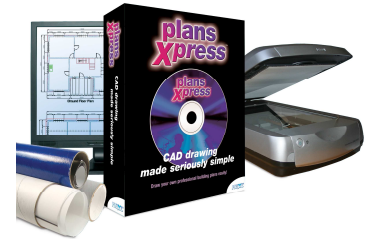


# HBXL factsheet

## Getting Started with PlansXpress

Use award winning PlansXpress® to produce architect quality plans and 3D visuals quickly and easily. Think it's beyond your capability? Well PlansXpress is made specifically for builders and developers and designed with the complete computer novice in mind. You'll unearth CAD skills you never knew you had AND it will save you money on outsourcing.




This Getting Started guide will take you about 30 minutes to run through and will show you how you can quickly start drafting plans yourself.

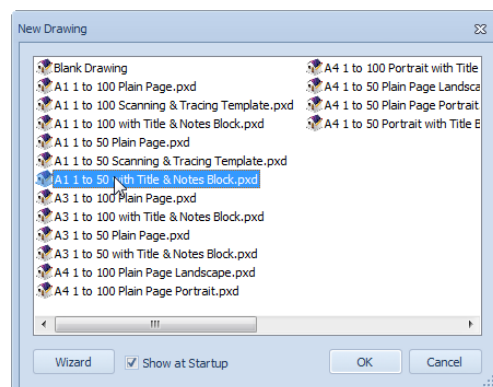
### PlansXpress® Minimum System Requirements

1Ghz processor, 150MB Hard Drive Space, 1.0MB Ram, CD Rom drive, SVGA Monitor, Windows® XP/Vista/7, Graphics card 1024x768 resolution, Pointing Device with Scroll Wheel, Internet Connection.

### How to load PlansXpress®

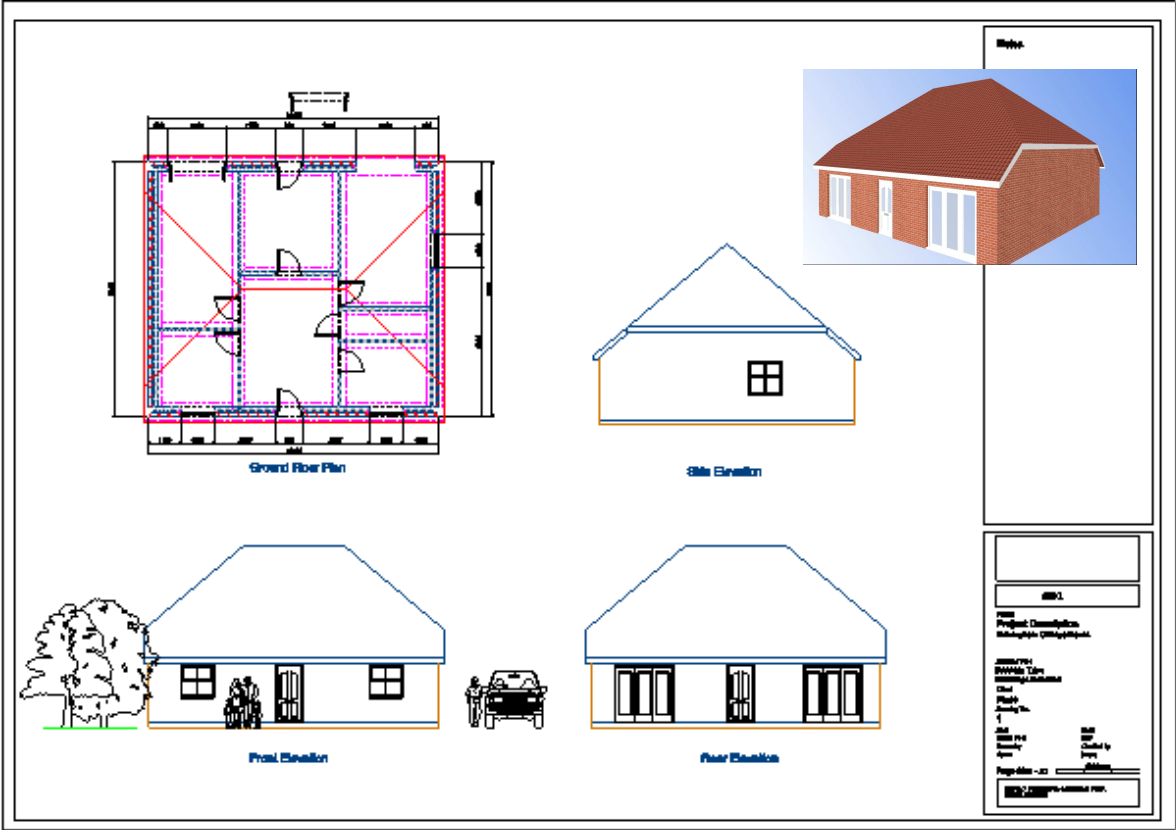
Either download your free Trial from [www.hbxl.co.uk](http://www.hbxl.co.uk) or if you have a Trial CD simply insert your CD into your PC or Laptop drive and it should auto-run so that you can install the trial software. If the CD doesn't autorun and you're running Windows 2000/XP, select Run from the Start Menu and type D:\Trial.exe where D is the CD drive. If you're running Windows Vista, the Run option may not be available, so type D:\Trial.exe into the Search box at the bottom of the Start Menu.

1.  To launch PlansXpress® double click on the **PlansXpress v.3** icon on your desktop or select PlansXpress v.3 from the Start > Programs Menu, HBXL, PlansXpress2 folder. Once the program launches, the New Drawing dialog box pops up. Simply choose a template and click **OK**.



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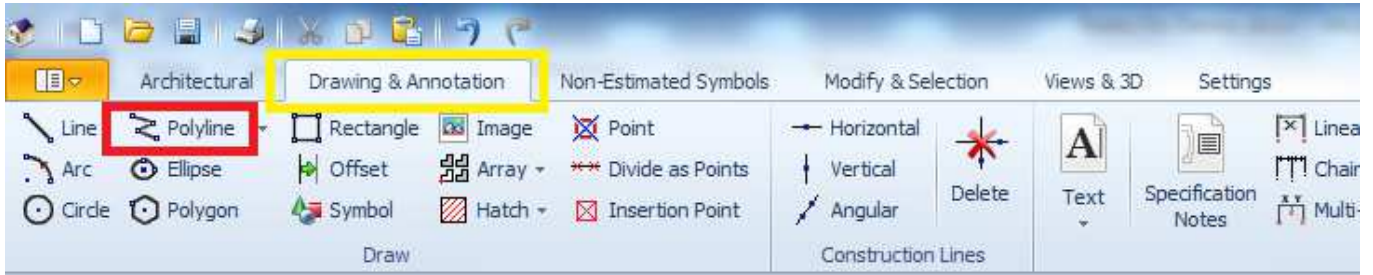
Here is the sample drawing of a bungalow we are going to work through.



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## Screen Basics

Spend a minute or two looking at the tabs and their contents:



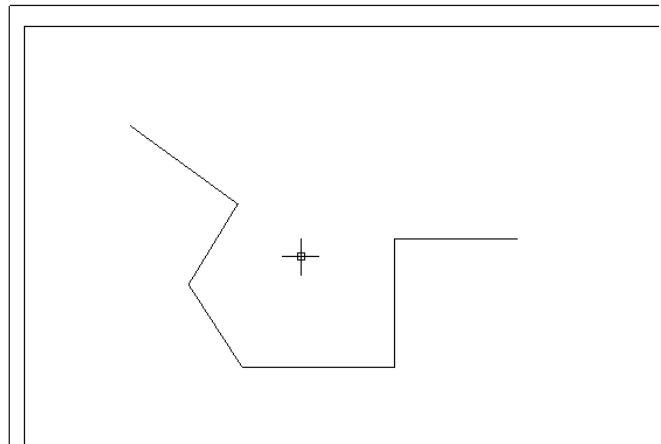
You'll see that there are many basic drawing tools that you'd expect to find in a CAD package for drawing lines, circles, arcs polylines etc, as well as pre-built symbols and Architectural drawing tools which are unique to PlansXpress and which make designing building projects incredibly easy.

Let's first take a look at some basic drawing tools...

1. Click the **Drawings and Annotation** Tab.

### How to draw basic lines...

1. Select **Polyline**.
2. **Left click** at top left of screen on the drawing board.
3. **Release Left Mouse button** (do not drag.)
4. **Click Second and Third** points etc to create a random shape.
5. Now **hold down** the Shift key and continue to draw additional points. You'll see that the lines are now constrained to right angles.
6. **Press Escape** to finish drawing your line.



## Zooming In



1. **Place the onscreen Cursor** in the middle of the shape you have drawn.
2. **Rotate the Scroll Wheel** on your mouse forward to zoom in and backwards to zoom out.

(You can also use zoom commands at the top right of screen if you get lost)

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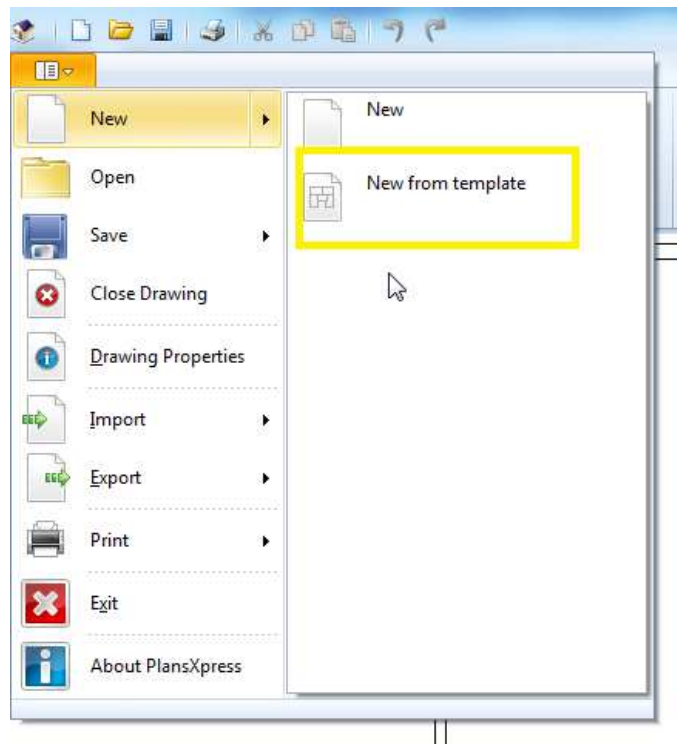
## Moving around the drawing

1. To drag the drawing around **press down the scroll wheel** on your mouse, **hold it down** and then **move your mouse**. A hand symbol should appear onscreen allowing you to drag the drawing around your screen.

## Right! Now let's start drawing our bungalow...

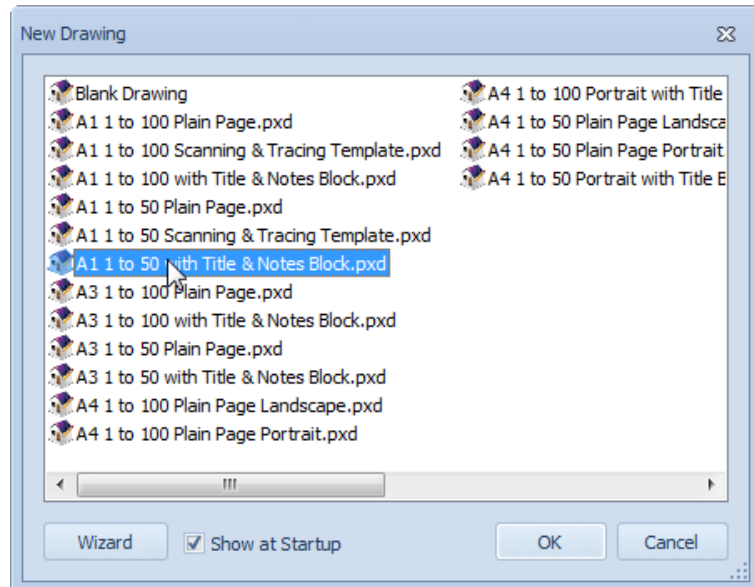
1. Opening a new drawing sheet from a template.

Click **New from template**



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2. Select 'A1 1:50 with Title & Notes Block.pxd' template.

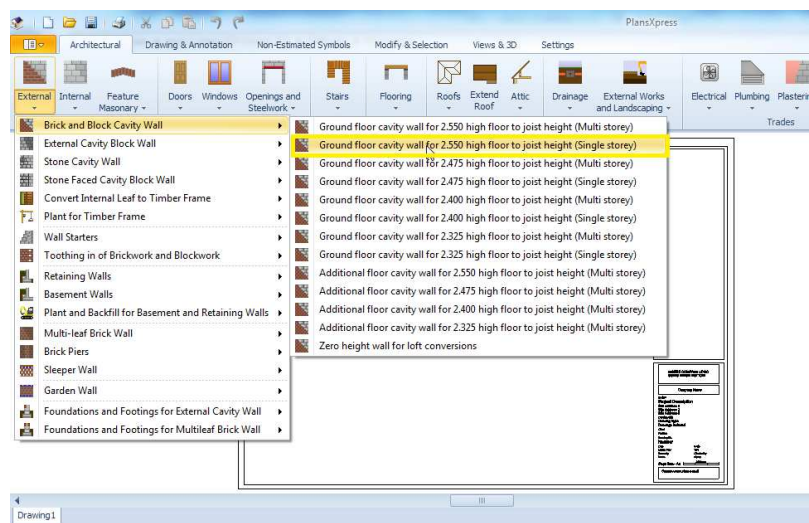


## External Walls

Let's start by drawing the external walls of the bungalow.

3. Click the dropdown arrow on the **External Walls** Menu, click on **Brick and Block Cavity Walls**.

**Select a ground floor 2.550 high floor to joist wall. (Single storey)**



The Brick and Block Cavity Wall Dimensions Wizard pops up so that you can review the dimensions of the External Wall. This is used to help you produce elevations and also allows you to enter additional information for estimating purposes. You can combine PlansXpress with EstimatorXpress to create what we call 'Visual Estimating'.



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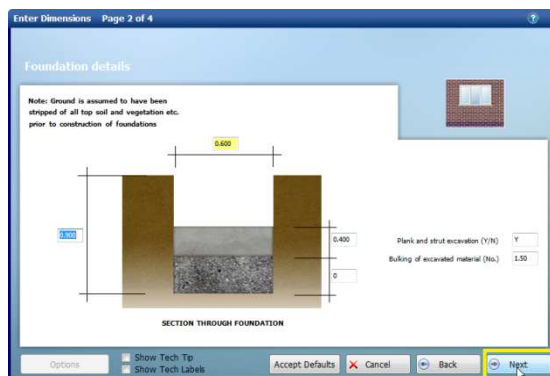
## 4. Confirm the **Wall Height**

Hit **Next**.



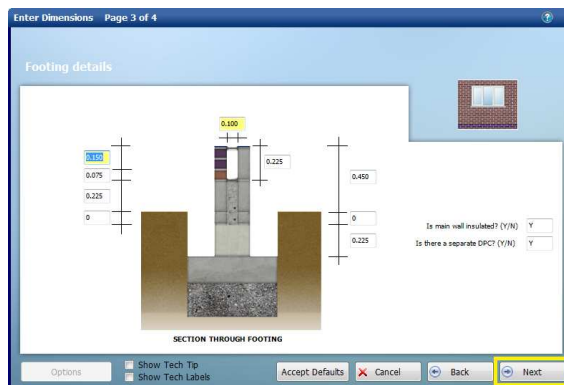
## 5. Confirm **Foundation Details**

Hit **Next**.



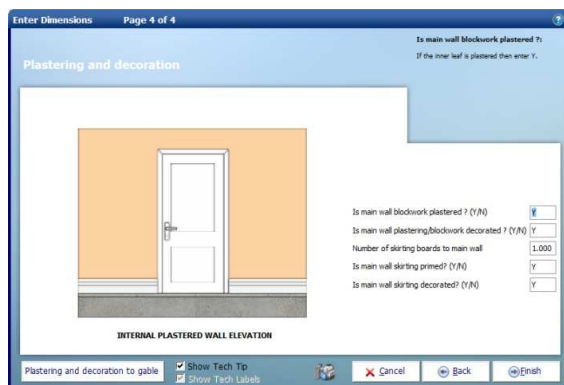
## 6. Confirm **Footing details**

Hit **Next**.



## 7. Confirm **Plastering & Decoration details**

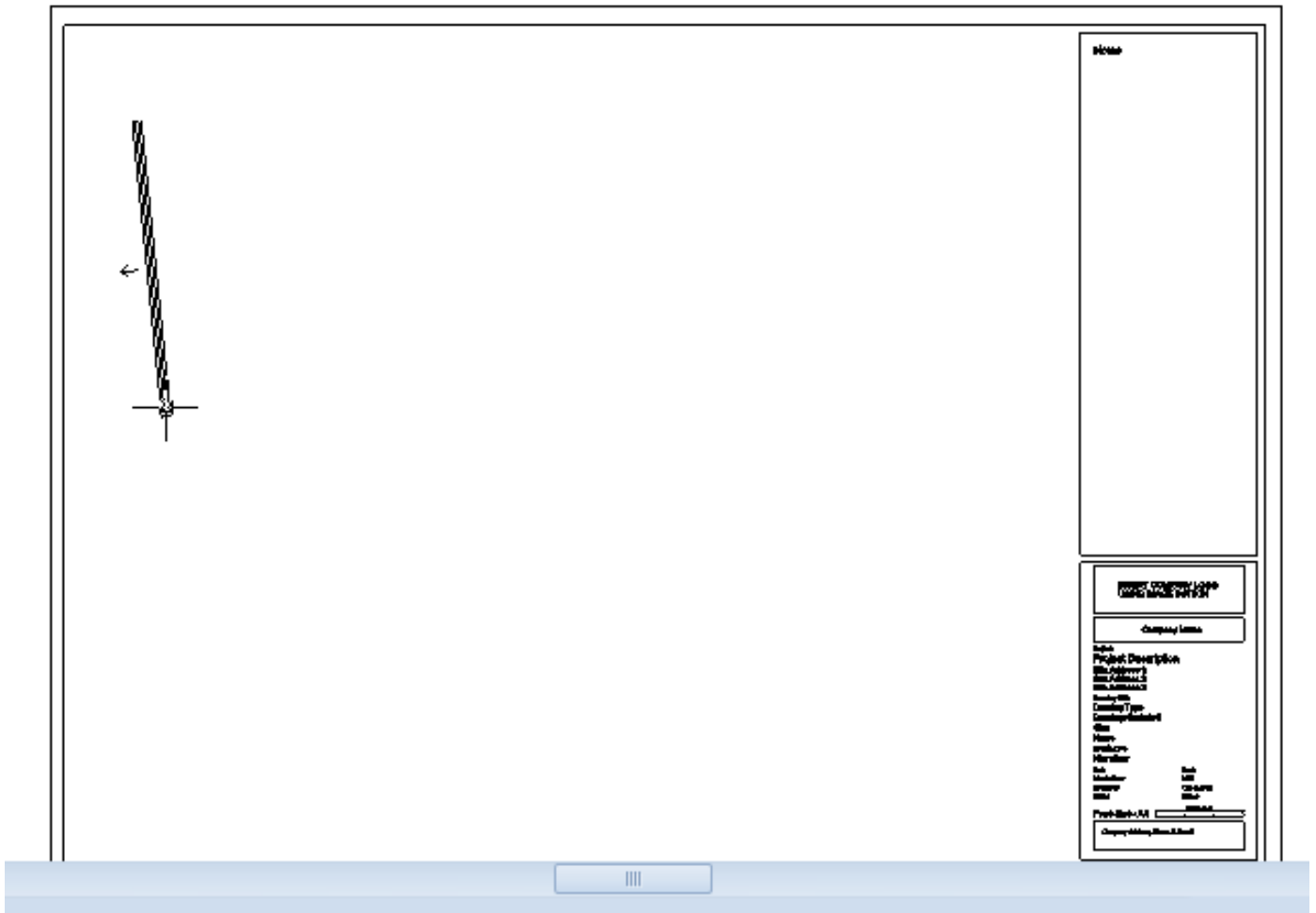
Hit **Finish**.



8. Place the mouse cursor (which represents the start of your wall) at the top left hand corner of drawing.
9. To place item **click left mouse button once** and lift finger off mouse (do not drag)

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If you move the mouse around you will see the wall following the cursor. Note the arrow next to the wall showing that this side is the outside of the wall.



The easiest and quickest way to draw the walls is to use the arrow keys. This way you can type in exact wall lengths.

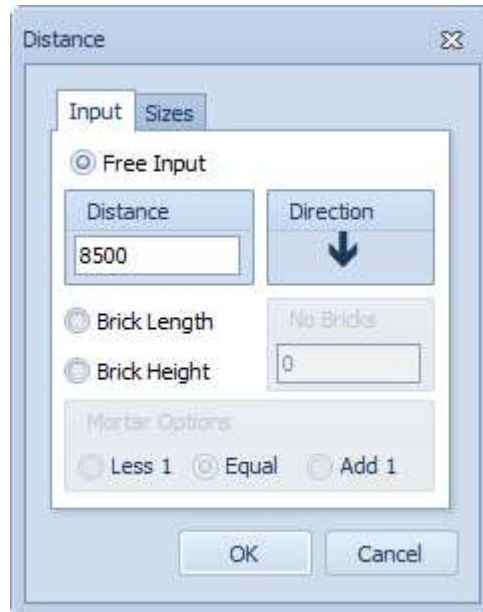


**Press DOWN arrow** on keyboard.

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10. Then enter wall length of **8500mm** into the 'Distance' field.

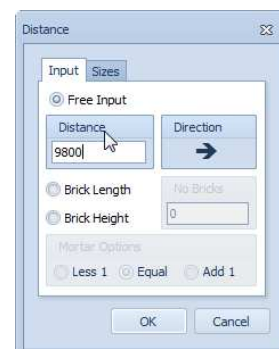
Then **Click OK** to create the wall.

A screenshot of the 'Distance' dialog box. The 'Input' tab is selected. Under 'Free Input', the 'Distance' field contains '8500'. The 'Direction' button has a downward arrow. Below, 'Brick Length' and 'Brick Height' are both set to '0'. The 'Mortar Options' section has 'Equal' selected. 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons are at the bottom.

You should now have your first wall in place – let's continue using the arrow keys to create the rest of the external wall.

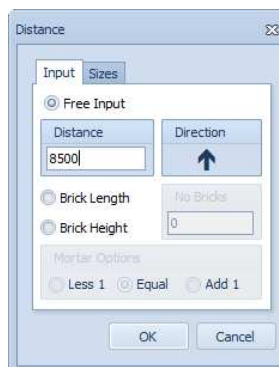
11. Press right arrow on keyboard and then enter wall length of 9800mm into dialog.

And again **Click OK**.

A screenshot of the 'Distance' dialog box. The 'Distance' field now contains '9800'. The 'Direction' button has a rightward arrow.

12. Press up arrow on keyboard and then enter wall length of 8500mm into dialog.

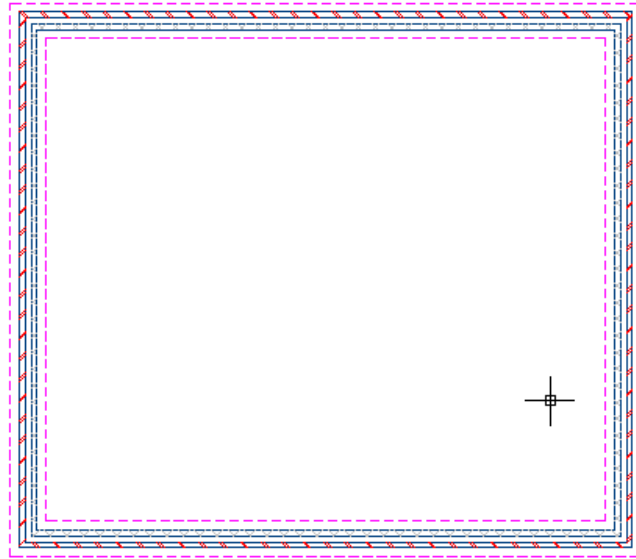
**Click OK.**

A screenshot of the 'Distance' dialog box. The 'Distance' field now contains '8500'. The 'Direction' button has an upward arrow.



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13. And finally, Press the “C” key on the keyboard. This will perform the “Close” function and link the wall back to the start point of the first wall, thus completing our simple rectangular external wall.



Try zooming in & out to get the entire drawing showing on your screen using the scroll wheel on your mouse.

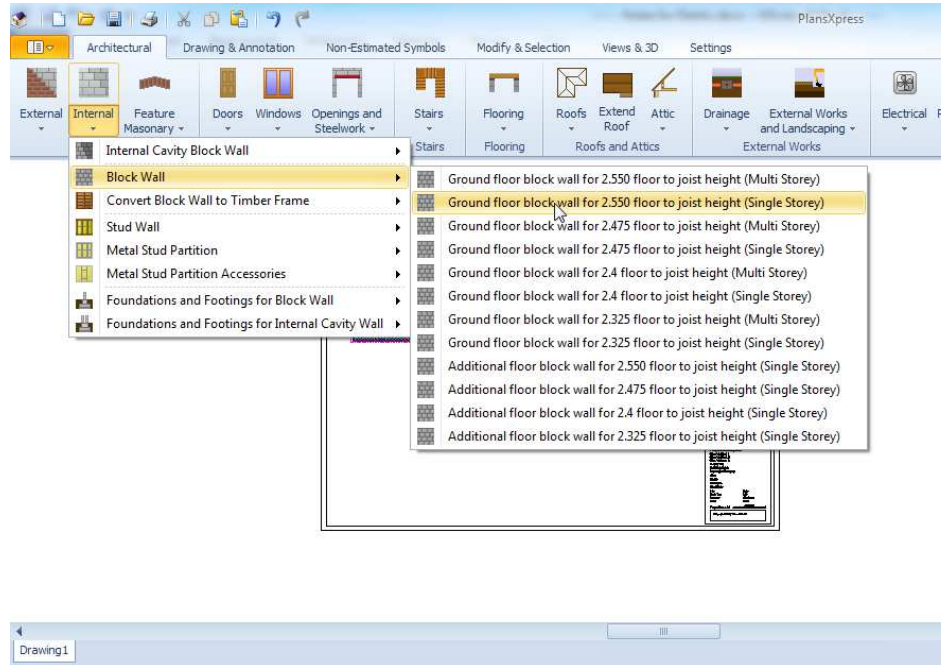
Remember to drag the drawing around, Press scroll wheel down, hold down and drag.

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## Internal Walls

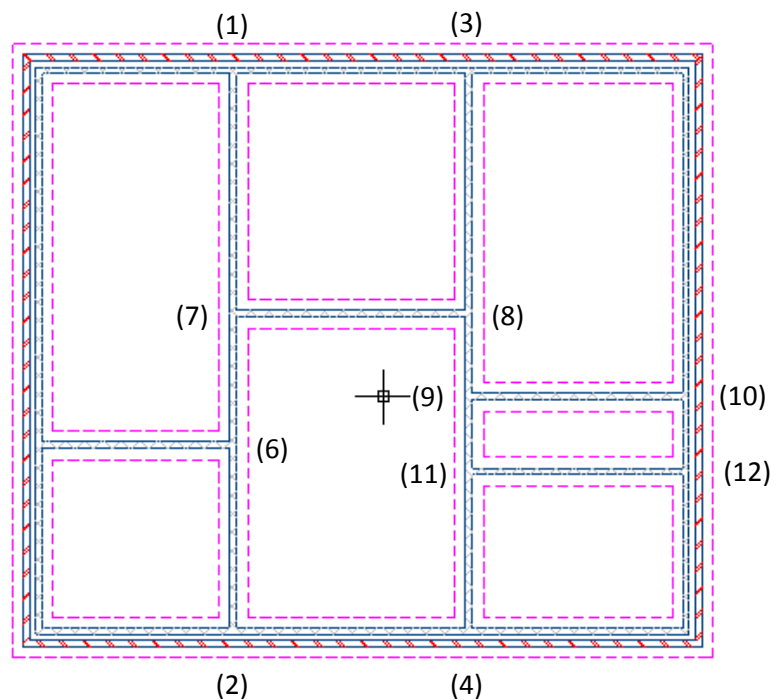
Let's now add some internal walls to the drawing.

14. Select Ground Floor Block Wall for 2.550 floor to joist height (Single storey).
15. Confirm height of the wall etc using the dialogue boxes as before or for the purpose of this Trial simply press **Accept Defaults** which will skip having to confirm these details.



Now we're going to place the internal walls by eye for the purpose of this Getting Started session.

16. Click on the top wall indicated as (1) on the drawing opposite. Release the mouse button and click at second end. (2)
17. Then draw the second internal wall in the same way from (3) to (4) as indicated on the drawing opposite. (Walls can be accurately placed using specific measurements or construction lines)
18. Then complete the walls from (5) to (6), from (7) to (8), from (9) to (10) and from (11) to (12).



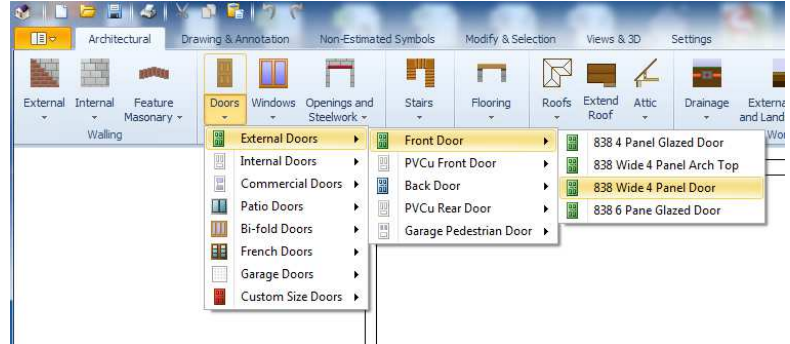
To make sure lines are exactly vertical or horizontal, hold down the "Shift" key whilst placing the wall. This will set the wall to the nearest 45 degree angle and ensure your walls are nice and straight!

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## Doors & Windows

Now let's place a selection of doors & windows to the exterior and interior of the bungalow.

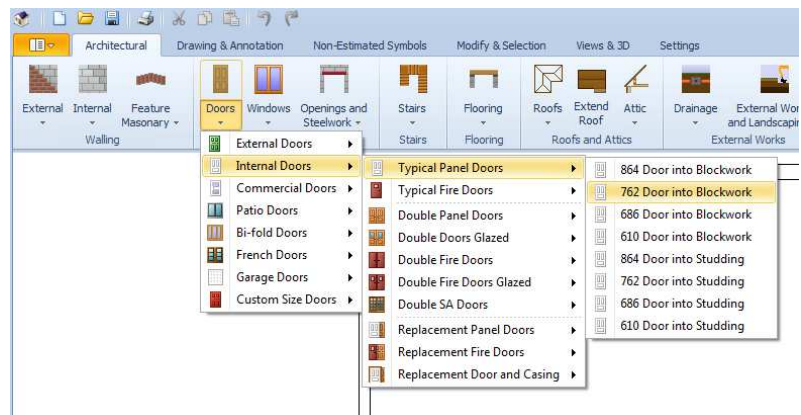
19. Choose an external door that you want to use for the front door from the Architectural Menu. In our demonstration we're using the 838 Wide 4 Panel Door.



When picking your doors use the **Accept Defaults Button** once the dialog opens. This sets items such as reveal depths and decoration but for this **Getting Started session** we'll accept the defaults each time.



20. Simply hover over the wall and click the left mouse button to place the door on the drawing as shown in the diagram below.

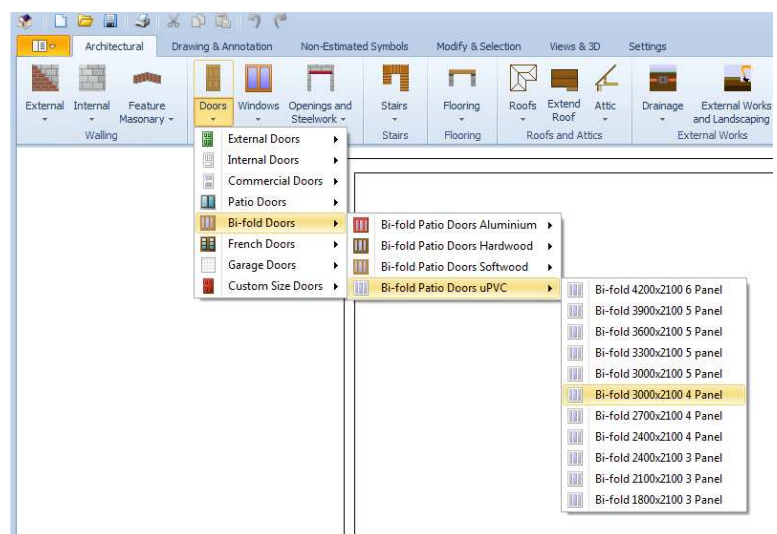


21. Then you can choose which way the door will open by dragging the mouse around the door. When you're happy click the left mouse button again.

22. Then pick an internal door of your choice into blockwork and place 6 of these on the drawing as shown in the diagram below, using the same method.

23. Then pick an External Back door and place on the drawing as shown in the diagram below, using the same method.

24. Then pick a uPVC Bi-fold door which we will place two along the back wall as shown in the diagram below, using the same method.



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25. Then place 3 uPVC Windows on the drawing as indicated by the diagram below, using a similar method to doors.

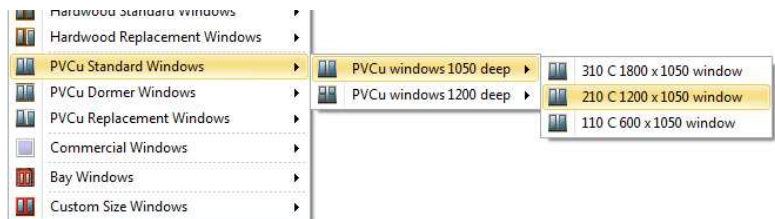
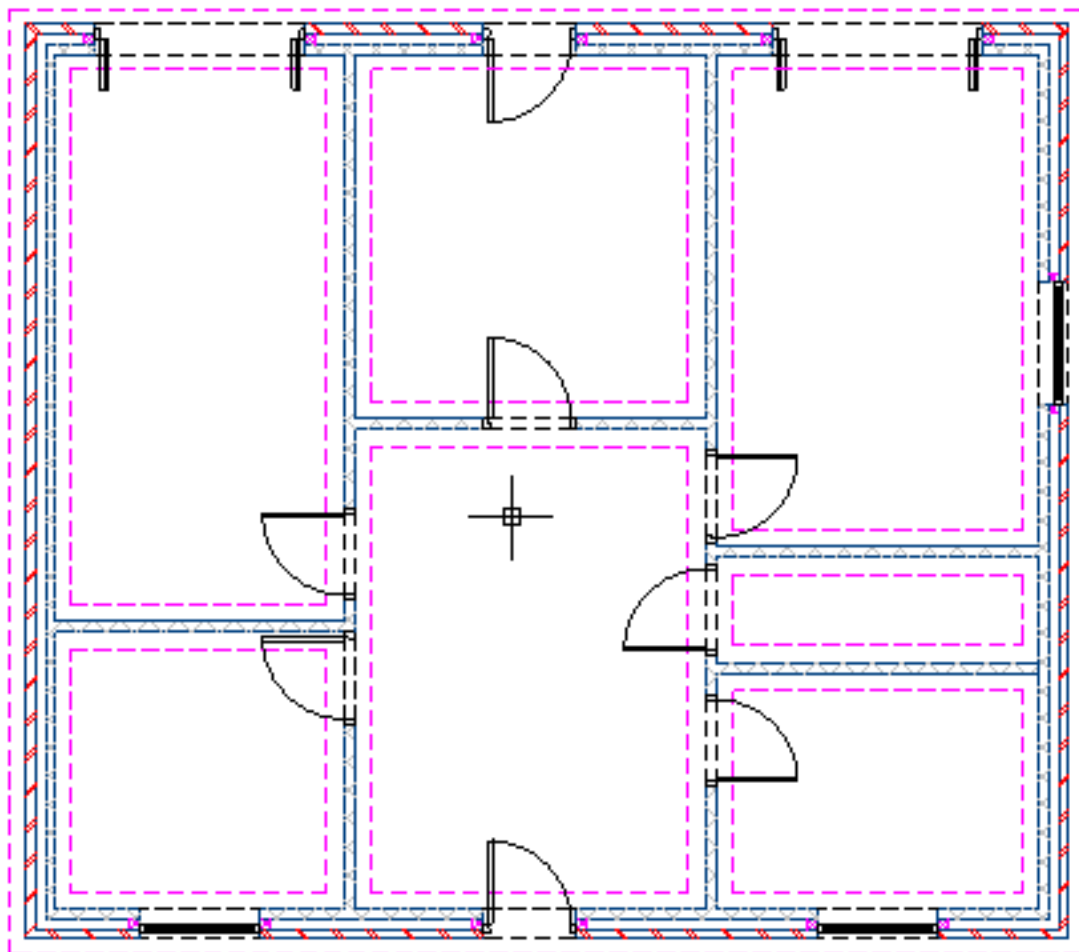


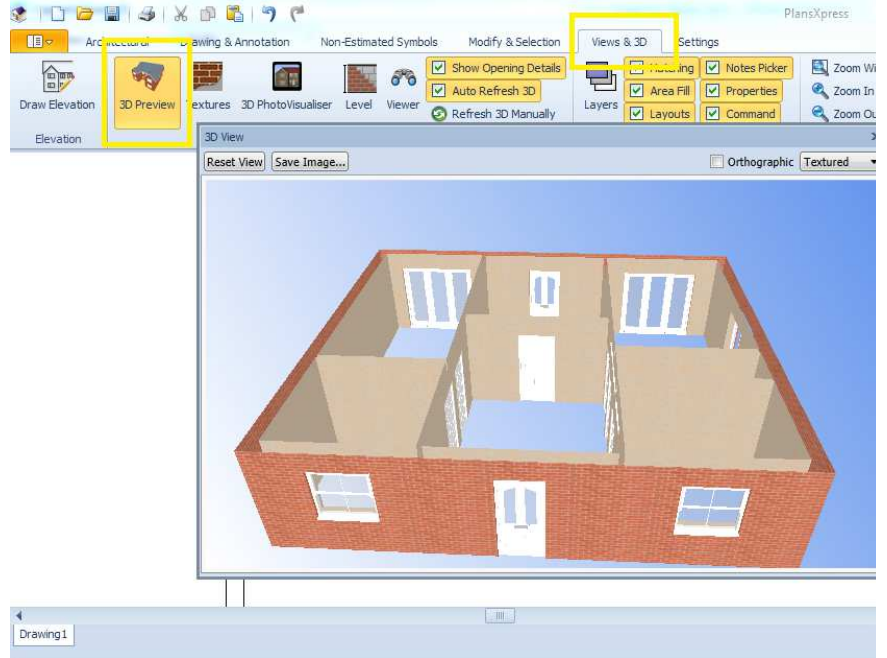
Diagram showing placement of Windows and Doors



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Lets have a look at our bungalow so far in the 3D Preview...

26. Once you have placed your doors and windows press 3D button on the Views and 3D Tab to create 3D image. Click on screen to rotate image. Switch on textures with drop down arrow button in top right of the 3D window.

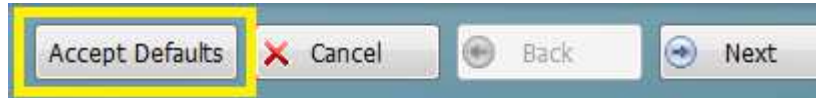




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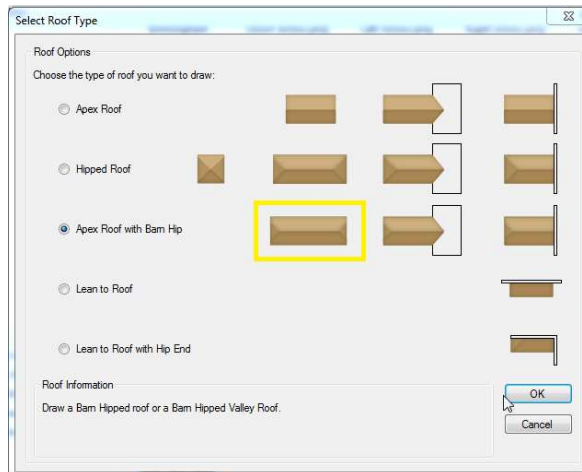
## Placing the Roof

27. Select a cut roof to place on the bungalow.



Select Accept Defaults.

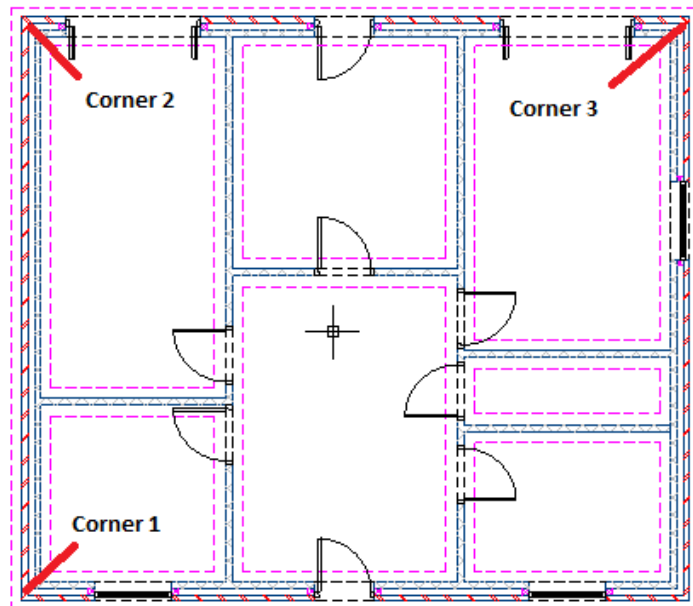
28. Select Roof Type (Apex Roof with Barn Hip)



29. Click on the left hand side supporting wall. (This tells the software the height that the roof will be placed.)

Now click on the three **corners** as shown on the diagram opposite, by the red lines, in sequence. PlansXpress will then draw out the bungalow roof automatically.

Remember to Zoom In and Out as required to get an accurate roof using the scroll wheel.

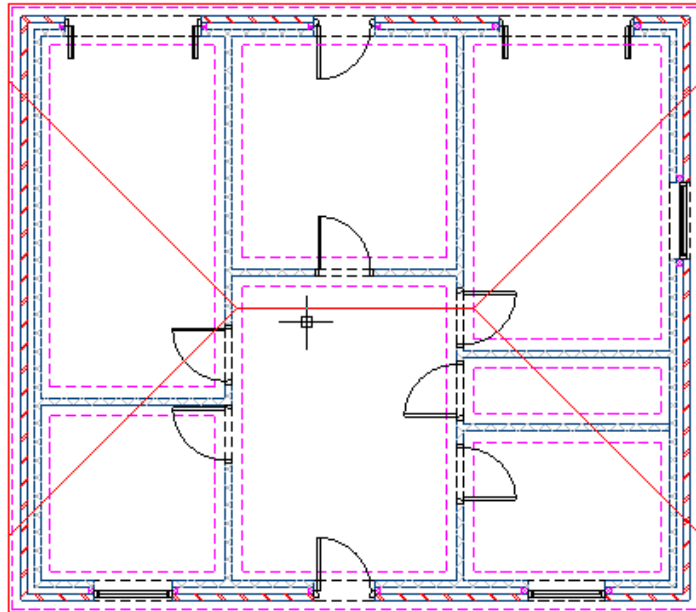


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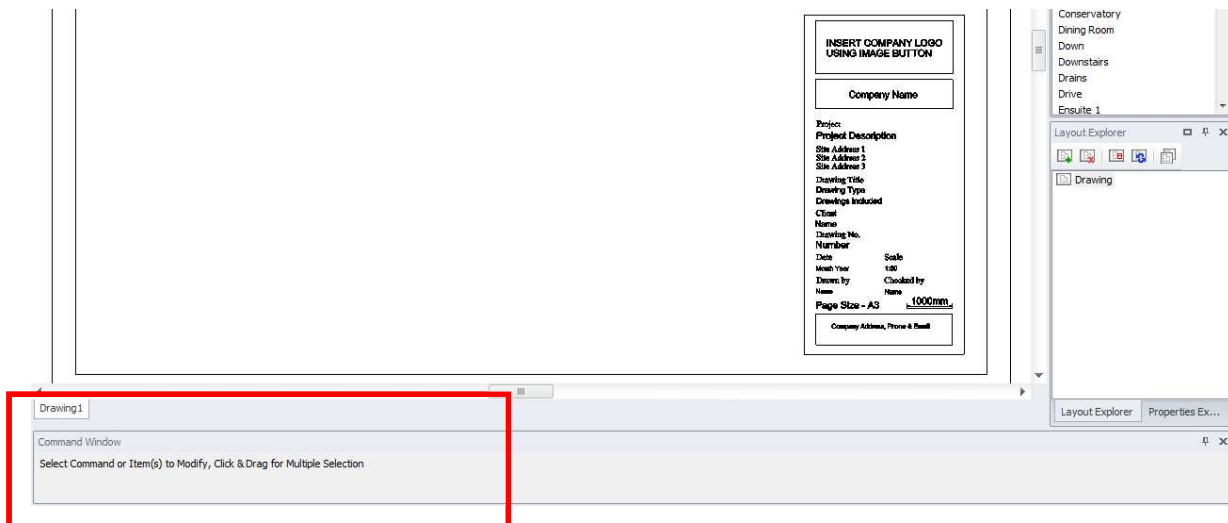
You will be asked if you want to consider a ceiling, purlins etc – for the purposes of this say No.

You can have a look at these options later by going into the Roof section on the Architectural Menu, and look at Sloping Roof Accessories.

Roof is automatically placed on drawing.



As you are going through this process, note the Command Window at the bottom of the screen – it is always telling you what you need to do next.



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Now let's look at the Bunglaow again in the 3D View



Now create 3D view using 3D View button again.

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Ok, now you have finished your basic house design, feel free to experiment with some of the other options on the Architectural Menu. For example, this house will need a floor slab and also some ceilings. As you draw each of these items, follow the prompt in the Command Window at the bottom of the screen.

Once you have finished your drawing you can output in several ways.

- The 3D images can be saved using the **Save Image** button. This is a great way of giving your client a visualization of the job you are working on.
- The drawing can be imported into EstimatorXpress for automatic costs, material lists and to produce a quote as well as notes for building regulations.
- You can export your drawing in numerous electronic formats such as DXF, PDF or various picture formats. These files could then be emailed to a client, Planning Office, or transferred to a tablet for presentation purposes.
- You can of course print out the drawing if you have a suitable printer, and if you don't you can take your exported file (see previous point) to a print bureau locally, or email it to an online printer if you want a large format printout.

Please remember, even though this is a trial edition, you are more than welcome to contact our technical support team (in fact we insist you do!!) if you find yourself stuck or with any questions on the software. We would much rather spend a few minutes helping you to understand a particular aspect of the software than for you to be stuck or have an unanswered question.

## **Order Hotline**

0845 1234 065

## **Need Help or Support?**

Call 0845 1234 065

Email: [support@hbxl.co.uk](mailto:support@hbxl.co.uk)

Online Chat: <http://www.hbxl.co.uk/chat>

## **Have you tried EstimatorXpress?**

Download it today and follow the EstimatorXpress Getting Started guide at <http://www.hbxl.co.uk/Files/pdfs/EstimatorXpress%20Trial%20Getting%20Started%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>



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