Top 10 AutoCAD Drawing and Editing Commands

Below is a brief description of the commands I find most useful when drawing in AutoCAD. The best source for more help on these commands is the AutoCAD help system. Simply type or select a command and then press F1.

Line

Use to create a line. Points can be selected by picking from the screen or by typing in coordinates. If you type in coordinates remember the 3 formats:

Absolute -- Examples 0,0 / 8’6, 9’3 / 24-1/2, 10-1/8 / 24.5, 10.125
Relative – Example @4,0; draws a line 4 units long in the X direction / @3,3; this will draw a line that is 3 units in the X direction and 3 units in the Y direction.
Polar – Example @10<45; draws a line 10 units long at a 45 degree angle

Rectang

Draws a rectangle. For example, this is a great command to create a border or a box of a certain size. Here’s how:

1. Type or select the command
2. Enter the starting coordinate, for example 0,0
3. Enter the next coordinate using the relative coordinates, for example @16,10

Note: If you start at 0,0 you do not need to enter relative coordinates, but using relative coordinates lets you specify an exact size rectangle, no matter what the start point is. This can be good for initially sizing rooms and buildings

Circle

With this command and the fillet command below I very rarely ever use the arc command. I find it much easier to draw a circle and then trim out the parts I do not need.

U

Short for Undo. This will back you up and undo commands you have just done. In other words, if you mess up big (or small for that matter) you can “undo” it.
Selecting Objects
Before moving on to the edit commands we need to learn how to select objects in AutoCAD. Of course, since this is AutoCAD, there are many ways to do this. We will concentrate on 3:

1. Pick the object.

   Using the pick box (little-bitty square at cursor location) pick on an object. Note that item should highlight as you pick it.

2. Window.

   Using cursor pick on your drawing where nothing is drawn. Next, move cursor to right. A blue box with solid lines will appear. Pick a second point. Now any objects that are completely inside this window will be selected.

3. Crossing Window

   Using cursor pick on your drawing where nothing is drawn. Next, move cursor to left. A green box with dashed lines will appear. Pick a second point. Now any objects that are partly or completely inside this window will be selected.

To unpick something you have already picked hold the shift key down and use one of the above operations. Also for windows and crossing windows instead of dragging a window a particular direction you can type W for window and C for crossing window.

Typically when you are done selecting objects you will need to hit the enter key to move on to the next phase of the command. Or if the command prompt is still saying “Command” you can select or type in a command name

Erase
Get rid of objects you do not want. To use:
   1. Type or select the command
   2. Select the objects you want to get rid of.
   3. Press enter.

Note: A really quick way to erase is to select items and hit the Delete key.
Two for the price of one here. Move and copy basically work the same way except that move will just move the object and copy will let you make multiple copies of the object selected. To use:

1. Type or select the command
2. Select the objects that you wish to move or copy
3. Press enter, when done selecting objects
4. Select the base point. I refer to this as the “from” point, point 2 on the figure below
5. Specify the second point. I refer to this as the “to” point, point 3 on the figure below.

When using the copy command press escape or enter to exit the command after all desired copies have been made.

Notes: The “from” point and the “to” do not need to be on the object. Also a very powerful feature to learn about is displacement option.
To use the displacement option:
- After selecting objects and pressing enter
- The “Specify base point or [Displacement]” prompt will appear. Type in the actual distance you want to move the object. For example, if you want to move the object 6” to the right – type in 6,0 and press enter.
- At the next prompt “Specify second point” press enter.

Offsets lines, arcs, polylines, circles, etc. at a user specified distance.

To use:
1. Type or select the command
2. Specify an offset distance and press enter
3. Select an object you want to offset
4. Pick the side to offset.
5. Press enter or escape when all desired objects have been offset.
Note: When offsetting polylines you may first need to **Explode** (another AutoCAD command) the polyline to convert it individual lines to get the desired results

**Fillet**

Use to place an arc between to lines or to get two lines to join exactly.

![Diagram of fillet](image)

first selected object  second selected object  result

To use:
1. Type or select the command
2. Type R and press enter
3. Enter the radius. *(Note: Enter 0 if you want to lines to meet exactly with no arc)*
4. Select the first object
5. Select the second object

**Trim**

Trim pieces of objects.

![Diagram of trim](image)

before trim  after trim

To use:
1. Type or select the command
2. Press enter (this will select all objects as trim cutting edges)
3. Pick the objects that you want to trim at the location you want it trim
4. Press enter or escape to exit the command

**Extend**

Extends lines. Works like the trim command, but has opposite results.