

# Questions and Answers

AutoCAD® MEP is the AutoCAD® software-based design and construction documentation software solution for mechanical/ electrical/plumbing (MEP) engineers, designers, and drafters.

Increase productivity, accuracy, and coordination—from conceptual design through construction documentation—with AutoCAD MEP software for mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) engineers, designers, and drafters. Seamlessly collaborate with architects using basic AutoCAD® or AutoCAD® Architecture software in an intuitive design environment. Automate production of construction documents using enhanced single-line and double-line system design and layout tools. And minimize coordination errors between mechanical, electrical, and plumbing engineering design teams as well as with architects and structural engineers.

AutoCAD MEP: A better, faster AutoCAD for MEP engineering, building design, and documentation.

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# 1. General Product Information

## **1.1 What is AutoCAD MEP?**

AutoCAD® MEP software is the AutoCAD® software-based design and construction documentation application for mechanical/electrical/plumbing (MEP) engineers, designers, and drafters. Increase productivity, accuracy, and coordination by maximizing the efficiency of your AutoCAD-based engineering workflow, while minimizing coordination errors between mechanical, electrical, and plumbing engineering design teams as well as with architects and structural engineers.

## **1.2 Is the AutoCAD MEP software the product that used to be called Autodesk Building Systems?**

Yes. AutoCAD MEP is formerly known as Autodesk® Building Systems. To better align our product line with the needs and requirements of our customers in the AEC Industry, Autodesk has modified the names of some of our products, which you will see reflected in our new 2008 product line. We believe that these name changes simplify the choices you have when it comes to selecting the best product for your professional needs.

Throughout this document and in other materials from Autodesk, "AutoCAD MEP" refers to the 2008 version of the product formerly known as Autodesk Building Systems.

## **1.3 What are the main benefits of AutoCAD MEP software?**

- **Productivity**

Work in a familiar AutoCAD environment with a purpose-built AutoCAD product developed specifically for mechanical, electrical, plumbing design, and MEP documentation workflows. Flexibly implement AutoCAD MEP, adapting it to existing workflows to improve the design process. Move from schematic design to documentation faster through automated production of construction documents. As with Autodesk Building Systems 2006, 2007, and 2007.1, in AutoCAD MEP 2008 you can connect systems through external reference files (xrefs) and make modifications while maintaining the integrity of the system by keeping components connected.

Spend more time designing and less time drafting by working in an intuitive design environment, using discipline-specific engineering tool palettes containing "real-world" equipment.

- **Accuracy**

With AutoCAD MEP your designs are coordinated with your construction documents. Reduce requests for information (RFIs) and costly design changes in the field with construction documents that are dynamically updated. Incorporate industry-based parts and equipment into design layouts for more efficient design development and construction documentation. Get instant feedback directly from AutoCAD MEP to maximize coordination with architectural and structural designs. Reuse design data by linking AutoCAD MEP to industry-leading analysis, cost estimation, and fabrication software applications.

Improve the accuracy of your designs with easy access to the engineering design data automatically created as part of your workflow process. Access engineering data and calculations through the scheduling tools to generate accurate schedules for your

mechanical, electrical, or plumbing systems, minimizing the amount of manual editing.

- **Coordination**

Help minimize design and documentation coordination errors between mechanical, electrical, and plumbing engineering design teams as well as with architects and structural engineers within an AutoCAD-based A&E (architectural design and engineering) workflow. Collaborate by taking advantage of architectural base plans developed using AutoCAD-based applications such as AutoCAD LT<sup>®</sup> or AutoCAD<sup>®</sup> Architecture software products. Because AutoCAD MEP is interoperable with the Autodesk<sup>®</sup> Buzzsaw<sup>®</sup> on-demand collaborative project management solution, data sharing among the extended design team has never been easier. The result: better coordination between engineers, architects, and builders.

With AutoCAD MEP 2008 you can collaborate even more smoothly by publishing your data to the web or to 3D DWF<sup>™</sup> file specification. Publish all or part of your design in 2D or 3D, enabling your clients or other design team members to view your drawings using the Autodesk<sup>®</sup> DWF<sup>™</sup> Viewer, while protecting your designs from unwanted changes. To simplify review cycles, use Autodesk<sup>®</sup> Design Review to mark up and redline drawings fast and efficiently.

### ***1.4 What are the main enhancements in AutoCAD MEP 2008?***

AutoCAD MEP 2008 builds on the concepts introduced in previous versions of the software. The following list highlights just some of the features included in AutoCAD MEP 2008.

- **Ease of use**

#### Single Line Plumbing

With improvements to the plumbing layout and modify tools in AutoCAD MEP, you will be more productive. Easily adjust the slope of the entire plumbing line or a specific section. All fittings are automatically placed as you lay out your design. Connecting to existing lines or adding new plumbing lines is faster and easier than ever. These enhancements help speed up your construction document process.

#### Electrical Layout

Lay out your electrical design the way you want either one device at a time, spaced evenly, or by distance. The enhancements of the electrical layout allow you to automatically align with walls, lines, or arcs. You can circuit devices anywhere in your project and have the ability to total the loads and count the devices on any circuit in one location. The circuit manager, through the project database, makes it easy to design according to code and specifications.

#### Enhanced Piping

Routing preferences make piping layout a breeze. Easily define the display of piping as two-line, one-line, or graphical one-line based on the size of the pipe and the system. This capability is available in both plan and 3D display representations. Increase your drafting productivity while creating accurate construction documents.

- **Ease of migration from lines, arcs, and circles**

#### Part Wizard

Quickly and easily create new parts using predefined parametric models. Enter the necessary data from the part specification and allow the Part Wizard to do the rest for you. Create equipment that you need: pipe fittings, duct fittings, valves, cooling

towers, air-cooled chillers, and more. You can quickly create a new parametric part with custom sizes based on a part template.

#### Global international Metric Content

More and more companies are working on international projects. It is now easier to satisfy your customers' needs with new Global profile. This profile allows you to create documents using international metric measurements and content. Take advantage of the easy layout and modification tools now available to create more accurate construction documents.

- **Construction documents**

#### Improved Display

The display improvements allow for easy access to change the display properties of objects and clearly show design intent with enhanced display controls. These display options can now be controlled from the properties palette. You can change the components of your design to properly display the type of system (duct, pipe, conduits, and cable trays) in the manner that conforms to your construction documentation standards. Easily make changes to the presentation style of your design by changing the display, rather than each of the components individually.

For a complete list of all the features in AutoCAD MEP please visit:

[www.autodesk.com/buildingsystems](http://www.autodesk.com/buildingsystems)

### ***1.5 Who should consider purchasing AutoCAD MEP software?***

Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing engineers, as well as designers and drafters should consider AutoCAD MEP for its benefits as a design and construction documentation software application. Additionally, building owners and contractors can also benefit from using AutoCAD MEP software to reduce coordination issues before they appear in the field, thus minimizing time-consuming and costly changes. AutoCAD MEP is suitable for commercial, institutional, light industrial design, and construction projects such as office buildings, schools, research labs, hospitals, and central utility/wastewater treatment plants.

### ***1.6 Do I need to purchase AutoCAD or AutoCAD Architecture to run AutoCAD MEP?***

No. AutoCAD MEP 2008 is built on the same technology as AutoCAD Architecture 2008 (which includes all AutoCAD 2008 functionality) providing an all-in-one, purpose-built AutoCAD for MEP systems engineering design and documentation. You do not need to purchase separate licenses of those products to use AutoCAD MEP.

### ***1.7 Is there an easy way to share designs with project team members who are not using AutoCAD MEP?***

Yes. The Export to AutoCAD feature "flattens" the drawing file to basic AutoCAD entities, making it easy to collaborate with members of your extended design team who may not be using AutoCAD MEP software. This release supports Export to AutoCAD R14/2000/2004/2007 DWG and DXF™ formats, making it possible for users of these versions of AutoCAD to open the exported AutoCAD MEP 2008 files.

### **1.8 Where is AutoCAD MEP 2008 available?**

AutoCAD MEP 2008 is available worldwide in U.S. English and international English. The international English version is available outside North and South America and includes specific metric content along with additional features unique for firms that require BSI (British Standard Institution) industry standards.

### **1.9 Where can I purchase AutoCAD MEP?**

To purchase AutoCAD MEP, contact your local Autodesk Reseller for more information. To locate one near you, visit [www.autodesk.com/reseller](http://www.autodesk.com/reseller). AutoCAD MEP is also available through the Autodesk online store at [www.autodesk.com/estore](http://www.autodesk.com/estore).

### **1.10 Is AutoCAD MEP Subscription aware?**

Yes. AutoCAD MEP is Subscription Aware.

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, self-paced training options, and a broad range of other technology and business benefits. AutoCAD MEP subscription customers have access to regularly updated content produced specifically for mechanical, electrical, and plumbing design.

Autodesk Subscription includes direct web support. You get one-to-one online 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.

Additionally, Autodesk Subscription includes Subscription Modules (such as DWG™ Compare), access to Autodesk University (AU) conference materials, and home use licensing options.

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

### **1.11 What is the current Subscription Module (Drawing Compare) for AutoCAD MEP**

The *Subscription Module: Drawing Compare* is available exclusively for AutoCAD MEP customers participating in the Autodesk Subscription program.

The new Drawing Compare feature enhances collaboration by using color-coded displays to show items on a drawing that have been changed, added, or deleted by other members of the design team. Changes to items such as walls, doors, windows, or other non-graphical properties are also tracked. Combined with redlining features, such as revision clouds, the Drawing Compare feature helps make communication across the design team clearer than ever.

Download this module now to get the new Drawing Compare feature at <http://www.autodesk.com/subscription>.

Any future Subscription Modules will be posted to the Subscription Site.

## 2. Technology

### ***2.1 Do I have to work in 3D using AutoCAD MEP?***

No, there is no requirement for the engineer, designer, or drafter to use the 3D functionality in AutoCAD MEP to see improvements in productivity and accuracy. With AutoCAD MEP you increase productivity and accuracy without leaving the 2D view.

For example, you can lay out your double-line duct or piping in plan view, just as you would in AutoCAD software. The advantage over AutoCAD is that AutoCAD MEP automatically places the fittings and elbows in the run, so you do not need to insert them manually.

### ***2.2 How does AutoCAD MEP address the need for flow diagrams and detailed schematics?***

AutoCAD MEP has a group of features devoted to schematic diagrams. With the schematic tools, you can create detailed schematics of chilled water systems, air systems, electrical power riser diagrams, plumbing details, and even isometric diagrams. AutoCAD MEP provides schematic symbols with intelligent connectors that enable anchoring to schematic lines without the time-consuming hassle of trimming lines, rotating symbols, or repairing broken lines. By using the isometric mode you can quickly lay out isometric diagrams where symbols and lines automatically adjust to the correct iso-plane as you develop your drawing. With direct manipulation you can easily change the plane orientation, rotation, and location of schematic symbols on the fly, saving time by minimizing tedious drafting tasks.

### ***2.3 Does AutoCAD MEP support engineering design calculations and analysis?***

Yes. AutoCAD MEP supports engineering design calculations and analysis through the connectivity between objects and the engineering data stored in the objects.

Size duct automatically while laying out ductwork based on traditional duct design methods including equal friction. Use circuit tools to automatically summarize circuit and power loads. Generate circuit reports that can be exported directly to a bidirectional Microsoft® Excel® spreadsheet, where you can quickly size wires, panels, and main service lines. Additionally, the Circuit Manager can be used to automatically flag overloads based on calculated loads and wire sizes. Size supply piping (hot and cold domestic water) and sanitary waste with automated tools based on customizable plumbing code and fixture unit pipe-sizing tables.

Autodesk has also been working closely with various industry-leading analysis, fabrication, and cost-estimating applications to facilitate the reuse of your design data. (Refer to question 3.6 for more information on third-party applications.)

### ***2.4 How does AutoCAD MEP help with Sustainable Design?***

AutoCAD MEP supports sustainable design through the transfer of data via gbXML. You can support sustainable design through building performance analysis with leading third-party analysis programs using gbXML. With the appropriate building analysis tools, linked with a CAD model, you can quickly and easily simulate the building and access the information which will give you a much better understanding of how the building will

perform. It will also help you identify the optimum configuration of both passive and active sustainable design components.

### ***2.5 What content is provided with AutoCAD MEP? Can I create custom content?***

AutoCAD MEP provides an extensive collection of parts, such as fittings, equipment, and fixtures. These components are based on common industry standards for increased accuracy throughout your mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection designs. Comprehensive catalogs included with the software organize the collection of available parts by discipline and type.

AutoCAD MEP also provides several ways to create custom content. There is the Content Builder for creating block-based fittings and equipment, and styles that provide a quick and easy way to create electrical devices and schematic symbols. In addition, as with the previous version of the software, AutoCAD MEP 2008 supports i-drop<sup>®</sup> technology, which enables you to share parts through published catalogs and the web. AutoCAD MEP 2008 continues to support standards-based pipe classes, as well as ANSI/ASME and ANSI/ASTM standards. New pipe-related equipment includes additional valves, clarifiers, heat exchangers and pumps, HVAC, and electrical content, such as duct silencers and access doors.

### ***2.6 Does AutoCAD MEP support metric units?***

Yes. AutoCAD MEP supports metric units in addition to imperial units. Metric templates and a collection of metric content are provided with AutoCAD MEP. Metric content is located in a separate catalog from the imperial content in the AutoCAD MEP application. Metric content available is based on GSA (General Services Administration) U.S. guidelines and BSI (British Standard Institution) guidelines.

## **3. Compatibility**

### ***3.1 Is AutoCAD MEP 2008 interoperable with other AutoCAD-based products?***

Yes. AutoCAD software is the foundation for an interoperable family of Autodesk products, which includes AutoCAD MEP. Sharing the same DWG file format framework for reading and writing drawing files helps to ensure that each generation of AutoCAD-based products is interoperable with AutoCAD MEP.

Interoperable products include AutoCAD, AutoCAD LT, AutoCAD Architecture, AutoCAD<sup>®</sup> Map 3D, AutoCAD<sup>®</sup> Mechanical, AutoCAD<sup>®</sup> Electrical, and AutoCAD<sup>®</sup> Land Desktop.

AutoCAD MEP 2008 has introduced a file format change from that used in Autodesk Building Systems 2007 and 2007.1. The AutoCAD MEP 2008 file format is the same as that used in all AutoCAD 2008-based products, including AutoCAD Architecture 2008. (Refer to question 3.4 for more information on the file format change.)

### ***3.2 What about object compatibility between AutoCAD MEP and Revit Architecture, Revit Structure, and Revit MEP?***

Revit<sup>®</sup>-based products can read and write ACIS<sup>®</sup> solids. This capability gives users a way to export their models from AutoCAD MEP software and import or link 3D information into

Revit® Architecture, Revit® Structure, or Revit® MEP software applications. This method can be used to cut sections and perform visual interference detection.

### ***3.3 What is the AutoCAD MEP object enabler?***

The AutoCAD MEP 2008 object enabler is a free download that enables users outside the AutoCAD MEP application to view object data created in AutoCAD MEP. With the proper version of the AutoCAD MEP object enabler, any AutoCAD 2000/2000i/2002/2004/2005/2006/2007/2007.1 or AutoCAD LT 2006 or 2007 user can open and view AutoCAD MEP design files. For more information or to download the AutoCAD MEP object enabler, go to [www.autodesk.com/aecobjecten](http://www.autodesk.com/aecobjecten).

### ***3.4 Can I open files created in Autodesk Building Systems 2007.1 or earlier with AutoCAD MEP 2008?***

Yes, you can always open files created in previous version of Autodesk Building Systems. However, in order to deliver important new features sought by customers, the file format requires occasional updating. When a file format change is made, the files saved to the latest version of AutoCAD, and related products, cannot be read by prior versions of the software. However, you can always save files in a format that is backward-compatible with older versions of AutoCAD and related products. This is useful for people sharing files with others who haven't upgraded recently, and applies to the AutoCAD-based products, including AutoCAD Architecture and AutoCAD MEP.

### ***3.5 What versions of AutoCAD does the AutoCAD MEP Export to AutoCAD feature support?***

This release supports export to AutoCAD R14/2000/2000i/2002/2004/2005/2006 2007/2007.1 DWG and DXF formats, making it possible for users of these versions of AutoCAD to open AutoCAD MEP 2008 files without using object enablers. (Please refer to question 3.3 for more information on object enablers).

### ***3.6 Is AutoCAD MEP compatible with third-party engineering applications? Which partners are working with Autodesk to provide this functionality?***

Yes. By exporting to standard file formats, such as ddXML and gbXML, and taking advantage of the API available for AutoCAD MEP, you can extract crucial engineering design data from AutoCAD MEP 2008 for interoperability with third-party applications from industry leaders. Autodesk is working with industry leaders including: Trane, Green Building Studio, Elite, Wendes, and EastCoast CAD, to provide functionality for engineering design analysis, cost estimating, and fabrication (some of these applications may not yet be available). Your existing third-party applications may be compatible with the current release of AutoCAD MEP. Contact your independent software supplier for details. For more information about the availability of third-party applications compatible with AutoCAD MEP 2008, visit [www.autodesk.com/partnerproducts](http://www.autodesk.com/partnerproducts).

## 4. Platforms, System Requirements, and Network

### **4.1 What are the system requirements for AutoCAD MEP 2008?**

The following are the hardware and operating system requirements for running AutoCAD MEP 2008.

#### **System Requirements**

The following are the hardware and operating system requirements for installing the AutoCAD MEP 2008 applications on a single workstation.

- Intel® Pentium® 4, 1.4 GHz, or equivalent AMD Athlon® processor
- Microsoft® Windows® XP SP1 or later (Professional, Home, Tablet PC Edition) or Windows® 2000 SP4, Microsoft® Windows Vista™ (Enterprise, Business, Premium, Ultimate Edition)
- 2 GB RAM
- 3 GB free disk space
- 1280x1024 monitor and display adapter capable of 24-bit color
- Internet connection for license registration
- Microsoft® Internet Explorer® 6.0 or later
- DVD-Rom – Any speed (for installation Only)
- MS-Mouse compliant

#### **Recommended System Requirements**

The following are the recommended hardware and operating system requirements for installing the AutoCAD MEP 2008 application on a single workstation.

- Intel Pentium 4, 3.0 GHz, or equivalent AMD Athlon processor
- Microsoft Windows XP SP1 or later (Professional, Home, Tablet PC Edition) or Windows 2000 SP4, Microsoft Windows Vista (Enterprise, Business, Premium, Ultimate Edition)
- 3 GB RAM
- 4 GB free disk space
- 128MB, 1280x1024 32-bit color video display adapter, True Color
- Dedicated video card with hardware support for OpenGL® spec 1.3 or later
- MS-Mouse compliant

*The preceding requirements are recommended for effective use of AutoCAD MEP software.*

### **4.2 Is a network version of AutoCAD MEP available? Have there been any improvements to software deployment through network licensing?**

Yes. AutoCAD MEP software uses standard Autodesk network license management. Enhanced Autodesk standard licensing software helps you get the full benefit from your AutoCAD MEP 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 AutoCAD MEP without having a connection to the license server for that specified time

## 5. Support and Training

### **5.1 Can I rely on my AutoCAD knowledge to use AutoCAD MEP? How quickly can I learn the new features in AutoCAD MEP 2008?**

Because AutoCAD MEP is built on the AutoCAD application, your existing knowledge of AutoCAD software gives you a sound base from which to build your AutoCAD MEP skills. Training improves productivity, increases return on investment, and enhances your AutoCAD MEP knowledge, which is why Autodesk recommends training on AutoCAD MEP from an approved Autodesk Reseller. In addition, self-paced e-Learning options are available to subscription members. For more information, contact your Autodesk Authorized Reseller or visit [www.autodesk.com/subscription](http://www.autodesk.com/subscription).

### **5.2 My organization has recently implemented Autodesk Building Systems 2006 and/or 2007. How much training or retraining is required to effectively use AutoCAD MEP 2008?**

AutoCAD MEP 2008 builds on the concepts introduced in Autodesk Building Systems 2006, 2007 and 2007.1. As a result, you can start using AutoCAD MEP 2008 with little training. Users proficient in earlier versions of Autodesk Building Systems can use AutoCAD MEP 2008 in the same way.

### **5.3 Where do I find training courses for AutoCAD MEP?**

Training courses are available from Autodesk Consulting, Autodesk Authorized Training Center (ATC<sup>®</sup>) 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. For more information about Autodesk's training services, visit [www.autodesk.com/buildingsystems-training](http://www.autodesk.com/buildingsystems-training).

*Additionally, you can 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 AutoCAD MEP users. An Autodesk ATC also delivers custom courses on AutoCAD MEP and other Autodesk products. To learn more, visit [www.autodesk.com/buildingsystems-atc](http://www.autodesk.com/buildingsystems-atc)*

Check with your local Autodesk Authorized Reseller for a schedule of AutoCAD MEP training classes. To locate a reseller, visit [www.autodesk.com/reseller](http://www.autodesk.com/reseller).

### **5.4 How do I obtain technical support for AutoCAD MEP?**

Autodesk Resellers provide support services for AutoCAD MEP software and all other Autodesk products. To locate a reseller near you visit [www.autodesk.com/reseller](http://www.autodesk.com/reseller). You can find a complete list of support options available from Autodesk at [www.autodesk.com/buildingsystems-support](http://www.autodesk.com/buildingsystems-support).

### **5.5 Can I get training directly from Autodesk?**

Yes. Autodesk Consulting provides 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 visit [www.autodesk.com/consulting](http://www.autodesk.com/consulting).

## AUTOCAD MEP 2008 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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