

TurboCAD V8 Standard - Understanding Symbols

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As with many complex programs help files are not always adequate, especially for the beginner when it comes to the intricacies of something specific. Giving them the benefit of the doubt, technical writers cannot be expected to include fully descriptive help files for every conceivable function in such a complex program. This being the case, and TurboCAD being no different in this respect, the beginner is left with many unanswered questions.

Working with symbols is one of the topics that has not been covered well enough in the TurboCAD help files and many questions arise. One particular question that arises often is "Is there an easy way to delete symbols from within TurboCAD?" The answer to this question is yes - but there is a whole lot more that can be discussed when talking about symbols.

This tutorial assumes that the beginner is proficient enough with TurboCAD that a basic drawing can be created.

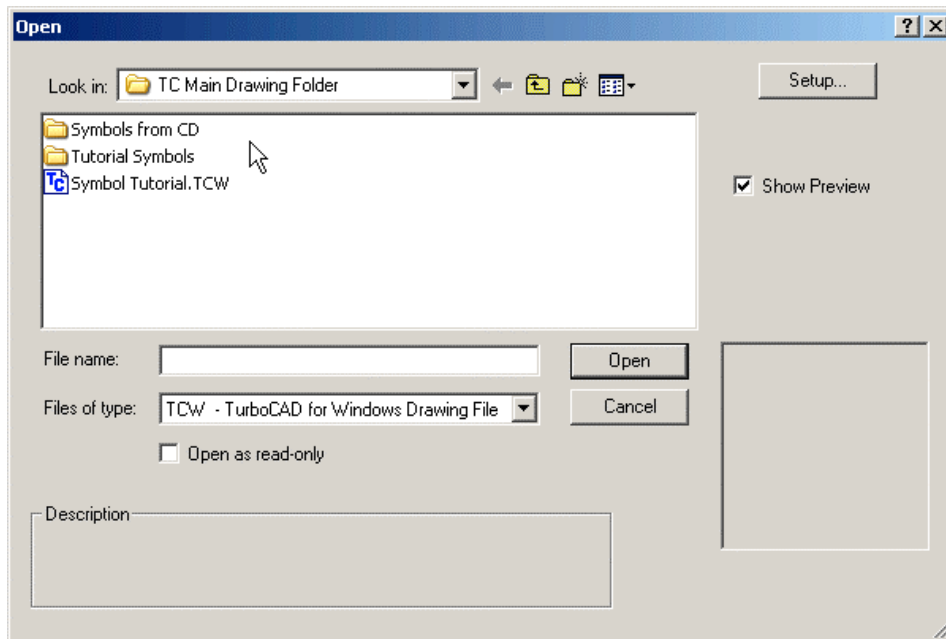
Within this tutorial I will help the beginner to understand the use of symbols - how to create them, where to store them, where to view them, how to name or rename them and, yes, how to delete them.

A symbol (used within TurboCAD) may be defined as a two or three-dimensional drawing (or object) that is created and stored for repeated usage in any current or subsequent drawings. Symbols help fulfill the basic CAD rule of "Never draw the same thing twice". Symbols are great time savers and, assuming the symbol has been precisely created, assure the user that the same precision will be there with any additional usage.

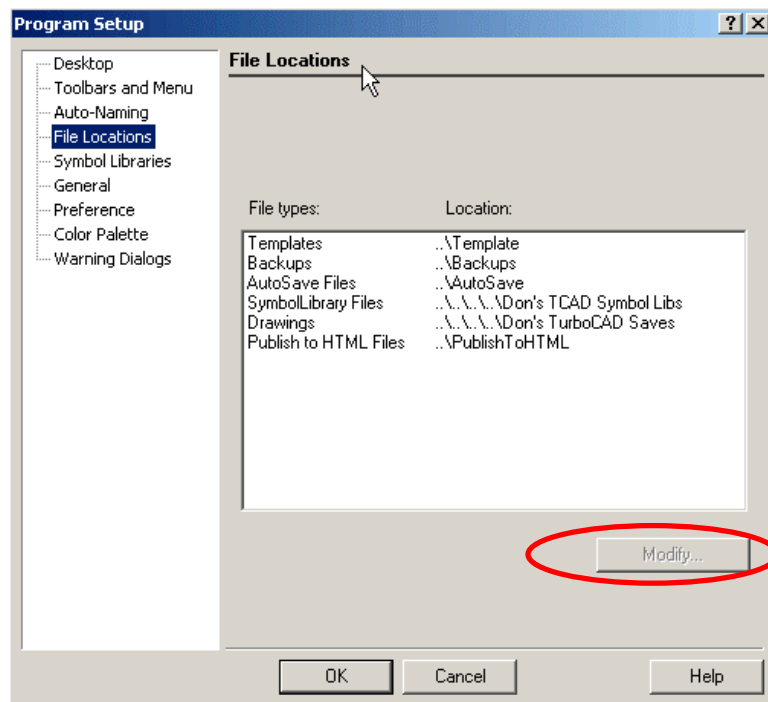
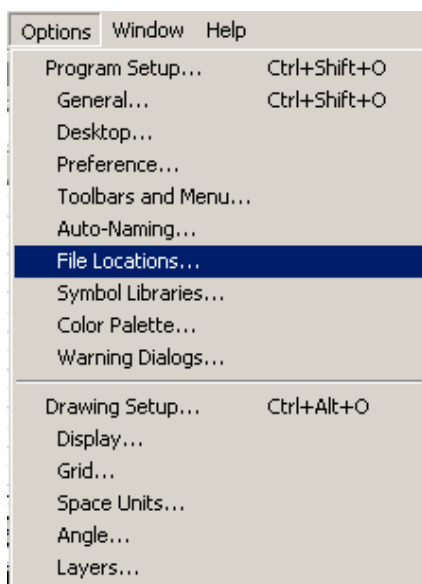
Some discussion has arisen as to the best place to create symbols. Some suggest that a symbol should be created as a separate drawing on its own drawing sheet to insure that no other drawing remnants are accidentally incorporated with it. Other believe that this is not important - that a symbol can be a selection of any drawing that can be dragged onto the symbol palette and used as is. I have tried both ways and have never run into trouble, the symbol(s) always seem to be just as it was created. If in doubt, I would suggest creating them as individual drawings on separate drawing sheets.

When setting up TurboCAD I believe it is important to have easy access to all TurboCAD files (including symbols). This access should alleviate the need to drill

through many folders to find the one that is being sought. As such I believe that the drawing files and the symbol library files should be within the same folder. I have mine stored right in the "C" drive for easy access, but as I was writing this tutorial I thought that it might be a good idea to store (save) them among the "My Documents" folder. This would be beneficial when performing document backups as this would include all the TC drawings and symbol libraries in one backup operation. Below is an example of how TurboCAD file and folder storage could be.



File Locations, Symbol Libraries and other program functions can be set up through TurboCAD's Program Setup dialogue on the Options menu.



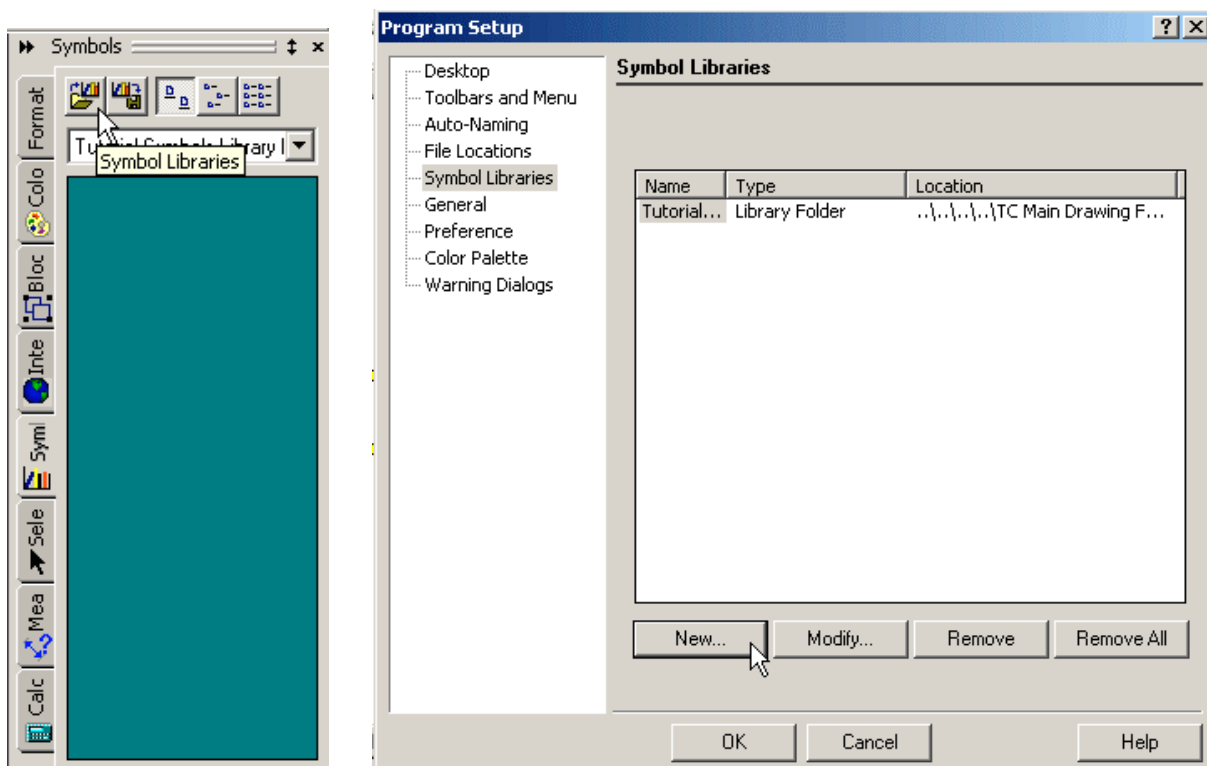
To define a location - select the file type that is to be changed, when highlighted select modify (see picture above). Drill through the various folders and identify or create new folders to accommodate the TurboCAD material. Once the desired folder locations have been created click Set for each change.



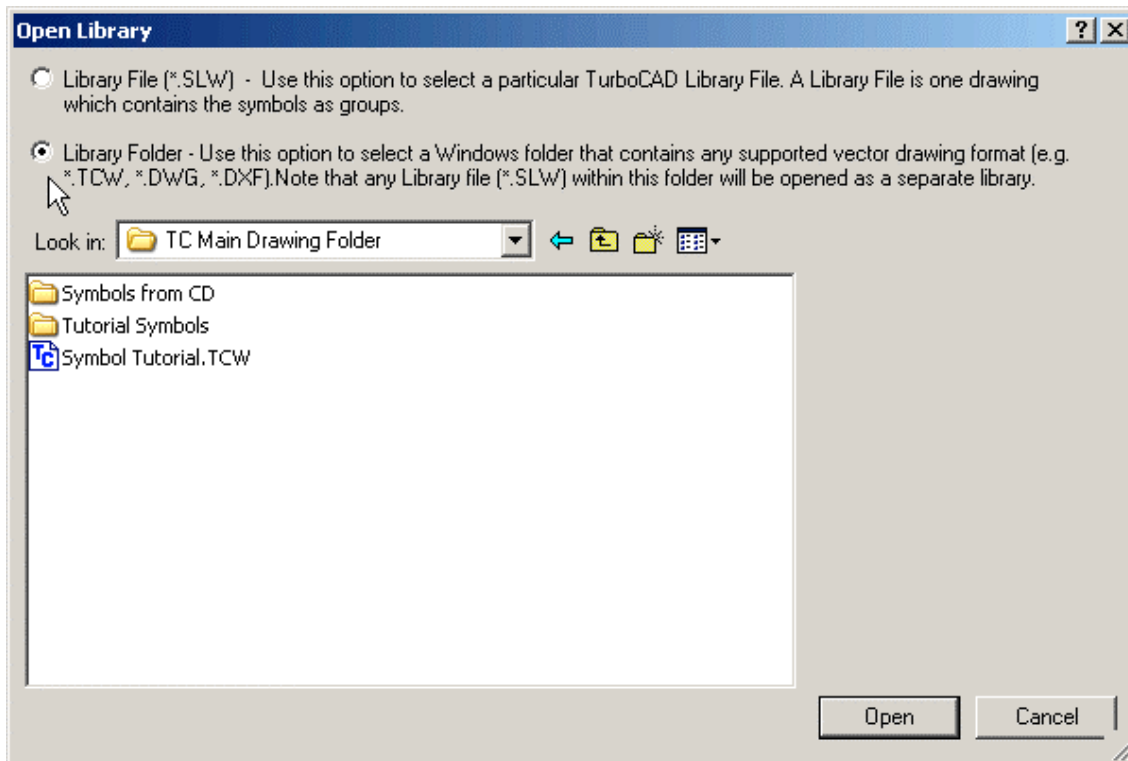
On to Symbols...

The first process for symbol storage is creating symbol libraries. Many libraries can exist; the number of libraries is only limited to the imagination and the amount of storage space one's hard drive has. Symbol libraries can be created via the TurboCAD desktop. New symbol libraries can be created on the fly as need arises or prepared in advance.

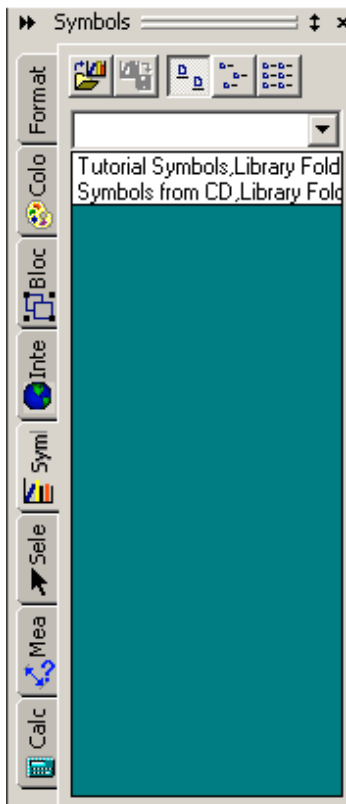
Begin by clicking the Symbol Libraries icon on the Symbols Palette. The Symbol Libraries dialogue appears from the Program Set.



Click new. The Open Library dialogue appears. Select the new file icon (the little folder with the starburst attached to it). A new folder appears ready for a name to be entered. Enter the name and select Open. The new Symbol Library(ies) will be available on the Symbol Palette.

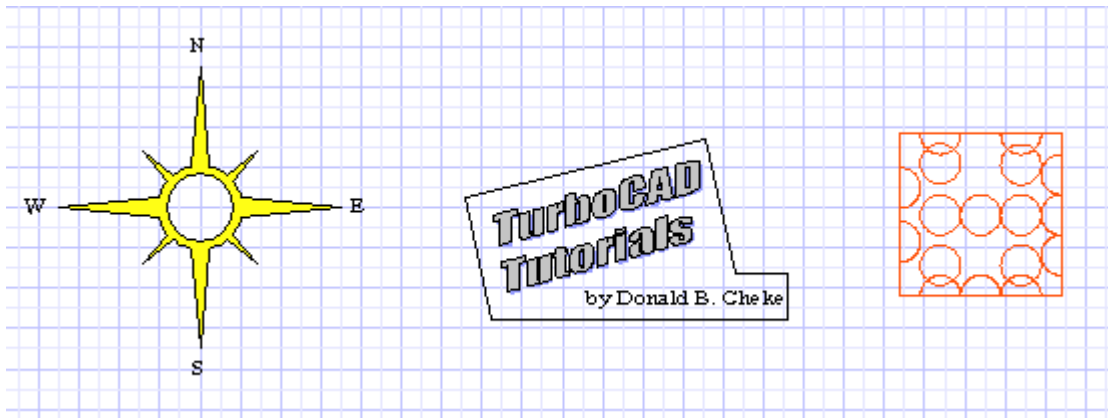


Like so.

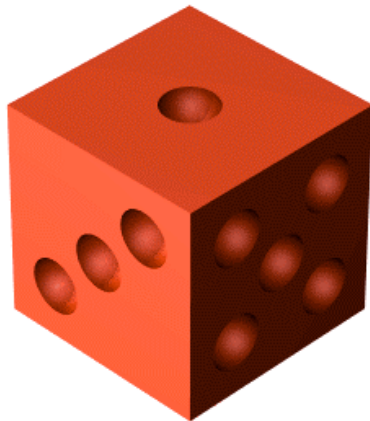


Create three separate symbols. These symbols can be something that the user will use within their subsequent work or they can be mock symbols serving only the purpose of working through this tutorial.

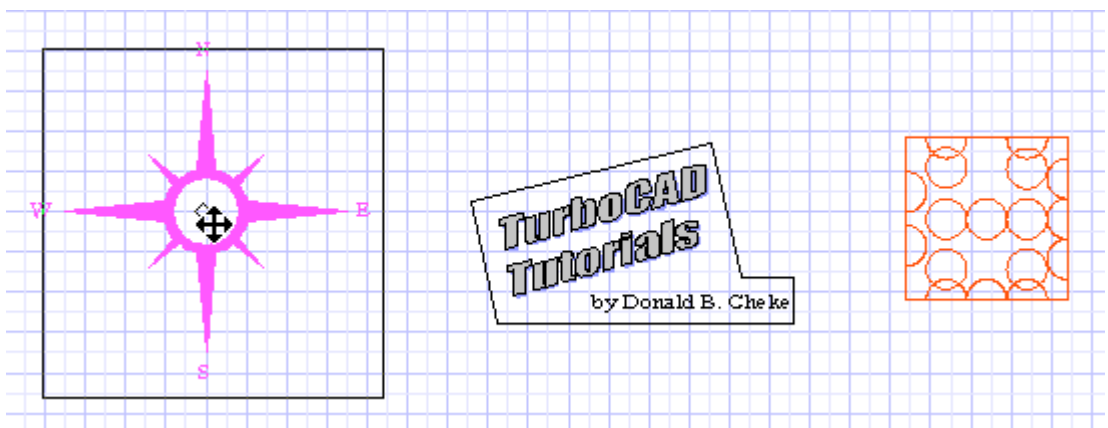
I have created these three symbols on the same drawing sheet. The first is a two-dimensional North Indicator symbol. The second is a two-dimensional logo consisting of TurboCAD lines and some text (my name) and an inserted object (MS Word WordArt). The third is a three-dimensional red die (as in dice).



This is an isometric rendered view of the die.



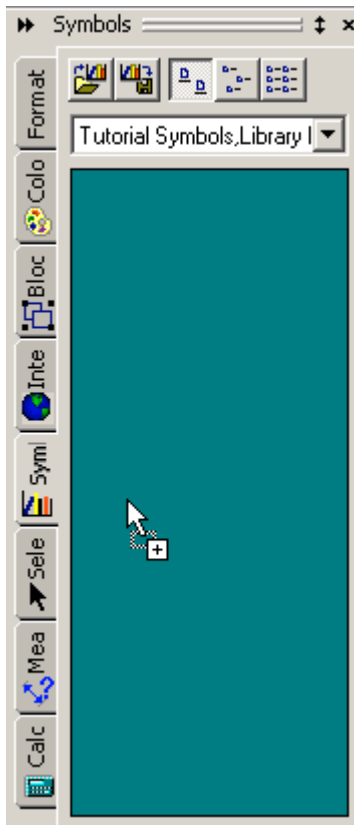
Having created the symbols they will now be placed in the appropriate symbol library. Insure that the proper library is opened on the Symbol Palette. Select all components of the first symbol and begin dragging it, while holding down the left mouse button, over to the Symbol Palette.



The move cursor will appear...



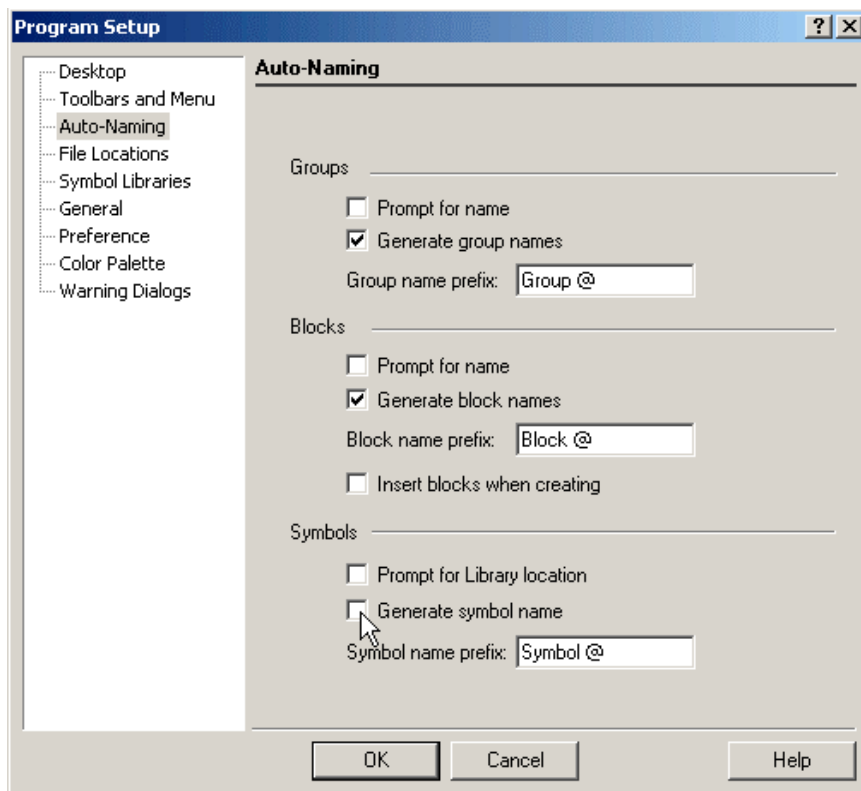
... and when the cursor enters the library field the copy cursor appears. Release the left mouse button and the symbol is now in the library.



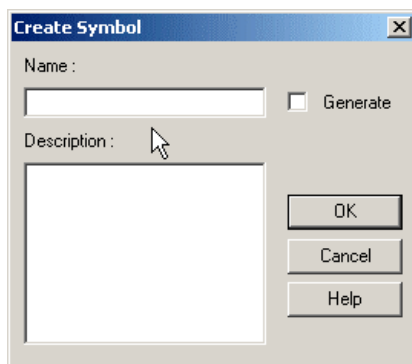
Note: It is not necessary to group the components of a symbol before they are dragged to the Symbol Library. They will become a grouping automatically in the symbol library. When a symbol is dragged out of the library the user will notice that it, indeed, has been grouped and can be exploded if so desired.

Naming can occur at the same time of this procedure. This is an important part of Symbols. As symbol libraries increase in number and in size the more difficult it becomes locating symbols. Any help that can be used will benefit the user in the long run.

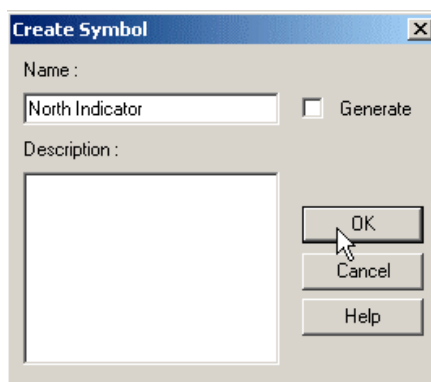
There are 3 naming settings available when dragging new symbols to the Symbol Library. If a user allows program generated default symbol names the symbols will all be named Symbol_0, Symbol_1 and so on the Symbol Palette and Symb0000.TCW, Symb0001.TCW and so on in the library file folder. This is not very useful in a search. I would encourage the TurboCAD user to uncheck Generate symbol name in the Program Setup and get into the habit of using easily recognizable names.



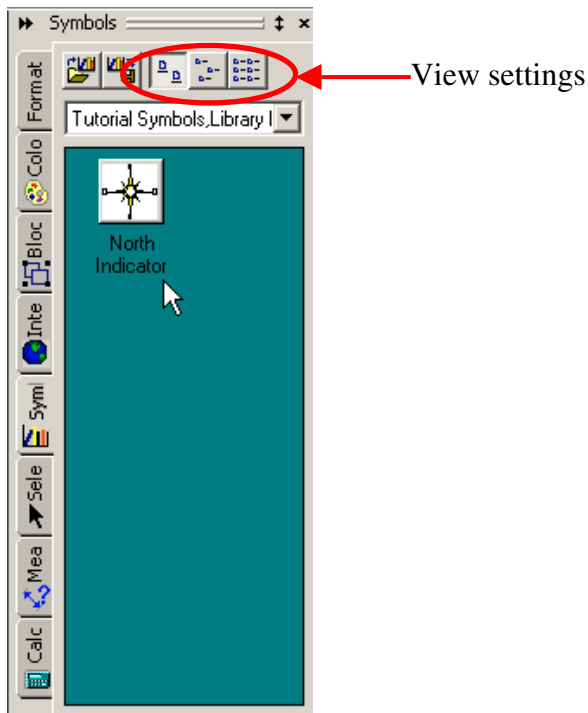
With the auto generating unchecked the user will be prompted for a name when the symbol has been dragged onto the Symbol Palette.



Enter the desired name (this is a continuation of the first symbol above) and click OK.

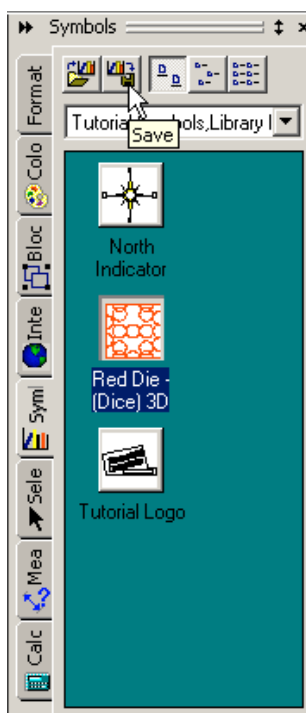


The named symbol appears in the library. The view can be change as with all windows.

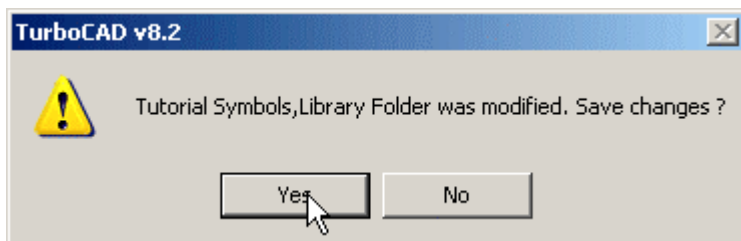


Unfortunately the file name in the library file folder does not change also but generally that will not matter unless the user is searching for symbols within the files and not on the palette. *Do not despair* - this will be a topic a little further along in this tutorial.

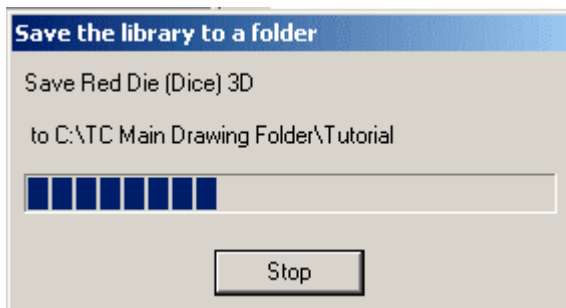
Continue dragging the two remaining symbols onto the Symbol Palette in the same manner. Click the Save icon on the Symbol Palette and the symbols will be saved and available for all subsequent drawings.



If the user forgets to click Save TurboCAD will ask if the library changes are to be saved when the user is closing the drawing or exiting TurboCAD.

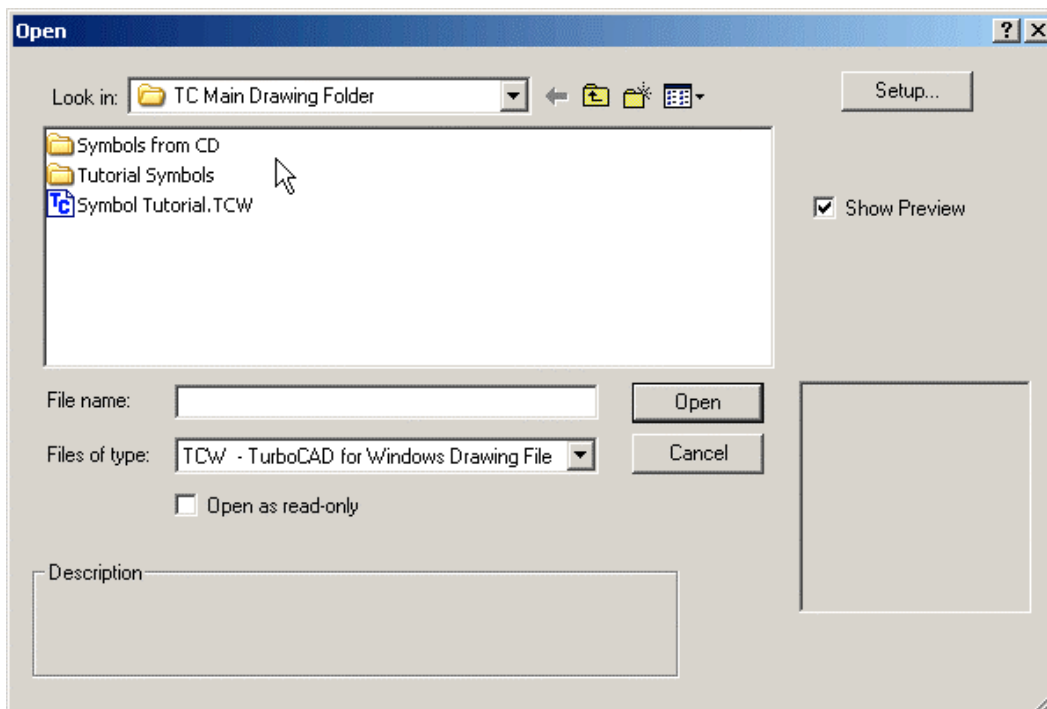


Select Yes and the save proceeds.

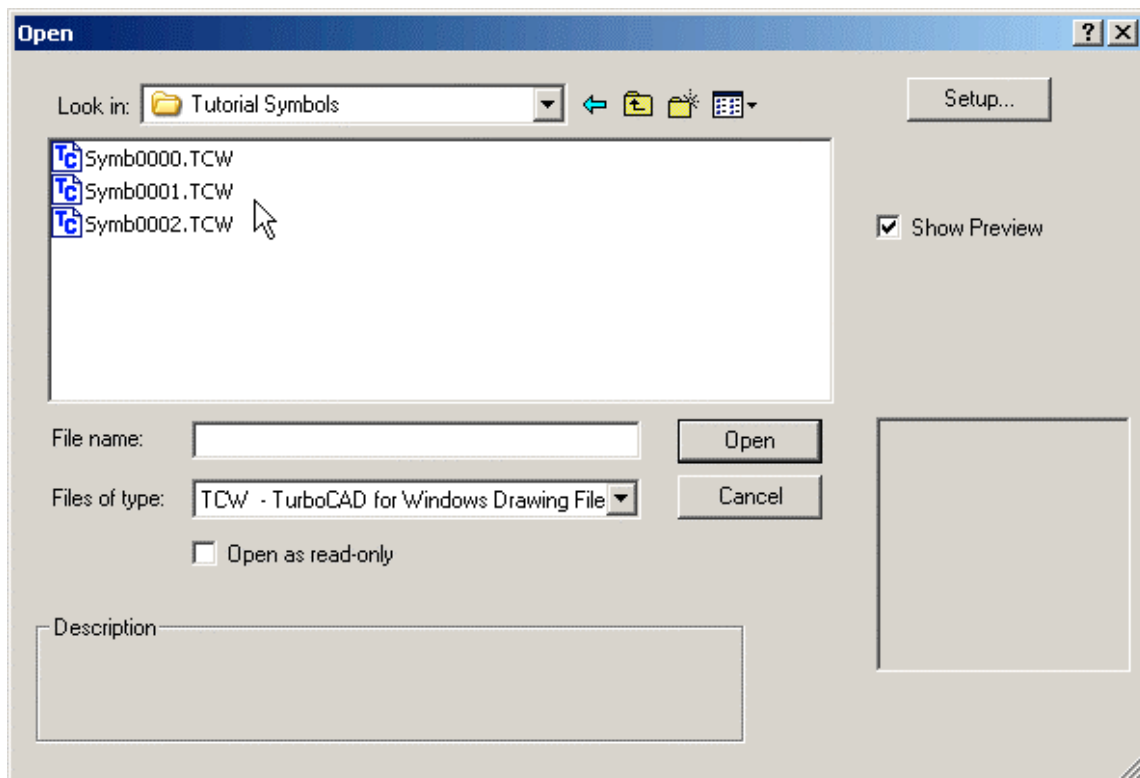


Viewing symbols from the Open file dialogue, (as opposed to viewing them on the Symbols Palett), Renaming symbols and Deleting Symbols all can be done in the same manner as outlined below.

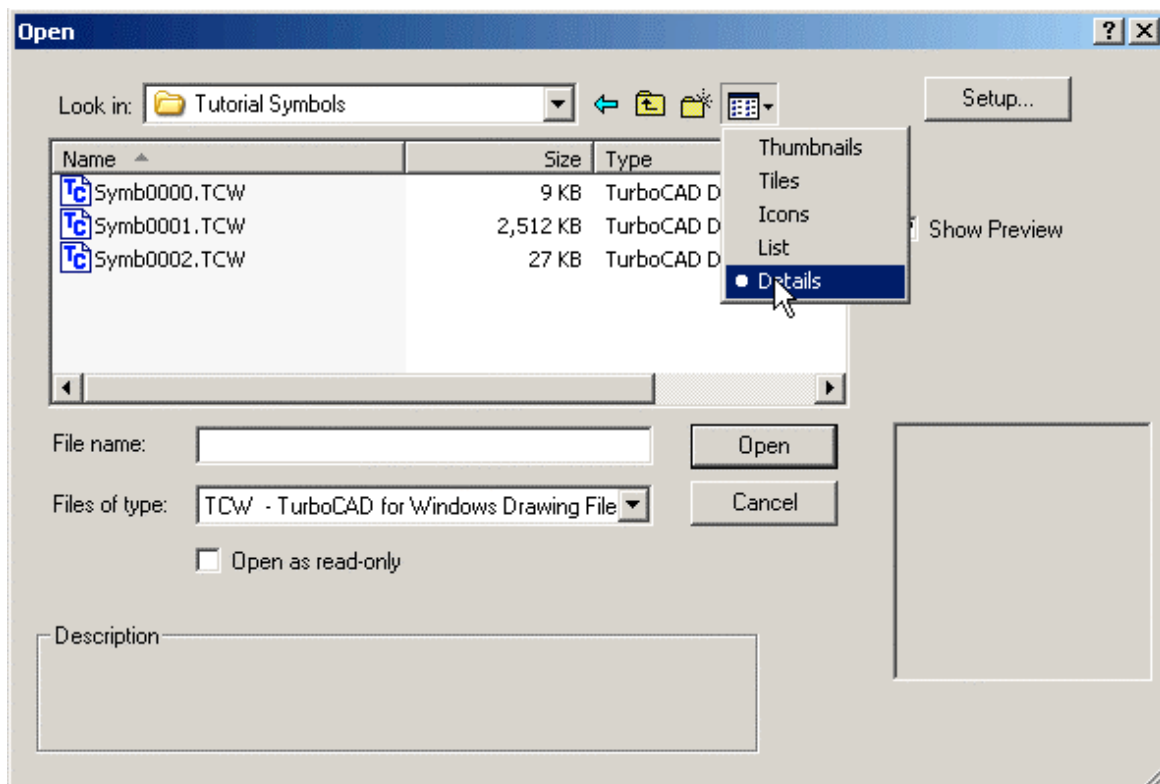
On the TurboCAD File menu select Open. The Open dialogue appears.



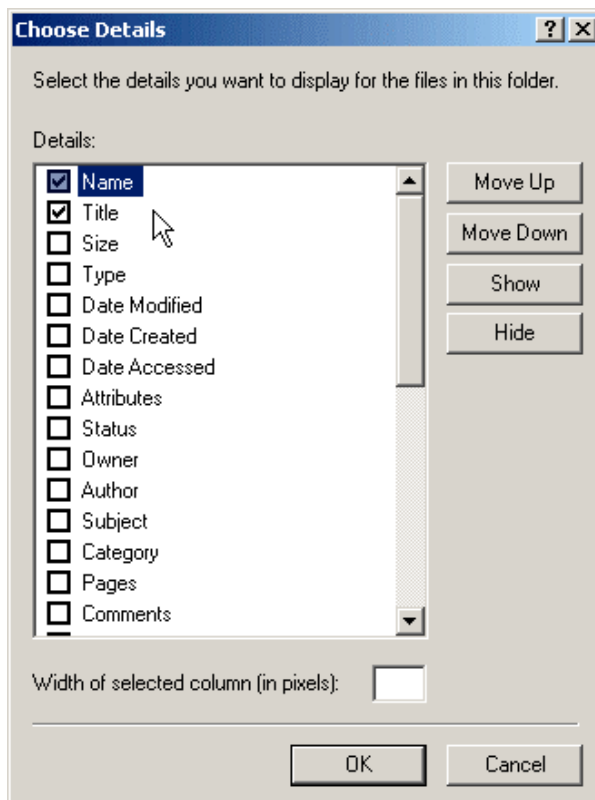
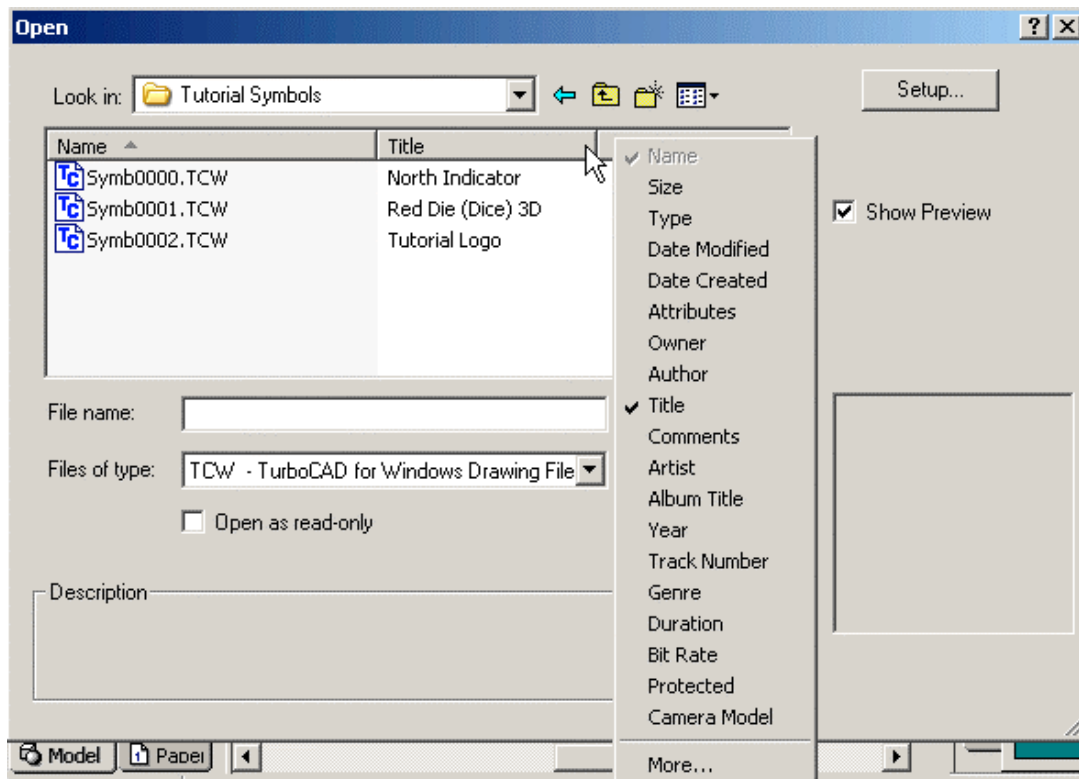
Open the Tutorial Symbols folder. As stated above, the symbol files do not have the names that were given when they were dragged to the Symbol Palette.



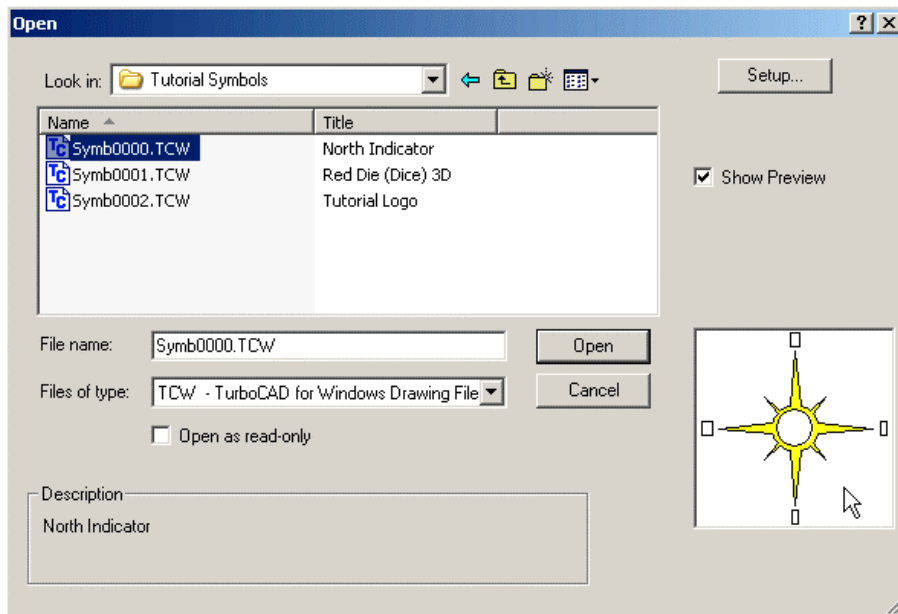
Select the View icon and choose Details.



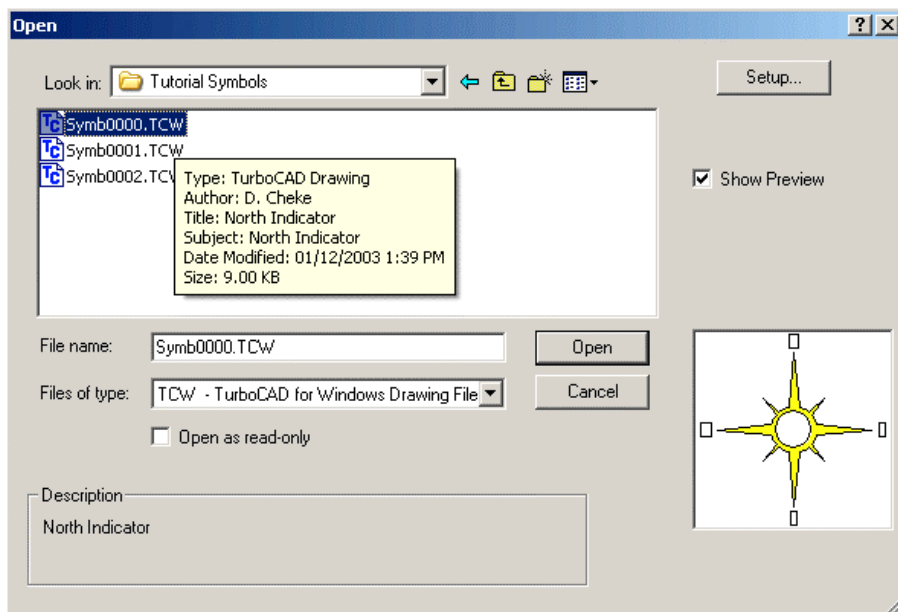
Right click anywhere on the detail bar and check Title. Uncheck the others. This can also be done by selecting More... at the bottom of the list and doing all the checking and unchecking at one time - instead of having the selection list close after each check.



Note that a title (the chosen name) is now given along with the file name. Select one of the symbol file names and notice that a preview is given. (This will occur no matter what detail identifiers have been chosen).

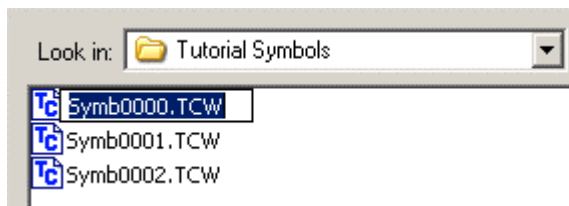


Notice below, only the List is in view and the preview is still displayed - and if the cursor is held over the file name for a second a good description appears (provided that the OS Folder Options has *show popup description for folder and desktop items* checked. I am using XP Home).

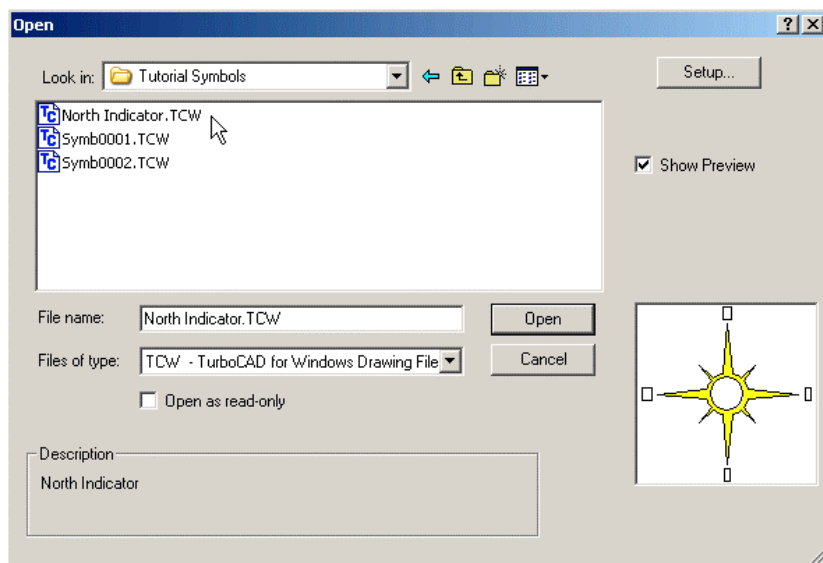


Unfortunately when the Open dialogue is closed the title bar reverts back to its original view. This being the case, this method is best used when doing a lot of symbol work at one time.

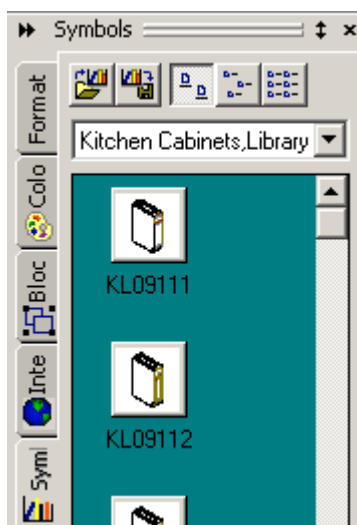
The alternative to this is to simply rename the files themselves. This can be done by right-clicking the symbol in question, pressing F2, and entering a name.



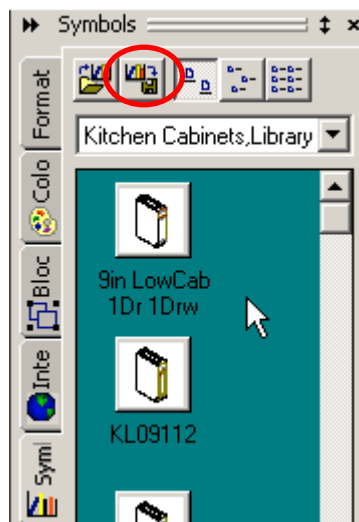
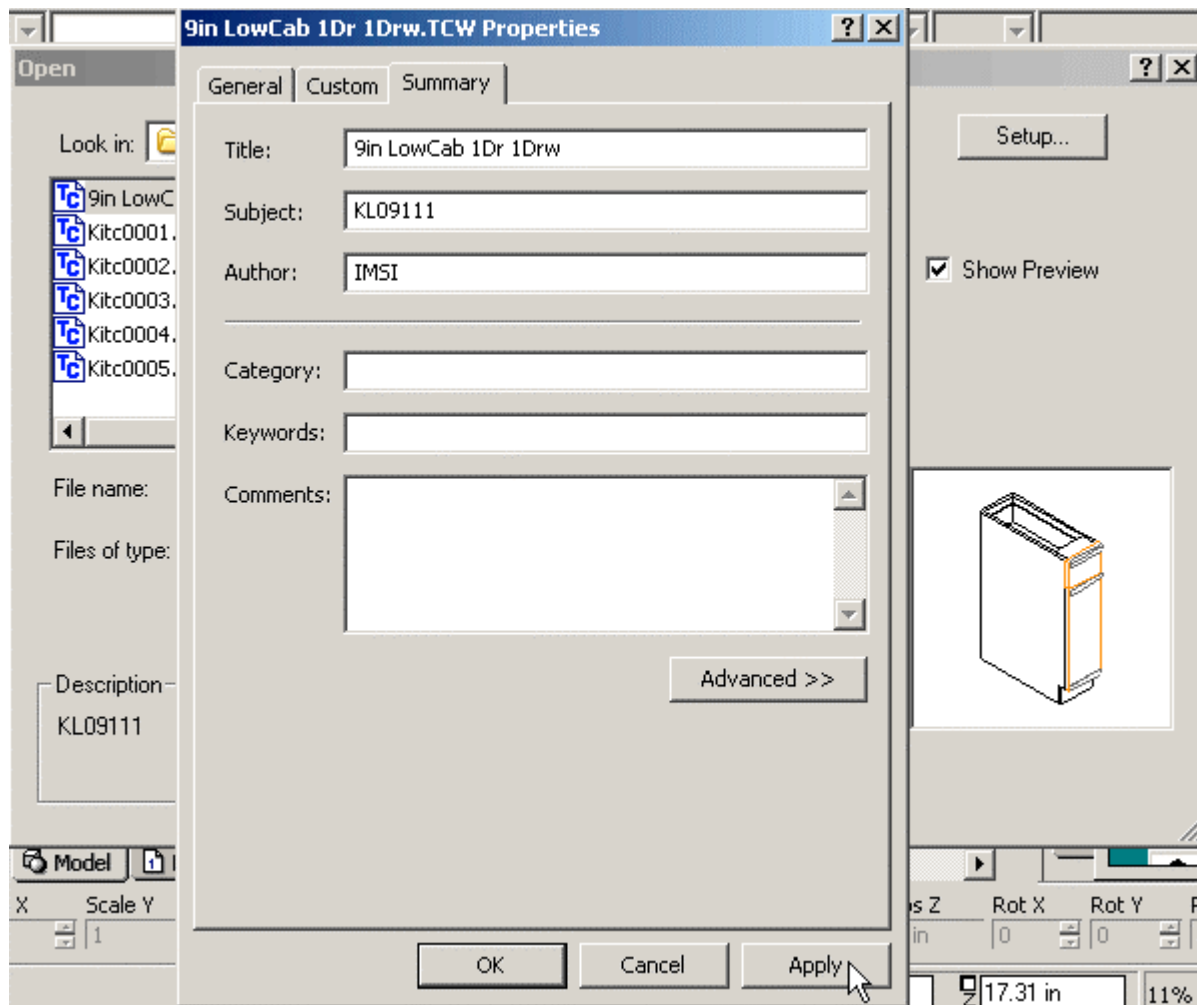
A user may also right click the symbol file in question and select Properties and Summary. If a title has been previously provided it can be copied and pasted as the file name and then changing view details will not be necessary. Be sure however, *to leave the file extension intact*.



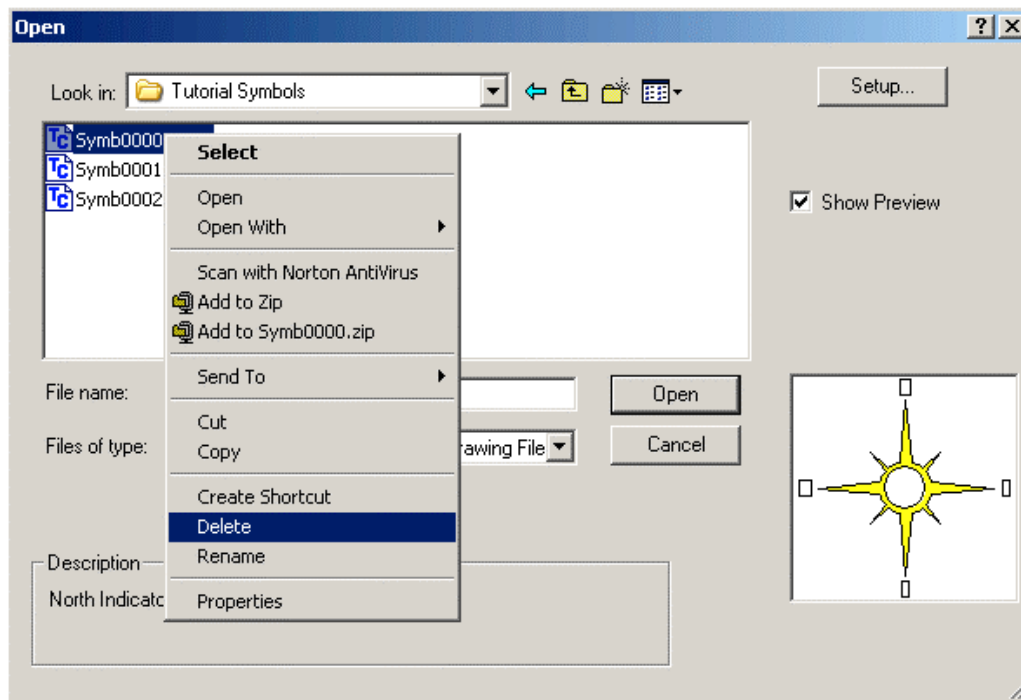
This method also works wonderfully for renaming symbols that may have been poorly named that came preloaded or have been loaded onto the hard drive from program CD's. As below.



Find the symbol file in question and rename it. Right-click the renamed symbol file, select Properties and Summary, enter that name on the summary page, click apply, click OK. Close the Open dialogue. The new name will be displayed on the Symbol Palette as soon as the user clicks the Save icon.



While viewing symbols this way - in the Open dialogue - the user may wish to delete a particular symbol. Simply right click the symbol file in question and select delete. There is never any doubt deleting symbol files in this way as the user is provided a preview to alleviate any uncertainty. Simply delete one at a time and when finished select Cancel to close the dialogue.



Finally, to use the symbols that have been created simply open the appropriate symbol library, find the desired symbol, left mouse click the symbol and while holding the left mouse button down drag the symbol onto the drawing. Release the left mouse button. Select the symbol and place or snap it into the desired location.

