

ArchiCAD Tutorial

Getting started

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Launch ArchiCAD

You can either create a new project or open an existing (previously saved) project. An archicad project file contains a 3D model of a building along with parameter settings.

To do: Create a new project

Getting familiar with the GUI

The user interface consists of a main window that has

- a menu bar
- a standard tool bar
- an area where drawings are displayed and
- a number of window panels containing tools and text boxes where parameters are set.

Showing and hiding palettes

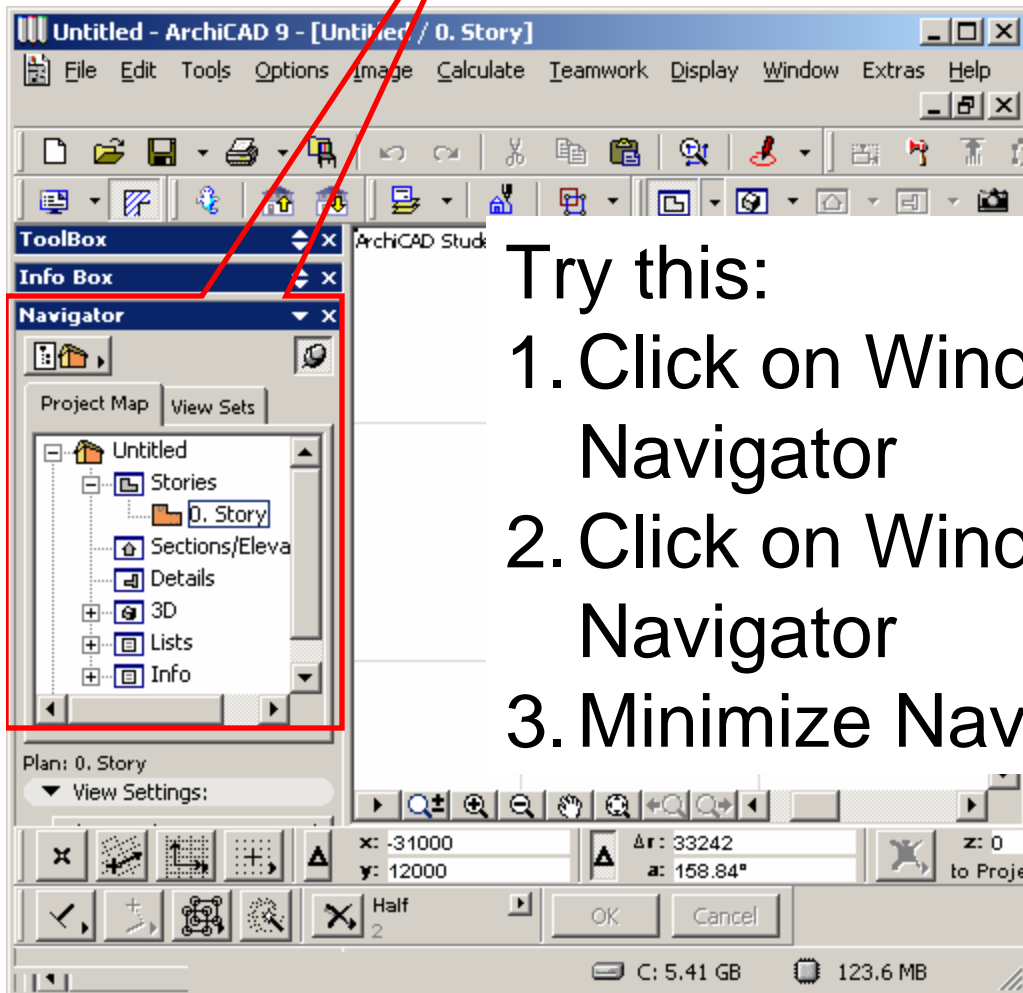
Any palette (tool box) can be minimized or closed by clicking on the usual buttons. A palette that is closed can be made visible by clicking on Window/Palette display and selecting the menu item to show the palette

Try this:

1. Close the main toolbox palette.
2. Make it visible again

Navigator panel

The navigator panel helps to easily switch between plan view, sections or 3D view.



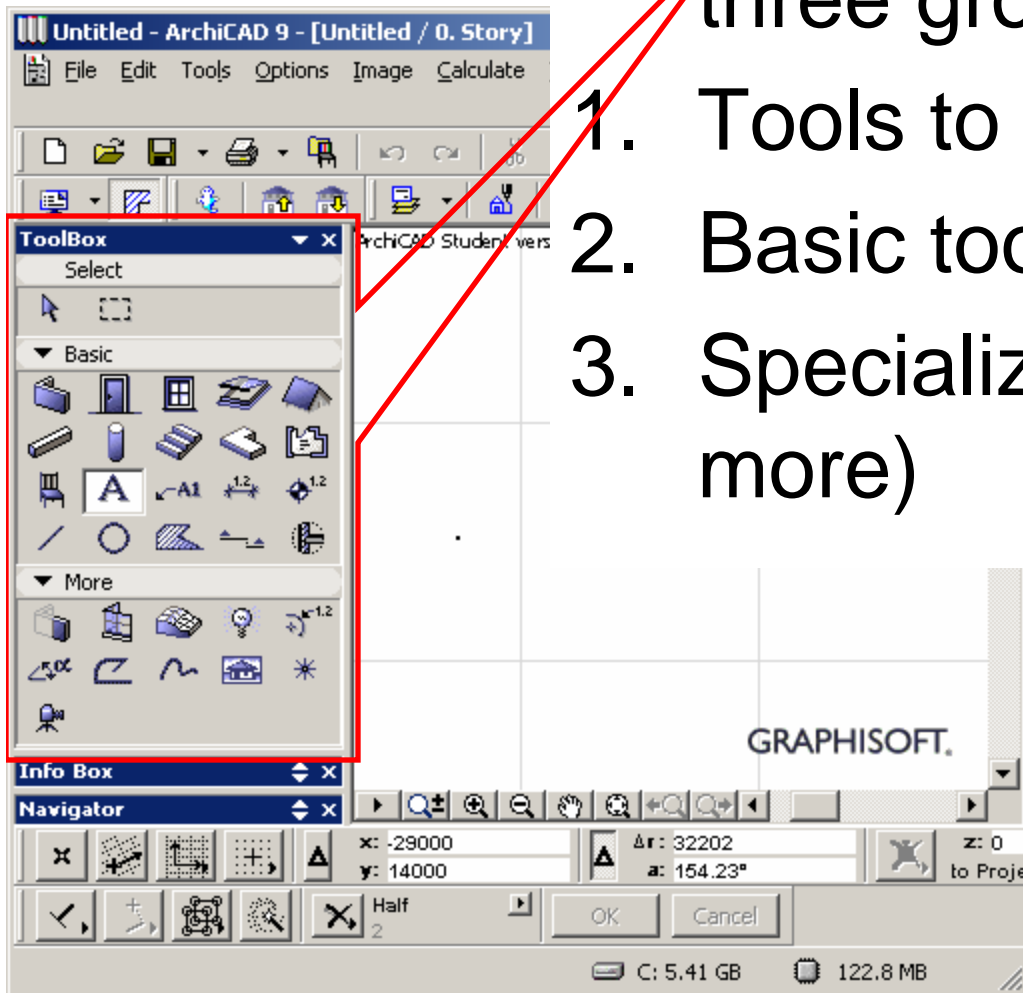
Try this:

1. Click on Window/Palette Display/Hide Navigator
2. Click on Window/Palette Display/Show Navigator
3. Minimize Navigator

Toolbox palette

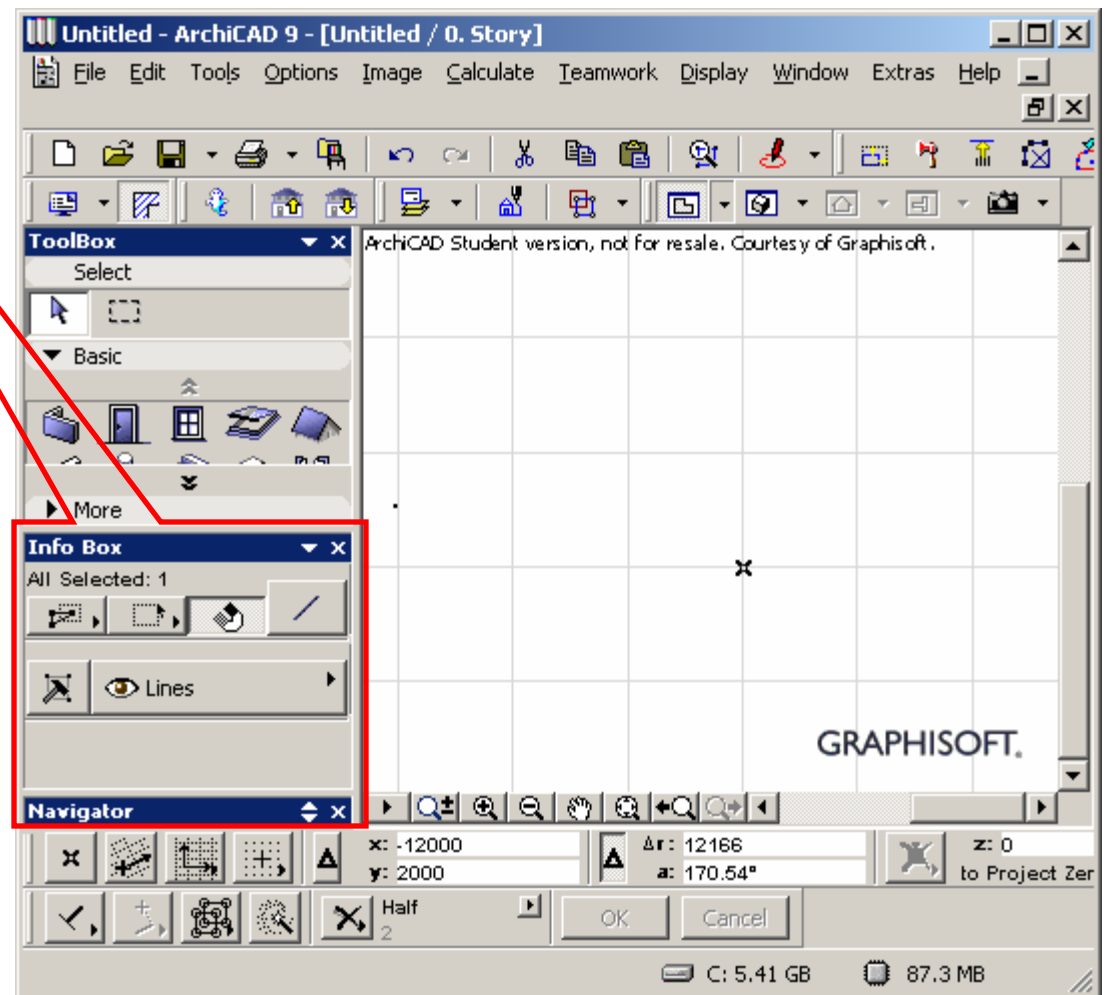
The toolbox palette contains three groups of tools.

1. Tools to select objects (arrow)
2. Basic tools
3. Specialized tools (Under title more)



Information panel

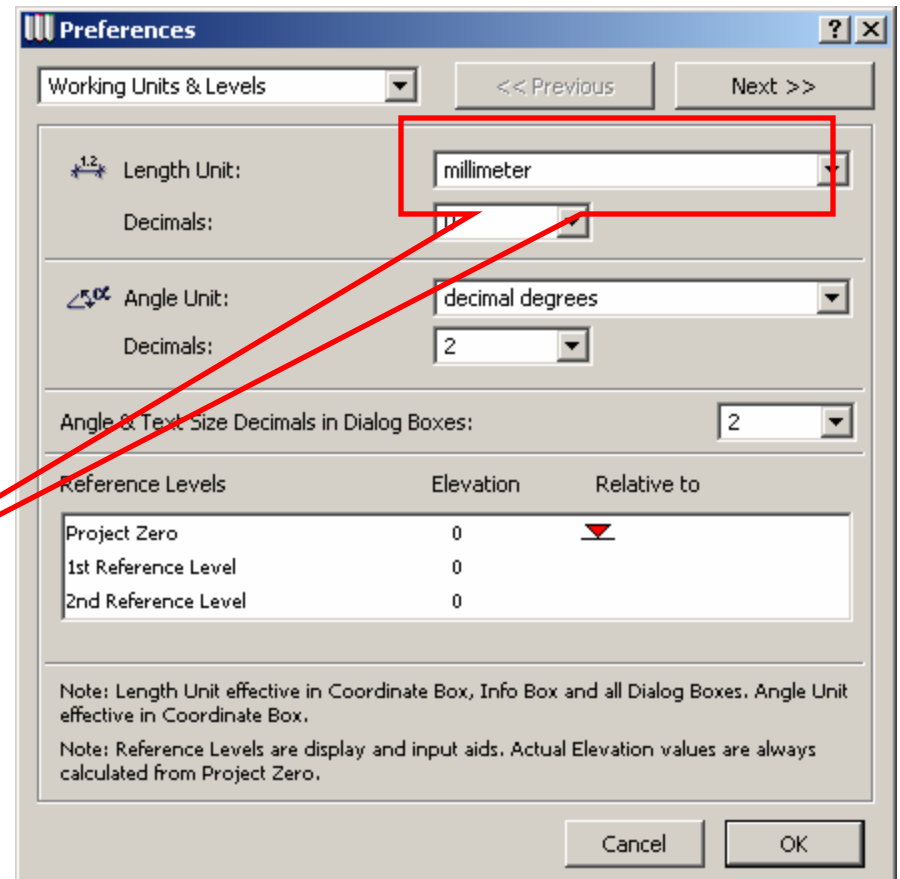
The panel with title “Info box” contains parameters related to the currently selected tool.



Units

It is important to set the correct units before you start drawings.

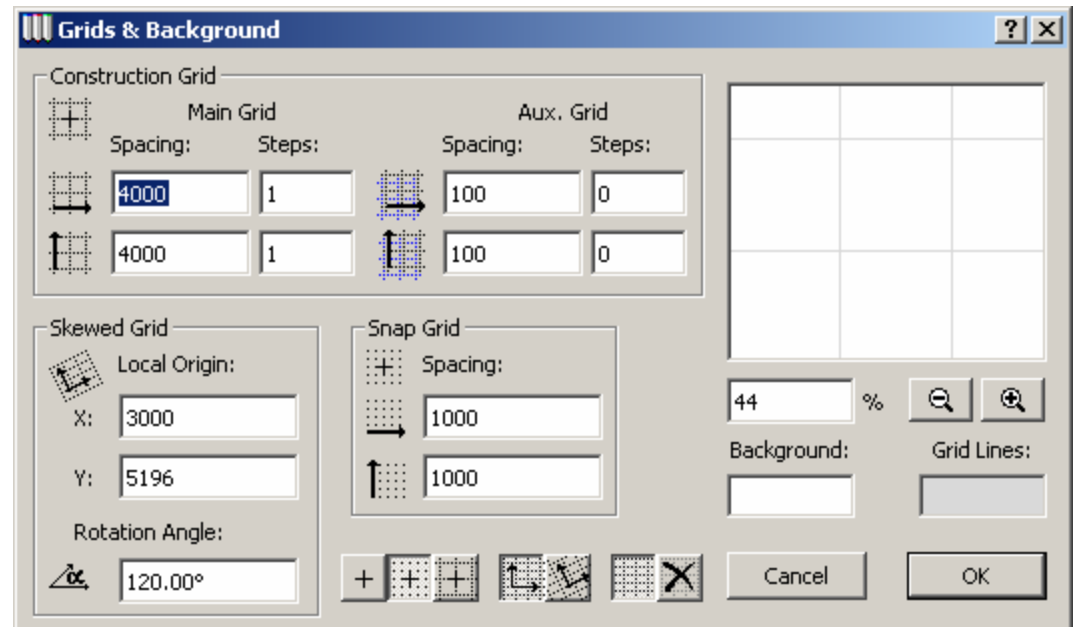
To do: Click on
Options/
Preferences/
Working Units & Levels
Set the units to mm.



Grid

Set the spacing of main grid to 4000 and the spacing of snap grid to 2000

To do: Click on Options/Grids & Background



Snap

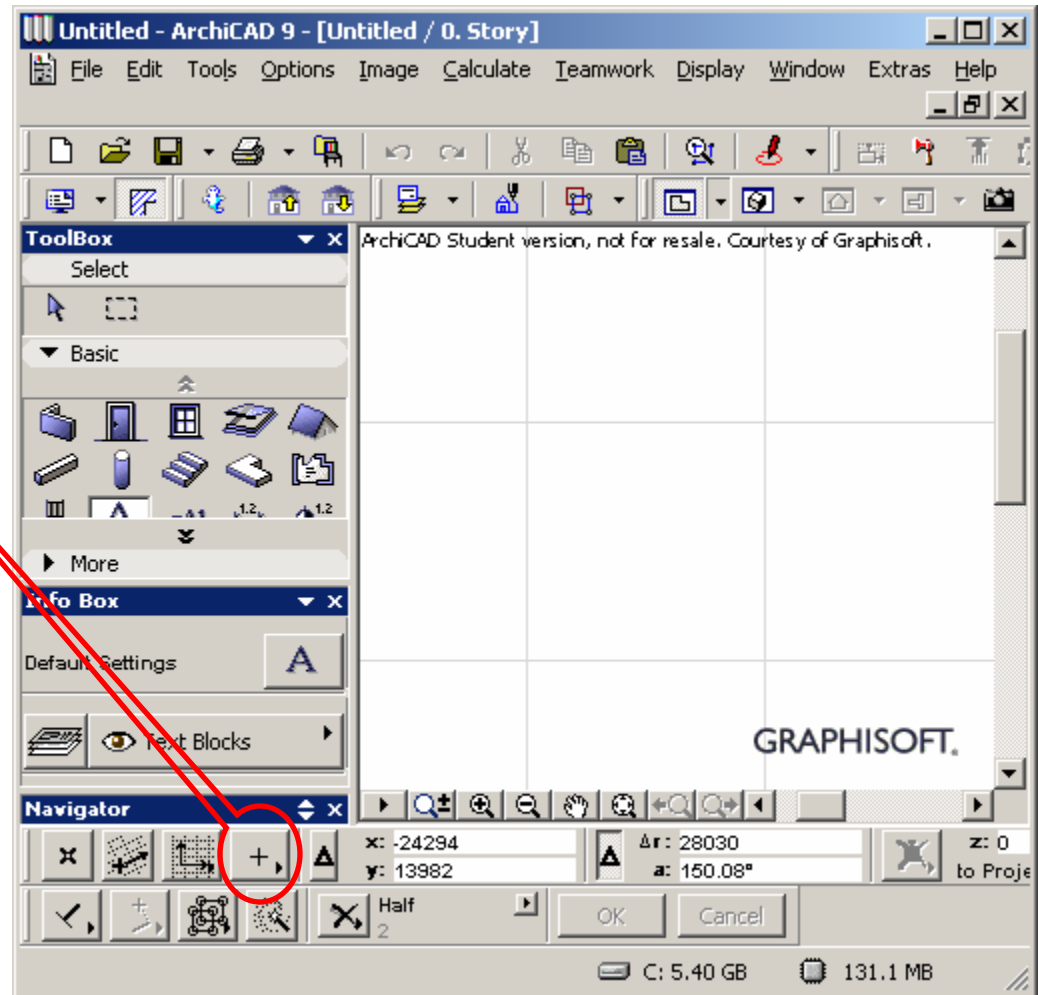
Turn on snap.

To do:

Click on the button
“Grid snap” in the
lower tool bar

Select the middle
button

You can turn off
snap by selecting
the first button



Working in plan view

It is usually convenient to work in the plan view.

To do:

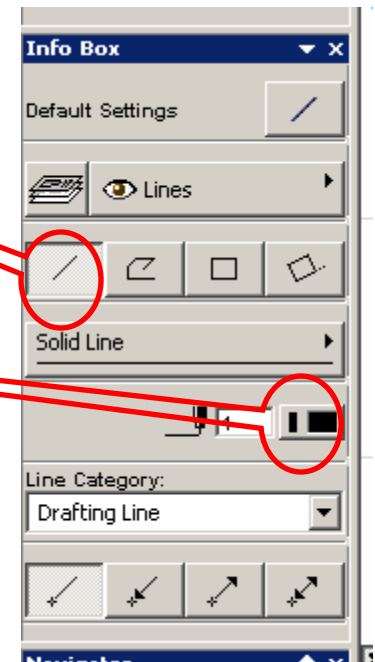
Click on Window/Floor plan

Or

Select the story from the Navigator panel

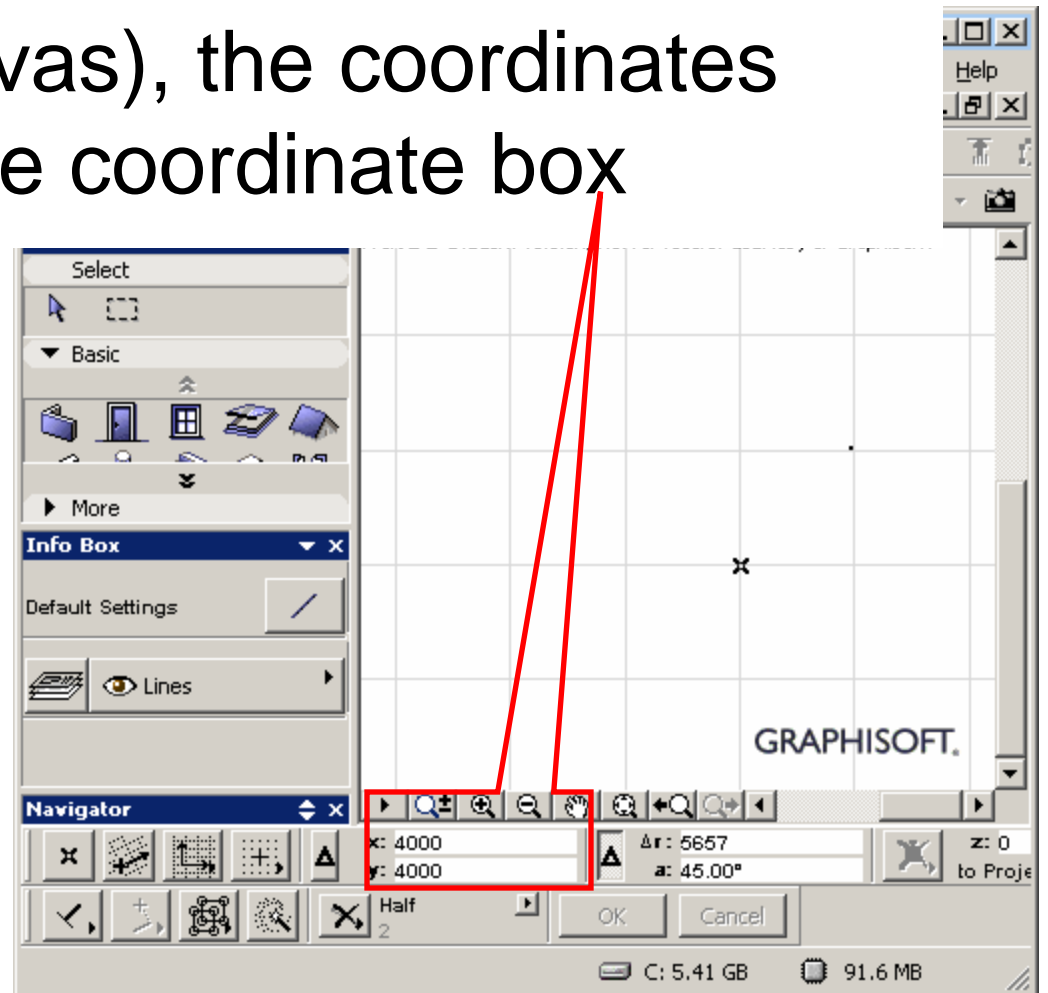
Drawing lines

- Click on the Line tool in the Basic toolbox
- Maximize info box
- Select simple straight line as “line geometry method”
- Change the pen type if necessary



Locating coordinates

When you move the mouse over the drawing area (canvas), the coordinates are displayed in the coordinate box

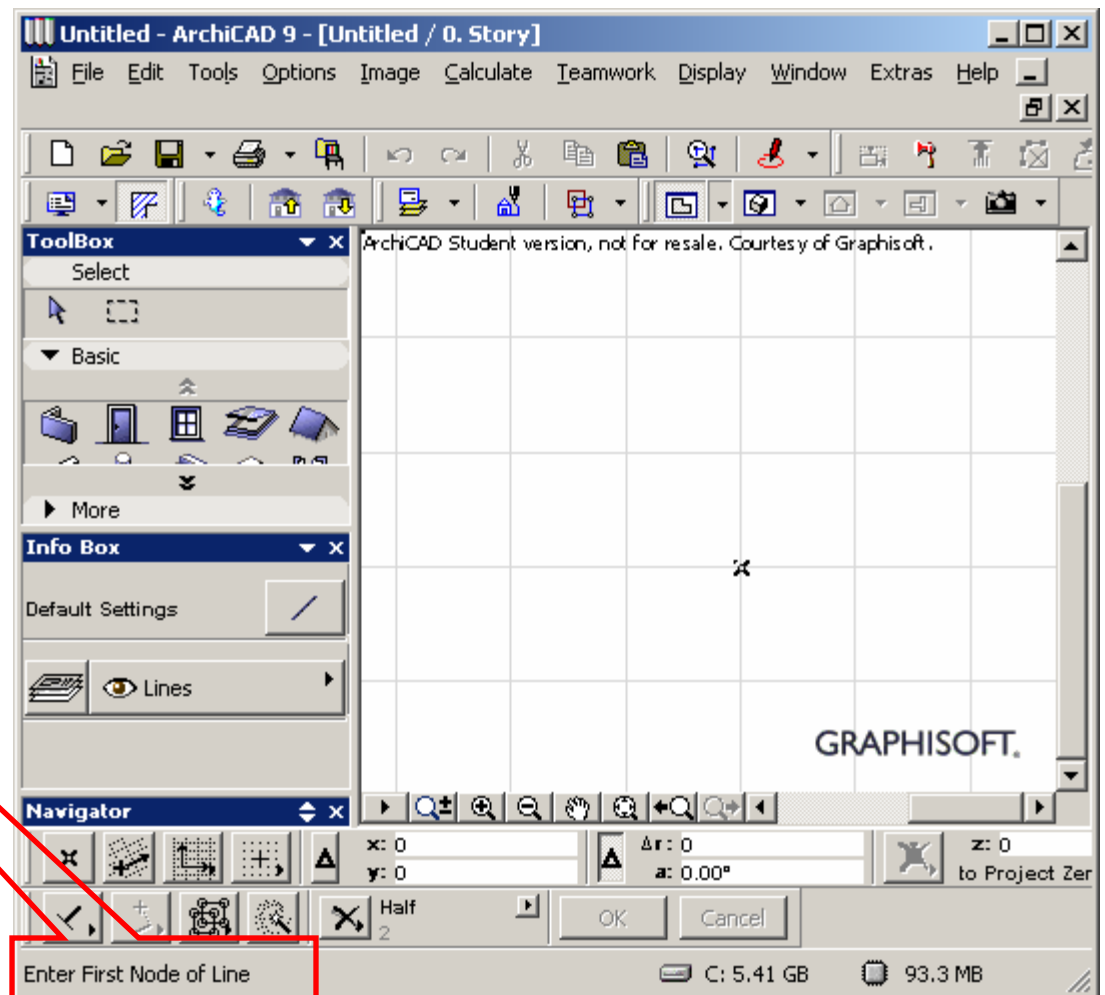


Zooming

The drawing area can be zoomed by using the scroll wheel of the mouse or the zoom button at the bottom of the drawing area.

Status bar

Always look at the status bar for instructions and other useful information



Drawing a horizontal line

1. Select the line tool
2. Move the cursor to the starting point of the line and click
3. Keep pressing the SHIFT button, move the mouse to the end point of the line and click.

Pressing the shift button constraints the mouse pointer to move in specific directions. Turning on the snap is another way to control the movement of the mouse.

Inputting coordinates through keyboard

Try this:

1. Select line tool
2. Move the mouse over the drawing area.
3. Type x on the keyboard. Enter x-coordinate in the coordinate box. (Do not press ENTER)
4. Type y. Enter y-coordinate.
5. Press ENTER
6. Complete the line.

Moving a line

1. Select the arrow tool from the toolbox.
2. Move the mouse over the line to be moved. Notice that the cursor changes when the mouse pointer is over the line. Click on the line.
3. Click and drag over the **mid-point** of the line.
4. Move the line to the required position and click.

Note that whenever you are prompted to input coordinates through mouse, you can press x or y and input coordinates through keyboard

Stretching a line

1. Select the arrow tool from the toolbox.
2. Move the mouse over the line to be moved. Notice that the cursor changes when the mouse pointer is over the line. Click on the line.
3. Click and drag over an **end-point** of the line.
4. Move the node to the required position and click.

Changing the properties of an object

1. Select the arrow tool from the toolbox
2. Click on an object in the drawing area
3. Click on the menu Edit
4. The last item in the drop down menu is usually for editing the settings for the selected object, for example, “Line Selection Settings” if the selected object is a line. Click on this menu item
5. Change the settings for the object in the dialog that is displayed.

Saving the project

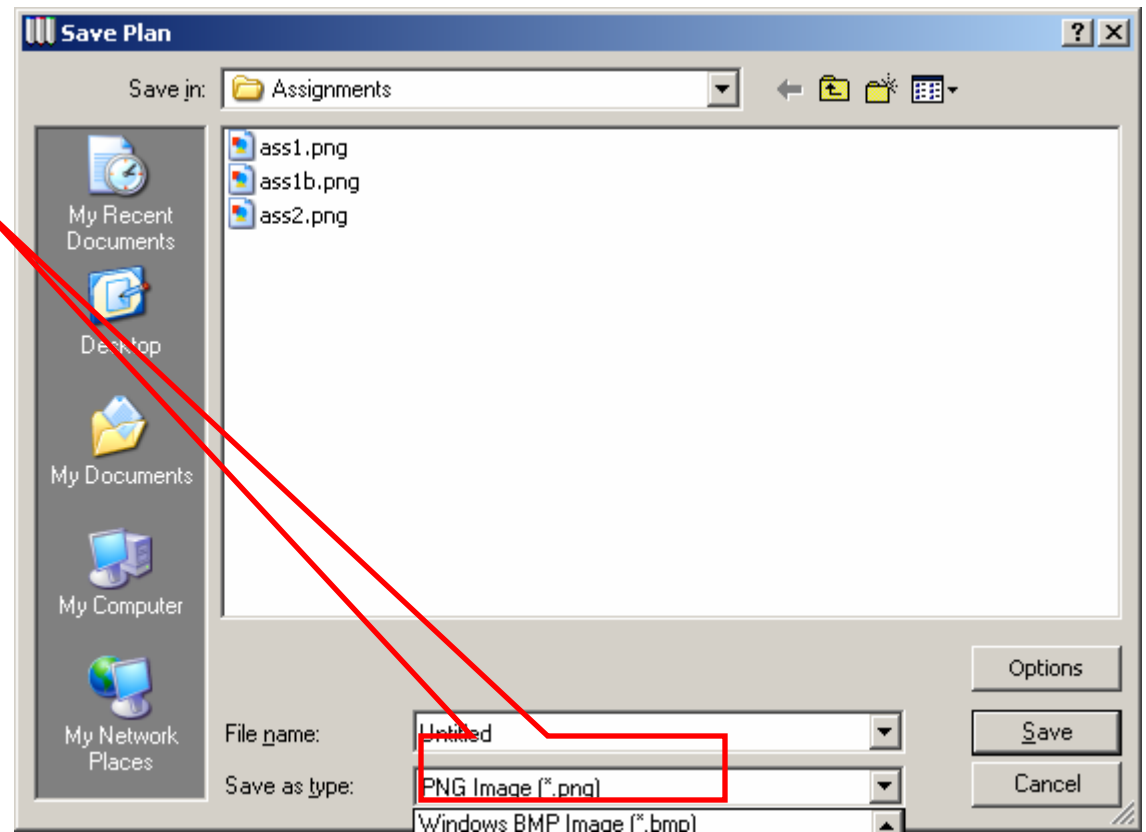
Click on File/Save

Or

Press Control-S (control key and s together)

Saving as a 2D image

- Click on File/Save As
- In the Save Dialog window, select the format.
- Type in the file name and click on the save button



Drawing a line at a specified angle

- Select the line tool and click on the starting point.
- Move the mouse for completing the line. Press a on the keyboard and input the angle in degrees. Press r and input the length of the line. Press ENTER.

Deleting a part of a line

Sometimes we need to trim a line at the point where it intersects another line or curve. We can do this without computing the coordinates of the point of intersection.

1. Select the line to be trimmed
2. Click on Edit/Split. On the status bar it displays “Click on edge to split ... “
3. Select the line or curve which intersects the selected line.
4. Click on the side of the line which should be deleted. The line will now be split into two parts and one part will be selected for the next operation.
5. Press DELETE key on the keyboard. This will delete the currently selected line.

Trimming

Another way to delete a part of a line is by trimming. Press Control key and select the part of the line to trim.

Chamfer

You can create rounded corners by chamfering. Select two lines that intersect and click on the menu item Edit/Fillet/Chamfer.

In order to add a new object to a selection, press the SHIFT key and click on the new object.

Summary

This tutorial is only to get you started. You need to get familiar with the software by exploration and experimentation. This is the best way to learn rather than following a tutor step by step!