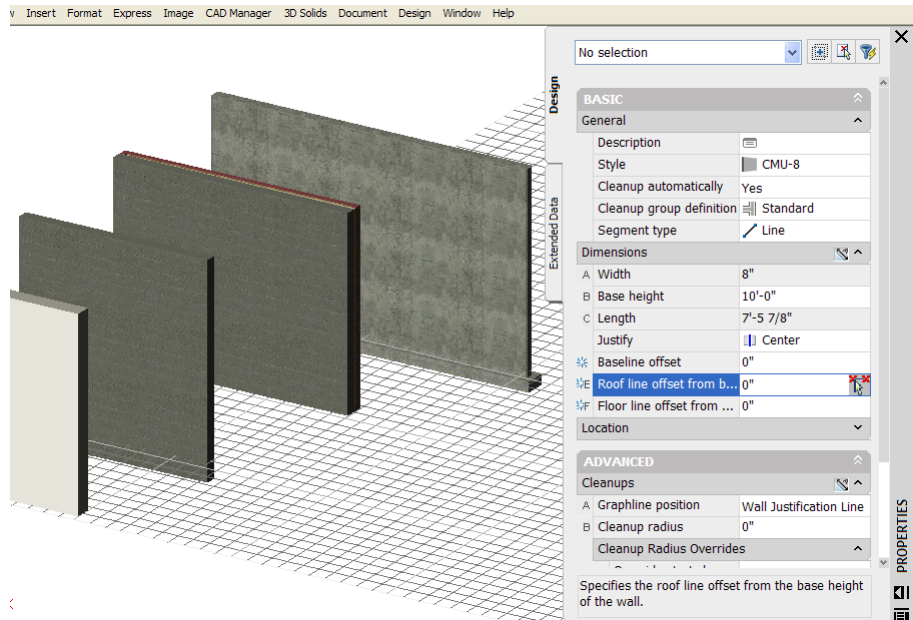


Creating More Specific Wall Tools in Autodesk Architectural Desktop

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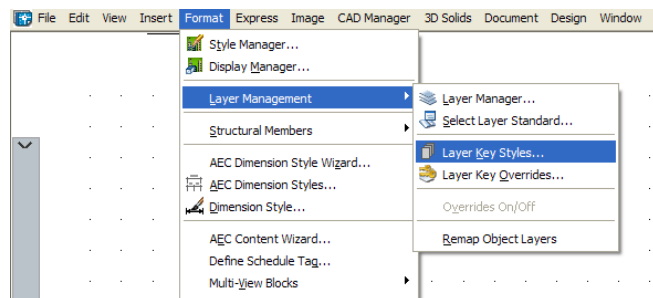
Relying on the out of the box wall style tools in Autodesk Architectural Desktop (ADT) necessitates many trips back and forth to Properties. That is because many of the last settings used become the default when you next launch that same command. Additionally some settings reset themselves (automatic cleanup, segment type, roof and floor offsets). Walls styles without variable widths will come in with the width as specified in the style, but most of the other variables such as height, justification, and baseline offset refer to the last setting used.



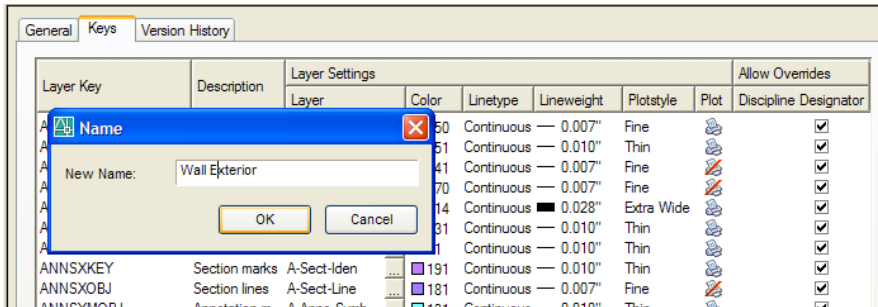
This concept also applies to many other commands and tools. The only exception to this, and a great shortcut, is by using Add Selected (at the right mouse shortcut menu) to launch a command. This captures all of the settings of the selected entities.

We'll see how we can create a wall tool that presets many of the property parameters. Another issue that the out of the box wall tools do not address is the need to have certain walls on different layers than the default A-Wall layer (eg. A-WALL- EXTR, A-WALL-INTR, A-WALL-DEMO). We will create layer keys in our layer key style and then set up the wall tools to use them. What we'll learn with wall tools can also be applied to door, window, roof, structural member, and other tools.

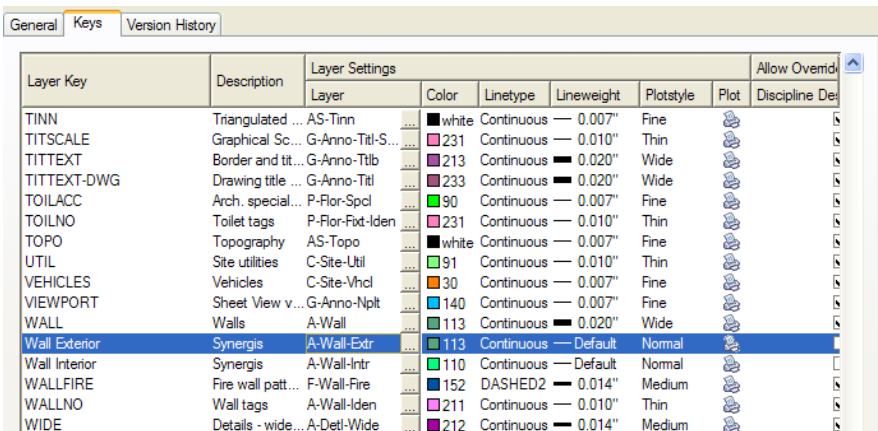
We'll start by creating the necessary layer keys to assign our wall tools. From the Format pull down menu select *Layer Management* and flyout to *Layer Key Styles*.



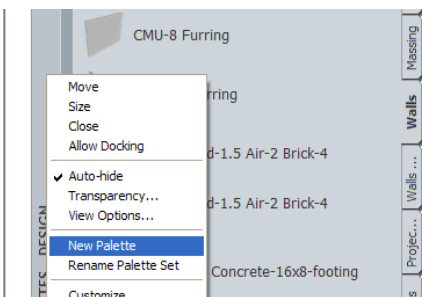
This will launch Style Manager and filter you to the Layer Key Styles present in your drawing. Typically you'll do this in your template drawing and be editing either the out of the box AIA layer key style or your firm's layer key style. Edit the layer key style in the right pane of Style manager by double clicking it or right mouse click (RMC) and selecting edit. Switch to the keys tab and at the bottom right select *Add*. Type the desired layer key name. This is arbitrary and it will make the layer name the same but you will usually change it. In this case I'll name the layer key *Wall Exterior*.



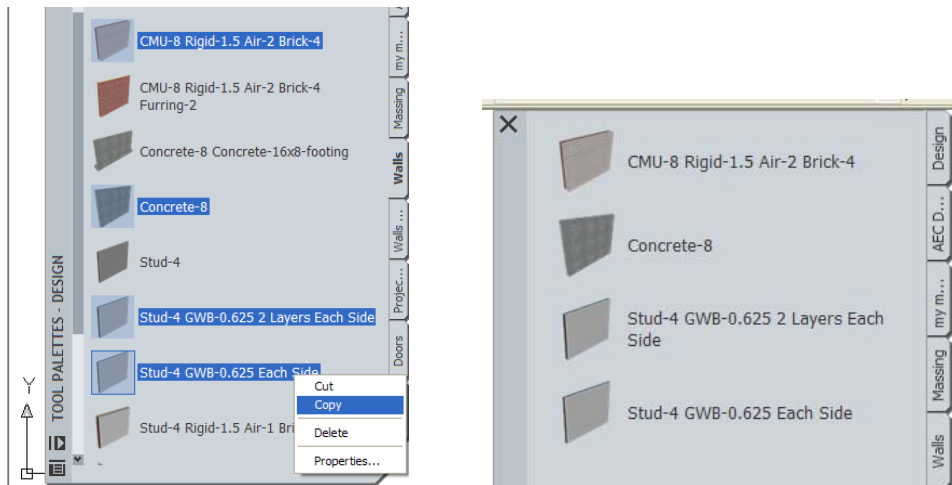
Then I'll scroll to that in the list and set the desired layer name, *A-Wall-Extr*, and the desired color and linetype. I'll repeat this and create another layer key *Wall Interior*. Don't be afraid of giving your layer keys a unique description, it will help later when sorting them by description to see your custom keys. Hit Ok at the bottom of Style manager and save the drawing.



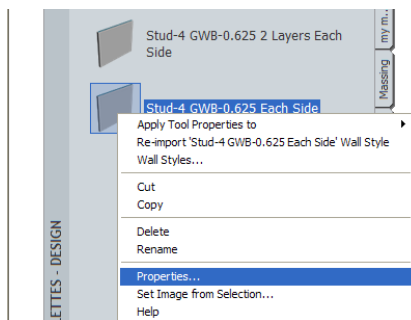
Next, I'll create a new palette to hold my custom wall tools. RMC over the palette set title bar and select *new palette* and name it.



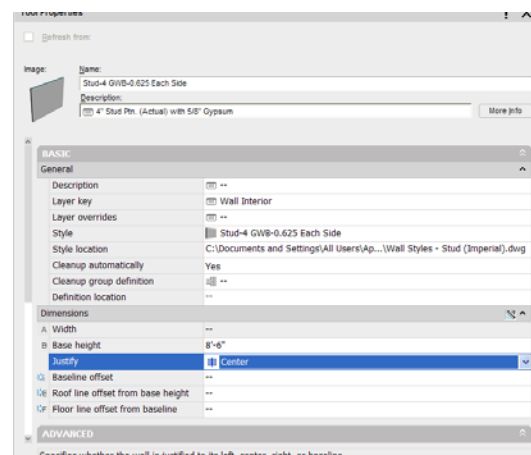
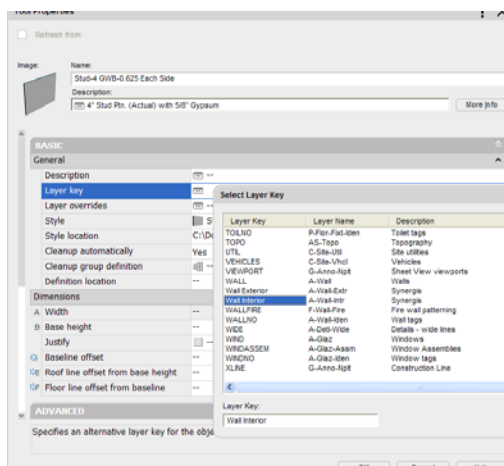
Then I'll switch to the out of the box Walls palette and, using control, select and RMC copy some existing wall styles that I'm going to use. I'll paste them on my custom walls palette where we will be editing their properties and setting the layer key.



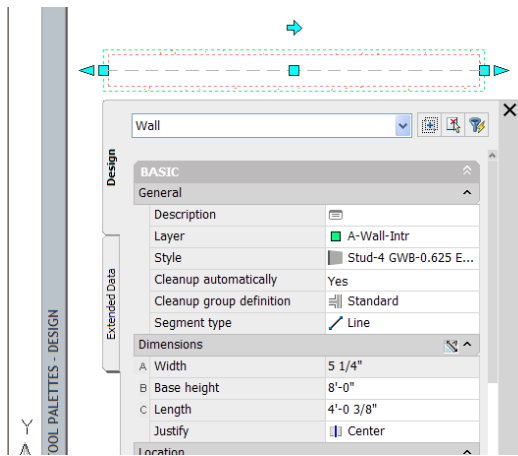
To customize the tool I'll RMC over it on the palette and select *Properties* in the shortcut menu.



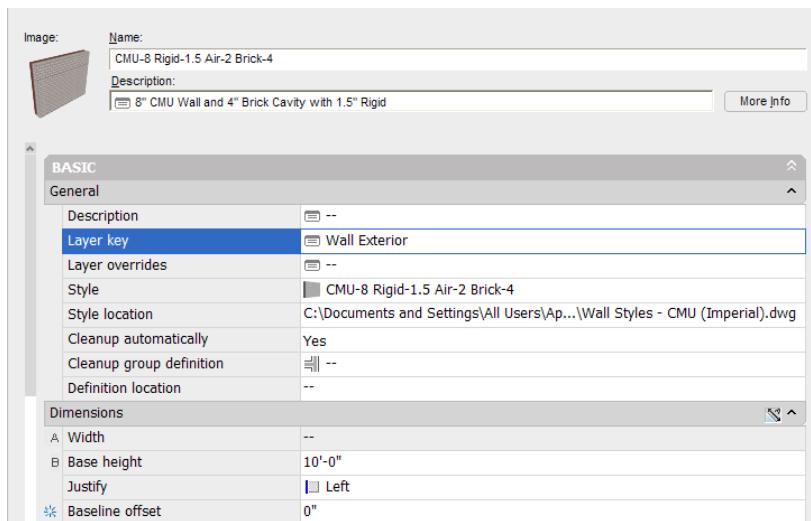
Looking at the properties I'll then start setting my desired parameters. First I'll click the cell to the right of layer key. This will bring up the layer keys for me to scroll and select. For this stud wall I'll set it to the layer key *Wall Interior*, the base height to 8' and justification to center.



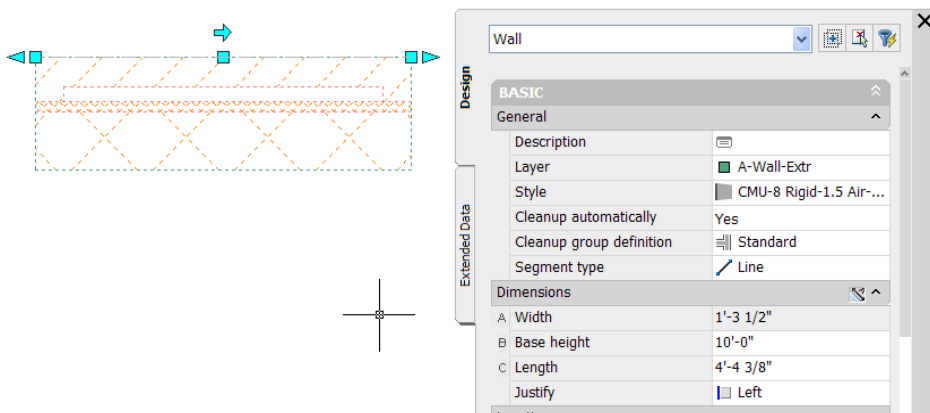
You might also want to set the baseline offset to “0”. This will ensure that it uses that instead of whatever was last set in properties. Then test the tool and verify the parameter settings and the layer.



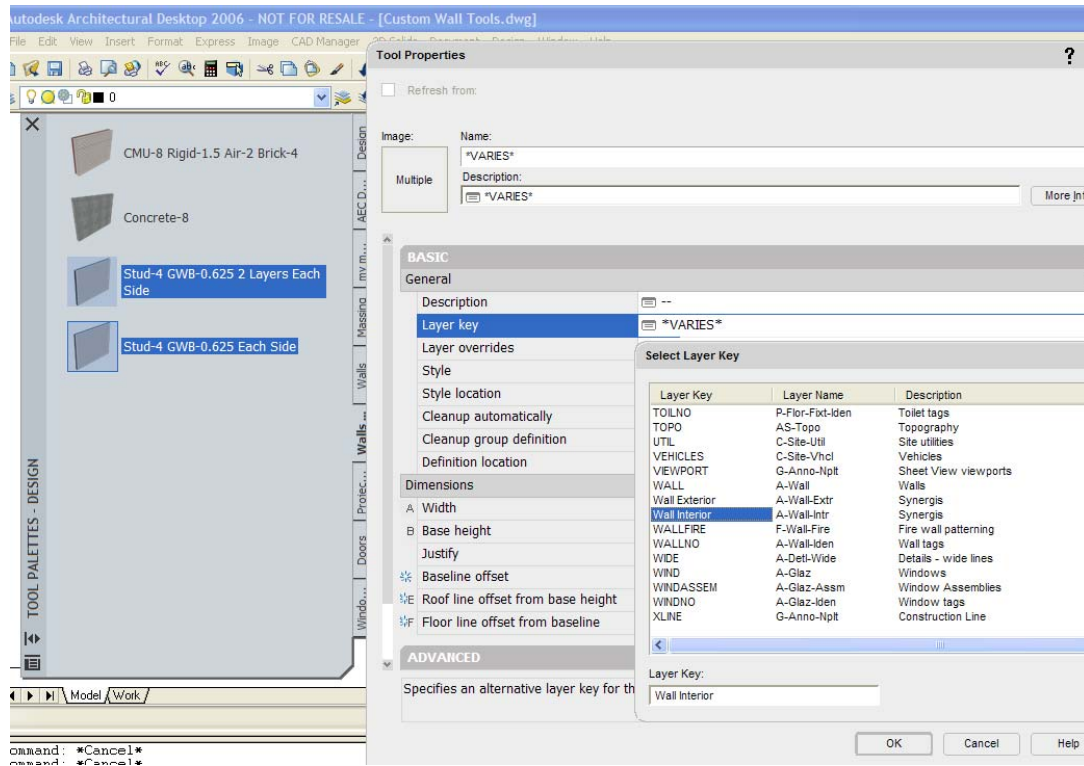
I'll repeat this procedure for an exterior wall and set the layer key to *Wall Exterior*, the justification to left and the desired height.



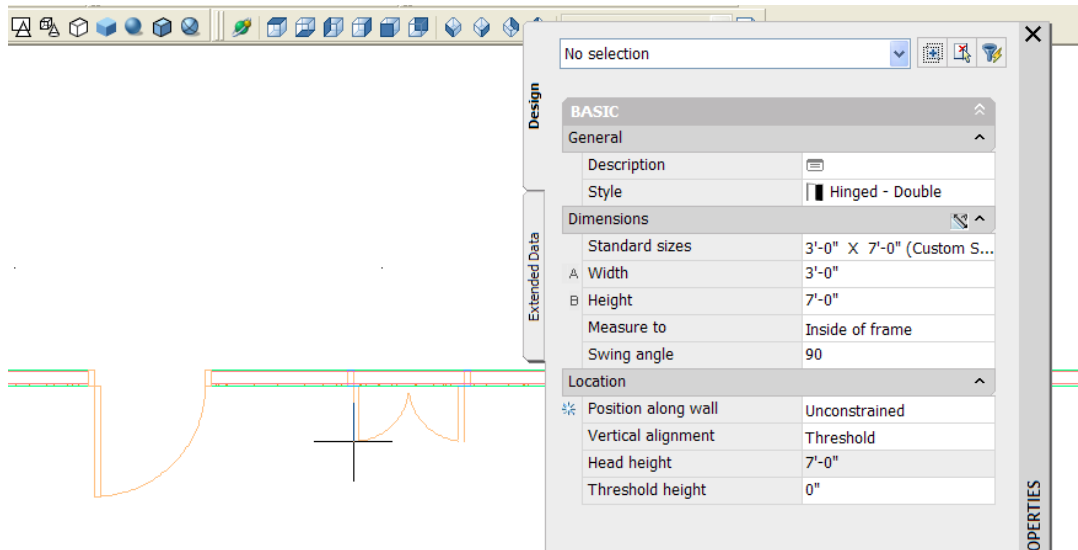
Testing this, we'll see that it lands on the desired layer and comes in with the desired settings.



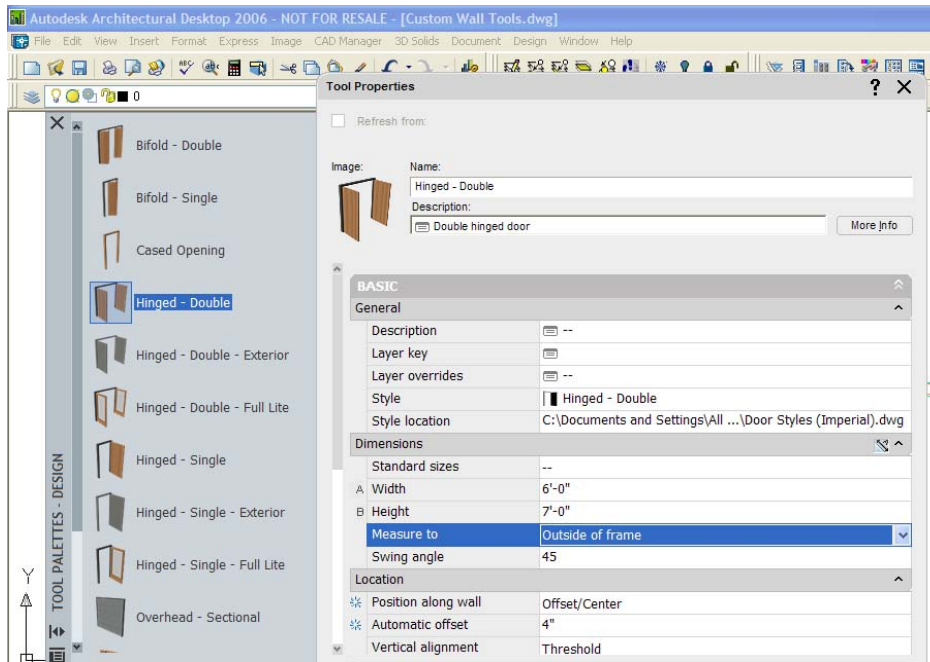
If you are setting the same layer key or parameter for more than one wall tool you can control select more than one and access and set properties.



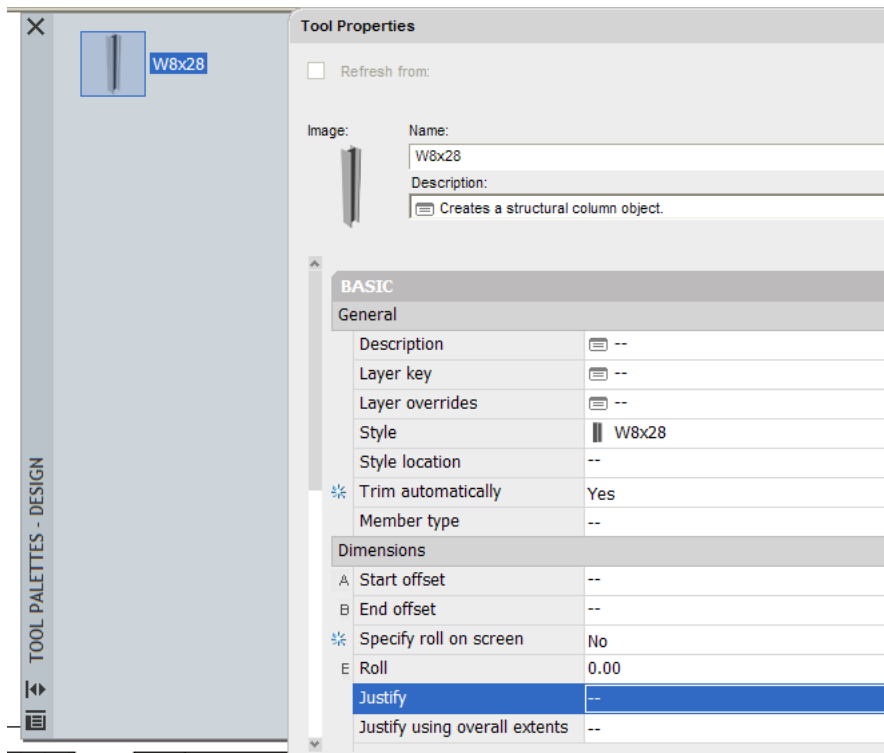
Using these same techniques you can customize other architectural geometry tools. A common frustration is adding some single doors at a width of 36" and then adding a double exterior door. If you do not adjust the width in properties before you place it, it will come in at 36" wide.



To prevent this you can RMC over the door tool on the palette and edit the properties for the desired width and other parameters.



The out of the box palettes only give you tools for the standard structural member styles. But if you have commonly used structural member styles in your drawing, you can make a more specific tool to bring them in.



With a little upfront work customizing your tools you can save time and eliminate those repeated trips to Properties while adding architectural elements.