



10 AutoCAD Skills You'll Need to Use Civil 3D: Part 1

Assumptions I've Made About You

If you are reading this there are probably a few things that are true:

- You are a go-getter who wishes to educate himself/herself about AutoCAD
- You have a decent sense of humor about technology.
- You are open to learning about new stuff.
- You are getting ready to learn Civil 3D 2010.

There are some other things I've assumed about you too. Want to hear them?

- You have a mouse with a scroll wheel.
- You have a decent knowledge of Windows.
 - You know how to browse for files.
 - You know what a save icon looks like. 
 - You know what an undo icon looks like. 
- You have used Microsoft Word or a similar word processing program.
- You are teaching yourself AutoCAD from within the Civil 3D 2010 interface.
- You might have a Microstation background...
- ...or not.

General Interface Stuff

When you open up Civil 3D 2010, you will see a plethora of buttons, tools and icons.

The tools that you will use in the course of reading this document are:

- The drawing area
- Command line
- Ribbon tabs
- Ribbon panels
- Toolpalettes
- Model and Layout Tabs
- Application Menu

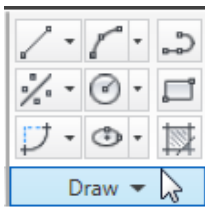
Ribbons

The ribbon interface is probably new to you.

The tabs across the top, (Home, Insert, Annotate, Modify, Analyze, View, Output, Manage, and Express Tools) represent different categories of tools. Each tab gives you a logical grouping of tools.

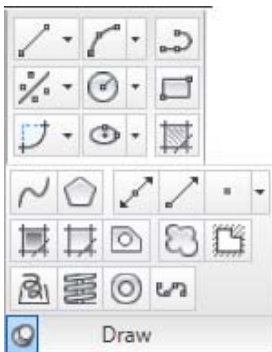
The only two tabs we will be visiting in this document are Home and Insert.

When a tab is active, you will see the tools split into more specific categories in panels. Panels bring specific types of commands together.



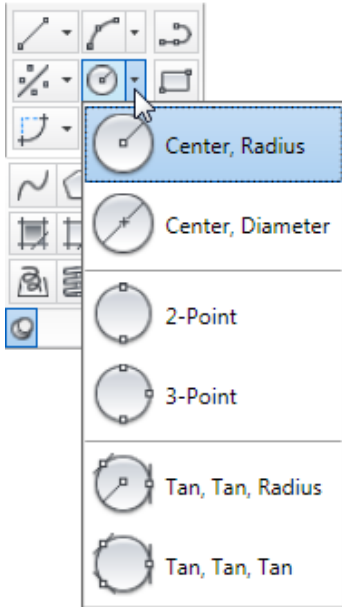
For example, let's look at the **Draw** Panel.

At the top of the panel are the more common tools. This panel can be expanded, as indicated by the black dropdown arrow.



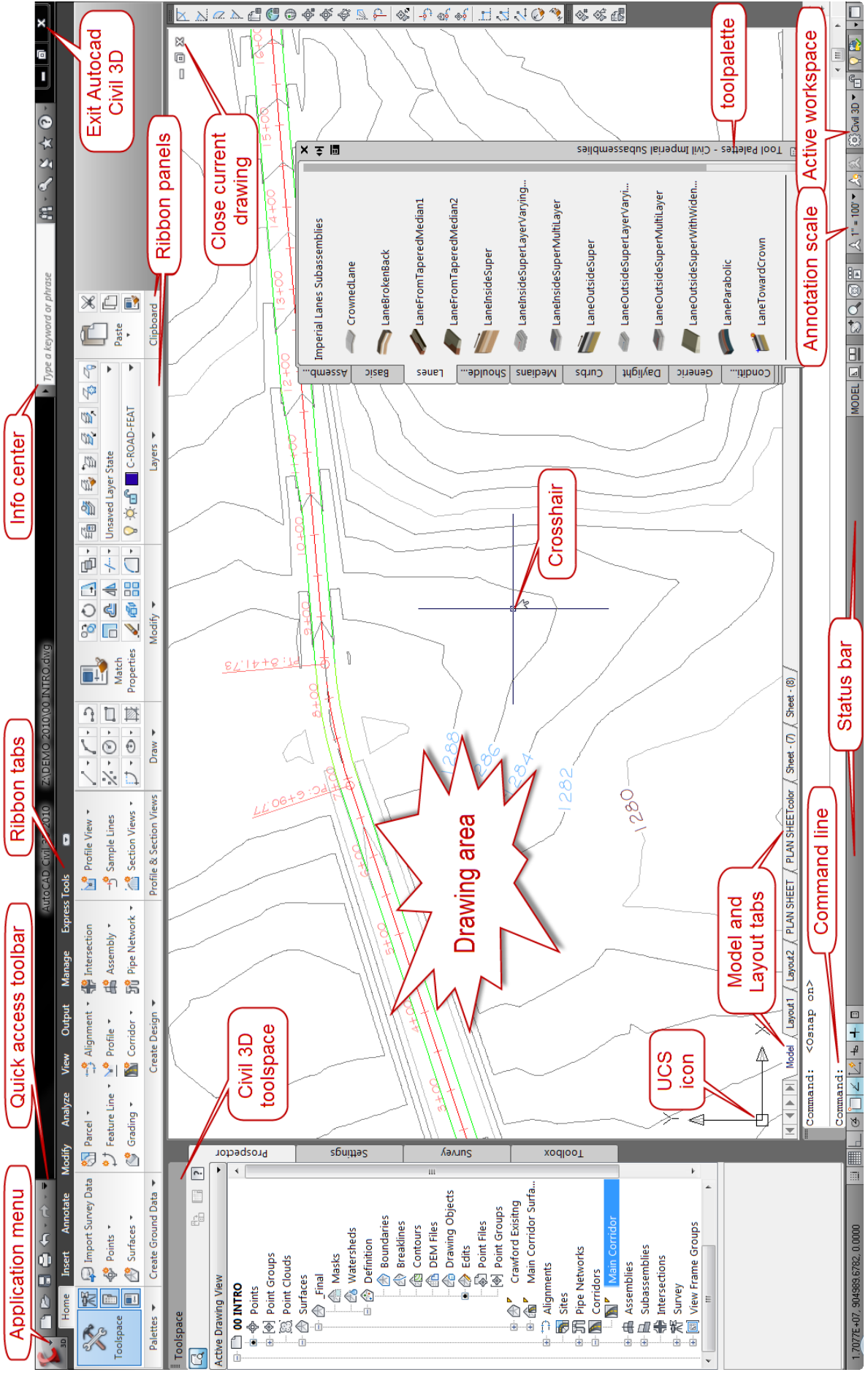
Click the black arrow to expand the panel. We see quite a few more tools.

Click the thumbtack icon in the lower left of the panel to keep the expanded view.



You may notice that some of the buttons are split into a command and a dropdown.


The dropdown button gives you multiple ways to execute a command. In the example shown here, there are multiple ways to determine the size and location of a circle.



The Command Line

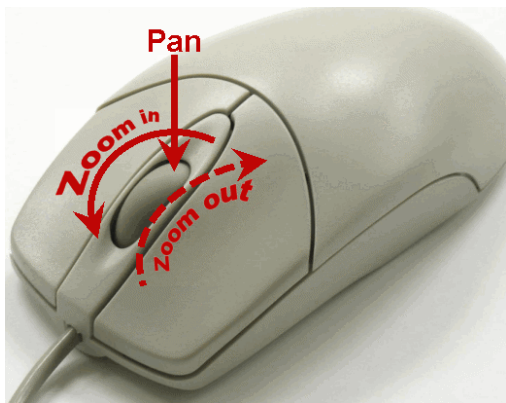
The AutoCAD command line is how you and AutoCAD can talk to each other. AutoCAD will tell you what type of information it is expecting, and you tell AutoCAD the value or option you want.

When you see **Command:** in the command line, you know that AutoCAD is not busy, and waiting for you to give it your next instructions.

Every tool that you use has a key-in version as well as an icon on the ribbon. For instance, you can click the polyline icon  or type **PL** at the command line, then hit enter.

Panning and Zooming


Most of your panning and zooming will be done with your mouse's wheel.



Roll the wheel forward to zoom in to an object.

Roll the wheel towards you to zoom out.

For zooming with the wheel, the location of your cursor is where AutoCAD centers the screen.

Press and hold the middle mouse wheel to pan the screen. 

Double-click the middle mouse wheel to zoom extents.

Stay tuned for part 2: **Selecting Things**