User Manual

Getting Started Edition

Version 1.1.0 · Windows and macOS

October 2026

© 2026 Insighted Pty Ltd. All rights reserved.
OT Draw is a trademark of Insighted Pty Ltd.

Contents

1 Introduction 4
1.1 What you can draw 4
1.2 How a drawing is organised 4
1.3 Getting Started 5
2 Installation and Licensing 6
2.1 System requirements 6
2.2 Starting OT Draw 3D for the first time 6
2.3 Signing in 7
2.4 How your licence is checked 8
2.5 Licence cards 8
2.6 Messages when signing in 8
2.7 Signing out 9
2.8 Updates 9
3 The Workspace 11
3.1 The Top Toolbar 11
3.2 The File menu 13
3.3 The Orientation Cube 15
3.4 The Left Toolbar 15
3.5 The Drawing Area 18
3.6 The Right Side Bar 18
3.7 Messages and tips 19
4 Your First Drawing 21
4.1 Before you start 21
4.2 Step 1: Place a wall 22
4.3 Step 2: Add a ramp 22
4.4 Step 3: Add a landing 23
4.5 Step 4: Set the landing height 23
4.6 Step 5: Add a door 24
4.7 Step 6: Add a handrail 25
4.8 Step 7: Add dimensions in TOP View 26
4.9 Step 8: Make the dimensions readable in 3D 27
4.10 Step 9: Save the project 27
4.11 Step 10: Export a picture 27
4.12 Where next 28
5 Projects and Files 29
5.1 What a project contains 29
5.2 The File menu 29
5.3 Starting a new project 30
5.4 Saving a project 30
5.5 Opening a project 31

5.6 The save prompt ... 33
5.7 Recovering unsaved work ... 33
5.8 Projects on shared folders ... 34
6 Exporting and Printing ... 35
6.1 Scale and size on paper ... 35
6.2 The Export dialog ... 35
6.3 Copying to the clipboard ... 37
6.4 Printing ... 38
6.5 Tips for good exports ... 38
6.6 If an export or copy fails ... 38
7 Preferences ... 39
7.1 Preferences ... 39
7.2 Canvas Settings ... 41
7.3 Backup and Recovery ... 41
7.4 Drawing settings in the Parameter Panel ... 42
7.5 Tool defaults ... 42
7.6 Left Toolbar layout ... 43
8 Keyboard Shortcuts ... 44
8.1 Tools and the view ... 44
8.2 What the drawing shows ... 44
8.3 Drawing ... 45
8.4 Selecting and editing ... 45
8.5 The project ... 45
8.6 Typing in boxes ... 46
8.7 The mouse ... 46
8.8 A trackpad ... 46
9 Troubleshooting ... 47
9.1 Getting help from support ... 47
9.2 OT Draw 3D will not start ... 47
9.3 Display and performance problems ... 48
9.4 Getting your work back ... 48
9.5 File problems ... 49
9.6 Licence problems ... 49
9.7 Update problems ... 49
9.8 Export and clipboard problems ... 50
10 Glossary ... 51

If page numbers are missing, right-click the table and choose Update Field.

1 Introduction

OT Draw 3D is drawing software designed especially for creating home modification diagrams. It features custom-built tools such as ramps, stairs and bathroom tools to make your diagrams easy to create. Objects can be placed at their exact size and location, so your diagrams are drawn to scale. Because each canvas is a complete 3D scene, it can be viewed as a realistic 3D view or as flat 2D views: the Top View (plan view) or the Front and Side Views (elevations).

> **Note** This is the **Getting Started** edition of the OT Draw 3D User Manual. It covers installing and signing in, finding your way around the window, a first drawing from start to finish, saving and opening projects, exporting and printing, preferences, keyboard shortcuts, troubleshooting and a glossary.

1.1 What you can draw

Area	What is included
Shapes	Cube, rectangle, circle, cylinder, polygon and line, each with its own size, position, rotation, edge and fill settings.
Labelling	Text, dimensions and arrows, set in the scene or kept facing the screen.
Walls and rooms	Joined walls drawn point by point, single walls, rectangular and L, U or T shaped rooms with floors, doors, windows, openings and wall breaks.
Structures	Stairs, winders, ramps at standard gradients from 1:8 to 1:20, landings with kerbs and cut-outs, and shaped landings of any outline.
Rails	Handrails in metal or timber, on posts or fixed to walls, with mid and kerb rails and a choice of endings; grabrails with any number of points.
Bathroom	Parametric toilet, bath, basin and shower.
Fittings	Wall taps (mixer, lever or cross taps), mixer spout, fixed or rain shower, hand shower, and hand shower on a rail.
Match Photo	Line the 3D view up with a photo of the real site and draw the modification over it.

1.2 How a drawing is organised

A few ideas run through the whole program:

Idea	What it means
Project	Everything you draw for one job is saved together in a single project file ending in .ot3d. See Chapter 5, Projects and Files.
Canvas	A Drawing Area within a project. A project can hold several canvases, each with its own view, listed in the Canvas List.
Views	Each canvas shows either the 3D view or a flat view (Top, Front, Back, Left, Right or Bottom). Flat views are used for plans and elevations.
Linked canvases	Canvases that share the same objects, so one design appears in 3D and in each flat view without being drawn twice.
Objects and parameters	Everything you place is an object. Selecting an object shows its parameters (sizes, colours, options) in the Parameter Panel, where you can type new values.

Idea	What it means
Tools	The buttons on the Left Toolbar that create objects, grouped by kind. See Chapter 3, The Workspace.

1.3 Getting Started

1. Install OT Draw 3D and sign in. See Chapter 2, Installation and Licensing.
2. Get to know the window: the Top Toolbar, the Left Toolbar, the Canvas List and the Parameter Panel. See Chapter 3, The Workspace.
3. Work through a complete example, from placing the first object to exporting the result. See Chapter 4, Your First Drawing.

> **Tip** The **File menu** has a **Help** link to the OT Draw support website and a **Keyboard and Mouse** link to a printable shortcut sheet. Keep the sheet beside you while you learn.

2 Installation and Licensing

This chapter explains where to download OT Draw 3D, how to sign in with your OT Draw account, how your licence is checked, and how OT Draw 3D keeps itself up to date.

2.1 System requirements

	Windows	macOS
Operating system	Windows 10 version 2004 or later, or Windows 11 (64-bit)	macOS on Apple silicon or Intel
Download from	www.otdraw.com/download	www.otdraw.com/download
Installer	OTDraw3D-Installer.msix	Disk image (.dmg)
Administrator rights	Not needed. OT Draw 3D installs for the person who is signed in to Windows.	Needed only if your Mac requires an administrator to add apps to the Applications folder.
Download size	About 150 MB	About 150 MB
Internet	For sign-in, licence checks and updates	For sign-in, licence checks and updates

2.2 Starting OT Draw 3D for the first time

Each time OT Draw 3D starts, it checks your licence before showing the Drawing Area. While it does this you see a **Checking licence…** card with a spinner. This usually takes only a moment.

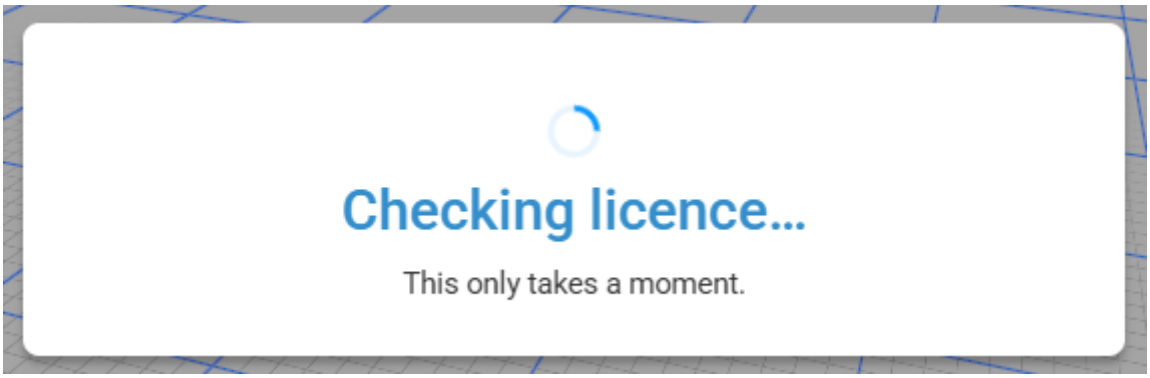

Figure 2.1 The licence check at start-up

The first time you start OT Draw 3D on a computer, the **Welcome to OT Draw 3D** card appears so that you can sign in.

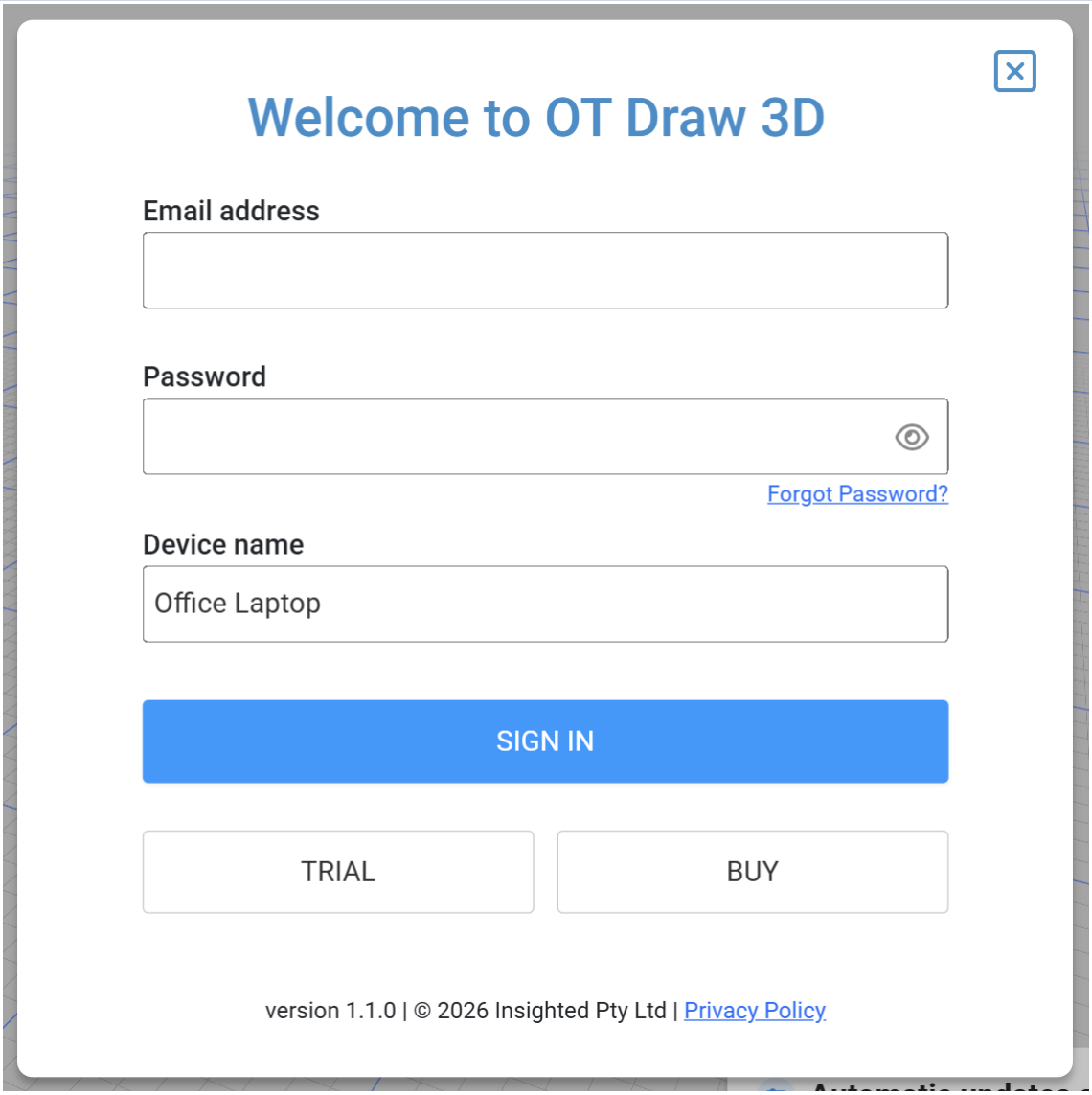

Figure 2.2 The Welcome to OT Draw 3D sign-in card

Note The cross in the corner of a licence card closes OT Draw 3D, as does **Close**. You cannot use the Drawing Area until the licence has been checked.

2.3 Signing in

1. In **Email address**, type the email address of your OT Draw account.
2. In **Password**, type your password. Click the eye icon at the right of the field to show what you have typed; click it again to hide it.
3. Check **Device name**. It is filled in with your computer's name. This is the name you will see for this computer in your account on the OT Draw website, so change it to something you will recognise if you like, for example Work laptop.
4. Click **Sign in**.

If you have forgotten your password, click **Forgot Password?** under the password field. The OT Draw website opens so you can reset it.

Depending on your account, one or more of the following steps may follow before OT Draw 3D opens.

2.4 How your licence is checked

OT Draw 3D checks your licence each time it starts. If the computer is online, it asks the OT Draw licence server; if it is offline, it relies on the result of the last successful check.

- Each successful online check lets you use OT Draw 3D offline for a set number of days. The number of days is set by your subscription.
- While that period lasts, OT Draw 3D opens normally without an internet connection.
- When it runs out, the **Validation Required** card asks you to connect to the internet and click **Refresh licence**.
- A problem reaching the licence server never counts against you. If the server cannot be reached but your offline period is still current, OT Draw 3D simply opens.

2.5 Licence cards

If the licence check finds a problem, a card explains what has happened and offers the next step. The table lists each card.

Card heading	What it means	What to do
Welcome to OT Draw 3D	This computer is not signed in.	Sign in, or click Trial or Buy to set up an account.
Sign in to OT Draw 3D (Your sign-in token on this computer has expired)	Your sign-in on this computer has expired.	Sign in again. One more session may be available if you are offline.
Validation Required	OT Draw 3D has been offline for longer than your subscription allows and needs to check your licence.	Connect to the internet and click Refresh licence. Use One more session if you cannot get online yet.
Subscription Expired	Your subscription has expired (the date is shown where known).	Renew it in the portal (Manage subscription), then click Refresh licence.
Subscription On Hold	Your subscription has been put on hold.	Review it in the portal (Manage subscription), then click Refresh licence.
Subscription Cancelled	Your subscription has been cancelled, so OT Draw 3D cannot be used on this account.	Click Contact support if this is not right.
Trial Expired	Your free trial has ended.	Click Buy to buy a subscription, then sign in.
Sign in to OT Draw 3D (no reason shown, with Contact support and Close)	This computer has been removed from your account, for example from the portal.	Sign in again to register the computer.

2.6 Messages when signing in

If a sign-in cannot be completed, a message appears in red under the button. The common ones are listed below.

Message	What to do
Invalid email address or password.	Check both and try again. Use Forgot Password? if needed.

Message	What to do
You've registered the maximum number of computers for this subscription. Remove one in your portal, then sign in again.	Click Manage devices, which replaces the first button under the message, to open the portal. Remove a computer you no longer use, then sign in again.
This trial account hasn't been verified yet. Check your email for the verification link.	Click the link in the verification email, then sign in.
A trial has already been used on this computer.	Buy a subscription, or sign in with a paid account.
This account is Admin Only and doesn't have access to the application.	Sign in with a user account, or ask your administrator to give you access.
This account doesn't have access to OT Draw 3D. Ask your OT Draw administrator to enable the account.	Your plan includes OT Draw only, or your user is allocated to the OT Draw plan. Ask your administrator.
This account has been removed. Contact your OT Draw administrator.	Contact your administrator.
OT Draw couldn't reach the licence server. Check your internet connection and try again.	Check your connection and try again.
Your internet connection is being security checked before it can reach OT Draw...	Often caused by a VPN or a company network. Turn the VPN off and try again.
The licence server couldn't complete the request. This is usually temporary - please try again in a minute.	Wait a minute and try again.

2.7 Signing out

1. Open the **File menu** and choose **Sign out** (under **Account**).
2. If the project has unsaved changes, you are asked whether to save it first. See Chapter 5, Projects and Files.
3. The Drawing Area is cleared and the **Welcome to OT Draw 3D** card appears.

> **Important** Signing out removes your sign-in from this computer only. The computer stays registered to your account and still counts towards your device limit. To free the place for another computer, remove this one from your account on the OT Draw website.

File menu > Open Customer Portal opens your account on the OT Draw website, where you can manage your subscription, your users and your registered computers.

2.8 Updates

OT Draw 3D checks for new versions over the internet. How it does this is set by **Software Updates** in **File menu > Preferences**.

Software Updates	What happens
Auto-Update (default)	OT Draw 3D checks when it starts and every six hours while it is open. A new version downloads in the background while you work. When it is ready you are offered a restart to install it.
Notify	OT Draw 3D checks when it starts and tells you if a new version is available. Nothing is downloaded until you click Download.
Manual	OT Draw 3D never checks by itself. Use File menu > Check for Updates when you want to.

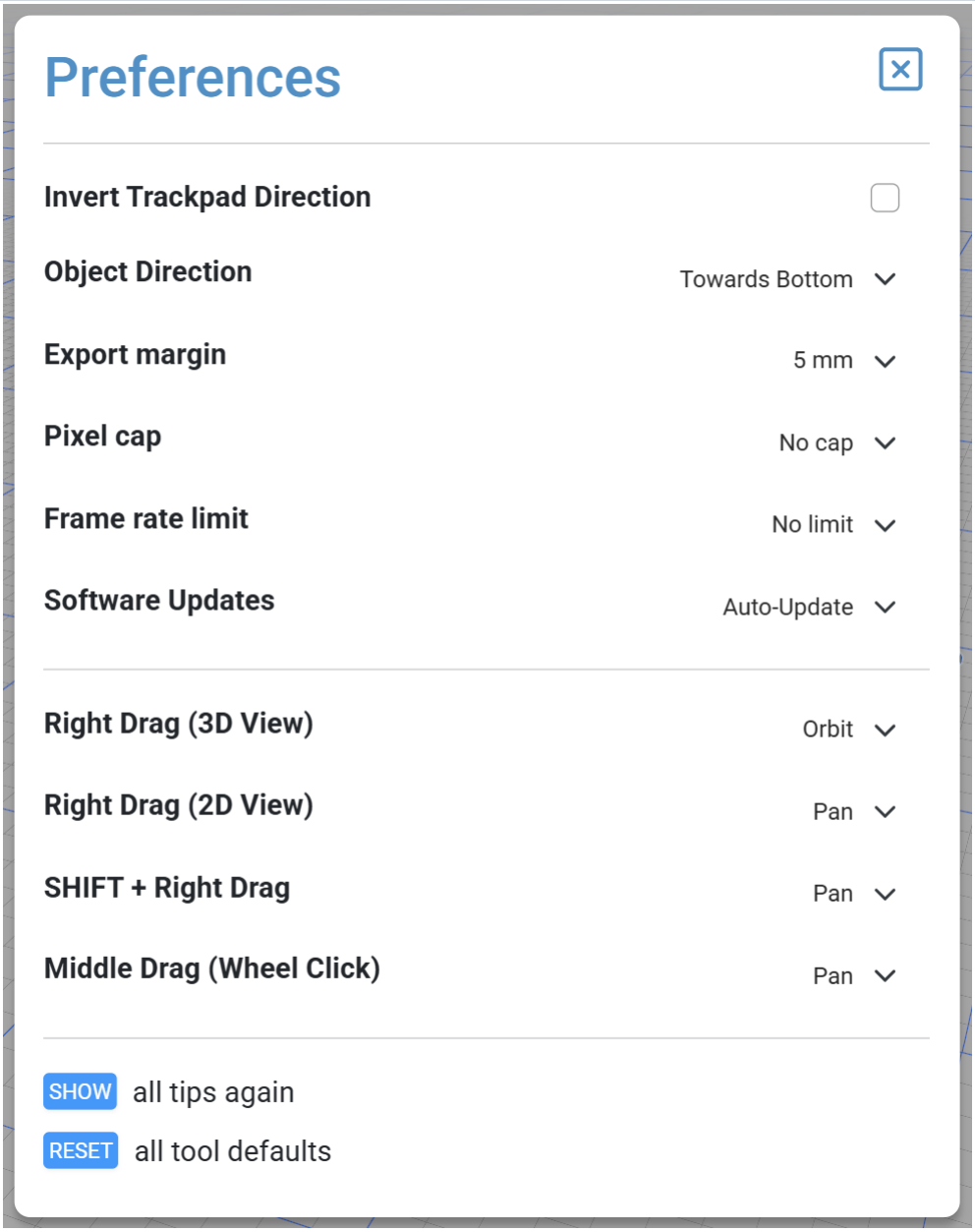

Figure 2.3 The Software Updates setting in Preferences

Note No check is made on the very first start after installing, because you have only just installed the latest version.

Checking for updates yourself

Choose **File menu > Check for Updates** (under **Settings**) at any time. The menu item changes to show what is happening: **Downloading update…** while a download is under way, and **Restart to update** once an update is ready to install.

3 The Workspace

This chapter walks you round the OT Draw 3D window: what each area is for and what every button does. Later chapters explain each feature in detail; here the aim is to know where things are.

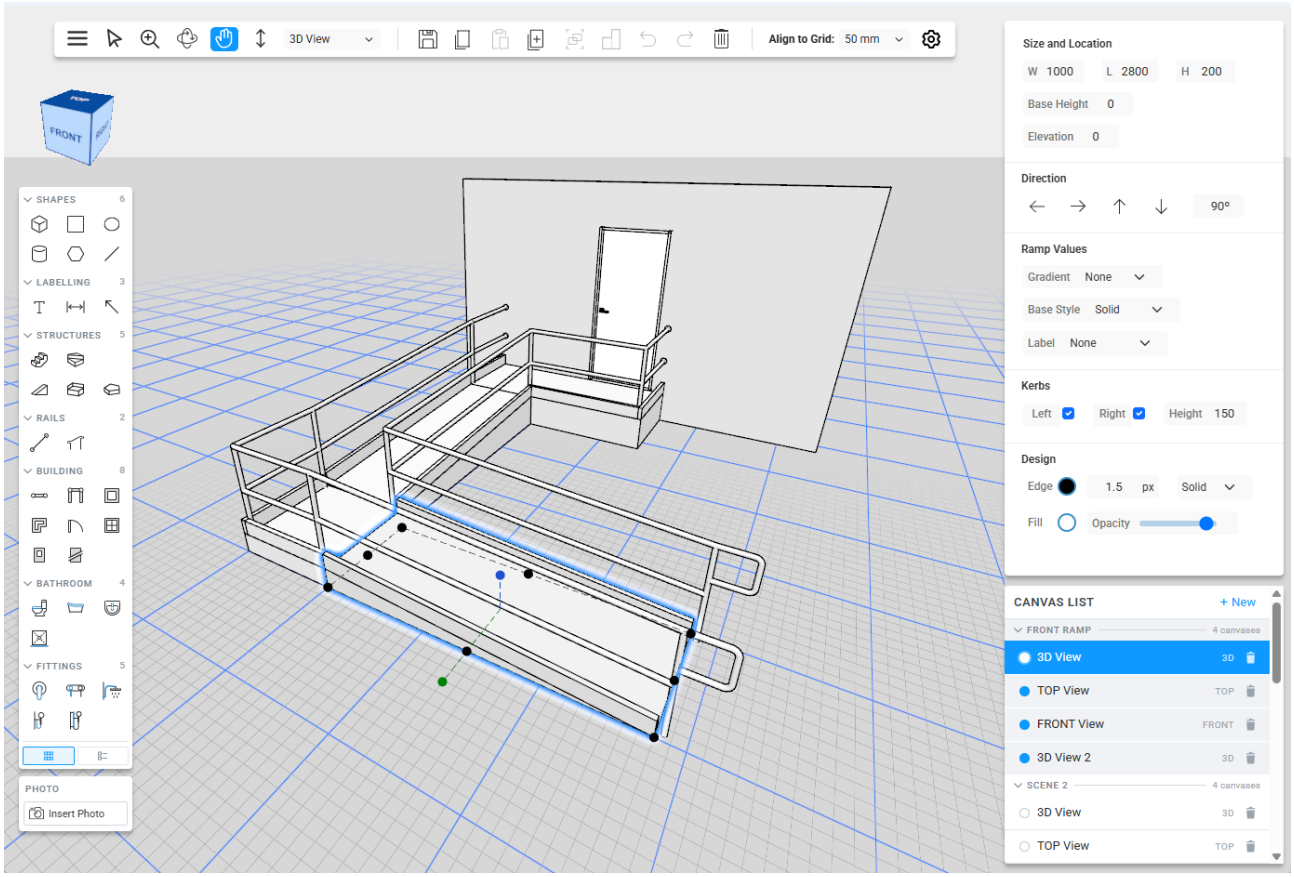

Figure 3.1 The OT Draw 3D window with its main areas

The window has five main areas:

- **The Top Toolbar** across the top of the drawing: the menu, the view tools, the view list, save and edit buttons, and Align to Grid.
- **The Orientation Cube** at the top left of the drawing, which shows which way you are looking and lets you change view.
- **The Left Toolbar**, holding every drawing tool in folding groups, with the **Photo** section under it.
- **The Drawing Area** in the middle, where you draw. Each canvas in your project has its own drawing.
- **The Right Side Bar**: the Parameter Panel at the top, which shows the measurements and options of what is selected, and the **Canvas List** below it.

3.1 The Top Toolbar



Figure 3.2 The Top Toolbar

Hover over any button to see its name (its tooltip). The buttons are, from left to right:



Figure 3.3 The menu button, the view tools and the view list

Button	Tooltip	What it does
Three lines	(none)	Opens the File menu - see The File menu below.
Arrow	Select	The normal working tool. Click objects to select them, drag them to move them. Shortcut **Space**.
Magnifier	Zoom (Z)	Drag up and down in the drawing to zoom in and out. In a flat view it also opens a list of set scales such as **Zoom to 1:50**. Shortcut **Z**.
Orbit	Orbit (O)	Drag in the drawing to turn the model round. Dragging in a flat view carries you out into the 3D view. Shortcut **O**.
Hand	Pan (P)	Drag to slide the view. Shortcut **P** or **H**.
Fifth button (changes with the view)	Vertical Shift (V), Rotate View, or Zoom to Fit (Home)	In the 3D view it is **Vertical Shift**: drag to raise or lower the view (shortcut **V**). In **TOP View** or **BOTTOM View** it is **Rotate View**, which turns the plan a quarter turn clockwise. In **FRONT**, **BACK**, **LEFT** or **RIGHT View** it is **Zoom to Fit**, which fills the view with the drawing.
View list (shows the current view, for example 3D View)	Select View	Choose **TOP View**, **FRONT View**, **LEFT View**, **RIGHT View**, **BACK View**, **BOTTOM View** or **3D View**, and **ZOOM to Fit** (**Home**).
Disk	Save	Saves the project (**Ctrl+S** (**⌘S** on Mac)). See Chapter 5, Projects and Files.
Copy	Copy Selection	Copies the selected objects (**Ctrl+C** (**⌘C** on Mac)). Greyed when nothing placed is selected.
Paste	Paste Selection	Pastes what you copied (**Ctrl+V** (**⌘V** on Mac)). Greyed until something has been copied.
Duplicate	Duplicate Selection	Makes a copy of the selection straight away (**Ctrl+D** (**⌘D** on Mac)).
Group	Group Selection or Ungroup Selection	Joins the selected objects into a group, or splits a selected group apart. The tooltip says which it will do.
Shared lines	Remove Shared Lines or Restore Shared Lines	Hides the outlines where selected shapes meet, so they read as one piece, or puts them back.
Curved arrow left	Undo	Undoes the last change (**Ctrl+Z** (**⌘Z** on Mac)).

Button	Tooltip	What it does
Curved arrow right	Redo	Redoes a change you undid (`Ctrl+Shift+Z` (`⌘⇧Z` on Mac) or `Ctrl+Y` (`⌘Y` on Mac)).
Bin	Remove Selection	Deletes the selected objects (`Delete` or `Backspace`). Greyed when nothing is selected.
Align to Grid	Select Grid Precision (A switches it off and on)	Sets the step that points and objects snap to as you draw and move, for example **50 mm**, or **Off**. `A` switches it off and back on.
Gear	(none)	Opens **Canvas Settings**: units, snapping, the grid and ground, colours, zoom speed and snap distance. See Chapter 7, Preferences.



Figure 3.4 Save and the editing buttons

Note Buttons that have nothing to act on are greyed out. For example, **Copy Selection** and **Duplicate Selection** stay grey until a placed object is selected, and **Undo** is grey until you have made a change.

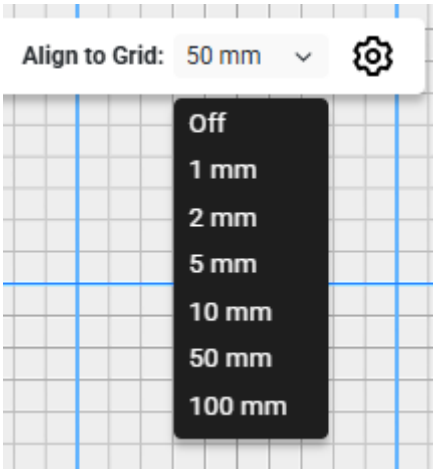

Figure 3.5 Align to Grid and the Canvas Settings gear

Tip On a narrow window, the **Align to Grid** section and the gear move out of the Top Toolbar into a bar of their own at the bottom of the drawing. They work the same in either place.

3.2 The File menu

Click the three-line button at the left end of the Top Toolbar to open the File menu. It has two columns: the project on the left and the app around it on the right.

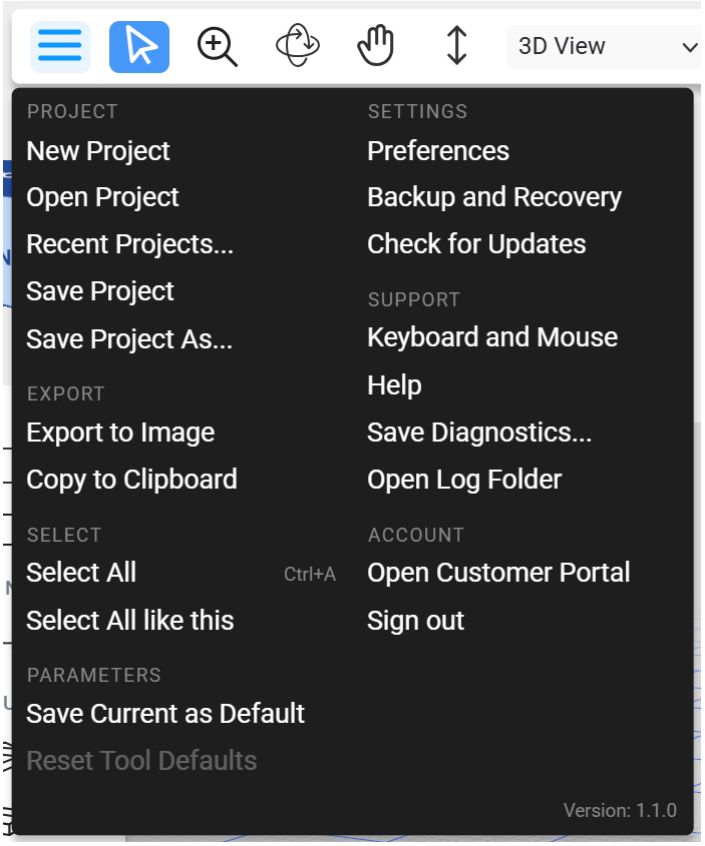

Figure 3.6 The File menu

Group	Item	What it does
Project	**New Project**	Starts a new, empty project. You are asked to save first if there are unsaved changes.
Project	**Open Project**	Opens a saved project (.ot3d file).
Project	**Recent Projects...**	Shows the projects you opened recently, with pictures, so you can open one with a click.
Project	**Save Project**	Saves the project (**Ctrl+S** (**⌘S** on Mac)).
Project	**Save Project As...**	Saves a copy under a new name or in a new place.
Project	**Recover Unsaved Work...**	Only shown when there is unsaved work to recover, for example after the app closed unexpectedly. See Chapter 5, Projects and Files.
Export	**Export to Image**	Saves canvases as PNG, JPG or PDF. See Chapter 6, Exporting and Printing.
Export	**Copy to Clipboard**	Copies the current view as a picture, ready to paste into a report.
Select	**Select All**	Selects everything on the canvas (**Ctrl+A** (**⌘A** on Mac)).
Select	**Select All like this**	Selects every object of the same kind as the one selected, so you can change them all at once.
Parameters	**Save Current as Default**	Only shown while one placed object is selected. New objects of that kind will start with its current values.
Parameters	**Reset Tool Defaults**	Puts that kind of object back to the standard starting values.
Settings	**Preferences**	Opens Preferences. See Chapter 7, Preferences.
Settings	**Backup and Recovery**	Auto-save and recovery settings. See Chapter 7, Preferences.

Group	Item	What it does
Settings	**Check for Updates**	Checks for a new version. While an update downloads it reads **Downloading update…**, and once it is ready it reads **Restart to update**.
Support	**Keyboard and Mouse**	Opens the keyboard and mouse shortcut sheet on the OT Draw website.
Support	**Help**	Opens the OT Draw support website.
Support	**Save Diagnostics...**	Saves a zip of the app's log files for you to send to support.
Support	**Open Log Folder**	Opens the folder that holds the log files.
Account	**Open Customer Portal**	Opens your account on the OT Draw website.
Account	**Sign out**	Signs you out on this computer. See Chapter 2, Installation and Licensing.

The version number of the app is shown at the foot of the menu. Click anywhere outside the menu to close it.

3.3 The Orientation Cube

The cube at the top left of the drawing turns with the model, so its labelled faces (TOP, FRONT, RIGHT and so on) always show which way you are looking. Click a face, edge or corner to change view, or drag the cube to turn the model. The cube also shows the work plane: the face you clicked, and the face opposite it, are shaded dark.

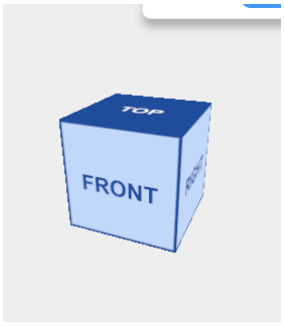

Figure 3.7 The Orientation Cube

3.4 The Left Toolbar

Every drawing tool is on the Left Toolbar, grouped under headings: **Shapes**, **Labelling**, **Structures**, **Rails**, **Building**, **Bathroom** and **Fittings**. The number beside each heading is how many tools the group holds.

- Click a tool to pick it up. The tool's button lights up, and the new object follows the pointer when you move over the drawing.
- Click a heading to fold that group shut, and click it again to open it. Folded groups stay folded the next time you open the app.
- A tool that cannot be used at the moment is greyed out, and its tooltip says why. For example, **Door**, **Window**, **Opening** and **Wall Break** are greyed until the canvas has a wall to put them in, and **Shaped Landing** is greyed in a side view.

Group	Tools
Shapes	Cube, Rectangle, Circle, Cylinder, Polygon, Line

Group	Tools
Labelling	Text, Dimension, Arrow
Structures	Stairs, Winder, Ramp, Landing, Shaped Landing
Rails	Grabrail, Handrail
Building	Single Wall, Wall Chain, Room, Shaped Room, Door, Window, Opening, Wall Break
Bathroom	Toilet, Bath, Basin, Shower
Fittings	Wall Taps, Mixer Spout, Fixed Shower, Hand Shower, Hand Shower on Rail

Icons or a list

Two small buttons at the foot of the Left Toolbar change how the tools are shown. The left one (tooltip **Icons, three to a row**) shows icons only; hover over an icon to see the tool's name. The right one (tooltip **A list, with names**) shows each tool on its own row with its name beside it. The app remembers your choice.



Figure 3.8 The Left Toolbar as icons

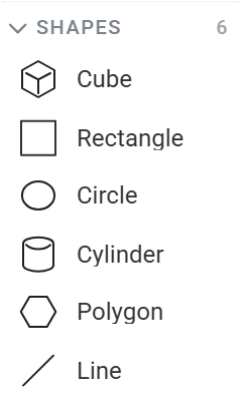

Figure 3.9 The Left Toolbar as a list with names (Shapes group shown)

The Photo section

Under the Left Toolbar is the **Photo** section. **Insert Photo** puts a photograph behind the current canvas; once a photograph is set the button reads **Change Photo**, and clicking it lets you **Clear** or **Replace** it. With a photograph in place, **Match Photo** appears: it lines the 3D view up with the photograph.

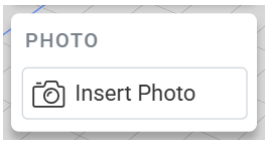

Figure 3.10 The Photo section

3.5 The Drawing Area

The Drawing Area fills the middle of the window. In the 3D view you see the model in perspective standing on the ground, with the grid on the work plane. In the flat views (Top, Front, Left, Right, Back and Bottom) you see a true-to-scale drawing with no perspective.

While you work, short tips sometimes fade in just under the Top Toolbar, telling you how to finish what you are drawing. For example, while you draw a handrail it says to click the last point again or press **Enter**. Tips like this never block your clicks, and disappear by themselves.

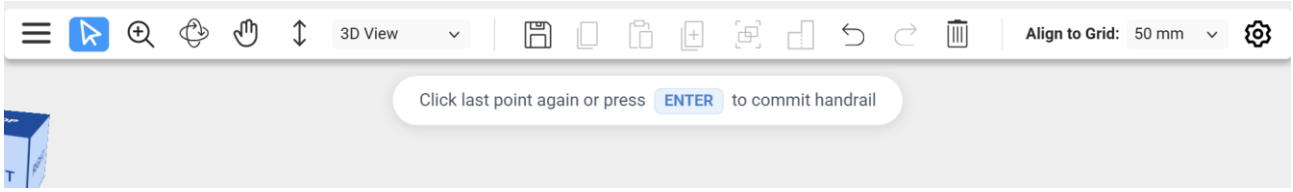

Figure 3.11 A drawing tip under the Top Toolbar

3.6 The Right Side Bar

The Parameter Panel

The top of the Right Side Bar is the Parameter Panel. With nothing selected it reads **Select an object to see its parameters**. Select an object, or pick up a tool, and the panel lists everything you can set for it: sizes, angles, styles and colours. Type a new value and the drawing changes.

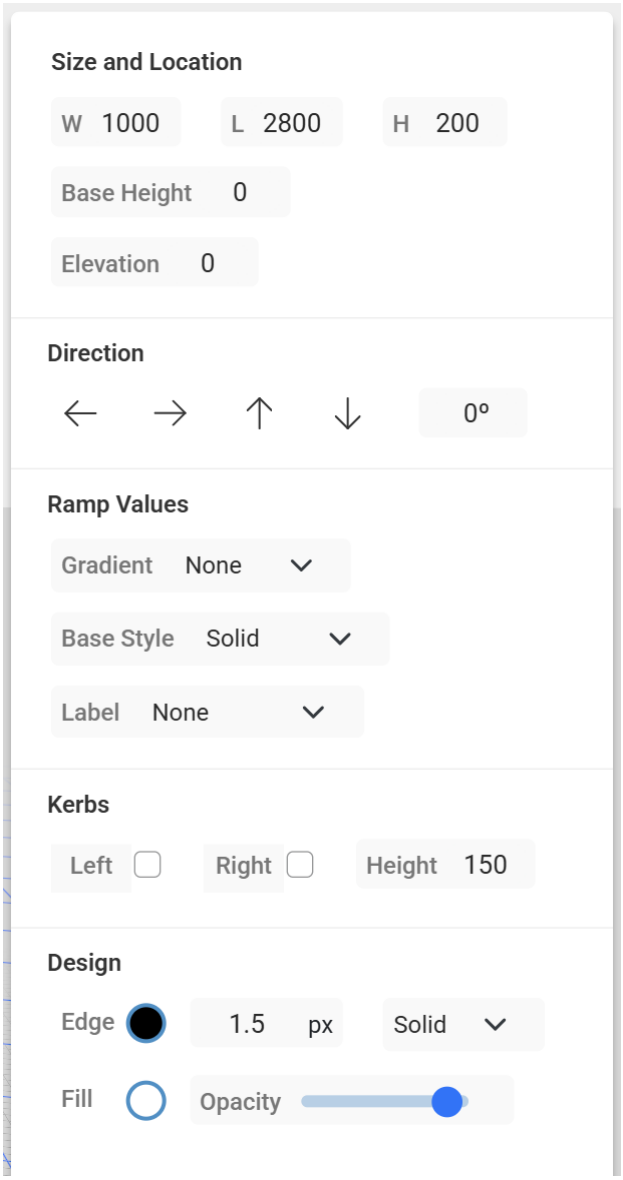

Figure 3.12 The Parameter Panel with a ramp selected

The Canvas List

Below the Parameter Panel is the **Canvas List**. A project can hold several canvases, for example a 3D view and a plan of the same room. Each row shows the canvas name and its view (such as 3D or TOP). Click a row to switch to that canvas, double-click its name to rename it, and use the bin at the end of the row to delete it. **+ New** adds a canvas.

On a canvas that shows a room or a run of two or more walls, a small room icon also appears on the row: the **Hide near walls** switch.



Figure 3.13 The Canvas List

3.7 Messages and tips

- **Tip bubbles.** The first time you meet certain features, a bubble explains them. Each has two buttons: **Close** hides it until next time you open the app, and **Got it** hides it for good. You can bring them all back from Preferences with **Show all tips again**.

- **Updates.** News about updates appears in a panel at the bottom right of the window. See Chapter 7, Preferences, for the **Software Updates** setting.
- **Unsaved changes.** An asterisk (*) in front of the project name in the window title means there are changes you have not saved.

4 Your First Drawing

This chapter takes you through a short drawing from start to finish: a front entry with a wall and door, a ramp up to a landing, a timber handrail and dimensions, then saving and exporting. It takes about fifteen minutes. Each step points to the chapter that covers the tool in full, so you can come back to the details later.

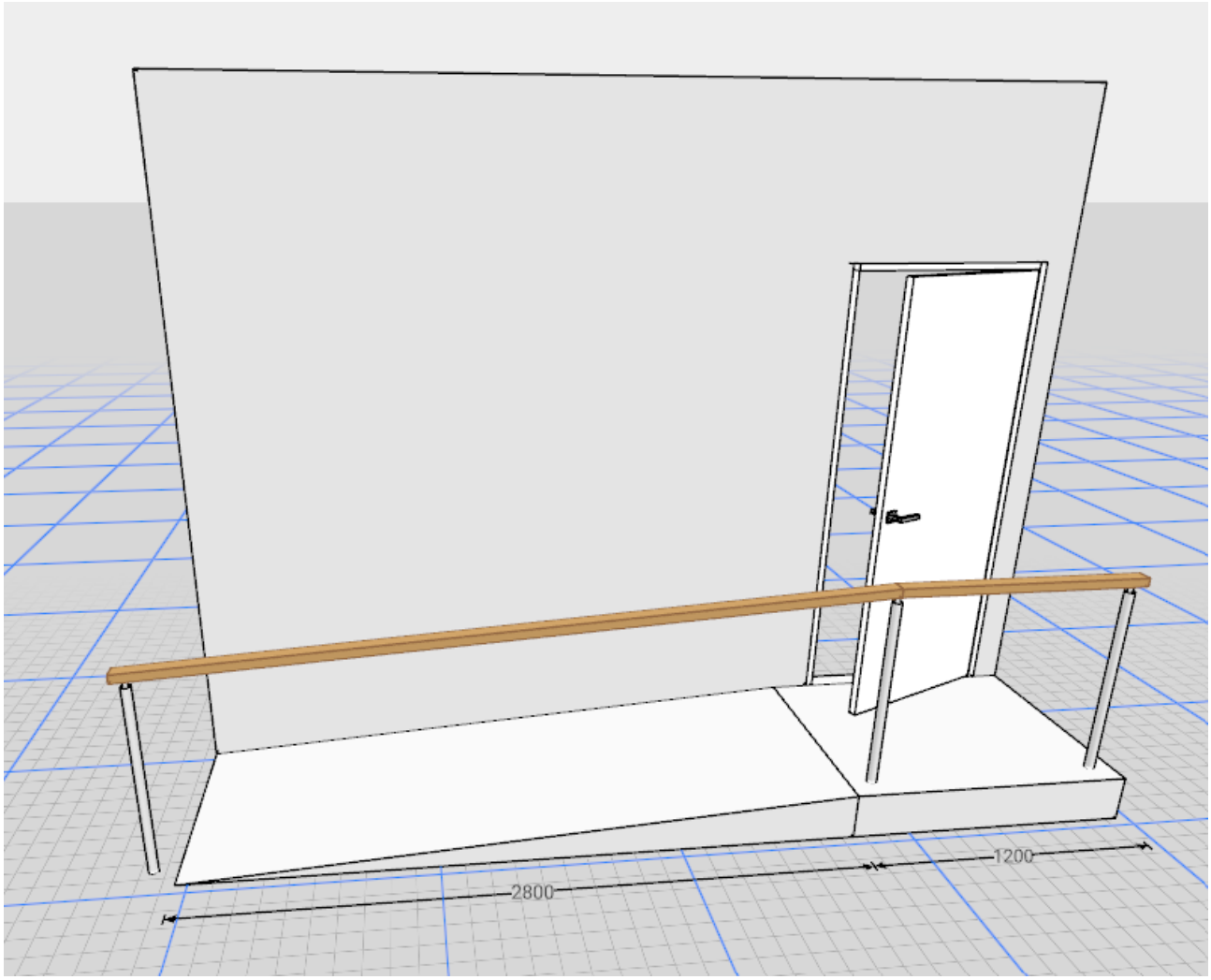

Figure 4.1 The drawing you will make in this chapter

4.1 Before you start

- Open OT Draw 3D and sign in. A new project opens with one canvas, **Canvas 1**, in the 3D view.
- Check the units. Click the gear at the right end of the Top Toolbar and look at **Units**. This chapter uses millimetres; if you work in inches the steps are the same.
- If you already have a drawing open, choose **New Project** from the File menu (the three-line button at the left of the Top Toolbar).

> **Tip** If you get lost at any point, press **Space** to go back to the Select tool and put down whatever you were holding, and press **Home** to fit the whole drawing in view.

4.2 Step 1: Place a wall

1. On the Left Toolbar, open the **Building** group and click **Single Wall**. A wall follows the pointer.
2. The wall needs to run across the screen, from left to right. If it runs into the screen instead, press an arrow key to turn it.
3. Click to put the wall down. It stays selected.
4. In the Parameter Panel, type **4000** in **L** (the length) and press **Enter**, then type **3000** in **H** (the height) and press **Enter**.

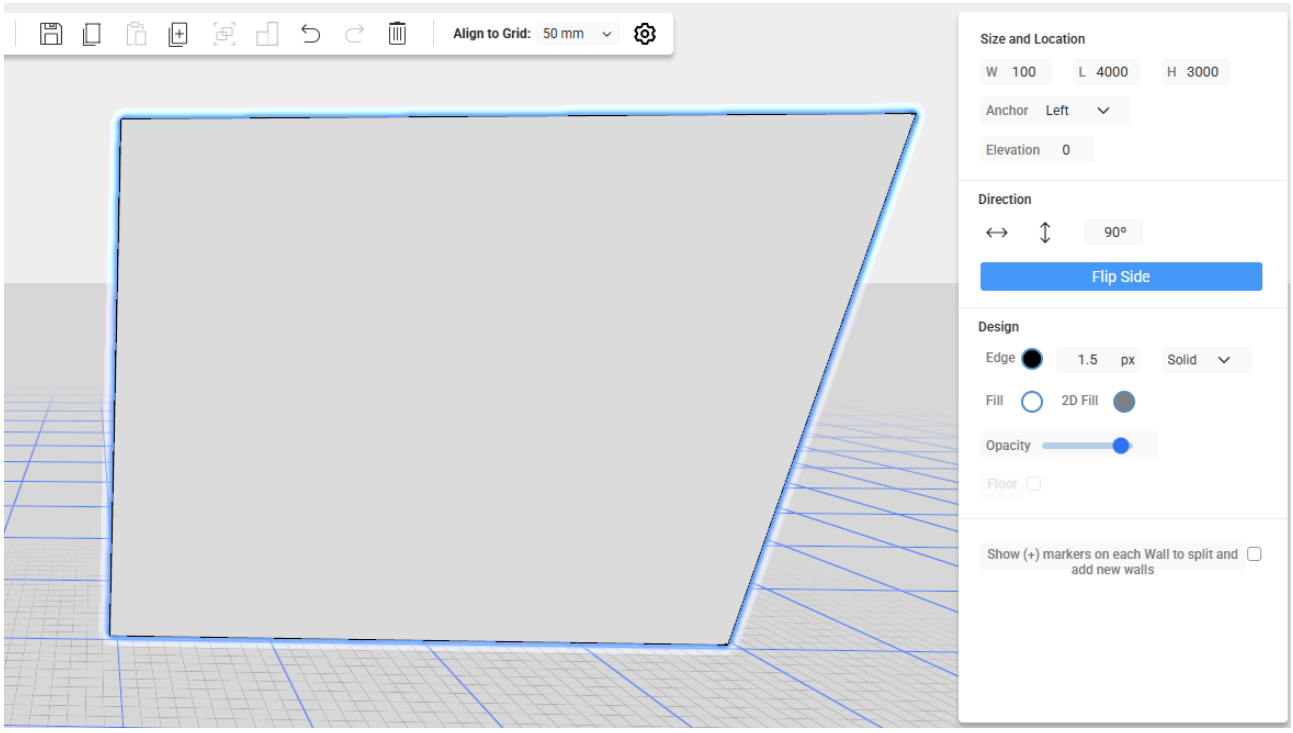

Figure 4.2 The wall after setting L to 4000 and H to 3000

W is the thickness of the wall.

4.3 Step 2: Add a ramp

1. Open the **Structures** group and click **Ramp**. A standard ramp follows the pointer: 1000 mm wide (**W**), 2800 mm long (**L**) and 200 mm high (**H**).
2. The ramp should run along the front of the wall and rise towards the right. If it faces another way, press the arrow keys to turn it.
3. Move the ramp to the left end of the wall. When the lower front corner of the ramp reaches the left corner of the wall, a red snap marker appears there.
4. Click to put the ramp down with its corner snapped to the corner of the wall.

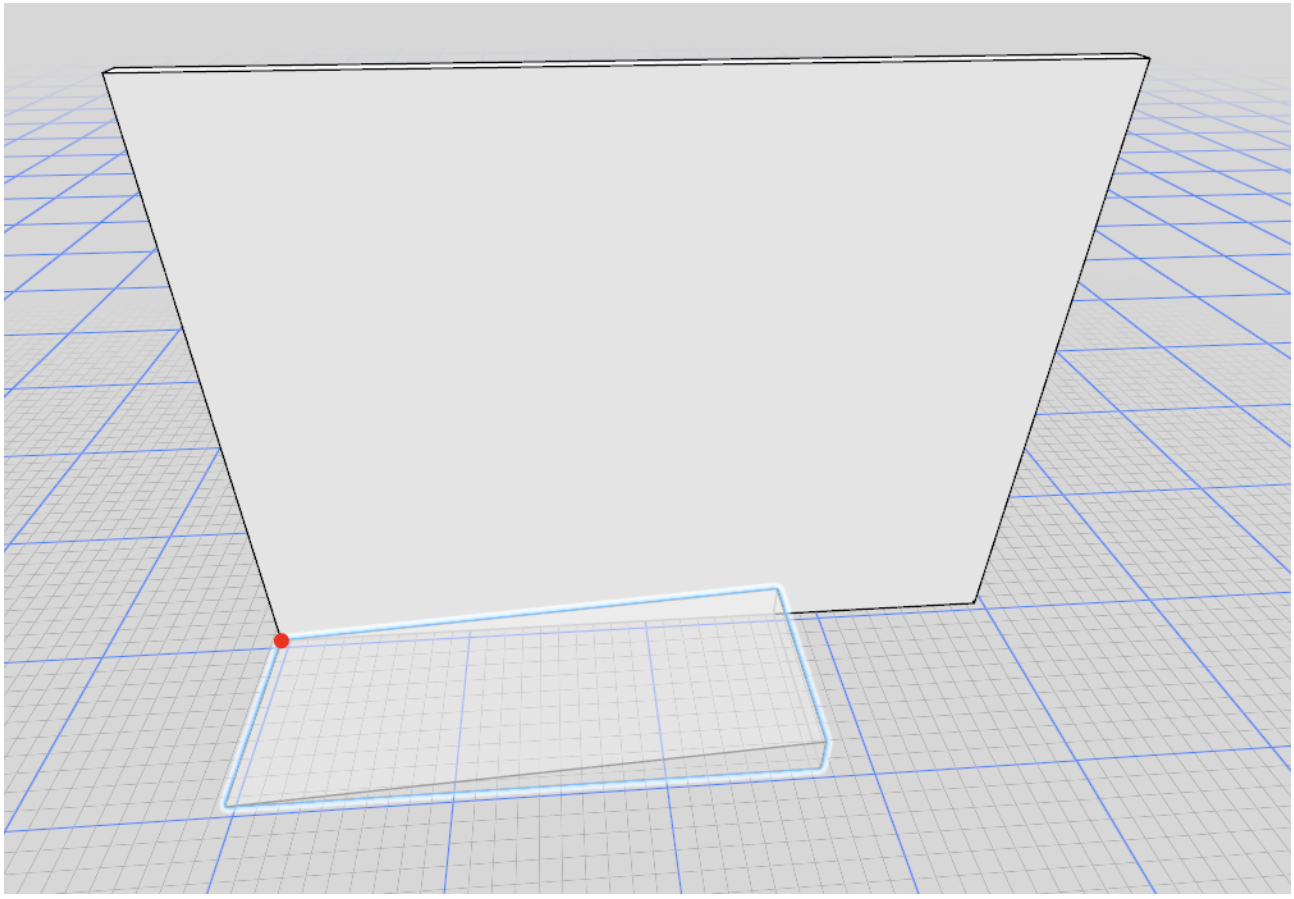

Figure 4.3 Placing the ramp: the red snap marker at the left corner of the wall

4.4 Step 3: Add a landing

1. In the **Structures** group, click **Landing**.
2. Move the landing to the top of the ramp, so that it sits against the high end of the ramp and the wall, and click to put it down.
3. With the landing still selected, drag the handle in the middle of its right side across to the right. Let go when the right edge snaps to the right end of the wall.
4. The landing is now 1200 mm wide: **W** in the Parameter Panel reads 1200 (the 4000 mm wall less the 2800 mm ramp).

4.5 Step 4: Set the landing height

A new landing is 500 mm high, taller than the ramp. Bring it down to the height of the top of the ramp.

1. With the landing selected, find the blue height handle above it.
2. Drag the blue handle down. When the top of the landing comes level with the top of the ramp, it snaps there.
3. Let go. **H** in the Parameter Panel reads 200.

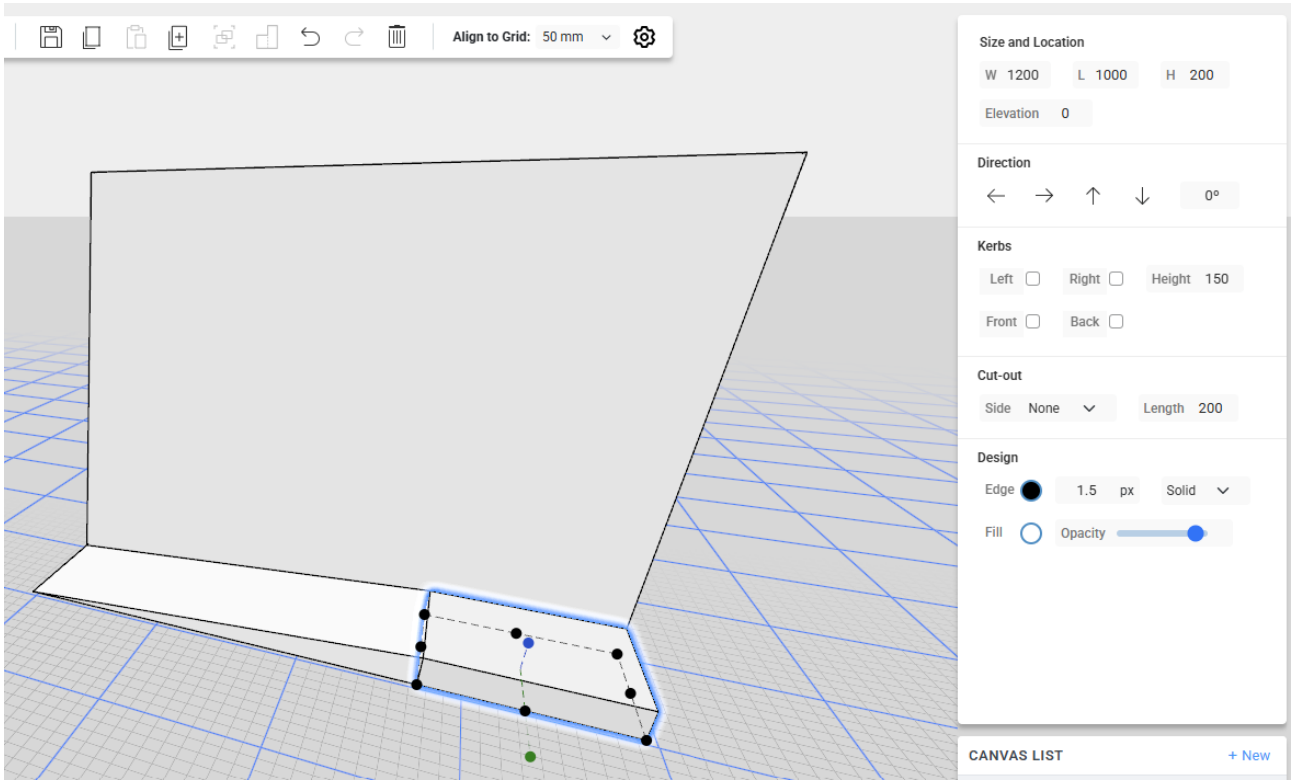

Figure 4.4 The landing widened to 1200 and brought down to the height of the ramp

> **Tip** You can always type a size instead of dragging. Dragging with snapping is quicker when the size should match something already in the drawing.

4.6 Step 5: Add a door

1. In the **Building** group, click **Door**.
2. Move the pointer over the wall above the landing. The door slides along the wall with the pointer, and drops so that the bottom of the door is flush with the top of the landing.
3. Click to put the door in the wall.
4. Beside the selected door are two round arrow buttons. Click the one that switches the door between opening inwards and outwards (**Face**) so that it swings out over the landing.
5. Drag the white dot on the door leaf (the swing handle) to open the door a little.

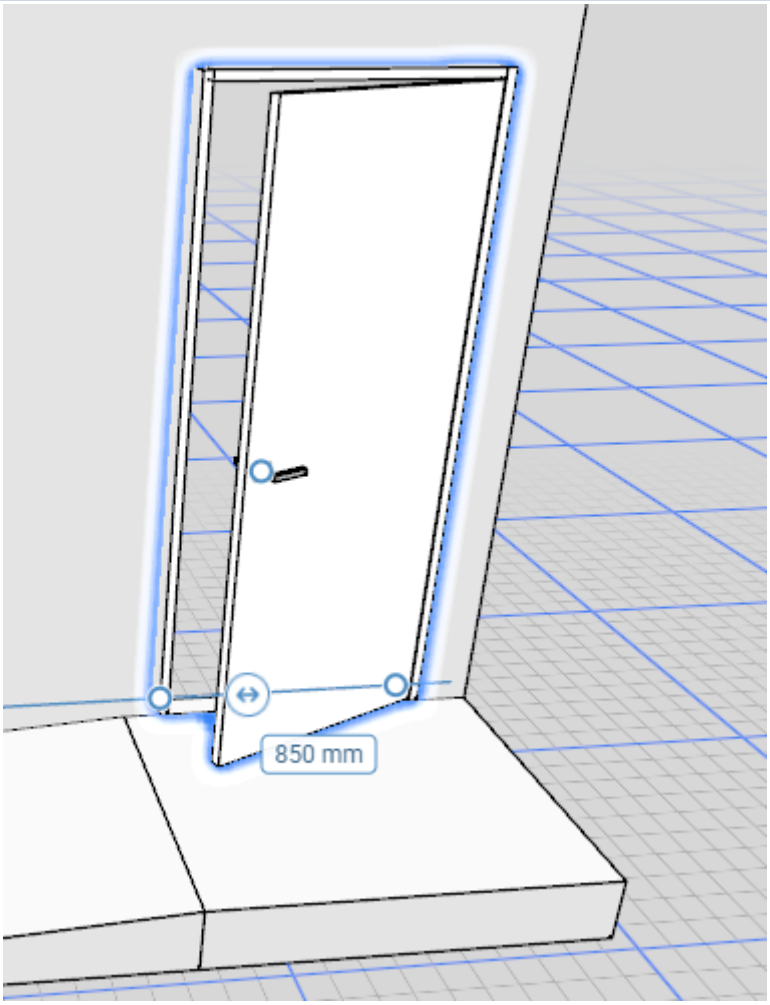

Figure 4.5 The door above the landing, swinging out over it and slightly open

The door finds the landing in front of it and sets its **Threshold** to match.

4.7 Step 6: Add a handrail

1. Open the **Rails** group and click **Handrail**.
2. Click on the ground at the bottom of the ramp, along its open front edge.
3. Click on the landing at the top of the ramp, along the same edge.
4. Click a third point at the far end of the landing.
5. Press **Enter** to finish the handrail, or move back to the last point and click when you see the magenta marker.
6. In the Parameter Panel, change **Style** (in the **Handrail Type** group) to **Timber Handrail**.

> **Tip** Hold **Shift** while you place the points to keep them in line with each other, so the handrail runs straight along the edge.

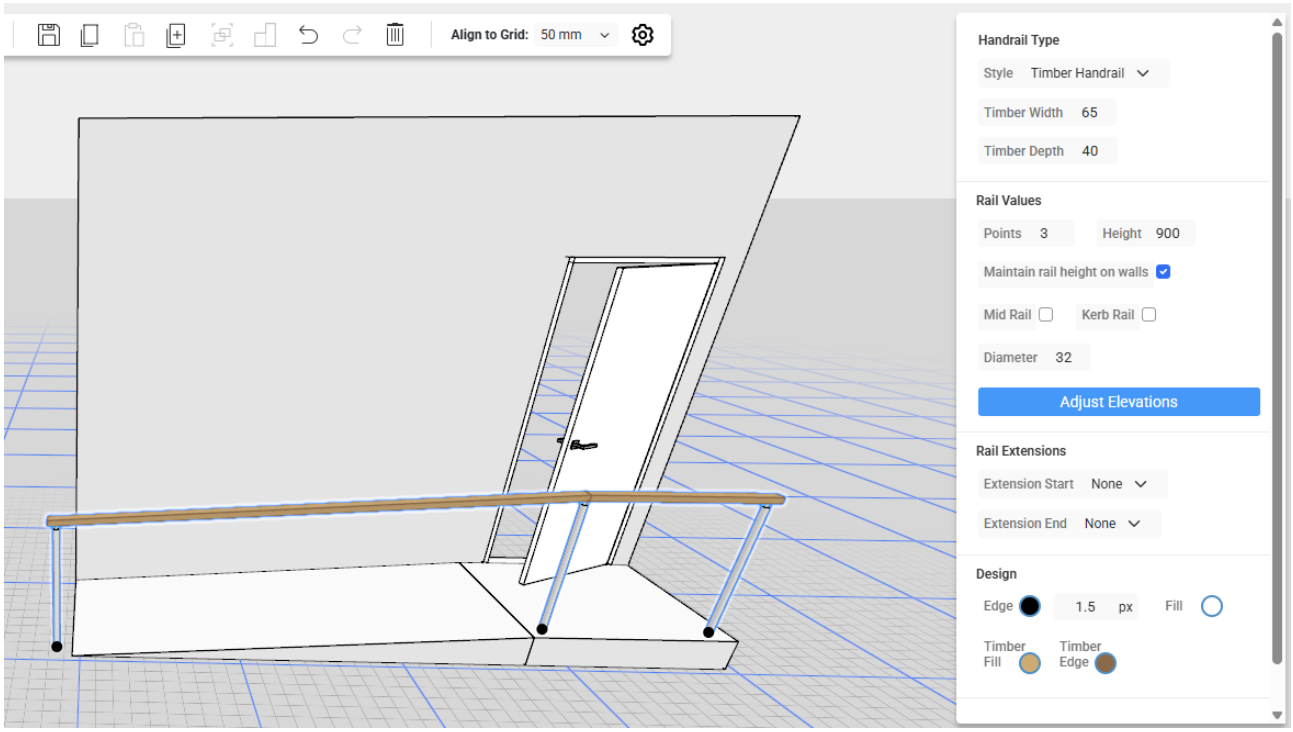

Figure 4.6 The timber handrail along the ramp and landing

4.8 Step 7: Add dimensions in TOP View

1. Open the view list on the Top Toolbar and choose **TOP View**. The long front edge of the ramp and landing runs along the bottom of the screen.
2. Open the **Labelling** group and click **Dimension**.
3. Move the pointer to the bottom left corner of the ramp. A red snap marker appears on the corner. Click.
4. Move to the bottom right corner of the ramp, where it meets the landing, and click on the red snap marker.
5. Move the pointer down, away from the ramp, to slide the dimension line out. Click to put it down. It reads 2800.
6. Draw the second dimension the same way, from the corner where the ramp meets the landing to the bottom right corner of the landing.
7. As you slide the second dimension down, blue snap markers appear when it comes into line with the first. Click to put it down in line. It reads 1200.

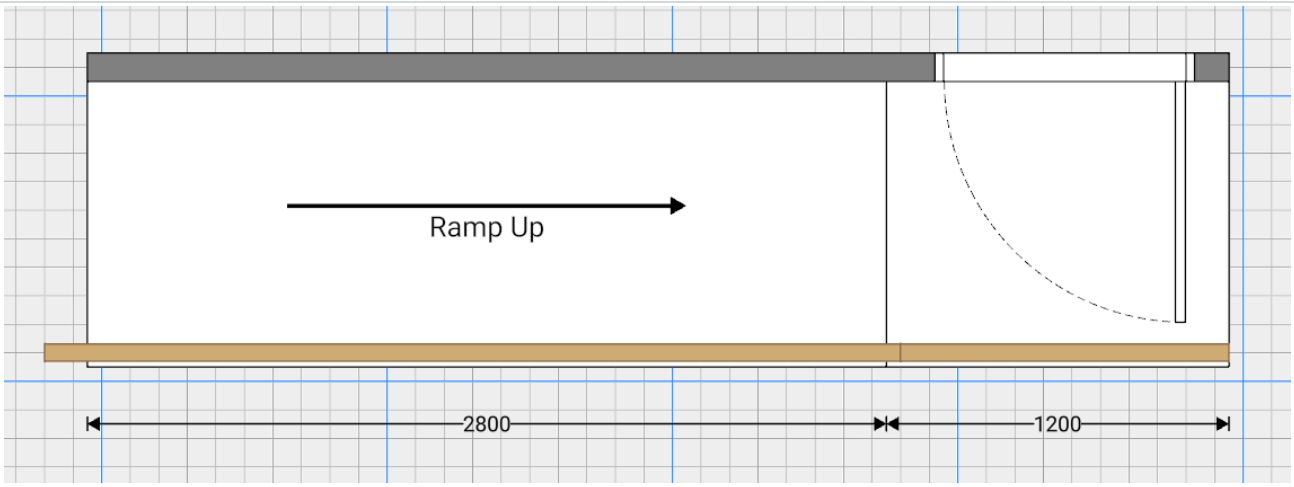

Figure 4.7 Two dimensions in line along the front of the ramp and landing in TOP View

4.9 Step 8: Make the dimensions readable in 3D

In the 3D view, a dimension lies flat in its own plane, so it is hard to read when you look at it from a low angle. Set the dimensions to face the screen instead.

1. Open the view list and choose **3D View**.
2. Press **Space** to go back to the Select tool.
3. Click one dimension, then hold **Shift** and click the other, so that both are selected.
4. In the Parameter Panel, change **Alignment** (in the **Text** group) to **Align to Screen**.

The numbers now face you square-on from any angle, as in Figure 4.1.

> **Tip** **Space** is the quickest way back to the Select tool from any other tool.

4.10 Step 9: Save the project

1. Press **Ctrl+S** (**⌘S** on Mac), or click the disk button on the Top Toolbar.
2. The first time you save, choose a folder and type a name for the project, then click **Save**. Projects are saved as .ot3d files.

After that, **Ctrl+S** (**⌘S** on Mac) saves straight to the same file. An asterisk in front of the name in the window title means there are unsaved changes. See Chapter 5, Projects and Files.

4.11 Step 10: Export a picture

1. Open the File menu and choose **Export to Image**.
2. Tick the canvases to export, choose the **File Type** (PNG, JPG or PDF), and click **Export**.

To drop a picture straight into a report instead, choose **Copy to Clipboard** from the File menu, or press **Ctrl+C** (**⌘C** on Mac) with nothing selected, then paste into your document. See Chapter 6, Exporting and Printing.

4.12 Where next

You now know the basics: placing objects, typing sizes, snapping, switching views and labelling. The same way of working applies to every tool on the Left Toolbar. Until the full manual is published:

- Hold the pointer over any button to see its name.
- Select an object to see everything you can change about it in the Parameter Panel.
- Watch for the tips that appear under the Top Toolbar while you draw; they tell you how to finish what you are doing.
- See Chapter 8, Keyboard Shortcuts, or choose **File menu > Keyboard and Mouse** for a printable sheet of shortcuts.
- Contact support at support@otdraw.com, or choose **File menu > Help**.

5 Projects and Files

Everything you draw for one job is kept in a project. This chapter explains how to save and open projects, how OT Draw 3D protects your work if something goes wrong, and what to do when a file is open on another computer.

5.1 What a project contains

A project is saved as a single file ending in **.ot3d**. The file holds everything needed to reopen the drawing on any computer with OT Draw 3D:

- every canvas, with its objects, view, title and links to other canvases
- photos used with Match Photo, stored inside the file
- each canvas's export settings, such as its scale, and the export file type and paper size
- a small preview picture, shown in the Recent Projects list

Some things are deliberately not saved in the project:

Not in the project	Why
Undo history	Each project opens with a fresh undo history.
Display units (millimetres, inches, or feet and inches)	Units belong to the computer, not the project. A project made in millimetres opens in inches on a computer set to inches, at exactly the same size.
Preferences and Backup and Recovery settings	These belong to the computer. See Chapter 7, Preferences.
The Recent Projects list	Each computer keeps its own list.
The current selection and tool	A project always opens with nothing selected and the Select tool active.

> **Tip** Because photos are stored inside the project, you can email an .ot3d file or move it to another computer and everything comes with it.

5.2 The File menu

Project commands are on the **File menu**. To open it, click the menu button (three horizontal lines) at the left end of the toolbar at the top of the window. Click it again, or click anywhere outside the menu, to close it.

Group	Item	What it does
Project	New Project	Clears the workspace for a new project. See Starting a new project.
Project	Open Project	Opens a project file. See Opening a project.
Project	Recent Projects...	Shows the projects you have used recently on this computer.
Project	Save Project	Saves the project. Same as **Ctrl+S** (**⌘S** on Mac) or the Save button on the toolbar.

Group	Item	What it does
Project	Save Project As...	Saves the project under a new name or in a new place.
Project	Recover Unsaved Work...	Only shown when there is unsaved work to recover. See Recovering unsaved work.
Export	Export to Image	Opens the Export dialog. See Chapter 6, Exporting and Printing.
Export	Copy to Clipboard	Copies the current canvas as a picture. See Chapter 6, Exporting and Printing.
Select	Select All / Select All like this	**Select All** selects everything on the canvas (**Ctrl+A** (**⌘A** on Mac)). **Select All like this** selects every object of the same kind as the one selected.
Parameters	Save Current as Default / Reset Tool Defaults	Only shown while one object is selected.
Settings	Preferences	See Chapter 7, Preferences.
Settings	Backup and Recovery	Recovery copy settings. See Backup and Recovery settings below.
Settings	Check for Updates	See Chapter 2, Installation and Licensing.
Support	Keyboard and Mouse	Opens the shortcut sheet on the OT Draw website.
Support	Help	Opens the OT Draw support page.
Support	Save Diagnostics... / Open Log Folder	For sending problem reports to support. See Chapter 9, Troubleshooting.
Account	Open Customer Portal / Sign out	See Chapter 2, Installation and Licensing.

5.3 Starting a new project

1. Choose **File menu > New Project**.
2. If the current project has unsaved changes, you are asked whether to save it. See The save prompt below.
3. The workspace is cleared and a new, untitled project starts.

A new project is called **Untitled drawing** in the window's title bar until you save it.

5.4 Saving a project

Saving for the first time

1. Press **Ctrl+S** (**⌘S** on Mac), click the **Save** button on the Top Toolbar, or choose **File menu > Save Project**.
2. In the **Save OT Draw 3D Project** dialog, choose a folder and type a name for the project. The name offered is untitled.ot3d.
3. Click **Save**.

The project's name now appears in the window's title bar. The save and open dialogs start in the folder you last used.

Saving changes

Once a project has a file, **Ctrl+S** (**⌘S** on Mac), the **Save** button and **File menu > Save Project** save straight to it without asking.

The title bar shows whether there are unsaved changes: an asterisk appears in front of the project's name as soon as you change something, and goes when you save. For example, *Smith bathroom - OT Draw 3D means the project Smith bathroom has changes that are not yet saved.

Saving a copy under a new name

Choose **File menu > Save Project As...** to save the project under a different name or in a different folder. From then on you are working on the new file; the original stays as it was when last saved.

> **Tip** Use **Save Project As...** to keep a version before making big changes, for example Smith entry - option A and Smith entry - option B.

The backup file

Each time you save changes to a project, OT Draw 3D keeps the previous save beside it as a backup, with **.bak** added to the end of the name. For example, saving Smith.ot3d keeps the save before it as Smith.ot3d.bak in the same folder. Only one backup is kept: each save with changes replaces it.

If a project ever will not open, OT Draw 3D offers to open the backup instead. You can also use it yourself: make a copy of the .bak file, remove .bak from the end of the copy's name so that it ends in .ot3d, and open it.

> **Important** Do not delete .bak files from a project folder if you might need to go back to the previous save. They are small and are replaced automatically.

If a save fails

If a project cannot be saved, a **Save failed** message explains why and offers **Try Again**, **Save As…** and **Cancel**. The project in the window is not affected, so nothing is lost; you just need to save it somewhere that works.

The message says	What to do
The folder is not there any more	The folder was renamed or moved, or is on a drive or network share that is no longer connected. Reconnect it and click Try Again, or click Save As… to choose somewhere else.
The file could not be written in the folder	The file may be open in another program, read only, or in a folder you are not allowed to write to. Close the other program, or use Save As….
The file is being held open by another program	Often a sync client such as OneDrive, or a virus scanner. Wait a moment and click Try Again.
There is no room left on the drive	Free some space, or use Save As… to save to another drive.
The full path is too long	Use Save As… with a shorter name, or a folder nearer the top of the drive.

5.5 Opening a project

From the File menu

1. Choose **File menu > Open Project**.

2. If the current project has unsaved changes, you are asked whether to save it first.
3. In the **Open OT Draw 3D Project** dialog, select an .ot3d file and click **Open**.

By double-clicking a project file

Double-click an .ot3d file in File Explorer or Finder to open it in OT Draw 3D. If OT Draw 3D is not running, it starts and opens the project. If the project you double-click is already open and has no unsaved changes, OT Draw 3D simply comes to the front.

> **Note** On Windows, double-clicking a project while OT Draw 3D is already running opens it in another OT Draw 3D window, so you can have two projects open side by side.

> **On Mac** On a Mac, double-clicking a project while OT Draw 3D is running opens it in the window you already have, after asking whether to save any unsaved changes.

Recent Projects

File menu > Recent Projects... opens the **Recent projects** dialog, which shows the last nine projects you opened or saved on this computer, newest first.

Each entry shows:

- a preview of the drawing as it was last saved (or **No preview** if there is none)
- the project's name and the folder it is in
- when it was last saved, for example Saved yesterday, 3:15 pm
- **Open now** on the project you have open

Click an entry to open it. If the current project has unsaved changes you are asked whether to save it first. Click the cross at the right of an entry to remove it from the list; the project file itself is not touched. Click **Browse…** to open a project that is not in the list.

A project that has been moved, renamed or deleted, or is on a drive that is not connected, shows **Not found** and cannot be opened from the list. Point at it to see why. It stays on the list in case the drive is reconnected; remove it with its cross if it has gone for good.

When a project will not open

The message says	What it means
... is not an OT Draw 3D project	The file is not a drawing. Check that it is the right file and has not been renamed from something else.
... is damaged	Part of the file is unreadable. If there is a backup beside it, click Open Backup to open the previous save.
... was saved by a newer version	Update OT Draw 3D (File menu > Check for Updates) and open it again.
... could not be opened	The file could not be read: it may have been moved or deleted, or another program may have it open.

A drawing opened from a backup appears with **(recovered)** after its name and no file of its own. Save it with **Save Project As...**, choosing a name, before carrying on.

5.6 The save prompt

Whenever something is about to replace or close a project that has unsaved changes, OT Draw 3D asks **Save the current project?**

Button	What happens
Save	The project is saved (you choose a name if it has never been saved), then OT Draw 3D carries on.
Don't Save	The changes are not saved to the project, and OT Draw 3D carries on. A copy of the drawing is kept for 7 days in Recover Unsaved Work, in case you change your mind.
Cancel	Nothing happens; you stay on the current project. Pressing **Esc** is the same as Cancel.

The prompt appears for New Project, Open Project, opening from Recent Projects, opening by double-click, Recover Unsaved Work, Sign out, Restart to install an update, and closing the window.

5.7 Recovering unsaved work

OT Draw 3D keeps a recovery copy of your drawing while you work, so that unsaved work can be brought back after a crash, a power cut, or a Don't Save you regret. A recovery copy is not a save: your project file only ever changes when you save it.

Backup and Recovery settings

Choose **File menu > Backup and Recovery** to change how recovery copies are kept.

Setting	What it does	Default
Auto-save a Recovery Copy	Keeps a recovery copy of the drawing while there are unsaved changes, including drawings that have never been saved. It does not save your project.	On
Auto-save Time Interval	How often the recovery copy is updated, from 1 to 60 minutes.	2 minutes
Keep unsaved projects for 7 days	When you choose Don't Save, a copy of the drawing is kept for 7 days under File menu > Recover Unsaved Work instead of being thrown away.	On

> **Important** **Auto-save a Recovery Copy** does not save your project. If you choose **Don't Save** when closing, the project file stays as it was at your last save. Save your work with **Ctrl+S** (**⌘S** on Mac) regularly.

Recover Unsaved Work

When there is unsaved work to recover, **Recover Unsaved Work...** appears in the File menu. Choosing it (after the save prompt, if needed) opens the **Recover unsaved work** dialog.

Each row shows the drawing's name, where it came from, when the copy was made and how many objects it holds. Where it came from is one of:

Label	Meaning
Closed without saving	You chose Don't Save. Kept for 7 days.
Unsaved changes	A saved project had changes that were not saved when OT Draw 3D closed unexpectedly.
Never saved	A drawing that had never been saved when OT Draw 3D closed unexpectedly.

1. Click **Open** beside the drawing you want. It opens as a new, unsaved drawing named after the project it came from.
2. Check it, then save it with **File menu > Save Project As...**. Your original project file is untouched until you choose to save over it.

Click **Discard** to delete a copy you do not need; you are asked to confirm, because this cannot be undone. Click **Decide Later** to close the dialog and leave the copies where they are.

After a crash

If OT Draw 3D closed unexpectedly, the **Recover unsaved work** dialog appears by itself the next time it starts, so you can open the work that had not been saved. Copies left by a crash are kept for 30 days. Copies from Don't Save are never pushed at you on start-up; find them under **File menu > Recover Unsaved Work...**.

> **Note** A recovery copy is made every couple of minutes, so if OT Draw 3D stops very soon after you start a drawing there may be nothing to recover yet. Anything you saved is always safe in the project file, with the save before it in the .bak file.

5.8 Projects on shared folders

Many practices keep projects in a shared folder, such as OneDrive or a network drive. If two people open and save the same project at the same time, the last save replaces the other person's work. OT Draw 3D warns you when this might happen.

Opening a project that is already open

If you open a project that is already open in another OT Draw 3D window, on this computer or on another computer, the **Already open** message tells you where, for example This drawing is open on RECEPTION-PC (kylie).

Button	What happens
Open a Copy	Opens the drawing with no file of its own. When you save, you are asked where to put it, so the other person's file is not replaced. Recommended.
Open Anyway	Opens the project file itself. If both of you save, the last save wins.
Cancel	Does not open the project.

Similarly, if you use **Save Project As...** onto a project that is open somewhere else, you are warned and can choose **Save Anyway** or **Cancel**.

> **Note** On a shared folder, the warning can take a minute or two to clear after the other person closes the project, while the folder syncs.

While a project is open, OT Draw 3D keeps a small marker file beside it, named after the project with a full stop in front and .lock on the end. It is removed when the project is closed. If OT Draw 3D closes unexpectedly, the marker stops counting after about a minute and a half.

6 Exporting and Printing

When a drawing is ready, you can save it as a picture or a PDF, or copy it straight into a report. Plans and elevations can be produced at a true scale such as 1:20 or 1:50, so that they can be measured with a scale rule once printed.

You want to	Use
Put a drawing into a Word report	Copy to Clipboard, then paste. See Copying to the clipboard.
Save picture files (PNG or JPG)	File menu > Export to Image, File Type PNG or JPG.
Print, or send a document to a builder or funding body	File menu > Export to Image, File Type PDF, then print the PDF. See Printing.

Every export and copy is drawn at 300 dots per inch, whatever your screen, so lines and text stay sharp when printed. The grid, the ground and the axis helper are left out automatically, and any selection is cleared first.

6.1 Scale and size on paper

How big a canvas comes out on paper depends on what kind of view it shows.

Canvas shows	Size on paper
A flat view (Top, Front, Back, Left, Right or Bottom)	Either at a true scale you choose, or As on screen: the size it appears on your screen at the current zoom.
The 3D view	As on screen. A 3D view has no scale, because distances change with perspective. The dialog says No scale in 3D.
A canvas with a Match Photo photo	As framed on screen, with the photo setting the picture's edges. The dialog says Photo, as framed.

The scales offered depend on the units set on your computer:

Units	Scales	Paper sizes
Millimetres	1:5, 1:10, 1:20, 1:25, 1:50, 1:100	A4 and A3
Inches, or feet and inches	1:4, 1:8, 1:12, 1:16, 1:24, 1:48, 1:96	Letter and Tabloid

Each canvas remembers its own scale, and the scale is saved with the project, so you set it once. Choosing a scale for export does not change how the canvas looks on screen. To see a flat view on screen at a given scale, use the zoom menu.

A margin of clear paper is left around every export and copy. It is set by **Export margin** in **File menu > Preferences**: 5 mm (default), 10 mm or 20 mm, or 1/8" (default), 1/4" or 1/2" in imperial units.

6.2 The Export dialog

Choose **File menu > Export to Image** to open the Export dialog. It lists every canvas in the project, with linked canvases under the canvas they belong to, and every canvas starts ticked. While the dialog works out how big each flat drawing is, a spinner shows in its size.

Column or control	What it does
Tick box	Includes the canvas in the export. Click anywhere on a row (except the scale list and the buttons) to tick or untick it.
Canvas	The canvas's name, used for the exported file name.
Scale	For a flat view, a list of As on screen and the scales for your units. For other canvases, a note saying why there is no scale.
Size on paper	How big the drawing will be on paper at that scale, including the margin, for example 240 × 165 mm. Nothing drawn means the canvas is empty.
Fits	Which paper the drawing fits on (see below).
Preview on paper (page icon)	Shows the canvas on a sheet of paper. See Preview on paper.
Copy to clipboard (copy icon)	Copies that canvas to the clipboard at its scale. A tick shows briefly when it is done.
File Type	PNG, JPG or PDF.
Paper	Only for PDF: the sheet size for each page. A4, A3 or Fit to drawing (Letter, Tabloid or Fit to drawing in imperial units).
Select All / Select Current	Ticks every canvas, or only the canvas you are on. With only one canvas in the project, Close is shown instead.
Export	Starts the export. Greyed out while no canvas is ticked.

The **Fits** column tells you, at a glance, whether you need to change the scale:

Fits says	Meaning
A4 either way	Fits on A4 in portrait or landscape.
A4 landscape / A4 portrait	Fits on A4, but only turned that way.
A3 only	Too big for A4, but fits on A3.
Too big for A3	Too big for either sheet at this scale. Choose a smaller scale, such as 1:50 instead of 1:20.

In imperial units the same labels name Letter and Tabloid.

Exporting pictures (PNG or JPG)

1. Choose **File menu > Export to Image**.
2. Tick the canvases you want, and set the **Scale** for each flat view.
3. Set **File Type** to **PNG** or **JPG**.
4. Click **Export**.
5. If one canvas is ticked, the **Save canvas as image** dialog opens with the canvas's name filled in. Choose a folder and click **Save**. If several canvases are ticked, choose the folder to save them in.
6. The window shows **Exporting canvases...** and then **Export completed**, and the dialog closes.

When several canvases are exported, each file is named after its canvas. If a file of that name is already in the folder, a number is added, for example Top view (2).png, so nothing is overwritten.

> **Tip** PNG gives the cleanest lines and is the best choice for drawings. JPG makes smaller files and suits canvases with a photo.

> **Note** Picture files record that they are 300 dots per inch. A program that respects this, such as Word, places a scaled flat view at its true size.

Exporting a PDF

A PDF export puts every ticked canvas into one PDF file, each on a page of its own, at its true size.

1. Choose **File menu > Export to Image**.
2. Tick the canvases you want and set their scales.
3. Set **File Type** to **PDF** and choose the **Paper**.
4. Click **Export**. In the **Save as PDF** dialog the file is named after the project (or diagrams if the project has never been saved). Choose a folder and click **Save**.

Each page is turned whichever way the drawing fits best. A canvas too big for the chosen paper is given a page of its own size, and the completed message says how many canvases this happened to. **Fit to drawing** makes every page exactly the size of its drawing.

Preview on paper

Click the page icon on a row to see that canvas laid out on a sheet of paper before you export it.

Control	What it does
Scale	Changes the canvas's scale. The change is kept for the export.
Paper	A4 or A3 (Letter or Tabloid in imperial units).
Orientation	Automatic (whichever way the drawing fits), Landscape or Portrait.
Fits on... / Too big for...	Whether the drawing fits on the sheet as shown. When it does not, the largest scale that would fit is suggested, for example try 1:50.
Copy to Clipboard	Copies the canvas at this scale.
Export this canvas	Exports just this canvas in the File Type chosen in the dialog. A PDF uses the paper and orientation shown here.
Back to Export	Returns to the Export dialog.

6.3 Copying to the clipboard

Copy to Clipboard puts a picture of the current canvas on the clipboard, ready to paste into a report, email or other document.

1. Open the canvas you want to copy, and click on an empty part of the canvas so that nothing is selected.
2. Choose **File menu > Copy to Clipboard**, or press **Ctrl+C** (**⌘C** on Mac).
3. A message under the toolbar confirms the copy, for example Top view copied at 1:50 (180 × 120 mm).
4. Switch to your document and paste with **Ctrl+V** (**⌘V** on Mac).

A flat view with a scale pastes into Word at its true size, so it can be measured on the printed page. A 3D view, a photo canvas, or a flat view set to As on screen pastes at the size it appears on screen, and the message says copied at the size it appears on screen. For a flat view with no scale, the message includes **Set a scale in Export**; click it to open the Export dialog and choose one.

Important **Ctrl+C** (**⌘C** on Mac) copies the canvas only when nothing is selected. With objects selected, it copies those objects within OT Draw 3D instead.

Tip To copy a canvas other than the one you are on, use the copy icon on its row in the Export dialog.

6.4 Printing

OT Draw 3D does not print directly. To print, export a PDF and print it from your PDF viewer.

1. Export the canvases as a PDF on the paper size you will print on, at the scale you want. See Exporting a PDF.
2. Open the PDF and choose Print.
3. In the print settings, choose **Actual size** or **100%**, not Fit or Shrink to page, so that the scale is kept.
4. Print, and check one known dimension on the printout with a ruler.

Tip The PDF page shows only the drawing: there is no title block or scale note. Add the scale as a text label in the drawing, so whoever reads the plan knows it.

6.5 Tips for good exports

- A 3D view is exported exactly as framed on screen. Set up the angle and zoom first; Zoom to Fit (**Home**) is a good start.
- Hide Walls carries through to exports, so a cut-away room exports as you see it.
- Use linked flat views for plans and elevations at a scale, and the 3D view for an overall picture.
- If a drawing is too big for the paper at the scale you want, use a larger sheet or split it across two canvases.

6.6 If an export or copy fails

Message	What to do
Export failed: ... could not be saved. The folder may be read only, full, or no longer there.	Try exporting to another folder, such as Documents or the Desktop.
Nothing was saved: the drawing is too big to export at this size ... - try a smaller scale	Choose a smaller scale (for example 1:50 instead of 1:20).
The Drawing Area was not responding, so nothing was saved (or copied).	Try again. If it keeps happening, see Chapter 9, Troubleshooting.
... of ... canvases could not be exported: ...	The canvases named were not exported; the rest were. Export the named canvases again on their own.
... could not be copied - try again / could not be previewed - try again	Try the button again.

7 Preferences

OT Draw 3D keeps your settings in several places, each next to the work it affects:

Where	How to open it	What it holds
Preferences	File menu > **Preferences**	Trackpad, stair direction, export margin, performance, updates, mouse buttons, tips and tool defaults.
Canvas Settings	The gear at the right end of the Top Toolbar	Units, snapping, grid, ground, shading, colours, zoom speed and snap distance.
Backup and Recovery	File menu > **Backup and Recovery**	Auto-save of a recovery copy, and keeping unsaved projects.
The Parameter Panel	Select or pick up a tool that uses it	Continuous Drawing, wall split markers, and automatic rail points.
The File menu's **Parameters** group	File menu, with one placed object selected	Save Current as Default and Reset Tool Defaults.

All of these settings belong to your computer, not to a project: they stay the same whichever project you open, and are kept when you close the app. The one exception is the **Hide near walls** switch, which is saved with each canvas in the project.

7.1 Preferences

Choose **Preferences** from the File menu. Changes take effect straight away; close the panel with the cross or by clicking outside it. Hover over a setting's name to see more about it where a description is given.

Setting	Choices	Standard	What it does
Invert Trackpad Direction	Ticked or not	Not ticked	Reverses which way a two-finger swipe moves the view. Tick it if the view moves the opposite way to your fingers.
Object Direction	Towards Bottom, Towards Top	Towards Bottom	Which end of a stair, ramp or winder the Direction buttons and arrow keys point. With **Towards Bottom**, Left puts the bottom of the stair on the left. With **Towards Top**, Left puts the top on the left (on a winder, the back edge of the top step).
Export margin	Millimetres: 5 mm, 10 mm, 20 mm. Inches: 1/8", 1/4", 1/2"	5 mm (or 1/8" in inches)	The white space left round a drawing when it is exported or copied. Changing between metric and imperial units puts it back to the standard for the new units.
Pixel cap	No cap, 1.5 pixel cap, 1 pixel cap	No cap	Try this if OT Draw 3D is slow on this computer. It draws the 3D view with fewer pixels, which is quicker, but lines and text look softer and exported images are smaller. It makes no difference on a screen set to 100% scale, and the 1.5 cap only changes screens set above 150%.

Setting	Choices	Standard	What it does
Frame rate limit	No limit, 60 fps limit	No limit	Try this if other programs slow down while you work in OT Draw 3D. It stops the 3D view being redrawn more than 60 times a second, leaving more of the graphics chip for everything else. Moving the view may look less smooth on a screen faster than 60 Hz.
Software Updates	Auto-Update, Notify, Manual	Auto-Update	**Auto-Update** downloads new versions in the background and asks you to restart to install them. **Notify** checks when the app starts and tells you when a new version is available. **Manual** checks only when you choose **Check for Updates** from the File menu.
Right Drag (3D View)	Orbit, Pan, Vertical Shift	Orbit	What dragging with the right mouse button does in the 3D View.
Right Drag (2D View)	Pan, Orbit	Pan	What a right-drag does in a flat view. Orbit carries you out into the 3D View.
SHIFT + Right Drag	Pan, Orbit, Vertical Shift (3D View)	Pan	What a right-drag does while you hold **Shift**.
Middle Drag (Wheel Click)	Pan, Orbit, Vertical Shift (3D View)	Pan	What dragging with the wheel pressed down does.

> **Tip** If OT Draw 3D feels slow, try **Pixel cap** first. If other programs feel slow while OT Draw 3D is open, try **Frame rate limit**. Using both gives the biggest saving.

Show all tips again

At the foot of Preferences, click **Show** (beside *all tips again*) to bring back every tip bubble you dismissed with **Got it**. The message **All tips will show again.** confirms it. The tips are:

Tip	When it appears
Linked Canvas Group	The first time you form a group of linked canvases.
Shared Objects	The first time you select an object on a canvas that belongs to a group.
Save your own defaults	The first time in a session that you change a parameter. It points to the File menu's Parameters group.
Change them all at once	The first time in a session that you select a dimension. It points to **Select All like this**.
Hide Walls	The first time the Hide near walls switch appears in the Canvas List.

Each tip appears at most once a session. **Close** means *not now*; **Got it** means *never again* until you use **Show all tips again**.

Reset all tool defaults

Click **Reset** (beside *all tool defaults*) to put every tool back to the standard starting values. You are asked to confirm, because it cannot be undone. It removes defaults saved with **Save Current as**

Default and changes carried over from objects placed this session, for every tool. Objects already drawn are not changed. The button is greyed when there is nothing to reset.

7.2 Canvas Settings

Click the gear at the right end of the Top Toolbar (or at the foot of the drawing on a narrow window). Despite the name, these settings apply to every canvas.

Setting	Key	Choices	Standard	What it does
Units		Millimetres, Inches, Feet and Inches	Millimetres	The units every length is shown and typed in.
Place on Surfaces	S	Ticked or not	Ticked	New objects sit on top of whatever surface is under the pointer, such as a landing or a cube, instead of on the work plane.
Snapping	N	Ticked or not	Ticked	Turns snapping to corners, edges and other points on or off, with its coloured snap markers.
Shading in 3D View		Ticked or not	Ticked	Lightly shades solid objects in the 3D View so each side reads differently.
Show Axis Helper at Origin	X	Ticked or not	Not ticked	Shows coloured axis lines at the drawing's zero point.
Show Grid	G	Ticked or not	Ticked	Shows the grid on the work plane.
Show Ground	R	Ticked or not	Ticked	Shows the ground under the model.
Ground Colour		Any colour	Light grey	The ground's colour. **Default** puts it back.
Background Colour		Any colour	Pale grey	The colour behind the drawing. **Default** puts it back.
Zoom Speed		0.5 to 8, in steps of 0.5	3	How far each turn of the mouse wheel zooms.
Snap Distance		5 to 40	12	How close (in screen pixels) the pointer must come to a point before it snaps to it.

Align to Grid

Align to Grid, beside the gear, sets the step that points and objects snap to as you draw, move and nudge them with the arrow keys. **A** turns it **Off** and back on at the step you were using.

Units	Choices	Standard
Millimetres	Off, 1 mm, 2 mm, 5 mm, 10 mm, 50 mm, 100 mm	50 mm
Inches, Feet and Inches	Off, 1/32 in, 1/16 in, 1/8 in, 1/4 in, 1/2 in, 1 in, 6 in, 1 ft	1 in

Metric and imperial each remember their own step, so changing units brings back the step you last used in those units.

7.3 Backup and Recovery

Choose **Backup and Recovery** from the File menu.

Setting	Choices	Standard	What it does
Auto-save a Recovery Copy	Ticked or not	Ticked	Keeps a copy of your drawing that you can recover if OT Draw 3D closes unexpectedly. It does not save your project: your .ot3d file only changes when you save it.
Auto-save Time Interval	1 to 60 minutes	2 minutes	How often the recovery copy is written. A copy is only written when there are unsaved changes.
Keep unsaved projects for 7 days	Ticked or not	Ticked	When you close a project without saving, a copy is kept under File > **Recover Unsaved Work** for 7 days.

See Chapter 5, Projects and Files, for how to recover work.

7.4 Drawing settings in the Parameter Panel

A few settings are about how you like to draw rather than about one object. They appear at the bottom of the Parameter Panel, below a dividing line, when you select or pick up a tool they apply to. Like the other preferences, they are kept for every project.

Setting	Shown for	Standard	What it does
Continuous Drawing	Dimension	Ticked	After you place a dimension, the Dimension tool stays in your hand for the next one. Press **Esc** or **Space** when you have finished.
Show (+) markers on each Wall to split and add new walls	Walls	Not ticked	Shows a + in the middle of each selected wall of a chain. Clicking it splits the wall in two.
Automatically create new points	Handrail	Ticked	Every click adds another point until you press **Enter** or click the last point again.
Automatically create new points	Grabrail	Not ticked	The same, for grabrails. Off to begin with, so a two-point grabrail is done in two clicks. The handrail and the grabrail each keep their own setting.

7.5 Tool defaults

When you draw a new object it starts from:

1. a value you changed on the object you placed just before it, this session (if any), then
2. a value you saved with **Save Current as Default** (if any), then
3. the standard starting value.

So if you change the first ramp's width and draw another ramp, the new one comes out at that width for the rest of the session. Only values that make sense to repeat are carried over, such as sizes, styles and colours, not positions or angles.

Saving your own defaults

1. Draw an object and set its parameters the way you usually want them.
2. With that one object selected, open the File menu.

3. Under **Parameters**, click **Save Current as Default**.

From then on, new objects of that kind start with those values, in every project, until you change them. **Reset Tool Defaults**, in the same place, puts that kind of object back to the standard values (it is greyed when it already uses them). To reset every tool at once, use **Reset** in Preferences.

> **Note** Lengths are remembered separately for metric and imperial units. A default saved while working in millimetres is used only in millimetres, and one saved in inches or feet and inches is used only in those. Other values, such as a style or a colour, are shared.

7.6 Left Toolbar layout

The Left Toolbar remembers whether you chose icons or a list (the two buttons at its foot) and which groups you folded shut. See Chapter 3, The Workspace.

8 Keyboard Shortcuts

This chapter lists every keyboard shortcut and mouse action in OT Draw 3D. Single-letter shortcuts are not case sensitive. You can also open a printable sheet from the File menu: **Keyboard and Mouse**.

> **Note** Single-key shortcuts are held back while you are typing in a box, so a name with a G in it stays a name. Click in the drawing first if a shortcut seems not to work.

> **On Mac** On a Mac, use the Command key wherever this chapter shows Ctrl. The Mac menu bar also has an **Edit** menu with **Copy**, **Paste**, **Duplicate** and **Select All**; these do the same as the shortcuts below, and in a text box they copy and paste text.

8.1 Tools and the view

Key	What it does	Where
Space	Back to the Select tool, putting down whatever you were placing	Anywhere
O	Orbit tool: drag to turn the model	Anywhere
P or H	Pan tool: drag to slide the view	Anywhere
Z	Zoom tool: drag up and down to zoom	Anywhere
V	Vertical Shift tool: drag to raise or lower the view	3D View only
Home	Zoom to Fit: fill the view with the drawing	Not in the 3D View of a canvas matched to a photograph
W	Move the work plane round: Top, Front, Right	3D View only. Drops an object you were placing.

8.2 What the drawing shows

These match the tick boxes in Canvas Settings (the gear on the Top Toolbar). Pressing a key ticks or unticks the box.

Key	What it does
G	Show or hide the grid
R	Show or hide the ground
X	Show or hide the axis helper at the origin
N	Snapping on or off, with its snap markers
S	Place new objects on surfaces, on or off
A	Align to Grid off, and back on at the last step used

8.3 Drawing

Key	What it does	When
Esc	Abandon the object being placed or drawn, and go back to Select	While placing or drawing
Esc	Cancel a move, resize or turn that is under way; the object goes back to where it was	While dragging
Esc	Finish a wall chain at the last point clicked; the walls already drawn are kept	While drawing a Wall Chain
Enter	Finish a handrail or grabrail at the last point clicked	While drawing a rail with Automatically create new points on
Enter	Finish a wall chain at the last point clicked	While drawing a Wall Chain
Numbers, then **Enter**	Type a length to make the next wall exactly that long, in the direction the pointer is pointing. **Backspace** removes the last character typed; **Esc** clears what you typed.	While drawing a Wall Chain, after the first corner
Arrow keys	Turn the object before putting it down	While placing stairs, a winder, ramp, landing, wall, room or bathroom item
Tab or **Shift+Tab**	Flip a two-way choice: a winder's turn, a room's shape, a door's hinge side or sliding direction, a sliding window's moving pane	While placing or with the object selected, when the panel shows that choice
Delete or **Backspace**	Abandon the object being placed	While placing

8.4 Selecting and editing

Key	What it does	Notes
Ctrl+A (**⌘A** on Mac)	Select everything on the canvas	Same as File > Select All
Ctrl+C (**⌘C** on Mac)	Copy the selection	With nothing selected, copies the view as a picture to paste into a document
Ctrl+V (**⌘V** on Mac)	Paste	
Ctrl+D (**⌘D** on Mac)	Duplicate the selection	
Ctrl+Z (**⌘Z** on Mac)	Undo	While placing an object, it abandons the placement first
Ctrl+Shift+Z (**⌘⇧Z** on Mac) or **Ctrl+Y** (**⌘Y** on Mac)	Redo	Only Ctrl+Shift+Z works on a Mac
Delete or **Backspace**	Delete the selection	
Arrow keys	Nudge the selection one Align to Grid step	With Align to Grid off, one step is 1 mm (or 1/32 inch)

8.5 The project

Key	What it does
Ctrl+S (**⌘S** on Mac)	Save the project

8.6 Typing in boxes

Key	What it does
Enter	Accept what you typed in a parameter box
Esc	Abandon what you typed and put the old value back
Tab / **Shift+Tab**	In the Parameter Panel, move to the next or previous box you can type in.
Up and down arrow keys	In a number box, step the value up or down

8.7 The mouse

Action	What it does
Click	Select an object, or put down the object being drawn
Shift + click	Add an object to the selection, or take it back out
Double-click a wall	Select the whole chain or room it belongs to
Drag an object	Move it
Shift + drag	Keep the move to one direction
Drag on empty space	Draw a box round everything it touches, to select them
Drag a corner handle	Resize. Hold **Shift** to keep the proportions.
Drag the round handle	Turn the object
Shift while drawing points	Keep the line to set angle steps (for lines, polygons, rails and dimensions)
Middle-drag (wheel pressed down)	Pan, in every view and with any tool
Right-drag	Orbit in the 3D View; pan in a flat view
Shift + right-drag	Pan
Roll the wheel	Zoom, towards the pointer
Double-click a canvas name	Rename it, in the Canvas List
Click a face of the Orientation Cube	Set the work plane; click the same face again to look straight at it

The middle and right drags can be changed in File > **Preferences**.

8.8 A trackpad

Gesture	What it does
Pinch	Zoom
Two-finger swipe	Orbit in the 3D View; pan in a flat view
Shift + two-finger swipe	Pan, in the 3D View too

> **Tip** If a trackpad moves the view the wrong way, turn on **Invert Trackpad Direction** in File > **Preferences**.

9 Troubleshooting

This chapter helps you sort out problems with starting OT Draw 3D, the display, licensing, saving, exporting and updates, and explains how to send information to OT Draw support when you need help.

Whatever goes wrong, remember that your work is protected in three ways: the project file holds your last save, the .bak file beside it holds the save before that, and a recovery copy of unsaved changes is kept every couple of minutes. See Chapter 5, Projects and Files.

9.1 Getting help from support

If you cannot solve a problem, contact OT Draw support at support@otdraw.com, or use **File menu > Help** to open the support page. It helps a great deal if you send diagnostics with your message.

Saving diagnostics

1. Choose **File menu > Save Diagnostics...** (under **Support**).
2. A save dialog opens on your Desktop with a file name such as OT Draw 3D diagnostics 2026-10-15 1432.zip. Click **Save**.
3. The folder containing the file opens. Attach the .zip file to your email to support.

The diagnostics file contains OT Draw 3D's own logs, the licence log, short reports of any serious problems, and a summary of the computer (Windows or macOS version, memory, graphics chip and screens). It does not contain your drawings. Personal details such as your home folder name are removed from the logs as they are written.

If the file cannot be saved where offered, a message suggests saving it somewhere else, such as Documents.

Opening the log folder

If support asks for a particular log file, choose **File menu > Open Log Folder** (under **Support**). The folder where OT Draw 3D keeps its logs opens, ready for you to attach the file to an email.

9.2 OT Draw 3D will not start

What you see	What to try
Checking licence… stays up for a long time	The licence server is slow to answer. Wait a minute. If it does not clear, check your internet connection; when the check cannot reach the server, OT Draw 3D uses your last successful check instead.
A licence card such as Validation Required or Subscription Expired	See Licence problems below, and Chapter 2, Installation and Licensing.
Nothing appears at all	OT Draw 3D keeps its window hidden until the Drawing Area is ready. Wait a few seconds. Check the taskbar (or Dock) in case the window has opened behind another window or on a screen that is not connected.
Windows says the app is damaged or needs repairing	Uninstall OT Draw 3D from Settings > Apps > Installed apps, then download it again from www.otdraw.com/download and install it. Your projects are not affected.

9.3 Display and performance problems

The Drawing Area is blank or stops drawing

If the Drawing Area runs into a problem, OT Draw 3D restarts it automatically, usually so quickly you do not notice. If it stops again within a minute, the drawing is replaced by a panel headed **The drawing view stopped working**, with a **Restart drawing view** button. Your drawing is safe: the Top Toolbar, the Left Toolbar and the Right Side Bar still work, and you can save your project before restarting.

1. Save your project with `Ctrl+S` (`⌘S` on Mac) or the **Save** button.
2. Click **Restart drawing view**.

If this keeps happening, update your graphics driver (see below), then send diagnostics to support.

OT Draw 3D is slow, or slows other programs down

Two settings in **File menu > Preferences** can help on less powerful computers. Hold the pointer over each setting's name for an explanation.

Setting	Try it when	What it does
Pixel cap	OT Draw 3D itself is slow, especially on a laptop with a high-resolution screen set above 100% scale.	Draws the 3D view with fewer pixels: quicker, but lines and text look softer and exported images are smaller. Choose 1.5 or 1.
Frame rate limit	Other programs slow down while you work in OT Draw 3D.	Stops the view being redrawn more than 60 times a second, leaving more of the graphics chip for other programs. Choose 60.

See Chapter 7, Preferences. Also close other programs you are not using, and keep the number of canvases in a project reasonable.

Updating your graphics driver

Many display problems are fixed by updating the graphics driver. On Windows, use Windows Update (including Optional updates) or the update tool from your computer or graphics chip maker. On a Mac, the graphics driver is updated with macOS in System Settings > General > Software Update.

9.4 Getting your work back

Situation	Where to look
OT Draw 3D closed unexpectedly	The Recover unsaved work dialog appears when OT Draw 3D next starts. Open the drawing, then save it with Save Project As.
You chose Don't Save by mistake	File menu > Recover Unsaved Work... within 7 days.
A project file will not open	Click Open Backup when offered, or use the .bak file beside the project.
You saved changes you did not want	The .bak file beside the project holds the previous save. Copy it, rename the copy to end in .ot3d and open it.

See Chapter 5, Projects and Files for details.

9.5 File problems

Problem	What to do
Save failed	Read the reason in the message. Click Try Again, or Save As… to save somewhere else. See Chapter 5, Projects and Files.
A project is already open (Already open)	Someone else, or another OT Draw 3D window, has it open. Choose Open a Copy to avoid overwriting their work.
... was saved by a newer version	Update OT Draw 3D with File menu > Check for Updates.
A project in Recent Projects shows Not found	It has been moved, renamed or deleted, or is on a drive that is not connected. Reconnect the drive, or use Browse… to find it.
Could not recover drawing	The unsaved copy is damaged or was made by a newer version. Choose Keep It to try again after updating, or Discard It.

9.6 Licence problems

Problem	What to do
Validation Required at start-up	Connect to the internet and click Refresh licence. If you cannot get online, click One more session to work this once.
Sign in to OT Draw 3D, your sign-in token has expired	Sign in again.
Maximum number of computers reached	Click Manage devices and remove a computer you no longer use, then sign in.
Messages about the licence server or a security check	Check your internet connection. Turn off any VPN. On a company network, the network may be blocking the licence server; ask your IT department to allow otdraw.com.
Subscription Expired, On Hold or Cancelled	Use Manage subscription to fix it in the portal, then Refresh licence; or Contact support.

When a sign-in problem shows a reference line, quote it to support. See Chapter 2, Installation and Licensing for every licence card and message.

9.7 Update problems

Notice	Meaning	What to do
Couldn't check for updates	OT Draw 3D could not reach the update server. Your drawing is unaffected.	Check your internet connection and try File menu > Check for Updates later.
Download didn't finish	The update was interrupted while downloading. Nothing on your computer has changed.	Start it again with File menu > Check for Updates.
Update didn't install	An update was downloaded but could not be installed, so you are still on the old version.	Try again with File menu > Check for Updates. Contact support if it keeps happening.

Tip If you would rather choose when updates are downloaded, set **Software Updates** to **Notify** or **Manual** in **File menu > Preferences**. See Chapter 2, Installation and Licensing.

9.8 Export and clipboard problems

Problem	What to do
Ctrl+C copies objects instead of the picture	Click an empty part of the canvas so nothing is selected, then press Ctrl+C again, or use File menu > Copy to Clipboard.
The pasted drawing is not at the scale I expected	Check the canvas's scale in the Export dialog. A 3D view or a canvas set to As on screen pastes at its on-screen size.
A printed plan is the wrong size	Print the PDF at Actual size or 100%, not Fit to page.
Too big to export at this size	Choose a smaller scale.
Export failed: the folder may be read only, full, or no longer there	Export to another folder, such as Documents.

See Chapter 6, Exporting and Printing.

10 Glossary

Terms used in OT Draw 3D and in this manual.

Term	Meaning
3D View	A perspective view you can orbit around. Most drawing is done here.
Align to Grid	The step that new points, sizes and moves snap to, chosen at the right of the Top Toolbar (for example 50 mm). **Off** turns grid alignment off.
Canvas	One Drawing Area in a project, with its own view and camera. A project can hold many canvases, listed in the **Canvas List**.
Canvas List	The panel at the bottom of the Right Side Bar that lists the canvases in the project and lets you add, switch, rename and delete them.
Connected canvas	A canvas in a scene group that receives new objects, shown by a solid marker.
Continuous Drawing	A Dimension setting that keeps the tool armed after each dimension, so you can place a run of them.
Cutaway	Hiding the walls nearest the camera so you can see inside a room. Turned on with the **Hide near walls** switch on a canvas row.
Default (tool default)	The values a tool starts with. Change them with **Save Current as Default** in the File menu.
Elevation	Height above the floor. For boxes it is the height of the base; for fittings it is the height of the fitting's reference point.
Flat view	Any of the TOP, FRONT, LEFT, RIGHT, BACK or BOTTOM views. Flat views have no perspective and can be exported to a true scale.
Gradient	The slope of a ramp, written as 1:14 and so on (one unit of rise for every 14 units of length).
Handle	A small marker on a selected object that you drag to resize, rotate or move a point.
Hob	The raised edge around a shower floor.
Kerb	A raised edge along the side of a ramp or landing.
Landing	A level platform, usually at the top or bottom of a ramp or stairs.
Left Toolbar	The panel of drawing tools down the left side of the window, grouped into Shapes, Labelling, Structures, Rails, Building, Bathroom and Fittings.
Linked canvas	A canvas that shows the same objects as the other canvases in its scene group, from a different view. Editing an object on one changes it on all.
Marquee	The dashed rectangle you drag across the drawing to select several objects at once.
Match Photo	Lining up the 3D camera with a photograph so you can draw a modification over a photo of the real site.
Nosing	The front edge of a stair tread that overhangs the step below.
Opening	A gap in a wall: a door, window, opening or wall break.
Parameter Panel	The panel at the top right showing the settings of the selected object.
Project	A saved OT Draw 3D file (.ot3d) holding all its canvases and objects.
Return	The end of a handrail that turns back towards the wall or down towards the ground.
Scale	The ratio between the drawing on paper and real life, for example 1:50. See Chapter 6, Exporting and Printing.

Term	Meaning
Scene group	A set of linked canvases shown together under a **Scene** heading in the Canvas List.
Snap	Pulling a point to a nearby corner, edge, wall face or grid position as you draw or move.
Wall canvas	An interior elevation made with **Add Wall Canvas from Selection**: one canvas per selected wall, looking at it from inside the room.
Winder	A stair that turns a corner using wedge-shaped steps.
Work plane	The surface new objects are drawn on. Usually the floor; it changes when you pick a face of an object or a flat view.