

CS317864

## **AutoCAD: Using the AutoCAD web app (or....yes, AutoCAD, in a browser!)**

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### **Learning Objectives**

- Learn how to save from AutoCAD desktop to your web and mobile apps
- Learn how to utilize the AutoCAD web app interface with DWG files
- Learn how to share and communicate your designs quickly with the AutoCAD mobile app
- Learn how to synchronize and work with your revised designs in your AutoCAD desktop app

### **Description**

With the release of the AutoCAD including specialized toolsets subscription last year, you can now also take your CAD projects on the go with the AutoCAD web app –the browser-based version of the original AutoCAD software. Shaun Bryant (CadJedi), a LinkedIn Learning [in]structor, will show you how to save from AutoCAD directly to your web and mobile apps. You will learn how to use the AutoCAD web app in Google Chrome, learn how to view and edit designs on the fly and in the field from a tablet or smartphone and communicate your designs from the field, and back to your AutoCAD desktop app. You will also learn how to access the tools from any mobile browser, sync your files across your mobile devices, upload files on the go, and edit drawings from a mobile browser—or sync them back to the desktop for closer inspection.

### **Speaker(s)**

Shaun Bryant is an Autodesk Certified Instructor in both AutoCAD and Revit with over 31 years of industry experience. Shaun has worked as a consultant, trainer, manager, and user, with the earlier years of his CAD career in sales, pre-sales, and business development as a CAD manager/user. Shaun has been a director on the board of Autodesk User Group International (AUGI) and he is also the author of the reputable CAD blog, Not Just Cad! He is a seasoned Autodesk University AU speaker and was the AutoCAD expert

at the inaugural Autodesk University London in June 2017. He is also an Autodesk University Speaker Mentor, an AutoCAD Influencer and an Autodesk Expert Elite. He recently authored the Wiley title, 'Tinkercad For Dummies'. Known to dabble in a bit of rock 'n' roll as an established singer/songwriter, Shaun lives in Norwich in the UK and is the owner and director of CADFMconsultants Limited.

## Introduction

Some of you may know me as the AutoCAD guy who does all the AutoCAD video learning over at LinkedIn Learning (previously Lynda.com). I often get the “Are you the LinkedIn guy?” or “Are you the Lynda.com guy?” and its normally because they recognize my voice before they recognize me physically, which (sometimes) can feel a bit strange!

I’m also the owner of the blog, **Not Just CAD!**, which you will find here: -

<http://cadfmconsult.wordpress.com>

I often blog about all things CAD and sometimes other stuff, and this class is loosely based on a series of AutoCAD blogs I wrote about what was, back then, One AutoCAD, the original subscription version, which was released in March 2018, and based around the AutoCAD 2019 release.

However, the **NEW** subscription release is now **One AutoCAD with SEVEN specialized toolsets**, which was released in March 2019, and based around the AutoCAD 2020 release.

The blog content is still relevant, but you just need to remember that it is now: -

**One AutoCAD with SEVEN toolsets.**

You can find the blog series here: -

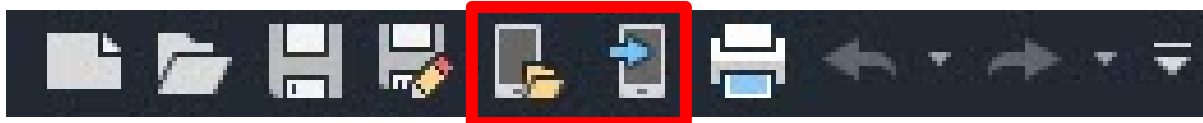
<https://cadfmconsult.wordpress.com/2018/03/22/autocad-2019-there-can-be-only-one/>

When you have a moment, maybe check them out.

In the meantime, let’s get going, shall we? And get you up and learning about **the AutoCAD web app (or....yes, AutoCAD, in a browser!)**

## 1. Learn how to save from AutoCAD 2020 to your web and mobile apps

If you are an AutoCAD subscription customer, you will have access to AutoCAD 2020, and you will have noticed that there are some new icons on the Quick Access Toolbar (QAT). These icons allow you to save DWG files to a cloud-based location that is accessible to both the AutoCAD web app and the AutoCAD mobile app.



The AutoCAD 2020 Quick Access Toolbar (QAT) with icons highlighted

These two icons (highlighted above) are called: -

**Open from Web & Mobile (OPENFROMWEBMOBILE)** and

**Save to Web & Mobile (SAVETOWEBMOBILE)** respectively.

They can be used if you are signed into your Autodesk Account, which can be accessed in the infobar, top right of the AutoCAD 2020 desktop app window.



The AutoCAD 2020 infobar with Sign In highlighted

Simply click on Sign In and follow the log in prompts. Your Autodesk Account username will then display in the infobar and you are ready to save to web & mobile.

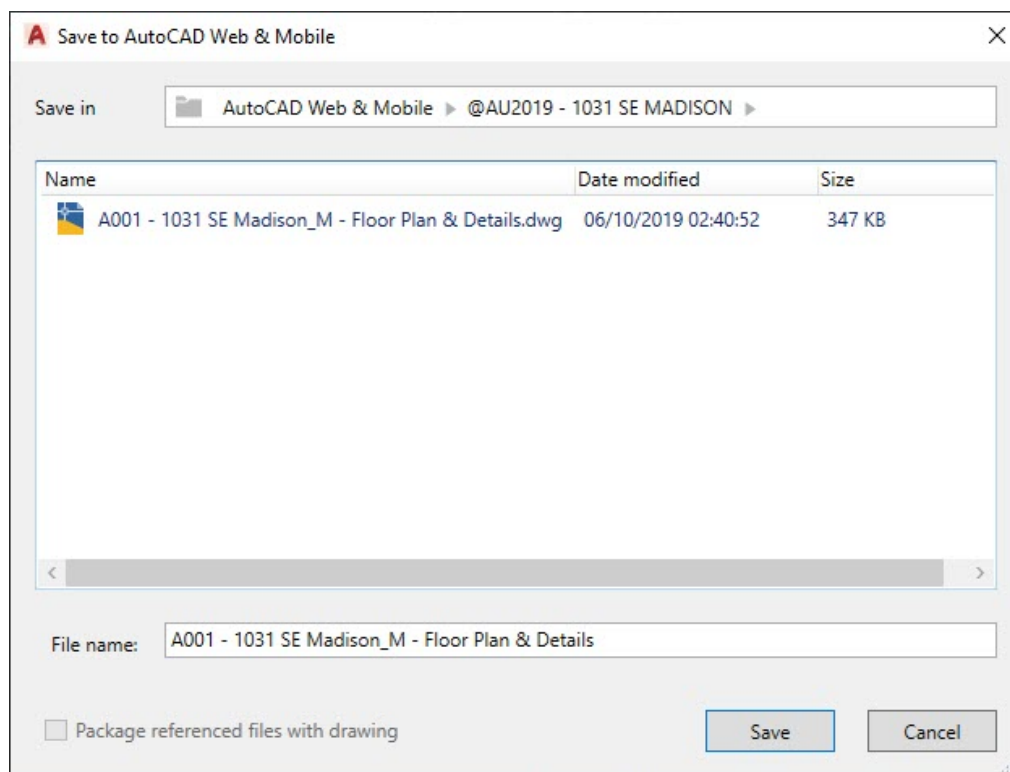


The AutoCAD 2020 infobar when signed in

We'll now go through the process of saving to web & mobile and then opening from web & mobile when in the AutoCAD 2020 desktop app.

## Save to Web & Mobile (SAVETOWEBMOBILE)

If you haven't saved to web & mobile before, when you first do so, you will be prompted to install a small AutoCAD driver file that sets up both commands; saving and opening. Once that is complete, when you click on **Save to Web & Mobile**, you will be greeted with a dialog box that shows you the file and folder structure of where your web & mobile files are stored in the cloud. You can then drill down the folder/file structure to save the file you need to the cloud.

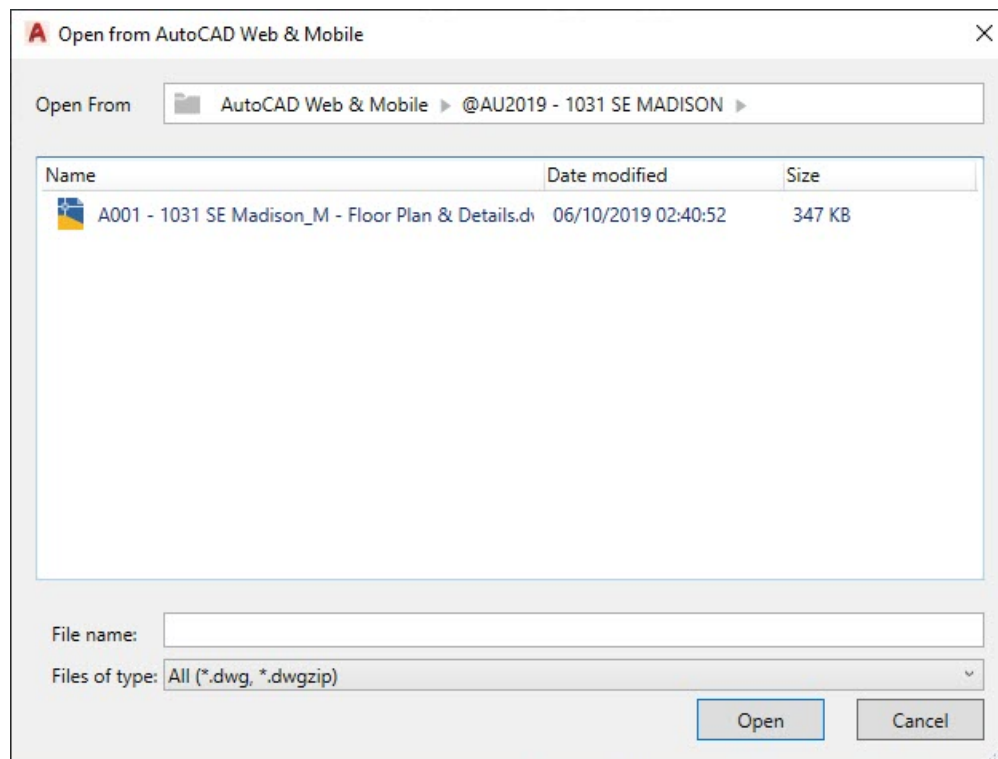


The Save to Web & Mobile dialog box  
(showing the 1031 SE Madison data set for this class)

You simply drill down to where you need to be in the cloud-based file structure and save your DWG file where it needs to go. The existing file structure is set up from the AutoCAD web app or AutoCAD mobile app, and we will look at that later in the class.

## Open from Web & Mobile (OPENFROMWEBMOBILE)

Once you have started saving DWG files to the web & mobile cloud location, you can then (obviously) open files from that location too. When you click on the **Open from Web & Mobile** icon, you will be greeted with a similar dialog box to the one when you saved to the cloud location. Again, like before, drill down to the required file location and file the file you want to open, select it, and click on **Open**.



The Open from Web & Mobile dialog box  
(showing the 1031 SE Madison data set for this class)

As you can see, the process to save to the web & mobile cloud from the AutoCAD 2020 desktop app isn't difficult. In fact, it is much like saving a DWG file locally. If you are signed into your Autodesk Account and you have downloaded the AutoCAD 2020 desktop app driver, you can easily save and open files to and from the web & mobile cloud.

This functionality gives you so much more scope with your AutoCAD designs. You can now open and save your DWG files from anywhere and use not only the AutoCAD web app but the AutoCAD mobile app. Both apps have great functionality and allow you to remove that need for hardcopy drawings going with you, and with cloud-based storage in Autodesk Drive, your files don't take up local disk space either.

**Here's a *Takeaway Tip* for you.**

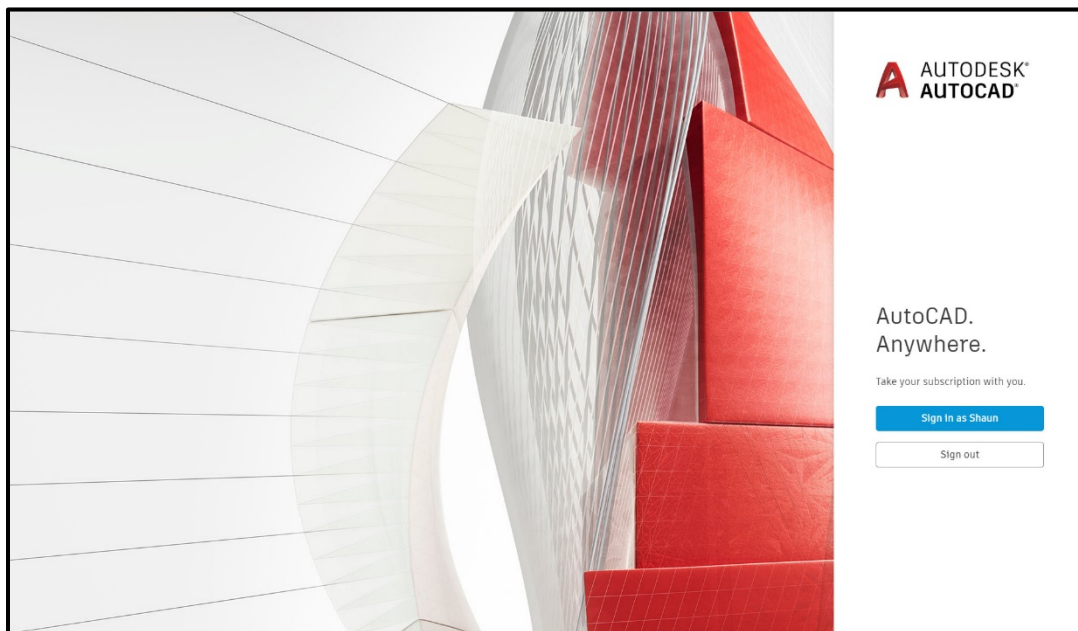
*Work with the app that most suits your device. If you are working with an iPad Pro with a larger screen, consider the AutoCAD web app, as a browser works well with that sized device. If your device is smaller, say an iPhone, use the AutoCAD mobile app as it is designed for smaller devices.*

## 2. Learn how to utilize the AutoCAD web app interface with DWG files

You will find the AutoCAD web app interface at the following URL: -

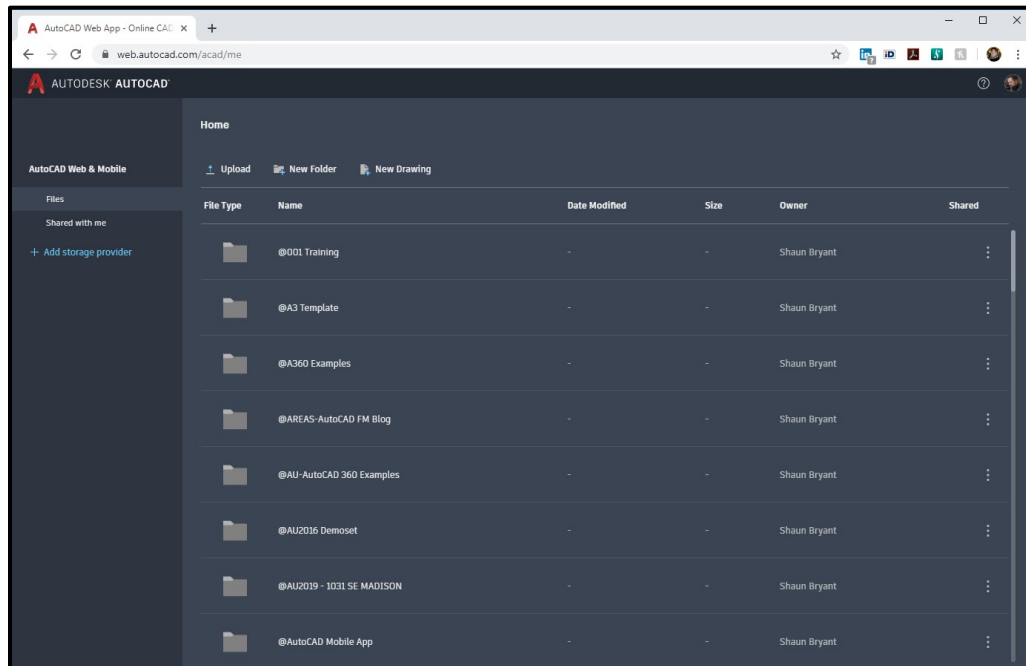
<http://web.autocad.com>

Like with all Autodesk web-based apps, you will need to be signed into your Autodesk Account. This will be an individual account or based around your organization's account. Make sure you know which account you need to use.



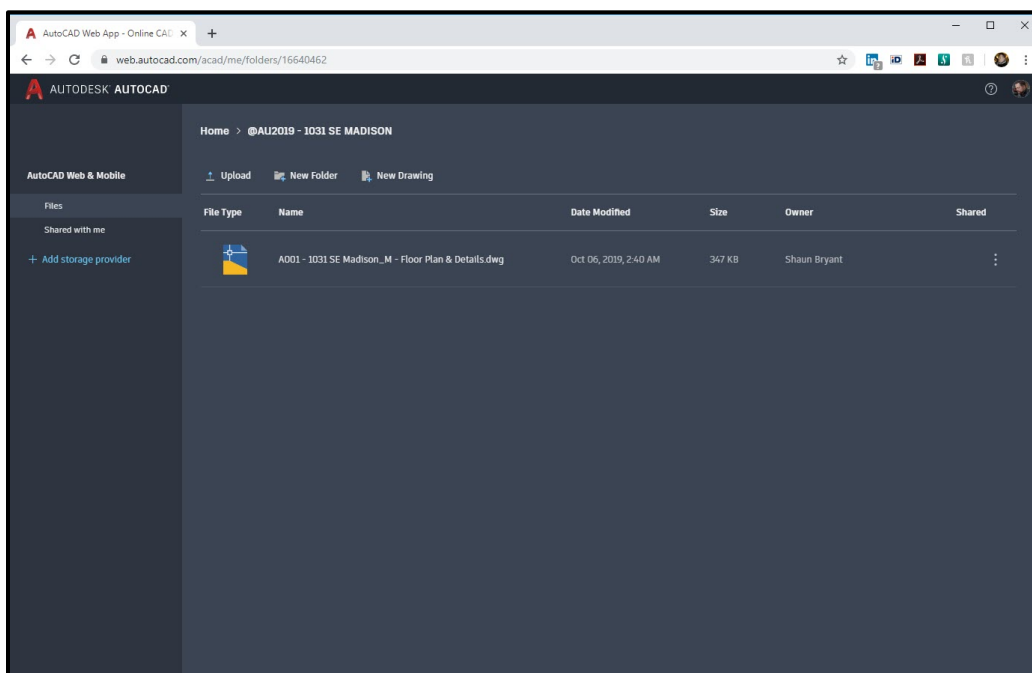
The AutoCAD web app homepage  
<http://web.autocad.com>

As you can see in the screengrab above, the AutoCAD web app is asking me to sign in as Shaun. That's because I have signed in before and my Google Chrome browser has remembered that. Upon clicking on sign in and having signed in, you will be greeted with the new file management page. This is one of the newer updates to the AutoCAD web app and it is a much cleaner, refined look to your AutoCAD web app folders and files, listed in alphanumeric order.



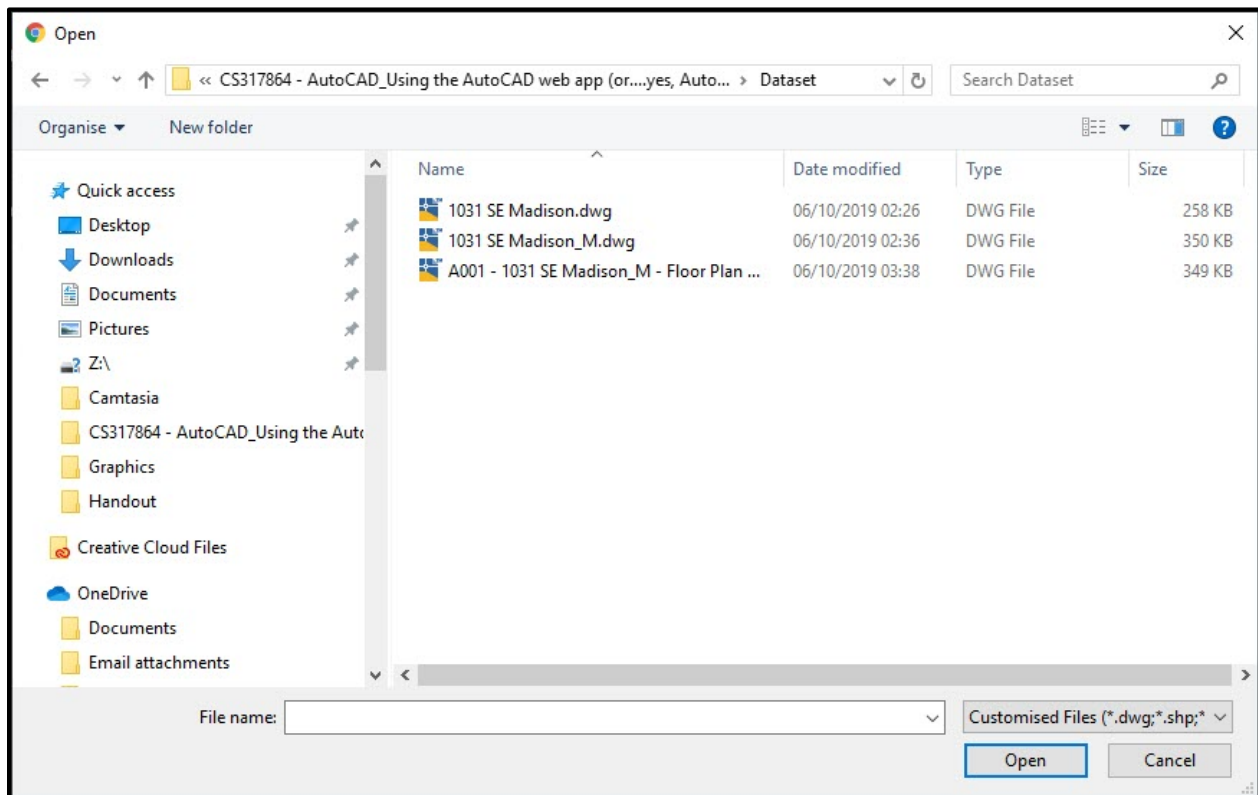
The AutoCAD web app file management page after logging in, showing the folder structure

The file management pages are in the AutoCAD 2020 dark mode colors and any individual DWG files are recognizable from their blue and yellow icons, just like in a Windows folder and file structure, as shown below: -



## Upload (client/server)

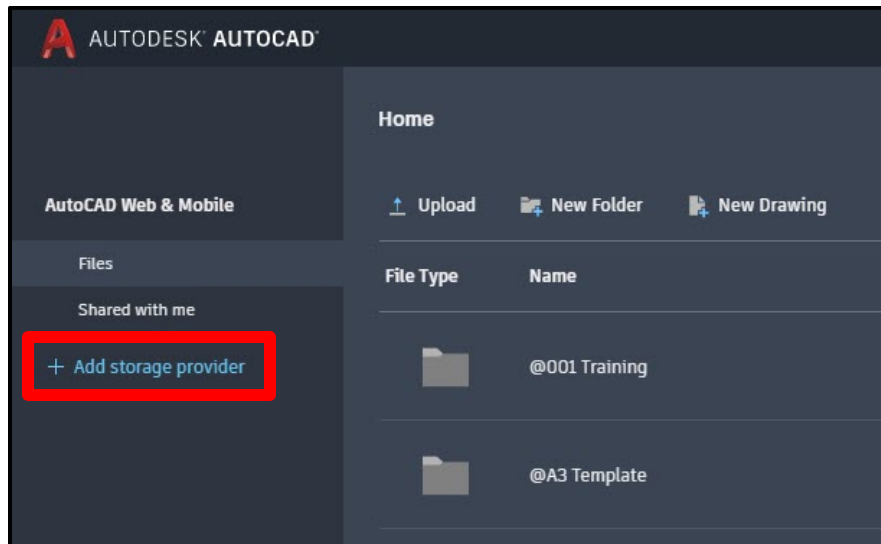
You can upload any DWG to the AutoCAD web app folders from your local drive (client) or perhaps a network drive (server). Just click on **Upload** and select a file, following the usual instructions and prompts in the dialog box. This file can come from your hard drive, a server drive, or even specific project drives on an intranet or extranet location.



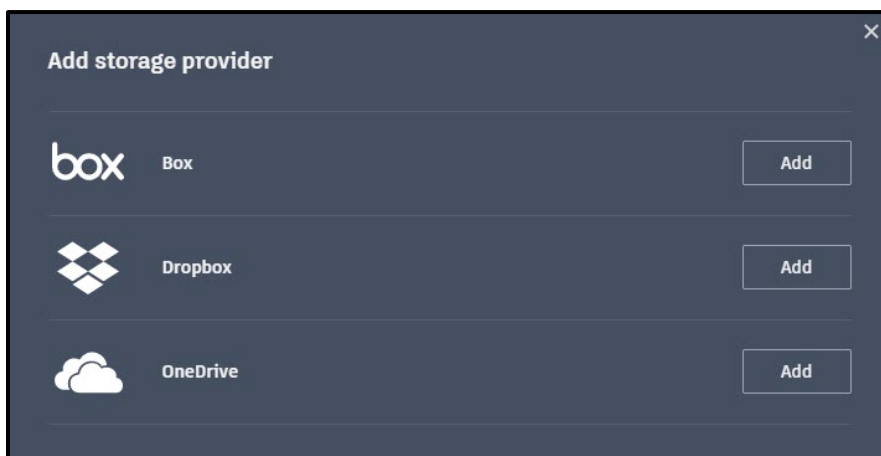
The AutoCAD web app Upload dialog box, showing DWG files to be uploaded to the Web & Mobile folders

## Upload (cloud)

You can also upload any DWG to the AutoCAD web app folders from the cloud. You simply need to add a storage provider; such as Box, Dropbox or OneDrive. Go to the **+ Add storage provider** option on the file management page when you first log in to the AutoCAD web app.

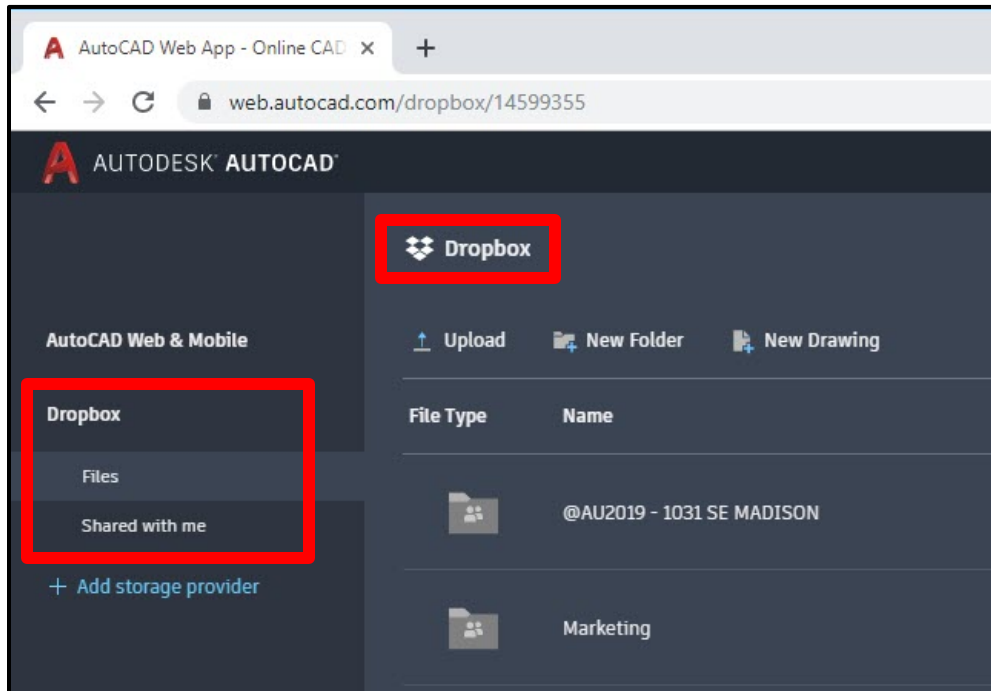


You will then be prompted with a dialog box that allows you to select your preferred storage provider.



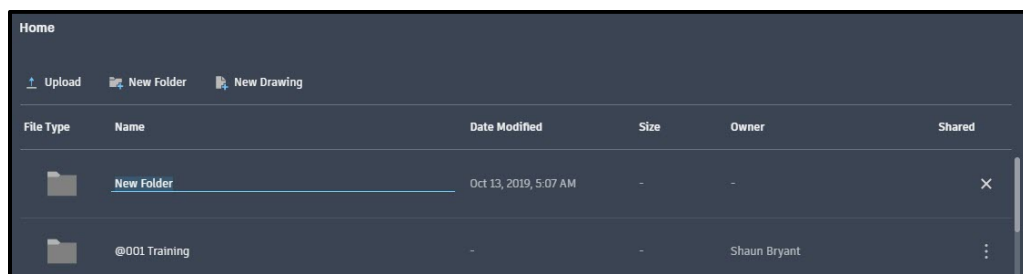
Upon selecting the storage provider, simply follow the prompts to get it all set up.

You will then be connected to your preferred cloud-based provider (in my case, Dropbox), and you can use the files you have stored in the cloud. You can also disconnect from your provider at any time and go back to using your AutoCAD Web & Mobile folders.



## New Folder

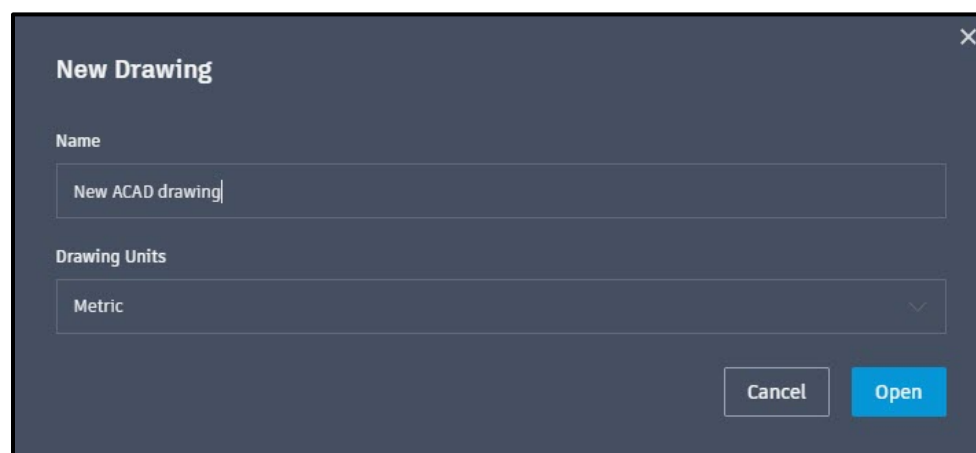
You can add new folders to your existing Web & Mobile folders simply by clicking on the **New Folder** icon. You will then be prompted to name the folder in the AutoCAD web app screen in your browser.



The AutoCAD web app showing a new folder waiting to be named

## New Drawing

New drawings can be added too, with a new file name and you can also set the drawing units to Metric or Imperial.



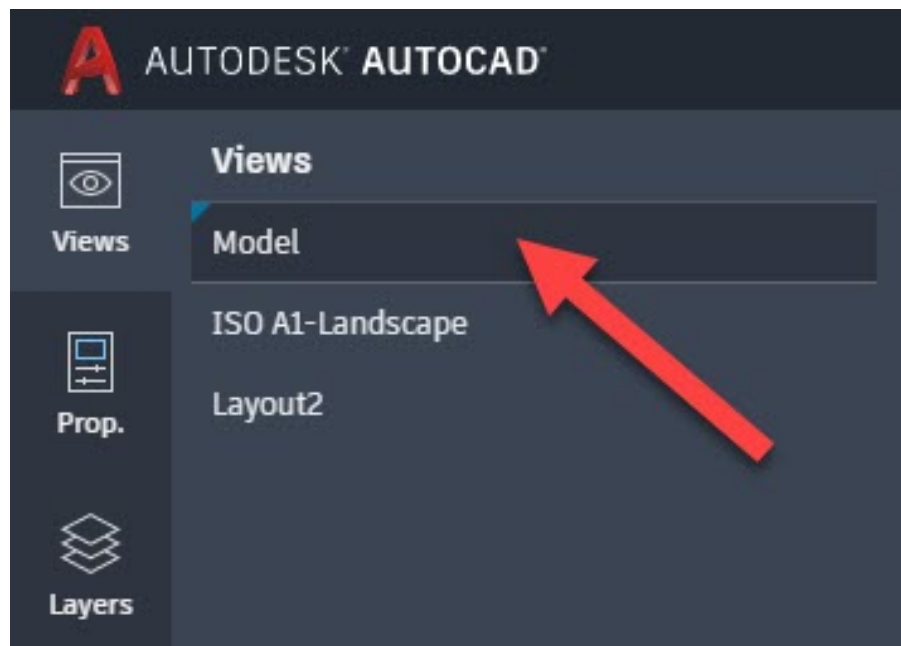
The AutoCAD web app showing a new drawing waiting to be named

## Views and Properties

The new AutoCAD web app allows you to use views and properties in your DWG files in the same way as you would in the AutoCAD desktop app. You have Modelspace (**Model**) and Paperspace (**Layout**) and you can alter your object properties and work with layers in your AutoCAD web app drawings.

### Working with views

You can access **Model** and **Layout** views easily in the AutoCAD web app. You will find them in the **Views** section of the left-hand panel in the AutoCAD web app browser screen. Click on the **Views** icon and the views will be displayed in a list.

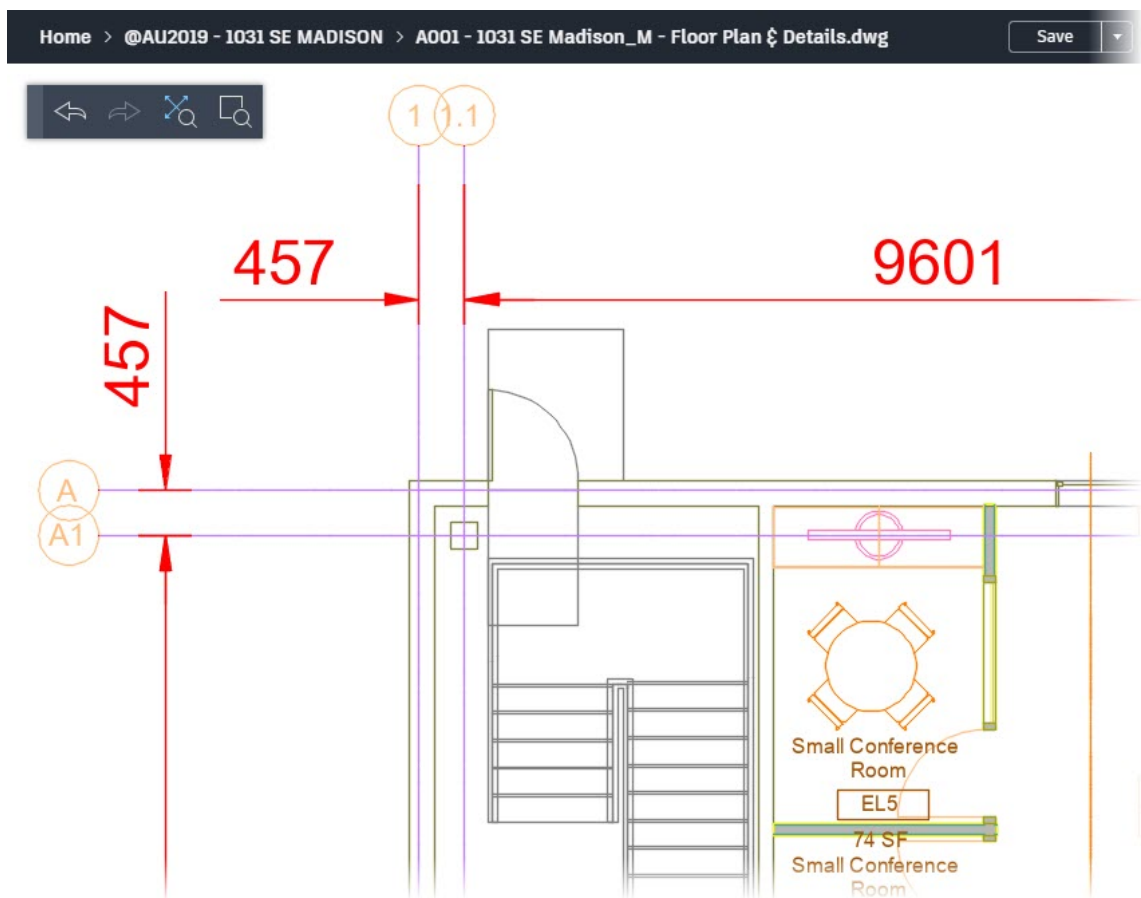


With the Views icon selected, you can specify which AutoCAD web app view to be displayed (Model is the current view)

You can click on each view to make it current, and the currently displayed view is highlighted with a small blue triangle shape in the top left corner of the view name.

## The WYSIWYG display in your layout tabs

Whilst the AutoCAD web app always defaults to **SIMPLEX.SHX** as its font, you will find that in your layout and model tabs, it still adheres to the **What You See Is What You Get (WYSIWYG)**, displaying all the line thicknesses you have set, along with colors and dashed and dotted lines, as well as uploaded annotation styles (where applicable).

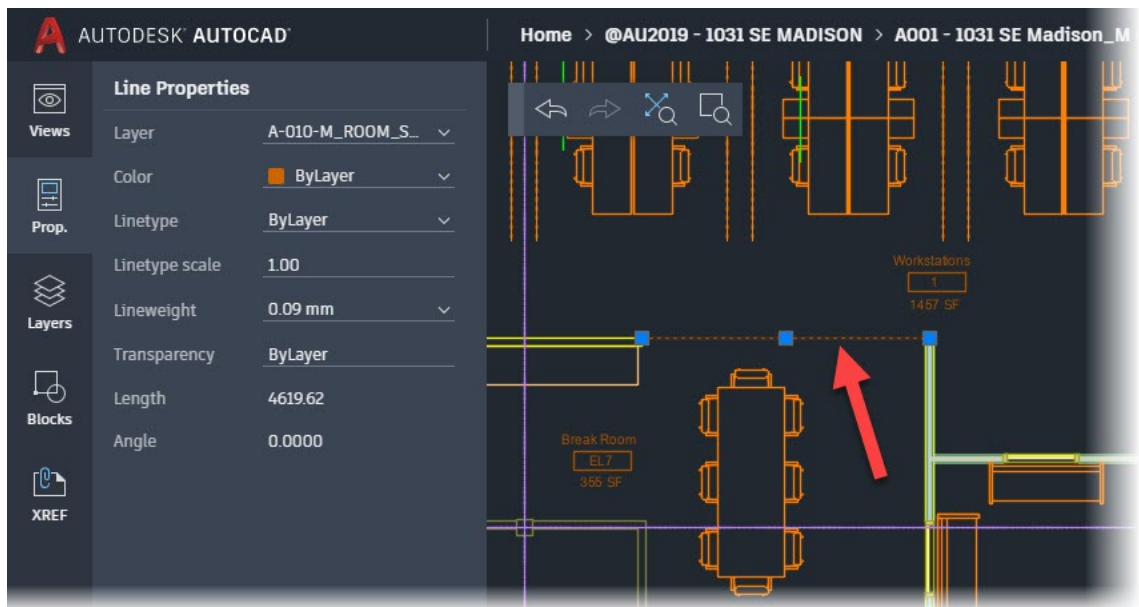


A layout view in the AutoCAD web app, displaying not only the WYSIWYG line thicknesses, but also the fonts in the uploaded text styles

## Changing the properties of objects

Object properties can be changed easily in the AutoCAD web app too. Working in the Model view, simply click on an object as you would in the AutoCAD desktop app. The object will highlight and display the appropriate grips, just like the desktop app.

Then, all you need to do is select the **Prop.** icon in the left-hand panel in the web app. All the object properties and the layer name will be displayed, as shown below. The line selected in the web app is highlighted in the usual way; dashed and with three grips. The web app even displays **Line Properties** in the panel showing the object type.



The properties of a selected object being displayed in the AutoCAD web app.  
The line selected is highlighted (dashed) and grips are displayed and the Properties panel 'knows' the object type

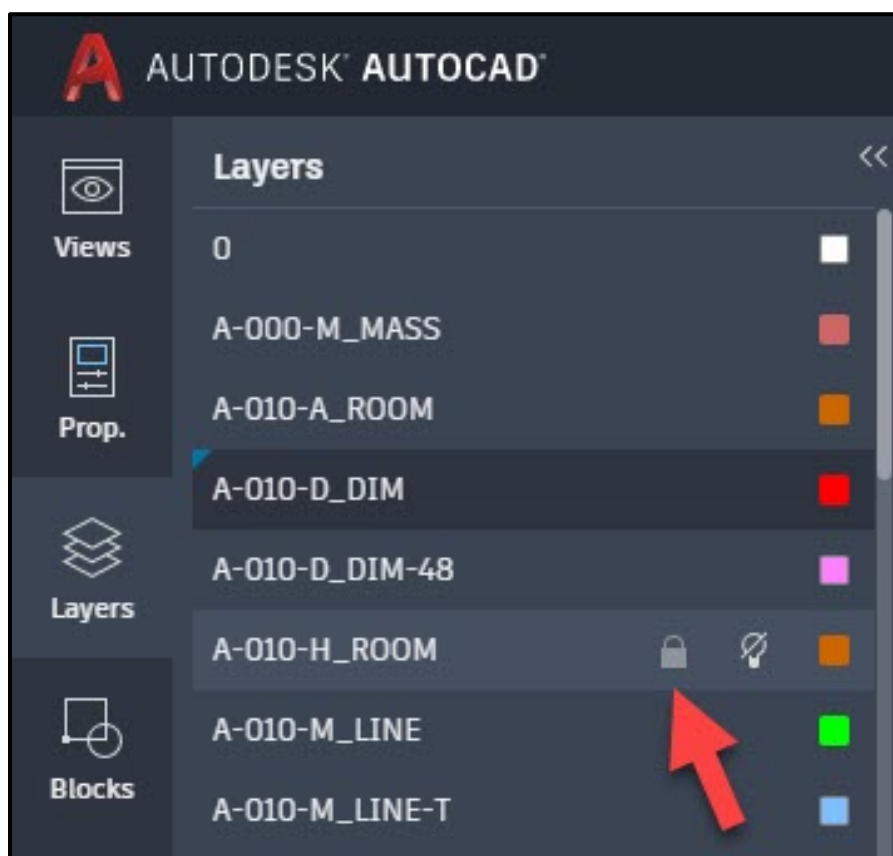
As you can see, the three main properties; **Layer**, **Color** and **Linetype** can be changed by clicking on the down arrow symbol next to each individual property value. To change **Linetype scale**, you click on the property value and update it accordingly.

## Using Layers in the AutoCAD web app

Layers in your AutoCAD web app drawings are fundamental to your design, just as they are in the AutoCAD desktop app. The approach to working with layers in the web app is subtly different to the desktop app, but the visual output is the same. Just like in **Views**, the current layer is displayed with a small blue triangle in the top-left corner of the layer name.

### Locking a layer

Using the **Layers** icon in the left-hand panel, you can hover over a layer name in the layer list and the layer settings display, simply click on the padlock icon (just like in the desktop app), and the padlock will show as bold, and lock the layer.



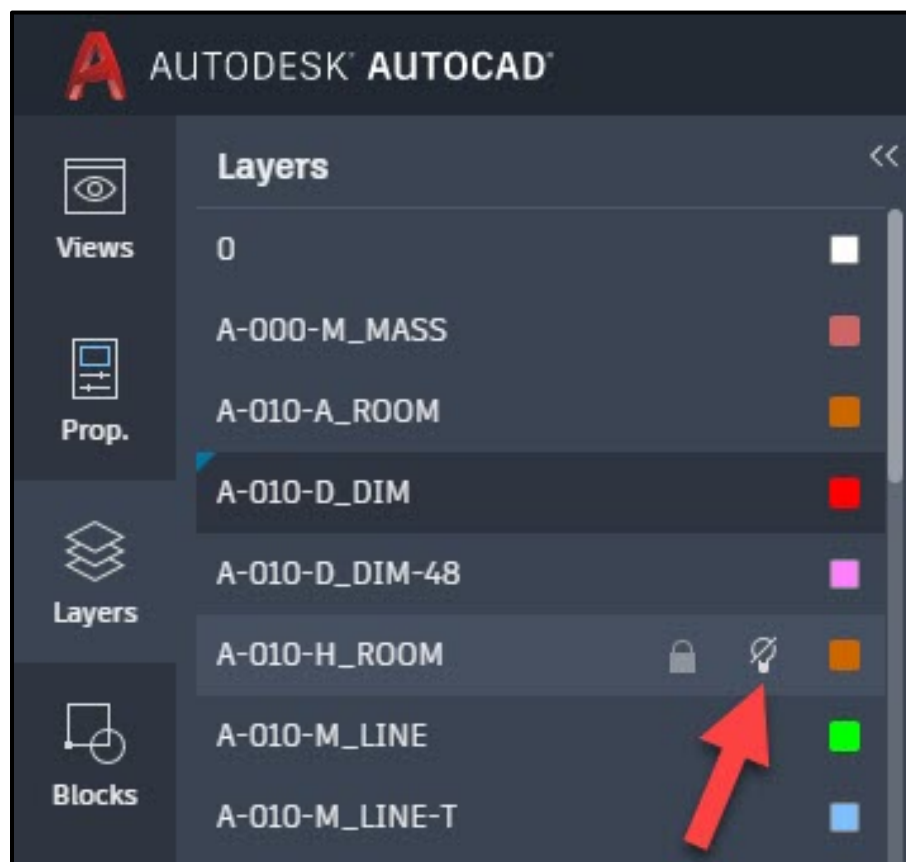
The layer of a selected object can be locked by highlighting the layer name in the layer list and clicking on the padlock symbol.

The current layer is **A-010-D\_DIM** which is shown highlighted with the small blue triangle.

## Changing layer visibility

In the AutoCAD web app, layer visibility is a simple **ON/OFF** function, displayed as a lightbulb in the layer list, just like in the AutoCAD desktop app. There is no Freeze/Thaw functionality at present.

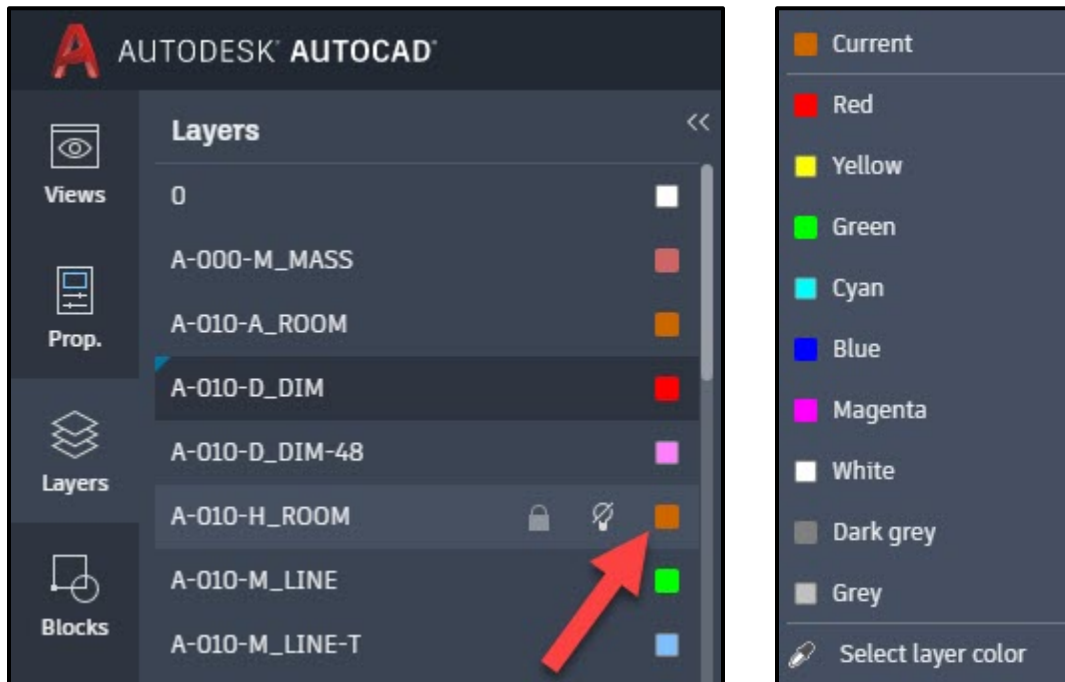
When a layer is switched off in the layers list, the lightbulb symbol goes bold and has a line through it and the layer does not display in the AutoCAD web app drawing area.



The visibility of a layer can be changed by highlighting the layer name in the layer list and clicking on the lightbulb symbol

## Changing layer color

Just like in the AutoCAD desktop app, layer color is one of the most important visual denominators in any DWG file. You can adjust layer color easily in the AutoCAD web app, just by clicking on the color button for any layer.



The color of a layer can be changed by highlighting the layer name in the layer list and clicking on the color button in the color list provided

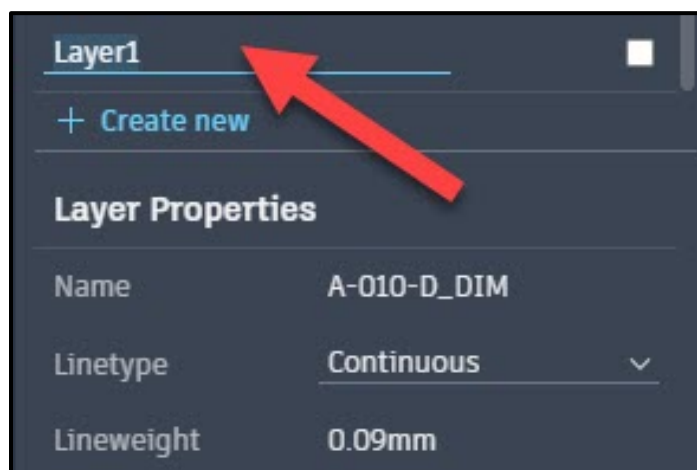
When clicking on the color button, you are then offered the color list which, whilst not extensive like the desktop app, gives you enough colors to work with. You can also select a layer color from any existing drawing too, using the **Select layer color** tool.

## Creating a new layer

Creating a new layer in the AutoCAD web app is very easy too. In fact, I think it is easier than the desktop app! All you do is click in the **+Create new** button at the bottom of the layer list in the left-hand panel. Make sure you have Layers selected in the menu buttons on the left and you will find it easily. The text is **blue** like a URL to highlight it.

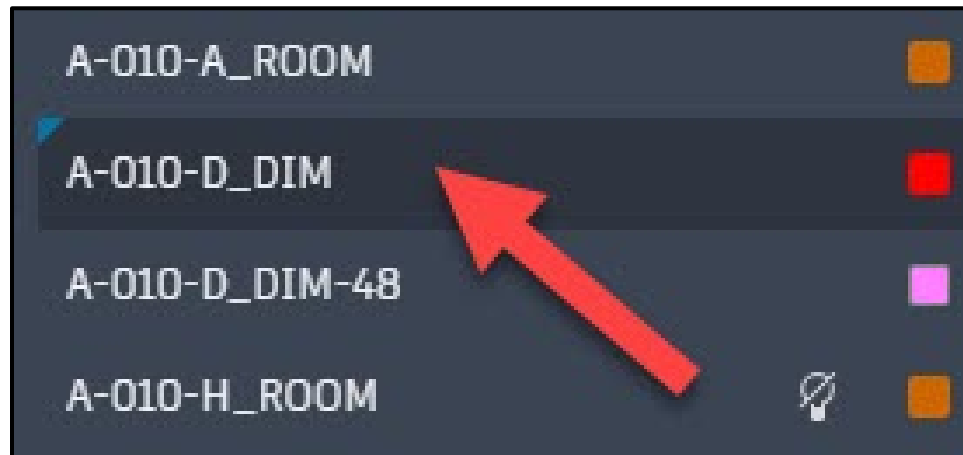


When you click on the **+ Create new** button, you can then name the layer and then click on it and assign its properties.



## Setting the current drafting layer

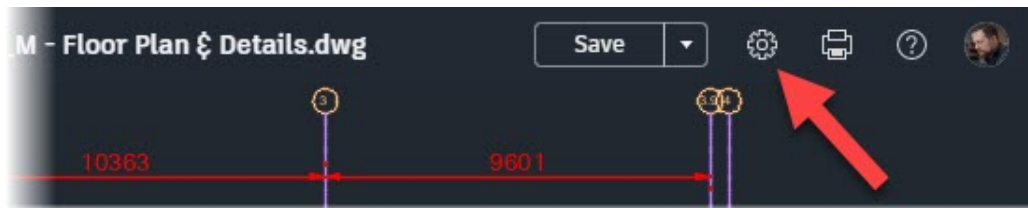
To set the current drafting layer in the AutoCAD web app, you simply select the layer in the layer list. You will see it highlight by way of a small **blue** triangle in the top left corner of the layer name.



Click on the layer name in the layer list to make it the current drafting layer.  
You will see the small blue triangle (top left) highlight the current drafting layer.  
The current layer here is **A-010-D\_DIM**.

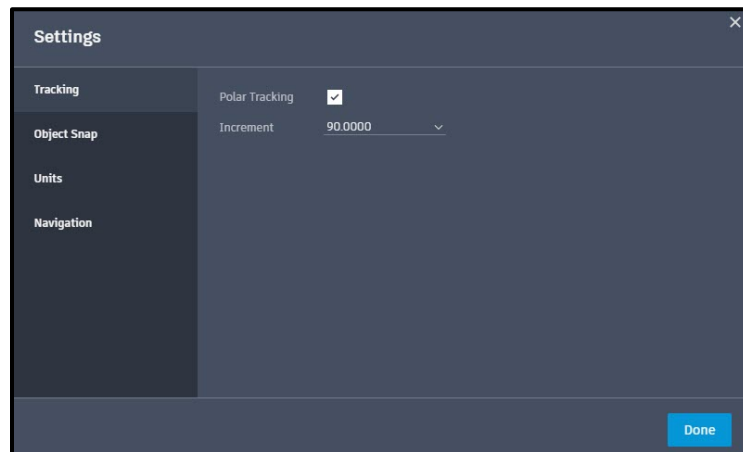
## Using Settings in the AutoCAD web app

Setting your settings in the AutoCAD web app is all done in one place. Select the settings icon in the top-right corner of the AutoCAD web app screen (it looks like a gear wheel, like it does in the AutoCAD desktop app for Workspaces) and it all appears in a dialog box, where you can select the **FOUR** different setting headings; **Tracking**, **Object Snaps**, **Units** and **Navigation** (you will find that Object Snaps is normally the default Settings heading).



The Settings icon (gearwheel) in the top-right corner of the AutoCAD web app screen.

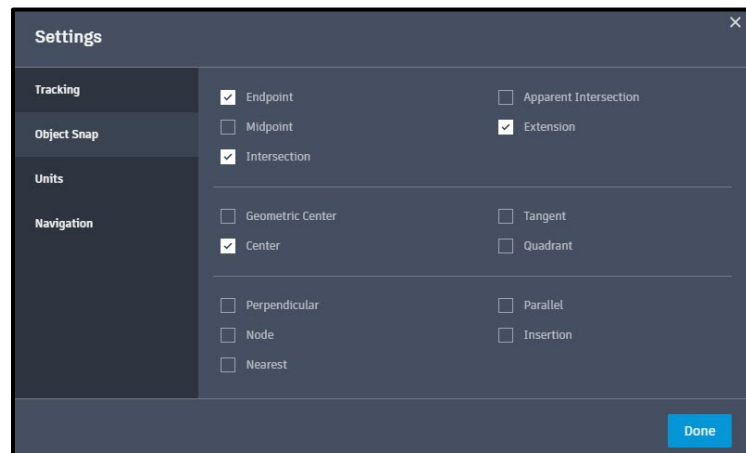
## Tracking



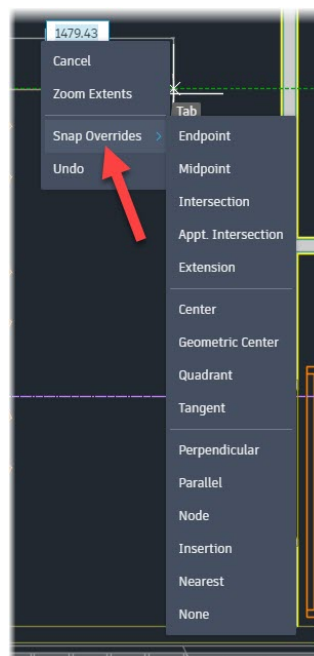
In order to set your tracking (**Polar** is shown switched on in the tickbox), all you need to do is select **Tracking** in the Settings dialog box. Switch on Polar, if required, and then select the tracking angle increment. Most required tracking angles are provided in the dropdown list for you. Just click on **Done** to return to the web app.

## Object Snaps

Object snaps are also easily set in the AutoCAD web app. Select **Object Snaps** in the Settings dialog box. Tick the object snaps you want to be your **RUNNING** object snaps in the AutoCAD desktop app and click on **Done**.

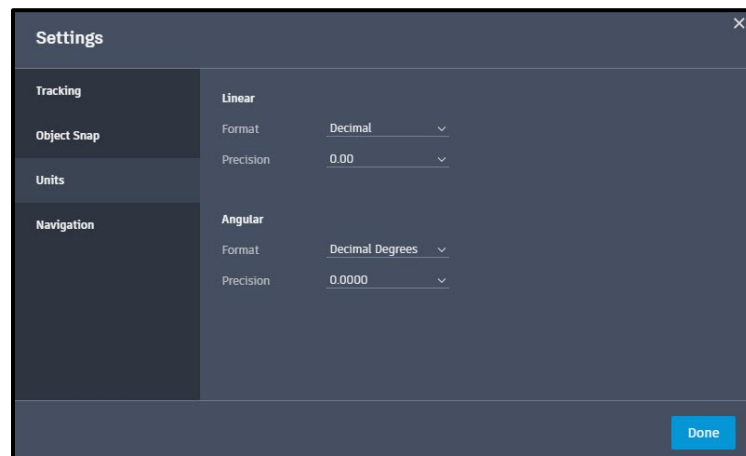


Snap overrides are activated in the same way as the AutoCAD desktop app with a right click when you are drafting, as shown below: -



## Setting your units in your drawings

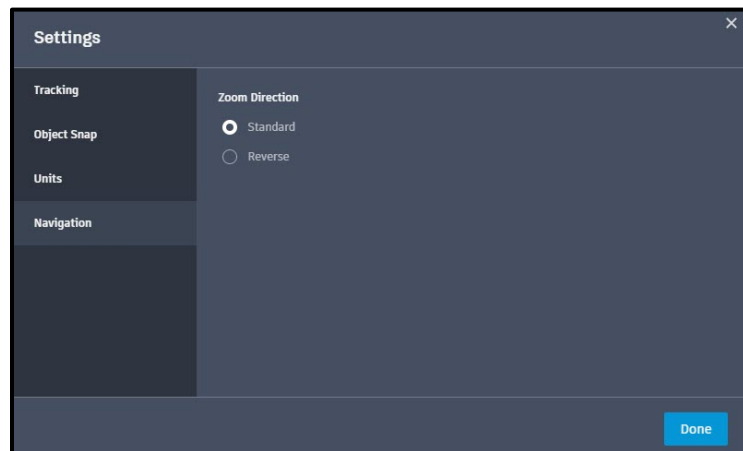
Again, setting units in the AutoCAD web app is easy. You will find it under **Units** in the Settings dialog box.



You can set all the required unit settings; **Linear** Format, **Linear** Precision, **Angular** Format and **Angular** Precision. All these settings are set from pulldown menus, by clicking on the down arrow symbol for each setting. Once you have them set to your requirements, click on **Done** in the dialog box.

## Setting your zoom direction

One of the cool features in the AutoCAD web app is the ability to alter your zoom direction. Often, in web-based apps, you will find that the zoom direction is the reverse of its related desktop app. Not so in the AutoCAD web app. You can set your zoom direction either way, simply by setting it in the **Navigation** section of the Settings dialog box.



As you can see above, I prefer my zoom direction to be set to the **Standard** setting, which replicates the zoom direction in the AutoCAD desktop app. If you set it to the alternative setting, **Reverse**, you will find that the zoom direction is the opposite of the AutoCAD desktop app.

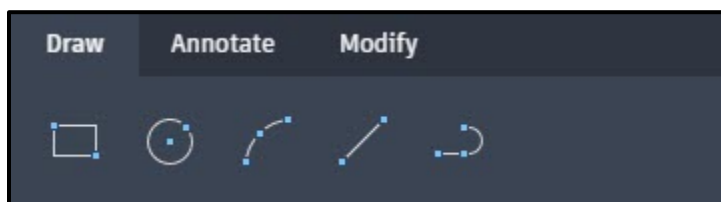
Once you have your preferred navigation direction set, click on **Done** in the Settings dialog box.

## Drafting and modifying in the AutoCAD web app

The AutoCAD web app allows you to draft effectively in the browser, using similar workflows and processes that you find in the AutoCAD desktop app. You will find all the current drafting and modify commands in the AutoCAD web app in the lower left panel on the AutoCAD web app screen.

They are broken down into **THREE** tabs; **Draw**, **Annotate** and **Modify**.

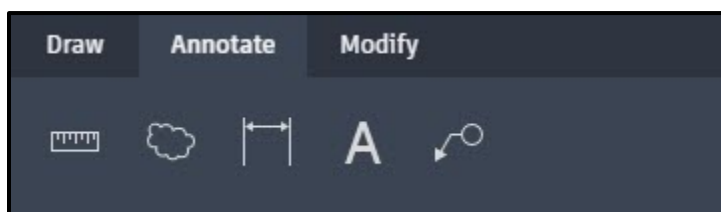
### Draw



The **Draw** tab provides you with the following drafting commands; **Rectangle**, **Circle**, **Arc**, **Line** and **Polyline**.

When you use these commands, the workflows are remarkably like the command workflows in the AutoCAD desktop app, especially with the new command line feature now available in the AutoCAD web app. The icons are also the same as the AutoCAD desktop app, thus providing the user with a common user interface and experience when using the AutoCAD web app.

### Annotate

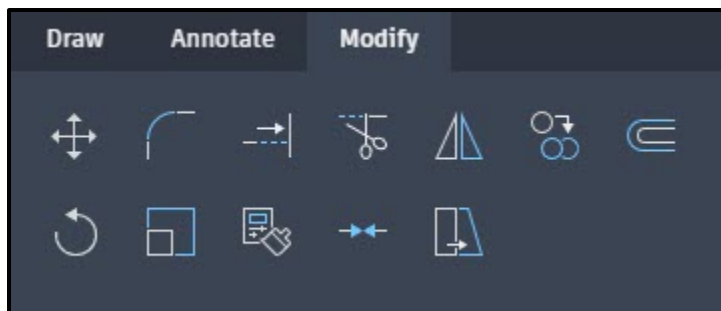


The **Annotate** tab provides you with the following annotation commands; **Measure**, **Revcloud**, **Dimension (linear/aligned, angular, baseline and continue)**, **Multiline Text** and **Multileader**.

Annotating drawings in the AutoCAD web app is also remarkably like annotating in the AutoCAD desktop app. This is testament to the Autodesk web app developers, who are working hard to ensure that the user interface experience in the AutoCAD web app is very close to the desktop app. This then gives the user an interface that is not difficult to learn.

What is also great in the web app is the ability to use the 'select objects' workflow for dimensioning, like the **DIMENSION** tool in the desktop app. You can hover over an object in the web app and you can then click on it to add a dimension with the web app recognizing the object selected. This makes for a quick, effective method of dimensioning in your drawings.

## Modify



You will also notice that there are numerous modify commands in the **Modify** tab in the AutoCAD web app. The following modify commands are available; **Move**, **Fillet (only with ZERO radius at present)**, **Extend**, **Trim**, **Mirror**, **Copy**, **Offset**, **Rotate**, **Scale**, **Matchprop (matching object properties)**, **Join** and **Stretch**.

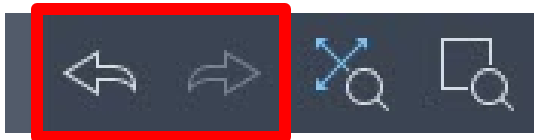
Again, these modify commands are remarkably like the command workflows in the AutoCAD desktop app, especially with the new command line feature. Like the drafting icons, they are also the same as the AutoCAD desktop app, thus providing the user with a common user interface and experience when using the AutoCAD web app.

## View controls and keyboard entry

There are various view controls and keyboard entry shortcuts available in the AutoCAD web app. As it is a browser-based app, some of these are limited, whereas in the desktop app you have full keyboard support.

### Using Undo and Redo

There are the usual **Undo** and **Redo** icons available in the AutoCAD web app and they can be found at the top of the drawing area of the app in a small toolbar.



### Zoom Extents and Zoom Window

**Zoom Extents** and **Zoom Window** are also found in the same toolbar and their workflow is the same as the AutoCAD desktop app, providing you with essential navigation and magnification of your AutoCAD web app drawings.



### Keyboard shortcuts

Some browser-based applications don't support the usual keyboard shortcuts. We all remember when Google Docs did not support some of the more commonly used keyboard shortcuts, right? Google have fixed that now and you will also be pleased to know that the AutoCAD web app supports the following standard Windows keyboard shortcuts: -

- **CTRL+Z = Undo**
- **CTRL+C = Copy**
- **CTRL+V = Paste**

These are also Apple keyboard compatible: -

- **CMD+Z = Undo**
- **CMD+C = Copy**
- **CMD+V = Paste**

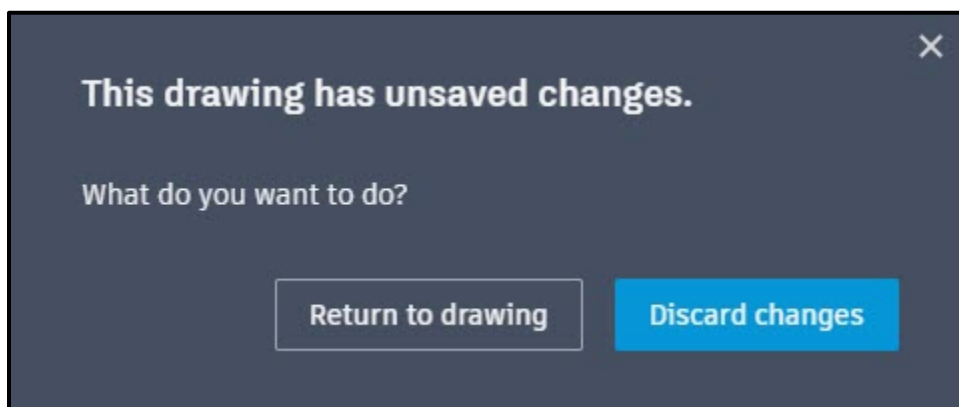
## Saving your drawings to the cloud

The AutoCAD web app provides you with a **Save** button. This allows you to save any changes to your drawing via the web app. These updated drawings can then, in turn, be opened in the AutoCAD desktop app if you wish.



The dropdown arrow also provides you with a **Save As** option so that you can save an existing web app drawing with a different filename.

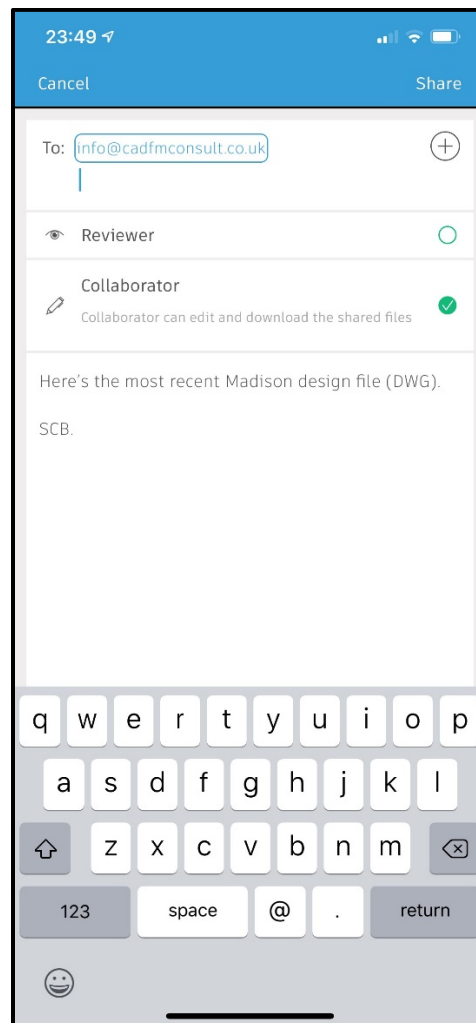
When you click on the **Save/Save As** button, make sure you see the **Saved** prompt before you use the **Back** button on your browser, otherwise those changes won't be saved. The AutoCAD web app will warn you if you try to go back and the save hasn't been fully implemented with the dialog box below: -



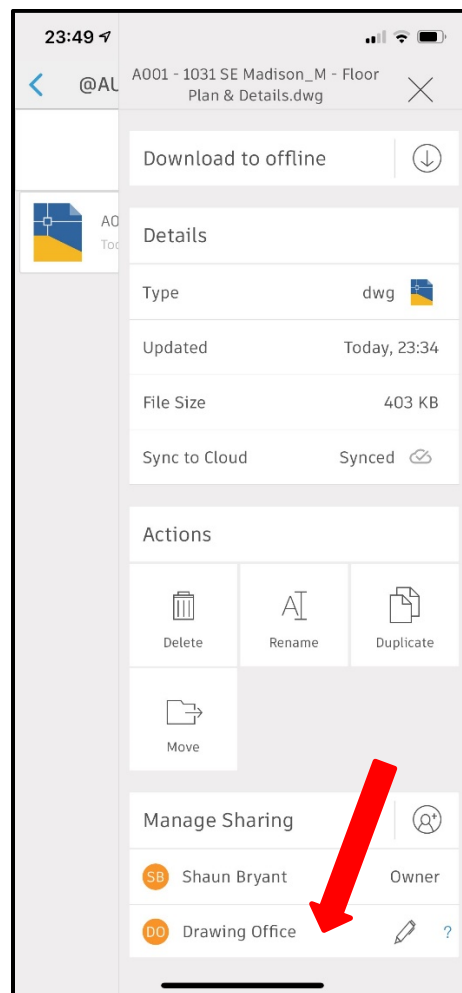
### 3. Sharing and communicating your designs quickly with the AutoCAD mobile app

When you save to **Web & Mobile** from the AutoCAD desktop app, the DWG files are saved to a location that is accessible to not only the AutoCAD web app, but also the AutoCAD mobile app. This gives you incredible mobility with AutoCAD. Not only can you work with AutoCAD in a browser, but you can also work 'on the road' via a phone or a tablet.

Drawings and any subsequent design changes can be shared from the mobile app and this then reflects in the web app as well. The graphic below shows a DWG file being shared from the AutoCAD mobile app using an iPhone XS Max.



When you receive the email saying that a drawing has been shared via the **MOBILE** app with you as either a reviewer or a collaborator, when you click on the 'view' option in the email, it will automatically take you to the AutoCAD web app to view the file. Simply log in (if you aren't already logged in) and the file will be opened for you in the web app, ready for you to work on the shared DWG file. It is also then available in the AutoCAD desktop app, should you need to perform more elaborate edits in the drawing.



You will notice the reviewers and collaborators listed in the online drawing details in the AutoCAD mobile app (as shown above), with you, the originator of the drawing share, listed as the Owner of the DWG file.

This is also shown with a small icon next to the drawing file in the file listing in the AutoCAD mobile app too, as shown below: -



#### 4. Syncing and working with your revised designs in the AutoCAD desktop app

Once you have worked with your designs in the AutoCAD web app and/or the AutoCAD mobile app, there will come a time when you will be back in the office and want to use your AutoCAD desktop app to perform more detailed drafting and edits and need the deeper functionality of the AutoCAD desktop app to do this.

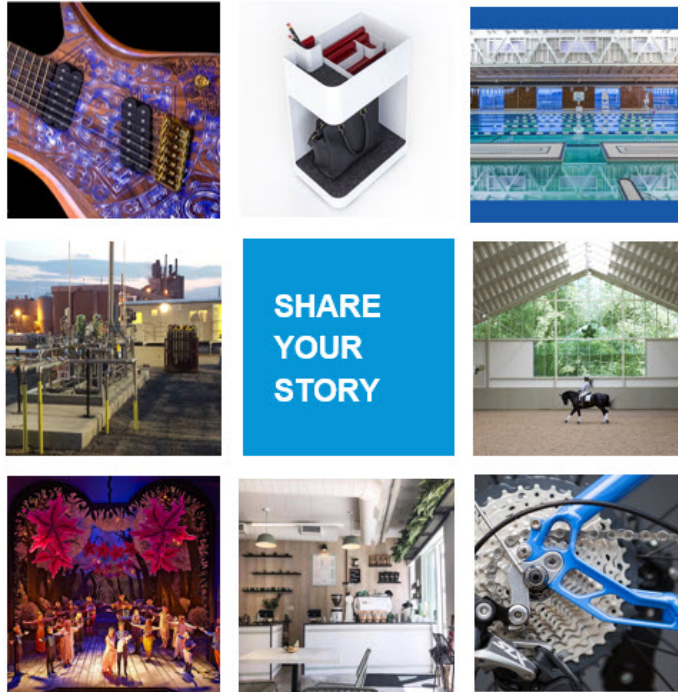
As the Web & Mobile files are saved to the same location, these revised files can be opened from the Web & Mobile cloud location easily in the AutoCAD desktop app using the following command: -

Open from Web & Mobile (**OPENFROMWEBMOBILE**)

So, now you have come full circle, saving from the desktop app to the Web & Mobile cloud location, performing edits in the AutoCAD web app and/or the AutoCAD mobile app, and then returning to the AutoCAD desktop app.

This kind of functionality allows you to become totally mobile with AutoCAD, providing you have an Autodesk account and internet access, and use of the Google Chrome browser. It gives you, as a designer, an incredible amount of flexibility and, more importantly, the mobility to, quite literally **MAKE ANYTHING, anywhere**.

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See the AutoCAD stories here:

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Thank you for attending my class!

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