

# Get started with SketchUp!

SketchUp is a popular design program you can download for free from the SketchUp website: [www.sketchup.com](http://www.sketchup.com). If you haven't used SketchUp before, these instructions will get you started.

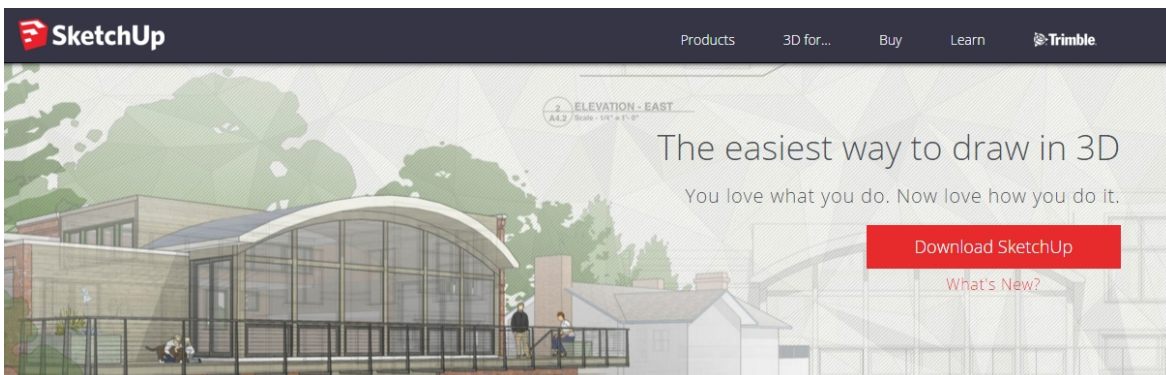
**FILE vs. PROGRAM:** We will be using the terms SketchUp **file** and SketchUp **program** often and we must be clear on the difference. When we do word processing we use a word processing program to write, read and edit a document. In like manner the SketchUp **program** enables you to read (view) and edit a SketchUp **file**. In this case the SketchUp file is like a document. NOTE: More-advanced users can also use the SketchUp program to create a new design from scratch.

**TIP:** It's smart to print out a copy of these instructions and keep them near your computer so that you can continually refer to them as you download the SketchUp program and while you read and edit a SketchUp file.

As we said above, you will need the SketchUp program to read your SketchUp file. If you haven't already downloaded the free SketchUp program to your computer, STEP 1 below entitled **Downloading the SketchUp Program to Your Computer** will tell you how to do it. If you have already downloaded the SketchUp program to your computer then proceed directly to the next step, STEP 2: entitled **Using your SketchUp Program to Look At Your SketchUp File**.

## STEP 1: Downloading the SketchUp Program to Your Computer

To download a copy of the SketchUp program to your computer go to **SketchUp.com** You should see a screen that looks something like the following:



Press the red button labeled **Download SketchUp**.

The next screen will display a drop down menu:

### Step 1: Let's choose a product

The drop down menu will give you 3 choices:

I plan to use SketchUp for:

Professional Work  
Personal Projects  
Educational Use

Select Personal Projects.

You will then see:

### Step 2: Tell us a bit about yourself

You will then need to enter your:

- email address,
- Profession/Interest (Choose Woodworking, near the bottom of the list)
- whether you want a Windows or Mac Version and
- if you agree to SketchUp Make's License Agreement.

You must answer each question.

Next push the red button:

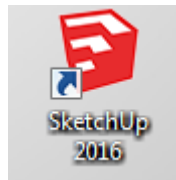
**Download SketchUp Make**

SketchUp will load a copy of **SketchUpMake-en-x64.exe** in your download folder.

Go to your Download folder and double click on this SketchUp installer program

Follow the installer instructions.

Once the SketchUp download has completed successfully, SketchUp will place an icon on your desktop that looks like:



Please remember that you are downloading a free version of SketchUp that is for your private use only. If you use SketchUp for any commercial applications you must then download the professional version and pay the appropriate license fee.

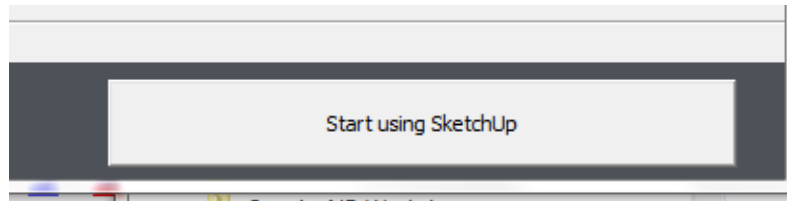
Now that you have a copy of the SketchUp program on your computer you are ready to look at the SketchUp file that has your project plans and see how to build your project.

## STEP 2: Using your SketchUp Program to Look At Your SketchUp File

Most of the time when you download a SketchUp file (or any file for that matter) the file will be placed in your Download folder. SketchUp files will have an extension of skp, for example toybox.skp. Locate the skp sketchUp file in your download folder (it should have the current date on it). Double click on the SketchUp file and either:

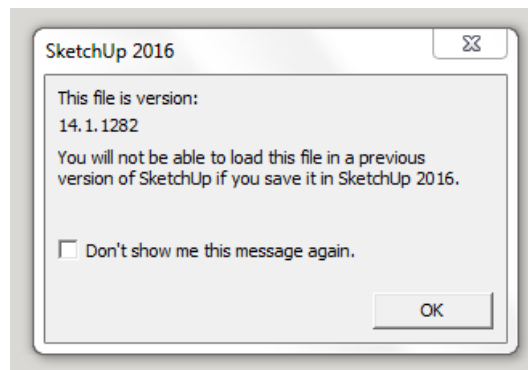
- the SketchUp program will start up automatically or
- you will be asked for the program that you want to use to open the SketchUp file. If you are asked, select SketchUp 2016

When the SketchUp program begins it will display a screen and in the lower right hand corner you will see:

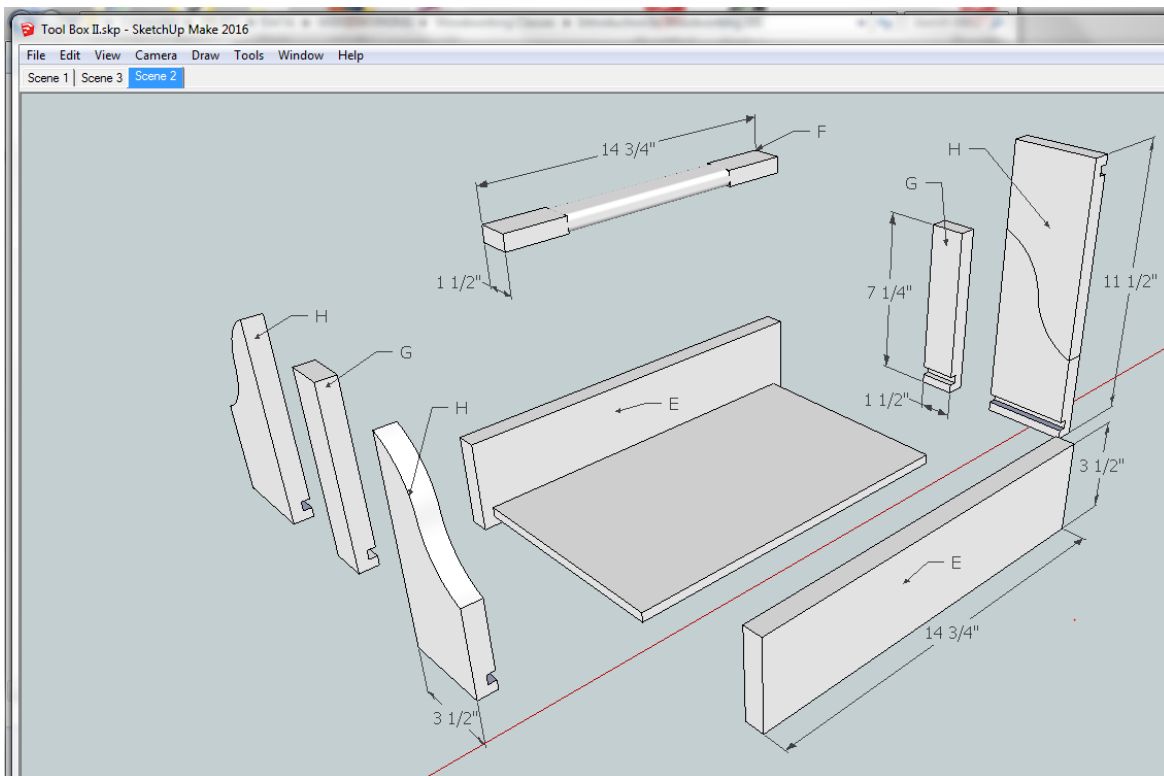


Pushing this button will open up your SketchUp program. If this is the first time you are running the SketchUp program it will likely ask you to Choose a Template. You should select *Woodworking - Inches*

When the SketchUp program opens your SketchUp file you may see a warning box that looks like:



If you see a box like this simply click on OK. All that the message says is that the version of the SketchUp program on your computer is newer than the version that was last used to save your SketchUp file. (This will not cause any problems.) The message will go away and you will then see your actual sketchUp file drawing which might look something like the following.



There may be tabs or buttons in the upper left corner showing as in this case Scene 1, Scene 3, and Scene 2. Because Scene 2 is lit up in blue it is implied that you are looking at Scene 2. Click on the other buttons and see what shows up. The various scenes or views of the project are the designers way of better depicting what your project looks like and how to make it.

## Zoom, Orbit and Pan

Probably the most important SketchUp tools that you will be using at this point are : Zoom, Orbit and Pan.

In SketchUp we move our mouse on a 2 dimensional mouse pad and look at a 2 dimensional screen while drawing 3 dimensional figures. This works well but requires an upgraded mindset. To properly orient ourselves in SketchUp we will frequently need to **Zoom** in and out, **Pan** up, down, right and left and **Orbit**. Fortunately SketchUp provides tools for all of these movements. It is imperative that you become adept at these three tools: Zoom, Pan and Orbit before you go any further.

Note that this discussion assumes that you are using a mouse and that the mouse has a scroll wheel. If not please do yourself a big favor and get a mouse with a scroll wheel.

Let's begin with zooming in and out. Simply rotate the scroll wheel on your mouse back and forth to zoom in and out. It is important while zooming in and out that your cursor is at the center point of the area that you want to zoom in or out of.

Orbiting - Often times you will need to orbit around your drawing to get a different or better view. To do this just hold the Scroll Wheel down, (the Orbit icon will appear)



then orbit your drawing simply by moving the mouse.

Panning - When you need to move (or pan) your drawing left, right, up and down simply hold the Scroll Wheel down AND hold the Shift key down at the same time. (the Pan icon which looks like a hand will appear)



Now you can move (or pan) the drawing left, right, up or down.

The time you spend practicing Zooming, Orbiting and Panning will make your life much easier as you continue to use SketchUp.

## Adding Dimensions

One last point, the person who developed the SketchUp file will most likely have provided all of the dimensions that you will need. But if you need to add some dimensions here is how you do it. First select the dimension tool from the Tools dropdown menu and click on Dimension. Your cursor will change to the dimension icon which is a white arrow.

Click on an end point of a board

1. Click Here

and then on the other end

2. Then Click Here

and then click a third time at a slight offset so that the dimension is easy to read.

3. Then a 3rd Click Here  
to offset the dimension line

