
Autodesk Products Tip & Tricks

Product: AutoCAD
Topic: AutoCAD Profiles
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AutoCAD Profiles

What is an AutoCAD profile?

An AutoCAD profile is what contains your user preferences and settings. The profile is where changes made in Options are saved. If you change the background color this information is saved in the profile. If you edit the support search paths on the File tab, these settings are saved in the profile. This makes the profile a very powerful tool.

Profiles are easy to create and easy to distribute/share with others. Here is an overview of what we will look at in these tips/tricks:

- Creating a profile
- Changing the profiles
- Exporting/importing profiles
- Making a shortcut to launch AutoCAD with the new profile

The steps below can be used in any AutoCAD based software – AutoCAD, AutoCAD Architecture, AutoCAD Mechanical, Civil 3D, AutoCAD MEP, AutoCAD Electrical. I will be using vanilla AutoCAD in my example.

Creating a New Profile

To create a new profile we start in the Options dialog box and go to the Profiles tab. Here we see several options, for now we are only interested in the '**Add to List...**' button; this will bring up the Add Profile box. (Figure 1)

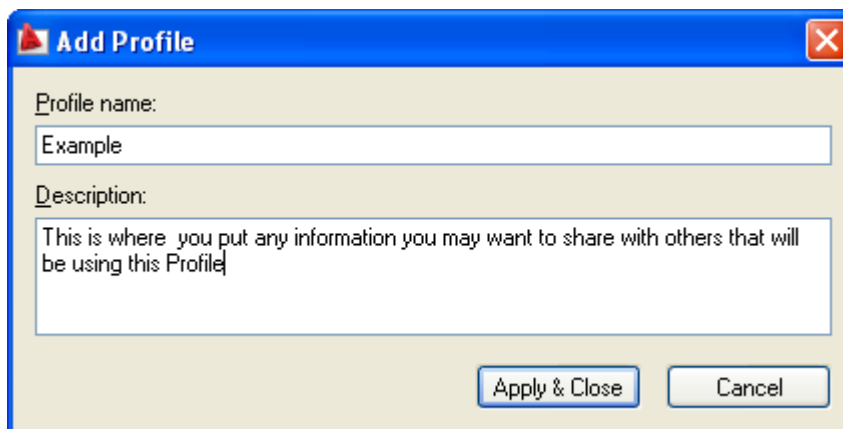


Figure 1

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Once you enter the profile name and any notes/description you want (the description area can be left blank), hit **Apply & Close**. You will now see the profile listed in the Available profiles list. (Figure 2)

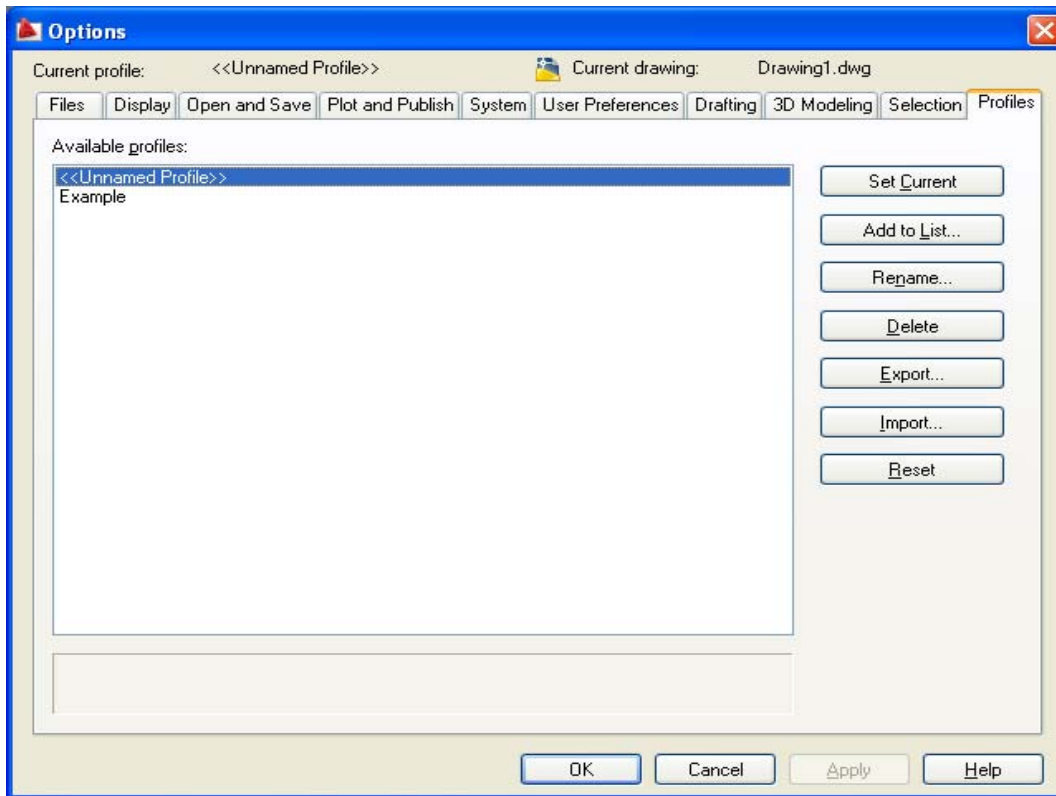


Figure 2

We have now created a new profile, which leads to the next section – Changing Profiles.

Changing Profiles

Now that we've created a new profile we want to make changes to it and get AutoCAD setup the way we want it. Changing profiles is simple, getting AutoCAD setup to your exacting specifications may not be ☺.

To change to the new profile we just created simply select the profile from the list and click the **Set Current** button. Now any changes you make in the Options dialog box will be saved to the new Profile.

Exporting / Importing Profiles

So now we have this wonderful new profile and made all the changes necessary to make AutoCAD look the way we like it. Now we just need to let everyone else see how awesome our settings are compared to theirs. Or we have set the profile to our company standards and edited the support paths to point to critical network paths. Either way we need to get this profile to others.

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This, also, is a relatively simple process, select the Profile and hit the **Export...** button. You will then see the Export Profile box where it asks you to save the profile as an .ARG file. Give your profile an appropriate name and save it somewhere easy to find. (Figure 3)

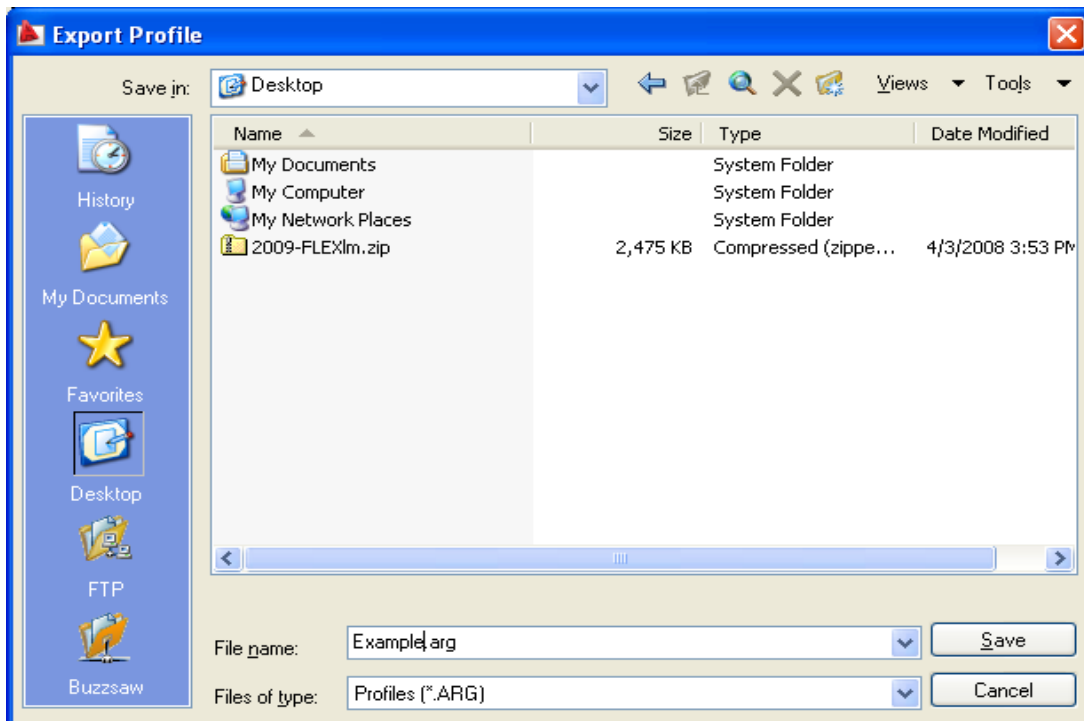


Figure 3

Now that the profile is saved in .ARG format we can share it with others in the usual ways – email, thumb drive, shared drive, etc.

Importing is just as simple, hit the **Import...** button and select the .ARG file and hit **Open**. You will then need to use the **Set Current** button to make the settings in this profile current.

Creating a Shortcut Icon

We have now created a new profile and shared it with the other users. Everything is good. Then you close AutoCAD for the day and come back in the morning for another day of bliss, but when you open AutoCAD you realize that all the work you did creating the profile yesterday is gone. You go to Options and notice that the profile is there, it just didn't load it, so you select the profile and hit **Set Current** and things are back to the way they should be.

What a pain! Why do I need to do that every time I close AutoCAD?! The reason is that the shortcut icon you are clicking isn't pointing to that spiffy new profile we just created.

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So here is how we are going to fix this. First we need to make a copy the current AutoCAD shortcut icon; to do this right-click on the Icon and select Copy. Next we need to edit the properties of this copy so that it will open the correct profile. Right-click the Icon and select Properties and go to the Shortcut tab.

Here we see several places that can be changed; the only one we are interested in is the Target: line. In Figure 4 we can see that the target is pointing to acad.exe" (if you are using one of the vertical products this line will look different).

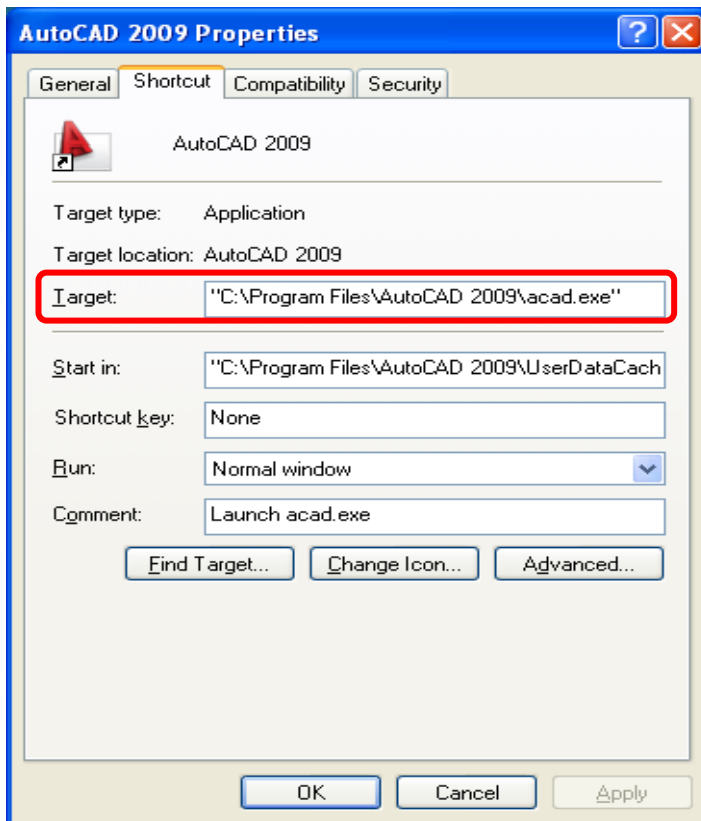


Figure 4

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We need to modify this target line to open the profile we created. To do this we will add a /p "Profile Name" to the end. (Figure 5)

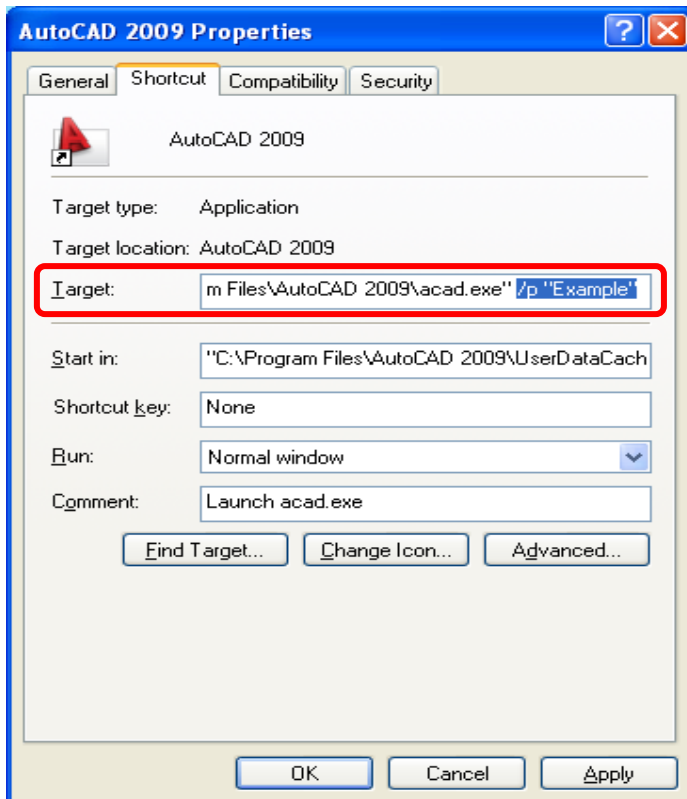


Figure 5

Once we have made this change we hit **Apply** and **OK** and the next time we use this icon to launch AutoCAD it will load with our new profile settings.