Chapter 2.
Navigation

Topic: Ignore

This chapter describes the online help screen and shows you how to navigate through the online help system.

How Information is Organized

Topic: *Finding Information

The ACIS documentation consists of online help, which is in HTML format, and PDF files. All documentation is available in online help and may also be printed to your printer in "book chapter" form from PDF files provided on the 3D ACIS Online Help CD-ROM.

Spatial's documentation is divided into two kinds of information, each of which is presented in a format designed to communicate the information effectively:

Theory (Discussion) . . . . . Is presented in paragraph, or text, form. Theory includes general information about components, discussions of modeling concepts, tables, diagrams, examples, "how-to" information, etc. Theory is broken into chapters and sections (possibly with multiple levels) that each have a title heading. An online help page containing theory information is known as a "Discussion Topic."

Reference . . . . . Is presented in template form. Reference templates are primarily used for documentation of *code items*, such as C++ classes, functions, etc., but may also be used for such purposes as component descriptions. Each template has a title that is the name of the item documented, such as the class name, function name, or component name.

A reference template is a way of presenting material in a structured format with a standard set of information, using named data fields. For example, the template used to document C++ classes includes fields such as:

Purpose . . . . . Summarizes the intended purpose of the class.

Derivation . . . . . Specifies the derivation of the class.

Filename . . . . . Specifies the name of the header file in which the class is declared.

Description . . . . Describes the class, its use, and its structure.

There are two types of manuals:

General information manuals . . . . . Cover the entire product line; these manuals usually contain theory but may also contain some reference templates.

Component manuals . . . . . Contain all the documentation for a single software component, which may include theory and/or reference templates.

A manual may contain only theory or both theory and reference templates (refer to section *Manuals*). Within manuals, reference templates are organized by type, where *type* generally refers to a kind of code item, such as C++ class, function, Scheme extension, etc. All the templates of a given type are grouped together and ordered alphabetically.

In online help, information may be organized and displayed several different ways:

- Information can be displayed in the order it appears in a manual.
- Information can be grouped by *subject*.
- An alphabetical list of all of a specific type of reference item can be displayed.
- A list of discussion or reference topics containing a specified keyword can be displayed.

Information is displayed in online help as individual "chunks" called *topics*. This may be different from the way the information would appear in a printed manual. For example, the reference template for a function may span several pages in a printed manual, but it is one topic in online help; or, a single page in a printed manual may contain several paragraphs, each with its own heading, but these appear as separate discussion topics in online help. Each online help topic is stored in a separate HTML file.

The Online Help Screen

Topic: *Finding Information

Figure 2-1 illustrates the online help screen layout. The online help screen consists of three frames and a browser status bar:

Navigation frame . . . . . Allows you to choose the way you want to locate information in online help, to browse through topics, or to return to the home page. The navigation frame is the horizontal frame stretching across the top portion of the screen. It contains several gray buttons and a search text box.

Selection frame . . . . . Allows you to select a specific item (topic) to view. The selection frame is the left vertical frame.

Data frame . . . . . Displays the topic that you selected from the list in the selection frame. The data frame is the right vertical frame.

Browser status bar . . . . . Displays messages, filenames, and brief link descriptions. The status bar is stretched across the bottom of the screen.

Note *Figure 2-1 illustrates the frames and status bar, and may not show the exact text that would be displayed for the current release.*

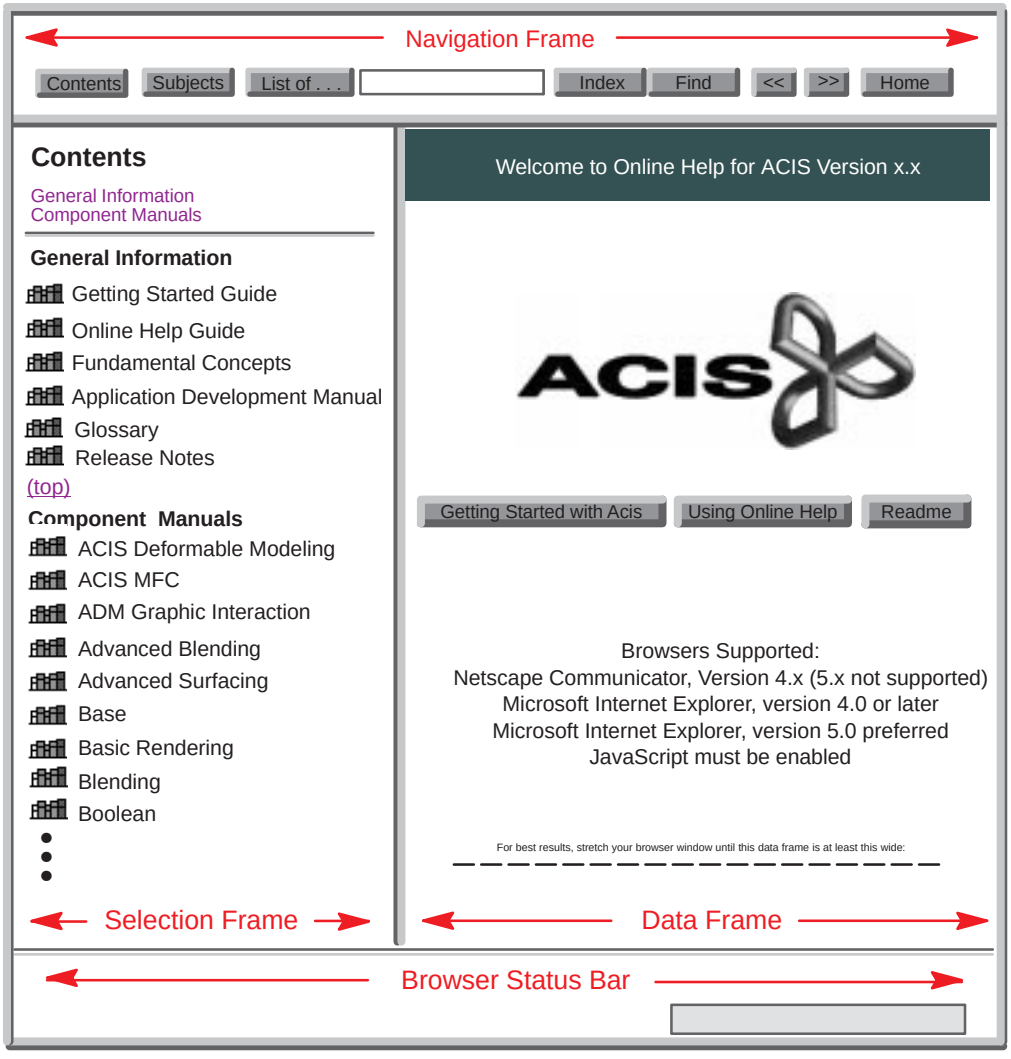


Figure 2-1. Online Help Screen Splash Page

Locating and Displaying Topics

Topic: *Finding Information

Online help provides several ways for you to locate and display a topic, as summarized below. Refer to specific sections in this chapter for more information about the online help screen and various navigation techniques.

Contents . . . . . You can display a manual's "table of contents," then choose the topic you want to view. You can select topics individually from the table of contents or browse from one topic to the next.

Click on the Contents button in the navigation frame to get the list of manuals, then click on the bookshelf icon beside the name of the manual you want.

Subject . . . . . You can display a list of topics by subject—pieces of information that are related by subject matter are grouped together—then choose the topic you want to view.

Click on the Subjects button in the navigation frame to get the list of subjects, then click on the bookshelf icon beside the subject you want.

A subject is a means by which software items and information are organized to facilitate discussion. Related subjects are gathered under broader categories to allow the user to more easily and logically navigate through the documentation. The *3D ACIS Online Help User's Guide* contains templates that describe each of the subjects used to group information in online help.

List of . . . . . You can display an alphabetical list of reference items, by type of information (class, function, etc.), then choose the specific topic you want to view.

Click on the List of... button in the navigation frame to display the types from which to choose, then click on the bookshelf icon beside the reference type you want.

Search . . . . . You can display a list of topics that contain a specified keyword. The search can be performed by index, which is a search of only the words that have been indexed, or full text "find," which is a search of the word anywhere in any online help topic (and thus considerably slower). The searches include both discussion topics and reference template topics.

Enter the keyword of interest in the search field of the navigation frame, then click on either the Index or the Find button.

Navigation Frame

Topic: *Finding Information

The navigation frame at the top of the screen allows you to select the way you want to locate information in online help. The navigational buttons are:

- Contents
- Subjects
- List Of ...
- Index and Find
- Browse (<< and >>)
- Home

Detailed explanations of each of the navigation buttons are provided in the following sections.

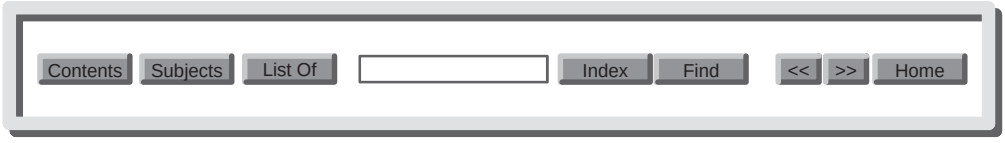


Figure 2-2. Navigation Frame

Contents

Topic: *Finding Information

Contents displays a list of ACIS manuals/books organized into chapters. This list of ACIS books is categorized by *General Information and Component Manuals*. Click on the bookshelf icon to the left of the book name to display the entire table of contents for that book. The table of contents is displayed in the selection frame. The *Contents* button is particularly useful when you want to view or read through a book in chapter order. Supporting information, such as summaries, can be found in the appendices of each book.

Click on Contents to display a list of all the books available for ACIS products and components.

- The selection frame displays a list of all available books.
- Use the scroll bar as necessary. The table of contents for any of the books can be displayed by clicking on the bookshelf icon for that book.
- Click on the closed book icon to the left of the chapter title to display the subheadings for that chapter. The closed book icon changes to an open book icon. The contents of the file are displayed. Click on the (open) book icon again to close the chapter. Click on the 'Contents' button in the navigation frame to return to the list of books.
- Click on the name of the chapter or heading to open the help file and expand the subheadings for the book.

Use the browse buttons (<< or >>) or the browser's Back and Forward buttons to browse through information in page order. This is useful for perusing a manual page by page.

Attention New Users!

To peruse the documentation set by knowledge level, from beginning level topics to more advanced topics, begin with the *3D ACIS Getting Started Guide*. Once you have a basic understanding of ACIS and geometric modeling concepts and terminology, proceed to the *3D ACIS Fundamental Concepts Guide*, and then to the component or subject of interest.

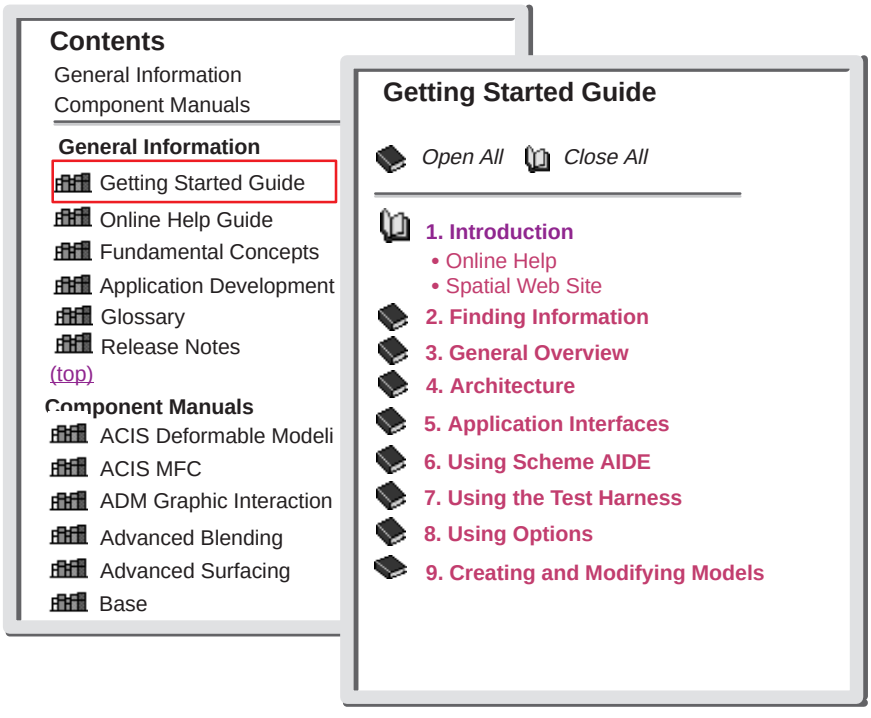


Figure 2-3. Selection Frame Contents

Subjects

Topic: *Finding Information

The Subjects button displays (in the selection frame) a list of links for the given subject. A *subject* can be a category, feature, function, etc. A *subject* is a means by which software items and information are organized to facilitate research or discussion. Related subjects are gathered into broader categories to allow easier and more logical navigation through the documentation. This also serves to gather together all available documentation based on a subject or idea.

To display a list of functional categories for ACIS subjects, click on Subjects.

- The selection frame displays a list of all available subjects. The subjects are grouped conceptually by topic, regardless of whether the topic is a beginner level or advanced level. (To peruse the documentation set by knowledge level, from beginning level topics to more advanced topics, select Contents instead of Subjects and begin with the *3D ACIS Getting Started Guide*.)
- Using the scroll bar as necessary, click on the bookshelf icon for the subject that interests you.
- The selection frame displays a list of all information available for that subject. This includes code types and/or discussion topics. Click on the book icon for the code type or topic that interests you. A list of available items for that topic is displayed.
- Click on the name of the item to open the help file. The contents of the help file are displayed in the data frame.

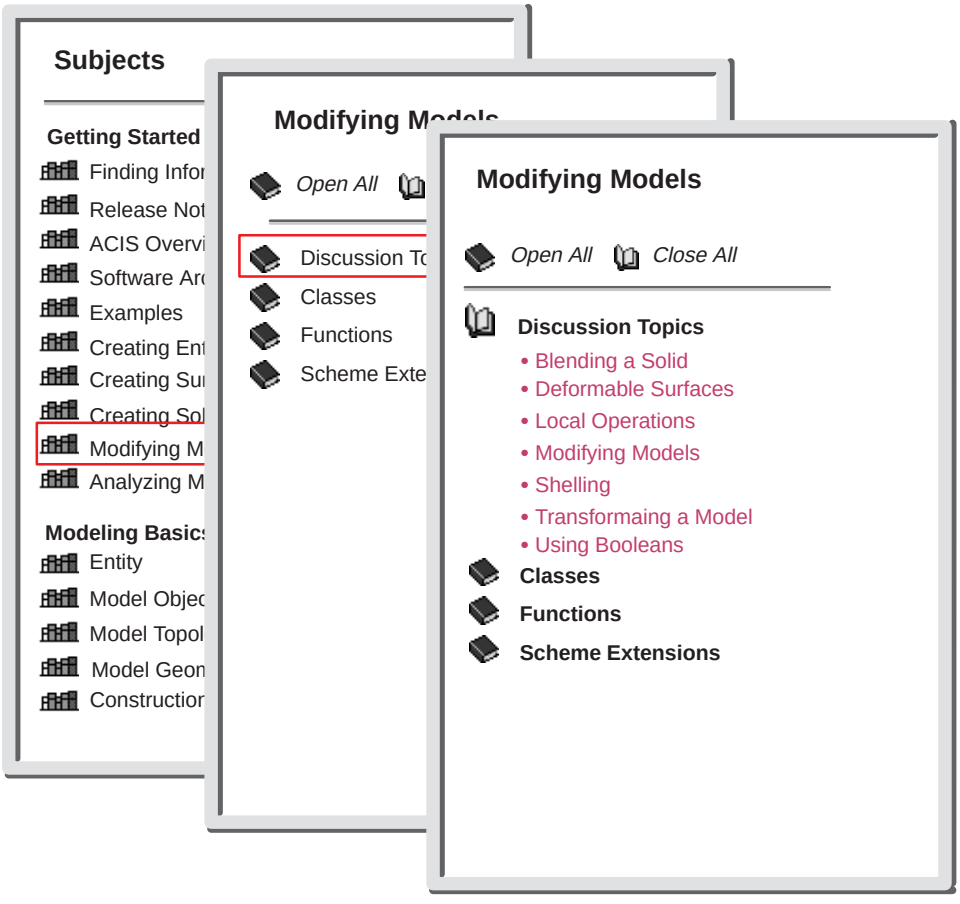


Figure 2-4. Selection Frame Subjects

List of . . .

Topic: *Finding Information

The List of . . . button displays the links to all of the available reference material by its type, such as classes, functions, Scheme extensions, etc. *List of . . .* displays alphabetical listings of various code types. A *type* is a type of reference information, usually an interface, or means of interacting with ACIS models. Types of information include classes, functions, Scheme extensions, and Scheme data types, shaders and shader utilities, test harness commands, etc. These lists are all inclusive of the entire product line. The lists also include derivation lists, syntax summary lists, and reference or action/purpose statement lists.

Note *The Derivation, Reference and Syntax Summaries for the various code types are useful to print and save for easy reference.*

To display a list of the available code types for ACIS, click on List of . . ..

- The selection frame displays an alphabetical list of all available classes.
- Using the scroll bar as necessary, click on the bookshelf icon to access Derivation Summary, Reference Summary, or click on the closed book icon for the first letter of the class name, e.g., 'G' to access the information for the Class gaussian_curvature_law.
- Click on the name of the item to open the help file. The contents of the help file are displayed in the data frame.

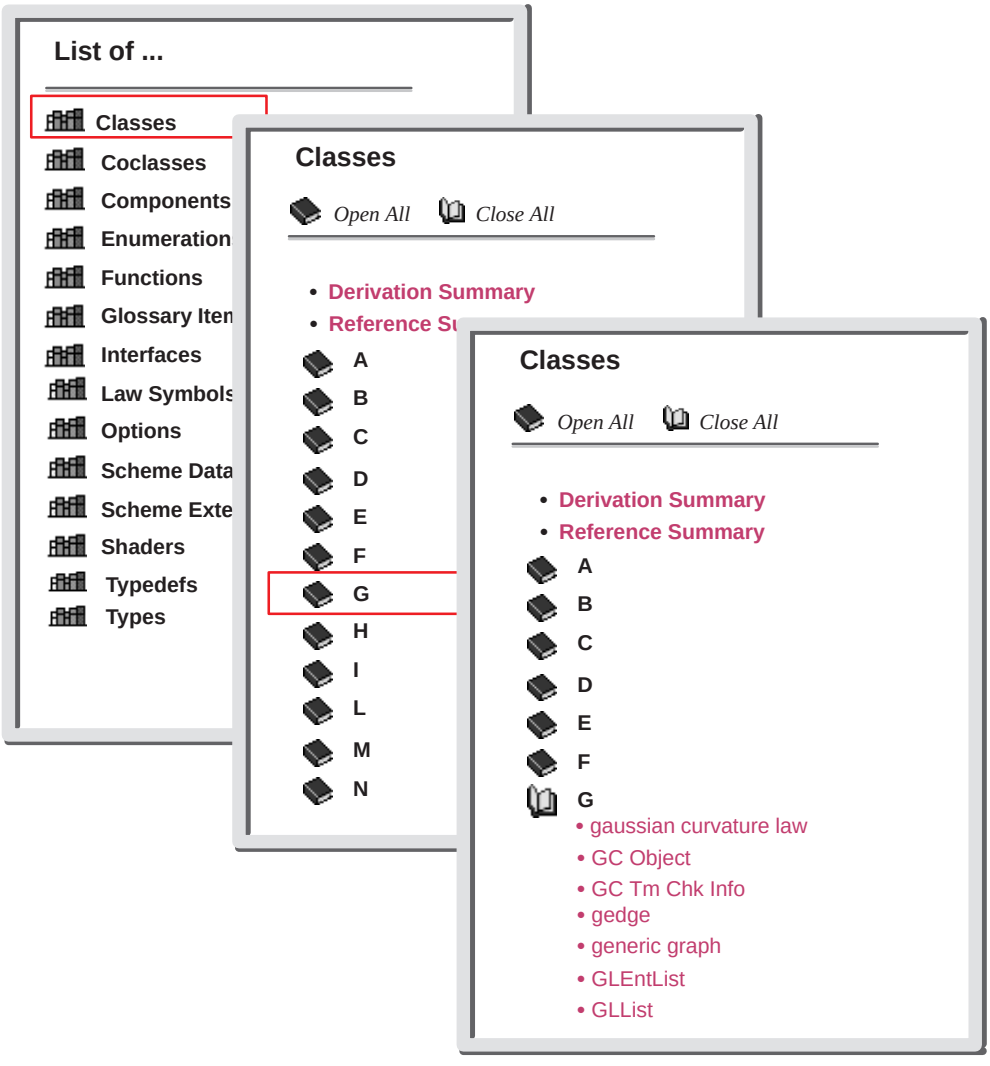


Figure 2-5. Selection Frame List of ...

Browse

Topic: *Finding Information

The Browse (<< and >>) buttons provide a convenient way to browse through the hyperlinks displayed in the selection frame. In general, browsing allows you to click on << to display the previous topic and >> to display the next topic in the list of hyperlinks shown in the selection frame. When used with the Contents function, the Browse function allows you to step forward and backward through a manual page by page. Browsing may be used with the Subjects, Contents and List of... functions, but not on listings of Index or Find search results.

If you click on hyperlinks within the body of the page displayed in the data frame while browsing through a list displayed in the selection frame, the browse function can sometimes get *confused* and cannot figure out where to go next. Clicking on hyperlinks in the header portion of the page displayed in the data frame can change the listing in the selection frame. In some cases, clicking the browse forward or backward buttons (or the Back button of the browser itself) allows the browse sequence to recover and you can continue browsing. In cases where the browse sequence cannot recover, you must return to the selection frame and start again. If your browser's hyperlinks are set up and working properly, you can determine where you strayed from the browse sequence by the color of the visited links and simply continue browsing.

Home

Topic: *Finding Information

Click on Home to return to the beginning splash page in the data frame and the list of Contents in the selection frame. (Note that this setting can be customized/changed and may not return Home as expected.)

Searching Online Help

Topic: *Finding Information

Online help provides Index and Find buttons for searching online help. The searches include all online help topics, including discussion topics and reference template topics.

The Index button searches only the words that have been indexed

The Find button does a full text search and allows the use of (*) wildcards. Note this method takes more time to return the results.

Enter the word or text string in the search field of the navigation frame, then click on the Index or the Find button. The search results are displayed in the selection frame.

Index is case–insensitive and Find is case–sensitive.

If your search fails and you are confident the topic is in online help, try using the Reference or the All Books buttons to find a better search string.

Search Using Index

Topic: *Finding Information

The Index button allows you to search for a text string in the global index. The Find button allows you to perform a full text search using wildcards (*).

The Index contains names of code items (functions, classes, Scheme extensions, etc.), chapter and section headers, and subject information and allows a faster search of the documentation using a subset of the full text search.

The index references information by:

Concept . . . . . Concepts are indexed where introduced and defined.

Name . . . . . Code items (e.g., classes, methods, functions, commands, Scheme extensions, options, etc.) are indexed by their names. Code items such as these may also be indexed by individual substrings within their names. For example, the Scheme extension abl:fixed–width–rad is indexed by the substrings “abl,” “fixed,” “width,” and “rad,” in addition to its full name.

Filename . . . . . Where relevant, filenames are indexed.

Header . . . . . Chapter and section headers (titles) appear in the index (using both the full title and individual words in the title).

Limitations

Topic: *Finding Information

The Index function allows you to scan the index of the complete set of manuals just like you would with a printed book. When using the Index search function, be aware of the Index search limitations. The Index search:

- Does not allow wildcards
- Is based on the first letter of the character string entered
- Is not case sensitive
- Does not allow use of the Browse (<< and >>) buttons to step through the search results
- Is not supported on Macintosh platforms, due to browser limitations

To use the Index search function, enter the text string that you want to search for in the space provided and click on Index.

The index page (with the entry closest to the text string you entered in the search field) is displayed in the selection frame.

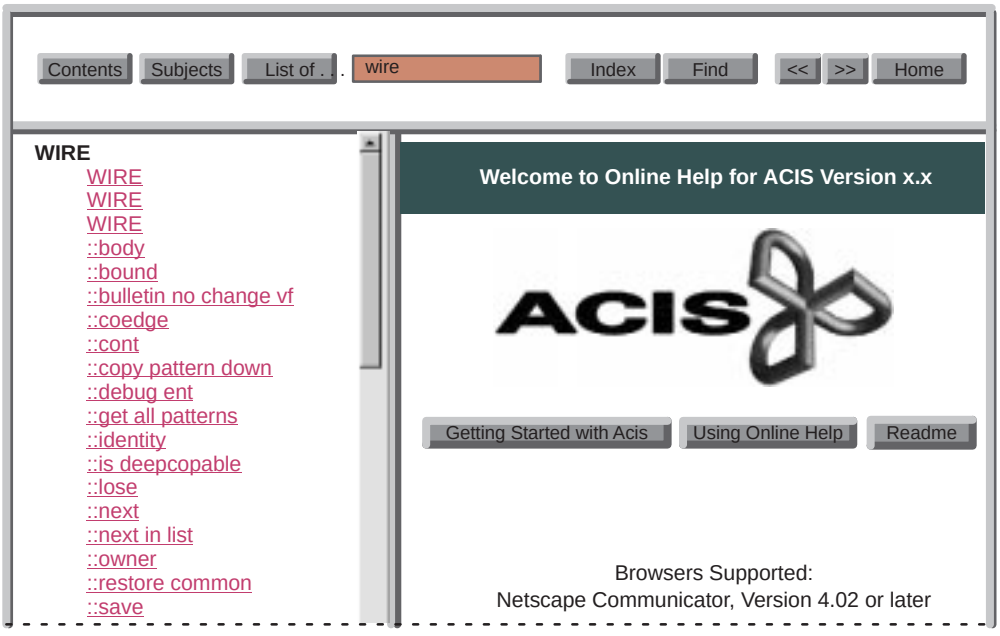


Figure 2-6. Selection Frame — Index Search

Search Using Find

Topic: *Finding Information

The Find function is a full text search function that allows you to search the documentation for specific words. A list of items containing the indicated character string is returned.

Limitations

Topic: *Finding Information

When using the Find search function, be aware that the Find function:

- Currently searches only for one word at a time; does not allow the use of spaces
- Allows wildcards; one or more * can substitute for any character. The * can precede and/or follow the character string.
- Is case sensitive
- Can be stopped with the browser “Stop” button
- Does not allow use of the Browse (<< and >>) buttons to step through the search results
- Is not supported on Macintosh platforms, due to browser limitations

Note *There is no indication of a failed search (e.g., “the character string was not found”).*

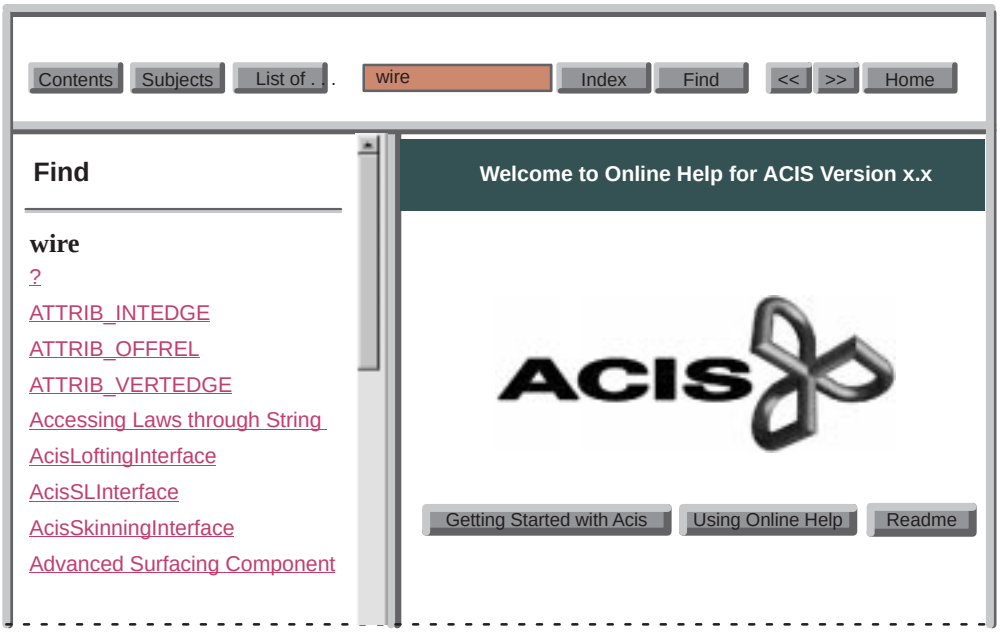


Figure 2-7. Selection Frame — Find Search

Selection Frame

Topic: *Finding Information

The selection frame displays online help topics organized by *heading* and *subheading*, when used with the Subjects, Contents, and List of... buttons, or by keyword *search results*, when used with the Index and Find buttons.

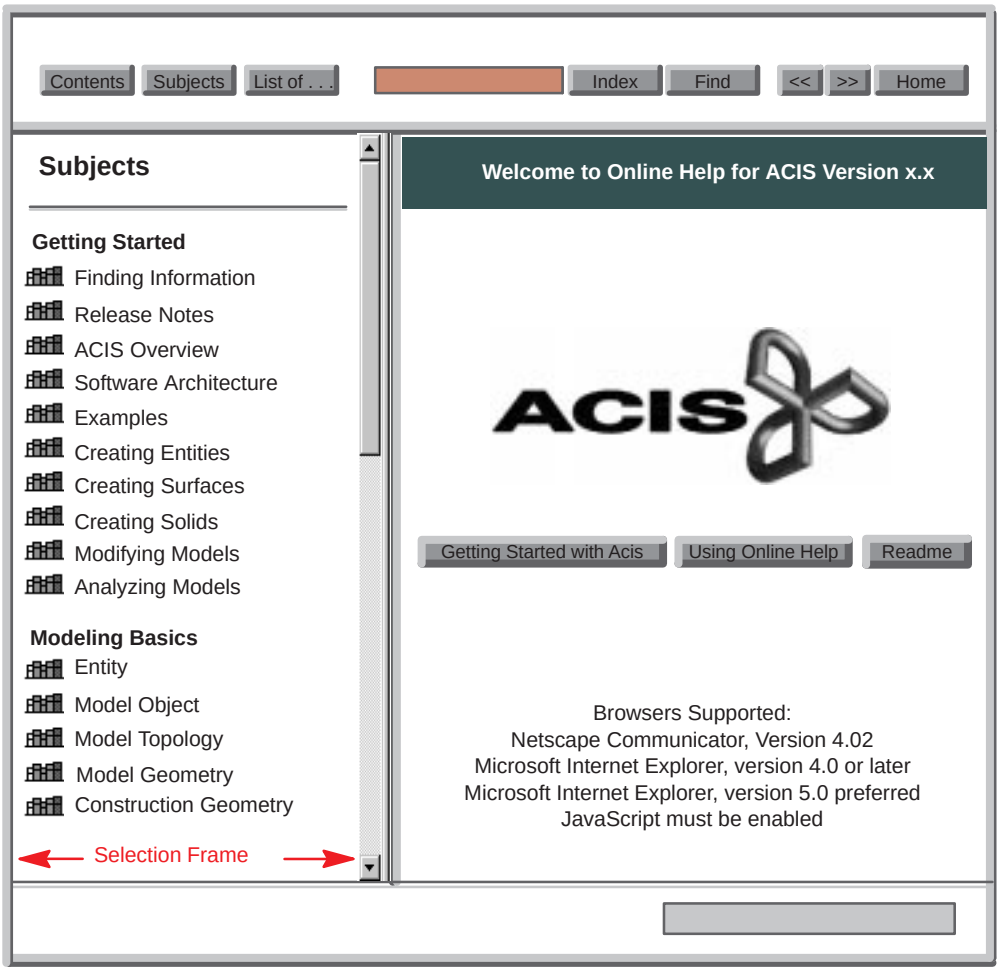
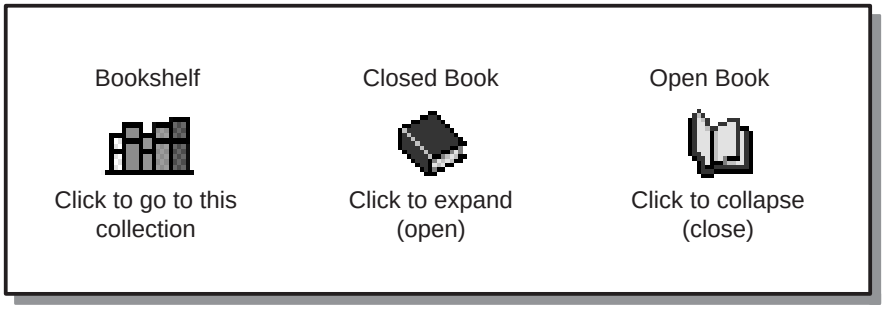


Figure 2-8. Selection Frame

Icons

Topic: *Finding Information

A bookshelf icon to the left of a heading is a link to that collection of topics, subjects, or books. A closed book icon to the left of a heading indicates there are subheadings beneath it. An open book icon indicates an expanded list of subheadings.



Click on the bookshelf icon to display the collection of related topics in the selection frame. The selection frame now contains a new list with a closed book icon to the left of each heading. Click on the browser Back button to return to the previous list of topics. Click on a closed book icon to expand one of the currently displayed headings. The closed book icon changes to an open book icon and expands the list to include subheadings.

In general, when you click on a closed book, the chapter or section expands and when you click on an open book, the chapter or section collapses. The other headings in the selection frame remain on display in the frame and are unaffected by expanding or collapsing a list.

You can expand or collapse all of the main headings at once by clicking on the book icons for Open All and Close All at the top of the selection frame. Except for the Open All command, you can only have one section open at a time. If all sections in the selection frame are open, clicking on the open book icon for one section causes all the *other* open sections to collapse. You can then click on any closed book icon to open a new section or chapter and all currently "open" books close automatically.

Text Hyperlinks

Topic: *Finding Information

Any text items that appear in the color set for links in your browser (typically blue unless you have customized/changed this setting) indicate hyperlinks to more information. Click on the browser's Back button to return to the previous page or frame. Place the mouse cursor on any hyperlink to display a brief description (or location of the item) in the browser status bar.

Under Contents, click on a numbered chapter heading next to a closed book icon to display the related page in the data frame and expand the list of subheadings. The closed book icon changes to an open book icon.

Data Frame

Topic: *Finding Information

The data frame displays the information you requested, based on the topic you selected in the selection frame. Text that appears in the browser default color for links (typically blue unless you have customized/changed this setting) indicates a hyperlink to additional data.

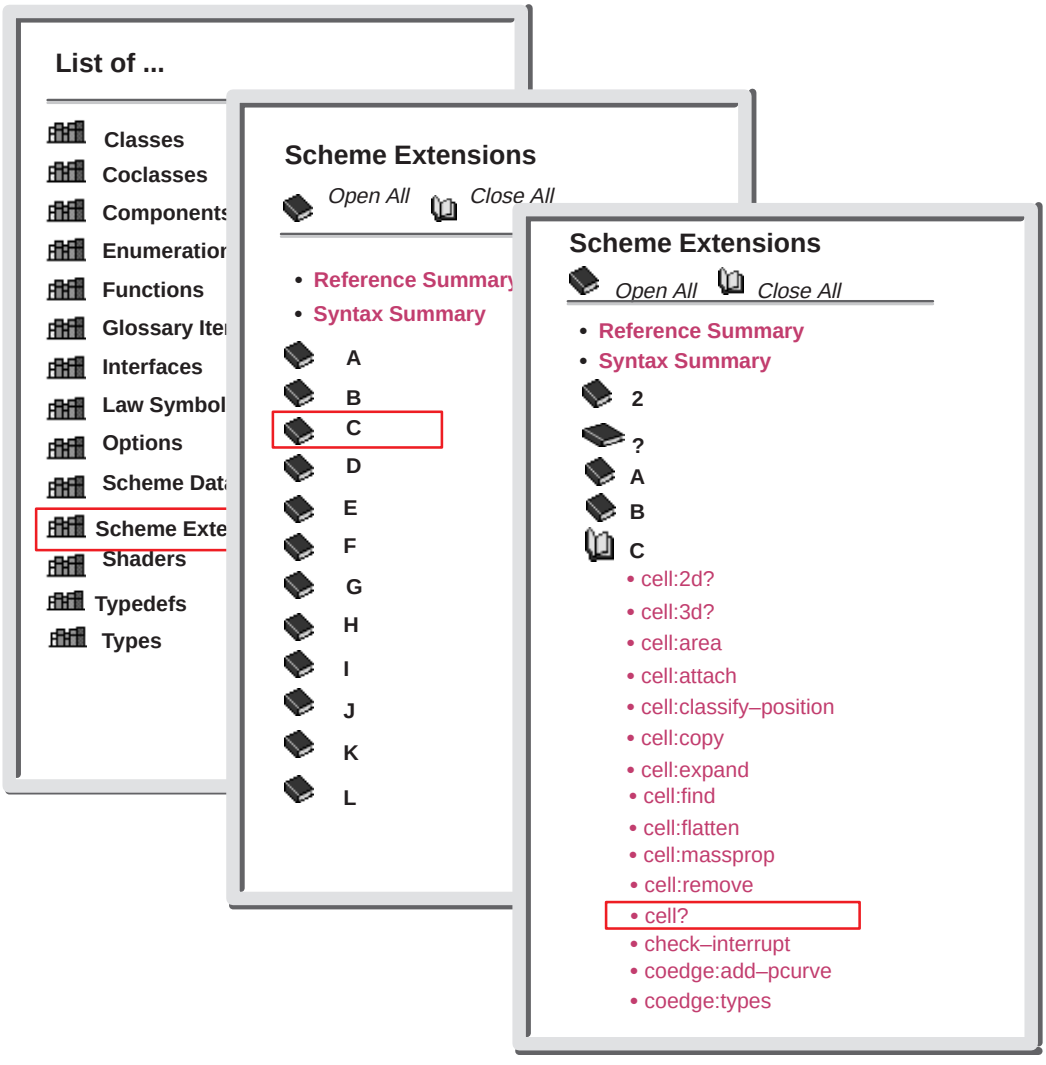


Figure 2-9. Selection Frame—List of ...

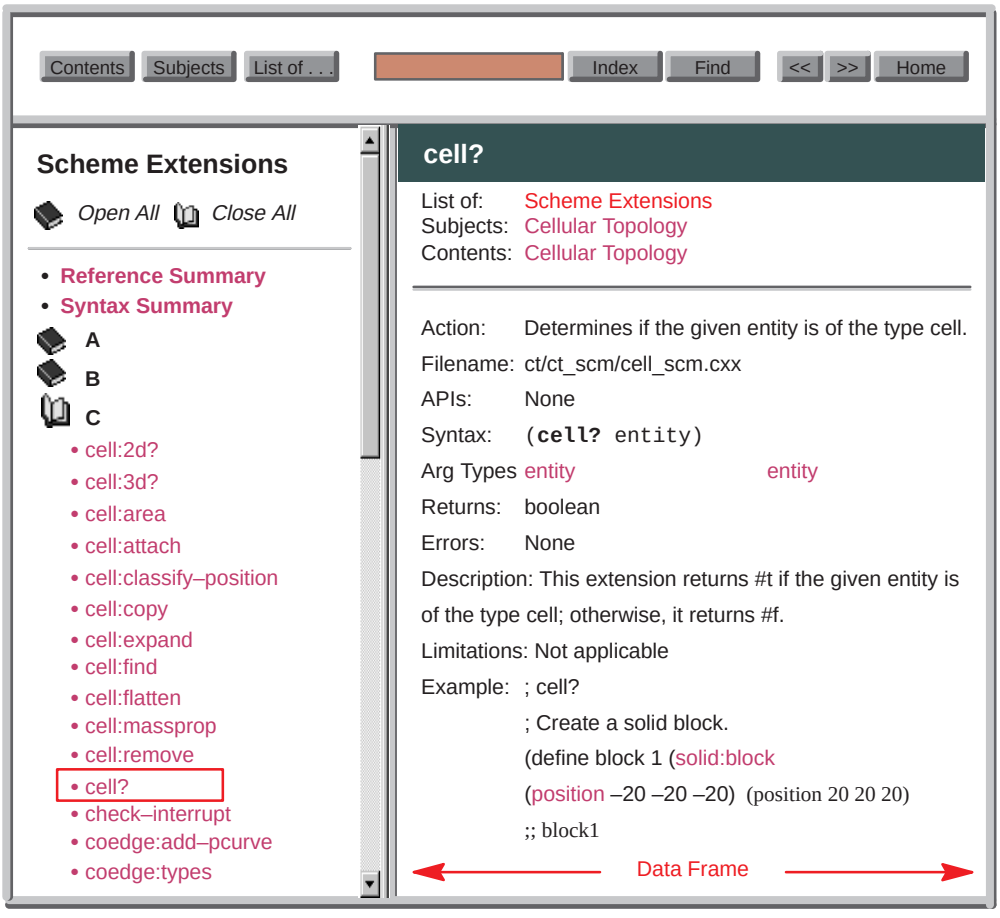


Figure 2-10. Data Frame

Data Frame Hyperlinks

Topic: *Finding Information

Hyperlinks displayed in the document header in the data frame (top of the page above the line) are links to summaries in the selection frame.

List Of

Topic: *Finding Information

This identifies the type of material that constitutes this topic. Clicking on this link changes the information in the selection frame to an alphabetic list of items of the type selected. This is equivalent to clicking on one of the item types in the List of ... list in the selection frame.

For example, if the *List of...* field is “Scheme Extensions,” clicking on “Scheme Extensions” changes the information displayed in the selection frame to what would be displayed if you had:

- Clicked on List of ... in the navigation frame
- Clicked on the bookshelf icon for “Scheme Extensions” in the selection frame
- Clicked on the book icon for the letter “C”, and
- Clicked on “cell?”

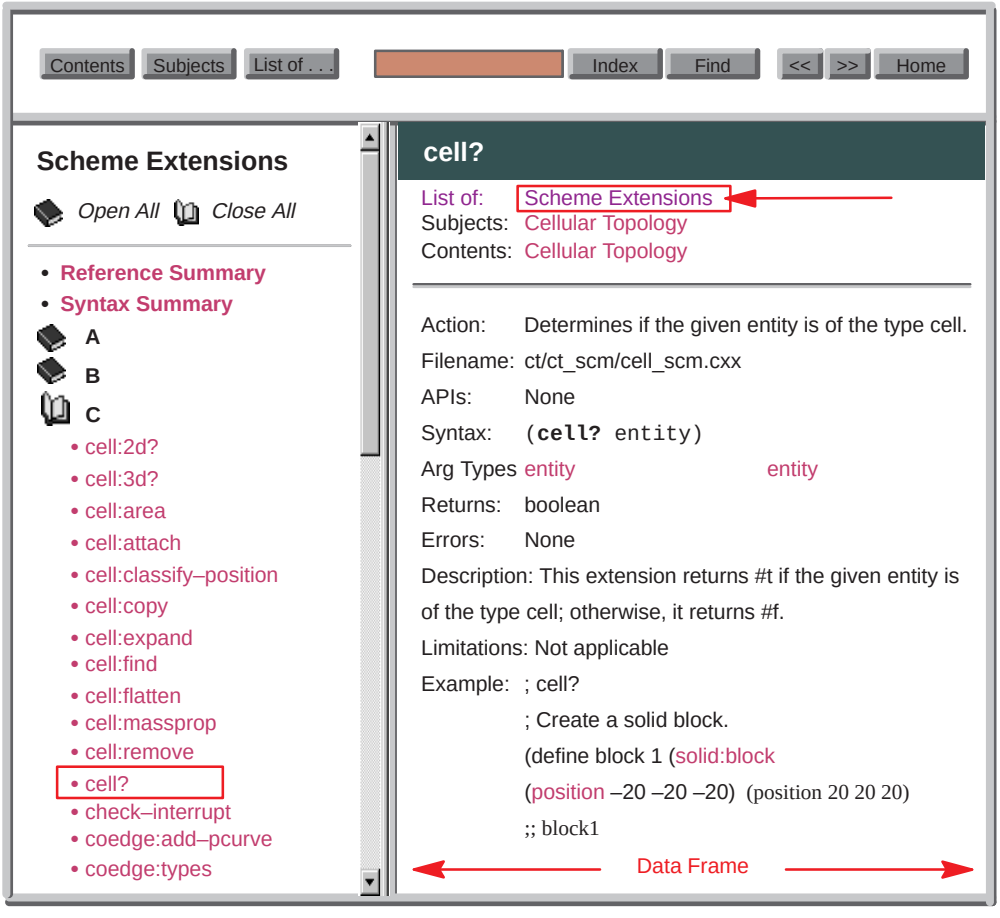


Figure 2-11. Data Frame – List of ... Hyperlink

Subjects

Topic: *Finding Information

This identifies the subject that is associated with this topic or template. Clicking on this link changes the information in the selection frame to an alphabetic list of items of the type selected. This is equivalent to clicking on one of the item types in the List of ... list in the selection frame.

For example, clicking on “Cellular Topology” in the *Subjects* field changes the information in the selection frame to what would be displayed if you had:

- Clicked on Subjects in the navigation frame
- Scrolled down the list to “Analysis”
- Clicked on the bookshelf icon for “Cellular Topology” in the selection frame
- Clicked on the book icon for “Scheme Extensions” and
- Clicked on “cell?”

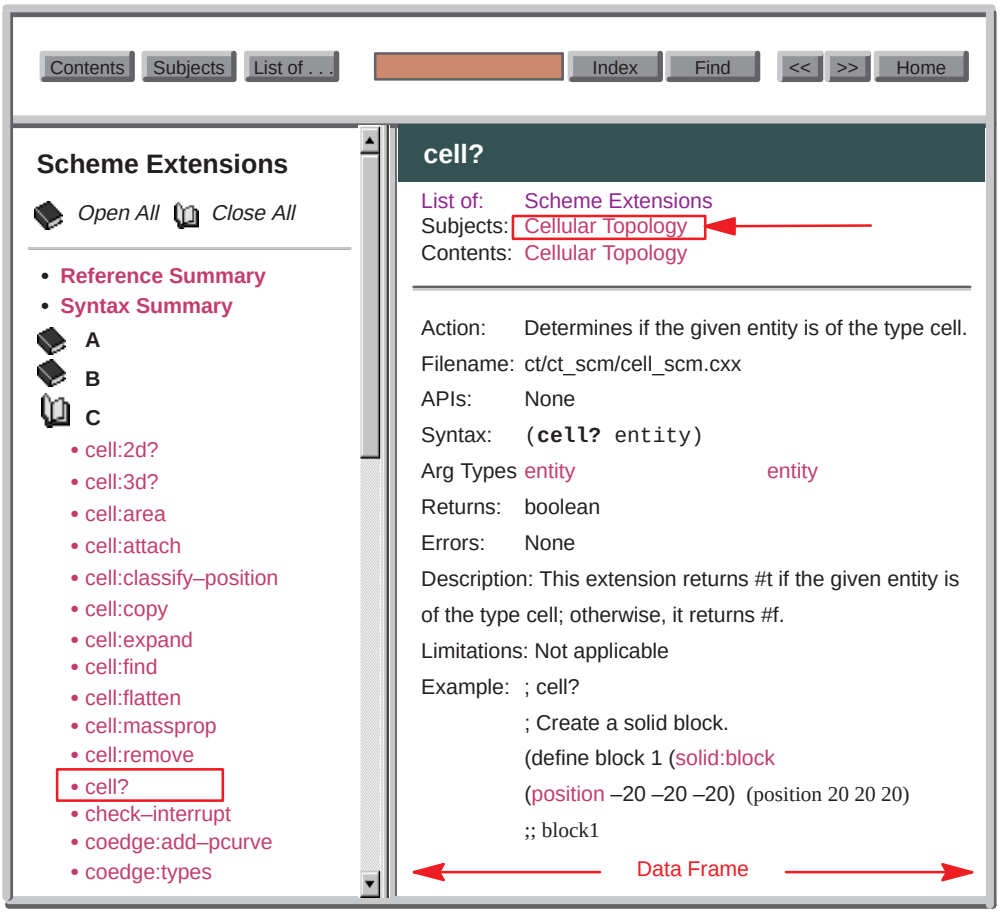


Figure 2-12. Data Frame – Subjects Hyperlink

Contents

Topic: *Finding Information

This identifies the component where the topic or template is located. Click on this link to change the information displayed in the selection frame to the table of contents of the applicable component book. This is equivalent to clicking on the Contents button in the navigation frame.

For example, clicking on “Cellular Topology in the *Contents field*” changes the information in the selection frame to what would be displayed if you had:

- Clicked on Contents in the navigation frame
- Clicked on the bookshelf icon for “Cellular Topology” in the selection frame

- Clicked on the book icon for “Scheme Extensions,” and
- Clicked on “cell?”

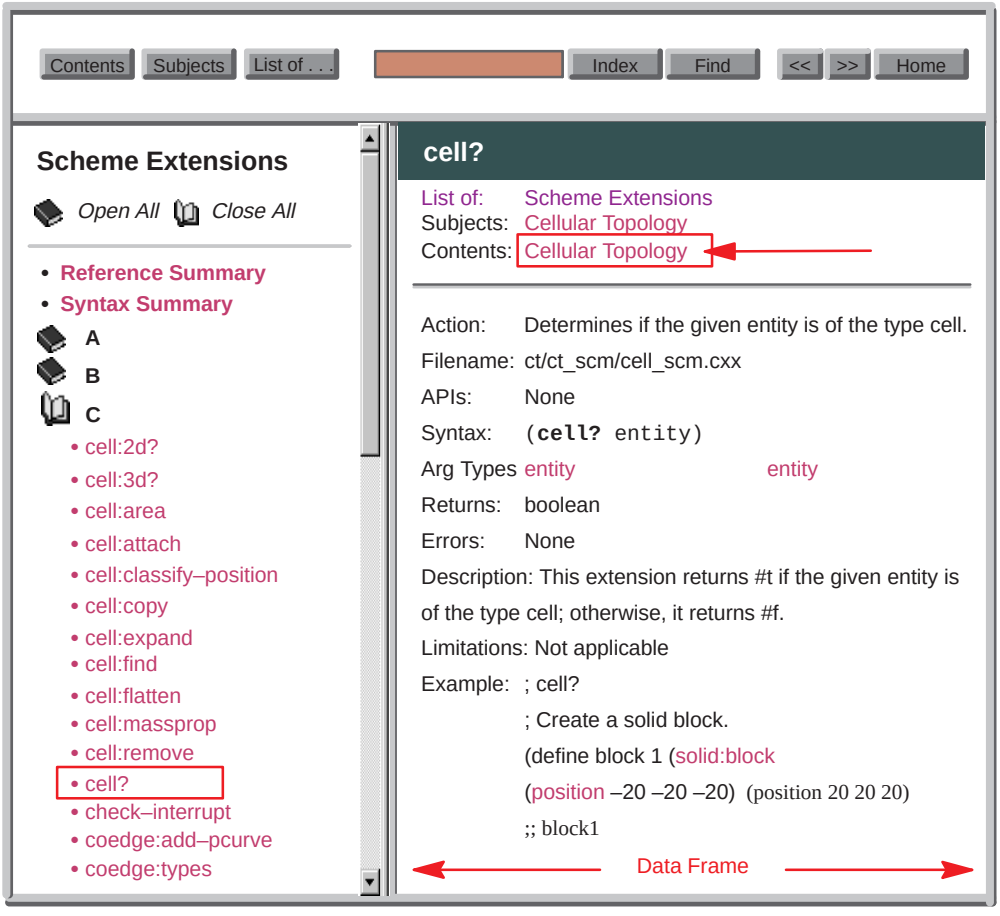


Figure 2-13. Data Frame – Contents Hyperlink

Hyperlinks that appear within the body of the data frame link to other pages that are displayed in the data frame. To return to the previous page, use the browser’s Back button.

Getting Started Button

Topic: Ignore

The Getting Started button is located near the center of the data frame of the splash page. Click on the Getting Started button to display the table of contents of the *3D ACIS Getting Started Guide*. From the table of contents, you can browse through the manual page by page just like you would with a printed book, or you can click on the topics that most interest you.

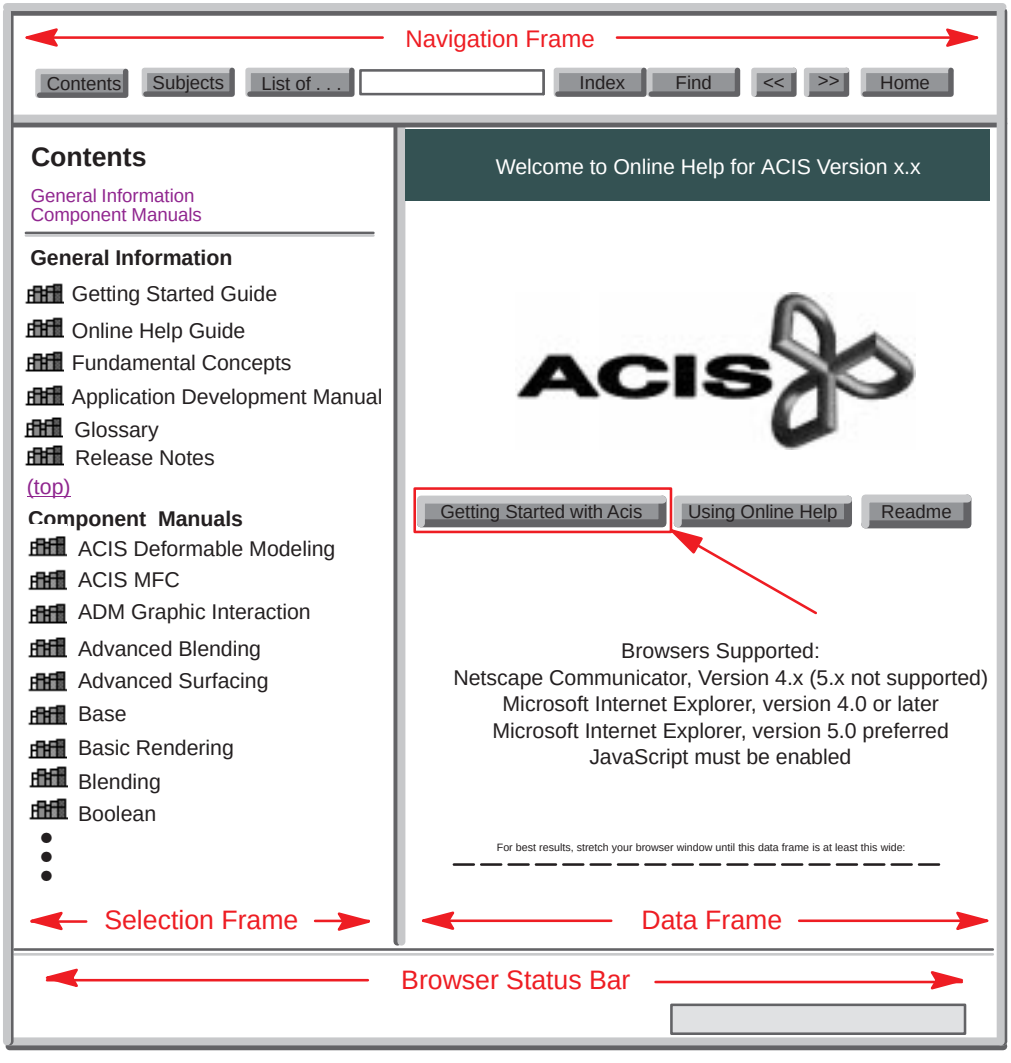


Figure 2-14. Getting Started Guide

Online Help Button

Topic: Ignore

The Using Online Help button is located near the center of the data frame of the splash page. Click on the Online Help button to display the table of contents of the *3D ACIS Online Help User's Guide* (*this manual*). From the table of contents, browse through the manual page by page just like with a printed book or simply click on the topics of interest.

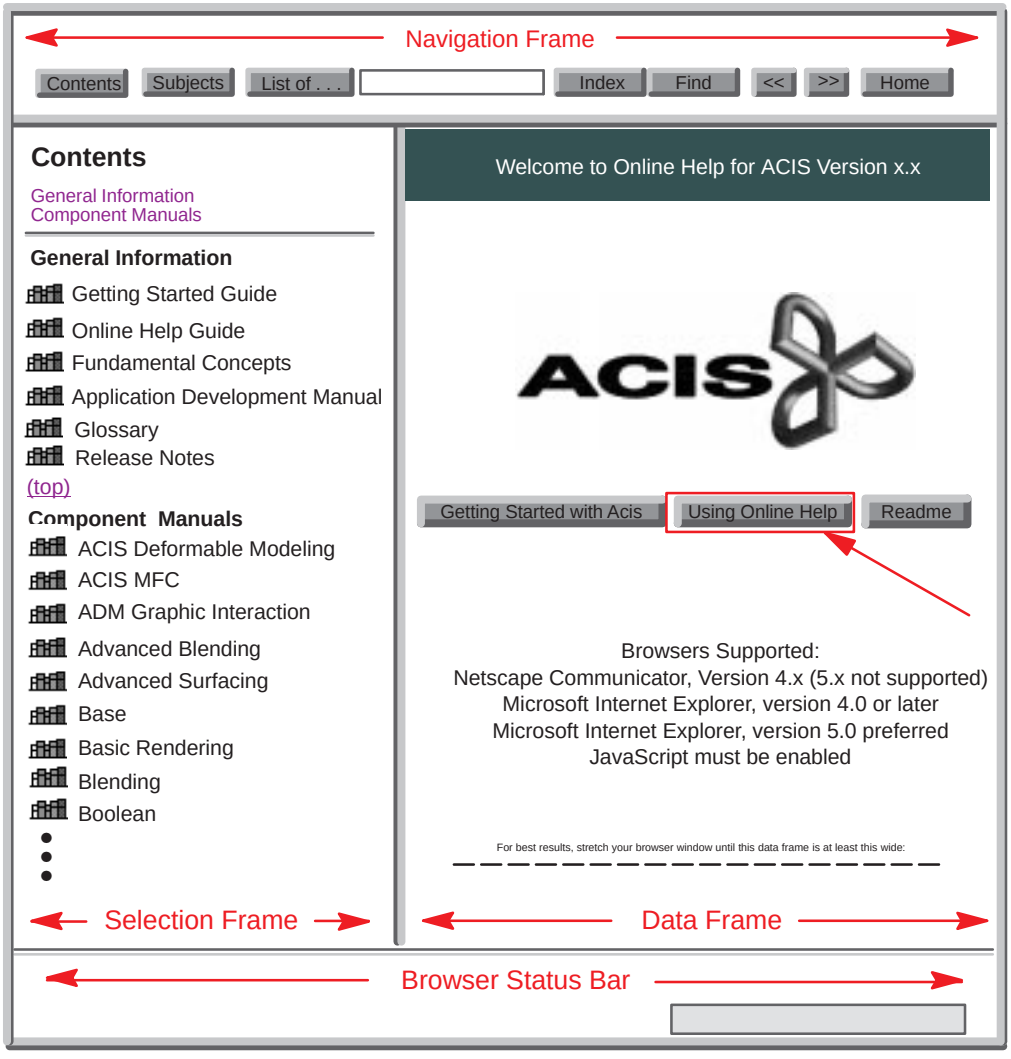


Figure 2-15. Online Help Guide

Readme Button

Topic: *Finding Information

The README file contains information about the contents of the ACIS Online Help CD, release notes, mounting and using the CD, browser requirements, known problems or limitations with online help, starting online help, etc.

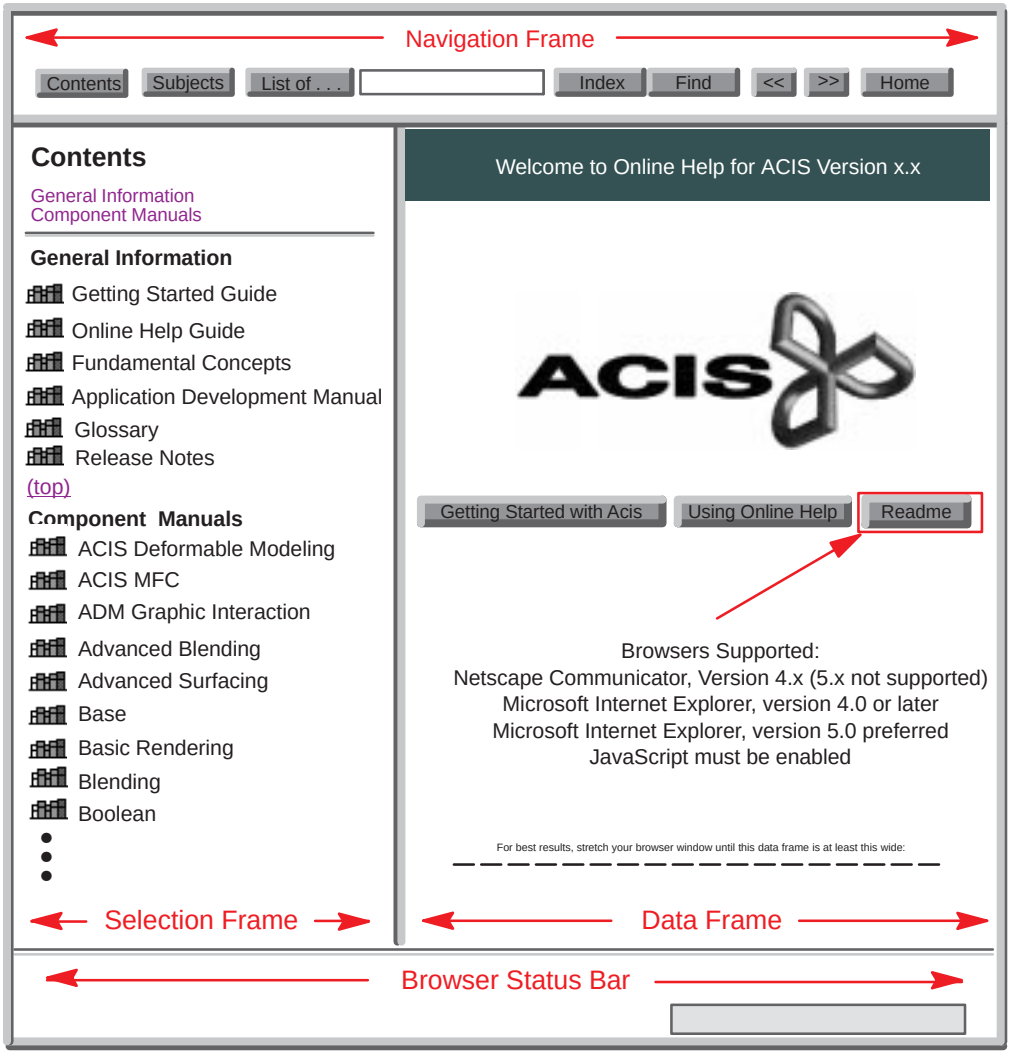


Figure 2-16. Readme File

Browser Status Bar

Topic: *Finding Information

The browser's status bar, located at the bottom of the screen, displays messages, filenames, and brief descriptions when you mouse over a hyperlink. This is especially useful during search functions when there may be multiple entries displayed in the selection frame for the same character string.

For example, a search for the string “wire” results in numerous entries in the selection frame. You can determine which entry is associated with the string you are interested in by moving your mouse over each of the hyperlinks, without clicking, and watching the message displayed in the status bar at the bottom of your screen. In this example, the first occurrence of “ATTRIB_INTEDGE” is associated with the Boolean component and is a class that defines an attribute for linking intersection edges with the intersecting entities.

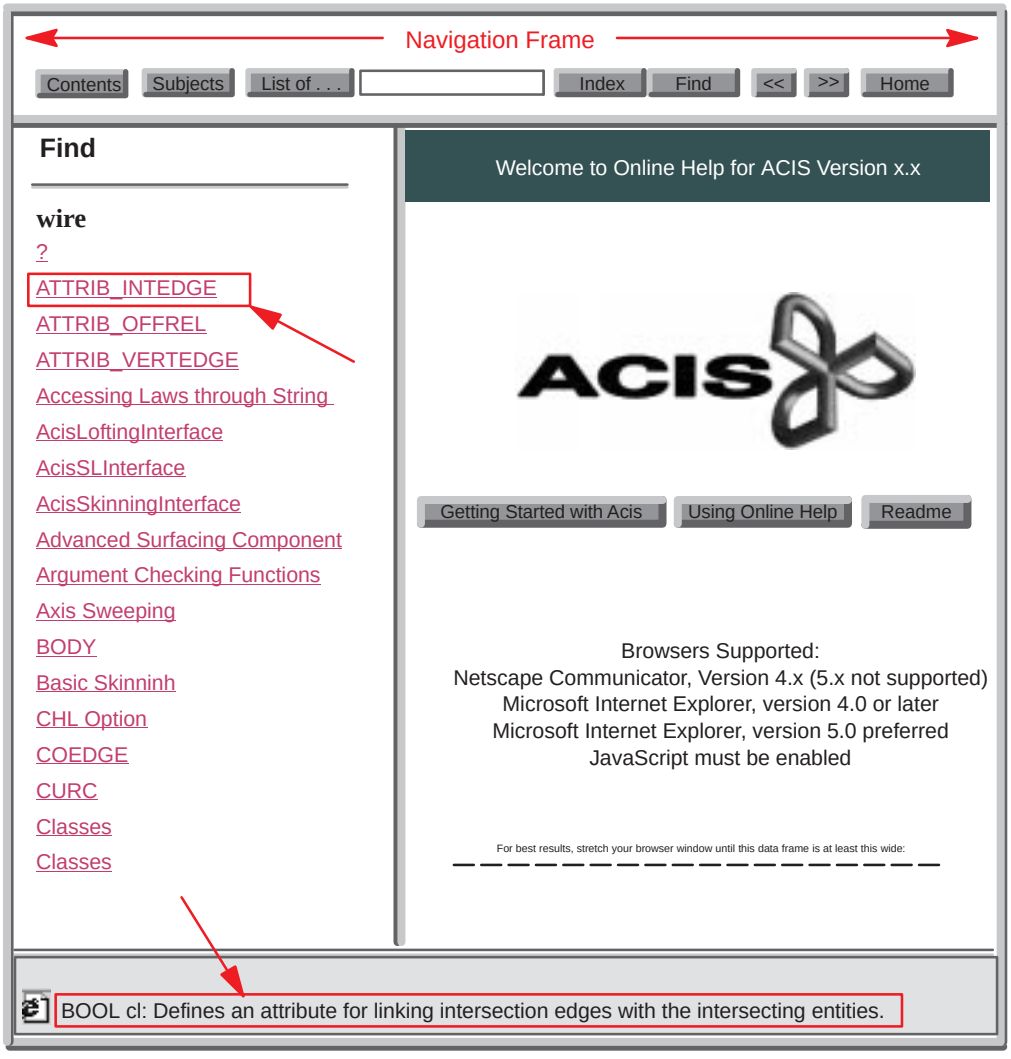


Figure 2-17. Browser Status Bar

All messages that appear in the browser status bar when you mouse over a hyperlink are in the following form:

BOOL cl: Defines an attribute for linking intersection edges with the intersecting entities.

The first portion of the message indicates the ACIS component:

Code	Component Name
ABL	Advanced Blending
ADM	ACIS Deformable Modeling
AMFC	ACIS MFC
BASE	Base
BLND	Blending
BOOL	Boolean
BR	Basic Rendering
CATIA	CATIA Translator
CLR	Clearance
COVR	Covering
CSTR	Constructors
CT	Cellular Topology
EULR	Euler Operations
FCT	Faceter
GA	Generic Attributes
GI	Graphic Interaction
GL	OpenGL
HEAL	Healing
IGL	Interactive OpenGL
IHL	Interactive Hidden Line
INTR	Intersectors
KERN	Kernel
LAWS	Laws
LOP	Local Ops
LOPT	Local Op Tools

OFST	Offsetting
OPER	Operators
PART	Part Management
PHL	Precise Hidden Line
PID	Persistent ID
Pro/E	Pro/E Translator
RBASE	Rendering Base
RBI	Repair Body Intersections
SBOOL	Selective Booleans
SCM	Scheme Support
SDM	Standalone Deformable Modeling
SHL	Shelling
STEP	STEP Translator
AS	Advanced Surfacing
SWP	Sweeping
TKMAIN	Scheme AIDE Main Program
TRANS	Translator Utility
VDA–FS	VDA–FS Translator
VM	VisMan
WARP	Space Warping

The second portion of the message indicates the information type:

Code	Information Type	Code	Information Type
cl	Class	obj	Coclass
cmp	Component	opt	Option
cd	Class Derivation	pr	Product
en	Enumeration	sc	Scheme Extension
fn	Function	sd	Scheme Data type
glo	Glossary	sh	Shader

ifc	Interface	td	Typedef
law	Law Symbol	th	Test Harness Command
me	Mechanism (Subject)	top	Topic (Discussion)
mg	Mechanism Group (Subject Group)	typ	Type of Documentation

And the third portion is the message itself.

For example, this message refers to BOOL, the class, ATTRIBUTE_INTEDGE, whose purpose is “Defines an attribute for linking intersection edges with the intersecting entities.”