

AutoCAD/ArchiCAD Cross-training

New users of ArchiCAD that come from the AutoCAD world will find that they already know more about ArchiCAD than they think! Many of the concepts from AutoCAD are the same in ArchiCAD, they just may be called different names or have different procedures. The end result, never-the-less, is the same.

On the left is the AutoCAD concept or term and on the right is the ArchiCAD equivalent and methodology. Note that many of the terms are the same.

AutoCAD	ArchiCAD
array	multiply
Allows rectangular or polar repeat patterns or copies of selected objects or entities.	
	Select what you want to multiply, right-click, and choose multiply
associative dimensions	associative dimensions
Dimensions that update automatically instead of needing to be manually updated as you modify or move an object	
blips	hot spots or selection handles
Little temporary marks that show spots you've "picked" on-screen with the cursor	
block	Object or library part
A collection of objects combined to form a single object or symbol that can be inserted into a drawing under a single name.	
	Double-click on the window, door, lamp or object tool and choose an object for insertion.
bounding rectangle/window	selection rectangle/marquee
A rectangle surrounding object. You can select objects with a bounding window, but only objects that are fully enclosed within the window.	
command line	N/A
A specific area of the AutoCAD screen, usually at the bottom, in which you enter commands and options via the keyboard.	
coordinate entry	coordinate entry
Locating a point in the drawing area by entering numbers on the command line that represent the point's cursor coordinates.	
	Press "x," "y," "r," or "A" on the keyboard, which highlights the respective field in the Coordinate Box. Enter a number and press "enter."
crossing window/selection	Not available
A selecting window that includes objects that are enclosed within it or that cross the window's boundaries.	
cursor coordinates	cursor coordinates
The location of the cursor as represented by its horizontal (X) or vertical (Y) coordinates	

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dialog box	dialog box
A set of related options that are displayed on-screen in a rectangular window or box, where you specify options or make changes	
displacement	radial distance
A specified distance.	
	Hold down the shift key and start drawing in the desired direction and press "r" on the keyboard and type in a distance in the Coordinate Box.
erase	delete/clear
Removes selected item from the drawing	
	Select what you wish to delete. Right-click and choose clear, or press "delete" or "backspace" on the keyboard.
explode	explode
Explode breaks down a block into its primitive shapes (lines, arcs, circles, or splines)	
	Select the object you wish to explode and choose "Explode" from the "Tools" menu.
extension line	witness line
A line connection one end of the dimension line to one of the objects that determines the size of the dimension	
filter	Find & select
Filter creates a list of requirements that an object must meet to be included in a selection set.	
	From the "Edit" menu, choose "Find & Select." Determine selection criteria and press the "+" sign to establish your selections.
fence	Not available
A multi-segmented line specified to select objects it passes through	
fill	fill
A pattern that can be placed in the interior of an object	
	Double-click on the "Fill" tool, choose your fill, line style and color, press "OK," then draw.
floating toolbars	floating palettes
Groups of icons that you can drag around on-screen and that always appear	
flyout	pop-out
A group of icons that appears, or "flies out," after you click on icon. The flyout expands your choices from one icon to a choice among several icons or menus.	
grid interval	grid spacing
The distance between grid points	
	Chose "Grids & Background" from the "Options" menu and establish you grid interval distances.
grid	grid
A visible array of dots used to indicate distances on-screen. The grid is intended to serve as a kind of flexible graph paper in which the user can at any time redefine the size of the grid.	

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	Right-click on your screen (with nothing selected) and toggle "Grid Display" off or on.
grips	selection handles/dots or hotspots
That appear on an object after it is selected	
group/ungroup	group/ungroup
Allows a number of objects or entities to act or move together	
	Select entities you wish to group or un-group, go to the "Tools" menu and make your grouping choice.
insert raster image	open bitmap image
Allows the insertion and placement of a bitmapped image into a drawing.	
	Double-click on the Figure tool; click on "Open" and go search for desired bitmapped image/picture
layer	layer
A group of objects that are associated for purposes of displaying and updating.	
	Choose Options > Layers > Layer Settings or use the keyboard shortcut Control (Command) + "L"
layer off	Hide layer
If a layer is off, the drawing does not display or print it.	
	From the Layer Settings dialog box, switch off or back on the layer by clicking on the "eyeball" button.
layer lock	Lock layer
A locked layer prevents the modification of objects on it.	
	From the Layer Settings dialog box, lock or un-lock the layer by clicking on the "padlock" button.
Layer Manager	layer combinations
Allows the saving and recalling of layer settings and visibilities.	
	Choose Options > Layers > Layer Settings or use the keyboard shortcut Control (Command) + "L" and set combination on the right side of the layer dialog box.
linetype	Line type
The pattern of line segments, dashes or dots used to draw a specific line style.	
	Go to the Options menu > Line Types
model space	Floor Plan / 3D Window / Section / Elevation
The mode in which most AutoCAD work takes place; where you create and edit objects	
object	Object or library part
A single graphical element or entity that you can select and edit separately.	
object model	Virtual building
A 3D object-oriented model of a building or structure.	
object properties bar	info box

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A toolbar that enables you to view and specify object properties, such as layer and linetype, with little or no keyboard entry	
object snap /running object snap	object snaps
Makes certain points on an object act like magnets so that if you click near that point, this action is the same as clicking the point itself. Object snaps include: endpoint, midpoint, center, intersection, tangent, perpendicular, insertion point, percentage of a line, distance on a line, divisions of a line.	
	Object snaps are always available via the "smart cursor"
ortho lock (F8)	Constrain
A setting that forces lines to be drawn horizontally or vertically only.	
	Hold down shift key and draw
pan	pan
Moving the drawing around so that a different part of the drawing appears on-screen in the current viewport.	
	From the Display menu, choose "Pan" and click and drag the mouse across the screen to move the drawing; click on the "hand" icon at the bottom of a view's window.
paper space	PlotMaker application
A mode for working with your drawing that enables you to change the view of a drawing, but not what's in the drawing itself.	
parallel offset	Drag a copy
	Select an object, right-click and choose "drag a copy," drag in the direction you wish to offset, hold down the shift key to constrain, press "r" on the keyboard, type the distance, and press "enter."
pickbox	N/A
A little box that appears at the cursor position after you select objects. The size of the pickbox determines what object you can select or snap to.	
polyline	polyline
A single object made up of multiple line or arc segments	
redraw	redraw
Clears the screen and redraws the drawing.	
	From the "Display" menu, choose "Redraw" or right-click and choose "Redraw"
regeneration (REGEN)	rebuild
Clears the screen and uses the drawing database to create a new display list.	
	From the "Display" menu, choose "Rebuild" or right-click and choose "Rebuild"
selection set	selection set
A set or group of objects that you have selected	
snap grid (F9)	snap grid or construction grid

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The array of points that the cursor snaps to, based on the snap interval	
snap interval	snap spacing
The distance between snap points if snap mode is on.	
third party application	third party application
A program from a vendor other than Autodesk that works with or within AutoCAD	
title bar	title bar
The strip across the top of the screen that displays the name of the currently active drawing.	
UCS	User Origin/coordinates
User Coordinate System. The user-defined current set of coordinates used to describe the location of objects.	
	Press the "X" button on the far right of the "Coordinate pallet" and click on the screen to place a temporary user origin, for measuring, referencing, etc.
UCS icon	N/A
The "X-Y" icon that appears in the lower left-hand corner of the drawing area to indicate the angle of the User Coordinate System.	
use shift to add	use shift to add
Ability to press and hold the shift key down to add additional items to a selection set.	
viewport	Story, Section/Elevation or Detail window
A rectangle that displays part of a drawing.	
	Click on QuickViews at the bottom of any view window and a pallet appears allowing you to set up a series of defined views across any story, section, elevation or portion of the plan
WBLOCK	Save 3D model as a GDL object
Writes the block out to its own file that can be retrieved and used in multiple drawings.	
	With the 3D window active, go to the File menu>GDL Objects>Save 3D Model as...
WCS	project origin/coordinates
World Coordinate System. A system used as the basis for defining all objects and other coordinate systems.	
	The black "X" on the plan window is the center of the ArchiCAD world or 0,0 point.
x-ref	hot linked modules (actually, library objects are "x-refed" into your drawings and so are .PMK files when brought into PlotMaker
A pointer to a separate drawing outside of the drawing you are working on.	
	From the File menu, choose "Hot Linked Modules" and search for another ArchiCAD project file. When the hot linked file changes, the changes are reflected in the master file.
zoom	zoom

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Moving the viewport closer or farther from the drawing so that more or less of the drawing appears on-screen	
	Double-click on the "+ magnifying glass" (to the right of the hand) icon at the bottom of any view window or right-click on the screen and choose "Zoom In" or choose "Zoom In" from the "Display" menu.
zoom extents	fit in window
Fills your current window with the entire drawing.	
	Click on the "multi-arrow magnifying glass" icon at the bottom of any view window or right-click on the screen and choose "Fit in Window" or choose "Fit in Window" from the "Display" menu.

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