Introduction to PCB layout

ELEC391 - Spring 2020
PCB Design support for ELEC391:

Altium 2018, 150 licenses

Talks:
• Jan 21  Introduction to PCB layout
• Mar 16 (TBC) Invited talk: PCB Fabrication

Fabrication deadlines, Mondays:
Feb 3, Feb 10, Feb 17, Feb 24, Mar 2, Mar 9, Mar 16

Support & submission instructions posted [here](#)
Contents

• PCB design flow
• How to install Altium Designer 2018
• Overview of Altium Designer
• Design example as backdrop to introduce PCB concepts
• Instructions for ELEC391 fabrication submissions
• Reference section: PCB design best practices

Credits:
• Unless explicitly stated all source material is from the Altium website and Altium training documents.
• [B1] Complete PCB Design Using OrCad Capture and Layout \ Kraig Mitzner, 2007
PCB Design Flow
Typical PCB Design flow

Front-end design and capture

Generate CAM files
- Fabricate
- Populate

Separate tools or integrated environments

Conceptual Idea
- System Definition
- Schematic Capture
- PCB Layout
- Debug/Test
- Final Product
- Pass
- Fail

Mixed-signal circuit simulation
Typical PCB Design flow

- Front-end design and capture
  - Mixed-signal circuit simulation
  - Schematic Capture
  - System Definition
  - Conceptual Idea
Typical PCB Design flow

Placement

Physical PCB Design

Routing

Conceptual Idea

System Definition

Schematic Capture

DRC check

PCB Layout
Typical PCB Design flow:

1. Conceptual Idea
2. System Definition
3. Schematic Capture
4. PCB Layout
5. Debug/Test

- Generate CAM files
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Typical PCB Design flow

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http://e2e.ti.com/
How to install
Altium Designer 2018
How to install Altium 2018

- Link to instructions:
  https://www.ece.ubc.ca/~eng-services/Altium/
  - Create an account at Altium Live:
    email: engservices@ece.ubc.ca (fast)
    http://live.altium.com/#signin (slow & not linked to our license)
  - Download Altium v2018
  - Connect to license server

- Access to license server:
  - Lab PC or a wired connection to ECE network
  - Wireless connection at UBC (ubcprivate, ubcsecure)
  - My VPN connection
To set the license server

1. **Sign in**
   - Altium Account - not signed in
   - Sign in
   - Forgotten password?
   - Account preferences

2. **Setup private license server**
   - Save standalone license file
   - Add standalone license file
   - Reconnect to private license server

3. **See instructions online**
   - Private License Server Setup
   - Primary server
     - Server name:
     - Server address:
     - Server port:
   - Secondary server
     - Server name:
     - Server address:
     - Server port:

If you lose connection to server click here
If you have problems with server, Disconnect from & Reconnect to server
To use a license

Right click

If you are having problems with the license server: Disconnect & Reconnect
Getting started with Altium Designer 2018

Exploring Altium Designer

Altium Designer documentation:

Do complete this tutorial

Jumping into PCB Design (and Altium Designer)

The design you will be capturing and then designing a printed circuit board (PCB) for, is a simple astable multivibrator. The circuit - shown to the left - uses two general purpose NPN transistors, configured as a self-running astable multivibrator.

The tutorial touches on many of the areas of the software that you will need to become conversant with, in your day-to-day design work - what better way to familiarize yourself with, and get to know, your powerful design 'partner'.

Best training material is on the Altium website. Info is updated, but beware that menus and options change between versions. ver 2018 <> ver 2016
Overview of Altium Designer
Altium Designer 2018

A unified design environment

System requirements (MS W7, W8, W10)

- Front-end design and capture
- Physical PCB design
- Mixed-signal circuit simulation
- Signal integrity analysis
- Multi-Board Assembly
- Power Integrity Analyzer
- PCB manufacturing
Professional Design Environment

• Unified platform for individual or corporate use

• Collaborative environment (corporate tool):
  – Multiple users, some with dedicated tasks
  – Design team incremental changes day-by-day
  – Built-in version control (SVN subversion or CVS concurrent versions system)
  – Design repositories / Vaults (accessible by multiple users with different credentials)

• Cloud oriented support:
  – Save preferences online
  – http://live.altium.com/ (forum, design content, blog)
  – Altium Vault (dynamic library of components)
Advice for ELEC391

• Keep it simple
• Focus on schematic entry & layout
• One page schematics
• Locate the right library models for your parts
• Stay away from very small SMD components
• Remember that ECE will take care of CAD file generation and fabrication
Altium Design X2 Environment
Recommended basic panels

For more help working with panels read this
Tips
(Basics for the single user)

Don't forget:

• Use Keyboard shortcuts
  <Shift + F1> while running a command for a list of shortcuts

• <Esc> or Right Click to exit a command mode

• Save documents and project often
Design Example
Design example

L298 Motor Driver Board
(by Matt Winship)

3D View on Layout Editor

L298_Motor_Driver_Board_Datasheet.pdf
Create project files

1. Project file
2. Schematic file
3. PCB file

When creating the project file remember to use “Save As” to rename. Otherwise your project will be called “PCB_Project1”

Create Schematic & PCB files. Remember to rename accordingly. It is good practice to save all files in the same directory.
Steps to create the Schematic

1. Load libraries

2. Draw the schematic
   Set electrical type for connector pins

3. Compile Project:
   Project → Project Options
   More on: Compiling and Verifying the Design

4. Place no ERC labels if necessary
   Modify connection matrix with caution
   More on: No ERC Directive
Wiring Tips

• Left-click or <Enter> to anchor the wire at the cursor position.
• <Backspace> (←) to remove the last anchor point.
• <Spacebar> to toggle the direction of the corner.
• <Shift+Spacebar> to cycle through all possible corner modes.
• Right-click or <Esc> to exit wire placement mode.
• To graphically edit the shape of a wire, Click once to select it first, then Click and hold on a segment or vertex to move it.
• Whenever a wire crosses the connection point of a component, or is terminated on another wire, a junction will automatically be created.
• A wire that crosses the end of a pin will connect to that pin, even if you delete the junction.
• To move a placed component and drag connected wires with it, hold down the Ctrl key while moving the component, or select Move » Drag.
About Libraries

More on: Understanding Models, Components and Libraries

• Component representations for different phases of design:
  – Schematic symbol
  – PCB footprint
  – SPICE model definitions
  – Signal integrity description
  – 3D graphical description
Libraries = collection of components

- Collection of components, models or both
- Model Libraries (*.MDL, *.CKT, *.PCBLib)
  - Simulation models are one file per model
  - PCBLib libraries are typically a collection of footprints
- Schematic Libraries (*.SchLib)
  - Symbol and a link to a model library
- Integrated Libraries (*.IntLib)
  - Symbol, footprint and other models are compiled into a single portable file to create …
  - Unified components with links to all domain models + parametric information
Obtaining integrated libraries

1. Altium default libraries
   Miscellaneous Connectors
   Miscellaneous Devices

2. Altium Vault
   Cloud dynamic collection of unified components
   includes real-time supply chain information

3. Frozen (legacy) libraries: from here
   you can install anywhere but it is a good idea to make a subfolder under:
   C:\Users\Public\Public Documents\Altium\AD18\Library
   or a cloud storage service if you work from more than one PC

4. AltiumLive website: Resources / Design Content

5. IC Manufacturer sites (specially simulation models)

6. ELEC391 libraries from last year: here

7. Make your own
Accessing libraries

1. Library Panel
2. Explorer Panel (with an Altium Live account)
Configuring libraries

- **Project**: part of and available only to the active project and its documents. You have to keep track of where these are if you move the project files.

- **Installed**: All installed libraries. Components are available to all open projects and list is persistent across design sessions.

- **Search Path**: Additional Libraries accessible via a search path and sub-folders. The search paths are valid for the active project.
Libraries Panel:

All libraries available to the active project

Project + Installed + Search Path

When placing component:

- `<spacebar>` to rotate
- `<x>` or `<y>` to flip
- `<Tab>` open properties dialog
- `<L>` for PCB footprints
to flip component side

To search across libraries:

Search …
How to select items from the Vault?

Often you will get several choices for the same part, e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revision ID</th>
<th>Revision State</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMP-1048-01464-1</td>
<td>Released</td>
<td>BC547CG</td>
<td>Amplifier Transistor, NPN Silicon, 3-Pin TO-92, Pb-Free, Bulk Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMP-1048-01437-1</td>
<td>Released</td>
<td>BC547C</td>
<td>Amplifier Transistor, NPN Silicon, 3-Pin TO-92, Bulk Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMP-1048-01606-1</td>
<td>Released</td>
<td>BC547CZL1G</td>
<td>Amplifier Transistor, NPN Silicon, 3-Pin TO-92, Pb-Free, Ammo Box</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are typically different component or shipping packaging options. Read the description and check the footprints carefully.

Bulk (TO-92) = loose parts
Ammo Box (TO-92)

RoHS = Compliance

2N2222 (TO-18)

2N2222 (3-Pin SMD)
Through-hole Packages & Components

- Use holes drilled through the PCB for mounting the components which are (typ.) soldered on the bottom layer
  - axial
    - e.g. resistor, capacitor
  - radial
    - e.g. capacitor, transistor, LED

- Dual in-line package, DIPn → DIP14
  - Pin spacing is 0.1”
  - TTL, CMOS, Linear (Analog) ICs
Surface Mount Packages

- Use SMD for high density, small parasitics, or a specific IC
- Passives Flatchip (ceramic Rs, Cs) 4-digit size code

Surface Mount Packages

- There are many types of packages (with leads, lead-less)
- List of integrated circuit packaging types (wikipedia)
  List of integrated circuit package dimensions
- Good visual reference is the NXP posters
  Discretes_package_poster.pdf
  Discrete_Flat_No-leads_DFN_package_poster.pdf

Difficult to solder by hand
Footprints are made out of pads

- Pads: contact areas for soldering components, test points, and solder traps
- Pads can have any shape
- Single layer pads: Top/bottom layer, common for SMT, end launch connectors
- Multi-layer pads: for through hole components
- Footprints are a collection of pads

Figure 5-7  Footprint dimensions (typical convention).

Figure 5-12  Radial-leaded through-hole device. (a) Axial-leaded capacitor. (b) Layout axial footprint
LM298 Motor Driver Board Layout

- Size 1.2” x 2”
- 2 layers
- Mounting holes
- Thick traces for \( V_- \) and \( V_+ \)
- Power planes for \( V_s \) and GND
2 starting points for PCB design

1. From a companion schematic package
   - Prepare project schematics
   - Import schematic design
   - Component footprints are added automatically
   - Connectivity is indicated with rats nests
   - Net names are imported from the schematic

2. Directly from the PCB editor
   - You need to select and place manually each component footprint from a library
   - No rats nest – connectivity
   - You must assign nets manually (at least GND)
Steps to complete the Layout

1. Choose work units (metric or imperial)
you can switch at any time
2. Set the grid
3. Define the board shape
   plan for mounting holes and account for connectors
4. Set the origin
   although you can move it for convenience as you work
5. Transfer the design from the schematic
6. Place components and mounting holes
7. Route
8. Draw a board outline, add labels (group #)
9. DRC Check
Working units

- Imperial (inches)
  - 1/1000\textsuperscript{th} of an inch = 1 mil = 1 thou
  - 100mils (0.1”) is a common dimension

- Metric (mm)
  - 1 mm ≠ 1mil!
  - Common unit in SM parts

- Remember: 100mils = 2.54mm
- To switch units in Altium Press <Q>
About the grid …

• The PCB Editor is a grid based environment
• Objects are placed on a ‘placement or snap grid’
• Placement is assisted such as the user doesn’t need to aim with absolute accuracy
• Unified Cursor-Snap System >> Properties Panel
  • User defined grids (Cartesian & Polar), that can start at any location and cover different size areas
    Default snap grid is called: Global Board Snap Grid
  • Press <G> to set Global grid step, define grids etc.
• You can work with just the Global Grid, and adjust the step to coarse when placing parts, and fine values when routing
  • More about the PCB Grid system here
PCB Editor view modes

- **Viewing modes:**
  - **Board Planning Mode <1>**
    - Design » Edit Board Shape
    - Design >> Move Board Shape
  - **2D Layout Mode <2>**
  - **3D Layout Mode <3>**
Design transfer

Design >> Update PCB Document …

Rat’s nests indicate connectivity as per schematic (Net names are assigned to part terminals)

All parts in the schematic with their selected footprints
PCBs are multi-layer entities

Top view all layers
Top overlay layer
Top copper layer
This is a 2 layer PCB
1 dielectric substrate with top and bottom copper

You as a designer specify the location of objects and features of every layer

Holes, vias, and footprints are grouped multi-layer objects

More complex PCBs have a stack-up of multiple boards and hence more layers
PCB Laminates

• Substrate (laminate)
  – Rigid board of insulating material, provides structural support.
  – Available in different materials and thicknesses, e.g:
    FR4, Rogers/Duroid, Teflon (PTFE) 8mils (0.2mm) → 240mils (6.1mm)
  – Most commonly used material type is FR4, 62mils thick
  – Available with different copper thicknesses
    Cu thickness measured in weight oz/ft²
    ½ oz → 0.7mils
    1 oz → 1.4mils
    2 oz → 2.8mils

1mil = 25μm
PCB Anatomy: Layer Stackup

Design >> Layer Stack Manager …
This will enable additional layers as required

Information on substrate thickness, type and dielectric is not included in Gerber CAM files, these need to be explained separately to the manufacturer.

This is a two-sided board with only: Top Layer & Bottom Layer
Working with Layers

- Use the tabs at the bottom of the editor to switch between layers.

To switch to single layer mode:

- Use the shortcut `<Shift><S>`.

To set relevant layers:

- Go to `View » Panels » View Configuration` or press `<L>`.
Configuring the Display Layers

- **Electrical layers**
  32 signal layers and 16 internal power plane layers.

- **Mechanical layers**
  32 general purpose mechanical layers, used for design tasks such as dimensions, fabrication details, assembly instructions, or special purpose tasks such as glue dot layers. These layers can be selectively included in print and Gerber output generation. They can also be paired, meaning that objects placed on one of the paired layers in the library editor, will flip to the other layer in the pair when the component is flipped to the bottom side of the board.

- **Special layers**
  these include the top and bottom silkscreen layers, the solder and paste mask layers, drill layers, the Keep-Out layer (used to define the electrical boundaries), the multilayer (used for multilayer pads and vias), the connection layer, DRC error layer, grid layers, hole layers, and other display-type layers.
Mechanical Layers

- Multi-purpose layers
- E.g. Altium supports 32 Mechanical layers: M1 … M32
- Typically
  - M1  Board outline
  - M2  PCB manufacturing info
  - M11-M12 Top and bottom layer dimensions
  - M13 Top layer 3D models and mechanical outlines
  - M14 Bottom layer 3D models and mechanical outlines
  - M15 Top layer assembly information
  - M16 Bottom layer assembly information
Positioning components & routing

Place a plane on top for GND
Place a plane bottom for Vs
Positioning components & routing

• When placing components:
  – Try to align parts (same orientation)
  – Ensure that labels are all set in the same direction
  – Beware of bulky connectors (use 3D view with caution)

Yellow (top overlay) lines in footprints typically mark the physical boundaries of a part. However, you must be cautious and think about it. This footprint includes the space taken by a heatsink, but does not show it in the 3D view.
About Traces / Tracks

• Copper traces are patterned either by:
  – Photolithography: requires photomasks
  – Laser: used to draw patterns on photoresist
  – Mechanical milling: Cu is removed to isolate the traces.

• Trace width and thickness determines:
  – Ampacity (current carrying capacity)
  – Characteristic impedance for RF designs

• Practical limitations:
  – Minimum trace width and gap for e.g. 7mils/7mils is typical fab. spec.

Negative view:
Copper planes, Drill holes, Solder Masks

Figure 1-11 Copper pad and trace after etching and resist stripping.

Figure 1-12 A mechanically milled trace.
Determining trace width

Use the following online trace width calculator:
http://circuitcalculator.com/wordpress/2006/01/31/pcb-trace-width-calculator
Handy shortcuts for routing

- Press * on the numeric keypad while routing to cycle through the available signal layers. A via will automatically be added, in accordance with the applicable Routing Via Style design rule. Alternatively, use **Ctrl+Shift+Roll** shortcuts to move back and forth through the available signal layers.

- **Shift+R** to cycle through the enabled conflict resolution modes, including Push, Walkaround, Hug and Push, and Ignore. Enable the required modes in the **PCB Editor - Interactive Routing** page of the **Preferences** dialog.

- **Shift+S** to cycle single layer mode on and off, ideal when there are many objects on multiple layers.

- **Spacebar** to toggle the corner direction (for all but any angle mode).

- **Shift+Spacebar** to cycle through the various track corner modes. The styles are: any angle, 45°, 45° with arc, 90° and 90° with arc. There is an option to limit this to 45° and 90° in the **PCB Editor - Interactive Routing** page of the **Preferences** dialog.
## Design Rules

### Design >> Rules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Constrain</th>
<th>Query</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electrical, Clearance</td>
<td>Min clearance = 7mil</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Routing, Width</strong></td>
<td>Min width = 7mils</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max width = 500mils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preferred = 10mils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Routing, Width</strong></td>
<td>Min width = 7mils</td>
<td>Advanced (Query)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IO</strong></td>
<td>Max width = 500mils</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preferred = 10mils</td>
<td>InNet(‘V+’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Width</strong></td>
<td>Min width = 7mils</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vss</strong></td>
<td>Max width = 500mils</td>
<td>InNet(‘V-‘))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preferred = 10mils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Width</strong></td>
<td>Min width = 7mils</td>
<td>Net Vss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vss</strong></td>
<td>Max width = 500mils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preferred = 20mils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Custom Routing design rules

Rename to “Width_IO’
Belongs to net V+
OR
Belongs to V-

Use ‘Custom Query’ to set

Set rule execution priority
Auto route

- Rout » Un-Route » All
- Auto Route » All

- You can also set single layer routing
Holes

Holes can be:

- Vias, multi-layer pads, mounting holes, or cuts
- Plated or non plated

You must specify whether a hole is plated or non plated during the design process

Plating reduces hole size by 0.003”
## Hole sizes

- Common hole sizes: non-plated vs. plated sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drill Number Set</th>
<th>Drill Size</th>
<th>Finished Size</th>
<th>Approximate Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#76</td>
<td>.020&quot;</td>
<td>.017&quot;</td>
<td>via holes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#70</td>
<td>.028&quot;</td>
<td>.025&quot;</td>
<td>via holes, fine lead devices such as trim pots etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#65</td>
<td>.035&quot;</td>
<td>.032&quot;</td>
<td>IC's, 1/4 watt resistors, small diodes, ripple caps etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#62</td>
<td>.038&quot;</td>
<td>.035&quot;</td>
<td>Square posted pins that measure .025&quot; on the flat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#58</td>
<td>.042&quot;</td>
<td>.039&quot;</td>
<td>TO-220 packages, IDC type square posted headers, 1/2 watt resistors, 1N9000 series diodes, IC chip carriers, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#55</td>
<td>.052&quot;</td>
<td>.049&quot;</td>
<td>larger connectors, transformer leads, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#53</td>
<td>.060&quot;</td>
<td>.057&quot;</td>
<td>similar to .052&quot; above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#44</td>
<td>.086&quot;</td>
<td>.083&quot;</td>
<td>TO-220 mounting holes, screw holes, general mounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 in.</td>
<td>.125&quot;</td>
<td>.122&quot;</td>
<td>mounting holes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>.152&quot;</td>
<td>.149&quot;</td>
<td>mounting holes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vias

• Connection between layers is accomplished with via holes
• After the holes are drilled, their inner walls are plated
• Top and bottom traces are patterned after plating

Thermal relief is needed when connecting a via to a copper plane.

PWR and GND planes are commonly inner layers

Teardrops:

Figure 1-13: Holes are drilled into the board and then copper plated. (a) A nonplated through-hole. (b) A plated through-hole.

Figure 1-14: A connection to a plane layer through a thermal relief.

Figure 1-15: A clearance area provides isolation between a plated hole and a plane.
Types of Vias

- Types of via holes:
  - Plated and un-plated through-hole, blind, buried
Solder mask

- Solder mask or solder resist:
  - Thin polymer layer deposited on top and bottom layers
  - Protects outer layers from oxidation and prevents solder bridges
  - Allows for wave or reflow soldering of components
  - Holes are opened with photolithography wherever components will be soldered
  - Default color is green, but any other color is possible

Source: Printed Circuit Board Basics: An Introduction to the PCB Industry, by: Michael Flatt
**Legend / Silkscreen / Overlay**

- **Legend or silkscreen:**
  - Applied on top of the solder resist
  - Can be applied to one or both outer layers
  - Default color is white but any other color is possible

Tip: add (Top) and (Bottom)

*Figure 1-16. Final layers are the soldermask (green) and silk screen (white).*
Instructions for ELEC391 fabrication submissions
Submission Instructions

• No limits to # of boards (7 deadlines)
• Cost: $25 + $10/ sq-in, from project budget
• Submission dates:
  Midnight, Mondays
  Feb 3, Feb 10, Feb 17, Feb 24,
  Mar 2, Mar 9, Mar 16
  we will check submissions and accept fixes
  until 5PM the following Tuesday
• Turn around: 5-6 business days
• Work within the given guidelines
• Verify PCB layout and design - prior to design submission
• Submissions will be rejected if guidelines are not followed
We will panelize your designs to speed up fabrication and reduce costs.
Submission Instructions

• You can send several different boards per submission
• You can request several copies of each but that increases your area & cost
• Email pcb@ece.ubc.ca
  Subject: [PCB] ELEC391, Group #, submission#
• Attach: Zipped file with your PCB Project file (*.PrjPcb) and all associated files, also include the latest DRC report. (make sure all files are under the same directory)

Body:
Total number of boards to fabricate:
Name of boards to fabricate and number of copies for each
Design constrains 1/2

1) Layers:

1) Maximum number of electrical layers = 2

2) Bottom overlay (PCB underside text) will not be manufactured - please use "bottom layer" for bottom text

2) Try to minimize the size of your PCB
Components can be placed side by side (recommend 50-100 mil IC's separation for most cases

3) Do not forget to:

Add your group number on the top overlay – make it visible
Draw a board outline on layer “Mechanical 1”
if several boards in a single file, draw a board outline for each
(min spacing from edge of board for any feature is 10mils)
Design constrains 2/2

4) Install provided Design-Rules file (available [here](#)) please do not modify base rules, but you can add custom routing rules. Submissions that do not pass DRC will be rejected.
How to load design rule file

• DRC file and these same instructions from here
• Download and save as “.RUL” file
• On your PCB design select:
  Design >> Rules
• On the 'PCB Rules and Constrains Editor', Right click anywhere on the left column
  – Select: Import Rules
  – Select all rules in window (using shift and mouse or <Ctrl> +<A>) → OK
  – Browse to select .RUL file
  – Clear existing rules prior to import? → NO
Rules – design rules

- Component clearance and (electrical) clearance:
  - Minimum distance = 7 mil

- (Routing) width:
  - Minimum trace width = 7 mil

- Annular ring size:
  - Minimum annular ring size = 7 mil
  - Minimum annular ring size for vias = 5 mil

- Board outline clearance: 10mils

- No limit to allowed hole sizes
PCB Design Best Practices
Best Practices: Estimating board size

• Before starting layout it is good to have an idea of the target size of the PCB board and all other relevant dimensions.

• It is very helpful to have the components at hand to plan the floor-plan.

• An old good trick of the trade is to print the PCB layout at a 1:1 scale, place the printout on a foam and stick on the through hole components.

http://circuitcellar.com/cc-blog/the-perfect-pcb-prototype/
Best Practices: Floor planning

- Choose your units and set the grid
- Carefully plan the placement of components
  - Place analog and digital sections apart
  - Group components into ‘functional blocks’
  - Place ICs in the same direction
  - Align ICs, resistors, labels, capacitors etc.
  - Place de-caps close by their ICs
  - Place Op-amp resistors near the Op-amp
  - Plan for mounting holes and heat sinks
- Aim for symmetry when possible
- Do use Design Rule check

Background: Apple Macintosh PCB from http://www.digibarn.com/collections
Best Practices: Routing strategy

- On two sided boards keep traces perpendicular as much as possible
- Avoid 90 degree bends in tracks (reduced chances of acid traps)
- Keep traces as short as possible
- Always connect a trace to the center of the pad
- Use teardrops (Tools >> tear drops), and use vias to avoid lockout
- Do not place vias under SMD pads
- Layout first all critical traces
  - e.g. CLK, diff pairs, controlled length
- Polygons as fills:
  - Connect to GND (EMC), or do not leave ‘dead copper’
- Rout nicely

[Ref 3]
Best Practices: Labelling

• Always sign your design: add date, version, and name of board

• Label all relevant inputs and outputs

• Default sizes for comments and designators are 60mils x 10mils

• If you have silkscreen on both sides add a 'TOP' label to the top overlay.
Best Practices: Finishing touches

• Add mounting holes
• Confirm Board Information
  – Properties panel: Board information section (when no objects are selected)
  – Click on Reports and select:
    • Board Specifications
    • Non-Plated Hole Size
    • Plated Hole Size
• Using the hole size editor:
  – Minimize the total number of holes sizes
  – Verify that all vias are the same size (if possible)
• Verify that there are no unwanted leftovers on any Mechanical layer
Online resources

1. Ten best practices of PCB design – EDN Magazine, Edwin Robledo & Mark Toth

2. Circuit Board Layout Techniques – Texas Instruments, Chapter 17 of Op-amps for everyone

3. PCB Design Tutorial – David L. Jones