent a significant time savings.



The second **PDF Import** mode also sets DraftSight apart. If you have individual PDF files instead of a multi-page file, you can use the **Batch Processing** mode to convert them into **DXF** files. Simply browse to the containing folder, select an output folder, and choose your desired PDF files.

Whichever Import mode you need, the enhancements found in DraftSight can significantly reduce the time it takes to import multiple PDFs into drawing geometry.



# Vocabulary





*Common AutoCAD commands and terminology, along with their DraftSight comparisons.*

AutoCAD	DraftSight
Array	<b>Pattern</b>
Audit	<b>Error Check</b>
Break	<b>Split</b>
CleanScreen	<b>FullScreen</b>
Current Layer	<b>Active Layer</b>
Design Center	<b>Design Resources</b>
Donut	<b>Ring</b>
DrawOrder	<b>DisplayOrder</b>
DWGProps	<b>DrawingProperties</b>
Dynamic Input	<b>Quick Input</b>
Erase	<b>Delete</b>
Group	<b>QuickGroup</b>
ID	<b>GetXY</b>
Join	<b>Weld</b>
Layer Off	<b>Hide Layer</b>
Layer On	<b>Show Layer</b>
Layout	<b>Sheet</b>
LayerWalk	<b>LayerPreview</b>
Limits	<b>Drawing Boundary</b>
Match Properties	<b>Properties Painter</b>
MLeader	<b>SmartLeader</b>





AutoCAD	DraftSight
Mline	<b>RichLine</b>
Mtext	<b>Note</b>
Multi Line	<b>Rich Line</b>
Object	<b>Entity</b>
Osnap	<b>Esnap</b>
PageSetup	<b>PrintConfiguration</b>
PlotStyle	<b>PrintStyle</b>
Publish	<b>Batch Print</b>
Purge	<b>Clean</b>
Redraw	<b>Refresh</b>
Regen	<b>Rebuild</b>
RegenAll	<b>RebuildAll</b>
Select Similar	<b>Select Matching</b>
ShadeMode	<b>ShadeView</b>
Text	<b>SimpleNote</b>
UCS	<b>CCS</b>
Units	<b>UnitSystem</b>
MS Viewports	<b>ViewTiles</b>
Wipeout	<b>Mask</b>
Xline	<b>InfiniteLine</b>
Xref	<b>References</b>



## Additional Resources

-  **Visit our website**  
<https://www.draftsight.com>
-  **DraftSight Free Trial**  
<https://www.draftsight.com/freetrial>
-  **Request a quote**  
<https://www.draftsight.com/request-quote>
-  **Purchase DraftSight now**  
<https://go.3ds.com/zZC>

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