

Learning SketchUp

or: Tooltips are King

What we thought:

- When people have a problem, they will consult the documentation, spend some time learning, and get their problem solved.
- We know the language people use to describe their problems, so we can make a simple search system that works.
- We can impose an order of importance for the tools that people should be using, and thereby set up a procedural path through basic training materials.

What we built:

- Learning Center
- Help Center
- SketchUp Help
- Status Prompts
- Tooltips
- Instructor
- Quick Reference Card
- SketchUp Community (Pro Forums, Google Groups)
- Video Tutorials
- Self-Paced Tutorials
- Live Training
- Tech Support
- Error messages
- Menu System
- Toolbars
- ...

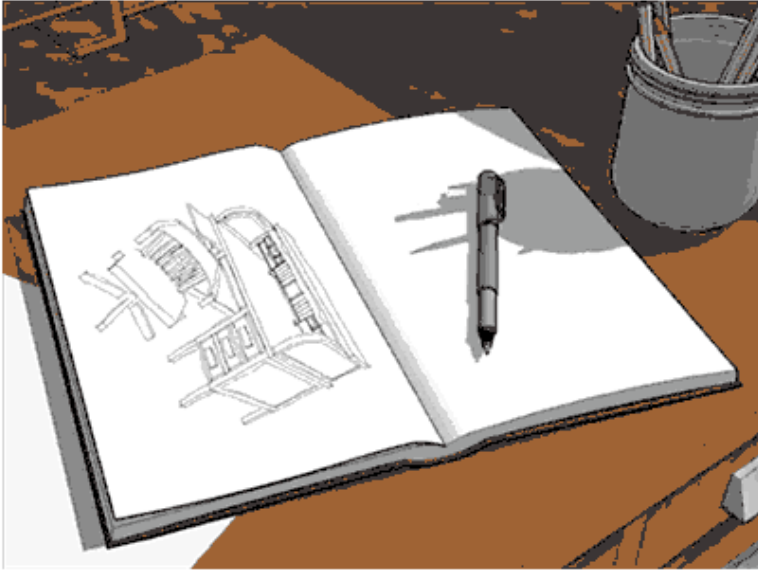
Learning Center

Learning Center

Show tips on startup

Learning Center Tips [Previous](#) [Next](#) [Additional Resources](#)

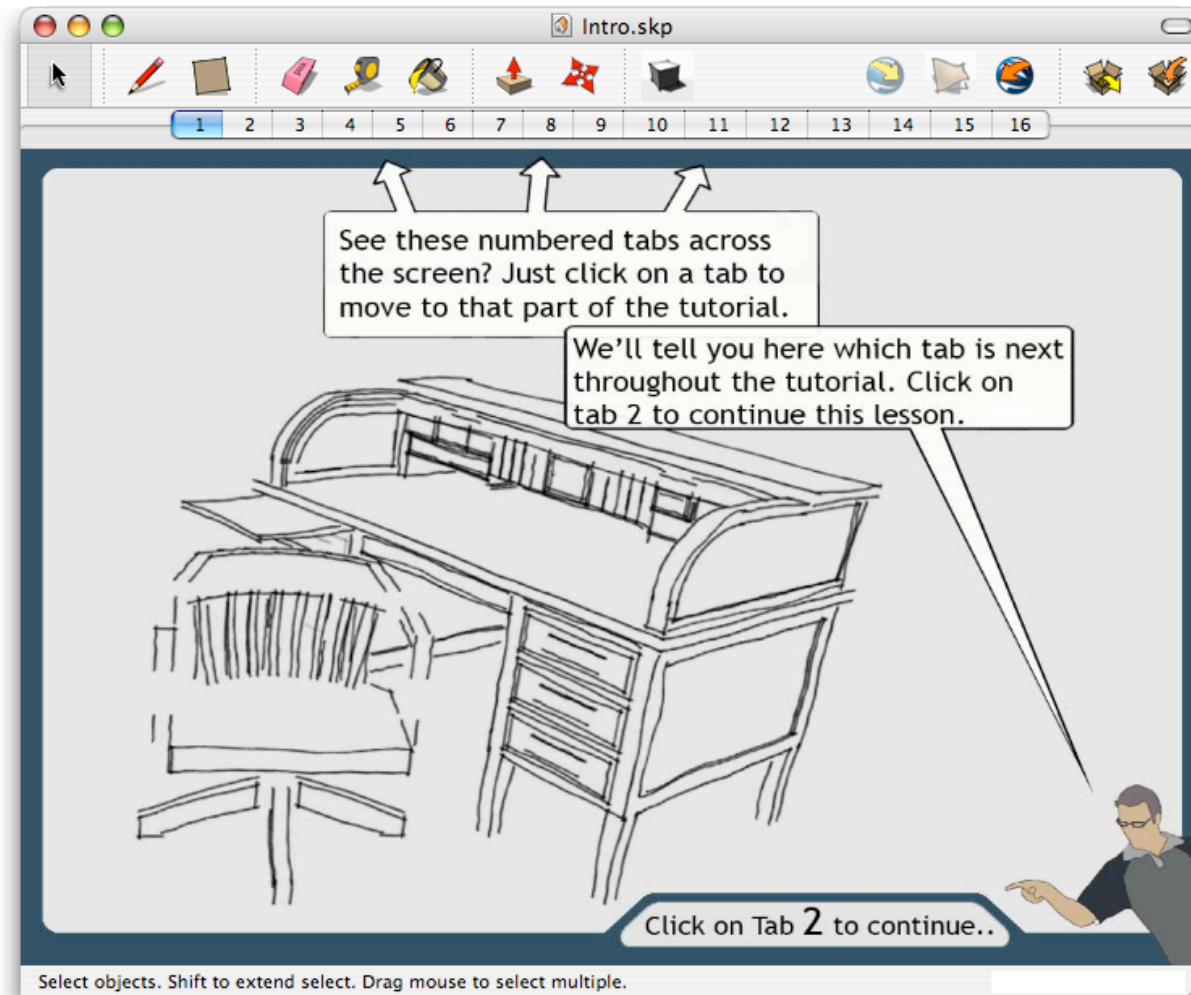
You can learn SketchUp



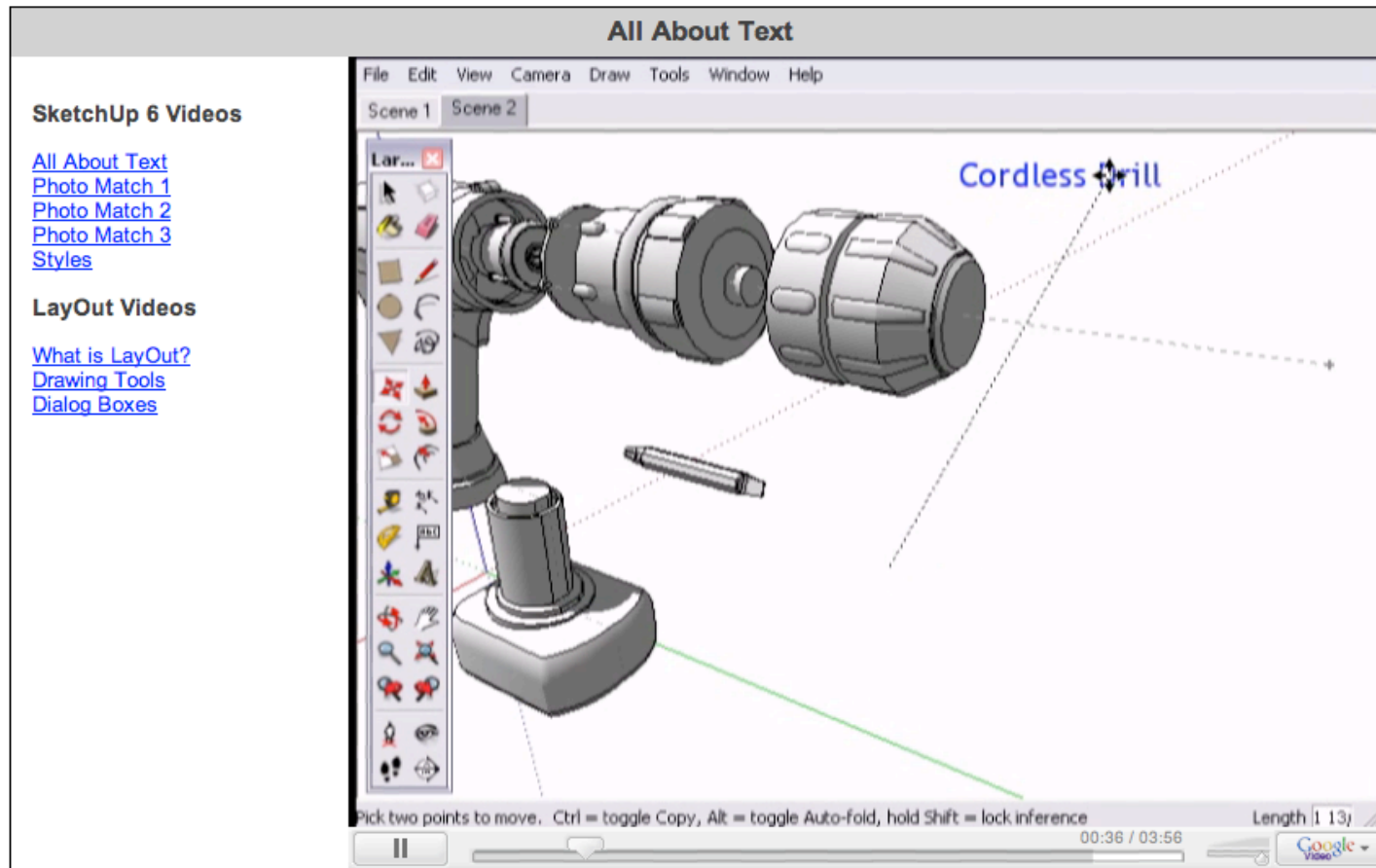
Anyone can learn the basics of SketchUp by taking a few minutes to work through the tips in this learning center. We hope this video will help you get a sense of working in SketchUp.

After you've watched this video try working through some basic concepts on your own using this [SketchUp model](#).

Self-Paced Tutorials



Video Tutorials



Help Center

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "SketchUp Help Center" with the URL "http://sketchup.google.com/support/". The page features the Google logo and the tagline "Model your world". A language selector is set to "English". The main content is organized into several sections: "Getting Started" with links for general questions, downloading, installation, and licensing; "Using SketchUp" with links for the latest version, general use, tools, advanced techniques, and integration with Google Earth and the 3D Warehouse; "Using SketchUp Pro Features" with links for other features and licensing; "Using SketchUp Pro LayOut" with a link for general use; and "Troubleshooting" with links for error messages, graphics card issues, and other problems. On the right side, there is a search bar, a "Top 5 Questions" list, a section for "Using SketchUp Pro 5?", and a "Learn from Other Users" section with links to a help group and forums. A footer at the bottom contains copyright information for 2007 Google and links to the Google Home and About Google pages.

SketchUp Help Center

http://sketchup.google.com/support/

Google Model your world

Change language: English

[SketchUp Home](#)
[Download](#)
[Products](#)
Help

Want to learn more?
Check out our User Guides below:

PC versions:
- [Google SketchUp](#)
- [LayOut](#)

Mac versions:
- [Google SketchUp](#)
- [LayOut](#)

[Google Help](#) > SketchUp Help

Getting Started

- [General Product Questions](#)
- [Downloading Issues](#)
- [Installation Issues](#)
- [Licensing Issues](#)

Using SketchUp

- [What's new in the latest version of SketchUp?](#)
- [General Use](#)
- [Using the SketchUp Tools](#)
- [Advanced Techniques](#)
- [Using SketchUp with Google Earth](#)
- [Using the 3D Warehouse](#)
- [Using the SketchUp Sandbox Tools](#)

Using SketchUp Pro Features

- [Using Other SketchUp Pro Features](#)
- [SketchUp Pro Licensing](#)

Using SketchUp Pro LayOut

- [General Use](#)

Troubleshooting

- [I'm Getting an Error Message](#)
- [Graphics Card Issues](#)
- [Other Issues](#)

Search Help Center

- ### Top 5 Questions
1. [How do I create a Google Account?](#)
 2. [How do I put my models in Google Earth?](#)
 3. [How can I best learn how to use Google SketchUp?](#)
 4. [How do I place a SketchUp model in Google Earth?](#)
 5. [Is there a manual available for SketchUp?](#)

Using SketchUp Pro 5?

If you're using SketchUp Pro 5, click [here](#) for assistance.

Learn from Other Users

Find answers, ask questions, and share your expertise with other users in the [Google SketchUp Help Group](#).

SketchUp Pro Users
Users of SketchUp Pro or previous versions can discuss topics related to SketchUp Pro in the [SketchUp Pro Forums](#)

SketchUp Help

The image shows a screenshot of a web browser window displaying the SketchUp User's Guide. The browser's address bar shows the URL http://download.sketchup.com/sketchuphelp/gsu6_mac/gsumac.html. The page title is "SketchUp User's Guide". The browser's search bar contains the word "Google".

The page content is organized into a table of contents (TOC) on the left and a main content area on the right. The TOC includes the following items:

- Welcome to SketchUp
- Concepts
- Application UI
- Principal Tools
- Drawing Tools
- Modification Tools
- Construction Tools
- Camera Tools
- Walkthrough Tools
- Sandbox Tools
- Google Toolbar
- Model Settings and Managers
- Entities
- Input and Output
- Technical Info
- Common Tasks
- Glossary

The main content area features the following sections:

Welcome to SketchUp (Mac OS X)

Developed for the conceptual stages of design, SketchUp is powerful yet easy-to-learn 3D software. We think of it as the pencil of digital design. This award-winning software combines a simple, yet robust tool-set that streamlines and simplifies 3D design inside your computer. SketchUp is being used by anyone with the desire to Dream, Design and Communicate in 3D!

From the entire SketchUp team, thank you for trying SketchUp, and welcome to the SketchUp user community.


SketchUp Versions

SketchUp is available in personal and professional versions. Google SketchUp (free) is available for free on sketchup.google.com.

Google SketchUp Pro is available to purchase at <http://sketchup.google.com/gsu6/buy.html>. You need Google SketchUp Pro if you want to:

- Export models in 3DS, DWG, DXF, OBJ, XSI, VRML, and FBX file formats
- Use the LayOut tools to create page and screen-based presentations of your models.
- Receive free email technical support for two years after purchase

Google SketchUp (free) and Google SketchUp Pro 6 Documentation

This documentation represents all of the functionality in both Google SketchUp (free) and Google SketchUp Pro 6. Functionality that is specific to Google SketchUp Pro 6 is identified with the pro icon () in this documentation.

Using this Guide

Transferring data from download.sketchup.com...

Quick Reference Card

SketchUp

Google

Quick Reference Card

© 2007 Google Inc. All rights reserved.

Select Tool (Spacebar)
 Option = Add to selection set
 Shift = Toggle in/out of selection set
 Shift+Option = Subtract from selection set
 Ctr+A = Select all

Eraser Tool (E)
 Shift = Hide
 Option = Soften/Smooth
 Shift+Option = Unsoften/Unsmooth

Rectangle Tool (R)
 VCB: Length, Width

Circle Tool (C)
 Shift = Lock to current orientation
 VCB: Number+s = Segments
 VCB: Number = Radius

Polygon Tool
 Shift = Lock to current orientation
 VCB: Number+s = Segments
 VCB: Number = Radius

Move Tool (M)
 Shift = Lock to current axis
 Arrow keys = Toggle axis lock
 Option = Toggle copy
 Command = Toggle auto-fold
 VCB: Number = Distance

Rotate Tool (Q)
 Option = Toggle copy
 VCB: Number = Angle
 VCB: Rise:Run = Slope

Scale Tool (S)
 Shift = Scale uniformly
 Option = Scale about center
 VCB: Number = Scale factor
 VCB: Number w/ units = Length

Tape Measure Tool (T)
 Opt = Toggle create construction geom
 Arrow keys = Toggle axis lock
 VCB: Number = Resize model

Retractor Tool
 Opt = Toggle create construction lines

Text Tool

3D Text Tool

Orbit Tool (O)
 Shift = Pan
 Option = Free

Zoom Tool (Z)
 Shift = Change field of view

Zoom Extents Tool (Shift+Z)

Position Camera Tool

Look Around Tool
 VCB: Number = Eye height

Walk Tool
 Shift = Move vertically
 Option = Run
 Command = Walk through entities
 VCB: Number = Eye height

Paint Bucket Tool (B)
 Option = Adjacent fill
 Shift = Replace
 Shift+Option = Adjacent replace
 Command = Sample material

Section Tool

Line Tool (L)
 Shift = Lock to current axis
 Arrow keys = Toggle axis lock
 VCB: Number = Length

Arc Tool (A)
 VCB: Number = Bulge
 VCB: Number+s = Segments
 VCB: Number+r = Radius

Freehand Tool
 Shift = Draw 3D Polyline

Push/Pull Tool (P)
 Option = Toggle new starting face
 Double-Click = Repeat
 VCB: Number = Distance

Follow Me Tool
 Command = Use perimeter of surface as path

Offset Tool (F)
 Double-Click = Repeat
 VCB: Number = Length

Dimension Tool

Pan Tool (H)

Zoom Window Tool

Previous/Next

Mouse Button:
 Click = Pick
 Cmd-Ctrl-Click-Drag = Orbit
 Shift-Cmd-Ctrl-Click-Drag = Pan
 Ctrl-Click = Context Menu

1-Button (Std.) Mouse

Middle Button (Wheel):
 Click-Drag = Orbit
 Shift-Click-Drag = Pan
 Double-Click = Re-Center View
 Scroll = Zoom

Right Button:
 Click = Context Menu

Left Button:
 Click = Pick

Top Front Left Right Back

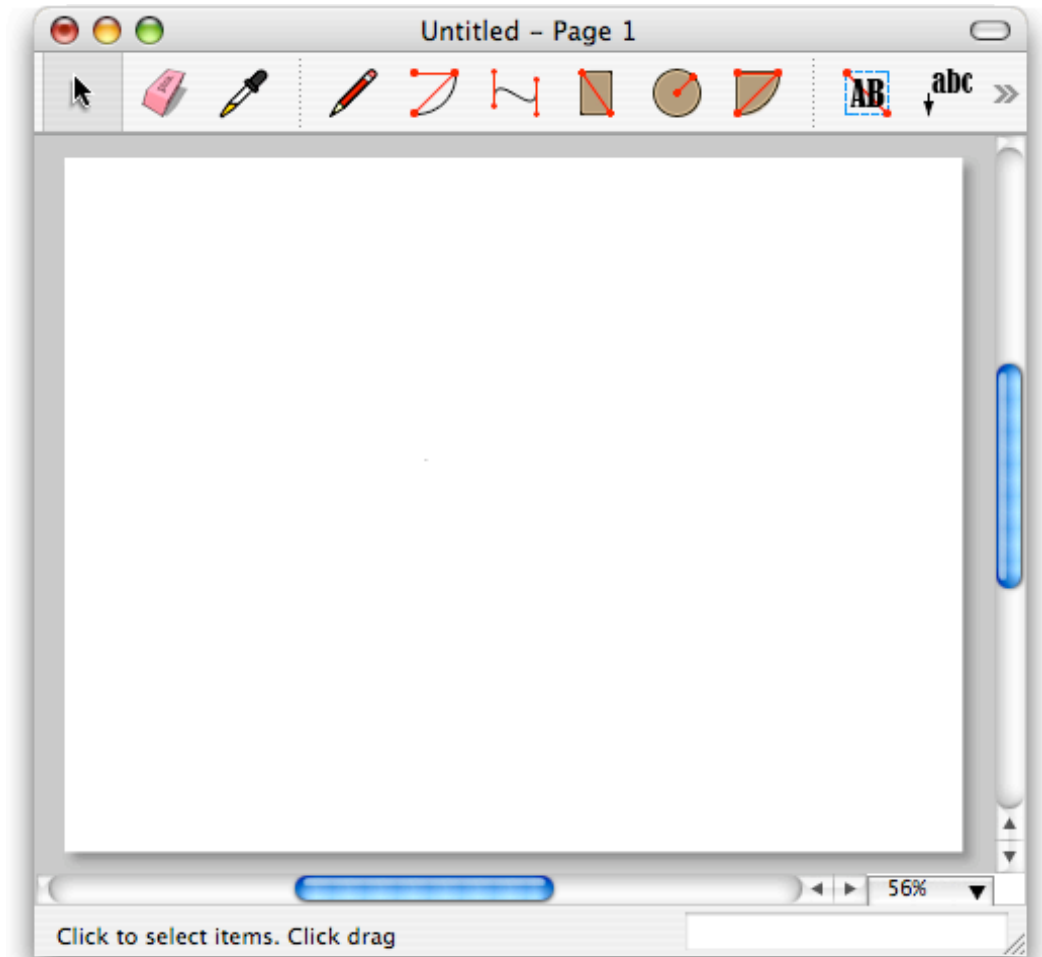
Play Pause X Ray Wireframe Hidden Line Shaded Shaded With Textures Monochrome

Get Current View
 Toggle Terrain
 Place Model
 Get Models
 Share Model

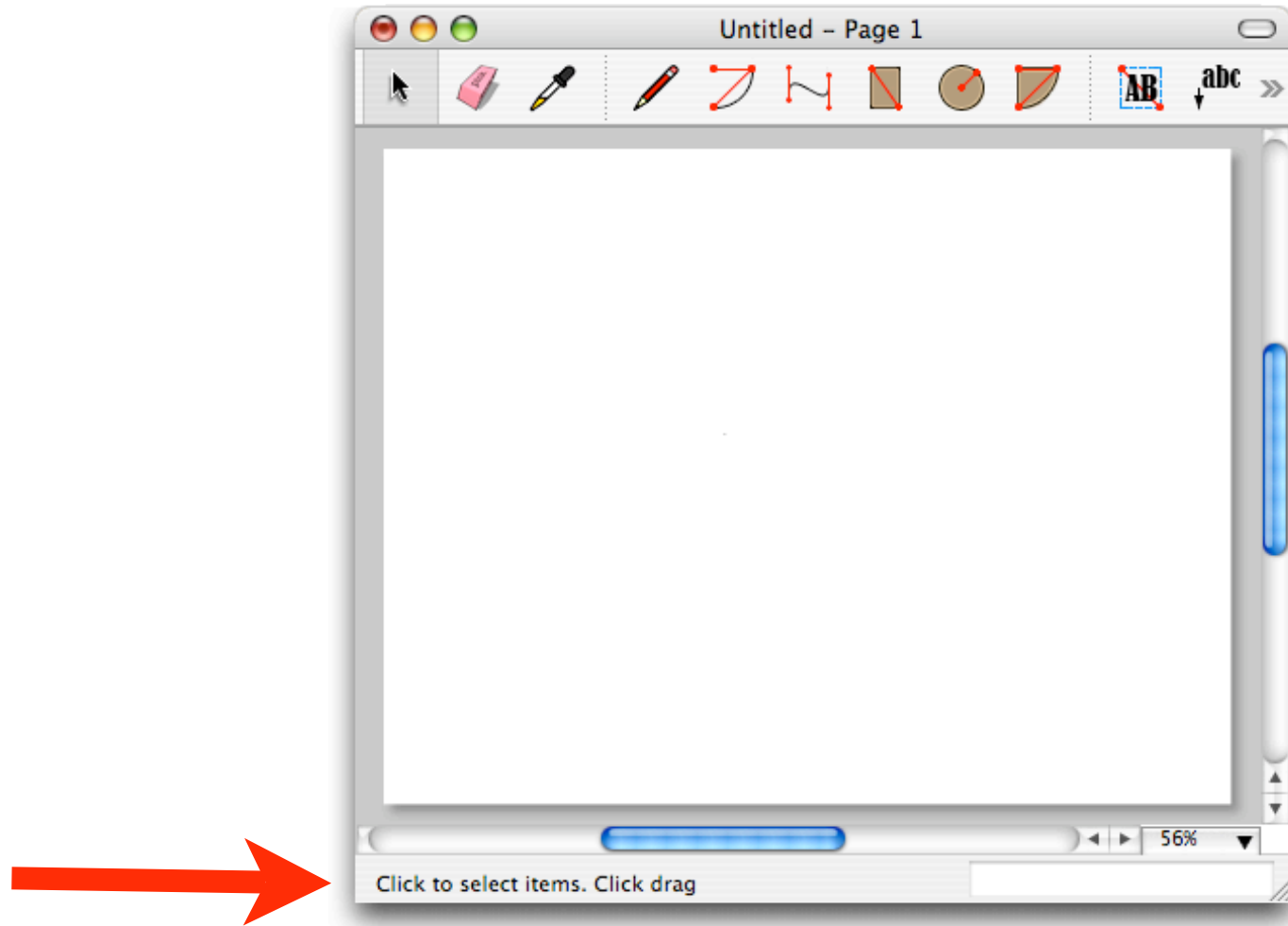
Display/Hide Day of Year Time of Day
 06/21 01:30 PM

VCB = Value Control Box

Status Prompt



Status Prompt

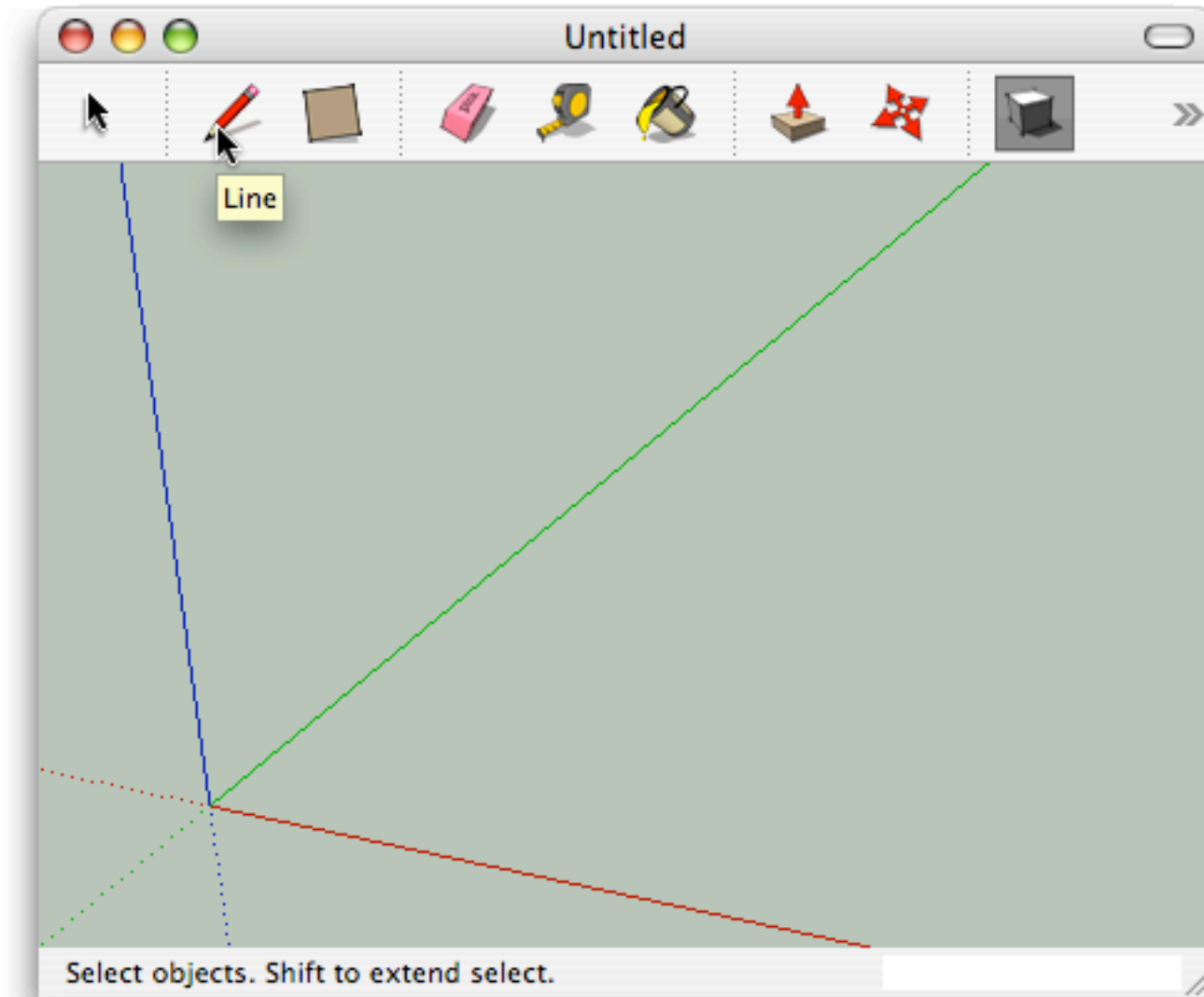


What we found:

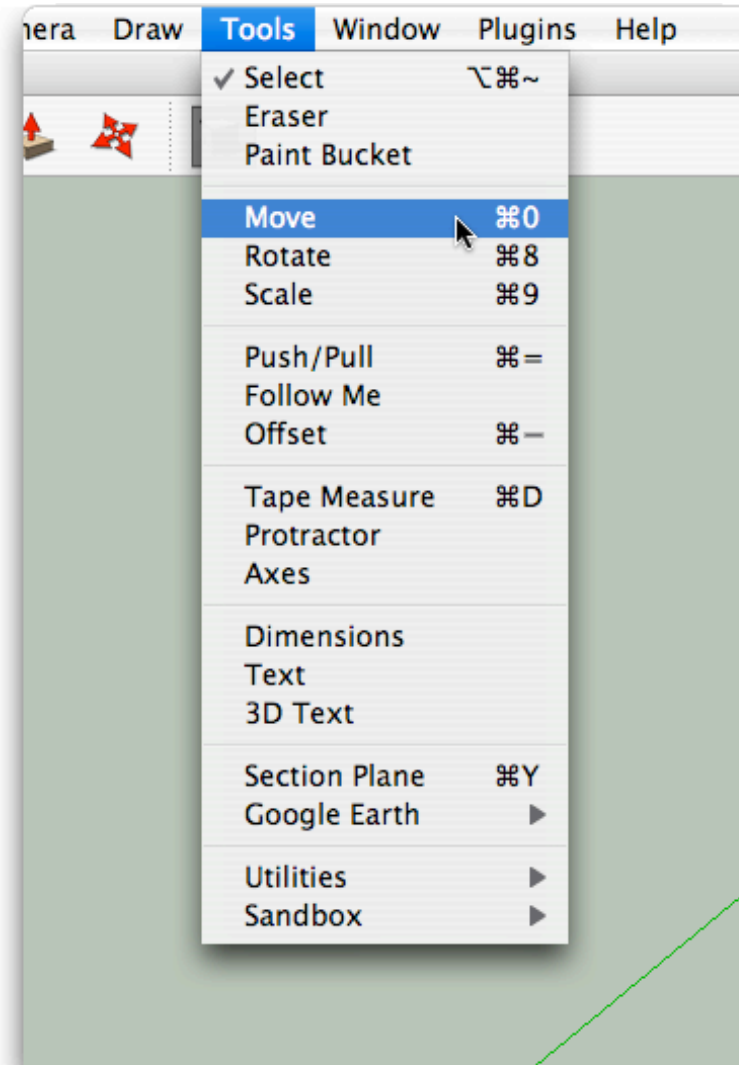
We performed a series of usability tests to look in detail at the “first 15 minutes” of a new SketchUp user’s experience. In the test, we recruited construction-minded people from the parking lot of a hardware store. We put them in front of SketchUp with no instruction, and watched what they did.

- about half the users dismissed the Learning Center right away.
- only one user (out of 7 total) consulted the documentation
- only one user (out of 7 total) consulted the Help Center
- all users missed the Status Prompt
- all users scanned the menu system
- all users scanned the toolbars, pausing to watch for tooltips

Tooltips



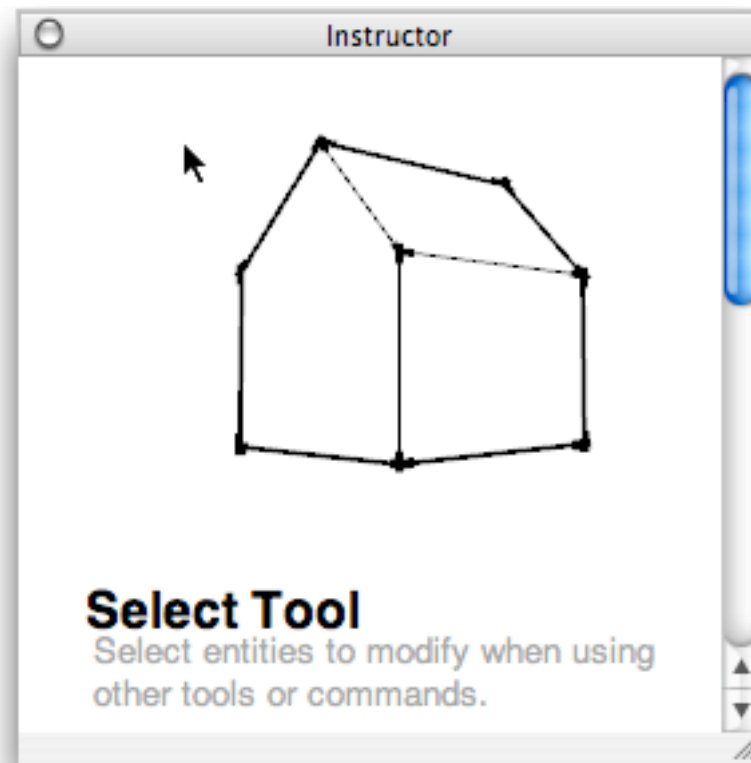
Menus



Tech Support



Instructor



next steps:

- Understand “Help & Learning” as a continuum of resources, from Tooltip to support call.
- Develop a richer, dynamic tooltip that grows to provide additional learning resources as a function of time, or clicks
- Research more adjacent applications to look for what works there. Maybe consider other applications as important precedents.
- Understand what kinds of help & learning are appropriate for each kind of question (“Something is broken...”, “How do I...?” and “How does this work?”)