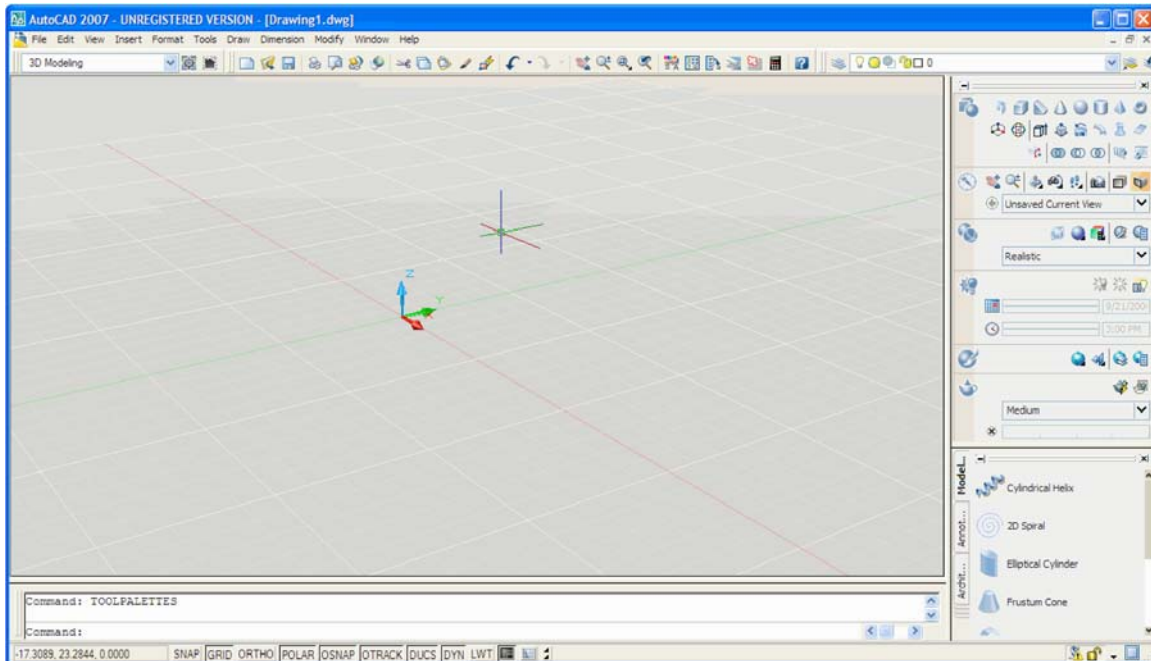


2D Drawing in AutoCAD 2007

By Jay D. Helsel

If you have used previous versions of AutoCAD, the user interface in AutoCAD 2007 may come as a shock to you. The familiar black drawing area, which has been an AutoCAD standard for decades, is no longer visible. Instead, when you open AutoCAD 2007, you will see a gray 3D grid with a complex-looking “Dashboard” off to the right.



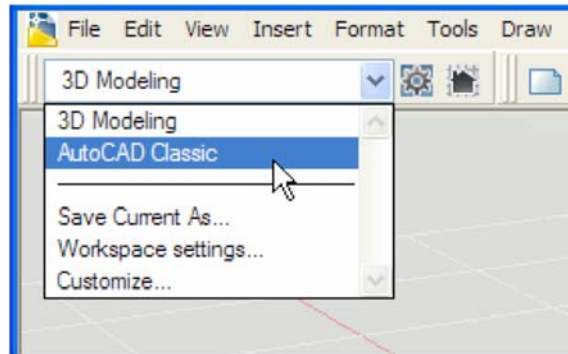
Autodesk, the company that makes AutoCAD, has decided to emphasize 3D modeling over the traditional 2D CAD. By default, therefore, AutoCAD opens in a 3D working environment. It looks strange and unfamiliar to long-time AutoCAD users, although it does facilitate 3D CAD modeling. But what if your work still requires 2D drafting?

Displaying the 2D Drawing Area

The familiar black 2D drawing area does still exist. You simply have to work a little to get to it. Once you do, however, you can work in 2D in much the same way as you always have.

The method you should use to display the traditional drawing area depends on how often you actually perform 2D work, as opposed to 3D work. If you work frequently in both 2D and 3D, follow the steps below to display the traditional 2D drawing area for the current drawing.

1. In the upper left corner of the screen, pick the down arrow next to 3D Modeling and select **AutoCAD Classic**.



The gray 3D drawing area remains, but you may recognize the Draw and Modify toolbars in their familiar places, as well as the Tool Palettes window and the Sheet Set Manager.

2. Unless you intend to use the Tool Palettes and Sheet Set Manager, click the **X** in the upper right corner of these bulky items to remove them from the drawing area.
3. In the **View** pull-down menu, select **3D Views** and then select **Top** from the submenu.

The top view, which is the view traditionally displayed for 2D drawing in AutoCAD, is now displayed.

4. From the **View** pull-down menu, select **Visual Styles** and then select **2D Wireframe** from the submenu.

The traditional black drawing area is now displayed, complete with the grid. (You can still manipulate the grid using the F7 function key, the GRID button on the status bar, or the GRID command.)

The “look and feel” of AutoCAD is now the same as it was in previous versions of the product, and you can use all of the familiar commands and buttons to accomplish your work. The state of the drawing area is saved with the drawing, so once you have saved a drawing with the traditional drawing area, the same drawing area is displayed each time you open that drawing.

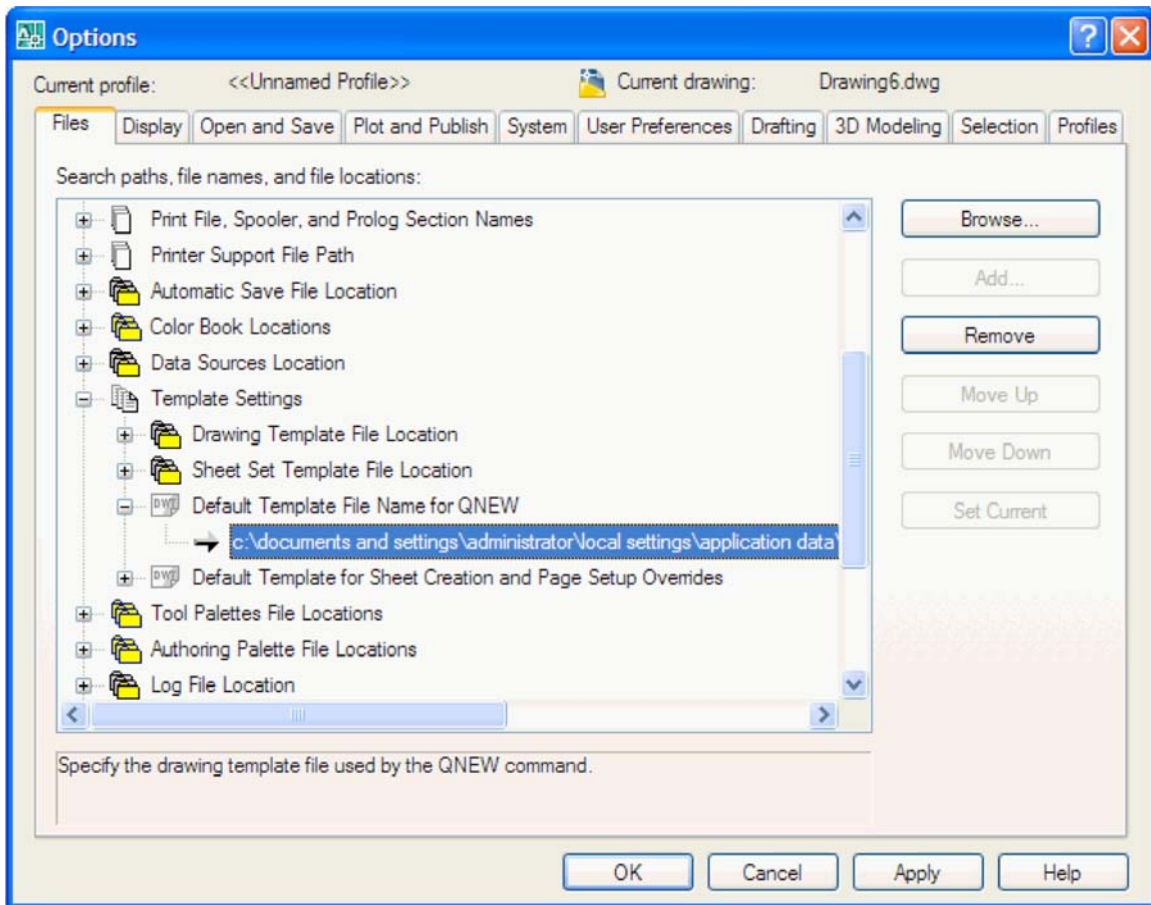
Keeping the 2D Display

Unfortunately, every time you create a new document in AutoCAD 2007, the gray 3D drawing area returns by default. The formal process to change it, as listed above, becomes very time-consuming and frustrating if you have to do it for every new drawing you create.

Fortunately, there is a fast and easy way around this problem. The status of the drawing area is stored in the template file that is used to open new drawings in AutoCAD. By default in AutoCAD 2007, this is the acad3D.dwt template. However, the old acad.dwt template still exists. This is very good news for people who spend most of their time doing 2D drafting work, because the default template can be changed. Follow the steps below to set the default drawing template to display the traditional black 2D drawing area whenever you create a new file.

1. From the **Tools** pull-down menu, select the **Options...** item.
2. Pick the **Files** tab if it is not already displayed.

3. Scroll down if necessary to see the Templates item and pick the plus sign to the left of it.



4. Pick the plus sign beside Default Template File Name for QNEW.

The default template file name appears, including its path. You can either use the horizontal scrollbar or simply rest the cursor over the filename to see the full path and verify that acad3D.dwt is indeed the default template file.

5. Double-click the filename to display the Select File dialog box.

The Select File dialog box automatically displays the dwt (template) files that are provided with AutoCAD.

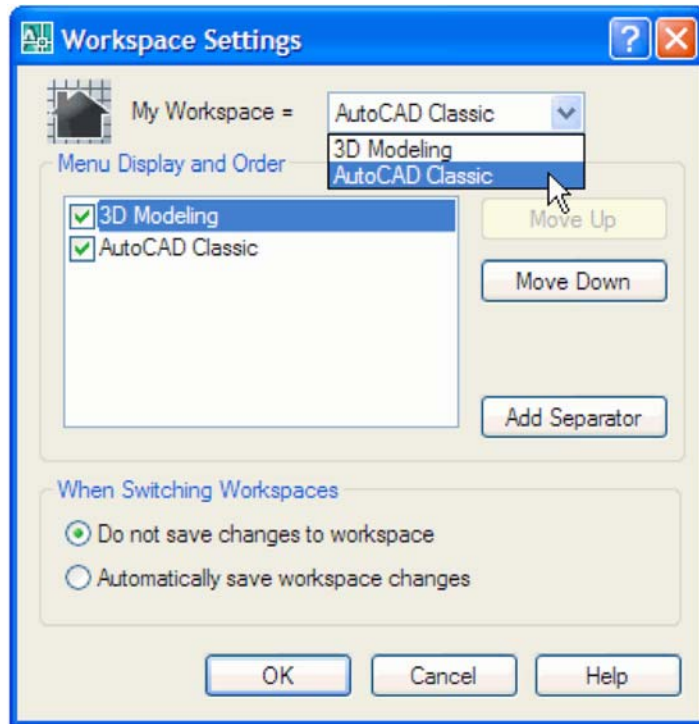
6. Choose **acad.dwt** from the list and pick the **Open** button.

7. Pick **OK** to close the Options dialog box.

Notice that the familiar black drawing area has returned. To see the Draw and Modify toolbars, you must choose AutoCAD Classic in the drop-down menu at the upper left of the screen, but this is a minor step. In fact, if you work entirely (or mostly) in 2D, you can set the default workspace to AutoCAD Classic. Follow these steps:

1. Pick the down arrow next to AutoCAD Classic (or 3D Modeling, depending on which is the current workspace) and pick **Workspace Settings**.

2. In the My Workspace area at the top of the Workspace Settings dialog box, pick the down arrow next to the workspace name and select AutoCAD Classic.



3. Pick **OK** to close the Workspace Settings dialog box.
From now on, when you open AutoCAD, the AutoCAD Classic workspace will be open by default, and if you have changed the default template to acad.dwt, the black drawing area will be present as well.