

Basic AutoCAD Terminology

Absolute coordinates	A way of inputting points based on AutoCAD's origin.
Cursor	Your cursor will change depending on what function it is performing in the program.
Drawing template file	This is a file that contains preset values for frequently used settings. The file extension is DWT.
Extents	The outer boundaries of the objects you have drawn.
Grid	This is pattern of dots displayed on the screen to guide you. It can be toggled on and off by pressing the F7 key.
Layer	All objects are drawn on a layer. You can group objects (such as electrical) on a single layer and organize your drawing.
Limits (Grid)	A setting to impose an 'artificial' boundary on your drawing that sets the area of the grid, and when turned on, limits you to drawing in the grid area.
Linetype	All objects are drawn with a particular linetype. Examples would be solid, center, dashed, etc.
Modify	A generic term used for changing your objects
Object	Any item that is in the AutoCAD database. Also known as an entity.
Origin	The (0,0) point of your current coordinate system.
Ortho mode	This is a drawing mode that allows you to draw only perpendicular lines.
Osnap - Object Snap	This is a method of 'snapping' to certain, precise points on an object.
OTRACK Object Snap Tracking	This is a method of 'snapping' to certain, precise points on an object, based upon temporary construction lines that appear on the screen.
Pan	To move around drawing by dragging the drawing area around your screen.
Panel	A grouping of commands on the ribbon
Pick	To select an object by 'left-clicking' on it.
Plot	Also known as print. To make a hard copy of your drawing.
Polar coordinates	A way of inputting points based on distance and angle.
Ribbon	The Ribbon runs across the top of the drawing space and contains panel - each panel has a group of associated tool. Switch to different panels by clicking on the tabs at the top of the ribbon.
Relative coordinates	A way of inputting points based on a starting point from another object.
Snap	This is a drawing mode that allows you to snap your cursor to precise points laid out in a grid pattern.
Viewport	A separate 'window' on your drawing. You may have more than one viewport visible to see different areas of your drawing at the same time.
World Co-ordinate System (WCS)	This is the common X-Y coordinate system that is the default. If it is modified, it becomes a User co-ordinate System (UCS)
Zoom	To view either a smaller section of your drawing (zoom in) or a larger section (zoom out