SOLIDWORKS Tips & Tricks

General Productivity Tips

- **Customize Your Toolbars** - Go to Tools → Customize, and drag/drop the commands you’d like to a location on your toolbars.
- **Mouse Gestures** – Invoke commands from a right-click and drag. Navigating to tools → Customize, and selecting the ‘Mouse Gestures’ tab to customize the selectable commands on the wheel.
- **S-Menu Shortcut** - Use the ‘s’ key to invoke a shortcut toolbar. It can be customized from Tools → Customize.
- **Command Search** – In the top right, search menus for any command, and launch using enter.
- **3D Mouse** – Using a separate 3D mouse makes manipulating the model much easier.

**Sketches & Features**

- **On-screen numeric Input** – From system options → sketch. Enter dimensions as you sketch.
- **Dimension to OUTSIDE of arc** – Hold the SHIFT key while clicking a circle or arc to quickly dimension to the outside, rather than center point.
- **Box/Lasso Select** – Blue box (down and right) creates a standard selection box. Green box (down and left) is a crossing window select.
- **Auto-transition to Arc** – Use the ‘a’ key to quickly switch from line to a tangent arc command.
- **Virtual Sharp Creation** – Multi-select two sketch entities, and pick the ‘point’ command on the sketch toolbar to create a virtual sharp at their intersection.
- **Contour Selection** – Utilize the contour selection window to select just one piece of a sketch to extrude, cut, etc.
- **Offset Plane** – hold CTRL + drag a corner point of a plane to quickly create an offset plane.
- **RMB to accept commands** – Many commands can be accepted by simply clicking the right mouse button. Watch for the ‘accept’ icon.

**Drawings**

- **Disable Sketch Relations** – hold the CTRL key to avoid creating snaps/relations in a drawing.
- **Break View Alignment on placement of view** – Hold CTRL key before clicking to place.
- **Move/copy dimensions across views**
  - Use SHIFT + drag a dimension to move to from one view to another.
  - Use CTRL + drag a dimension to copy it to another view.
- **Add another leader to note** – CTRL + drag on an existing leader to create another leader.
- **Angle dimension shortcut** – Select a line, and an endpoint of that same line. Use the quadrant selections for angle.
- **Dimension WITHOUT creating virtual sharp** – while dimensioning, right-click an entity and select ‘find intersection’. Select a second entity to dimension to the virtual sharp.

**View, Rotation, and Orientation Tips**

- **Arrow keys can be used to rotate your model on screen:**
  - Hold SHIFT + arrow keys to rotate in 90 degree increments.
  - Hold ALT + arrow key to rotate in-plane.
- **Triad in the bottom left corner can be used to orient your model on screen:**
  - Select an axis to view normal to it.
  - Hold SHIFT + Click an axis to rotate 90 degrees around that axis.
  - Hold ALT + Click an axis to rotate in 15 degree increments.
- **Middle Mouse button shortcuts**
  - Zoom to Fit – Double-click middle button.
  - Roll about an edge – middle mouse click + drag on a model edge to rotate about it.
  - Rotate about Scene Floor – right mouse click in space, and select to enable.
- **Undo Last View Change** - CTRL + SHIFT + Z.
- **View Orientations** – Use the space bar to create and save custom view orientations.

**Assembly Tips**

- **Smart Mates** – Hold ALT + drag an entity to quickly mate it.
- **Rotate a part in place** by right-clicking and dragging.
- **Select through transparent parts**
  - Enabled from system options, Display/Selection.
  - If you want to select the transparent part, hold SHIFT.
- **Quickly hide parts** – Hold the TAB key, and hover over the part you’d like to hide. Show the part by using SHIFT + TAB and hovering over where the hidden part would be.
- **Shortcuts for Advanced Mates:**
  - Multiple-select 3 faces, then hit the Mate command automatically invokes a Symmetry Mate.
  - Multiple-select 4 faces, then hit the Mate command automatically invokes a Width Mate.

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