

Modeling a Subdivision or Lot with Multiple Structures in Home Designer

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The information in this article applies to:



QUESTION

On many occasions I have used Home Designer to construct a single building. However, today I would like to create a subdivision. How do I accomplish this?

ANSWER

When creating subdivisions, or other large projects, it is important to remember that Home Designer is designed to create a single home in a single drawing. However, there is no set limit to the number of homes that may be included in any one drawing.

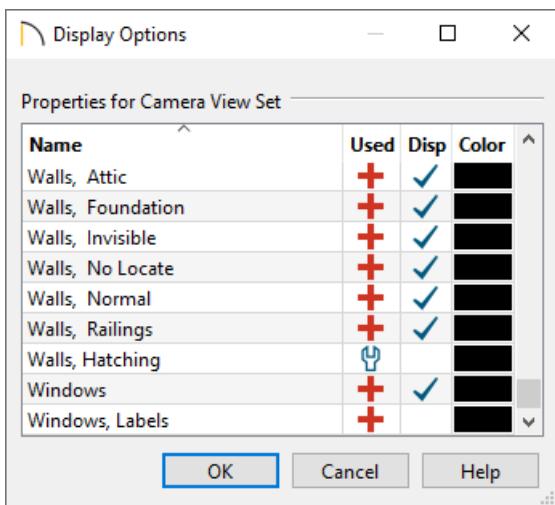
Recommendations to customers who want to use Home Designer to design a subdivision or a small town include:

- Model each single family home in its own plan file. Eventually, each customer you work with will require customization and changes to their particular home. Also, you will need to print their plans to obtain permits. Both of these tasks are made easier if you only have one house in a drawing.
- The subdivision itself should be in a separate drawing in which you model the terrain, streets and sidewalks, and other features of the development.
- Export each house plan out of Home Designer as a 3D model and then import each model into the subdivision file. Within the subdivision file, model files can be positioned as needed.

Note: The [Chief Architect Premier](https://www.chiefarchitect.com/products/home-design/premier/) (<https://www.chiefarchitect.com/products/home-design/premier/>) software is designed for professionals in the building field such as draftsmen, designers, and architects, and it contains additional features and tools for creating plans that contain multiple structures.

To export a plan or structure as a 3D model

1. Open  the Home Designer plan that you would like to convert into a 3D model.
2. Select **3D> Create Camera View> Perspective Full Overview**  from the menu to create a camera view of the entire structure.
In Home Designer Pro, navigate to **3D> Create Perspective View> Perspective Full Overview**  instead.
3. Select **Tools> Display Options**  from the menu.
4. In the **Display Options** dialog that opens, scroll down the list of layers and ensure that the items you want to have displayed, such as walls, doors, and windows, have a checkmark in the **Disp** column.



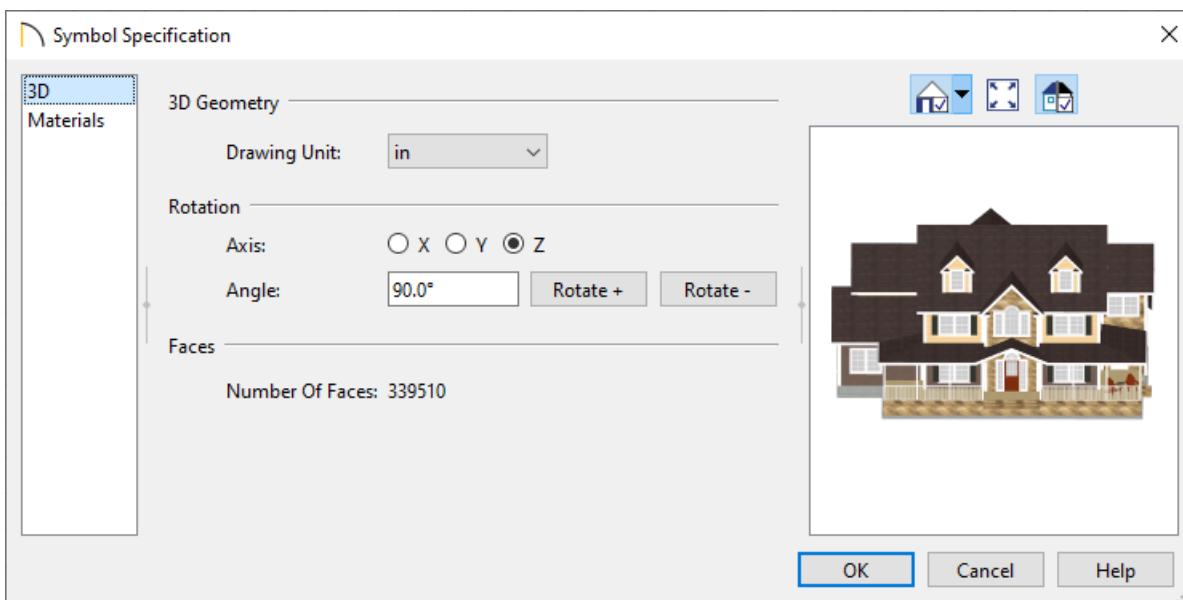
5. Uncheck the display of any layers that you don't want displayed for the model that will be exported.
 - Unchecking the "Furnishings, Interior" and "Fixtures, Interior" layers will help minimize the number of surfaces your model will have and improve rendering time for the subdivision. However, interior fixtures and furniture will not be present when viewing the model in the subdivision file.
 - Be sure to turn off the display of all terrain layers.
6. When you are satisfied with the layer settings, click **OK**.
7. Next, navigate to **File> Export> Export 3D COLLADA Model (DAE)**  from the menu.
8. Specify a file name and a location in the dialog that appears next, then click **Save** to export the model.

When exporting a COLLADA (DAE) model, a .dae file will be created, along with a folder containing the model's textures. It's important to keep the textures folder in the same location as the .dae file.

9. Repeat steps 1-8 for any additional plans that you would like to be part of the subdivision.

To create the subdivision file and import the models

1. Create a **New Plan** , then choose to **Save**  the file.
2. Within a floor plan view, navigate to **File > Import > Import 3D Symbol**  from the menu.
3. Browse to where you saved the .dae model file, select it, then click **Open**.
4. In the **Symbol Specification** dialog that appears next, verify that the model looks correct, and that the **MATERIALS** are set correctly, then click **OK**.



5. Next, click in the plan to place the model.

Note: Models such as this will be imported as fixtures. Once placed, the model can be opened and edited further within the Fixture Specification dialog.

Additionally, the model can be added to the User Catalog section within the Library Browser using the Add to Library edit tool.

6. Repeat this process for any other additional models that you would like to add to the design.

7. Finally, create a Terrain Perimeter, and add in elements such as roads, sidewalks, and other terrain features.

Related Articles

- [Editing the Shape and Size of the Terrain Perimeter \(/support/article/KB-00566/editing-the-shape-and-size-of-the-terrain-perimeter.html\)](/support/article/KB-00566/editing-the-shape-and-size-of-the-terrain-perimeter.html)
- [Locating and Importing 3D Symbols \(/support/article/KB-00888/locating-and-importing-3d-symbols.html\)](/support/article/KB-00888/locating-and-importing-3d-symbols.html)
- [Setting the Height of the Terrain \(/support/article/KB-00322/setting-the-height-of-the-terrain.html\)](/support/article/KB-00322/setting-the-height-of-the-terrain.html)
- [Troubleshooting Why the Terrain Tools are Greyed Out \(/support/article/KB-00278/troubleshooting-why-the-terrain-tools-are-greyed-out.html\)](/support/article/KB-00278/troubleshooting-why-the-terrain-tools-are-greyed-out.html)
- [Using Terrain Features and Regions \(/support/article/KB-00806/using-terrain-features-and-regions.html\)](/support/article/KB-00806/using-terrain-features-and-regions.html)

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