

## The Best Practices Course - Week #4 - Library Management - Part 1

Let's take a look at library management as it's changed between ArchiCAD 10, 11, 12, and going into version 13 and version 14. Here we have ArchiCAD 12 onscreen with the standard U.S. template brought up with just the four elevation markers and nothing else drawn. Now, when I go to the Library Manager – File > Libraries and Objects > Library Manager -- we'll see that it indicates that we've got the standard ArchiCAD library loaded and nothing else.

When you start out a project, you can work with just the standard ArchiCAD library and do quite well. However, it is likely that you're going to, over time, create custom library parts that you'll want to use in your office, and as well, you'll probably have some library parts that are specific to individual projects.

When I go to the Local/LAN tab, which is available in the Library Manager of ArchiCAD 10, 11, and 12, we can see what's on the local computer or on the local-area network. If I highlight, actually, ArchiCAD Library 12 here, it'll show where this is located in the file structure, and you can see that it's in the Graphisoft folder of the applications. If you were on a PC, it'd be the Program Files folder. Within that, we have ArchiCAD 12 and the ArchiCAD Library 12 here.

Now, I'm going to go and scroll down and browse for my Documents folder, which on the Mac will be under Users, and under my name and under Documents. Of course, on Windows, it would be under My Documents.

Now, here I've got a folder called Projects, and when I open that up, we'll see that I have a folder for my ArchiCAD Office Standards. This is something that I recommend that you set up as a resource for using ArchiCAD, and within this, you may have several things. That can be the place where you store your template, files for starting projects.

It can be a place where you store your standard libraries. My company, Bobrow Consulting Group, the BCG Library has elements within it. Then these are some additional libraries that I have that I occasionally use. For example, the GreenLine Library is a landscaping collection from Germany, and Modular Joinery is a very flexible and powerful tool for doing doors and windows.

Now, I'm going to go ahead and load the BCG library and add it. So now I have the standard library and my office library here. Now, let's say that we were working on the Smith house project. Here I have the Smith house project folder, and when I open it up, perhaps there is a folder for the Smith house library.

In ArchiCAD 10, 11, 12, we would often want to have the library folder added for the particular project. You would create this, of course, for each new project, and this would be a very clean setup where you'd be loading the standard ArchiCAD library, the office

library for your own office, things that are repeated, and the library for the actual project. I can say "Done", and it will just reload the library at that point.

Let's take a look at a project here. This is a sample project that we supply with MasterTemplate. This is a small residential building. Let's take a look at how the libraries are set up here. You can see, again, I have the standard library. In place of my office library, I have the MasterTemplate library here, and then this sample project has its own library. That's the same structure that we had before.

Now, sometimes you'll want to add additional libraries, so if I go back into my Local/LAN area, here's my ArchiCAD office standards. Suppose that I wanted to add the GreenLine library of landscaping components. I can add that directly.

Now I'm loading the standard library, a specialized library for the landscaping, and let's just call this my office library here and the project library. It's very permissible and certainly very acceptable to add additional libraries.

Now, if the GreenLine library was one that I was using all the time, then I might want to move it into the BCG library and just load the BCG library which would include that. So if a library is small and/or you're using it for almost all projects, then you might as well place that library into your standard office library folder and load that.

Whereas, on the other hand, if it's something that you're using infrequently, for example, the landscaping maybe I'm only using for certain types of projects -- and particularly in this case, it's a very, very large library, so therefore I don't want to burden ArchiCAD if I'm not actually needing it -- then I would load it separately just when I need that particular library access. So I'd say "Done", and it's going to load the library.

In ArchiCAD 10, 11, or 12, if we are creating a custom library part, then it can be stored anywhere on the hard drive. I'm going to just create a simple shape here. This element here is just a slab, but I'm going to save it as a custom library part by going to the File menu > Libraries and Objects > Save Selection As.

This then asks, "What do you want to call this particular object?" and I'll call it "L-Shaped Slab."

It says, "Where do you want to store it?" I'll just put it right now on, say, my desktop. I've now created a custom library part, and if I go to the object tool, I can drop it in. You can see that this object is actually an object, whereas this is a slab.

Now, in the object tool, we'll see that the object that I just created is listed in the folder called Other Objects here, and here's L-Shaped Slab. This Other Objects folder is for anything that's individually loaded. If I go to the Library Manager, we'll see that this L-Shaped Slab is stored in its particular location that I placed it, and it lives in the Other Objects group, which looks like a folder, but it actually is just a group of elements that are being loaded for this particular project at this time.

So that's how ArchiCAD 10, 11, and 12 work. I'm going to just go back into the Library Manager and point out one thing that is very nice about ArchiCAD 10, 11, and 12 that Graphisoft actually removed as we move forward to 13. I miss it, actually.

If I go to File, Libraries and Objects, Library Manager, we have the Local/LAN for finding things, and then we also have a history. You can see under History that it's got a record of the things that I've been using. What this means is that if you're starting a new project or working on a project, and you want to go get a library folder that you've used before, it's very easy to go to the History tab, find it, and then add it. This certainly can work quite well.

One of the things that we may need to do sometimes is to create new library parts, and the question is, when we create them, or if we simply need to access an individual library part, how is that done? In version 10, 11, and 12 -- let me just highlight, by the way, the sample project library here.

By the way, when we highlight something in 10, 11, and 12, it will show its path, which is also a very nice thing. You can go find where it's loading it from. It'll show the path down below here, but it'll also actually highlight it on the left side, which I think is a very nice touch. It was removed by Graphisoft in the later versions.

I'll just open this up a little wider so we can see. Now, if I look at the My Documents folder -- let me close up this one here -- we'll see that here's a particular library part that perhaps I want to load separately. It's not specific to this project, and at this point, it's not been filed away into the office library folder. I'm just going to add it, and we'll see that it shows up under Other Objects here, this particular one.

So this is the way that it was handled in ArchiCAD 10, 11, and 12. You could create new library parts, store them wherever you liked, and possibly load them individually as well.

Now, the issue with this, and one reason why Graphisoft changed the structure of the Library Manager in version 13, is that this file here is located somewhere on the hard drive. If things get reorganized, if you decide to create a folder and put this into it or rename it, or, in any event, anything happens with your hard drive organization, then this other object will get lost. It'll basically end up in the Libraries and Objects Not Found, the reddish folder here.

This is the way that it was handled in version 10, 11, and 12. The main things you have to be aware of, if you're in those versions, is that loading individual extra objects like this is fine on the fly when you need to do it or when you create a new part. But a good practice is to move them into either the sample project library -- let's say the project library here -- or into your office library if you're going to be using that same part repeatedly.

So don't, in general, use this Other Objects capability more than temporarily. This will just help you to make sure you don't lose track of those objects if you move things around on your hard drive or take your project to another computer.

I'd like to go back over one thing right now that might confuse some of you who are watching. I've mentioned that it is important to take custom library parts like this one and store them in the project library folder rather than just loose on the desktop. At least, that's the best for the long-term organization.

You may be a little concerned that what happens if you placed it on the desktop or somewhere else and then moved it later? Well, it turns out that's not a problem. You can, in the Finder or the Windows Explorer, move these things around, move the file that is this library part into the project folder or into your office library folder if it's something you're going to use in multiple projects. The next time that ArchiCAD loads the libraries, it'll re-catalog it and find it without a problem.

Here we have the new object that I created, the L-Shaped Slab, and the one that I added to the Library Manager manually, the Tilt-Rotate Beam. These are in the Other Objects folder. So, as I mentioned, they're a little bit more vulnerable to these elements getting lost.

So how would you actually deal with this in terms of proper organization? As I mentioned, you're going to place these elements into the project folder, ideally, so that they don't get lost, and I'll show you how that works and what happens at that point.

I've switched to the Finder to my operating system, and I can see the L-Shaped Slab here in my desktop. I'm just going to drag this right into the project library right there, and it has now disappeared into the project library here along with the other elements. I could organize it and put it in certain folders, but at this point, it's in the project library.

When I go to the Library Manager, you'll see that it says the L-Shaped Slab is no longer found at its location, so it's lost track of it. I'll go ahead and reload. When it reloads, I don't see any difference because this element here is still found, the L-Shaped Slab, and if I look to see where it is, instead of it being in the Other Objects folder, it is now inside the sample project library. So the actual project library is where it is.

Now, we're now seeing anything else here because the other elements that are in that project library are stairs, and they are not objects, so they don't show up in the object dialog box.

So we don't have to worry about moving things around from being loose on the hard drive to being put into a project folder or the office library folder because ArchiCAD, after you reload the library, will be able to locate them and coordinate them with the elements that are placed into the project.

So this concludes the section on library management for ArchiCAD 10, 11, and 12, and the next segment of the training will focus on changes as we've moved forward into ArchiCAD 13 in the Library Manager.