

Questions & Answers

With Autodesk® Architectural Desktop you get flexibility in both implementation and use, the efficiency of real-world building objects, and the very best AutoCAD®-based design and documentation productivity for architects.

Share your designs using the integrated VIZ Render for visualization and presentation. Achieve better coordination with engineering consultants using intelligent design information. And choose from hundreds of partner applications to customize Architectural Desktop for your specific needs.

Autodesk Architectural Desktop—Making AutoCAD better for architects

The familiar AutoCAD user interface supports your existing working methods, and lets you easily introduce increasingly powerful architectural design features to save time and improve coordination at your own pace.

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1. General Product Information

1.1 What are the main benefits of Autodesk Architectural Desktop software? How are these improved in Architectural Desktop 2006?

Productivity

The familiar AutoCAD workflow and interface enable you to get to work right away with minimal effort. You can then implement increasingly powerful and effective features according to your own timetable. You're working in the AutoCAD environment and have the traditional drafting methods at your disposal, but you can achieve faster documentation from intelligent building objects, such as walls, doors, and windows, that automate tedious drafting tasks.

With Architectural Desktop 2006 you can be even more productive with improvements to Details. The Detailing feature set, introduced with Architectural Desktop 2005, automates the drafting of 2D construction details. Now, in Architectural Desktop 2006 more standard detail components are included in the library, and it's even easier to create your own detail components and edit the detail databases.

Efficiency

Because daily revisions are a fact of life in most design projects, it is important that your designs are well coordinated with your construction documents. Autodesk Architectural Desktop ensures that the work you do in design development is available for use during the documentation process. Since your designs are linked to your construction documents, you can be confident that any change you make in your design is reflected in your construction documentation, helping to increase coordination and reduce errors.

Architectural Desktop 2006 makes you even more efficient with Display Themes, which allow you to display your design according to non-graphic data. Highlight all the 2-hour rated fire assemblies, for example, or all the doors with a specific hardware set.

Flexibility

For architects currently using AutoCAD software, Autodesk Architectural Desktop's file-based approach to design and use of intelligent building objects immediately enhances productivity while providing a familiar design environment consistent with your current standards and practices.

Architectural Desktop 2006 gives you even greater flexibility with Project Standards, which allow you to automate the maintenance and synchronization of standards such as style definitions and display settings across an entire multi-file project. Project Standards extend the functionality of the Project Navigator, introduced in Architectural Desktop 2004.

Collaboration

To communicate effectively, designers require tools to visualize and present design intent at every stage of the design process in a way that is fluid and efficient. The VIZ Render capabilities in Autodesk Architectural Desktop make this possible with visualization functionality that is effectively integrated into the Autodesk Architectural Desktop environment, enhancing design workflow.

Because Autodesk Architectural Desktop is interoperable with other Autodesk building design solutions and services as well as with third-party applications for specific needs, you can be sure that you can collaborate effectively with your extended design team. And because of broad support for industry-standard formats and interoperability standards, collaboration with the extended team is easier and better.

Architectural Desktop 2006 allows you to collaborate even more smoothly with publishing to 3D DWF. With the click of a button you can publish all or part of your design in 3D complete with object data. Your clients or other design team members can then use the Autodesk® DWF™ Viewer to view your design drawings plus pertinent information such as a door's fire rating or a room's square footage. And using Autodesk® DWF™ Composer, members of your design team can review and redline as well, making DWF an efficient means to collaborate digitally.

1.2 Has the user interface changed for Autodesk Architectural Desktop?

The user interface for Architectural Desktop 2006 extends the improvements seen in Architectural Desktop 2004 and 2005 and will be quite familiar to users of those products. The streamlined user interface introduced with Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2004 improves on traditional AutoCAD design software and earlier versions of Architectural Desktop in terms of look and feel and overall functionality.

Highly visual, simpler, and more intuitive, the interface helps you increase productivity using process-focused tools that make the software easier to use. With less focus on dialog boxes and more emphasis on designing directly in the workspace, the design tools in the software are easily accessible.

1.3 What does Drawing Management do for me? How does this feature relate to the AutoCAD Sheet Set Manager?

Earlier releases (pre-2004) of Autodesk Architectural Desktop simply enabled you to continue to manage projects using existing standards for manually organizing file structure and xref relationships. While continuing to respect your practices and standards, Autodesk Architectural Desktop has now introduced the drawing management feature for users who want to take advantage of automated project, drawing, and level management.

For those familiar with AutoCAD 2005 or 2006, the Sheet Set Manager feature of that product has been seamlessly integrated into the Architectural Desktop Drawing Management's Project Navigator.

1.4 How does VIZ Render differ from Autodesk VIZ?

VIZ Render, Autodesk Architectural Desktop software's native visualization tool, uses some of the core technology developed in Autodesk® VIZ. Much of the photometric lighting and rendering technology from (Discreet®) 3ds max® software has been included in VIZ Render.

However VIZ Render has been optimized to accept the data organization from Autodesk Architectural Desktop in a much more efficient way, and the entire user interface has been revised and simplified to make the process of creating high-quality visualization more accessible to Architectural Desktop users. The guiding principle in using VIZ Render is that Architectural Desktop is the model authoring application. You organize and build the model exclusively in Architectural Desktop and then seamlessly link to VIZ Render for rendering.

2. Technology

2.1 What are intelligent architectural objects?

The ObjectARX® technology used in Autodesk Architectural Desktop enables you to create intelligent architectural objects that know their form, fit, and function and behave according to their real-world properties. This technology improves software performance, ease of use, and flexibility in design.

Intelligent architectural objects respond directly to standard AutoCAD editing commands in the same way that common AutoCAD drawing objects—such as lines, arcs, and circles—do, and yet they also have the ability to display according to the type of drawing that is being produced (e.g. plan, section, elevation, or 3D view) and to interact with other architectural objects in appropriate ways (e.g. a door cuts a wall graphically in plan). Object-based technology transforms ordinary geometry into intelligent architectural objects whose behavior models that of physical objects.

2.2 What is the significance of door, wall, window, and other architectural objects?

These intelligent objects improve design productivity and efficiency because they behave according to the specific properties or rules that pertain to them in the real world. Architectural objects thus have a relationship to one another and interact with each other intelligently. For example, a window has a relationship to the wall that contains it. If you move or delete the wall, the window reacts appropriately.

In addition, intelligent architectural objects maintain dynamic links with construction documents and specifications, resulting in more accurate project deliverables. When someone deletes or modifies a door, for example, the door schedule is automatically updated.

2.3 What is the significance of 3D in Autodesk Architectural Desktop?

Because the objects in Autodesk Architectural Desktop describe real-world building components, both 2D and 3D representations can be created automatically and either one can be used to view or edit the model. This conveniently and smoothly integrates 2D and 3D functionality and allows exploration of design ideas within CAD in a fashion similar to the way architects and designers envision their designs.

For example, you can quickly and easily create 3D massing studies in the initial phases of the design process to explore multiple design scenarios. Or you can develop a floor plan in 2D and then immediately see a perspective view of it in 3D. You can even use 3D to visually check for any type of interference in your design.

3D also provides you with exportable geometric information that can be used for other applications.

Using 3D is not required in Autodesk Architectural Desktop. Object technology increases productivity and accuracy without the need to leave the 2D view. With Autodesk Architectural Desktop software you can incorporate 3D into your design process at your own pace.

3. Compatibility

3.1 Is Autodesk Architectural Desktop interoperable with other Autodesk products?

Yes. AutoCAD is the foundation for an interoperable family of Autodesk products, including Autodesk Architectural Desktop. Sharing the same database framework component—ObjectDBX™ for reading and writing drawing files—helps to ensure that each generation of Autodesk products is interoperable with Autodesk Architectural Desktop.

These include industry-specific products such as Autodesk® Building Systems, Autodesk® Revit® Building, Autodesk® Revit® Structure, Autodesk Map, AutoCAD® Mechanical, Autodesk® Mechanical Desktop®, Autodesk® Land Desktop; as well as software that address many industries such as Volo® View, Autodesk® Express Viewer, Autodesk® Raster Design, and Autodesk® OnSite View.

Because there has been no file format change between the Autodesk 2004, 2005, and 2006 generations of products, Architectural Desktop is interoperable with the majority of applications in all of these release cycles.

3.2 Is Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006 compatible with earlier releases of Autodesk Architectural Desktop?

Files created with earlier versions of Architectural Desktop are forwards-compatible with the current release; i.e., designs created in earlier versions of Autodesk Architectural Desktop easily migrate to the current release of Architectural Desktop.

Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006 is backwards compatible with Architectural Desktop 2004 and 2005 at the object level (AEC objects used in Architectural Desktop).

Architectural Desktop 2006, 2005, and 2004 are not backwards compatible at the object level with earlier releases of Architectural Desktop, but files created in these versions of the software can be saved as DWG files to be read by versions of Autodesk Architectural Desktop based on AutoCAD 2000, 2000i, and 2002 platforms.

For more information about compatibility and the Export to AutoCAD feature, see question 3.4 below.

3.3 Are Autodesk Architectural Desktop and Autodesk Revit files interoperable?

You can exchange drawing information (2D DWG files) between Autodesk Architectural Desktop and the Autodesk Revit software through their respective Export to AutoCAD features.

In addition, Autodesk Revit Building 8 has the ability to read and write ACIS[®] solids. This gives users a way to export their models out of Autodesk Architectural Desktop and Autodesk Building Systems and import or link 3D information into Revit. You are able to cut sections and do visual interference detections with this method. You can download a white paper on Autodesk Revit and Autodesk Building Systems or Architectural Desktop Workflow from www.autodesk.com/revit.

Also, Architectural Desktop 2006 users will be able to exchange intelligent design information with structural engineers using Autodesk Revit Structure.

3.4 What versions of AutoCAD does Autodesk Architectural Desktop software's Export to AutoCAD feature support?

This release supports export to AutoCAD 2004/2005/2006 and AutoCAD 2000 DWG and DXF[™] formats, making it possible for users of AutoCAD 2000, AutoCAD 2000i, AutoCAD 2002, AutoCAD 2004, AutoCAD 2005, and AutoCAD 2006 to open Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006 files without using object enablers.

3.5 Can I export more than one Architectural Desktop file at a time?

Yes, you can export multiple Architectural Desktop files. E-transmit functionality allows users to transmit entire projects, sheet sets, or specific DWGs.

3.6 What is the Autodesk Architectural Desktop Object Enabler?

The Autodesk[®] Architectural Desktop Object Enabler is a freely downloadable and distributable utility that allows object data created in Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006 to be accessed outside the Autodesk Architectural Desktop environment. With the proper version of the Architectural Desktop Object Enabler, any AutoCAD 2004, 2005, or 2006 user can open Architectural Desktop files and access the Autodesk Architectural Desktop objects. The Architectural Desktop Object Enabler is included with AutoCAD 2005 and AutoCAD 2006.

For more information and to download the Architectural Desktop Object Enabler, go to <http://www.autodesk.com/aecobjecten>.

3.7 Will my third-party applications work with the current release of Autodesk Architectural Desktop software?

Your existing third-party applications may or may not be compatible with the current release of Autodesk Architectural Desktop. Contact your independent software supplier for details.

For more information about the availability of third-party applications compatible with the current release of AutoCAD and Architectural Desktop, visit www.autodesk.com/partnerproducts

3.8 Is Architectural Desktop compatible with Industry Foundation Classes (IFC)?

Yes, IAI-certified support for IFCs is currently provided in Autodesk Architectural Desktop through G.E.M. Team Solutions GbR. The IFC-Utility 2x for Architectural Desktop can be downloaded at www.inopso.com, the web site of Inopso GmbH, a partner of G.E.M. Team Solutions which distributes the plug-in.

3.9 Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006 has AutoCAD 2006 as its foundation. Has the AutoCAD 2006 drawing file format (DWG) changed from the AutoCAD 2004 or 2005 products, as it did between AutoCAD 2002 and AutoCAD 2004?

No, the AutoCAD 2006 DWG file format is the same as AutoCAD 2004 and 2005. The AutoCAD 2004 file format was updated and is different from the AutoCAD 2000/2000i/2002 DWG file format. This new format was necessary to provide performance enhancements, smaller file sizes, presentation graphics, and drawing security.

3.10 Can I run Autodesk Architectural Desktop side by side with other AutoCAD platform-based applications?

Yes, the current release of Autodesk Architectural Desktop can be installed side by side with any other AutoCAD 2000i, AutoCAD 2002, AutoCAD 2004, AutoCAD 2005, or AutoCAD 2006-based product. These products include Autodesk Architectural Desktop, Autodesk Building Systems, Autodesk Mechanical Desktop, AutoCAD Mechanical, Autodesk Land Desktop, Autodesk Map, and AutoCAD LT[®] software.

3.11 Can I export VIZ Render files to Autodesk VIZ?

Yes. VIZ Render files (DRF) can be imported to Autodesk VIZ or 3ds max software, and VIZ Render can also import files (MAX) from both Autodesk VIZ and 3ds max.

4. Support and Training

4.1 How can I find technical support information for Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006?

You can learn about all support options from your local Autodesk Authorized Reseller or distributor.

Visit www.autodesk.com/archdesktop-support to find a knowledge base of commonly asked support questions. Also, Autodesk software manuals and documentation are a great source of answers to your support questions.

Autodesk hosts topical discussion groups about specific products, including Autodesk Architectural Desktop, and about general topics, such as drafting techniques and customization. You can ask questions and read information about the use of Architectural Desktop in these peer-to-peer discussion groups on www.autodesk.com/archdesktop-discussion.

4.2 How do I obtain direct technical support?

Autodesk Authorized Resellers provide support services for Autodesk Architectural Desktop software and all other Autodesk products. In the United States and Canada, call 800-964-6432 to locate a reseller near you, or visit www.autodesk.com/reseller/.

Autodesk[®] Subscription includes direct web support. You get one-to-one communication with Autodesk support technicians for fast, complete answers to your installation, configuration, and troubleshooting questions. Web and email communications deliver support straight to your desktop. Plus you have web access to your account, so you can track and manage questions and responses.

For more information about Autodesk Subscription, contact your Autodesk Authorized Reseller or visit www.autodesk.com/subscription

You can find a complete list of support options from Autodesk at www.autodesk.com/archdesktop-support.

4.3 Is Autodesk Architectural Desktop Subscription Aware?

Yes. Architectural Desktop is Subscription Aware. You can directly access subscription services including web support and online training through the help menu.

4.4 Can I rely on my AutoCAD knowledge to use Autodesk Architectural Desktop? How quickly can I learn the new features in Autodesk Architectural Desktop?

Autodesk Architectural Desktop builds on the speed, performance, and familiarity of AutoCAD, so AutoCAD users have a strong foundation from which to learn Autodesk Architectural Desktop.

As always, training will help improve your productivity and speed of learning. Self-paced e-learning options are available to subscription customers. For more information, contact your Autodesk Authorized Reseller or visit www.autodesk.com/subscription.

4.5 Where do I find training courses for Autodesk Architectural Desktop?

Training courses are available from Autodesk Consulting, Autodesk Authorized Training Center (ATC[®]) locations, and Autodesk Resellers.

Training courses through Autodesk Consulting include Autodesk Virtual Classroom Training (online, instructor-led), custom training to match your organization's specific needs, and Autodesk Classroom Training. To obtain more information about Autodesk's training services, visit www.autodesk.com/archdesktop-training.

You can also enroll in instructor-led training at Autodesk Authorized Training Centers around the world. These training centers use Autodesk Official Training Courseware (AOTC) to deliver comprehensive courses for new and intermediate Autodesk Architectural Desktop users. An Autodesk ATC also delivers custom courses on Autodesk Architectural Desktop and other Autodesk products. To learn more, visit www.autodesk.com/archdesktop-atc.

Check with your local Authorized Autodesk Reseller for a schedule of Autodesk Architectural Desktop training classes. To locate a reseller, visit www.autodesk.com/reseller.

Other helpful training resources include the online discussion groups you can access through the Autodesk Architectural Desktop Communication Center, which also features industry-specific news, Tips and Tricks, and product updates as well as the Autodesk Architectural Desktop software manuals and online documentation.

4.6 Should I get training with this release?

Although Autodesk Architectural Desktop takes advantage of your existing knowledge of AutoCAD software, training is recommended. Training improves productivity, increases return on investment, and enhances your Autodesk Architectural Desktop knowledge.

4.7 We have recently implemented Architectural Desktop 2004 or 2005. How much training or re-training is required to effectively use Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006?

Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006 builds upon the concepts introduced with release 2004 and 2005. This will allow you to start using Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006 with little to no re-training. A user proficient in Architectural Desktop 2004 or 2005 can use Architectural Desktop 2006 in the same way they use 2004 or 2005. You may want to consider some training in order to take full advantage of new features however.

4.8 What consulting services are available for Autodesk Architectural Desktop?

Autodesk Consulting provides customer consulting offerings for project assessments, process audits, implementation services, networking setup, application porting and other custom services to help you get the best possible return on your investment in Autodesk technology.

For more information on Autodesk Consulting, contact your Autodesk Account Executive or your local Authorized Autodesk Reseller; or visit www.autodesk.com/archdesktop-consulting.

5. Platforms, System Requirements, and Network

5.1 Do I need to buy new hardware to run Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006?

Following are the minimum hardware and operating system requirements for running Autodesk Architectural Desktop.

Component	Minimum Requirement
Operating System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Microsoft® Windows® 2000 Professional, SP4 or later ▪ Windows XP Professional, SP2 or later ▪ Windows XP Home Edition, SP2 or later ▪ Windows XP, Tablet PC Edition, SP2 or later (Windows 95, 98, and NT are no longer supported.)
CPU	Intel® Pentium® 4 or AMD K7 with 1.4 GHz processor
RAM	1 GB
Free Disk Space	650 MB free hard disk space and 75 MB swap space; 1.3 GB for full install
Display Resolution	1024x768 with True Color

5.2 I'm upgrading from Autodesk Architectural Desktop 3.3, but my hardware does not meet the minimum requirements for this release; can I still effectively use the current release of Autodesk Architectural Desktop?

If you are using Architectural Desktop strictly for drafting and design, you may use slower hardware. When using hardware that does not meet the minimum system requirements however, you should avoid using certain features that may cause below optimal performance. These features include VIZ Render and Materials with surface hatching enabled.

5.3 Is Autodesk Architectural Desktop software available on both CD and DVD formats?

Yes, you may purchase Autodesk Architectural Desktop on either CD or DVD formats.

5.4 Is a network version of Autodesk Architectural Desktop available? Have there been any improvements to software deployment through network licensing?

Yes. Autodesk Architectural Desktop software uses standard Autodesk network license management. Enhanced Autodesk standard licensing software helps you get the full benefit from your Autodesk Architectural Desktop licenses. For example, with the new license-borrowing feature you can install a time-limited license on your computer while disabling the license on the server for that same period. You can then run Autodesk Architectural Desktop without having a connection to the license server.

5.5 Are there any changes to the licensing for stand-alone seats?

Yes. SafeCast is now the stand-alone licensing technology used in Autodesk products worldwide. For customers in the United States and Canada this is a change in the stand-alone licensing.

Why change to SafeCast? CD-Secure and SafeCast store licensing information on the user's hard drive, typically on the hard disk. Examining re-authorization statistics, it became clear that a number of technical issues with storing information on the hard drive could be resolved by implementing a new feature of SafeCast.

What will this feature do instead? This feature will store a duplicate set of licensing information in the computer's registry. For the types of errors that render the hard drive storage ineffective, there will now be a fallback location in the registry, which will allow the licensing system to continue without error.

6. Availability

6.1 When will Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006 be available?

Worldwide availability of Autodesk Architectural Desktop 2006 in International English is planned for April 2005.

6.2 Where can I purchase Autodesk Architectural Desktop?

Autodesk Architectural Desktop is available worldwide. Contact your local Autodesk Authorized Reseller or Distributor for more information. To locate one near you, visit www.autodesk.com/reseller.

Autodesk Architectural Desktop is also available through the Autodesk online store at www.autodesk.com/estore.

6.3 Is Autodesk Architectural Desktop being released as an English-only product?

No. This product will be released worldwide. Versions of this product will be available in a wide range of languages and with localized content in many countries. For information on product availability contact your local reseller.

6.4 Is subscription available for Autodesk Architectural Desktop?

Yes, subscription is available in most countries around the world for many of Autodesk's products including Autodesk Architectural Desktop. Autodesk Subscription is the best way to keep your design tools and learning up to date.

For an annual fee you get the latest versions of your licensed Autodesk software, web support direct from Autodesk, self-paced training options, and a broad range of other technology and business benefits.

For more information about Autodesk Subscription, contact your Autodesk Authorized Reseller or visit <http://www.autodesk.com/subscription/>.

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