

DesignCAD 3D Max 21.1 Release Notes

10/27/2011

The DesignCAD 3D Max 21.1 update offers the following changes and improvements:

DWG/DXF Improvements

A number of improvements were made to the DWG/DXF import and export process, including the following:

- Exported symbols that used only a single symbol handle did not export to the correct orientation if they had been rotated using the Rotate command. This has been fixed.
- Some drawings containing ACIS solids were not being imported completely or at all. DesignCAD now reduces ACIS solids to collections of triangular planes so they can be represented in DesignCAD. *Note: ACIS solids may contain a LOT of triangles. Loading large ACIS objects, or lots of them, may slow DesignCAD down considerably.*
- Region entities were not being imported. These are now represented as planes.
- After import, some blocks' attribute definitions were missing.
- Several sources of crashes on import were fixed.

Miscellaneous Improvements

- Attempting to use old binary (*.dkf) custom keyboard files from V20.0 or earlier in DesignCAD 21.0 left some keys working incorrectly. This has been fixed.
- The Rotate command sometimes completed prematurely, particularly if trying to rotate without the "Use Custom Handles" and "Drag Mode" options.
- Dimensions with fixed extension lengths did not draw correctly – dimension lines were always drawn with a length of zero. The fixed extension lengths now work correctly.
- Attempting to edit a UNC path in the File Locations tab of Options would cause a crash. This now works correctly.
- Printing with "Print with Shadows" turned off in the Print dialog would crash if Shadows were turned on for one or more lights. This now works correctly.
- In the Startup Settings for workspace configuration, selecting any metric unit would give the wrong unit the next time that dialog was opened. For example, mm would become cm, cm would become m, m would become "blank"). The metric units are now working correctly in this dialog box.
- The Info Box only showed "Centered" as an option for vertical placement of dimension text. Now all available options are shown correctly.
- Dimension Baseline only allowed an arrowhead offset of 50 units or less. This was often insufficient for users drawing in millimeters. The limit has been increased to 1000 units.
- The option to print the display grid only printed the grid in a small section of the drawing. This now works as intended.

- Midpoint Snap did not work correctly in a number of cases when trying to snap to segments of a Plane's perimeter. This has been fixed.
- BasicCAD's SysEx\$ values could be written, but not read back in. This has been solved.
- When opening multiple 2D drawings in version 21.0, all view windows would revert to their "Restored" window size. This behavior has been removed and previous behavior reinstated.

DesignCAD 3D Max 21.0 Release Notes

04/26/2011

Welcome to DesignCAD 3D Max Version 21. DesignCAD 3D Max 21 offers the following new features and improvements:

Default Settings And Workspaces

Version 21 has brought some much-needed attention to Default settings and Workspaces.

Default settings allow you to specify that certain command options should be the default settings each time the program starts. These default settings are stored in the various DC_*.ini files that DesignCAD creates.

Workspaces are similar sets of command settings and options that you can save into binary workspace files, but workspaces have the added capability of letting you specify startup macros, the starting screen width, and custom menus and keyboard shortcuts. You can also specify a default workspace that can always be loaded when DesignCAD starts, and will apply to each new drawing that you open.

There can only be one set of Default settings saved at any one time. Each time you press "Save as Default" for a group of options, the previous default settings for that group of options are overwritten with the current ones. This is convenient when you almost always use the same default settings for all your drawings. You can, on the other hand, save many different groups of settings in differently-named workspace files.

Whether DesignCAD will give preference to the default settings in the INI files (generated by "Save as Default" buttons) or to the default workspace, is controlled by a new setting in General Options: "Reload last-saved settings at startup".

DesignCAD 21 now also offers the ability to copy the current set of program settings into a workspace, or to apply the settings from a loaded workspace to the current drawing.

Reload last-used settings at startup

There is a new checkbox in the General Options tab: "Reload last-saved settings at startup". This flag controls whether DesignCAD launches with your last-saved defaults or with the default workspace settings. If this box is checked (as it is by default), the settings in the DC_*.ini files are loaded when the program starts. If the box is unchecked, the settings in the default workspace (if one is present) are loaded when the program starts.

"Save as Default" now works when YOU decide

Some commands and Option groups have a "Save as Default" button (or just a "Save" button, in some cases). For some time now, even though you might have chosen save those settings at any time, it was often the case that later changes would be saved over your desired defaults even though you did not want this to occur. This made it difficult to maintain a standard set of defaults from session to session. Now those defaults are only saved when you choose to save them, and are not automatically overwritten when the program exits.

New buttons in Workspace Configuration dialog box

Two new buttons have been added to the Workspace Configuration dialog box:

Load Current Settings

This button loads the current application settings into the checked Workspace Configuration details settings. For example, if you uncheck the "Display and Snap Grid Settings" and "Dimension Settings" boxes, then click "Load Current Settings", all the workspace details **except** those two categories will be loaded into the workspace editor. Similarly, if you check the boxes for "Display and Snap Grid Settings" and "Text Options", and uncheck all the rest, **only** those two categories will be loaded into the workspace editor.

Apply To Drawing

This button applies all the checked Workspace Configuration details settings to the current drawing, with a few exceptions.

Dimension Options behavior changes

There have been some changes to Dimension Options (these need to be checked both in Dimension Options and in Workspace Configuration->Dimension Settings->Details):

- Changing the settings of one dimension type (such as Text Size) does not automatically propagate to the other dimension types. Currently only the "Scale Prop" checkbox is global this way.
- The Paste button has been temporarily removed from Dimension Options. We do expect it to return again in the future, with improvements.
- The "Save" button now saves the settings for all dimension types at once. Previously it was necessary to save them separately for each dimension type.
- The "Reset" button now restores all dimension type options from the last saved settings at one time.
- There is a new Vertical Text Position option for some dimension types: "Outside". This always puts the text as far away as possible from the base measurement points.
- When you chose "Save as Default", many Dimension options weren't being saved. Most of those omissions have been found and corrected.

- By default, the "Same size as Normal Text" option is now off. This helps prevent unexpected scale interactions that can occur when "Scale Prop" is checked and you have changed the text size outside the Dimension Options dialog box.

Shadow Improvements (For Directional Lights Only)

For Directional Lights only, we now offer an optional improved shadow map calculation algorithm. This new algorithm allows you to zoom in on shadowed areas of the drawing with less-pronounced aliasing ("jaggies") appearing on the shadows. It's not a cure-all, however – if you zoom in far enough, they will still become evident, due to inherent limitations in the shadow-mapping algorithm. How much you can zoom without the shadows becoming aliased will vary considerably from drawing to drawing. This new algorithm also doesn't always work reliably when printing zoomed viewframes in Paperspace Mode. To enable or disable the new shadowing method, see the new menu entry Options/Use New Shadows. BasicCAD users can turn it on and off by means of Sys(1160). By default, the new algorithm is turned off, but the setting is "sticky" and remains as you last set it from session to session.

DWG/DXF Improvements

AutoCAD 2010 File Support

DesignCAD 21 now supports both import and export of AutoCAD 2010 formatted files (covers AutoCAD 2010, 2011, and 2012).

Long Layer Names

DesignCAD 21 now supports layer names up to 255 characters in length.

Imports ADT Objects

DesignCAD 21 now recognizes Architectural Desktop entities in imported files, and converts them to the nearest-available DesignCAD equivalents.

Miscellaneous Changes

- A very long curve consisting of four colinear points no longer confuses Zoom To Extents.
- It is now much easier to connect to DesignCAD using .NET languages.
- When drawing arcs with the "Save as Line" option checked, arcs that did not span an exact integer number of degrees were being created with unequal segments – the last (most counter-clockwise) segment was typically shorter than the other segments. Now all the segments are of equal length. (Note: This only applies to circular arcs, not elliptical arcs.)
- BasicCAD: Added Sys(1160) to control the "Use new shadows" option.