



# Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

## *Essential ArcView Skills - the Basics*

*Keywords: ArcView Essentials, save, add theme, classify, ArcView 3.x*

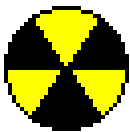
### Introduction

ArcView GIS is an exciting and powerful software package for viewing and analyzing spatial data. It can also seem complex, especially to a new or casual user. This Tip Sheet should remove some of the initial “mystery” of basic ArcView use by presenting a set of essential ArcView skills. These skills will be needed every time you use ArcView.

To make it easier to refer back to this document after you have been away from ArcView for awhile, this Tip Sheet has been written in an abbreviated step-by-step style.

After an initial discussion of the ArcView interface, the following skills are covered:

- Opening an ArcView Project
- Saving a Project
- Creating a View
- Adding a Theme
- Classifying a Theme
- Assigning Symbols to a Theme



This tip sheet is not meant to replace introductory ArcView training, but to serve as a refresher for essential ArcView skills.

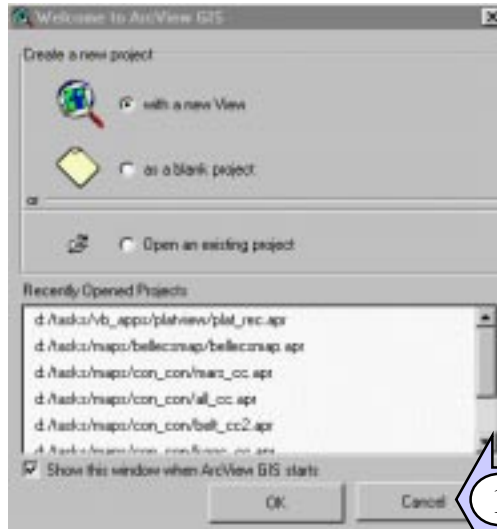


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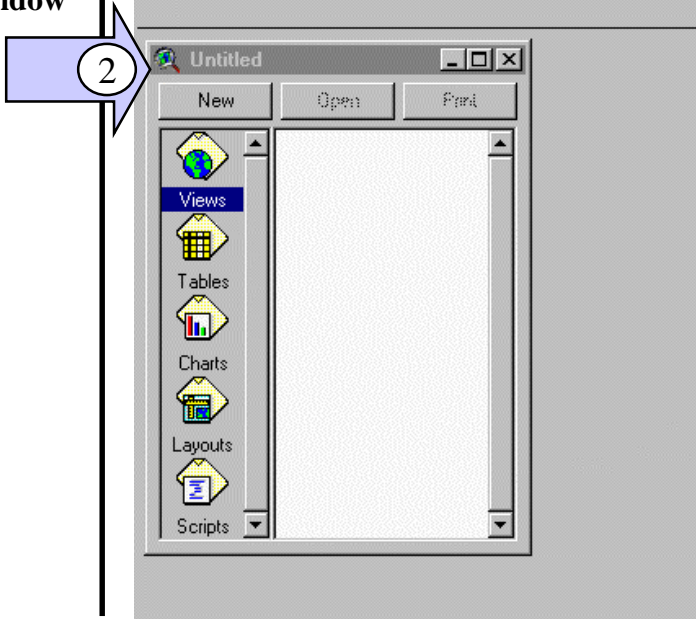
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### The ArcView Interface



When you first start ArcView, you may be prompted with a “Welcome” dialog that allows you to start ArcView with a new view, a blank project, or an existing project. Clicking **Cancel** (1) will open ArcView with no project loaded. You may want to choose other options as you become more familiar with ArcView.

### The ArcView Project Window



The main ArcView interface consists of menus, toolbars, and document windows. Initially the project window is shown (2). This window organizes the documents (Views, Tables, Charts, Layout, Scripts). From the project window, you can select the different document types. Buttons at the top of the project window allow you to open new documents of the type selected (in this case - Views), open existing documents that are already in the project, and print documents if appropriate. Think of the project window as a sort of “Project Explorer” from which you can manage, view, and organize the contents of the project.



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### The ArcView Project Window

Project Window Documents:

VIEW: Used to add, create, and render data for viewing and analysis.

TABLE: Database and text tables for creation, maintenance, and query of tabular data.

CHART: Used to create bar and pie chart representations of tabular data.

LAYOUT: Map layout and design document for creating maps and printed versions of data, map layers, tables, charts, and graphics.

SCRIPT: Document for writing a script with ArcView's own Avenue language to automate and add features.

### Essential Skills

Opening an ArcView Project

- Saving a Project
- Creating a View
- Adding a Theme
- Classifying a Theme
- Assigning Symbols to a Theme

#### •Saving a project:

- 1) from the **FILE** menu, choose *Save Project*,
- 2) a *Save Project As...* dialog will appear,
- 3) navigate to the directory and disk in which you want to save the project,
- 4) enter a filename for the project and click OK,
- 5) subsequent saves can be done by clicking the save button on the button bar (the button with the floppy disk icon on it).

#### •Creating a view:

- 1) from the **Project** window, select *Views* by clicking on the Views Icon,
- 2) click the *New* button at the top of the *Project* window,
- 3) a new view document should appear.

\* - double-clicking the *Views* icon will also create a new view.



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### Essential Skills cont'd

#### •Adding a theme:

- 1) make the **View** window that you want to add the theme to active by clicking on its title bar,
- 2) from the **VIEW** menu, choose *Add Theme...*  
or
- 2) click the *Add Theme* button on the button bar (with a plus icon on it).

#### •Classifying a theme - by unique attributes:

- 1) load the theme into a view (see above),
- 2) double-click the theme name in the **View's** table of contents - the strip containing theme names to the left of the map area in the view window,
- 3) the **Legend Editor** dialog should appear,
- 4) in the **Legend Editor** change the legend type to *Unique Value*,
- 5) in the *values field* box - choose the field that contains the attribute information you wish to classify (ex. - if you are attempting to classify a theme of point data, where the points represent bird nesting sites - and you want to show a different symbol for each species - select the field that contains the species name.)



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### •Assigning symbols to a theme:

- 1) load a theme into a view and open the legend editor (see above),
- 2) the **legend editor** displays the symbol chosen to represent the theme (for polygon themes, this is displayed as a rectangle, for line themes, this is displayed as a zig-zag line. For point themes, this is displayed as a point),
- 3) double-click the symbol in the **legend editor** to open the **symbol window**,
- 4) the **symbol window** has buttons across the top to select various symbol properties. They are arranged left to right as FILL properties, LINE properties, POINT SYMBOL properties, TEXT properties, COLOR properties, and PALETTE properties,
- 5) click a properties button (ex. FILL properties) and the properties will appear in the **symbol window**. Adjust the properties as desired (ex. Change the point symbol and the symbol size),
- 6) go back to the **Legend Editor** and click *Apply* to change the theme to the new symbol scheme.

\* - if you want to change the symbols used when classifying a theme by unique attributes, classify the theme by attributes as above, then follow the "Assigning symbols to a theme" instructions for each theme classification that you want to change the symbol for.



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### *How to Read This Document*

#### **Formatting Conventions**

The following conventional terms, text formats, and symbols are used throughout this document. These formatting styles are designed to make this document more readable and to guide you in what buttons, menus, and inputs that the programs may require.

#### **BOLD UPPERCASE**

All text in **BOLD UPPERCASE** letters refers to a drop-down menu. When you see this style of text you should be able to look at the menu interface and find a menu with this name.

#### *Italics*

All text in *Italic* format refers to drop-down menu options. In this case the text are usually preceded by a **BOLD UPPERCASE** menu option in the form:

**MENU: *Option***

#### **BOLD ITALICS UPPERCASE**

Text formatted as **BOLD ITALICS UPPERCASE** refers to a form or dialog window. These windows are not part of the standard ArcView interface and usually “float” above the ArcView screen.

#### ***Bold Italics***

Text formatted as ***Bold-Italic*** refer to buttons that you will find on an interface or dialog box.

#### “Double-Quoted”

Any “Double-Quoted” text refers to text you should see on the screen in a dialog, menu, button or tool.

#### “DOUBLE-QUOTED UPPERCASE”

Any “DOUBLE-QUOTED UPPERCASE” text refers to text that you will type in exactly as shown.



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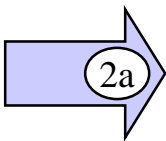
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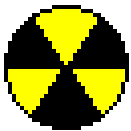
<*Italic text in arrows*>

When the instructions need to direct the user to a disk drive, such as a CDROM reader, whose designation varies from PC to PC. In this case you will see the instructions encased in arrows (<>) and italicized. For example <*CDROM*> would represent the drive letter that is your CDROM reader. On my system it would be E:\.

Arrows



When you see an Arrow with a number in it this is pointing something referenced in the text of the document. This helps you find the topic or input line that you are looking for. The number in the arrow always has a corresponding reference in the body of the instructions you are reading. Usually these are used in lessons or tutorials.



When you see the Radiation Icon you should recognize this as a warning. You need to read this to make sure that you avoid common mistakes or problems that are often encountered



When you see the Light bulb icon this represents a hint or trick that you can use to make life easier.