Tracing Over an Imported File to Create a 3D Floor Plan

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The information in this article applies to:

PREMIER INTERIORS | PRO

QUESTION

My picture has dimensions on it, and I would like to import it into Chief Architect and use it to create a 1:1 scale drawing. How do I do this?

ANSWER

There isn't a way to convert a digital image into a 3D model in Chief Architect; however, you can use an image of a floor plan, or a PDF, as a template to trace over. In many cases, imported images and PDFs are not scaled, so in order to produce an accurate model, you will need to make some adjustments to your drawing.

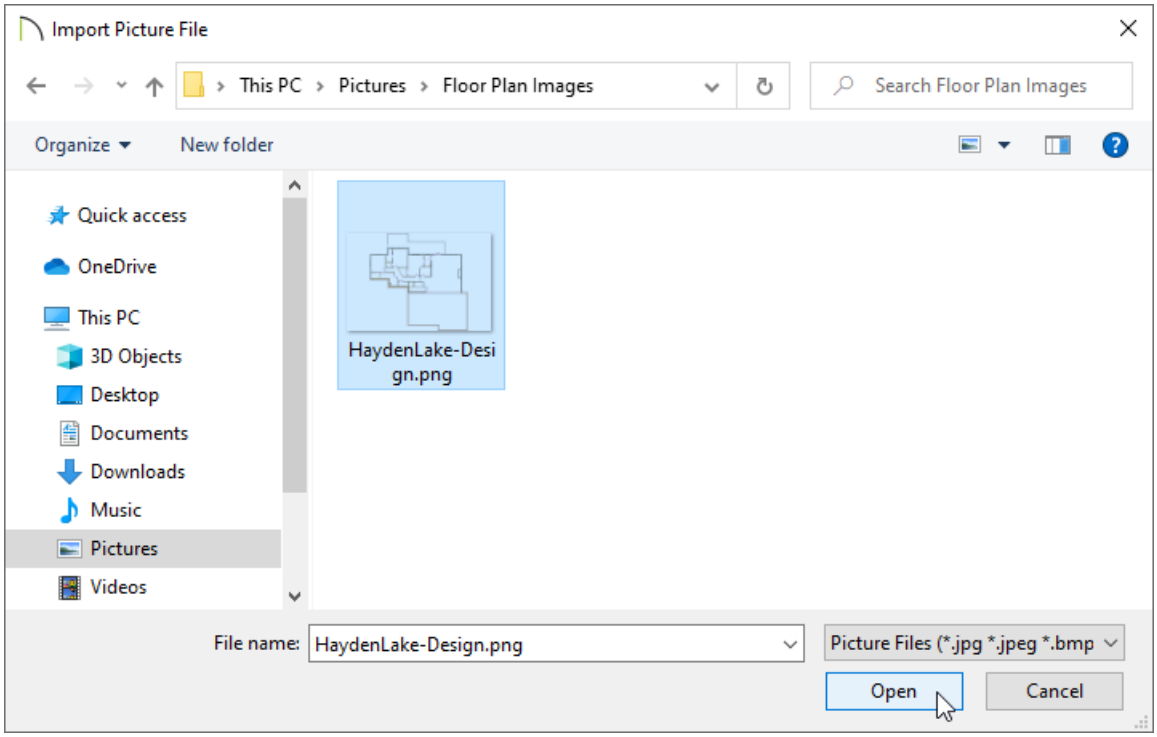
- Importing Pictures
- Importing PDFs
- Saving imported pictures and PDF's to the plan
- Resizing Images and PDFs
- Hiding or removing the image/PDF in X15 and newer
- Hiding or removing the image/PDF in X14 and prior

To import a picture of a floor plan

The picture file that will be used should be saved in the same folder on your computer as the plan file you want it to appear in.

1. In your desired plan, navigate to **File> Import> Import Picture** .

2. Browse to the picture file that you would like to import, click on its name to select it, then click the **Open** button.



Note: When an image is imported, it will be in the Back Drawing Group allowing you the ability to draw on top of it using the Chief Architect tools.

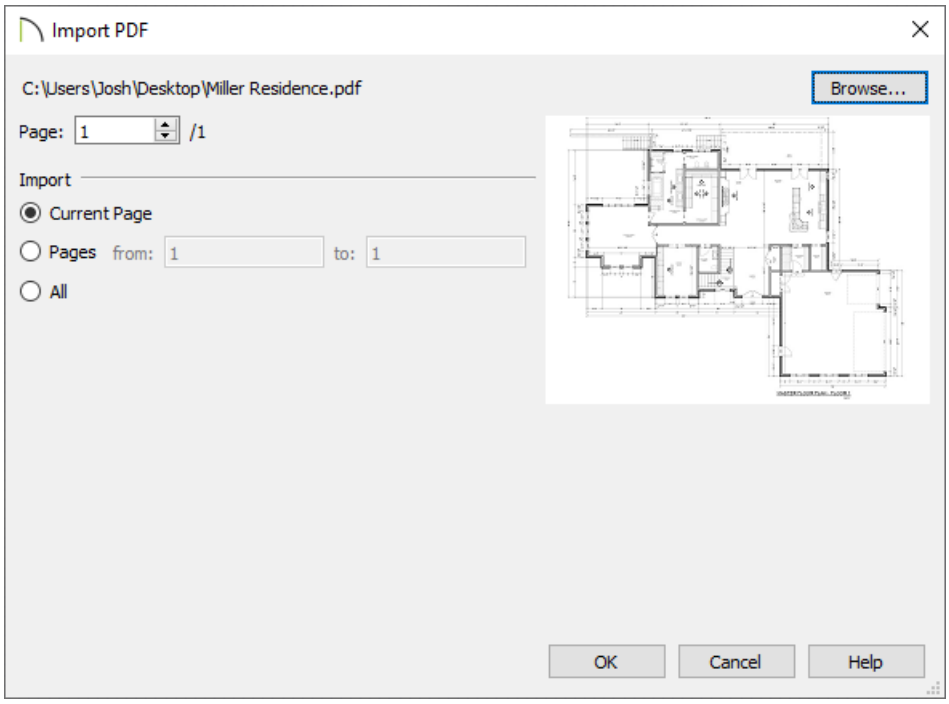
You can change the Drawing Group of an imported picture by first selecting the imported picture file, and then selecting the View Drawing Order Edit Tools edit button on the Edit Toolbar.

To import a PDF file

1. In your desired plan, navigate to **File> Import> Import PDF** .

2. Browse to where the file is located, select it, and click **Open**.

3. In the **Import PDF** dialog, choose which page(s) of the PDF to import, then click **OK**.



Note: When a PDF is imported, it will be in the Back Drawing Group allowing you the ability to draw on top of it using the Chief Architect tools.

You can change the Drawing Group of an imported PDF by first selecting the imported PDF file, and then selecting the View Drawing Order Edit Tools edit button on the Edit Toolbar.

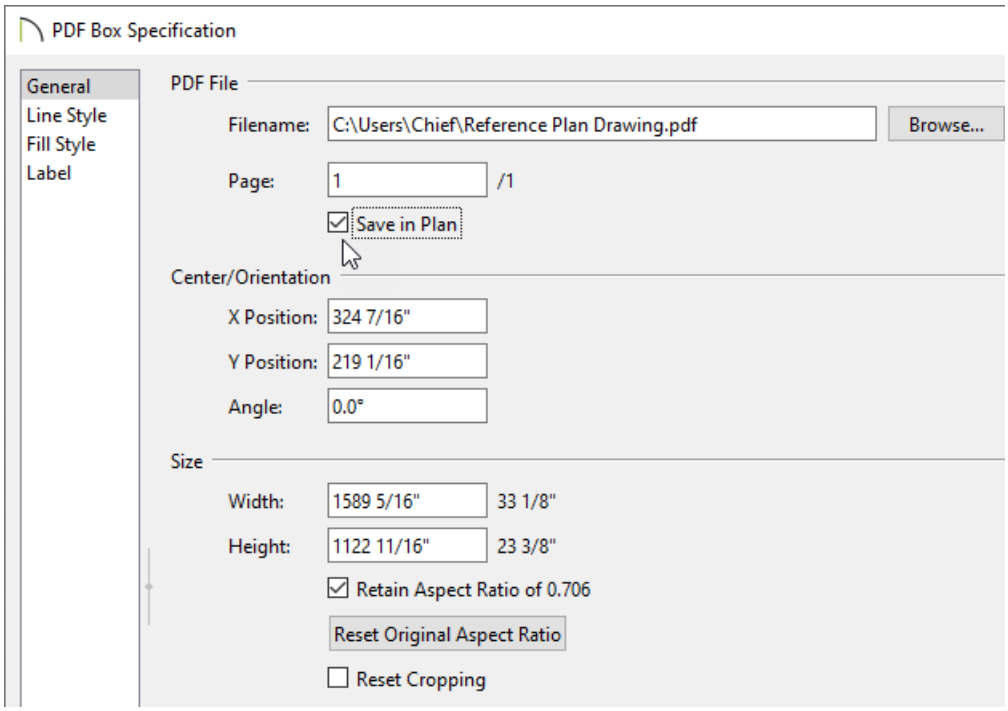
To save an image/PDF to your plan

When you import an image/PDF into your plan file you are referencing a file on your computer and not actually saving it in your plan. This means that if the image/PDF file were to be moved or deleted from your computer you would no longer be able to see the image/PDF in your plan file without relinking the file.

Instead of relying on the link to the image/PDF you are able to instead save the image/PDF in your plan file. However, do keep in mind that this will increase the overall file size of the plan file.

1. Use **Select Objects** to select the image/PDF and click the **Open Object** edit button.

2. On the GENERAL panel of the **Picture File Box** or **PDF Box Specification** dialog, select the **Save in Plan** box to keep the image saved within the plan file, then click **OK**.



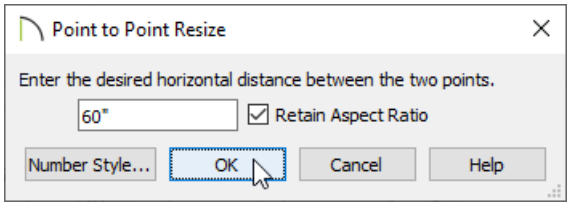
To resize the image/PDF

1. Locate two walls or other objects in the image or PDF that you imported, in which you know the exact size of in the X and Y axes, and make a note of their length.

2. Using the **Select Objects** tool, select the picture or PDF, then click the **Point to Point Resize** edit button.

3. Choose two points on the image between which you know the distance. Click the first point (A) and then click the second point (B).

4. In the **Point to Point Resize** dialog that opens next, type in the distance between the two points you selected in Step 3, check or uncheck the **Retain Aspect Ratio** box, then click **OK**.



The option to retain the aspect ratio is available in X12 and newer program versions.

5. Repeat this process for the opposite axis if you decided not to retain the aspect ratio in Step 4, or if you're using X11 or an older program version.

> For best results, use dimensions to accurately size and position all walls after you are finished.

To hide or remove the image/PDF in X15 and newer

1. When you are finished, you can select the imported picture or PDF and**Delete** it, or you can hide the layer that the image/PDF is on.

2. To hide the layer the image/PDF is on, simply hide the "Picture/PDF Boxes" layer:
   - Go to **Tools> Layer Settings> Display Options** .

     You can also use the **Active Layer Display Options** side window.

   - Locate the "Picture/PDF Boxes" layer and remove the check from the **Disp** column.

To hide or remove the image/PDF in X14 and prior

1. When you are finished, you can select the imported picture or PDF and**Delete** it, or you can hide the layer that the image/PDF is on.

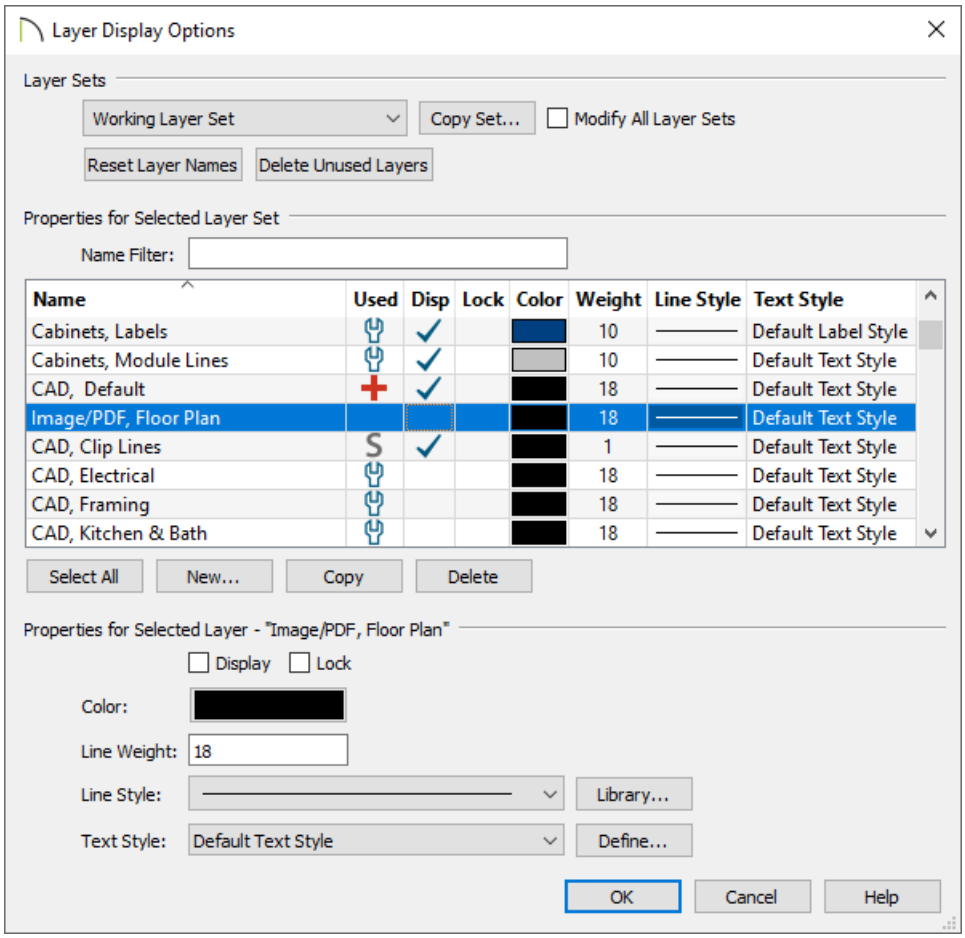
2. The image/PDF will come in on the "CAD, Default" layer meaning you will likely want to create your own custom layer.

   Creating custom layers is not available in Home Designer Pro.

3. Use **Select Objects** to select the image/PDF and click the **Open Object** edit button.

4. On the LINE STYLE panel, note that the selected file is located on the "CAD, Default" layer. Click the **Define** button to the right of the Layer drop-down list.

5. In the **Layer Display Options** dialog that displays:



- Click the **Copy** button in the middle of the dialog box.
- Give the new layer a short, descriptive name such as "Image/PDF, Floor Plan".
- Remove the check from the **Disp** column for this layer if you want to hide the image or PDF from view.
- Click **OK** and notice that your new layer will be selected in the **Picture File Box** or **PDF Box Specification** dialog.
- Click **OK** to close this dialog as well.

By adding fixtures, furniture and walls over the picture you will create a duplicate of the original floor plan image, and will be able to see your creation in a 3D camera view.

In this manner ,your picture can be used as a guide or template while creating a floor plan, and a drawing scaled at 1:1 can be produced using your Chief Architect software.

Related Articles

- Importing a PDF File (https://www.chiefarchitect.com/support/article/KB-00940/importing-a-pdf-file.html)
- Showing the As-Built in a Remodel Plan using CAD (https://www.chiefarchitect.com/support/article/KB-02208/showing-the-as-built-in-a-remodel-plan-using-cad.html)

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