Photorealistic Rendering Techniques in Autodesk[®] AutoCAD [®]

David Cohn

Technical Publishing Manager – 4D Technologies/CADLearning





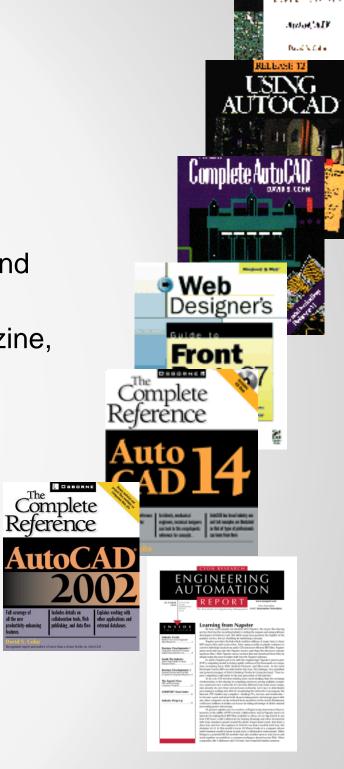
David S. Cohn

- Technical Publishing Manager4D Technologies/CADLearning
- Contributing editor Desktop Engineering
- Former editor of CADalyst, Engineering Automation Report and CADCAMNet
- Frequent contributor to Computer Graphics World, PC Magazine, and others
- Registered architect—30+ years experience
- AutoCAD experience—25+ years
- Author of numerous books & articles

COMPUTER GRAPHICS WORLD







Class summary

Do you want to create professional-looking renderings? Learn how to convert your 3D Autodesk AutoCAD models into finished, photorealistic renderings using tools already built into AutoCAD software. In this class, you learn how to use lighting, material, and rendering tools in AutoCAD to place and control lights, add and adjust materials and textures, and control the surrounding model environment to produce eye-catching images. You see how to take real-world objects and quickly create custom materials, and produce reusable models of light fixtures that behave like real-world lights. You also see how to take full advantage of the Autodesk 360 cloud-based rendering service to create beautiful renderings quickly and easily, and even produce rendered animations entirely inside AutoCAD.



Key learning objectives

At the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Add lights and model actual light fixtures
- Attach and modify materials and create custom materials
- Control the rendering environment to simulate natural lighting and atmospheric effects
- Render on your computer or in the cloud



Rendering Basics

Rendering in AutoCAD

- Tools have existed for many years but were completely revised in AutoCAD 2007
 - Based on the mental ray® rendering engine
 - Use the same material library as other Autodesk products
 - Use render presets to quickly create renderings
 - Can also create walkthroughs and flythroughs





Rendering caveats

If you used rendering tools in earlier versions of AutoCAD

- Lights and materials are different since ACAD2007
 - If working with older drawings
 - CONVERTOLDLIGHTS converts older lights to new format
 - CONVERTOLDMATERIALS converts older materials to new format
 - Procedural materials and material mapping settings do not migrate
 - Material by ACI no longer supported
 - Obsolete landscape commands (LSNEW, LSLIB, LSEDIT)



While working in AutoCAD

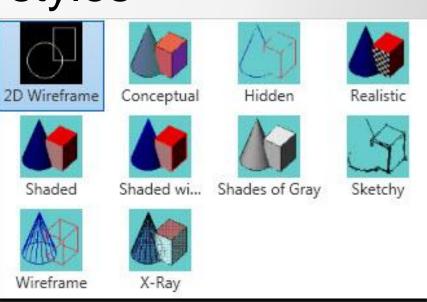
Display models with realistic materials, lighting, and shadows.

Depends on the current active visual style

Visual style – a collection of settings that control the display of edges and shading in a viewport

- AutoCAD comes with 10 predefined visual styles
 - 2D wireframe
 - 3D wireframe
 - 3D hidden
 - Conceptual
 - Realistic

- Shaded with Edges
- Shades of Gray
- Sketchy
- Wireframe
- X-Ray
- You can create and save your own





Rendering Basics

Preparing drawings for rendering can be a very time consuming process

- You may spend more time adjusting camera positions, lighting, and materials than actually building the model
- Multiple light sources and shadows require fast computers



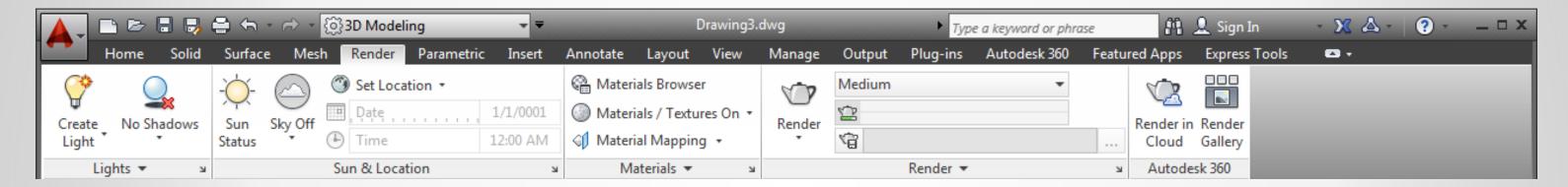
4 conceptual steps of rendering

- Create the model
- Place lights
- Attach materials to objects
- Render the image
- 5th step: adjust camera positions

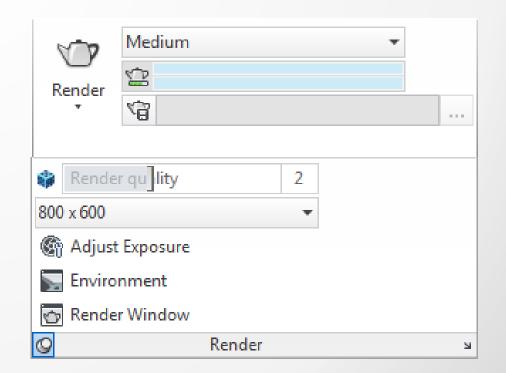


The Rendering Tools

All tools are located on the Render ribbon



Use tools in the Render panel to quickly create a rendering







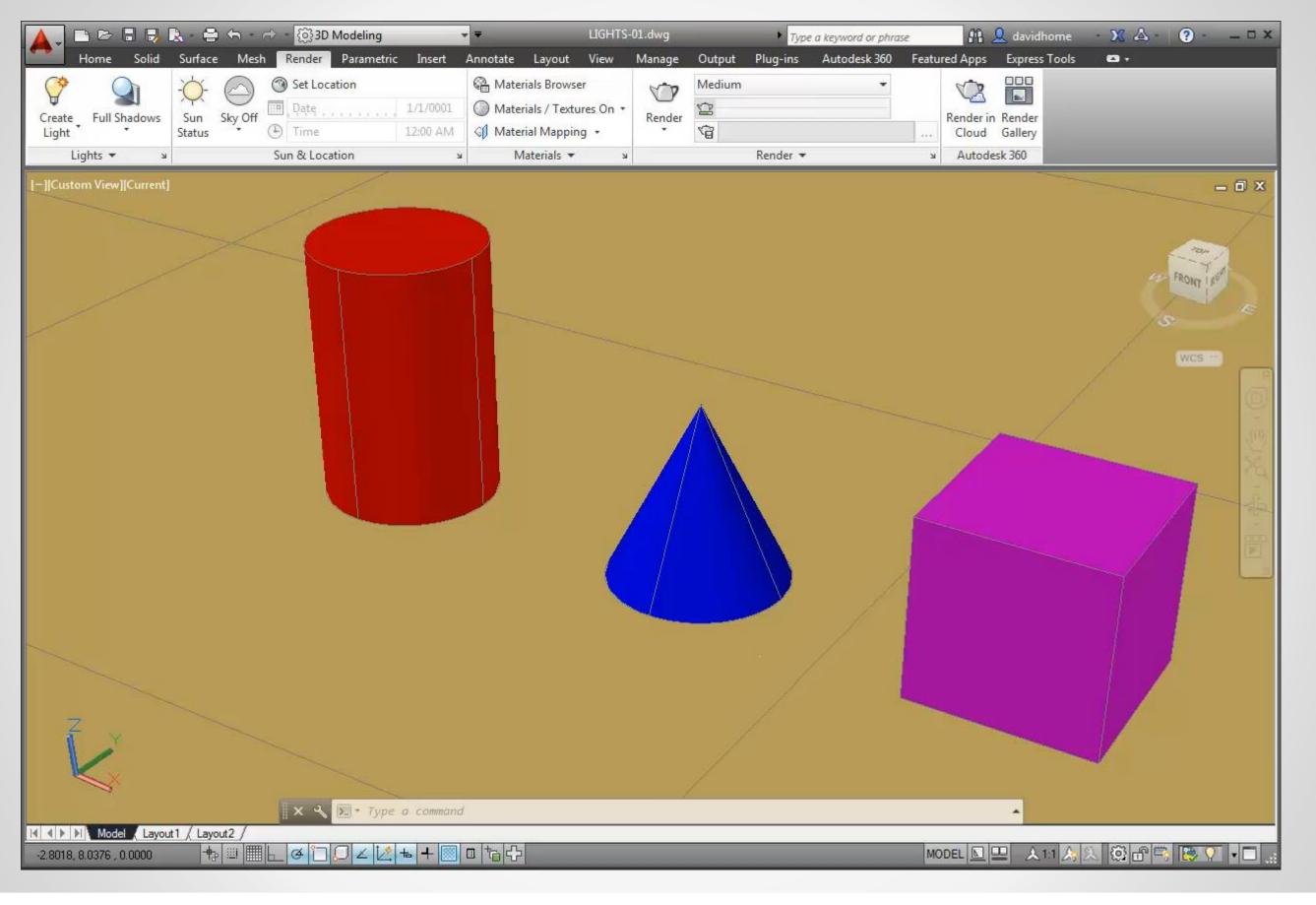
Working with Lights



Default lighting

- Comes from two distant sources that follow the viewpoint as you move.
 - All faces are illuminated
 - You can control brightness and contrast
 - Default lighting must be turned off to see the effect of usercreated lights

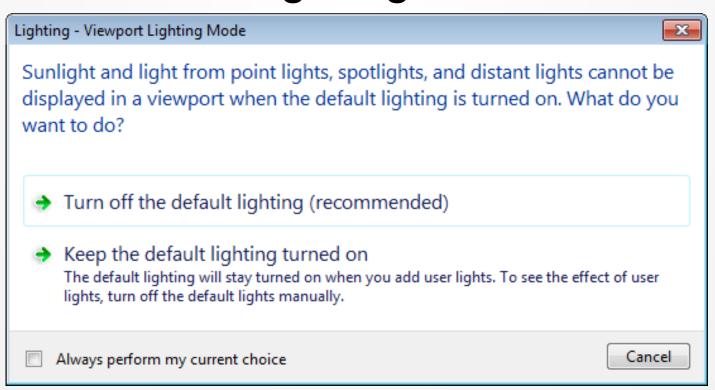




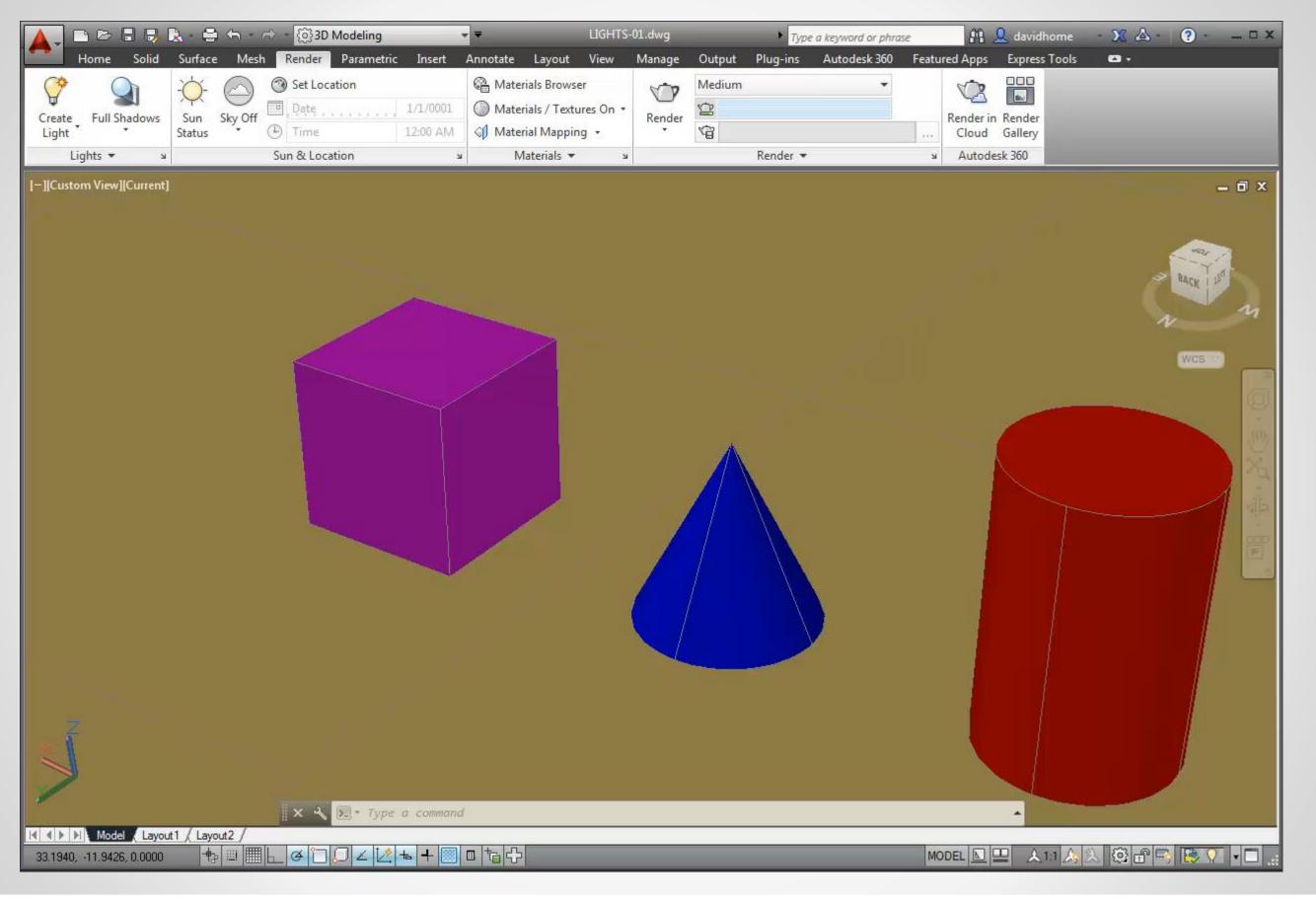


User-Created Lights

- Provide control over lighting
- When you place the first user light, AutoCAD displays an alert.
 - You must turn off default lighting in order to see their effect



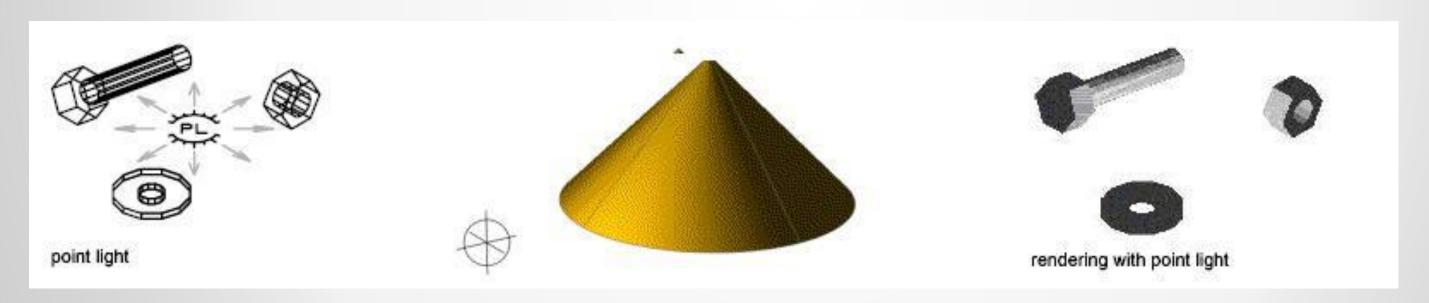




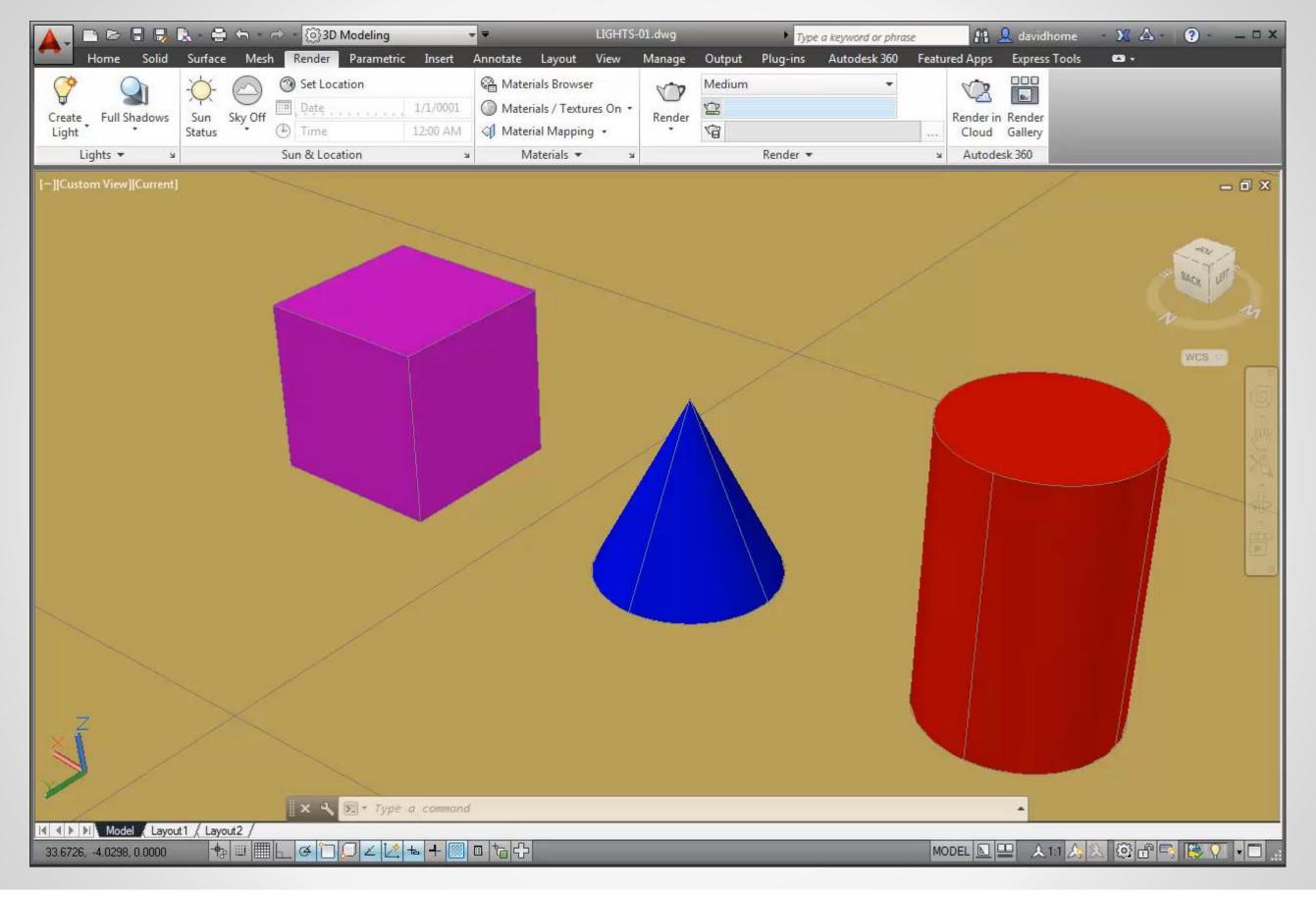


Point Lights

- Radiates light in all directions
 - Useful for general lighting effects
 - Intensity diminishes over distance
 - Specify the Location of the light



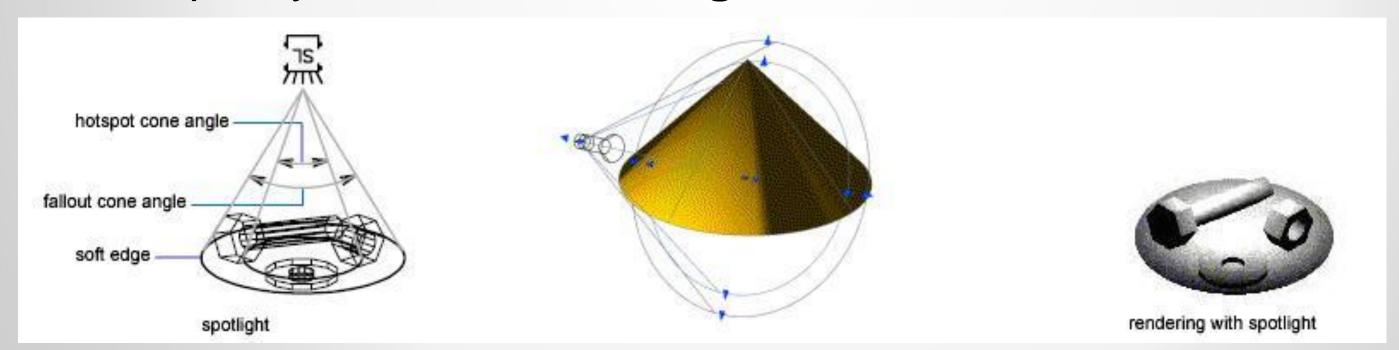




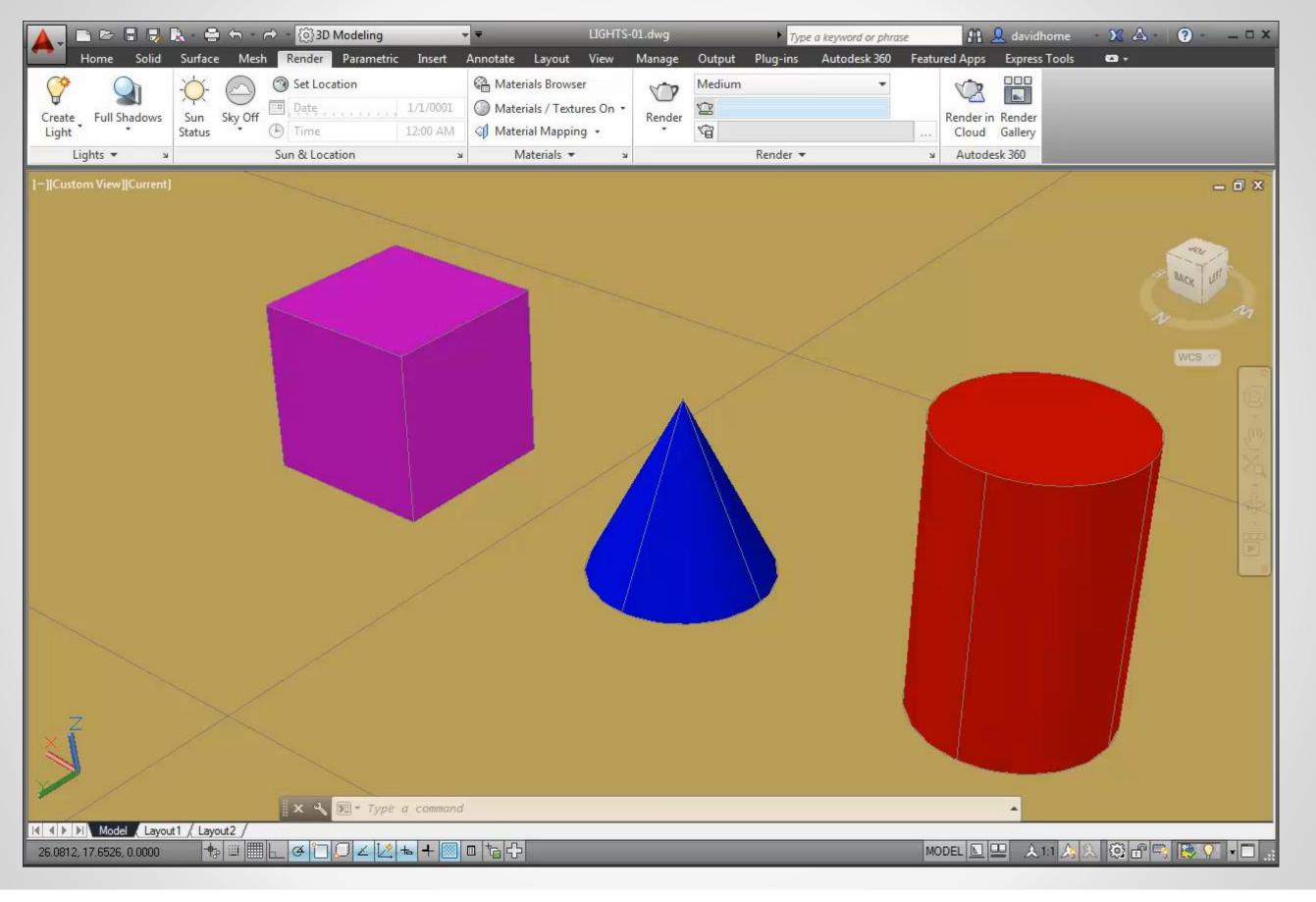


Spot Lights

- Emits a directional, focused cone of light
 - Useful for highlighting features
 - Intensity diminishes over distance
 - You control the hotspot and falloff
 - Specify Location and Target



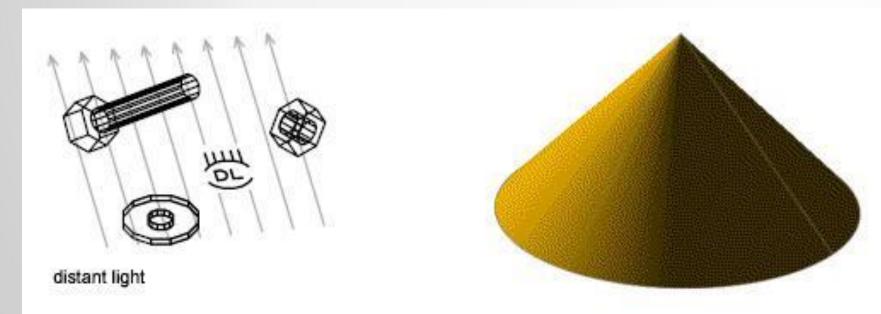


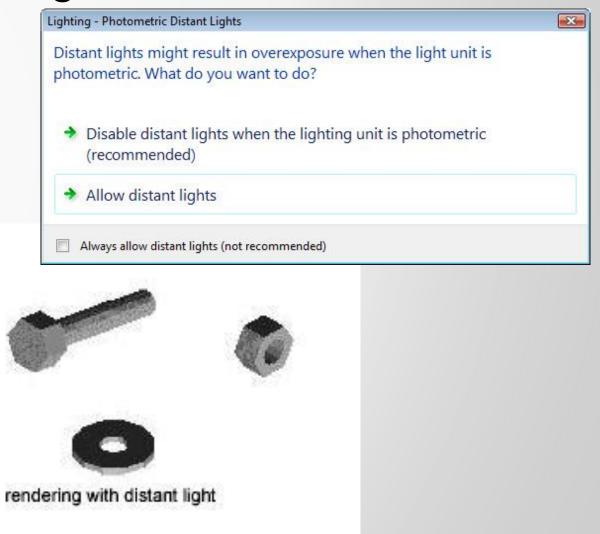


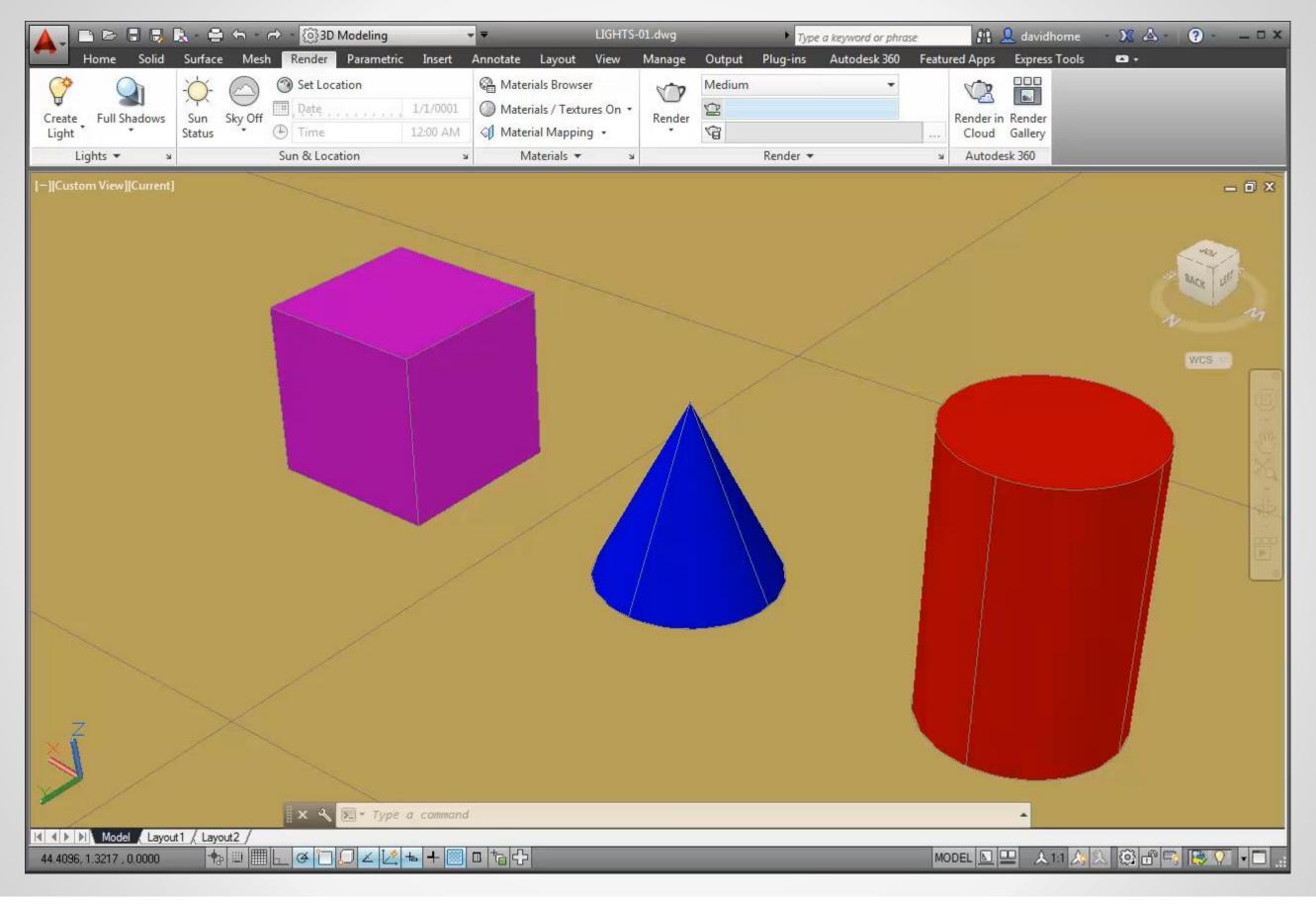


Distant Light

- Emits parallel rays of light in one direction
 - Useful for uniformly lighting objects or background
 - Intensity does not diminish over distance
 - Specify From and To points
 - Not physically accurate



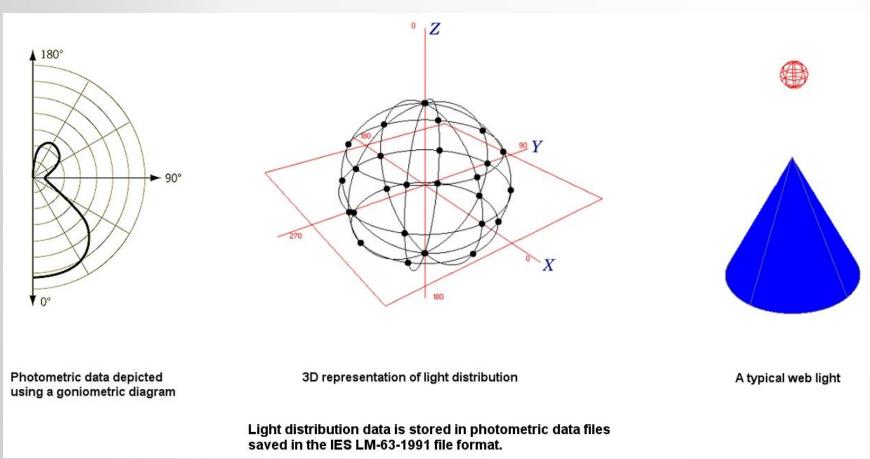


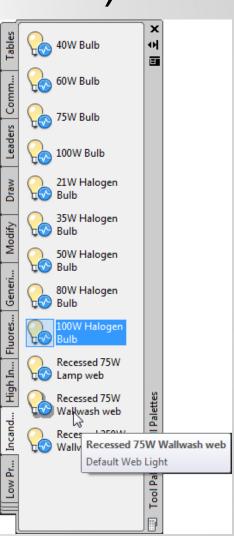




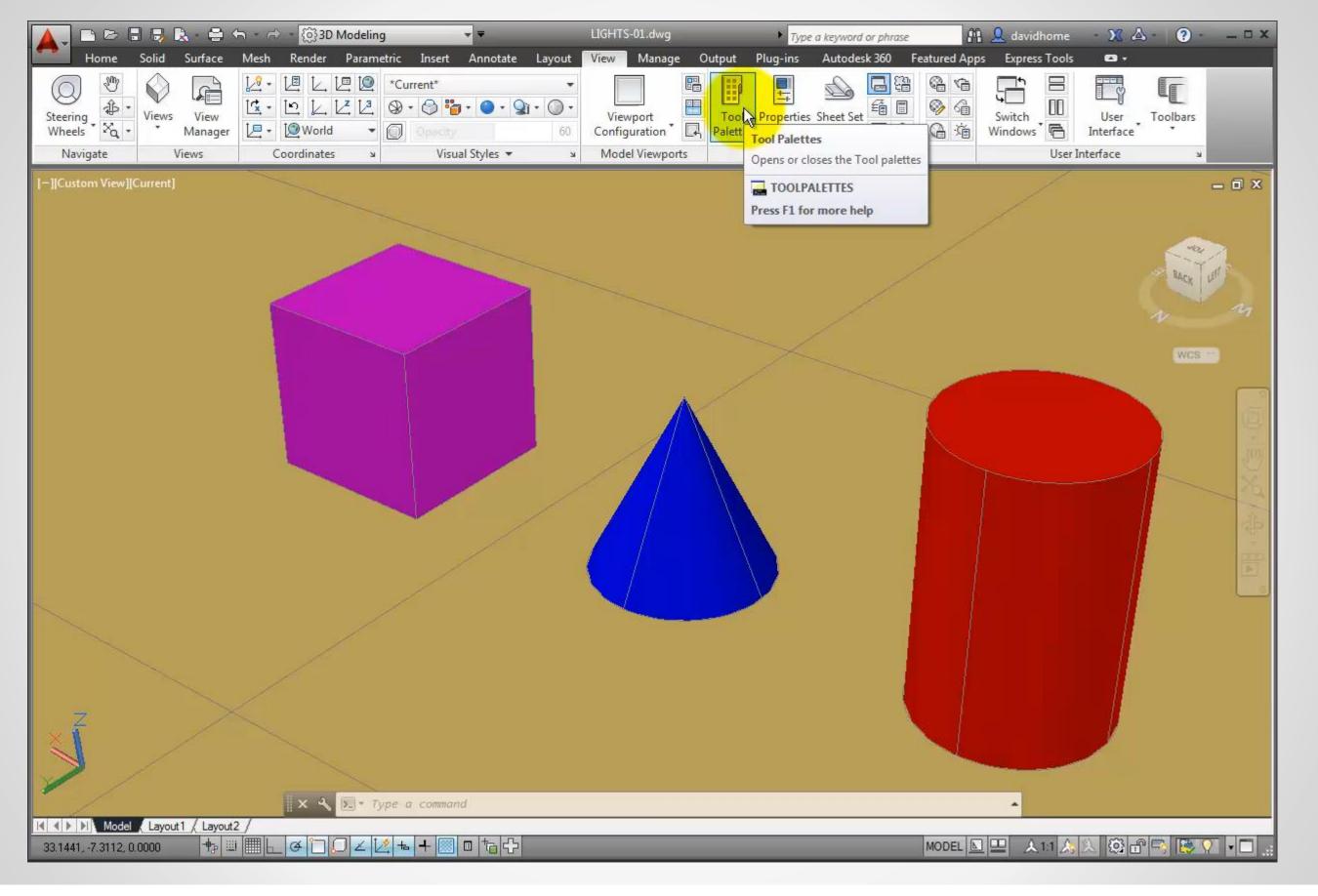
Weblight

- 3D representation of light intensity distribution
 - Derived from data provided by manufacturers (in IES format)
 - Several provided with AutoCAD (in Tool Palette)





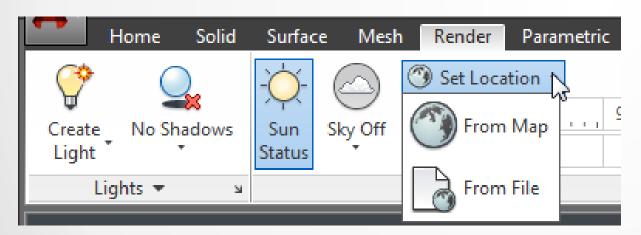


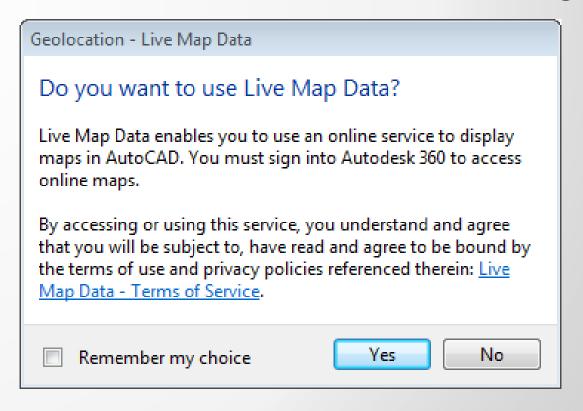




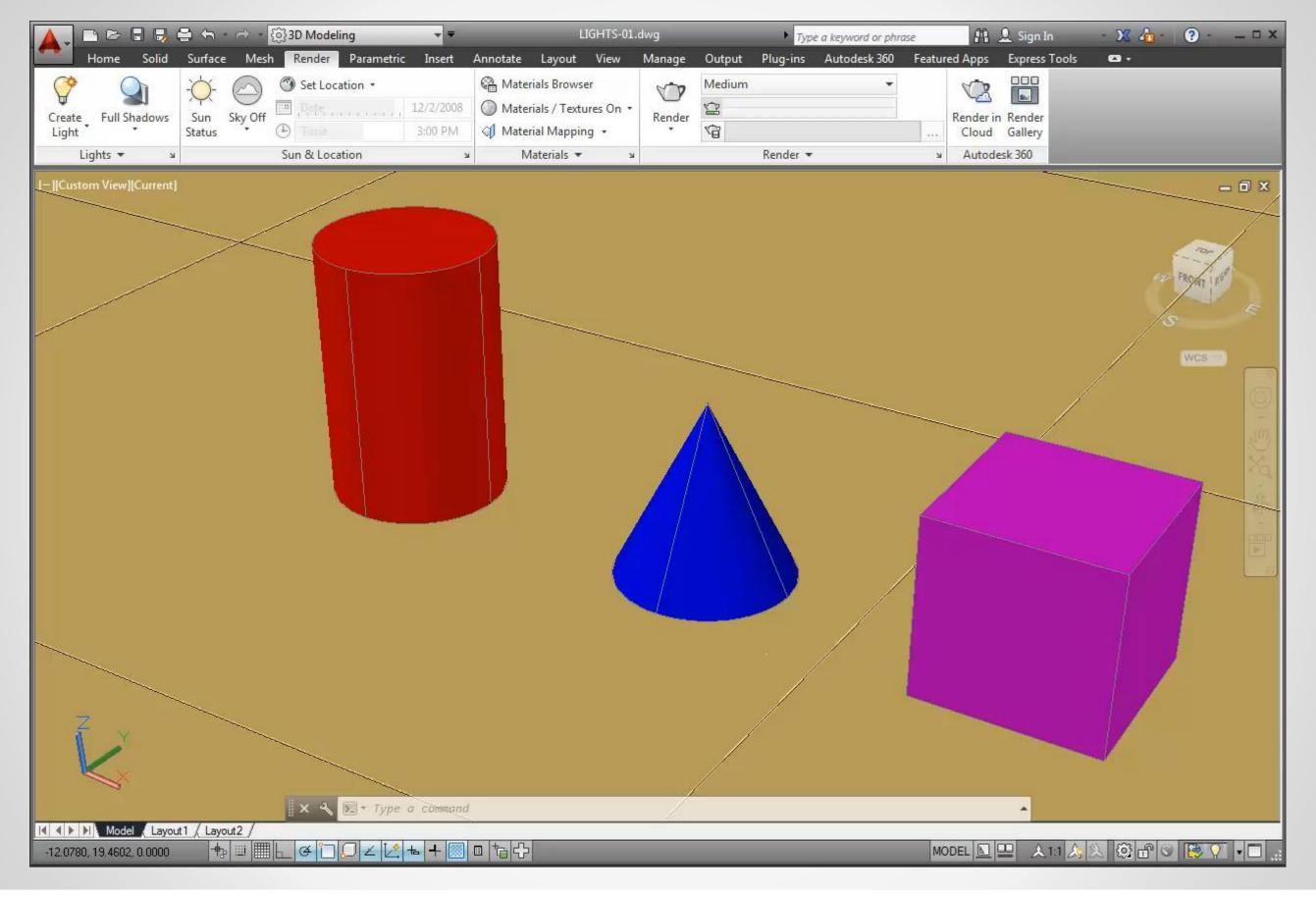
Working with Sunlight

- Simulates the sun
 - Parallel rays with same intensity over any distance
 - Tools in the Sun & Location panel
 - Import a file or use Live Map Data (requires Autodesk 360 login)





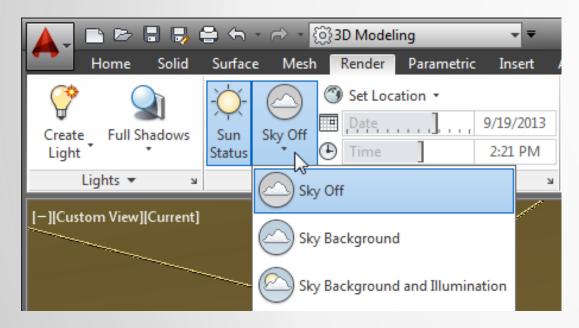


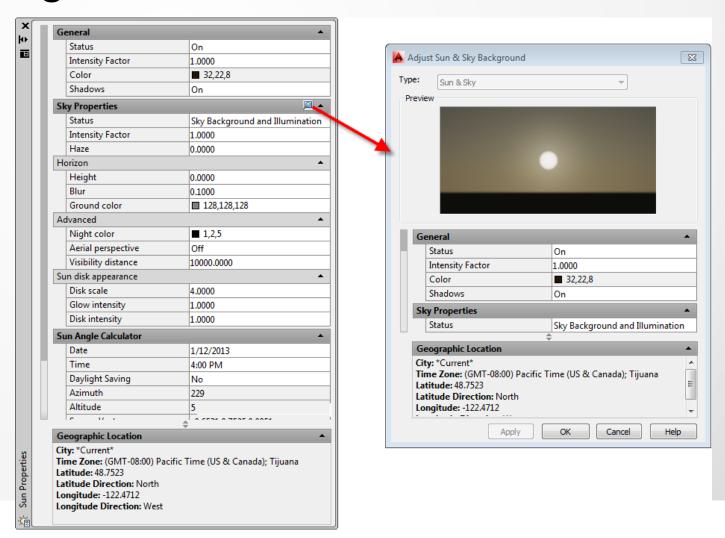




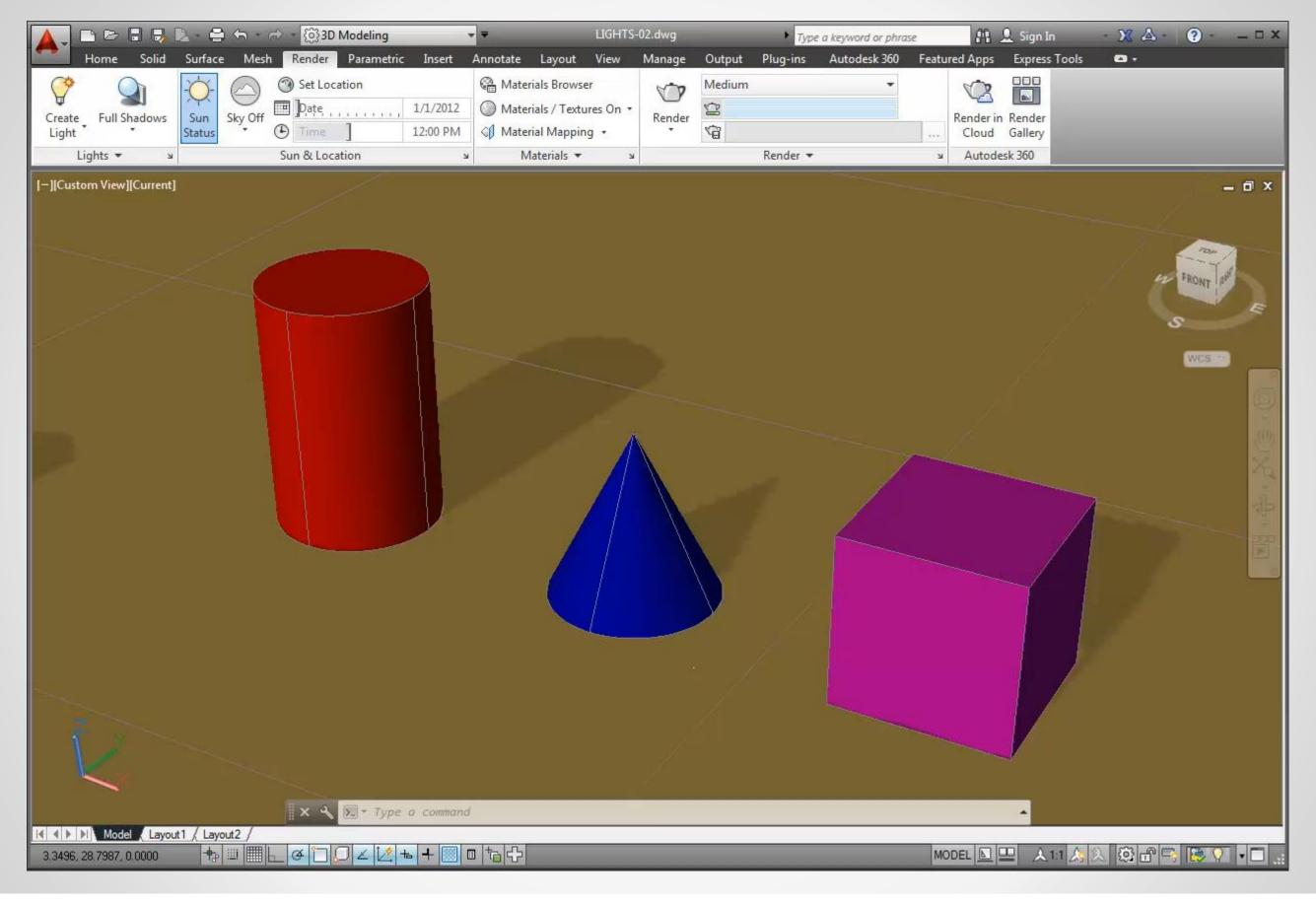
Controlling the Sky and Background Illumination

- Adds realistic atmospheric light scattering:
 - Sky background only or background AND illumination
 - Enables control of background, horizon, and solar disk





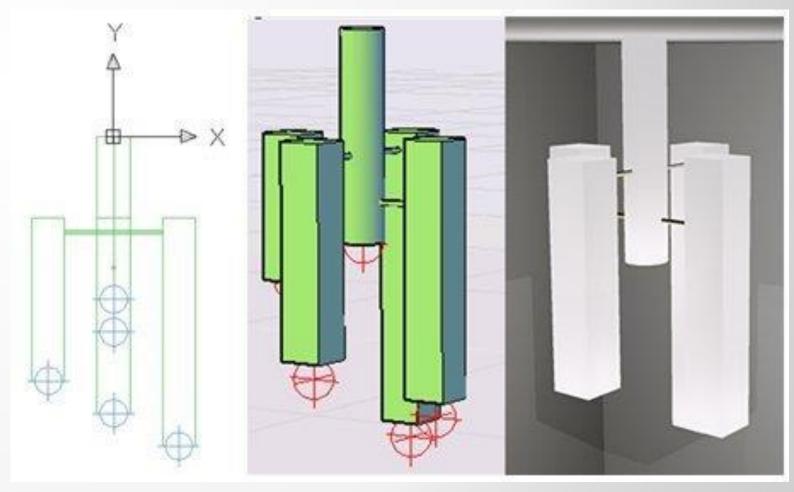




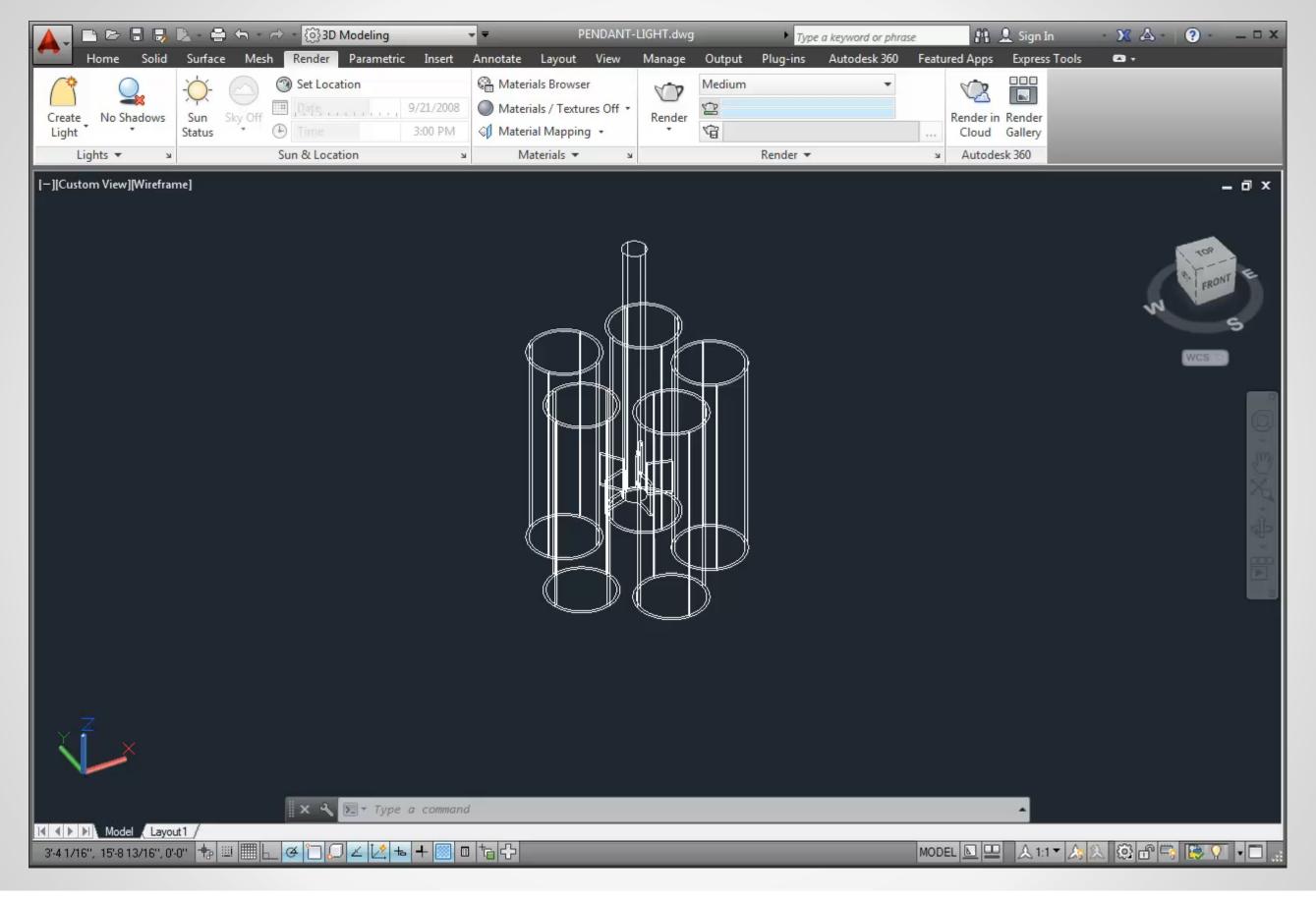


Using Luminaire Objects

- Embed lights inside blocks
 - Create light fixture that models both physical and light properties of a lighting fixture
 - 1. Model 3D light
 - 2. Add light within model
 - 3. Save as a block
 - 4. Use in other models



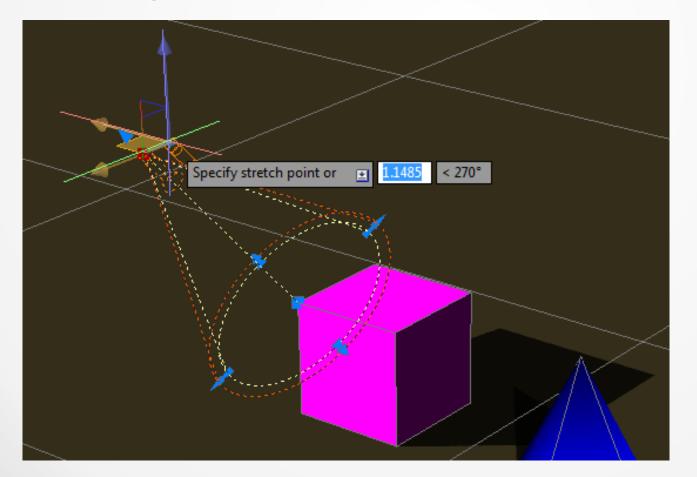




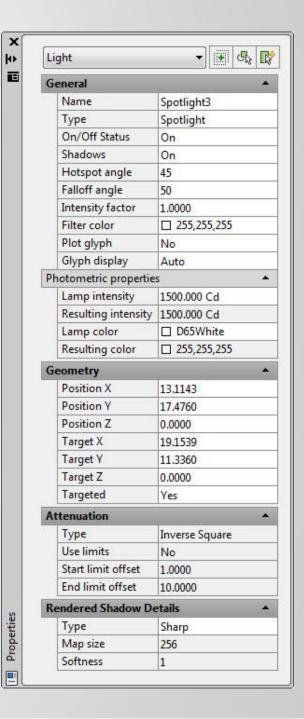


Controlling the Location and Properties of Lights

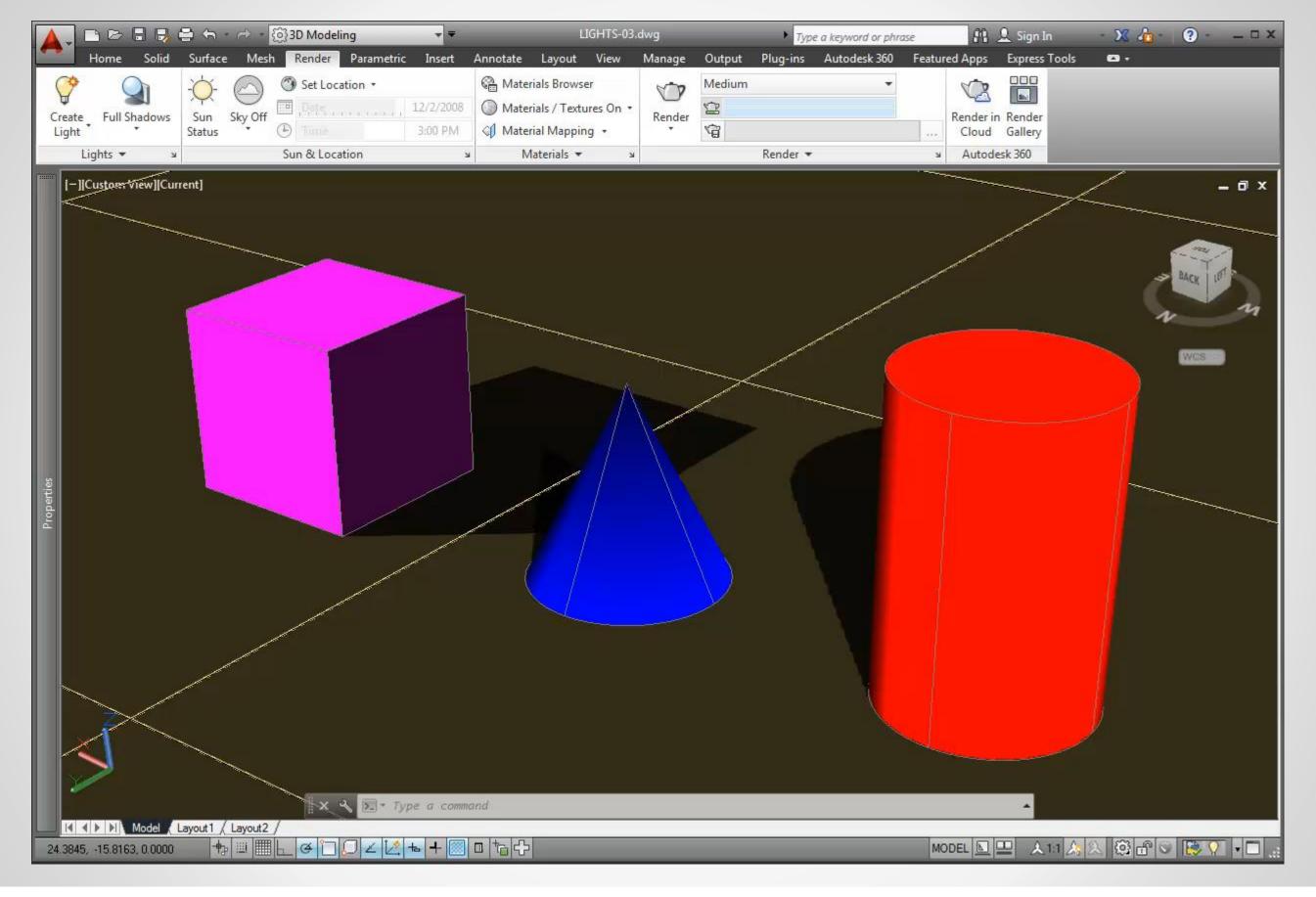
- Select any light in the Lights in Model palette
- Adjust properties in the Properties palette
- Use grips and gizmos











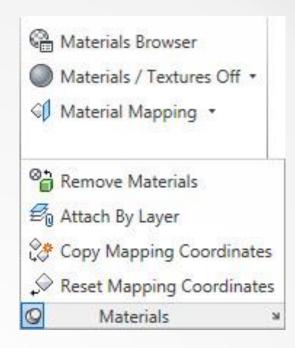


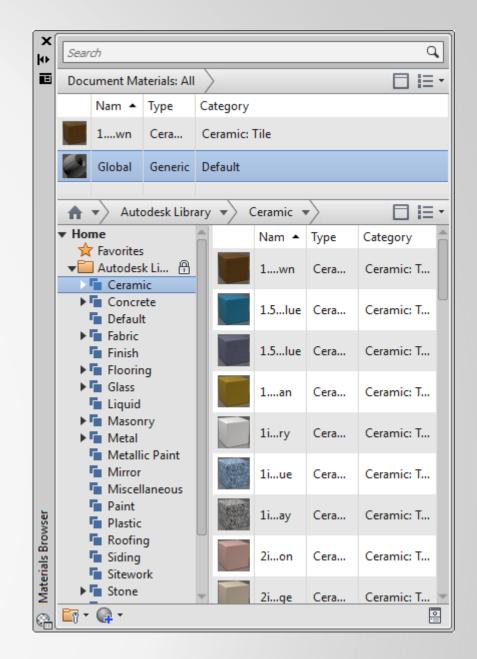
Working with Materials

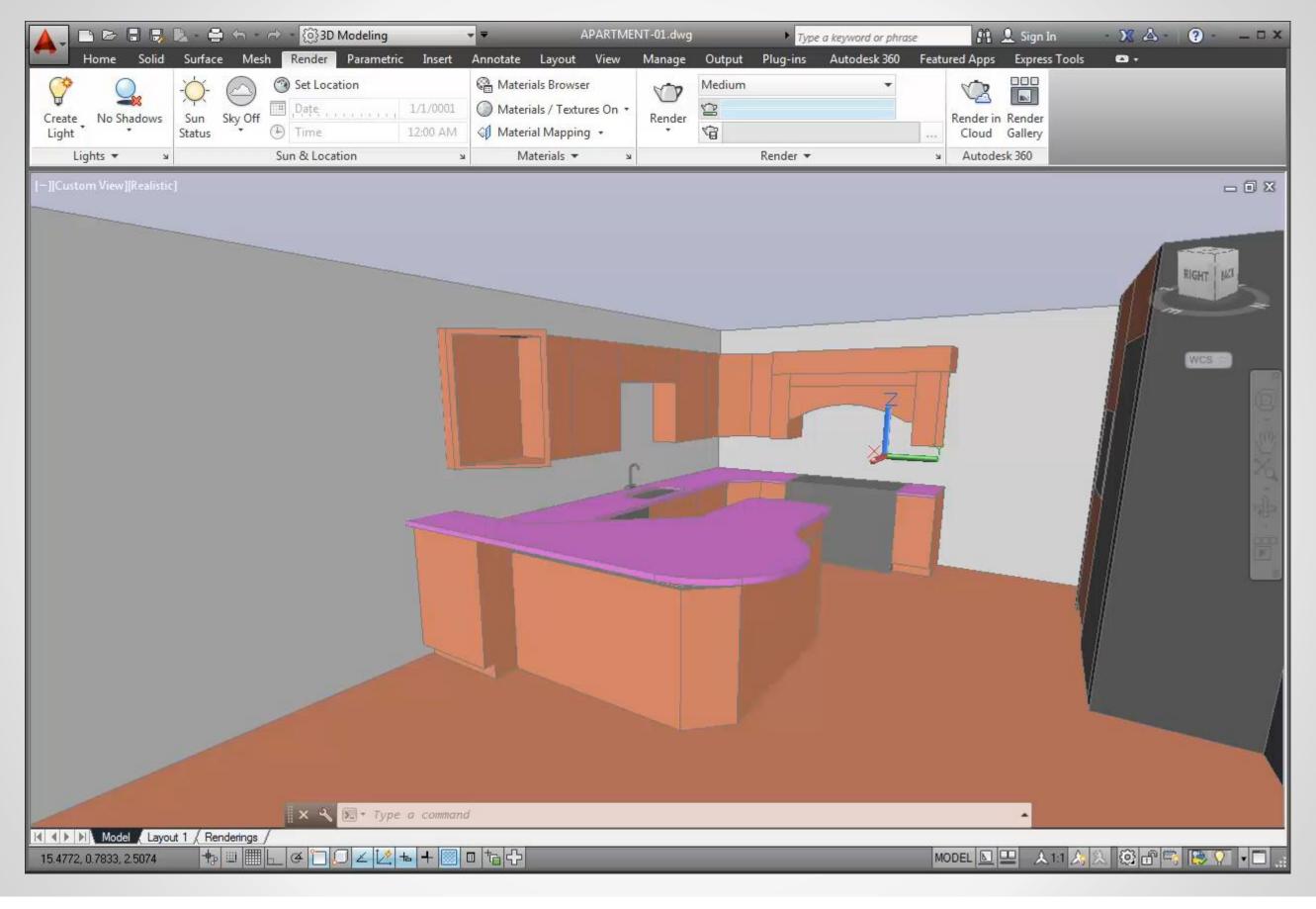


Working with Materials

- Brings models to life
- Tools in the Materials panel and Materials Browser
 - Autodesk Materials Library (shared by Autodesk programs)
 - All materials appear in Library area
 - Materials in drawing appear in Document area



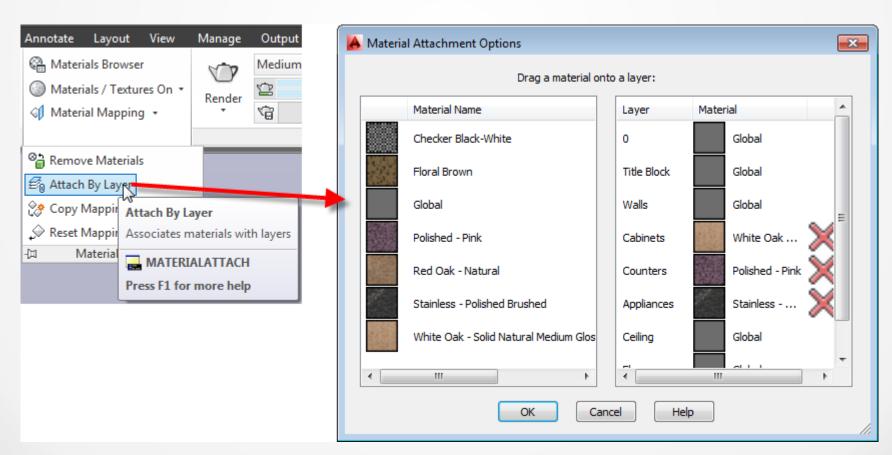




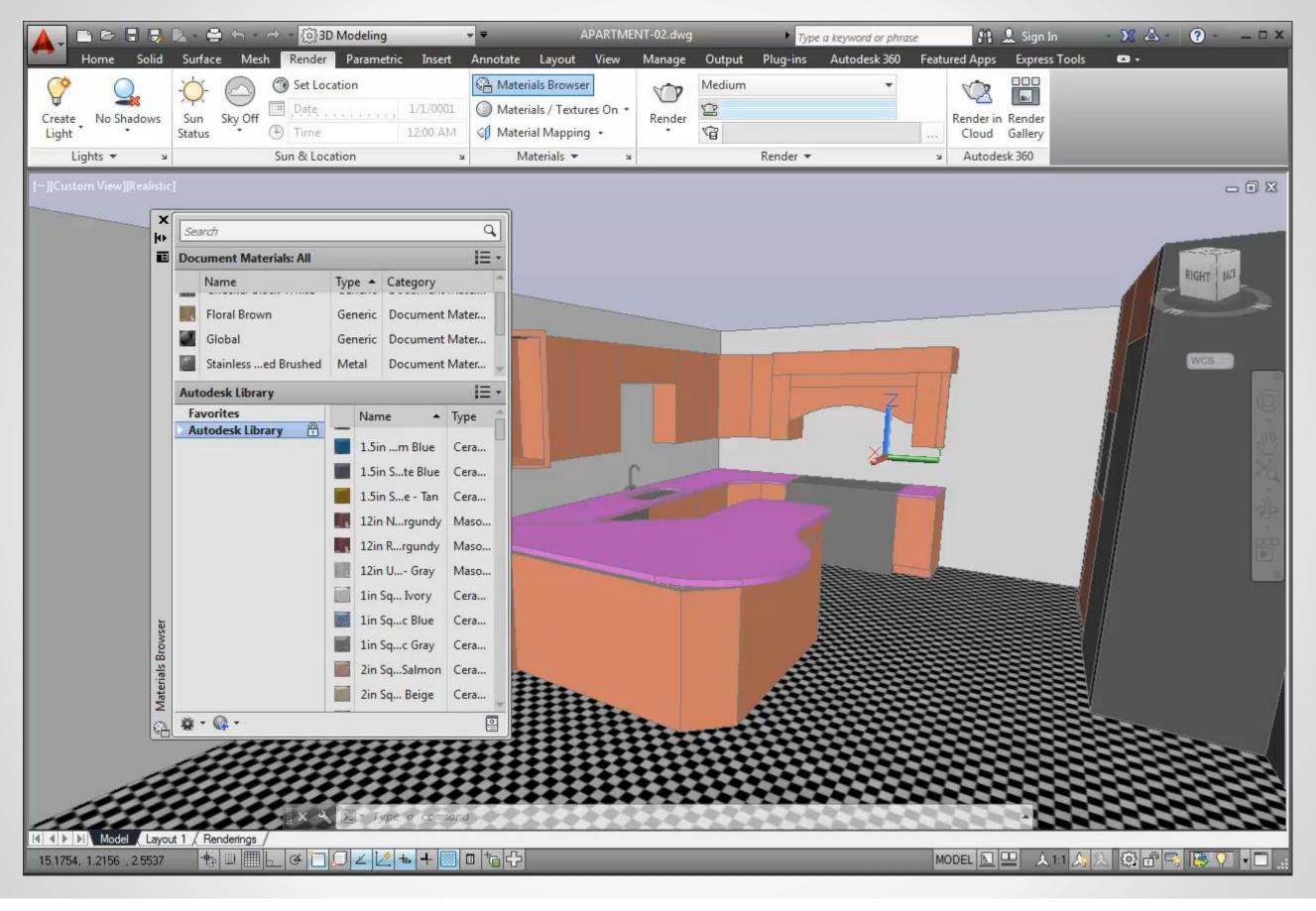


Applying Materials to Objects and Faces

- To an object drag and drop onto object
- To a face press CTRL and drag onto face of object
- By layer use Attach by Layer tool to display dialog



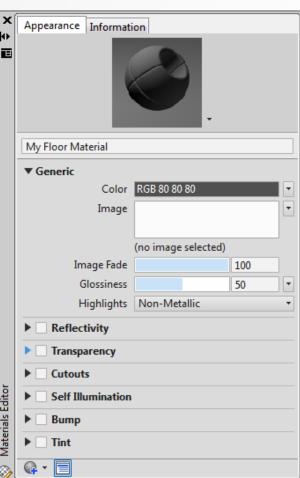


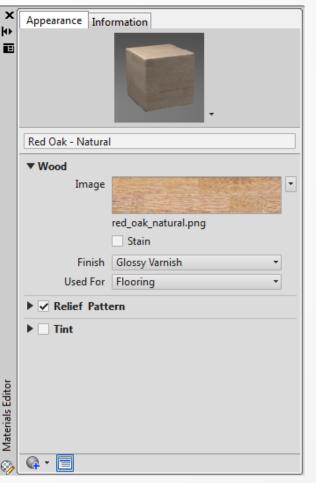


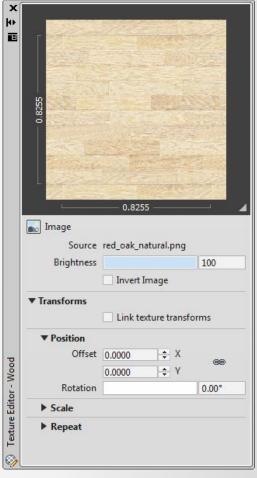


Creating and Modifying Materials

- Use tools in Materials Browser to create new material
 - Only adjust materials in current drawing or user library
- Use tools in Materials Editor to adjust its properties
 - Color
 - Image
 - Image Fade
 - Glossiness
 - Highlights
 - Reflectivity
 - Transparency
 - Cutouts
 - Self-illumination
 - Bump



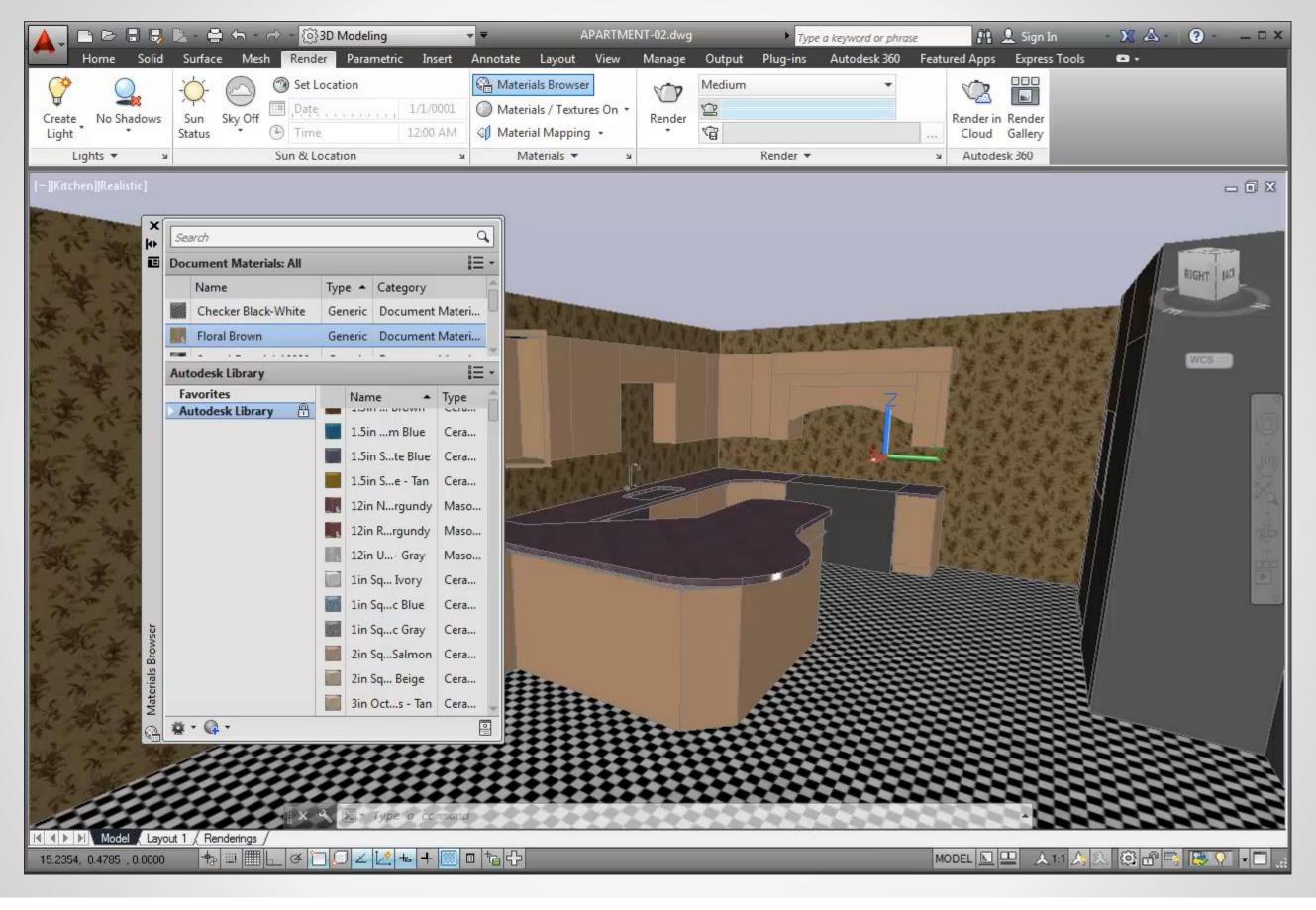




Adjust image-based maps using Texture Editor







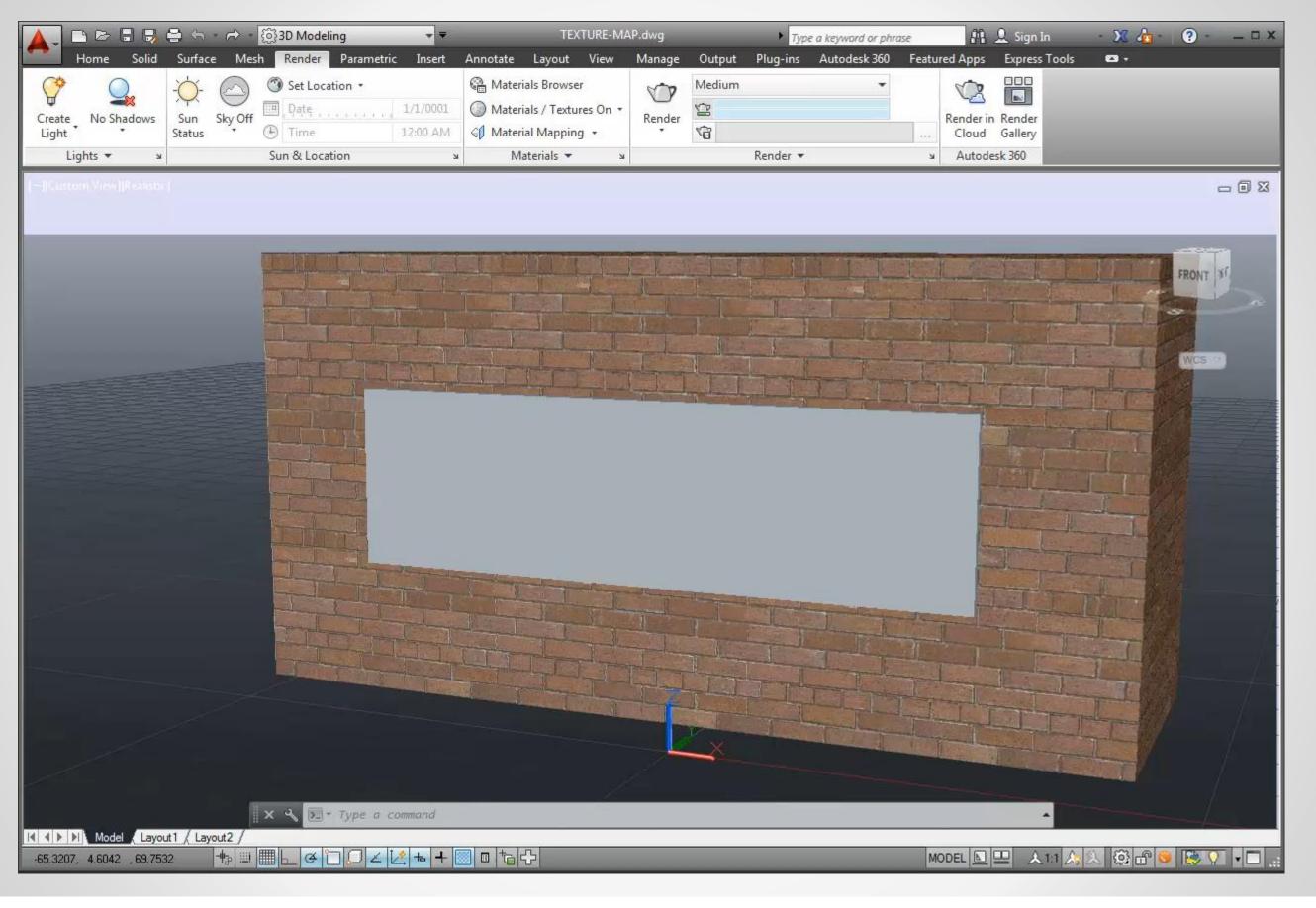


Using Texture Maps

- Images assigned to materials are called maps
- Materials containing images are mapped materials
 - BMP, GIF, JPG, PCX, PNG, TGA, TIF
 - Apply multiple maps to create effects (such as cutouts)
 - In Texture Editor, link transforms (change to one map applies to all)



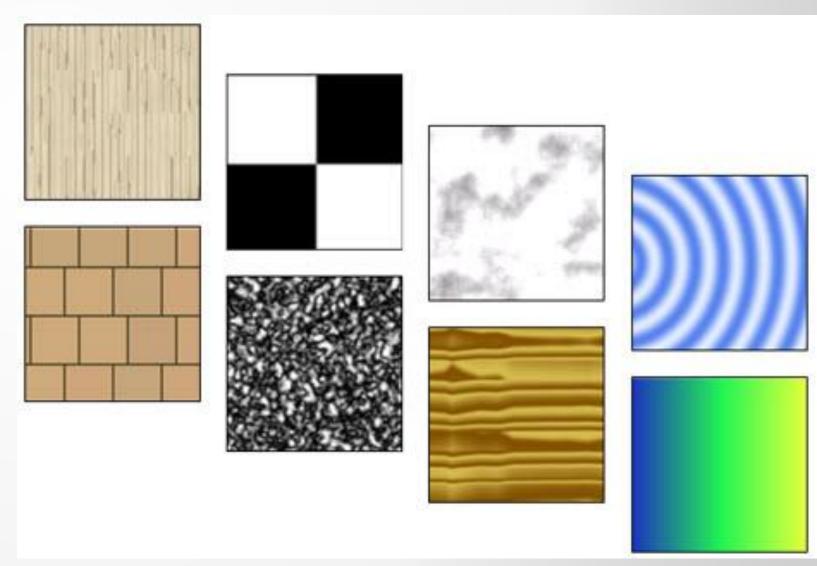


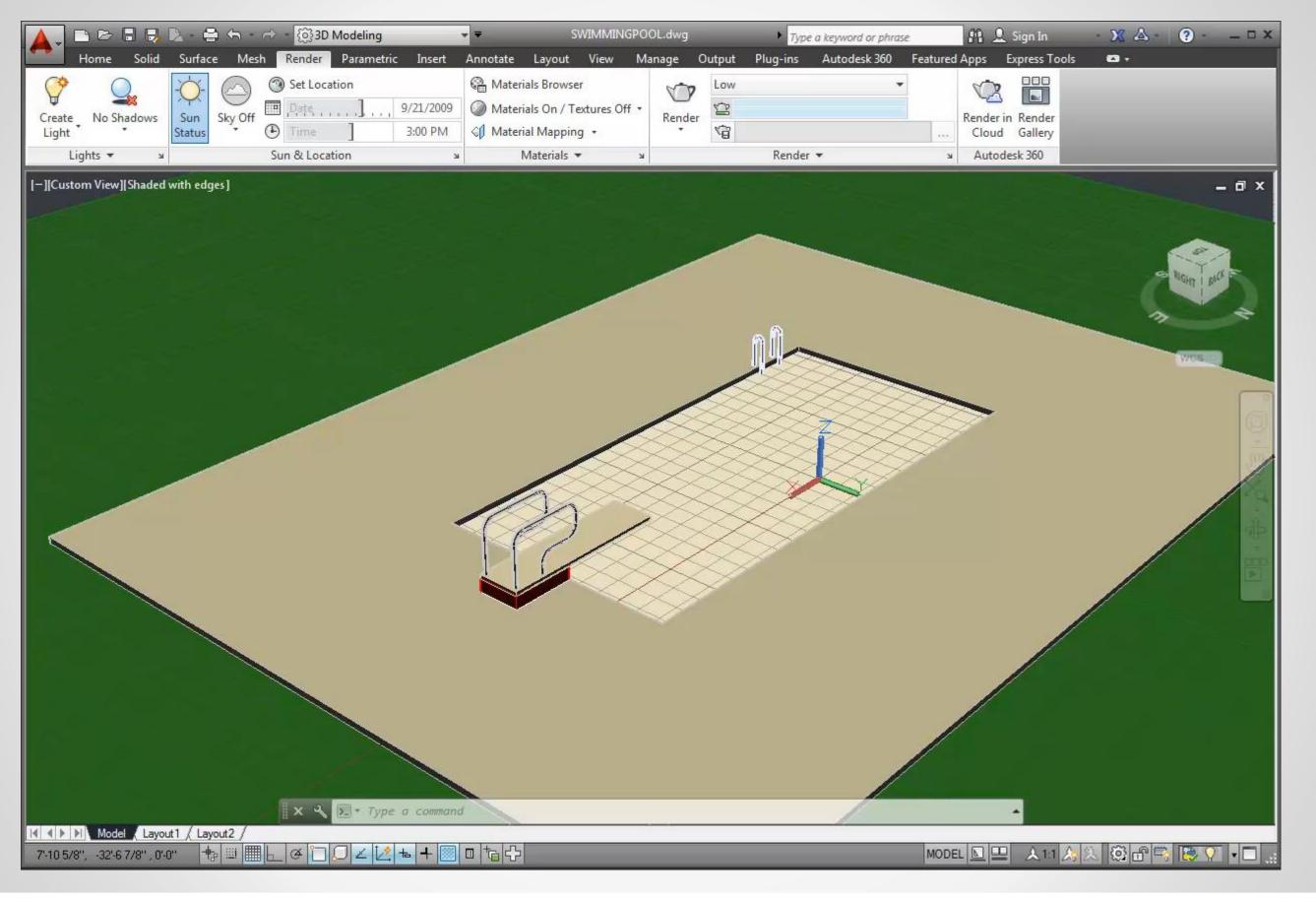




Procedural Maps

- Generated using mathematical algorithm (not images)
 - Can be generated in 2 or 3 dimensions
 - Checker
 - Gradient
 - Marble
 - Noise
 - Speckle
 - Tiles
 - Waves
 - Wood





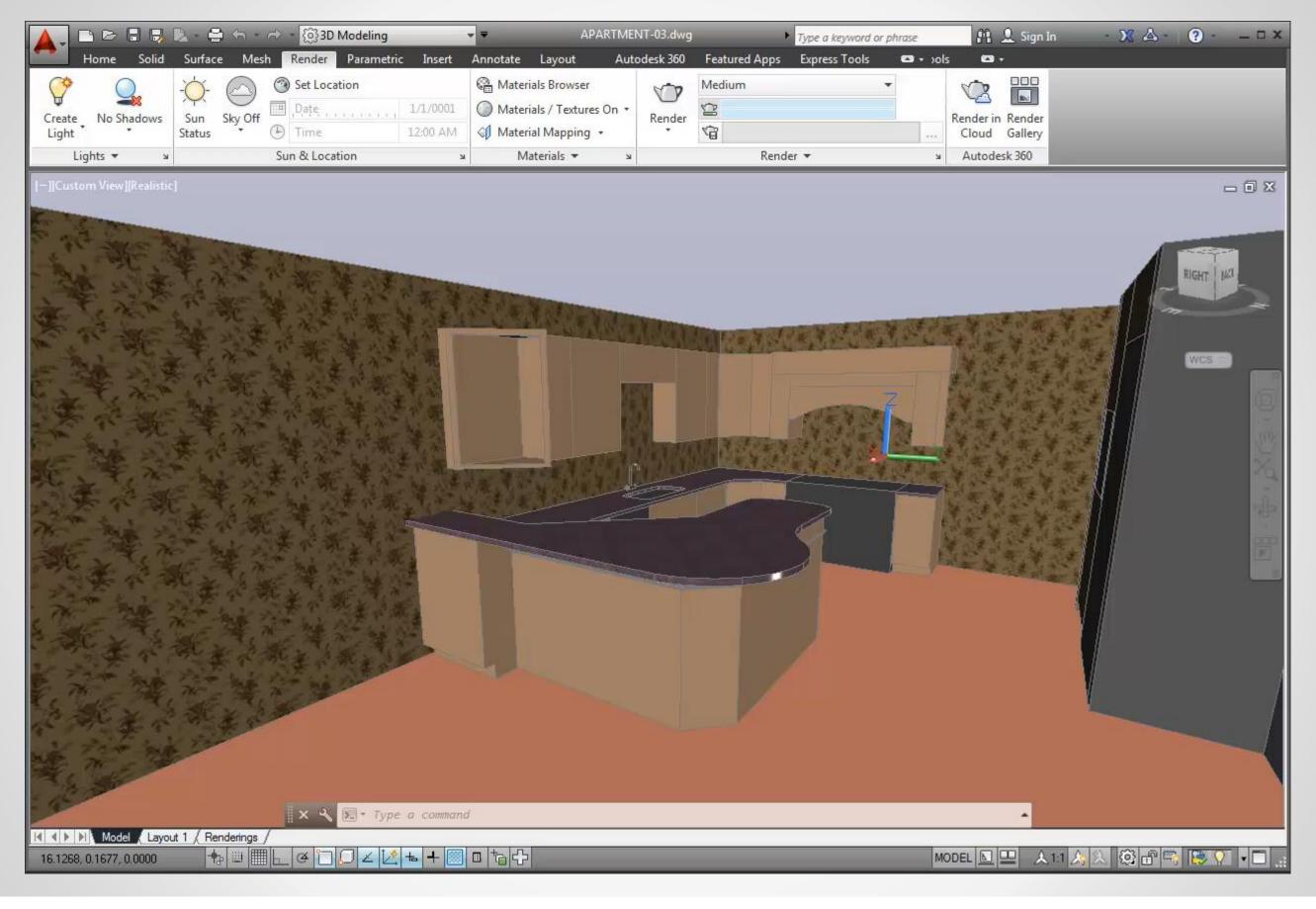


Preparing Your Own Bitmaps

- Create your own custom materials from digital photos or scanned images
 - BMP, GIF, JPG, PCX, PNG, TGA, TIF
 - Make sure images tile seamlessly







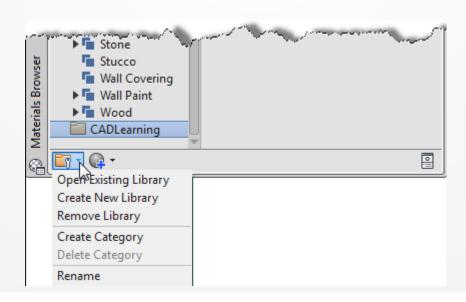


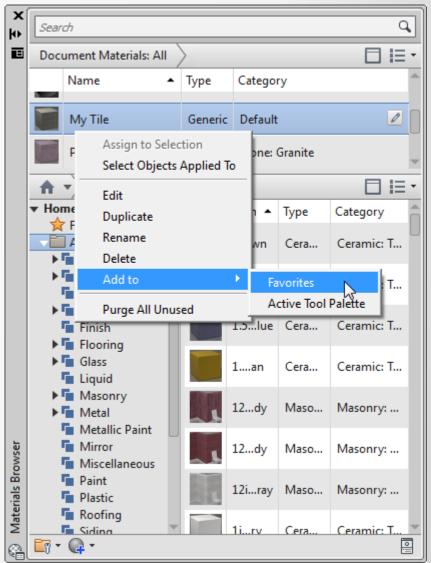
Saving Materials to a User Library

New/modified materials only exist in the drawing

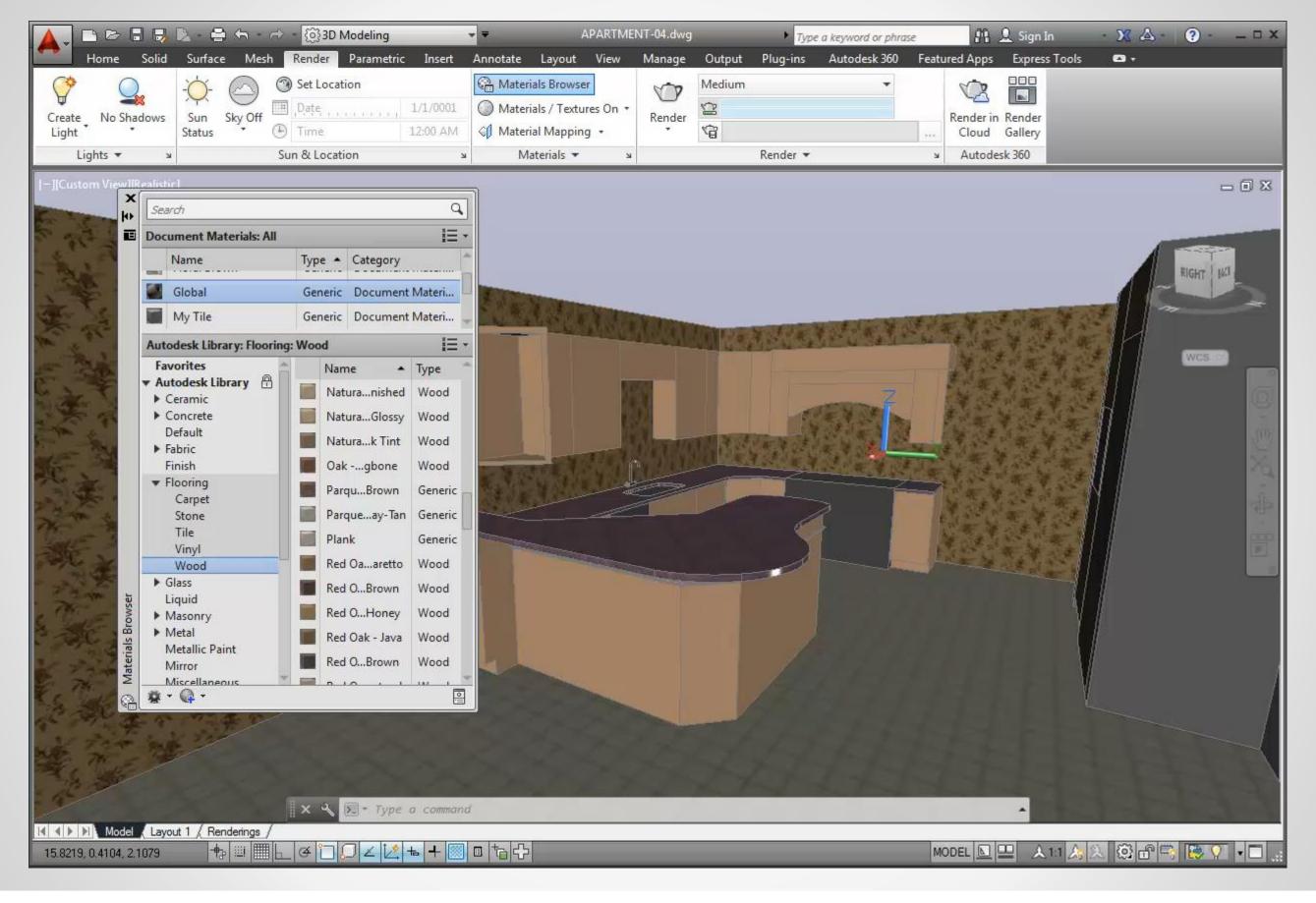
You cannot make any changes to the Autodesk Material Library

- You can save new/modified materials to
 - Favorites library
 - Custom user libraries





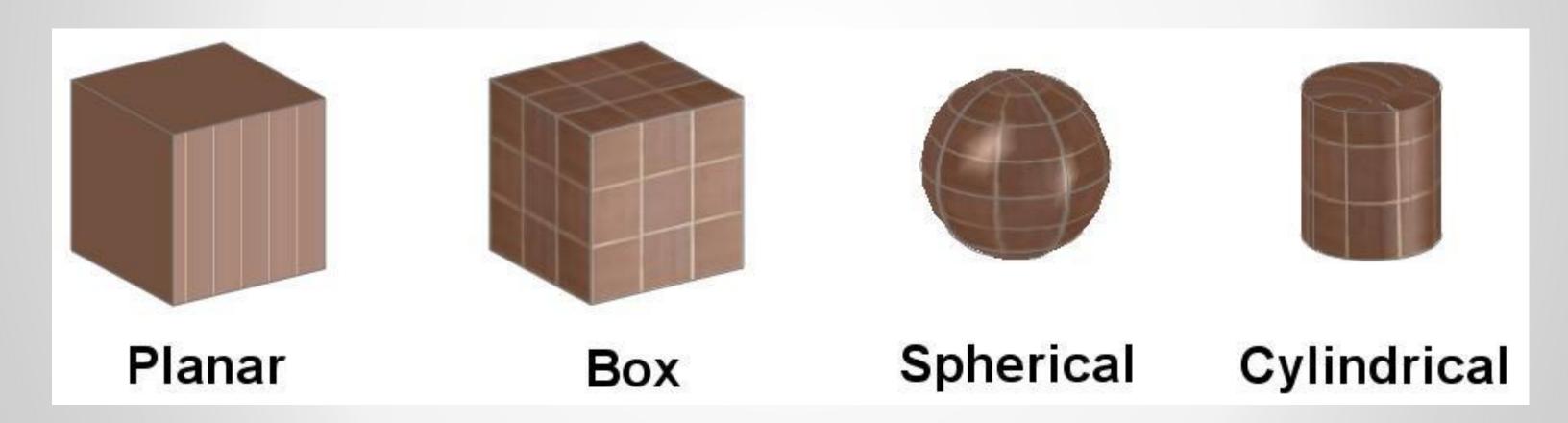






Adjusting Material Mapping

After attaching a material, you can adjust the orientation of the texture map if it was not applied properly







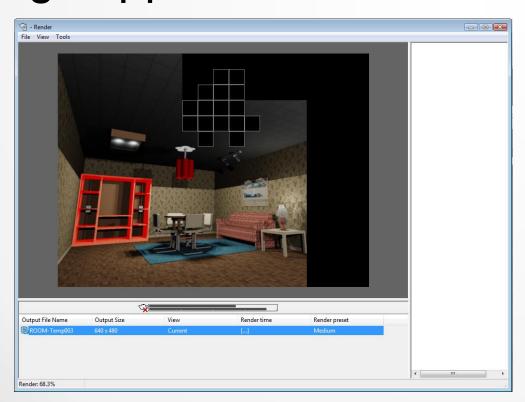


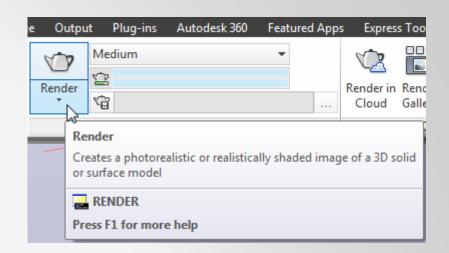
Creating a Rendering

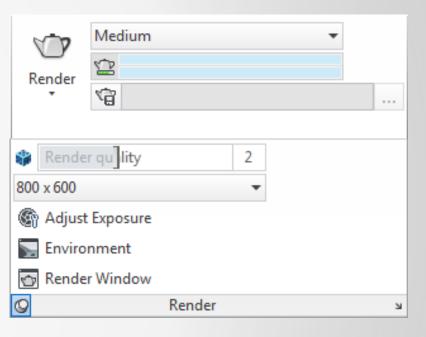


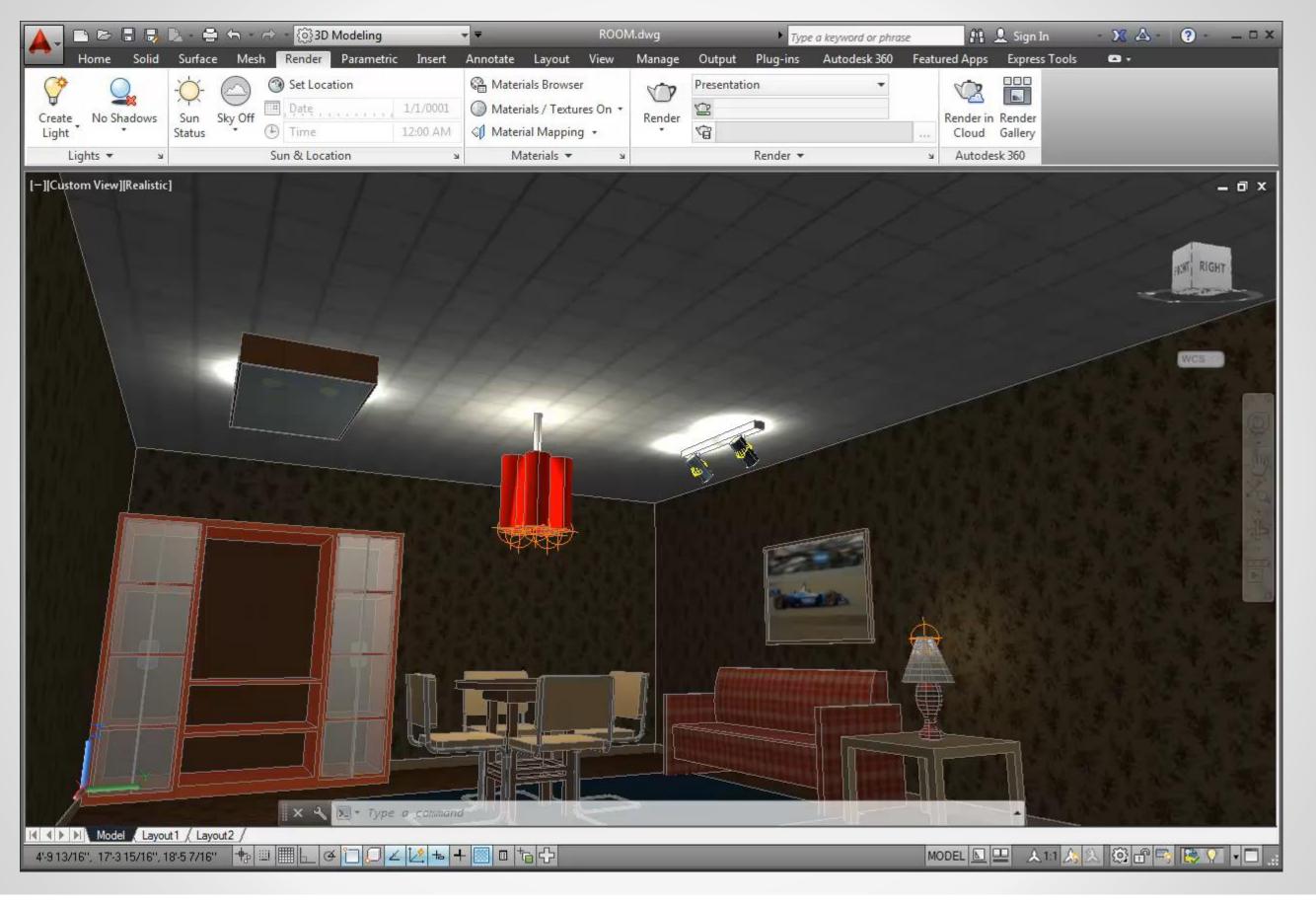
Creating a Rendering

- Use tools on the Render panel
 - 5 predefined render presets
 - Expand the panel to see additional tools
 - Renderings appear in Render Window (default)











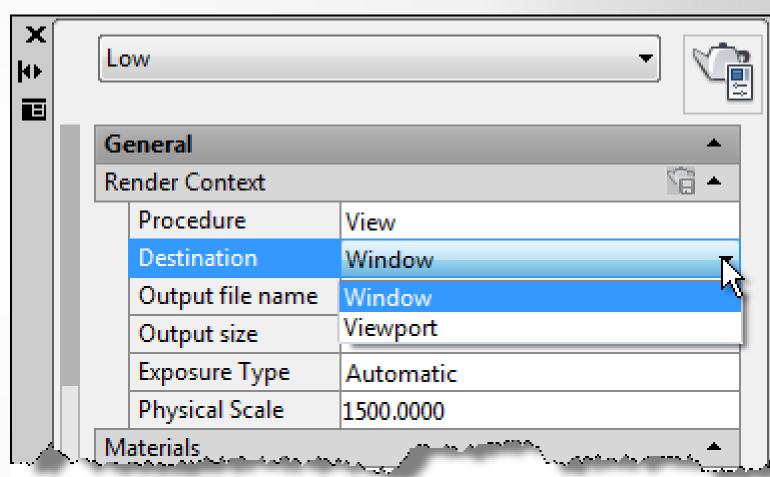
Setting the Render Destination

Use Advanced Render Settings palette to

choose **Destination**:

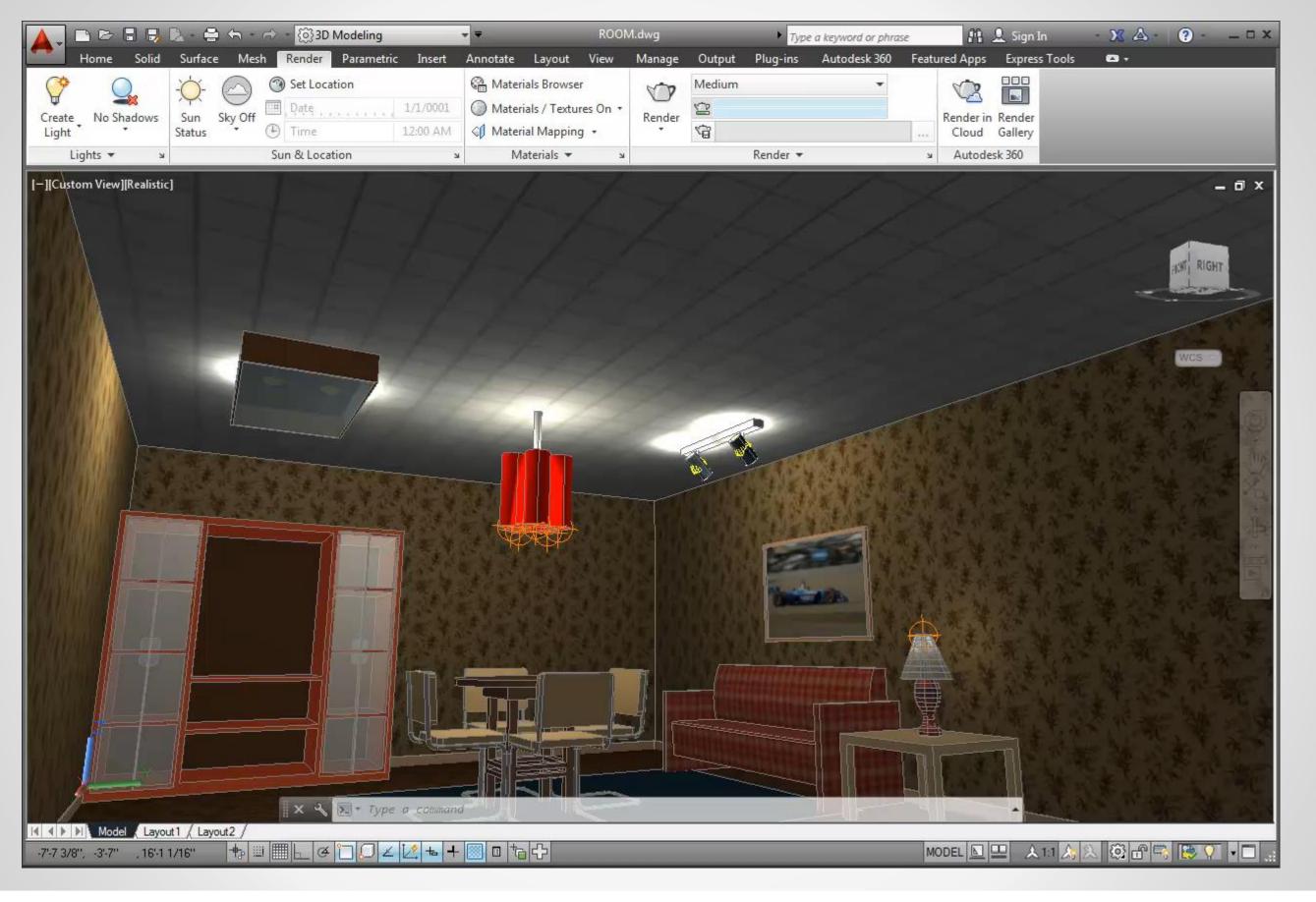
Window = Render Window

- Save images from Window
- Viewport = Current viewport
 - Use SAVEIMG command



Setting remains in effect until changed

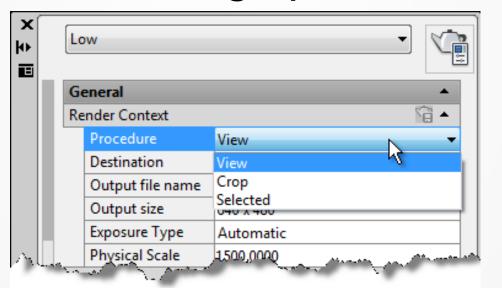


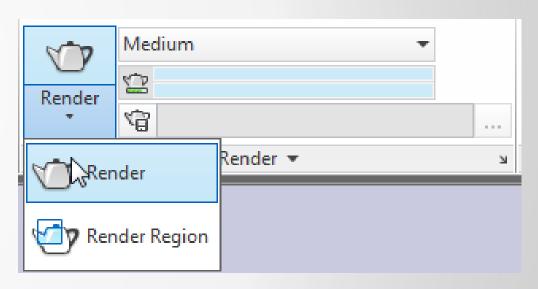




Rendering Portions of What You See

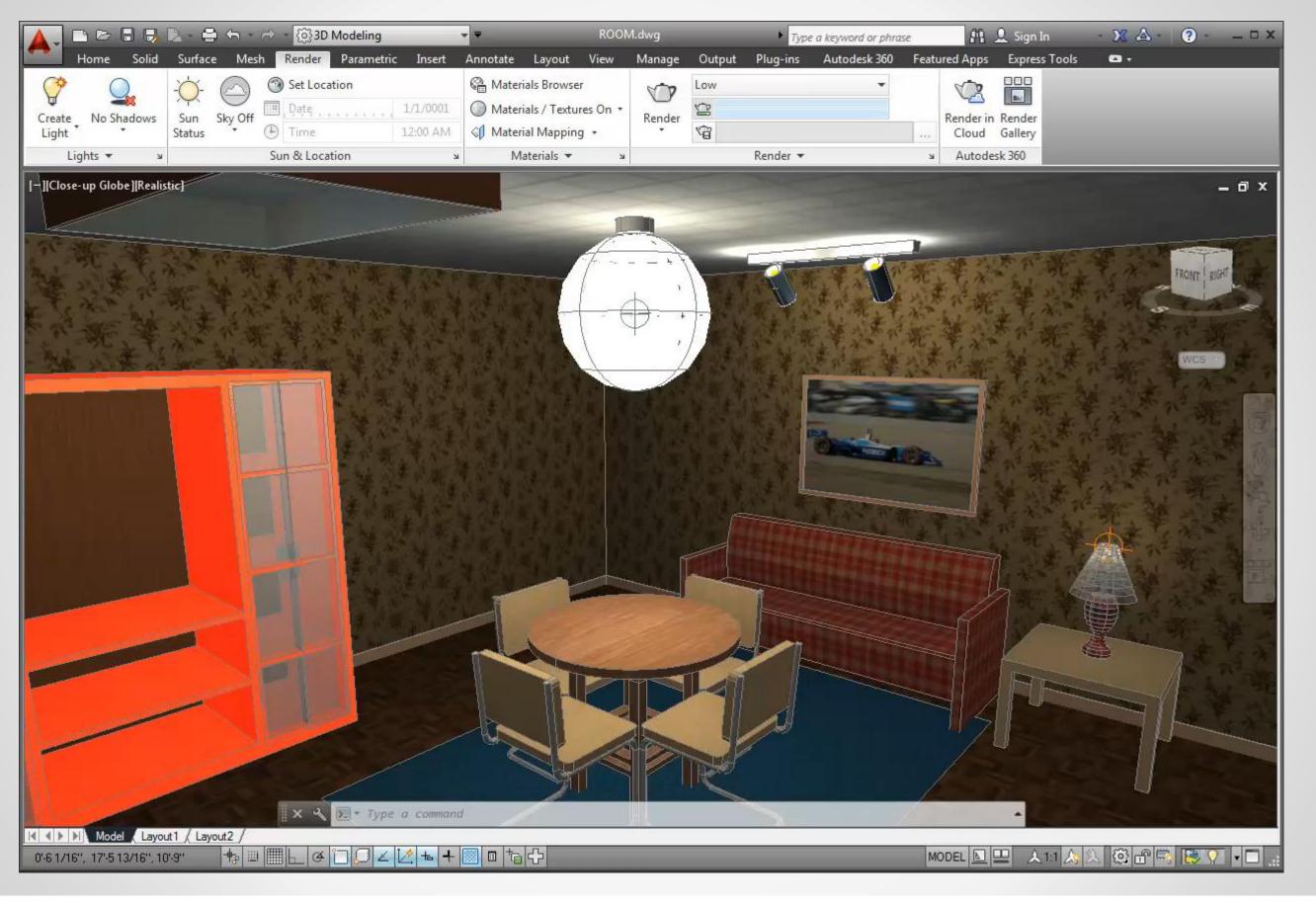
- Render selected objects or a region
 - Use Render button to render all or region
 - Use Advanced Render Settings palette:
 - View
 - Cropped
 - Selected





Changes in Advanced Render Settings remain in effect until changed

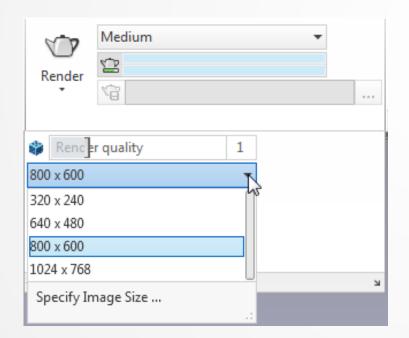


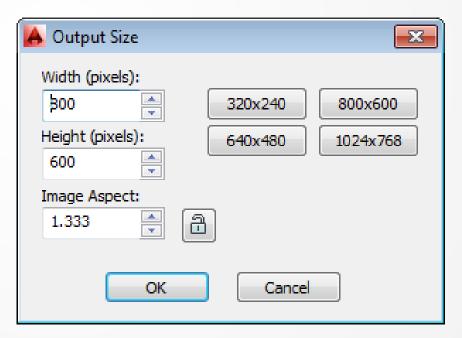




Setting the Render Output Resolution

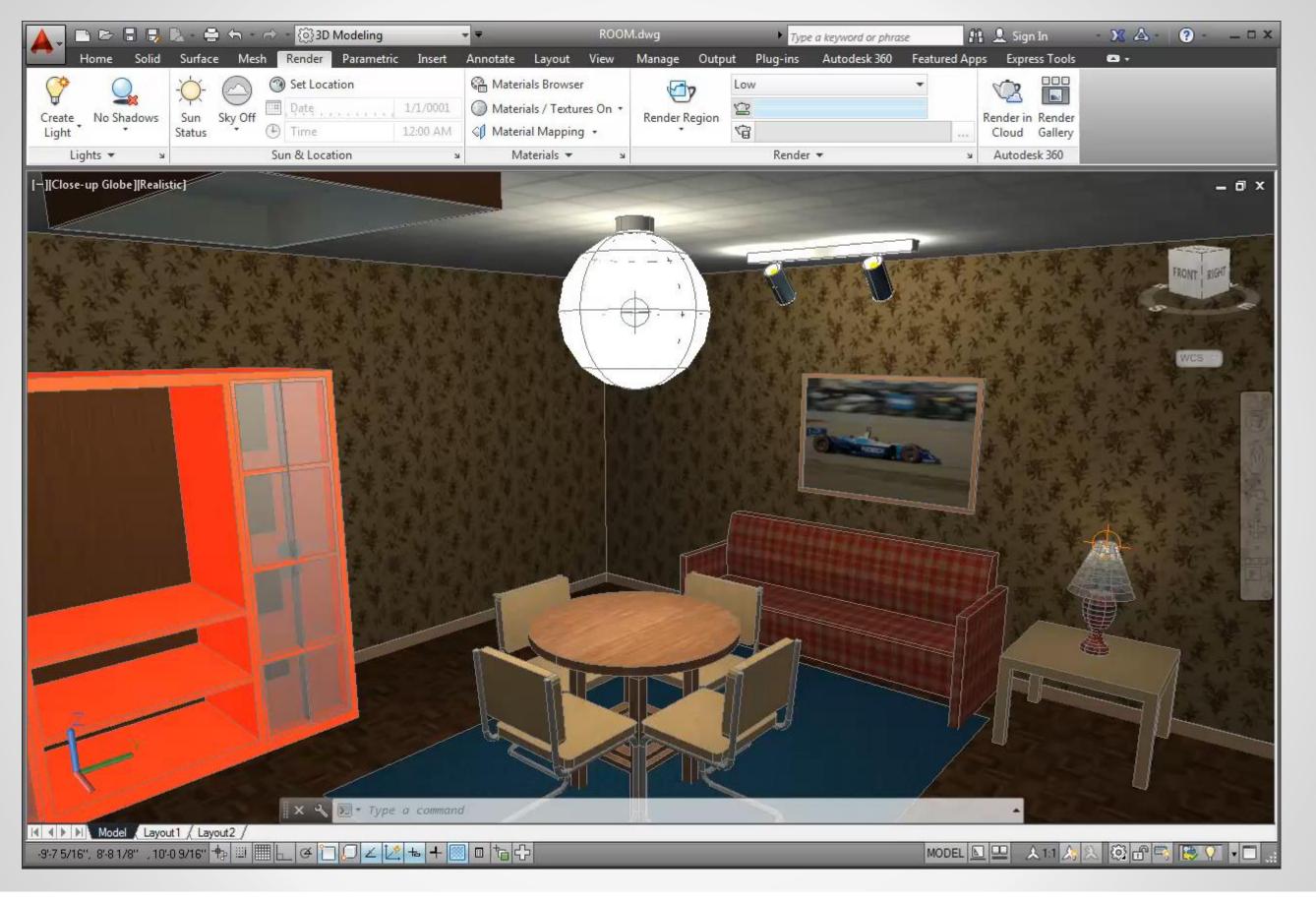
- 4 predefined sizes in Render Output Size drop-down
- Click Specify Image Size
 - Output Size dialog to set custom sizes





- Higher resolution = longer rendering
 - Need faster CPU with more cores (or use Autodesk 360 Rendering)

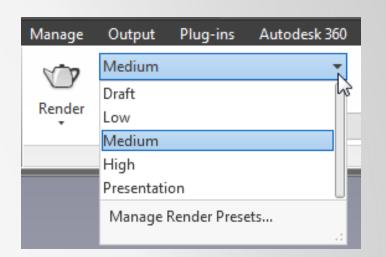


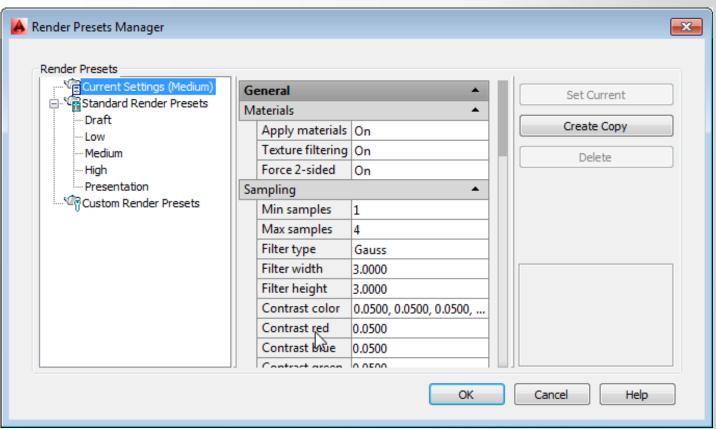




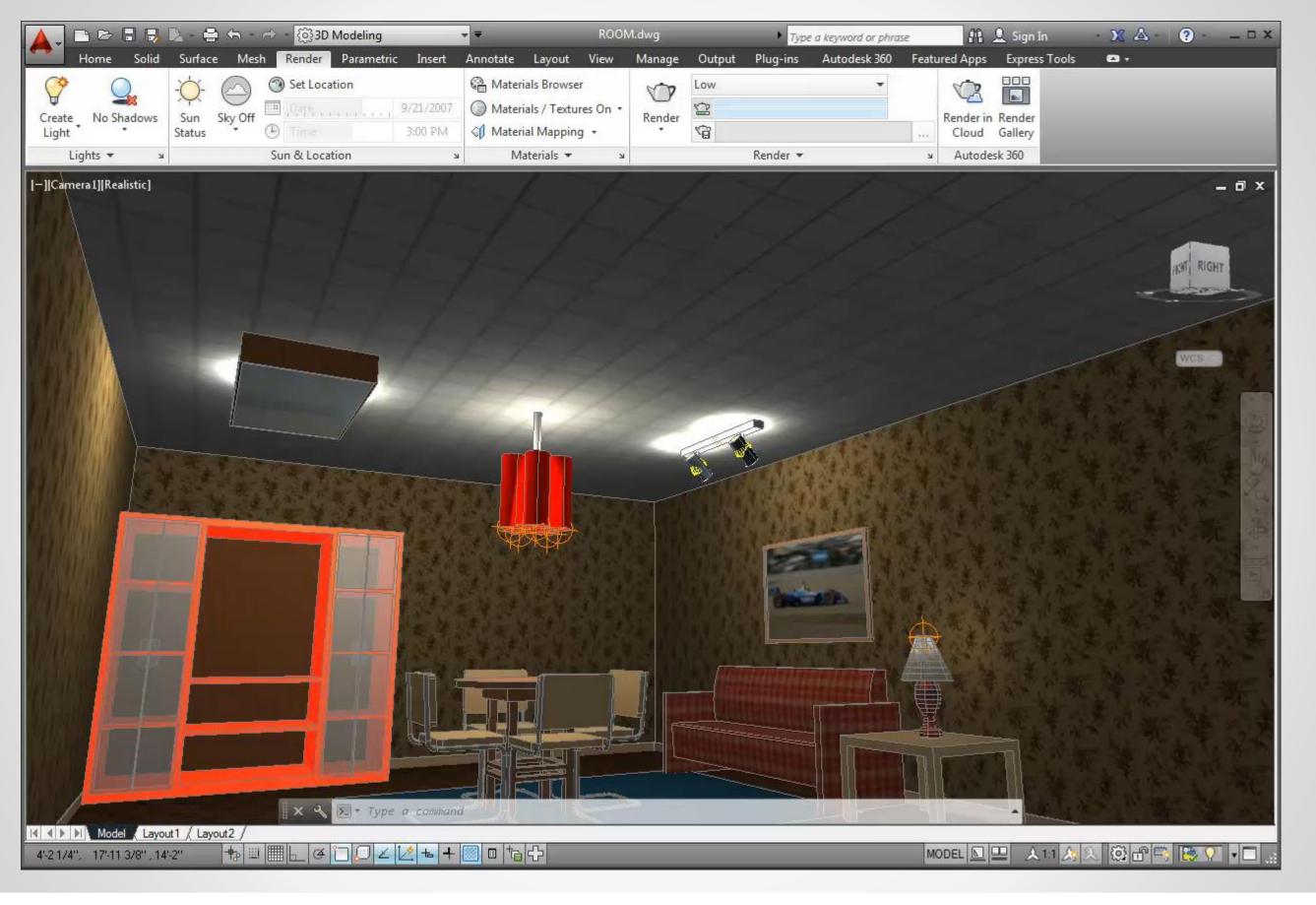
Understanding Rendering Settings

- 5 render presets
 - Changes made in Advanced Render Settings dialog are not saved to presets
 - Use Render Presets Manager to create custom presets





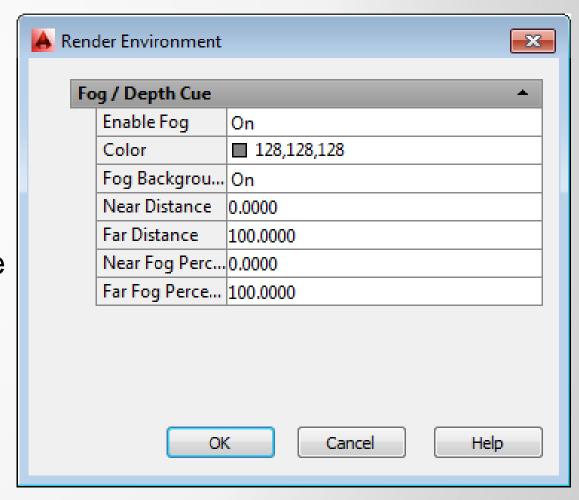




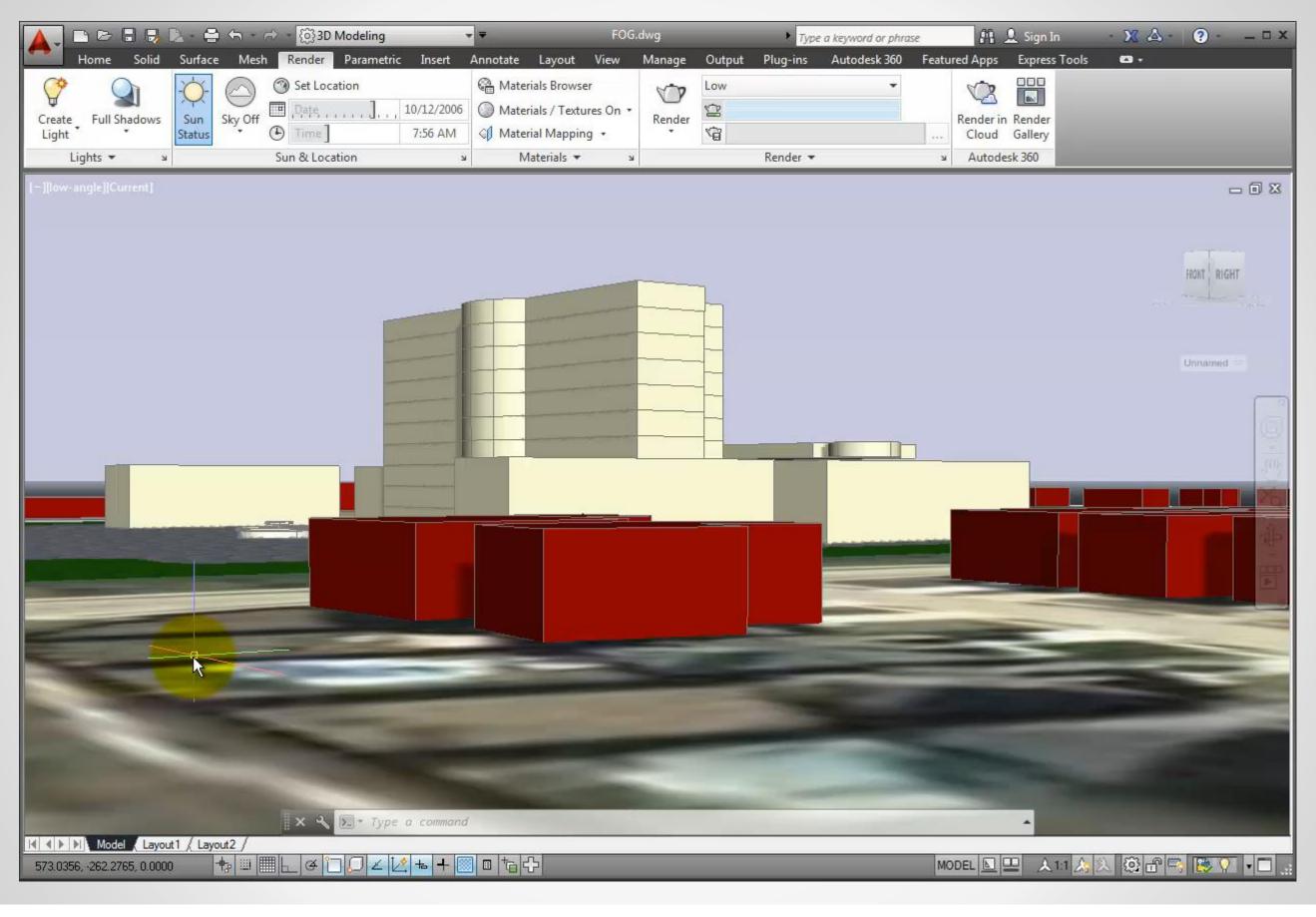


Controlling the Rendering Environment

- Add fog and depth cueing
 - Makes objects appear to fade into the distance
 - Enable Fog toggle on/off
 - Color Set color of fog effect
 - Fog Background Toggle fog effect on background
 - Near Distance % distance from camera
 - Far Distance % distance from camera
 - Near Fog Percentage % of opacity at near distance
 - Far Fog Percentage % of opacity at far distance









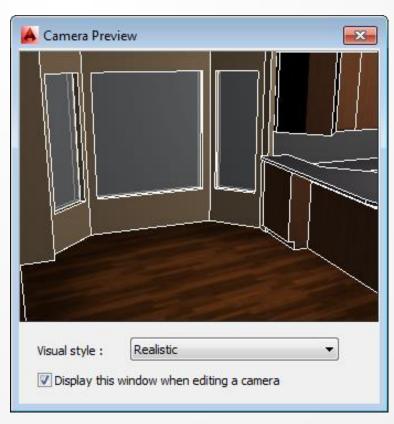
Working with Views

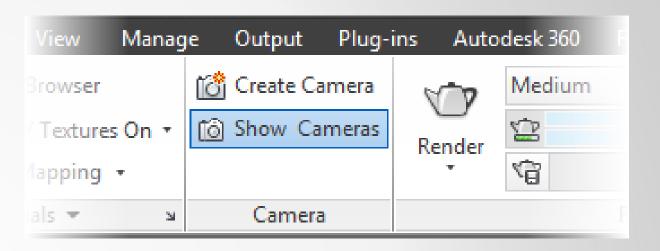


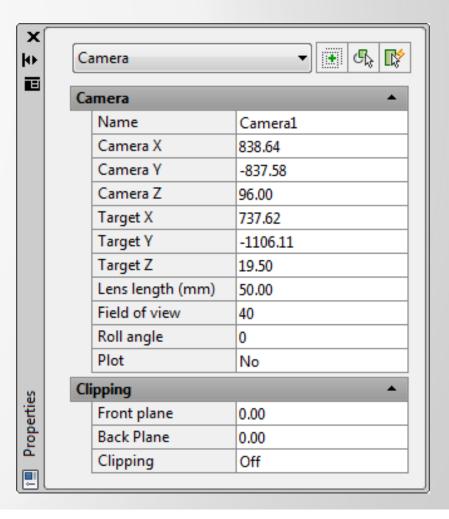
Placing Cameras and Creating Views

- Camera tool: places a camera, which creates a named view
 - See what the camera sees
 - Adjust the camera properties

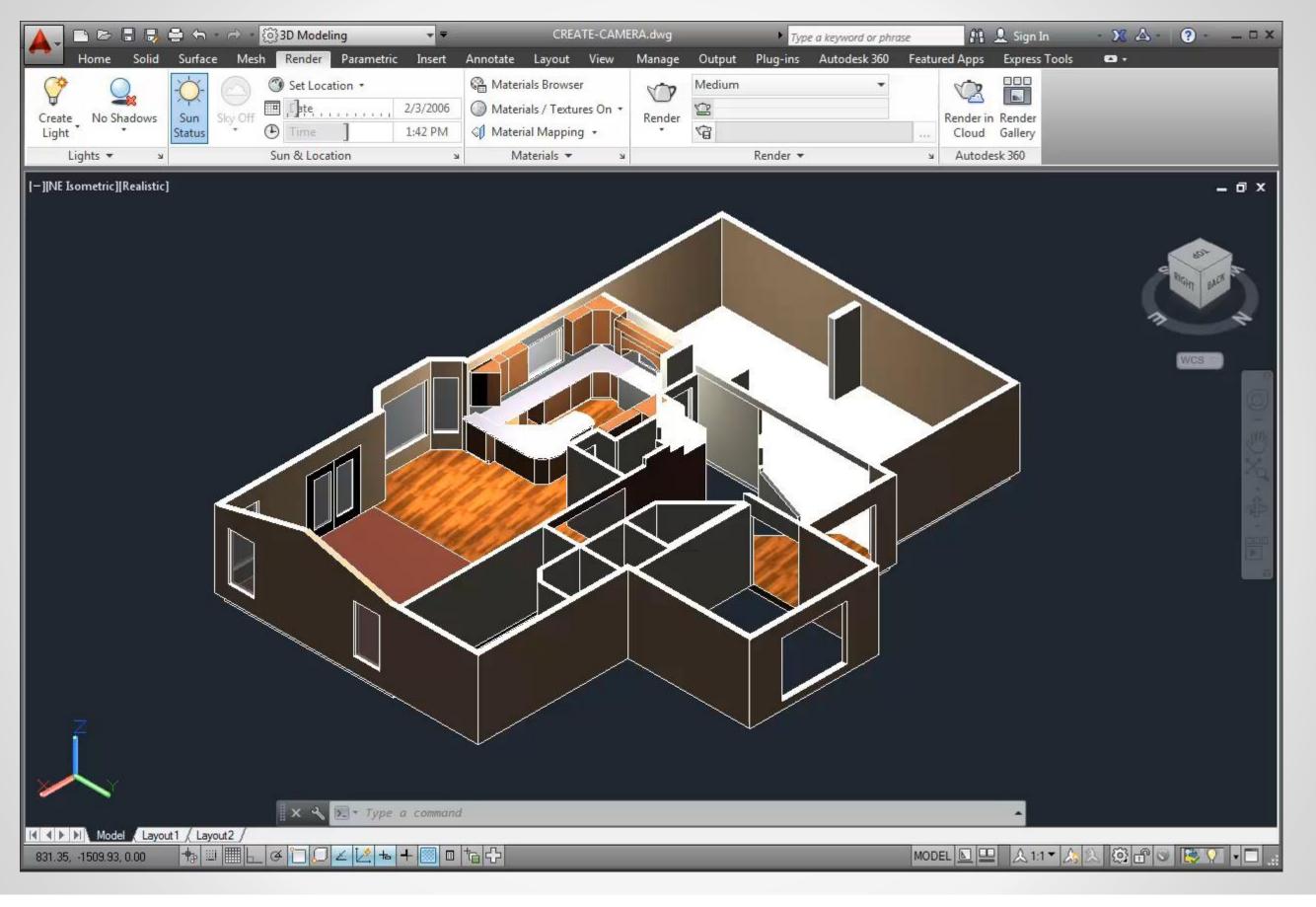








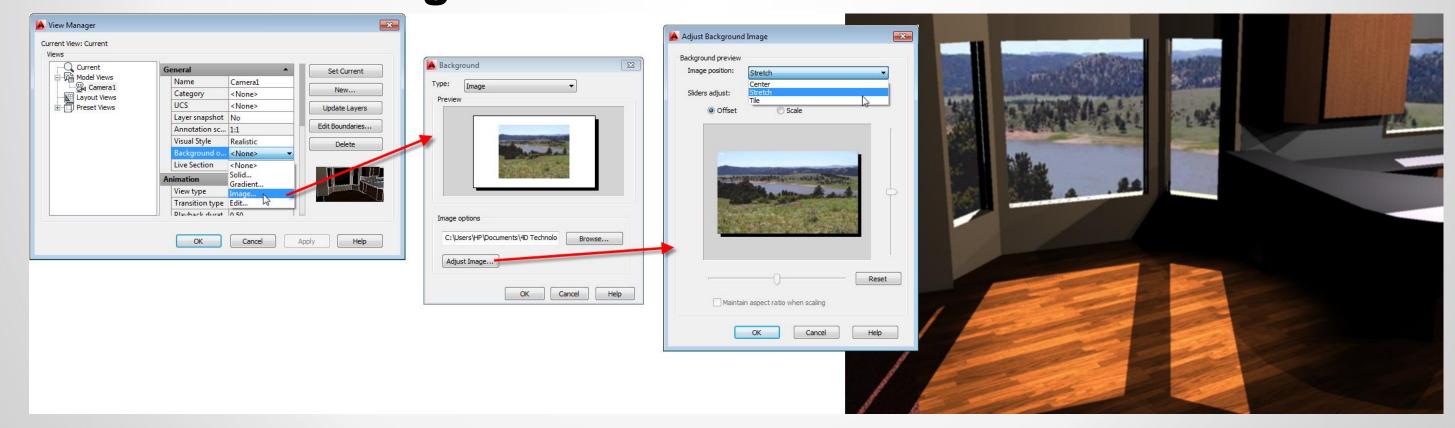




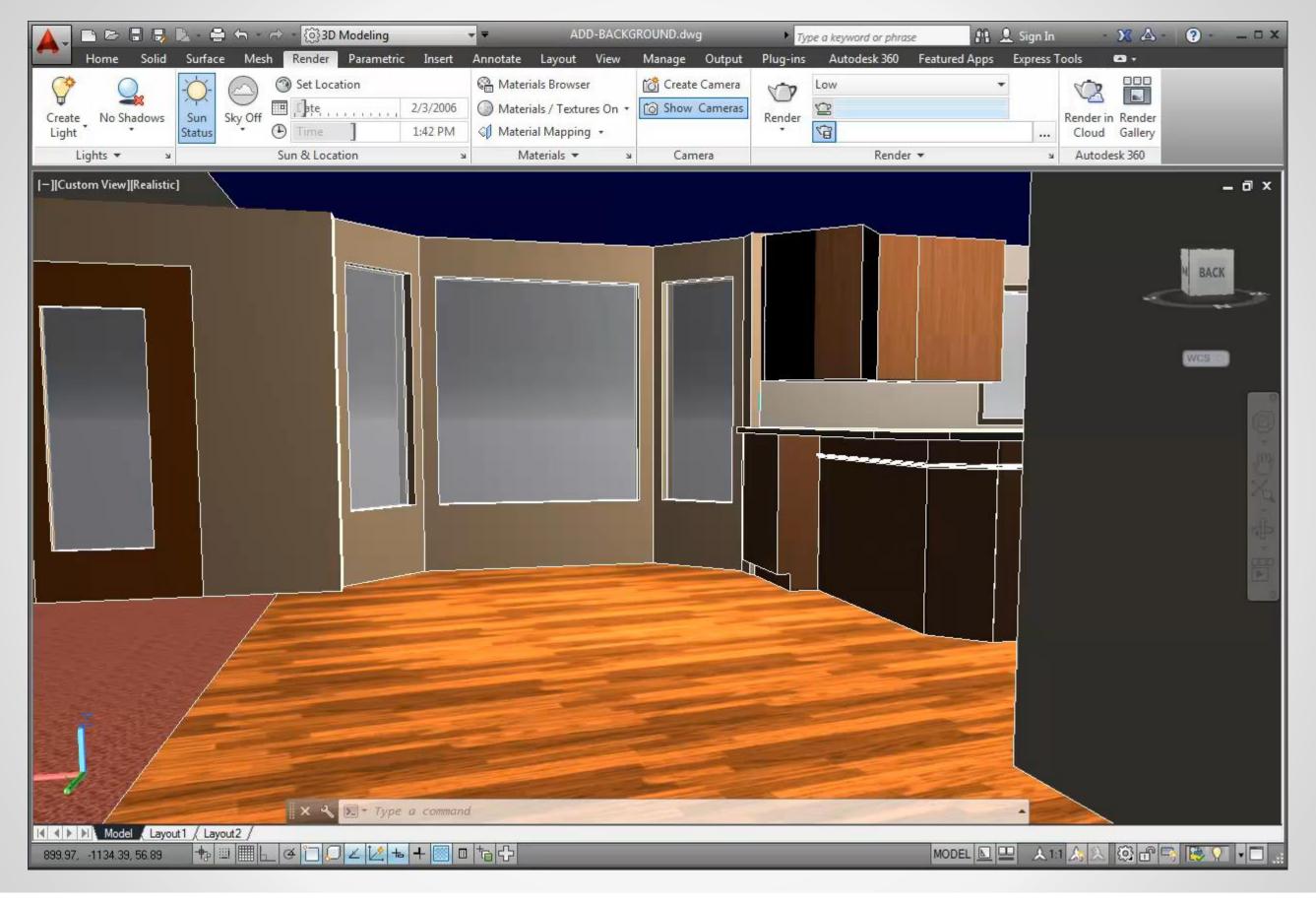


Adding a Background to a View

- Add a background image to a named view
 - Included whenever you render the view
 - Works best for still images
 - Use View Manager





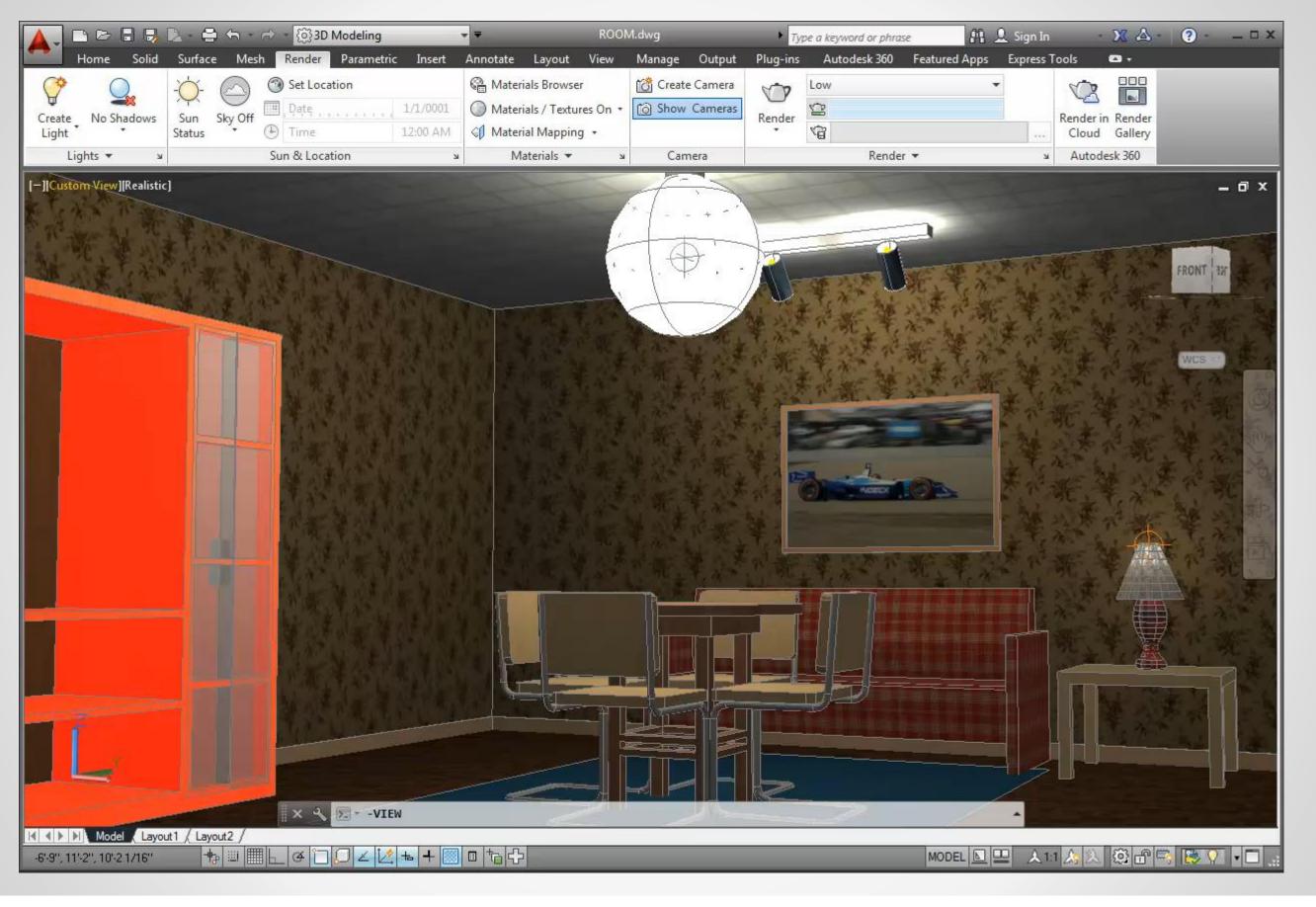




Saving and Redisplaying Rendered Images

- Save image from Render Window
- Use SAVEIMG command from viewport
- Render directly to a file





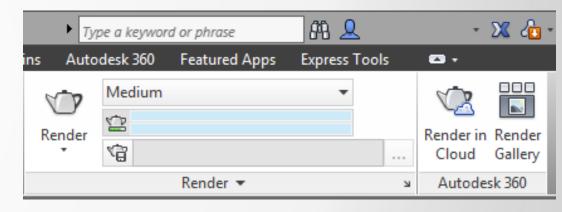


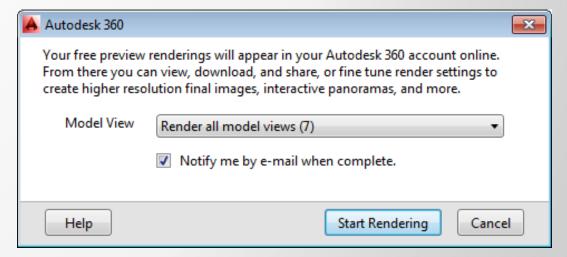
Rendering in the Cloud



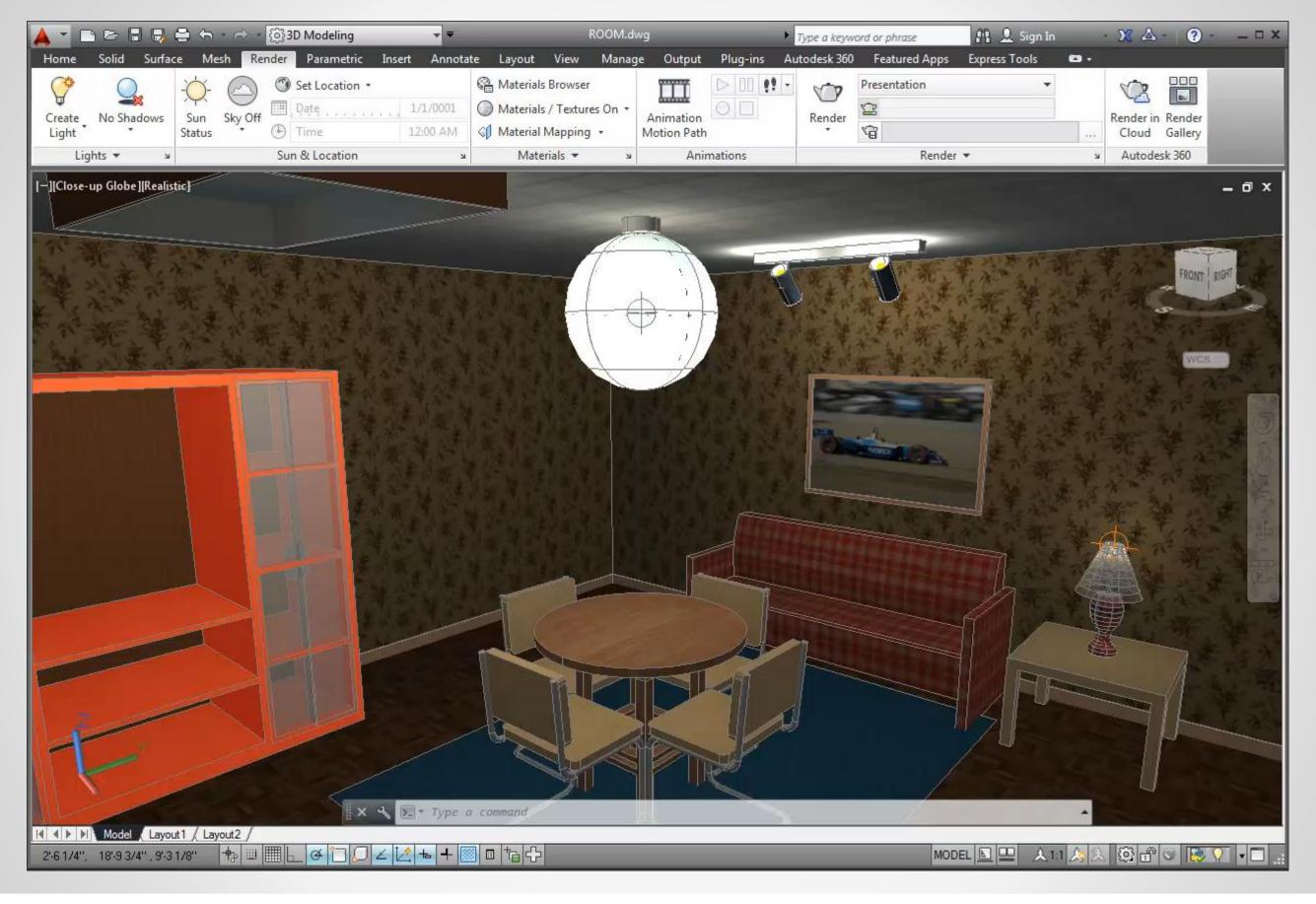
Rendering in the Cloud

- When you Render on your computer
 - AutoCAD is busy until the rendering is complete
 - Complex renderings require fast CPU with lots of cores
- Render online instead
 - Using your free Autodesk 360 account
 - Cloud credits
 - Notified by email when complete





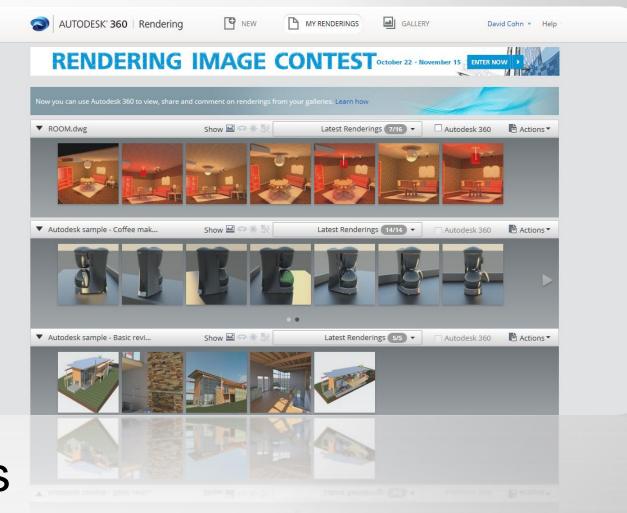




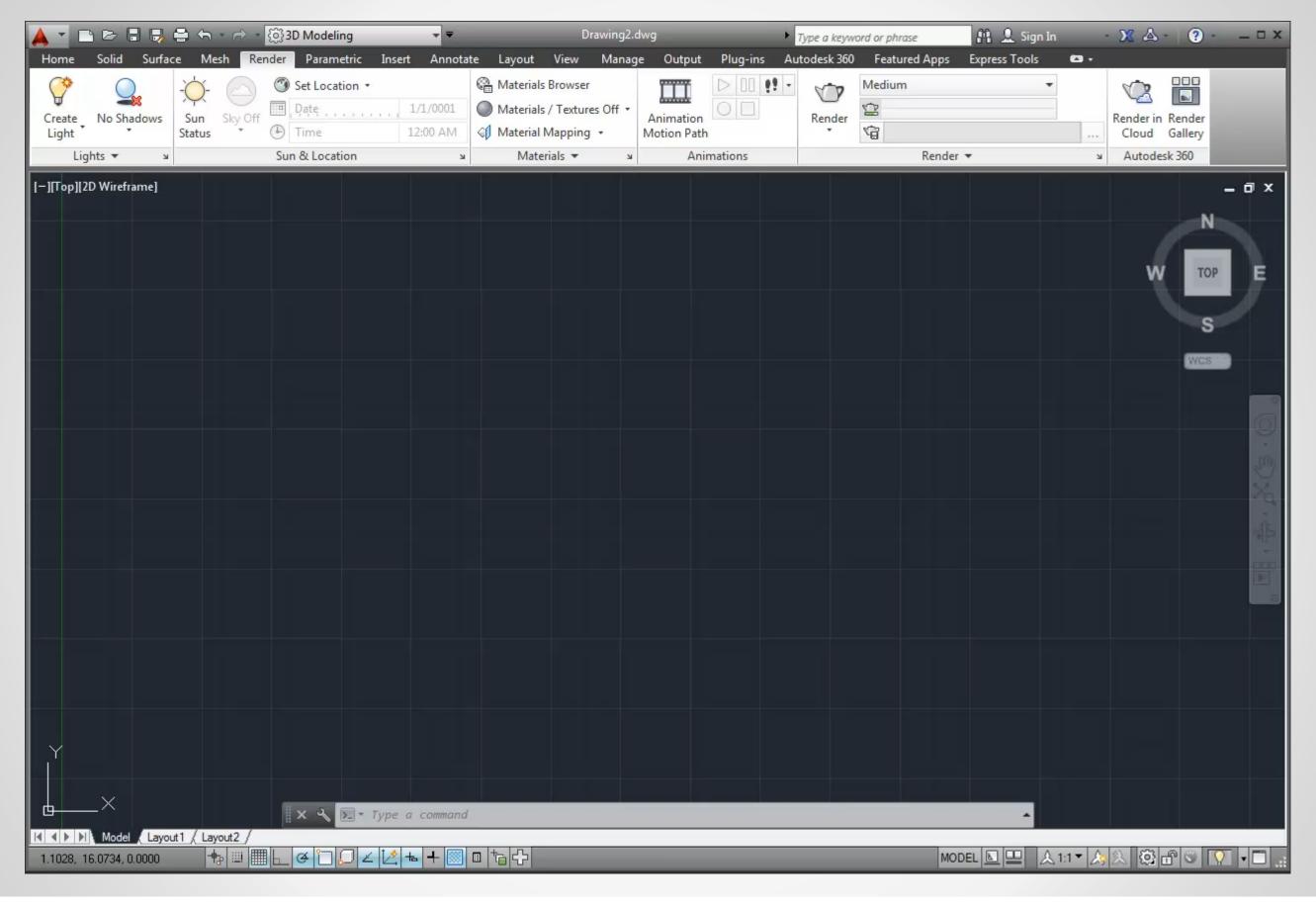


Understanding the Render Gallery

- The interface for accessing online renderings
 - Click the Render Gallery tool
 - Opens a browser window
 - Sign into your Autodesk 360 account
 - See your renderings
 - Re-render images
 - Download/delete/adjust images
 - Upload a DWG eTransmit ZIP
 - 3GB of online storage/75 cloud credits







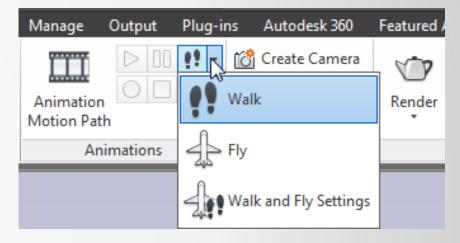


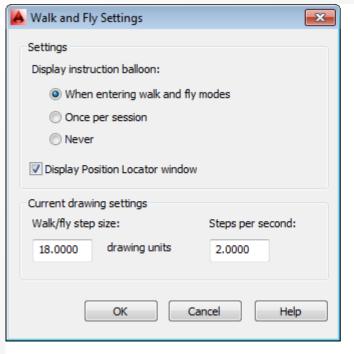
Walkthroughs and Flythroughs

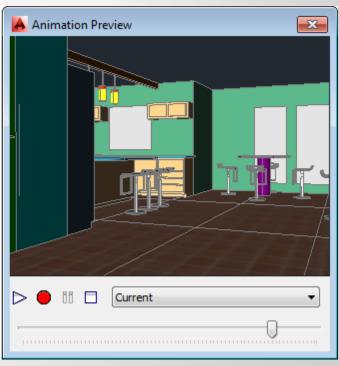


Creating Walkthroughs and Flythroughs

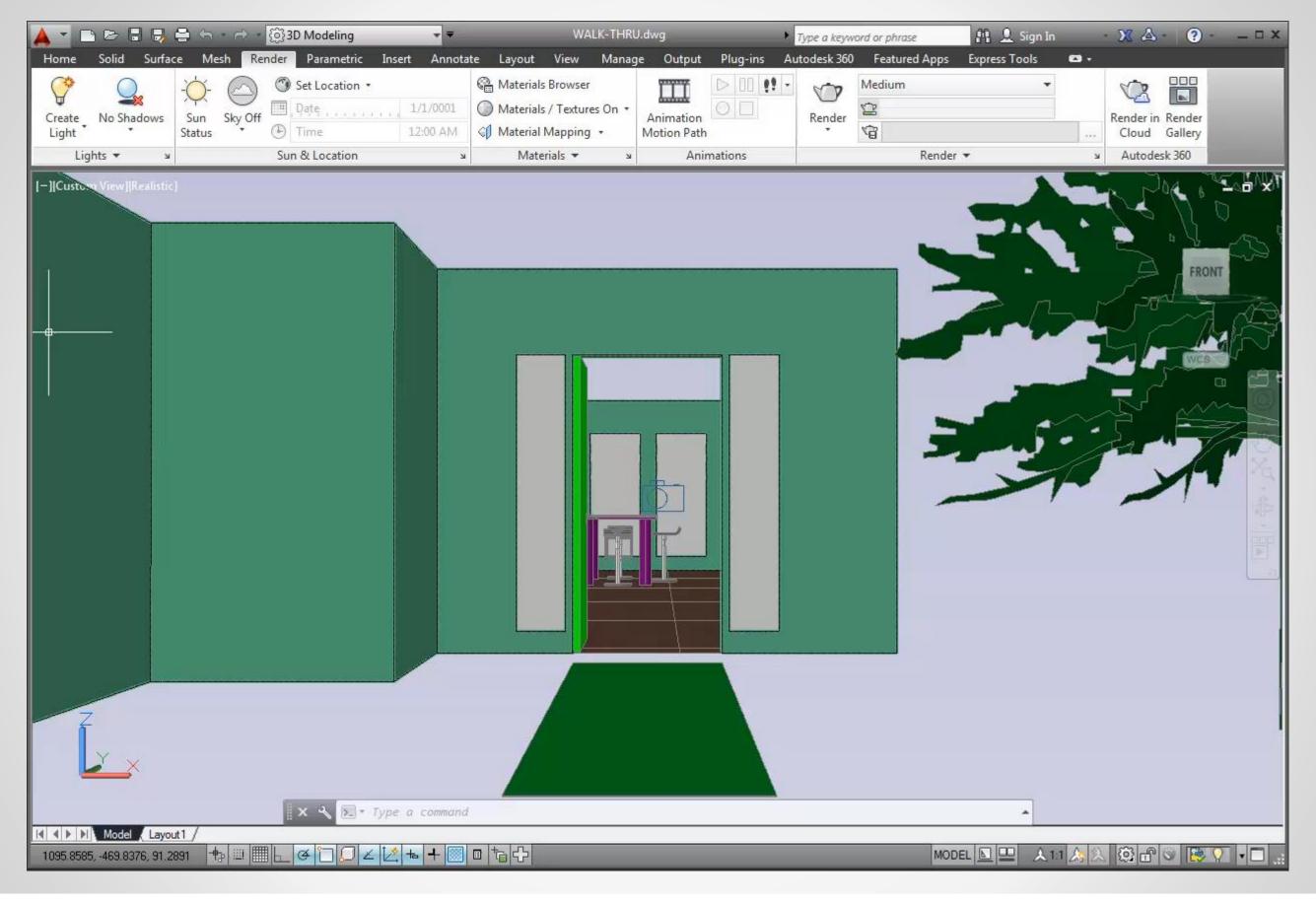
- Create animated walkthroughs and flythroughs
 - Tools in the Animations panel
 - Walk stays on XY-plane
 - Fly not constrained to XY-plane
 - Use keyboard and mouse to move
 - Adjust settings
 - Save as an animation







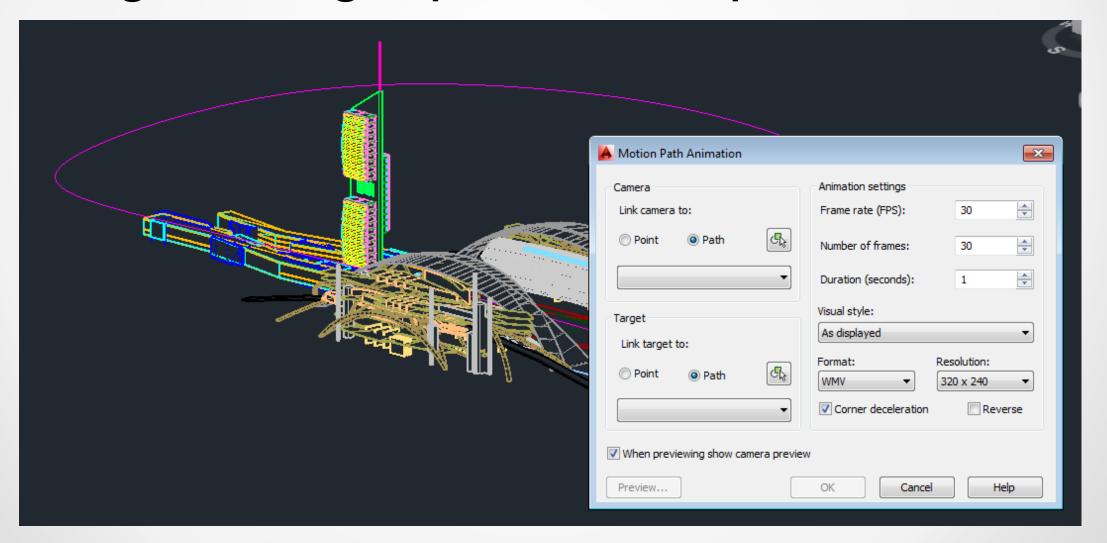




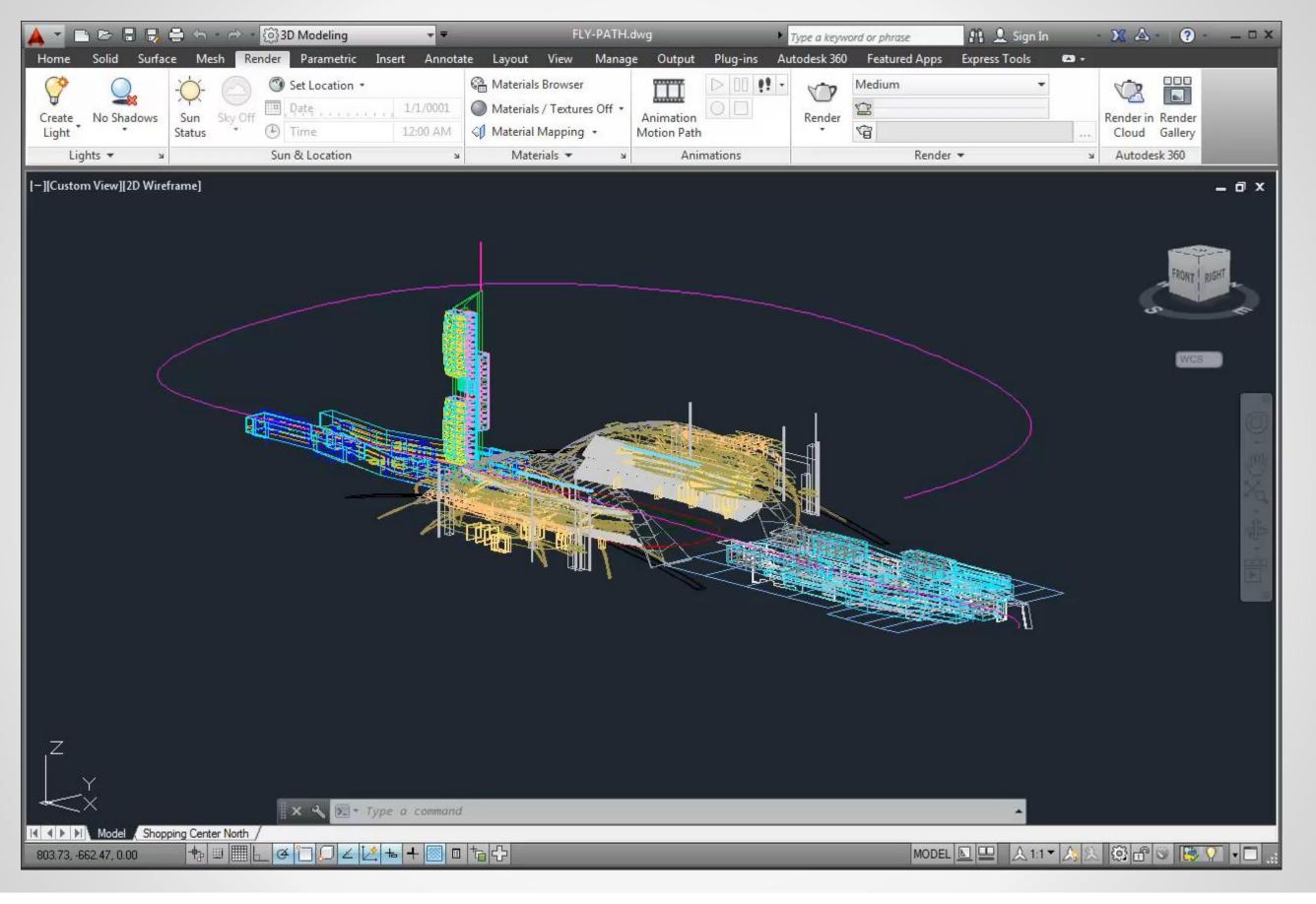


Animating Along a Path

 Use the Animation Motion Path tool to move the camera/target along a predefined path









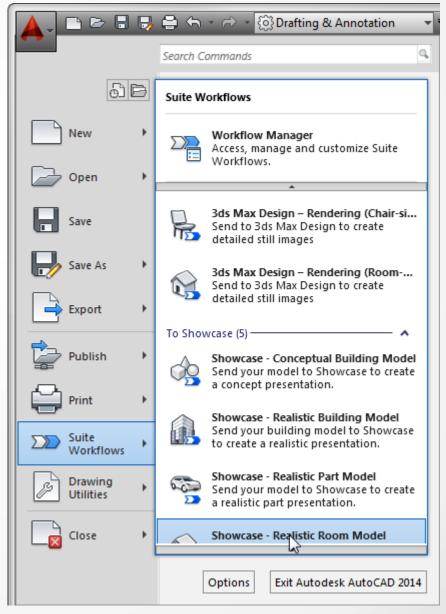
Using Other Tools

Autodesk Design Suite Workflows

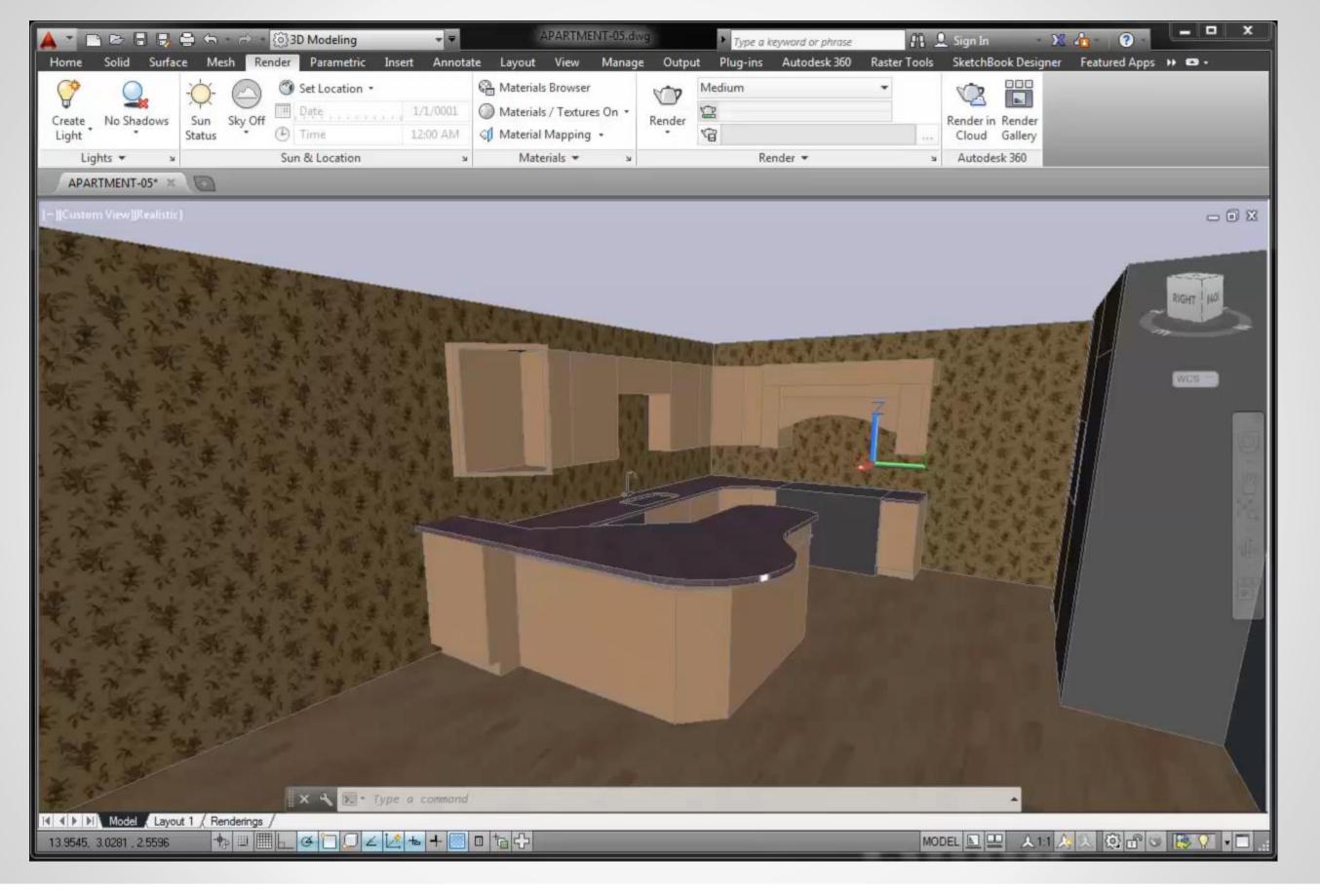
Render and animate using other software in the

AutoCAD Design Suite

- 3ds Max Design
- Autodesk Showcase
- Suite Workflows







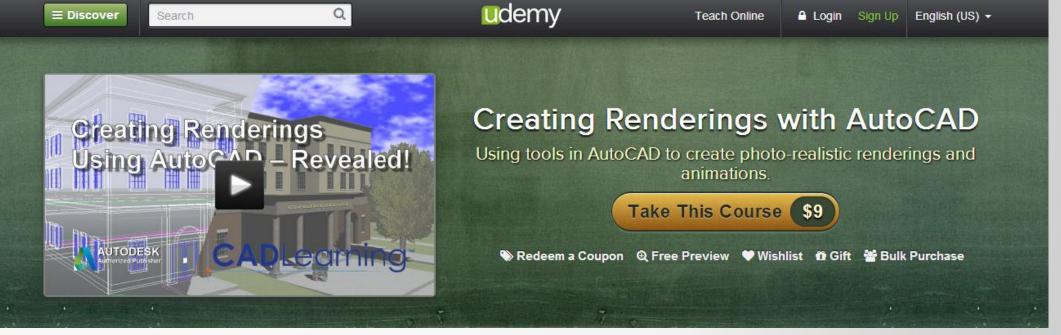


Conclusion

- Other resources
 - CADLearning eBooks
 - CADLearning courses at Udemy.com
 - Full CADLearning courses













Questions & Answers

To contact me:

David S. Cohn
711 Chuckanut Drive North
Bellingham, WA 98229-6921

360-733-0711
mailto:david@dscohn.com
www.dscohn.com
www.cadman-do.blogspot.com





