3DEXPERIENCE®

DRAFTSIGHT
MIGRATION GUIDE
A Practical Guide to a Smooth Transition

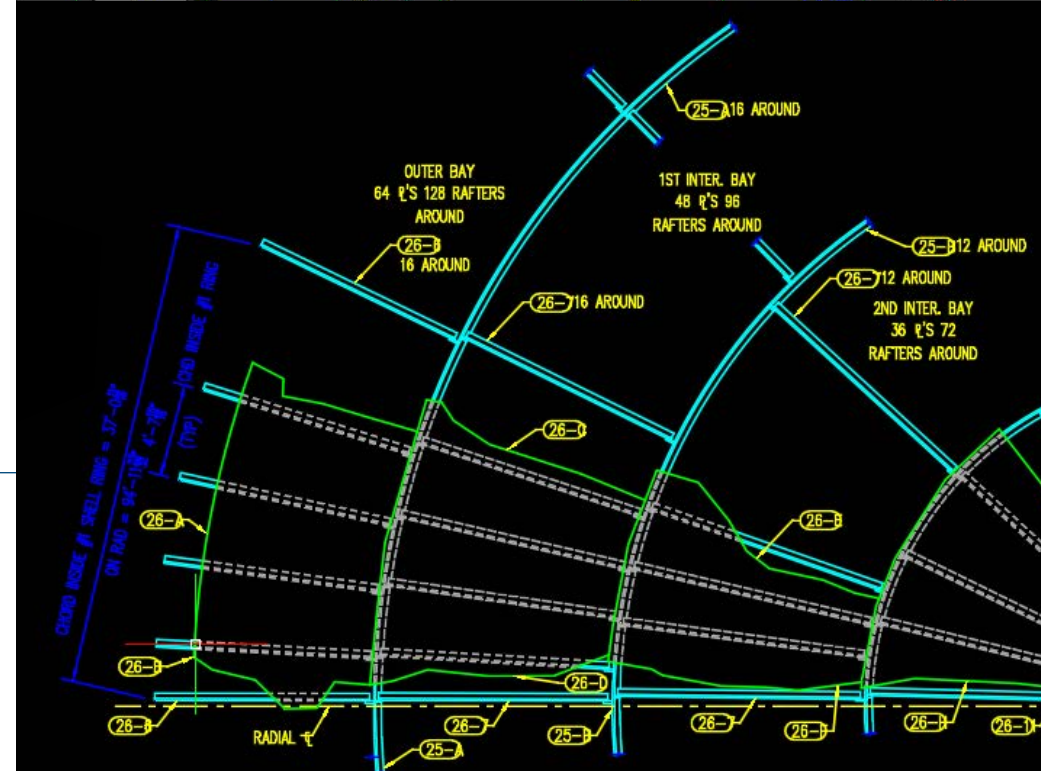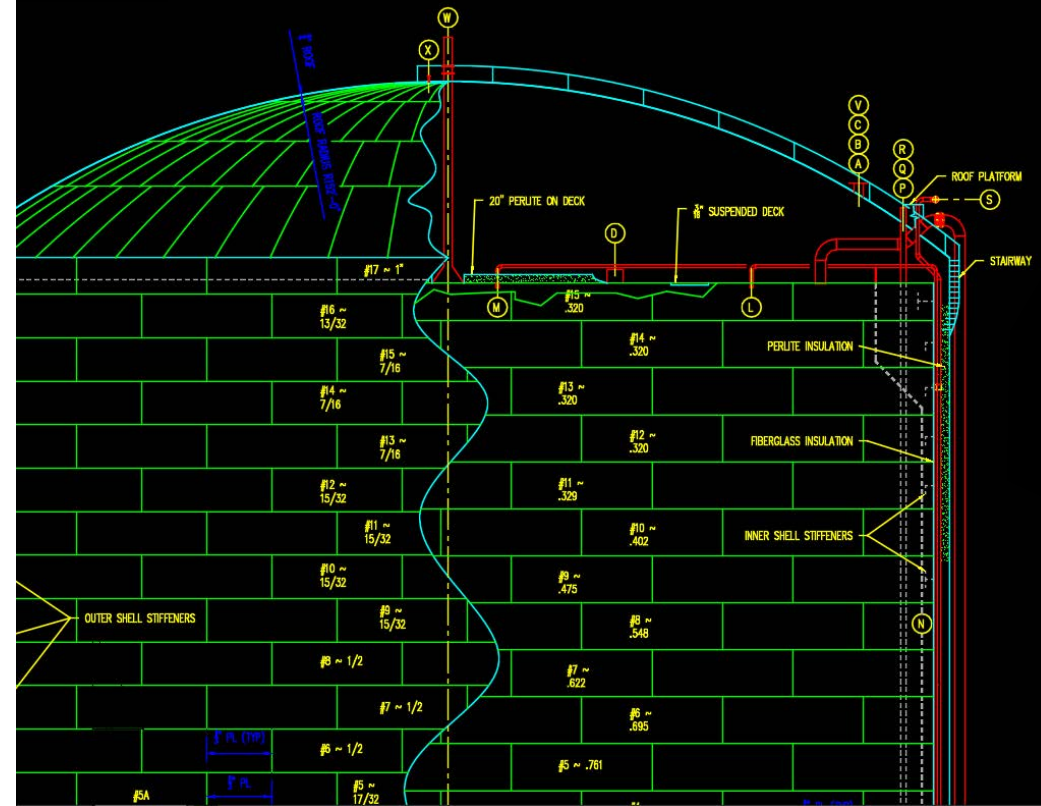Ds DraftSight™

DS DASSAULT SYSTEMES

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to help users make a **smooth and confident transition to DraftSight** from their previous CAD software. Whether you're an individual designer, a member of a drafting team, or part of a larger organization migrating multiple licenses, this guide is designed to make your move seamless and efficient.

This is a **general migration guide**, not tied to any specific previous CAD product. It focuses on principles, tools, and workflows that are universally relevant to professionals familiar with 2D CAD environments. Regardless of whether you've used AutoCAD®, BricsCAD®, or another platform, you'll find clear, practical steps to help you get productive in DraftSight quickly.

In the following sections, you'll learn **what to expect before, during, and after migration**, including how to **transfer your custom settings, preferences, and tool configurations**. You'll also discover how DraftSight handles **files, layers, blocks, references, and fonts**, ensuring that your data remains intact and your workflow uninterrupted.

Additionally, this guide answers **common questions** about compatibility, feature differences, and best practices for maintaining drawing integrity. It includes **tips from experienced users** to help you avoid common pitfalls and accelerate your learning curve, allowing you to focus on what matters most, **designing and delivering quality work in DraftSight**.

" Moving to a new software is like moving into a new home. It will take time to adjust to your new home but, with time, you will love that you moved."
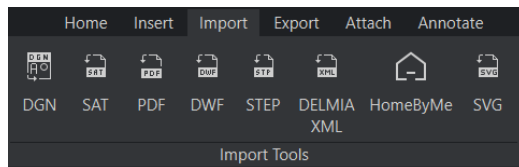
DRAFTSIGHT
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WHY CHOOSE DRAFTSIGHT

DraftSight is a **powerful, professional-grade 2D CAD solution** that enables you to create, edit, view, and markup DWG and DXF files — as well as a variety of other industry-standard formats. It delivers the performance and flexibility that design professionals expect, while maintaining the familiarity of traditional CAD workflows.

One of DraftSight's key strengths lies in its **broad compatibility**. It supports opening and saving in numerous DWG versions, including legacy formats dating back to **AutoCAD Release 12**. This means you can work confidently with existing projects, clients, and partners who may still be using older CAD environments, without worrying about data loss or conversion issues.

DraftSight's **user interface feels instantly familiar** to those who have experience with other CAD tools. Common commands, shortcut keys, and drawing behaviors are intentionally aligned with industry standards, helping reduce the learning curve and allowing users to start working productively almost immediately.
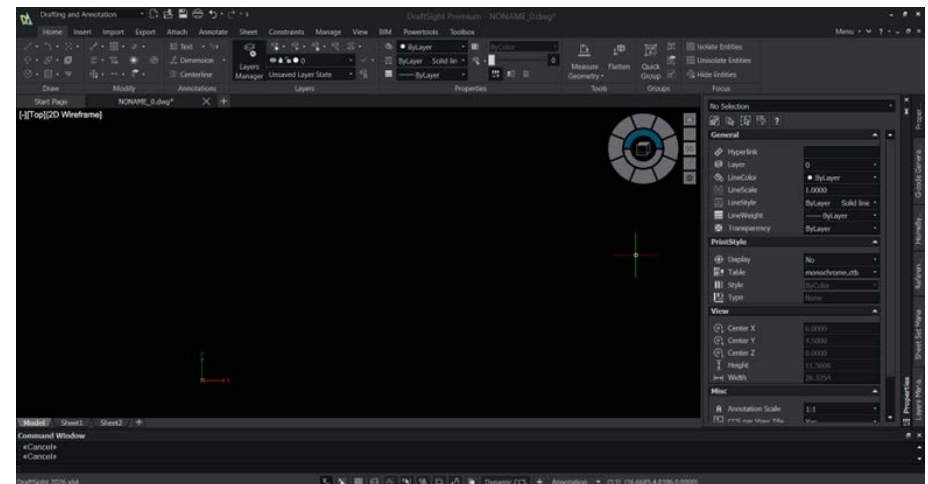
Beyond standard drafting capabilities, DraftSight offers robust customization and automation options. Through support for LISP, DCL, .NET, and scripting, you can tailor the environment to match your preferred workflows, automate repetitive tasks, and even integrate DraftSight into broader design or engineering ecosystems. This makes it ideal for power users, CAD managers, and organizations seeking consistency and efficiency across teams.
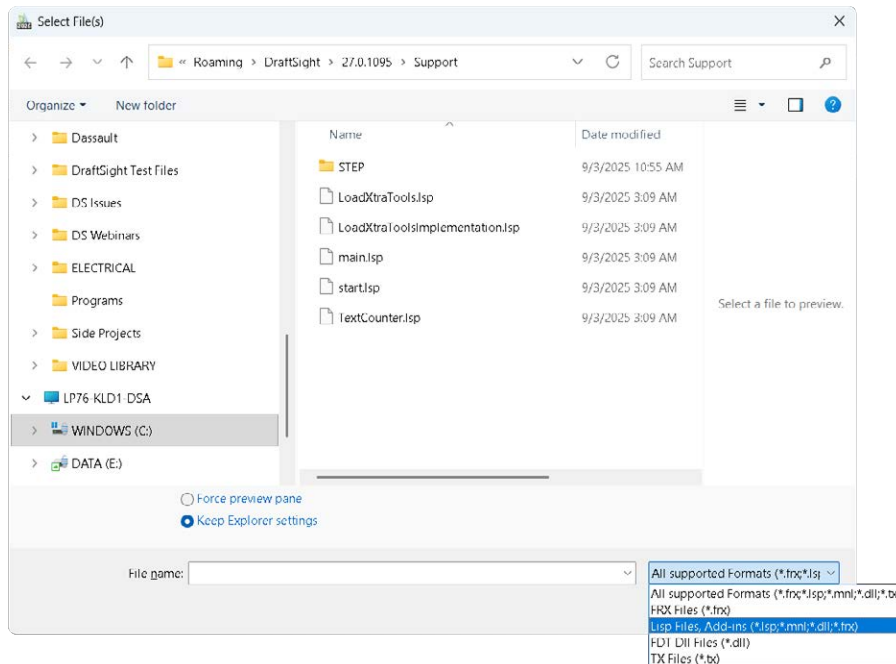

Additionally, DraftSight excels in **data preservation and interoperability**. It maintains the integrity of your **layers, blocks, external references (Xrefs), plot styles, fonts, and templates** when transitioning from other CAD platforms. Whether you're opening existing DWG files or building new ones, DraftSight ensures your project standards, file structures, and visual fidelity remain intact.

Finally, DraftSight continues to evolve under the **Dassault Systèmes 3D**EXPERIENCE **platform**, offering scalable options from individual users to enterprise-level integrations. Whether you need a reliable standalone drafting tool or a connected design environment, DraftSight provides a flexible, cost-effective solution backed by a trusted name in design innovation.

GETTING STARTED / INSTALLATION & SETUP

1. Download and install the appropriate PC or Mac version from DraftSight.com.

   a. You have multiple choices such as Professional, Premium, Enterprise, and 3DEXPERIENCE versions. Refer to this product matrix for a more complete understanding.
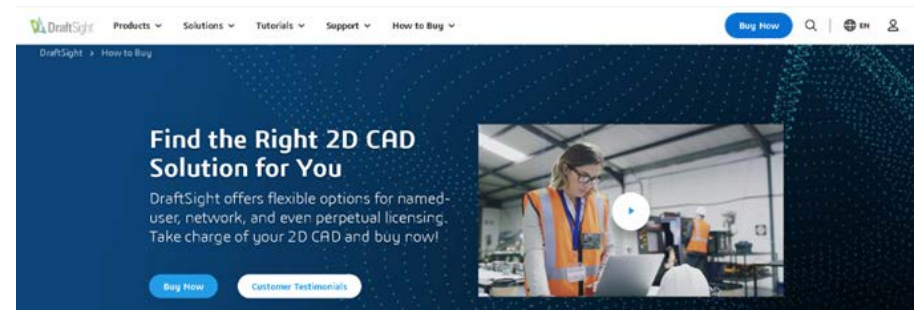
2. During installation or first launch, look for **Migration / Preference Import** options to bring in settings from previous installations (if migrating from an earlier DraftSight or version).

   b. If the migration dialog doesn't appear, you can manually copy your old preferences/settings folder to: C:\Users\<username>\AppData\Roaming\ DraftSight\<version>

3. Verify that your custom settings (CUI, toolbars, aliases, etc.) came along correctly.
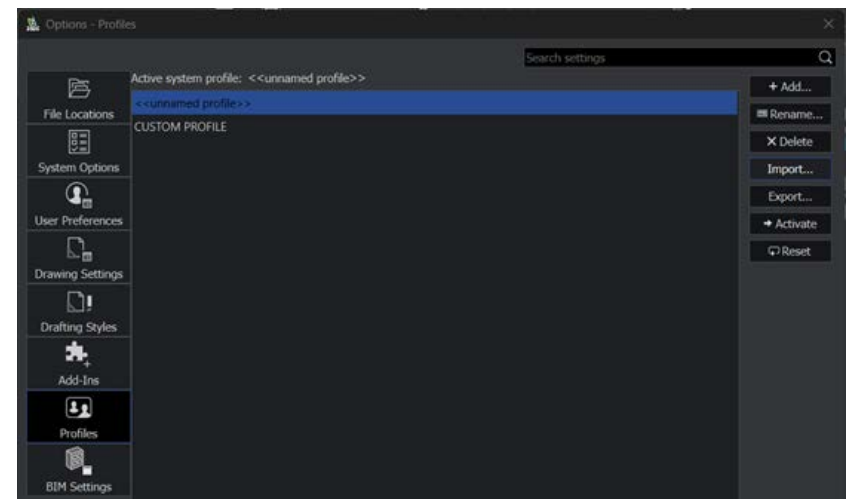
4. Utilize the 3DExperience DraftSight Wiki page to answer all of your most common questions here.

TRANSFERRING / MIGRATING YOUR SETTINGS

Migrating settings is easy with the migration wizard upon installation. Many of these transferred setting fall under this path: **C:\Users\<username>\AppData\Roaming\ DraftSight\<specified folder>**

- After migration, always double-check key custom macros, scripts, or menus to ensure they still behave as expected.

HOW FILES & DATA BEHAVE IN DRAFTSIGHT
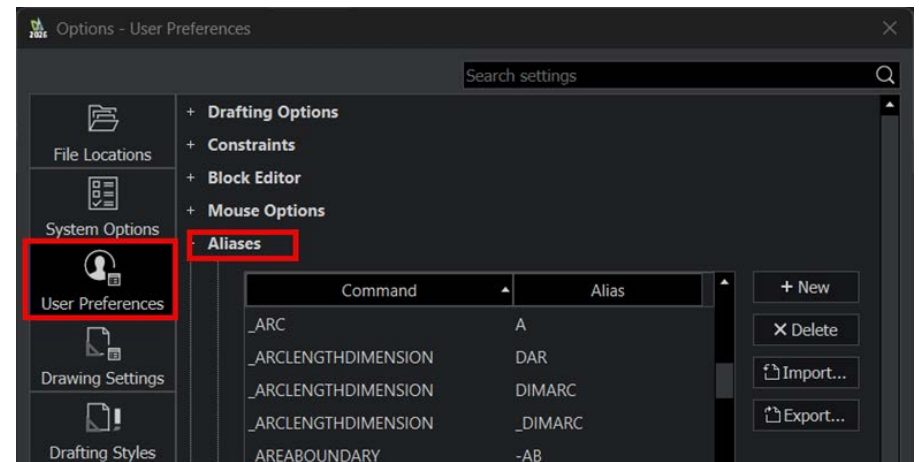
"You will not lose your drawing data; rather, you'll adapt to a new environment with strong backwards compatibility."

Layers

Migrating to or opening in DraftSight **does not affect your layers** (layer names, properties, on/off, freeze, colors, linetypes). These remain intact when opening DWG/DXF files in DraftSight.

NOTE! DraftSight uses its own alias mapping internally; so, your old "PGP" alias file from another CAD product is not automatically applied. DraftSight instead maps common commands and aliases natively.

- For missing custom aliases, you can manually recreate or edit alias lists in DraftSight.
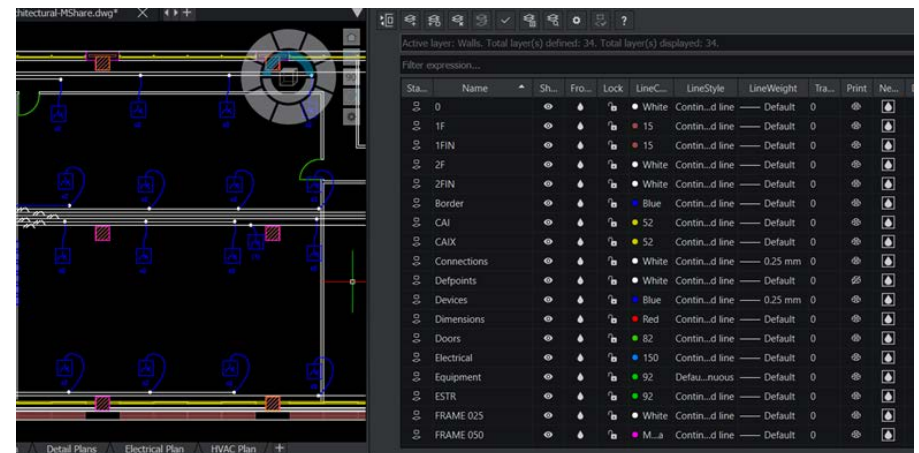
Blocks, References, Xrefs

Block definitions, block references, attributed blocks, and external references (Xrefs) are carried over.

Custom Blocks

DraftSight supports many custom blocks (with dynamic properties). However, some highly complex dynamic block behaviors from other software might not translate perfectly in all cases and should be tested after migration.

DWG Version Compatibility

- You can open, edit, and re-save DWG or DXF files. The internal data is preserved.
- DraftSight supports saving to older DWG versions (even very old release versions) so interoperability is maintained.

Fonts & Text Styles

DraftSight supports SHX and TrueType (TTF) fonts; if a font used in a drawing is missing, it will appear as unresolved or substituted just like in other CAD tools.

Plot / Print Styles

- CTB and STB plot style files are recognized by DraftSight in printing/plotting processes.
- PC3 plot files can be imported into the plot manager for customized plot settings
- PCX files can be created for sharing custom plot files.

### Automation, Scripts, LISP, APIs

DraftSight supports AutoLISP / Visual LISP, DCL, .NET, and script (SCR) files.

Data Integrity / File Corruption Concerns

DWG files are preserved faithfully and if a corruption occurs, the RECOVER & AUDIT tools can "rescue" corrupted DWG files.

Import Sheet Set Files

Sheet Set .DST files can be imported and continued to be used in the DraftSight Sheet Set Manager.
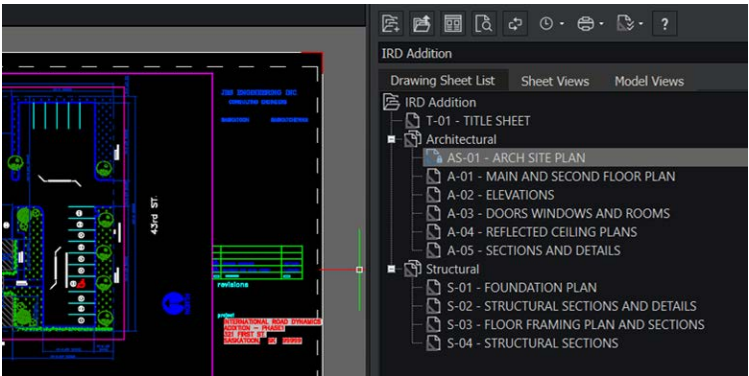
Unsupported / Feature Gaps to Watch Out For

Currently AEC object enablers are not supported

COMMON QUESTIONS & MISCONCEPTIONS (FAQ)

Question	Answer / Clarification
Will migrating to DraftSight mess up my layer structure?	**No.** Layers remain intact when you open DWG files in DraftSight. Layer names, colors, linetypes, visibility, etc., are preserved.
Can I still open older DWG files (legacy versions) without corruption?	**Yes.** DraftSight supports opening, editing, and saving legacy DWG versions and is well known for strong DWG compatibility.
Will my dynamic blocks still work?	**Yes.** DraftSight supports dynamic blocks. Very complex dynamic behaviors may need testing.
What about my custom scripts, LISP routines, etc.?	DraftSight supports AutoLISP / Visual LISP, DCL, script files, and .NET automation, so most of your custom automation can still be used.
Will my plot styles / CTB/STB files carry over?	**Yes.** DraftSight recognizes .CTB and .STB plot style files for printing and plotting.
Does DraftSight import my alias file (PGP)?	**No,** the external PGP alias file is not automatically imported. DraftSight maps commands/aliases internally. You'll need to recreate or edit custom aliases manually.
Can DraftSight "repair" corrupted DWG files?	**Yes.** You can use the RECOVER & AUDIT tools to repair files. The PURGE tool can also be used to keep files clean.
Any limitations or gotchas?	• Some very advanced or niche commands or object types may not be fully supported. • Performance in very large drawings will depend on system hardware. • Always back up your files before migration and test thoroughly. • Some scripts or automation routines that depend on subtle behaviors of another software may need adjustment.

TIPS & BEST PRACTICES

1. Before migrating, **backup** all original drawing files, templates, block libraries, fonts, plot styles, scripts, etc.

2. Start by migrating a small pilot set of drawings or projects and test thoroughly before full rollout.

3. Validate critical drawings (especially ones using dynamic blocks, advanced annotation, reference files) after migration.

4. Maintain a "golden template" or standard drawing with styles to compare differences after migration.

5. Map or cross-reference command aliases early in the process so users don't get confused by naming differences.

6. Document any small behavioral differences or conventions (e.g. default settings, unit tolerances, snapping behavior) that users should be aware of.

7. Train power users first, let them become champions, and provide quick reference cheat sheets (matching old commands to new where needed).

8. Keep your original CAD environment (if still licensed) as read-only fallback until confidence is high.

9. Monitor user feedback early (issues, anomalies) and maintain a list of "differences to watch for."

Appendix / Resources

1. Official DraftSight documentation, help pages, and support links.
   www.draftsight.com/2d-cad/media-center-and-ebooks

2. Tutorials, video guides.
   www.draftsight.com/2D-cad/draftsight-tutorials

3. Links to forums / user communities.
   https://r1132100503382-eu1-3dswym.3dexperience.3ds.com/community/swym:prd:R1132100503382:community:51

4. Example mapping of commands / aliases.
   www.draftsight.com/media/draftsight-commands-quick-reference

5. Checklist for users to run through

CHECK LIST
Open a sample drawing
Check layers
Check block behaviors
Check text styles
Check Sheet Sets (if used)
Check Print to PDF
Check Publish

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