AutoCAD 2024

Basic Drafting Guide

For Beginners & Non-AutoCAD Users

■ 8 Chapters

Fundamentals to
Real Drawings

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This guide introduces complete beginners to AutoCAD 2024 — the industry-standard computer-aided drafting software. Each chapter builds on the last with simple step-by-step exercises, keyboard shortcuts, tips, and direct links to video tutorials so you can see every command in action.

What You Need Before Starting

- ✓ AutoCAD 2024 installed (free 30-day trial at autodesk.com)
- ✓ A Windows or macOS computer with a mouse and keyboard
- ✓ No prior CAD experience required — this guide starts at zero
- ✓ About 1–2 hours per chapter for exercises

Version: AutoCAD 2024	Level: Beginner	Companion to Intermediate Guide

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction to AutoCAD 2024

What is AutoCAD?

AutoCAD is a professional computer-aided design (CAD) and drafting software developed by Autodesk. Used by architects, engineers, surveyors, and designers worldwide, it allows you to create precise 2D drawings and 3D models digitally — replacing traditional pen-and-paper drafting with speed and accuracy.

AutoCAD 2024 includes an updated Smart Blocks panel, improved PDF import performance, enhanced collaboration tools, and a modernized ribbon. This guide focuses entirely on **2D drafting fundamentals** — the foundation every AutoCAD user must master first.

★ **TIP** AutoCAD 2024 is available as a free 30-day trial. Visit autodesk.com/products/autocad to download it before starting this guide.

■ **What is AutoCAD? — Official Autodesk Introduction**

Autodesk's own overview of AutoCAD 2024: interface tour, real-world uses, and what's new.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=what+is+autocad+2024+overview+beginners

Installing & Activating AutoCAD 2024

1 **Go to the Autodesk Website**
Open your browser and navigate to **autodesk.com**. Click **Products > AutoCAD**.

2 **Start a Free Trial or Sign In**
Click **Free Trial** if this is your first time, or sign in with your Autodesk account to access a purchased license.

3 **Download the Installer**
Select **AutoCAD 2024** from the product list. Choose your operating system (Windows or macOS) and click **Download**.

4 **Run the Installer**
Double-click the downloaded file. Follow the on-screen prompts: Accept the license, choose your install location, and click **Install**.

5 **Launch & Sign In**
Once installed, open AutoCAD from your desktop or Start Menu. Sign in with your Autodesk account to activate the license.

Launching AutoCAD for the First Time

When AutoCAD opens for the first time you will see the **Start Tab**. From here you can create a new drawing, open a recent file, or access learning content.

1 **Create a New Drawing**
On the Start Tab, click **New** and select the template **acad.dwt** (the standard inches template). Click **Open**.

2 **Understand the Screen Layout**
You will see: the Ribbon at the top, the Command Line at the bottom, the large white Drawing Area in the center, and the Status Bar at the very bottom.

3 **Save Your File Right Away**
Press **Ctrl+S**, give the file a name like *My_First_Drawing*, and save it to a folder you can find easily. Always save often!

■ **NOTE** Always save your drawings frequently using Ctrl+S. AutoCAD does auto-save every 10 minutes by default, but manual saving protects your work.

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CHAPTER 2

Navigating the AutoCAD Interface

Before drawing anything, you need to feel comfortable navigating the AutoCAD workspace. Understanding the interface is the single most important skill for a beginner.

■ **■ AutoCAD 2024 Interface Overview for Beginners**

A 15-minute walkthrough of every part of the AutoCAD 2024 interface — ribbon, command line, drawing area, and status bar explained clearly.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=autocad+2024+interface+tour+beginners

Interface Areas at a Glance

Interface Area	Location	What It Does
Application Menu	Top-left 'A' button	Open, Save, Print, Export files
Quick Access Toolbar	Top-left bar	Undo, Redo, Save shortcuts
Ribbon	Top of screen	All commands organized into tabs & panels
Drawing Area	Center (white/dark area)	Where you create and view your drawing
Command Line	Bottom bar	Type commands; read AutoCAD prompts here
Status Bar	Very bottom	Toggle Snap, Grid, OSNAP, coordinates
Navigation Bar	Right side	Zoom, Pan, ViewCube controls
Crosshair Cursor	Inside drawing area	Your drawing pointer — follows the mouse

The Command Line — Your Best Friend

The **Command Line** is the most important part of AutoCAD. Every action you perform is shown here — and most are faster to trigger by simply typing a command name or shortcut and pressing **Enter** or the **Spacebar**.

1 **Click inside the Command Line area**
Click at the bottom of the screen where it shows the blinking cursor. You are now ready to type a command.

2 **Type a command and press Enter**
For example, type **LINE** and press **Enter**. AutoCAD will prompt you to specify the first point.

3 **Respond to prompts**
AutoCAD will guide you step-by-step. Read each prompt carefully and respond by clicking in the drawing area or typing coordinates.

4 **Press Escape to cancel**
At any time, press the **Esc** key to cancel the current command and return to the ready state.

5 **Press Enter or Spacebar to repeat last command**
Pressing **Enter** or **Spacebar** when no command is active repeats your last-used command — a huge time saver!

Zooming & Panning

You will need to navigate around your drawing constantly. Here are the essential navigation controls:

Action	How To Do It
Zoom In	Scroll mouse wheel UP (forward)
Zoom Out	Scroll mouse wheel DOWN (back)
Zoom Extents (fit all)	Type Z then Enter, then E then Enter — or double-click scroll wheel
Pan (move the view)	Hold the scroll wheel and drag the mouse
Zoom to a window	Type Z then Enter, then W then Enter — click two corners

★ **TIP** Double-clicking the scroll wheel zooms to extents — fitting your entire drawing on screen. Use this constantly to re-orient yourself.

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CHAPTER 3

Setting Up Your Drawing

Before drawing anything meaningful, you must configure your drawing environment. Correct units, grid, and snapping settings are the foundation of accurate drawings.

■ **Setting Up a New Drawing in AutoCAD 2024**

Covers units, drawing limits, grid, snap, and Object Snap (OSNAP) setup from scratch. Perfect first-setup walkthrough for beginners.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=autocad+2024+drawing+setup+units+grid+osnap

Setting Units

AutoCAD can work in inches, feet, millimeters, or other units. Always set your units *before* you start drawing.

1	**Open the Units Dialog** Type **UNITS** in the Command Line and press **Enter**. The Drawing Units dialog box opens.
2	**Set Length Type** Under **Length**, choose **Decimal** for metric/millimeters or **Architectural** for feet and inches.
3	**Set Precision** Choose your decimal precision — **0.00** is common for most work.
4	**Set Insertion Scale** Set to **Millimeters** or **Inches** depending on your project.
5	**Click OK** Click **OK** to apply. Your drawing is now set to correct units.

Grid & Snap Settings

The **Grid** shows a dot or line pattern in the drawing area for visual reference. **Snap** forces your cursor to jump to exact intervals — essential for precise drawing.

1. **Open Drafting Settings**
   Right-click the **SNAP** or **GRID** button on the Status Bar at the bottom of the screen. Select **Snap Settings**.

2. **Set Snap Spacing**
   Under **Snap X spacing** type a value like **1** (for 1mm or 1 inch). Snap Y spacing will match automatically.

3. **Set Grid Spacing**
   Under **Grid X spacing**, type **5** (5mm or 5 inch). Grid lines are visual only — they do not print.

4. **Enable Snap and Grid**
   Check both **Snap On** and **Grid On** checkboxes, then click **OK**.

5. **Toggle on/off**
   Press **F7** to toggle Grid on/off. Press **F9** to toggle Snap on/off. You can also click them on the Status Bar.

Object Snap (OSNAP)

Object Snap (OSNAP) is one of AutoCAD's most powerful features. It lets your cursor automatically lock onto exact points on existing objects — like endpoints, midpoints, and centers.

OSNAP Mode	What It Snaps To	Icon Symbol
Endpoint	The exact start or end of a line, arc, or polyline	Square
Midpoint	The exact middle of a line or arc	Triangle
Center	The center point of a circle or arc	Circle
Intersection	Where two objects cross each other	X mark
Perpendicular	A point exactly 90° from a line	Right angle
Nearest	The closest point on any object	Hourglass

1. **Open OSNAP Settings**
   Right-click the **OSNAP** button on the Status Bar and choose **Object Snap Settings**.

2. **Enable recommended modes**
   Check: **Endpoint, Midpoint, Center, Intersection, Perpendicular**. These cover 95% of your drawing needs.

3 **Toggle OSNAP on/off**

Press **F3** or click the **OSNAP** button on the Status Bar. Keep it ON during most drawing tasks.

> ★ **TIP** When OSNAP is active, hover your cursor near a point — you will see a colored marker and tooltip appear. That marker confirms AutoCAD will snap precisely to that point when you click.

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CHAPTER 4

Basic Drawing Commands

These are the fundamental drawing commands that form the building blocks of every AutoCAD drawing. Master these five commands and you can create almost any 2D shape.

■ **■ AutoCAD Basic Drawing Commands — LINE, CIRCLE, RECTANGLE & ARC**

Step-by-step demonstration of the core drawing commands in AutoCAD 2024. Watch each command in action before trying the exercises below.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=autocad+2024+basic+draw+commands+line+circle+arc+rectangle

The LINE Command

LINE	Shortcut: L

Description: Draws straight line segments between two or more points.
Usage: Type L → click start point → click end point → press Enter to finish

1. **Start the LINE command**
   Type **L** and press **Enter**, or click the Line tool in the **Home > Draw** panel on the Ribbon.
2. **Specify the first point**
   Click anywhere in the drawing area for the starting point, or type exact coordinates like **0,0** and press Enter.
3. **Specify the next point**
   Move your mouse and click, or type a distance and angle. Example: type **@100,0** for a horizontal line 100 units long.
4. **Continue or finish**
   Keep clicking to add more connected segments, or press **Enter** or **Esc** to end the command.
5. **Close a shape**
   Type **C** and press Enter to automatically connect the last point back to the first point, closing the shape.

★ **TIP** Coordinate input: @x,y means relative (from last point). @distance<angle means polar (e.g. @50<45 = 50 units at 45 degrees). Direct distance: type a number while pointing the mouse in a direction.

The CIRCLE Command

CIRCLE **Shortcut: C**

Description: Draws a perfect circle by center and radius (default), or by other methods.
Usage: Type C → click center → type/click radius

1. **Start the CIRCLE command**
   Type **C** and press **Enter**.
2. **Specify the center point**
   Click a point in the drawing area, or type coordinates like **50,50** and press Enter.
3. **Specify the radius**
   Type a number (e.g. **25**) and press Enter, or click a point to define the radius visually.
4. **Alternative: Diameter**
   After starting CIRCLE, type **D** and press Enter, then type the diameter value instead of radius.
5. **Alternative: 3-Point Circle**
   After starting CIRCLE, type **3P**, then click three points that the circle must pass through.

The RECTANGLE Command (RECTANG)

RECTANG **Shortcut: REC**

Description: Draws a closed rectangular polyline by specifying two opposite corners.
Usage: Type REC → click first corner → click or type opposite corner

1. **Start RECTANG**
   Type **REC** and press **Enter**.
2. **Specify first corner**
   Click in the drawing area, or type coordinates like **0,0**.

3 **Specify opposite corner**
Click the opposite corner diagonally, or type **@200,100** to create a 200×100 rectangle relative to the first corner.

4 **Add chamfers or fillets (optional)**
Before picking corners, type **F** for Fillet (rounded corners) or **C** for Chamfer (angled corners) and set a value.

The ARC Command

ARC	Shortcut: A

Description: Draws a curved arc. Default method: Start, Center, End.
Usage: Type A → click start → click center → click end

1 **Start the ARC command**
Type **A** and press **Enter**.

2 **Specify the start point**
Click the starting point of the arc.

3 **Specify the center**
Click the center point around which the arc curves.

4 **Specify the end point**
Click or type the endpoint. The arc draws counterclockwise from start to end by default.

5 **Other arc methods**
You can also use Start-End-Radius (type **E** then **R** at the prompts) or use the Ribbon's Arc dropdown to choose other methods.

The POLYLINE Command

PLINE	Shortcut: PL

Description: Draws connected line and arc segments as a single object. Better than LINE for closed shapes.
Usage: Type PL → click points → press Enter to finish

1. **Start PLINE**
   Type **PL** and press **Enter**.

2. **Click points**
   Click each vertex (corner) of your shape, just like the LINE command.

3. **Switch to Arc mode**
   During PLINE, type **A** to switch to arc mode, then type **L** to switch back to line mode.

4. **Close the polyline**
   Type **C** and press Enter to connect back to the start, forming a perfectly closed shape.

> ★ **TIP** Use PLINE instead of LINE when you want a closed shape that behaves as one object. This makes selecting, moving, and measuring much easier.

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CHAPTER 5

Modifying Objects

Drawing commands create objects; modify commands let you edit them. These six commands are the most commonly used modify tools in everyday drafting.

■ **■ AutoCAD Modify Commands — MOVE, COPY, MIRROR, TRIM, OFFSET**

Clear visual demonstrations of all essential modify commands in AutoCAD 2024. Watch this video alongside this chapter for best results.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=autocad+2024+modify+commands+move+copy+trim+offset

The ERASE Command

ERASE	Shortcut: E

Description: Deletes selected objects from the drawing.
Usage: Type E → select objects → press Enter

1	**Start ERASE** Type **E** and press Enter.
2	**Select objects** Click each object you want to delete. Selected objects turn dashed.
3	**Confirm** Press **Enter** to delete them.
4	**Undo a mistake** Press **Ctrl+Z** immediately to undo the erase.

The MOVE Command

MOVE	Shortcut: M

Description: Moves selected objects from one location to another.
Usage: Type M → select → Enter → click base point → click destination

1. **Start MOVE**
   Type **M** and press Enter.
2. **Select objects**
   Click objects to move. Press Enter when done selecting.
3. **Click a base point**
   Click a reference point on the object (use OSNAP for precision).
4. **Click the destination**
   Click where you want to place the object, or type a relative distance like **@50,0**.

The COPY Command

COPY — Shortcut: CO

Description: Copies selected objects to a new location. Original stays in place.
Usage: Type CO → select → Enter → base point → destination

1. **Start COPY**
   Type **CO** and press Enter.
2. **Select & base point**
   Select objects, press Enter, then click a base point.
3. **Click destinations**
   Click multiple locations to place multiple copies.
4. **Press Escape to finish**
   Press **Esc** when done copying.

The MIRROR Command

MIRROR — Shortcut: MI

Description: Creates a mirror image of objects across a defined line.
Usage: Type MI → select → Enter → pick two points for mirror line

1. **Start MIRROR**
   Type **MI** and press Enter.
2. **Select objects**
   Select objects to mirror. Press Enter.
3. **Define the mirror line**
   Click two points to define the axis of reflection. A vertical mirror line keeps the X the same on both sides.
4. **Keep or delete original**
   AutoCAD asks: Delete source objects? Type **N** (keep both) or **Y** (delete original).

The TRIM Command

TRIM	Shortcut: TR

Description: Trims objects at a cutting edge (another object's boundary).
Usage: Type TR → select cutting edges → Enter → click parts to trim

1. **Start TRIM**
   Type **TR** and press Enter.
2. **Select cutting edges**
   Click the object(s) that will act as the cutting boundary, then press Enter. Or press Enter immediately to use all objects as cutting edges.
3. **Click to trim**
   Click the part of each line or arc you want to remove (the part that crosses the cutting edge).
4. **Press Escape to finish**
   Press **Esc** when done.

The OFFSET Command

OFFSET	Shortcut: O

Description: Creates a parallel copy of a line, circle, or polyline at a specified distance.
Usage: Type O → type distance → click object → click which side

1	**Start OFFSET** Type **O** and press Enter.
2	**Type the offset distance** Type a number (e.g. **10**) and press Enter.
3	**Select the object** Click the line, circle, or arc to offset.
4	**Choose the side** Click on the side of the object where you want the offset copy.
5	**Continue or press Escape** Click more objects to keep offsetting, or press **Esc** to end.

> ★ **TIP** — To select multiple objects at once: click and drag LEFT-to-RIGHT to select only objects completely inside the box (blue box). Drag RIGHT-to-LEFT to select everything the box touches (green box).

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CHAPTER 6

Layers & Properties

Layers are one of the most important organizational tools in AutoCAD. Think of them like transparent sheets stacked on top of each other — each sheet holds different types of objects (walls, dimensions, text, etc.) that you can show, hide, or lock independently.

■ **AutoCAD Layers — Complete Beginner's Guide**

Full explanation of layers in AutoCAD: creating, naming, color-coding, and using layers to organize your drawing professionally.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=autocad+2024+layers+tutorial+beginners+properties

What Are Layers?

Every object in AutoCAD lives on a layer. By default, all objects go on **Layer 0**. Good practice is to create separate layers for: walls, doors, windows, dimensions, text, electrical, plumbing, etc. Each layer has its own color, linetype, and lineweight.

Creating Layers

1. **Open the Layer Properties Manager**
   Type **LA** and press Enter, or click the **Layer Properties** button in the **Home > Layers** panel on the Ribbon.
2. **Create a new layer**
   Click the **New Layer** button (it looks like a sheet with a star). A new layer named 'Layer1' appears — type a descriptive name immediately, like **WALLS** or **DIMENSIONS**.
3. **Set the layer color**
   Click the color swatch next to the layer name. Choose a color that helps you identify the layer visually (e.g. Red for walls, Blue for dimensions).
4. **Set linetype (optional)**
   Click the **Continuous** linetype to change it. For dashed lines, click **Load** and select a linetype like **DASHED** or **HIDDEN**.

5 **Set lineweight (optional)**
Click the lineweight value to change line thickness. 0.25mm is typical for most lines; 0.50mm for heavy/visible lines.

6 **Close the Layer Manager**
Click the X to close. Your layers are now ready to use.

Working with Layers

1 **Set the current layer**
In the Layer dropdown on the Ribbon (Home > Layers panel), click the name of the layer you want to draw on. All new objects will go on that layer.

2 **Move objects to a different layer**
Select the object(s), then change the layer in the Layer dropdown. The objects immediately move to the new layer.

3 **Turn a layer off**
In the Layer Properties Manager or Layer dropdown, click the **light bulb** icon. Objects on that layer become invisible (but still exist).

4 **Freeze a layer**
Click the **snowflake** icon to freeze. Frozen layers are invisible AND not calculated by AutoCAD — speeds up performance on large drawings.

5 **Lock a layer**
Click the **lock** icon to lock a layer. Objects on locked layers are visible but cannot be selected or edited — great for reference layers.

■ **NOTE** Never draw everything on Layer 0. Organize your drawing with named layers from the start — it is very difficult to reorganize layers later on a complex drawing.

Recommended Starter Layer Setup

Layer Name	Color	Linetype	Lineweight	Purpose
0	White	Continuous	Default	Default layer — avoid drawing here
WALLS	White/7	Continuous	0.50mm	Main building elements
DOORS	Cyan/4	Continuous	0.25mm	Door swings and openings
WINDOWS	Green/3	Continuous	0.25mm	Window openings
DIMENSIONS	Blue/5	Continuous	0.18mm	All dimension annotations
TEXT	Red/1	Continuous	0.18mm	Notes, labels, titles

HIDDEN	Yellow/2	HIDDEN	0.18mm	Hidden/invisible edges
CENTERLINE	Magenta/6	CENTER	0.18mm	Centerlines of circles/arcs
HATCH	Gray/8	Continuous	0.13mm	Fill patterns and hatching

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CHAPTER 7

Dimensions & Text Annotations

No technical drawing is complete without dimensions and text. AutoCAD 2024 has powerful annotation tools that automatically measure and label your geometry.

■ **■ Dimensions & Text in AutoCAD 2024 for Beginners**

Learn how to add linear, angular, radius and diameter dimensions, plus MTEXT notes and leaders in AutoCAD 2024. Includes Dimension Style setup.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=autocad+2024+dimensions+text+mtext+beginner

Setting Up a Dimension Style

Before adding dimensions, create a Dimension Style so all your dimensions look consistent and are scaled correctly for your drawing.

1	**Open Dimension Style Manager** Type **DIMSTYLE** (or **D**) and press Enter. The Dimension Style Manager opens.
2	**Create a new style** Click **New**, give it a name like **MY_DIM_STYLE**, and click **Continue**.
3	**Set text height** On the **Text** tab, set Text Height to **2.5** (for mm drawings) or **0.125** (for inch drawings).
4	**Set arrow size** On the **Symbols and Arrows** tab, set Arrow Size to match your text height (**2.5**).
5	**Set overall scale** On the **Fit** tab, set Overall Scale to match your drawing scale (e.g. **1** for 1:1 drawings).
6	**Set current style** Click **Set Current** on your new style, then click **Close**.

Linear Dimensions (DIMLINEAR)

DIMLINEAR **Shortcut: DLI**

Description: Places a horizontal or vertical dimension measuring the distance between two points.
Usage: Type DLI → click first point → click second point → click dimension placement

1. **Type DLI and press Enter**
   Or go to **Annotate > Dimensions > Linear** on the Ribbon.
2. **Snap to first point**
   With OSNAP active, click the first endpoint of what you are measuring.
3. **Snap to second point**
   Click the second endpoint.
4. **Place the dimension line**
   Move your mouse away from the object and click to set the dimension line location. AutoCAD shows the measurement automatically.

Radius & Diameter Dimensions

DIMRADIUS / DIMDIAMETER — Shortcut: DRA / DDI

Description: Dimensions the radius or diameter of a circle or arc.
Usage: Type DRA or DDI → click the circle/arc → place dimension

1. **For radius: type DRA + Enter**
   Click the circle or arc edge. Move mouse to set dimension placement.
2. **For diameter: type DDI + Enter**
   Click the circle edge. Move mouse to set dimension placement.
3. **For angular dimensions: type DAN + Enter**
   Click the first line, then the second line. Move mouse to set the angle dimension.

Adding Text with MTEXT

MTEXT — Shortcut: MT

Description: Places multi-line formatted text anywhere in the drawing.
Usage: Type MT → click two corners for text box → type text → click OK

1	**Type MT and press Enter** Or go to **Annotate > Text > Multiline Text**.
2	**Define the text box** Click two opposite corners to define the area where the text will fit.
3	**The text editor opens** A formatting toolbar appears. Type your text normally.
4	**Format the text** Select text to change font, size, bold, italic using the toolbar.
5	**Click Close Text Editor** Click outside the text box or click **Close Text Editor** in the Ribbon to finish.

> ★ **TIP** Use DDEDIT (or double-click any dimension or text) to edit existing annotations without deleting and redrawing them.

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CHAPTER 8

Saving, Printing & Sharing

Once your drawing is complete, you need to save it correctly, set it up for printing, and export it in formats others can use. This chapter covers the complete workflow from save to output.

■ **■ How to Print & Plot in AutoCAD 2024 — Complete Beginner Guide**

Covers Page Setup, choosing a plotter/printer, scale settings, and exporting to PDF. One of the most important workflows for delivering finished drawings.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=autocad+2024+print+plot+pdf+tutorial

Saving Your Work

1. **Save (Ctrl+S)**
   Saves the file in its current format and location. Do this constantly.
2. **Save As (Ctrl+Shift+S)**
   Opens a dialog to choose a new file name, location, or format.
3. **Save as older format**
   In the Save As dialog, change **Files of type** to an older version like **AutoCAD 2018 (.dwg)** if sharing with users who have older AutoCAD.
4. **AutoSave**
   AutoCAD auto-saves to a .sv$ file every 10 minutes. To change this, go to **Application Menu > Options > Open and Save** and change the interval.

Using Drawing Templates (.DWT)

A **template** is a pre-configured drawing with your standard layers, dimension styles, text styles, and title block already set up. Starting from a template saves setup time on every new drawing.

1. **Set up a drawing exactly how you want it**
   Configure layers, styles, units, and add your title block.
2. **Save as Template**
   Go to **Application Menu > Save As > Drawing Template**. Give it a name like **My_Company_Template.dwt**.

3 **Use your template**
When creating a new drawing, click **New** and browse to your .dwt file.

Page Setup & Plotting (Printing)

1 **Switch to a Layout tab**
At the bottom of the screen, click **Layout1**. This is your paper space for printing.

2 **Open Page Setup Manager**
Right-click the Layout tab and choose **Page Setup Manager**. Click **Modify**.

3 **Choose your printer/plotter**
In the **Printer/Plotter** dropdown, select your printer or choose **DWG To PDF.pc3** to export to PDF.

4 **Set paper size**
Choose your paper size (e.g. **ANSI B 11x17** or **ISO A1**) from the Paper Size dropdown.

5 **Set plot scale**
In the **Plot Scale** section, choose **Fit to paper** for a quick print, or enter a specific scale like **1:50** for a scaled drawing.

6 **Set plot style**
Choose **monochrome.ctb** to print all lines in black regardless of layer color.

7 **Click OK then Plot**
Click **OK** to save page setup, then press **Ctrl+P** to open the Plot dialog and click **OK** to print.

Exporting to PDF

1 **Method 1 — Plot to PDF**
Press **Ctrl+P**, select **DWG To PDF.pc3** as the plotter. A PDF will be created instead of printing on paper.

2 **Method 2 — Export to PDF**
Go to **Application Menu > Export > PDF**. More options are available including multi-sheet PDFs.

3 **Set PDF quality**
In the Export to PDF dialog, set **Quality** to **High** for presentations, **Medium** for everyday sharing.

4 **Choose output location**

Browse to your desired folder and click **Save**. The PDF is ready to share immediately.

> ■ **NOTE** Always review your drawing in the Layout/Paper Space view before plotting. Model Space is for drawing; Paper Space is for presenting and printing with correct scale and title block.

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CHAPTER R

References & Web Resources

The following curated resources are the best on the web for learning AutoCAD 2024. Each section includes direct links. Click any link to open it in your browser.

■ Official Autodesk Resources

Official **Autodesk AutoCAD 2024 Official Documentation**

The complete official reference manual for AutoCAD 2024. Search any command, option, or concept.

Official **Autodesk AutoCAD Learning Path**

Autodesk's official structured learning paths from beginner to certified professional.

Official **AutoCAD Free Trial Download**

Download the official 30-day free trial of AutoCAD 2024. No credit card required.

Official **Autodesk Knowledge Network**

Troubleshooting articles, how-to guides, FAQs, and community answers from Autodesk.

■ Best Video Tutorial Channels

■ **■ CAD in Black — AutoCAD 2024 for Beginners (Complete Playlist)**

One of the top AutoCAD tutorial channels on YouTube. Clear, beginner-friendly tutorials covering every topic in this guide and beyond. Highly recommended as your primary video source.

https://www.youtube.com/@CADinBlack

■ **■ JOKO ENGINEERING — AutoCAD 2024 Tutorials**

Practical AutoCAD tutorials with real engineering and architecture examples. Excellent for seeing commands applied in professional contexts.

https://www.youtube.com/@JokoEngineering

■ AutoCAD Tutorials by Balkan Architect

Architecture-focused AutoCAD tutorials. Great for students learning to draw floor plans, sections, and elevations from scratch.

https://www.youtube.com/@BalkanArchitect

■ Autodesk Official YouTube Channel

Official tutorials, feature spotlights, and what's new videos directly from Autodesk. Reliable, accurate content for every version.

https://www.youtube.com/@Autodesk

■ The CAD Academy — AutoCAD for Beginners

Structured beginner course covering the full workflow from opening AutoCAD to printing a finished drawing. Covers many topics in this guide with on-screen demonstrations.

https://www.youtube.com/@TheCADAcademy

■ Free Online Courses & Tutorials

Tutorial

Autodesk Instructables — Free AutoCAD Class

A free structured class covering the full AutoCAD basics. Includes written lessons and exercises you can follow step-by-step.

Tutorial

LinkedIn Learning — AutoCAD 2024 Essential Training

Professional video course by Scott Onstott. Covers beginner through intermediate topics. Free with LinkedIn Premium or public library card.

Tutorial

GrabCAD Community — AutoCAD Tutorials

Community-contributed tutorials and project examples. Good for seeing real-world AutoCAD drawings and following practical exercises.

Tutorial

Udemy — AutoCAD 2024 Courses (Search Free & Paid)

Hundreds of AutoCAD courses. Many go on sale for under $15. Look for highly-rated courses with 4.5+ stars and 1000+ reviews.

■ Community Forums & Help

Forum

Autodesk Community Forums — AutoCAD

The official AutoCAD user forum. Ask questions and get answers from experienced AutoCAD users and Autodesk staff worldwide.

Forum

Reddit — r/AutoCAD

Active community of AutoCAD users. Post questions, share drawings, and find tips and tricks from users of all skill levels.

Forum

CADTutor — AutoCAD Tutorials & Forum

Long-running CAD tutorial website with free written tutorials and an active user forum for getting help with specific problems.

■ AutoCAD 2024 Essential Keyboard Shortcuts

Command	Shortcut	Command	Shortcut
LINE	**L**	ERASE	**E**
CIRCLE	**C**	MOVE	**M**
RECTANG	**REC**	COPY	**CO**
ARC	**A**	MIRROR	**MI**
PLINE	**PL**	TRIM	**TR**
OFFSET	**O**	EXTEND	**EX**
LAYERS	**LA**	ZOOM Extents	**Z → E**
MTEXT	**MT**	PAN	**P**
DIMLINEAR	**DLI**	PROPERTIES	**PR**
DIMRADIUS	**DRA**	UNDO	**Ctrl+Z**
HATCH	**H**	REDO	**Ctrl+Y**
SAVE	**Ctrl+S**	SELECT ALL	**Ctrl+A**
PLOT/PRINT	**Ctrl+P**	OSNAP toggle	**F3**
UNITS	**UNITS**	GRID toggle	**F7**
SNAP toggle	**F9**	ORTHO toggle	**F8**

Ready for the Next Step?

Once you have mastered the content in this guide, continue to the *AutoCAD 2024 Intermediate Drafting Guide*, which covers: Blocks & Attributes, External References (Xrefs), Viewports & Paper Space, Advanced Dimensions, Hatch Patterns, Drawing Standards, and more.

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