

BATCH FILES

B

Batch files provide another method for entering multiple commands automatically. Any number of regular Generic CADD Level 3 commands can be combined in a text file and called up at any time. All batch files must be standard ASCII text files, and their file names must end with the extension .TXT.

Unlike menu files, the number of commands which can be combined is not limited to a single 80 character line. When the batch file is done with one line, it moves on to the next. Each line must end with a semi-colon.

Batch files can contain anything that you can type from the keyboard, as long as each new piece of information is separated from any other by a comma. A batch file can use the tilde (~) and the AT (@) sign prompt for user input, the same way a video or digitizer menu uses these symbols in macros (see Appendix A, "CUSTOM MENUS"). A simple batch file to set the drawing LIMITS to 24"x36", set the GRID SIZE to 1/2", turn on SNAP TO GRID, do a ZOOM ALL, and draw a border around the screen 1/2" in from the edge might look like this:

LS,24,36;	(LIMITS command, height=24, width=36)
GS,.5;	(GRID SIZE command, size=.5)
SG;	(SNAP TO GRID command)
ZA;	(ZOOM ALL command)
LI;	(LINE command, not strictly required)
0.5,0.5;	(first point of line)
35.5,0.5;	(second point of line)
35.5,23.5;	(third point of line)
0.5,23.5;	(fourth point of line)
0.5,0.5;	(return to first point)
PU;	(PEN UP command, kills rubber band)

The notes in parenthesis are for explanation only, and are not allowed in the batch file itself.

DESCRIPTION

ASCII FILES

NOT LIMITED TO 80 CHARACTERS

ANY COMBINATION OF COMMANDS

EXAMPLE:

**BATCH FILE
LINES CAN BE
COMBINED**

In the above example, each command and each point of the line command is on a separate line for clarity. This is not required by the program, but it is often a good idea when debugging your batch files. If we wanted, we could combine the points into two lines like this:

```
LS,24,36;GS,.5;SG,ZA;  
LI,0.5,0.5,35.5,0.5,35.5,23.5,0.5,23.5,0.5,0.5,PU;
```

**START WITH
SEPARATE
COMMANDS,
THEN COMBINE
TO CREATE
POWERFUL
MACROS**

Each line can be a maximum of 80 characters, and must end with a semi-colon (;). For designing batch files, it is probably a good idea to keep the commands separate until you have it working properly, but once you have developed a routine to do a certain job that you might want to incorporate several times in your batch file, or use in several batch files, you might want to compress it as we have done above. Note that in order to make the file as short as possible, we have removed the unnecessary LI command, and have incorporated the PU (Pen Up) command after the LINE command. This is so the rubber band will not end up attached to the last point entered.

**SPECIAL
BATCH
COMMANDS**

Three special commands are used in conjunction with batch files and are described on the following pages.