

# Archicad

<b>Name:</b>	ArchiCAD 14
<b>Produced:</b>	Graphisoft, Hungary
<b>Operating system:</b>	Windows, Mac
<b>Native file type:</b>	
<b>Description:</b>	2D drafting and 3D BIM modelling software.
<b>Next version release:</b>	
<b>Homepage:</b>	<a href="#">Graphisoft</a>
<b>See also:</b>	<a href="#">BIM</a>
	<a href="#">Autodesk</a>
	<a href="#">CAD</a>
<b>Link:</b>	<a href="#">LEARN, The Catalogue</a>
	<a href="#">Official Support</a> <a href="#">Post a question to Media Centre</a>
<b>Introduction:</b>	ArchiCAD is a 2D drafting and 3D BIM modelling software.
<b>Primary functions:</b>	<p>ArchiCAD's primary functions are oriented towards 2D drafting and BIM modelling. While the program does provide an OpenGL rendering engine the results are generally terrible. This just emphasises ArchiCAD's position as a drafting software with BIM capabilities. The modelling however attainable in ArchiCAD is limited to fairly rational architectural components. Curved and complex geometries are difficult to obtain. As such the primary functions which ArchiCAD offers are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>2D drafting (measured/technical drawing)</b> is excellent. Drafting skills in ArchiCAD are quickly learnt and export functions for drawings (including scale and paper size) are logical and relatively straight forward.</li> <li><b>Diagramming/Pattern making/Vector line drawing</b></li> <li><b>Vector Rendering</b> is the one render type which works particularly well in ArchiCAD and some very good 3D line visualisations can result.</li> <li><b>Terrain modelling</b> can be achieved in many programs (ex. <a href="#">3DS Max</a>) however one the benefits of using ArchiCAD to model terrain is that the user can specify terrain heights very accurately.</li> <li><b>BIM modelling</b></li> </ol> <p>Similar to ArchiCAD in terms of functionality is <a href="#">AutoCAD</a>, <a href="#">Revit</a> and <a href="#">MicroStation</a>.</p>
<b>Primary outputs:</b>	<p>ArchiCAD's primary outputs include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Line drawings</b> Especially conventional project documentation (plan, elevation, axonometric, section) and vector based diagramming. Usually, the line drawing or graphic generated in Revit is qualified (fine tuned) through Adobe <a href="#">Illustrator</a> prior to printing. The extra step spent qualifying the file in Illustrator, changing <a href="#">line-weights</a>, <a href="#">stroke/fill colours</a>, <a href="#">opacity</a> amongst others will result in a better articulated image.</li> </ol> <p>Drawing output to print or PDF from ArchiCAD is very user friendly with good scale and page-positioning functions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Laser-cutting.</b> Again time spent qualifying the ArchiCAD drawing file in <a href="#">Illustrator</a> is greatly encouraged before submitting it to the Laser-cutter. See <a href="#">here</a> for more information.</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Base-modelling.</b> Creating base-models for subsequent use and/or rendering in visualisation programs. Rendering within <a href="#">ArchiCAD</a> is a waste of time except for basic renders just to check how the model looks.</li> </ol>
<b>Usability:</b>	<p><a href="#">ArchiCAD</a> is a solid usable program. The interface is clean and clear and most menu functions are logical. The program uses drop down menus and floating menus to input data. The interface is not so friendly and intuitive as say Rhino and will take more time to pick up than most other CAD programs (except <a href="#">Microstation</a> perhaps).</p> <p>Interoperability is the one area where the usability of ArchiCAD is called into question. As a 2D drafting program ArchiCAD supports all main files, will place most image files and even receives some text files. But when dealing with any 3D model the program tends to be fairly insular and usually fails to import or export in useful filetypes. However, ArchiCAD does import 3DS, Max's native filetype and nowadays one of the most common of 3D modelling filetypes. Perhaps 3D model interoperability will improve with coming versions. It is certainly an area of the program where work is needed.</p>
<b>Strengths/weaknesses:</b>	<p>Over and above those strengths and weaknesses listed already, ArchiCAD at present is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>++ Very good at accurate, precise and versatile line work</li> <li>++ Very good at accurate, precise and versatile 3D modelling</li> <li>++ very good interoperability (3DS, SKP, DOC, XML...)</li> <li>++ Virtual building explorer (VBE)</li> </ul>
<b>Learning support:</b>	<p>Graphisoft offer a user primer which can be downloaded <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Graphisoft also offer some support mainly in the form of online communities affiliated with the company's website: ArchiCAD wiki [<a href="http://archicadwiki.com/">http://archicadwiki.com/</a>] and ArchiCAD talk.</p> <p>To get you started Media Centre suggest the following tutorials:</p> <p><a href="#">Beginner A</a> <a href="#">Beginner B</a> <a href="#">Beginner C</a>(this one is especially good!)</p> <p><a href="#">Intermediate A</a> <a href="#">Intermediate B</a></p> <p><a href="#">Advanced A</a> <a href="#">Advanced B</a> <a href="#">Advanced C</a></p>

<b>Miscellaneous:</b>	
<b>References:</b>	
<b>External links:</b>	
<b>Published:</b>	First published Mon. 1 Feb. 2010