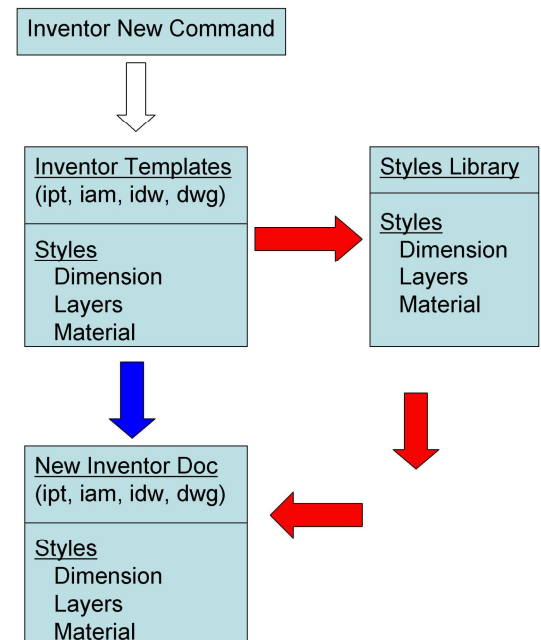
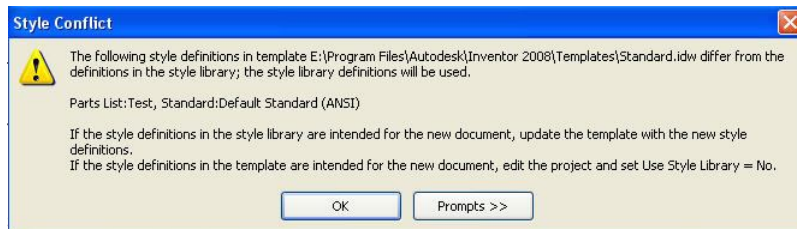


Inventor 2008 Styles Library Overview

Inventor uses styles to control the format and other parameters of objects inside documents. Some examples of this are dimensions inside an Inventor drawing, and material and color of an Inventor ipt. This collection of “styles” are saved inside of each Inventor document (two different ipts can have different style settings on the same machine), and these are accessed through the Style and Standard Editor in the Format drop down menu. Since these settings are all stored in each individual file, Autodesk wanted to provide a way to make changes to a style and update old and new document styles without having to open each document and change each style one by one. This is a great benefit to administrators trying to make sure that all documents conform to certain standards. For single users, this might be more work than it is worth (see best practices below). To do this, they created a “Styles Library”. This styles library allows a user to create or edit a style within a document, then save this style to a central location (as long as the styles library is on the network). Below are some descriptions of settings and features within Inventor relating to the styles library.

Project File / New Document

The setting in the project file for “Use Styles Library” has three options, “Yes”, “Read Only”, and “No”. A general explanation of this setting is this: If it is set to yes or read only, then upon creating a new document, Inventor will check the style settings in the template to be used and compare it to the style settings in the styles library. If they are different, Inventor will automatically update the styles in the new document that is being created to match the styles library and may pop up with a “style conflict” dialog box. This overall process is shown with the path of white and red arrows in the diagram to the right. There is also a setting for the location of the styles library which will be covered later in this document.



If this project setting is set to “No”, then Inventor will not compare the settings of the template to the styles library and continue to create a new document based only on the styles settings of the template. This overall process is shown with the path of white and blue arrows above.

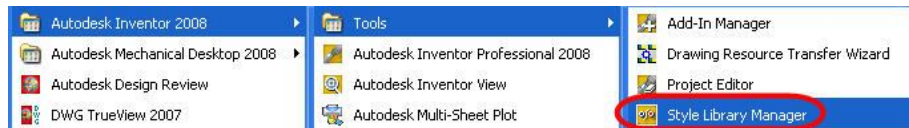
Open/Update Existing Documents

Upon opening an existing document inside Inventor it will not compare the settings of the styles within that document to the settings in the library automatically. Instead you must run the “Update Styles” command. This command will bring up a dialog box to list out each style in the document that setting’s differ from the setting’s of the styles in the library. More information can be found about this dialog box and the settings within by clicking the help button in the bottom left corner of the dialog box. If your project file setting is set to “No” for “Use Styles Library, this option will be grayed out.

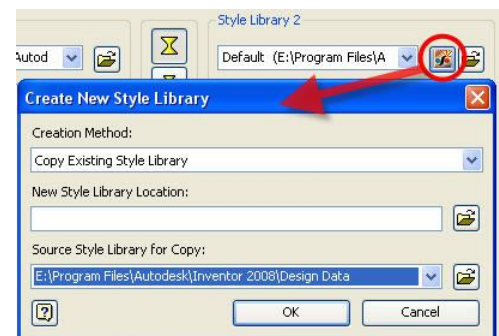


Creating a Styles Library

Upon installing Inventor, a default styles library is created in the install directory (default in C:\Program Files\Autodesk\Inventor 2008\Design Data\). This library is a collection of xml files that define these styles. Of course the default settings and location is not going to work for most users, so a user needs to create a new styles library and populate it with their styles. The location of this library will most likely be on a network drive to allow all users of a workgroup access to those styles.



In order to create a new styles library, select Start – All Programs – Autodesk – Inventor 2008 – Tools – Styles Library Manager (see above). Once the dialog for the Library Manager is open, you can create a new library based on the default that was installed with the software. In order to do this, select the “Create New Styles Library” icon in the top right section of the “Styles Library 2” half of the dialog box (see right). There are other options for creating a new styles library and they are explained in the help which can be found by clicking the icon in the bottom left of this dialog box. Any styles can be automatically copied from the default library and put into your newly created library from the Styles Manager to save time populating the new library with styles.



Once you have created this new styles library, you will need to tell Inventor which styles library you wish to use and where it is located. In order to do this you must change the setting “Design Data (Styles, etc)” under the Folder Options in the project settings. This will probably say “Default” currently, which tells Inventor to look at the setting in the Application Options on the “Files” tab to find the location for the styles library. Instead of using the default setting, you can browse to the folder location of the newly created Styles library. Once this is changed Inventor will now look in this new location for the styles library (you must change the project file setting, save it and it must be the active project).

Updating Styles in a Library

Once you have your styles library created and also have most of the styles inside the library that have been copied from the default, you will need to change some of these styles to change the settings to your personal preference or even create new styles for your needs.



In order to do this, start a new document. When using a library your project file should of course be set to either read only or yes.

Inventor should automatically update your styles in this new document to match the settings in the library. Changes and new styles can then be made through the Style and Standard Editor. Once the styles are saved, they are only saved within the current document. To save these to the library, you can either right click on an individual style and select “save to styles library”, or you can close the editor and select Format – Save Styles to Styles Library to save out multiple styles to the library at once. More information can be found on the tools within these functions through the help inside the dialog box. In



order to save these changes to the library, the setting in the project file for “Use Styles Library” must be set to “Yes”. If it is set to “Read Only”, these tools will be grayed out and not available.

Best Practices

- Single Users might find it easier to have the project file setting for “Use Styles Library” set to “No”. It will take some extra work to manage the styles library and settings. Since the benefits of using styles libraries is not as great for a single user compared to a multi-user environment, the benefits of using this option might not be worth the extra work to a single user.
- While it is possible to leave the project file setting for the location of the styles library as “default” and change the location for “default” in application options, it is easier to change the location of the styles library in the project rather than the application options. By changing the project file settings, you only change it once and every user points to that project file. By changing the application options, you would have to change it on every user’s machine.
- It is best to use a blank document created from existing templates to update styles in the library. This way you can make the changes in the template, save those styles to the library, then save that document as the template. This way you won’t see any conflicts between the documents created from the templates and the styles library.