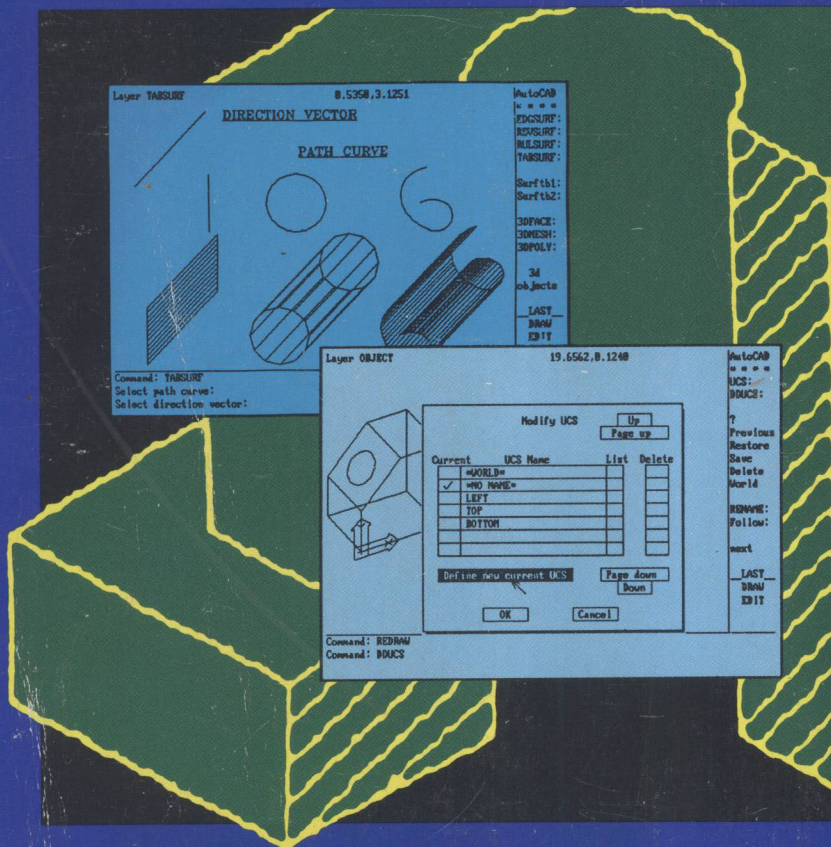


AUTOCAD[®]

REFERENCE GUIDE

Dorothy Kent

Second Edition



Everything You Want To Know
About AutoCAD[®] — Fast!

Covers Releases 10 & 11



New Riders Publishing

AUTOCAD® REFERENCE GUIDE

Second Edition

Everything You Wanted to Know About AutoCAD — Fast!



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AUTOCAD® REFERENCE GUIDE

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Fast!*

By Dorothy Kent

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Introduction

Getting Faster Answers About AutoCAD

Whether you are a beginning AutoCAD user, a part-time user, or even a long-standing user, it is virtually impossible to remember every nuance and every option for every AutoCAD command. We have all had questions like “Can I do it this way with that command?” or “How do I get this sequence to work?” It’s more important to know *where* to find information about AutoCAD commands than to remember it all. This reference guide is designed to give you fast access to AutoCAD’s commands. Each command is presented alphabetically and described simply and to the point. The complexities of commands are explained with tips and warnings from experienced users.

Why This Book Is Different

This guide pulls AutoCAD commands into one easy-to-use reference that brings important information about every AutoCAD command to your fingertips. The guide is not limited to just a listing of commands and what they do. It also helps you:

- ❑ Find commands quickly to get key descriptions,
- ❑ Get tips and warnings that will save you time,
- ❑ See example sequences and screen shots illustrating how to use a command,
- ❑ Identify system variables for use with menu macros, AutoLISP, and 3D.

How to Use the AutoCAD Reference Guide

We recommend keeping the reference guide right next to your computer. Or better yet, for really fast access, put it *inside* your computer. This entire reference guide is also available as a disk (called AREF), which you can load as a help file inside AutoCAD.

To order the disk, see the New Riders Publishing order card at the back of the book. For instructions on loading the disk, turn to Appendix C.

Using the guide is simple. The commands are listed in alphabetical order. Just use the handy thumb tabs (or the Table of Contents), to help you turn to the command you want, and start reading. Related commands are cross-referenced for easy location. If you are using the AREF disk, type the command name at the AREF prompt. You get the same information on command description, menu access, prompts and options, tips, warnings, and examples that you get with the book.

How to Get Information From the AutoCAD Screen

If you are new to AutoCAD, or unfamiliar with AutoCAD's screen display, take a moment to review the information that you can get directly from AutoCAD's drawing display.

Selecting the word AutoCAD at the top of the screen always takes you back to the root menu.

Selecting the * * * * (asterisks) near the top of the screen brings up a submenu of object snap and other frequently used commands. As soon as you choose an option, you are returned to the previous screen menu.

Here are some of the other quiet but important clues given to you by AutoCAD for moving around the program. Use the numbers to locate key areas on the AutoCAD screen illustrated below

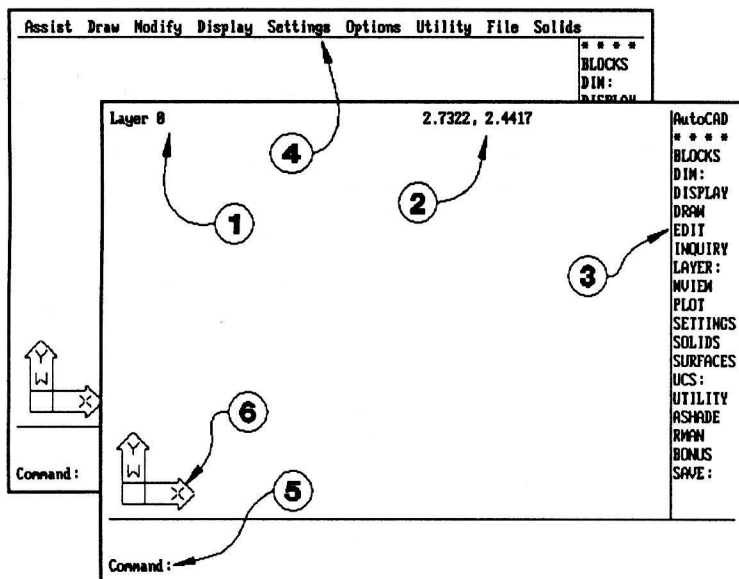
- ① The upper left-hand side of your monitor lists the current layer. If Ortho, Snap, or Tablet is on, you will see these words on the upper left-hand side of the monitor also.
- ② X,Y coordinates display the location of the crosshairs as absolute X,Y values; as a distance and angle (polar); or they can be turned off.

③ The screen menu on the right-hand side of the screen gives you access to all the AutoCAD commands.

④ The menu bar at the top of the screen is activated by the crosshairs, provided your system supports AUI. The menu bar displays pull-down menus giving you access to menu commands similar to the screen menu. Menu selections followed by ... means that dialogue boxes will appear if the command is chosen. Not all AutoCAD commands are accessed from menus.

⑤ The command prompt is at the bottom of the screen when AutoCAD is waiting for a command. If you want to repeat the last command, you can press the space bar or <ENTER> key on the keyboard.

⑥ The icon in the lower left-hand corner (called the UCSICON) orients you to the current coordinate system. It shows the direction of the X,Y axis, indicates the origin and Z axis direction, and tells you whether you are in the WCS or a UCS. This icon is replaced with an icon indicating perspective projection or parallel orientation to the display screen when appropriate.



What the Guide Tells You About Each Command

We have tried to make your access to each command as straightforward as possible. Each command listing follows the same basic format:

Command name. You'll find the command names (or topics) arranged alphabetically with thumb tabs at each letter division.

Menu directions. Lists the Release 11 screen and pull-down menu selections you need to invoke the command. (Release 10 menus will look slightly different.) *Screen* refers to the screen menu on the right-hand side of the screen; *Pull down* refers to the menu bar across the top of the screen. Note: some icon menu labels are too long to print as a selection in this book. In such cases, the key word that displays in red by the icon is printed. If no screen or pull-down menu selections are possible, directions are given for using the keyboard.

Description. This is a general description of the command, including defaults.

Prompts. This section demonstrates the prompting text that AutoCAD displays in the command line at the bottom of the screen, where input is requested.

Options. The command options are briefly explained.

Related system variable(s). Lists any related or affected system variables for the command. (See Appendix B for a complete listing of system variables and their descriptions.)

Tip(s) and Warning(s). Gives key tips and warnings on using the command or options, including tips on 3D.

See also: Gives cross references to other commands that interact with or are similar to the command you are looking up.

Example. Gives a command prompt and response example or an illustration (or both) to demonstrate the command.

Quick Start Guide

If you are just beginning with AutoCAD, here are some suggestions for picking up essential information about AutoCAD from this guide.

If you want to know about:	Turn to:
An individual command	Command name
Entering drawing points	Point Entry
Pull-down menus and trivia	Appendix A
Setting drawing aids	DDRMODES (Drawing Aids)
Setting coordinate systems	UCS and WCS
Setting system variables	SETVAR and Appendix B
Using object snaps	OSNAPS
Using point filters	Point Entry and Point Filters

How the Exercises Look and Work

In our exercise format, AutoCAD's screen display text and your input are in Courier typeface on the left of the exercise. Comments and instructions are given on the right in the book's normal text font.

When you see *Pull down*, you select the indicated pull-down menu. *Screen* means to pick the menu item shown from the screen menu. The bracketed items are menu items, labels, or boxes. To select an item, highlight its label and press your mouse or digitizer pointer pick button. You can also execute commands by typing them at the keyboard and pressing <RETURN> (also known as the <ENTER> key). You'll find that AutoCAD seldom requires you to type the whole name of a command. Usually, commands or options appear on the screen with the first few letters capitalized. You need only type those key letters to execute the command.

Each exercise shows all necessary commands, prompts, and input at the left-hand side of the page. The input you need to enter as you work through the exercises is shown in boldface type. The <RETURN> is shown only when it is the sole input on the line; otherwise you should automatically press <RETURN> following any input you make.

Type input exactly as shown (followed by <RETURN>), watching carefully for the difference between the number 0 and the letter O.

The @ is the @ character, above the 2 on your keyboard. Keyboard keys are shown in angle brackets, like <RETURN>. <F9> is a function key and <^C> stands for the Control-C key combination.

Getting Started

Whether you are using the *AutoCAD Reference Guide* book or the AREF disk, there is no magic to getting started. Just look up the command you need and off you go.