Creating a Custom Tool in AutoCAD 2004
By Elise Moss
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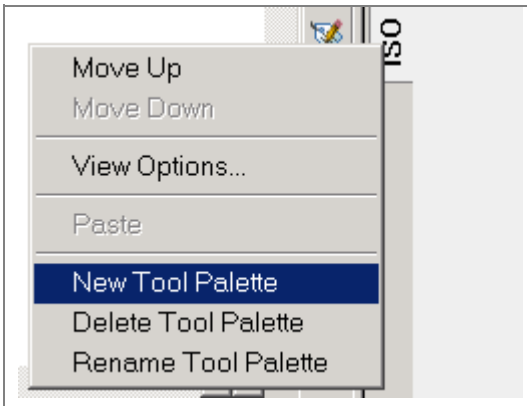
You can create a custom tool in AutoCAD 2004. It just isn't very well documented – until now…



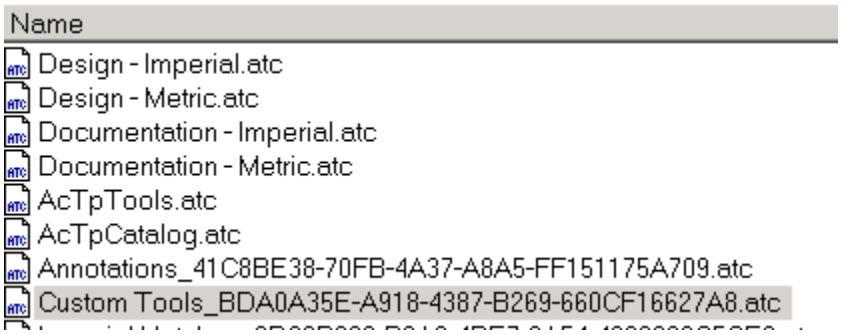
Press Ctl+3 to launch the Tool Palette.

Right click on the Tool Palette and select **New Tool Palette**.

Name your palette **Custom Tools**.

Save the active drawing.

Using Windows Explorer, search for *.atc files under Documents and Settings\



If you highlight the file, you can confirm that it is the correct file by using the date and time properties.

Open the file using Notepad, so you don't add any unwanted formatting.

You can leave the palette entry in this file as a separate entry or place it within an existing palette atc file.

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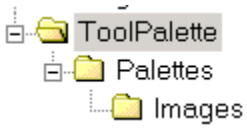
File Edit Format Help

```
<Palette>
<ItemID idValue="{BDA0A35E-A918-4387
<Properties>
<ItemName>Custom Tools</ItemName>
<Images/>
<Time createdUniversalDateTime="200
</Properties>
<Tools/>
</Palette>
```

Note the palette is defined using sections for Images and Tools.

You can use any image file type for your palette tool.
Create the image file and add the lisp routine you want to run from the palette to your startup suite.



Copy your tool image to the Images folder under ToolPalette\Palettes.

You need to create a unique GUID for the lisp routine.

To generate a GUID, you can use a free tool downloadable from Microsoft's website.

Create an image to be used on the palette. It can be a bmp, jpg, or png file. Store this file in the Images folder.

You will then edit the atc file as shown. The lines indicated in red were added.

```
<Palette>
<ItemID idValue="{BDA0A35E-A918-4387-B269-660CF16627A8}"/>
<Properties>
<ItemName>Custom Tools</ItemName>
<Images/>
<Time createdUniversalDateTime="2003-08-28T20:38:13"
modifiedUniversalDateTime="2003-08-28T20:38:13"/>
</Properties>
<Tools>
 <Tool>
 <ItemID idValue = "{5276B019-A6C2-482e-9806-A41D96FD54FB}"/>
 <Properties>
    <ItemName>CurledLeader    </ItemName>
    <Images>
    <Image cx = "65" cy= "65" src=".\Images\curled.jpg"/>
    </Images>
    </Properties>
    <Source/>
    <StockToolRef idValue="{2AE7120B-CEE4-47A5-9B50-EF9F3ADE24C}"/>
```

```
    <Data>
      <Macro>^C^Ccurled</macro>
    </data>
  </Tool>
 </Tools>

</Palette>
```

In this example, I added a commandtool to create a curled leader using a lisp routine which defines a custom command called Curled. This is called in the Macro section. The curled.lsp routine is added to AutoCAD's Startup Suite so it is always available.

Walking through the code:

```
<Tool>
 <ItemID idValue = "{5276B019-A6C2-482e-9806-A41D96FD54FB}"/>
```

I define my first tool. I can define more than one tool in the tools section.
I set the ItemID for this tool to the GUID I created.

```
 <Properties>
    <ItemName>CurledLeader    </ItemName>
```

Next I define the Properties for the tool. In this case, I define an Item Name for the tool. This is the title that will appear next to your tool icon on the tool palette.

```
 <Images>
    <Image cx = "65" cy= "65" src=".\Images\curled.jpg"/>
    </Images>
    </Properties>
```

Next I define the image size, path and filename.
I then close the Properties definition.

```
<Source/>
    <StockToolRef idValue="{2AE7120B-CEE4-47A5-9B50-EF9F3ADE24AC}"/>
```

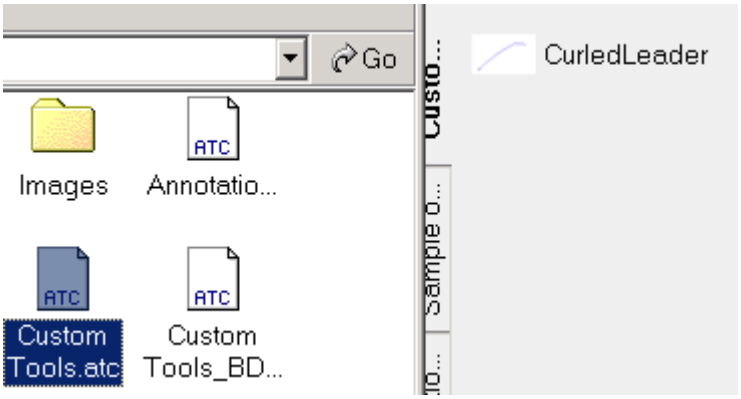
The StockToolRef idValue does not change. This is a CLSID that refers to a custom tool.

```
<Data>
      <Macro>^c^Ccurled</macro>
    </data>
  </Tool>
```

</Tools>

Next, we indicate what command will be initiated when the tool is selected.
We close the Tool definition and indicate we are done defining all the tools.

Save the atc file.



Bring up Windows Explorer so you can see the atc file next to the Tool Palette.

Drag and drop the atc file onto the tool palette.

Test your new tool.

You are now able to create custom tools for your AutoCAD2004 tool palettes!

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