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GETTING STARTED

This a quick start sketching guide for beginners to assist with sketching floor plans. For further advice please call our UK head office on +44 (0) 203 301 7216 or email us at hq@fourlabs.co.

1.1

What equipment do I need?

Paper

We recommend that you use standard graph paper or our sketching template which can be downloaded and printed from our website [here](#). A straight-line guide is also helpful and can be purchased [here](#), and we also recommend Free Hand Designer packs which can be purchased [here](#). If you're drawing very large properties, you may find it easier to use A3 paper.



Why not try Surveyorpad? Our sketching app is the digital alternative to pen and paper. For further details please check out the [website](#).

Stationery

For the best results, draw your property using a clipboard and a good quality rollerball pen. It's also a good thing to keep some Tippex on hand in case you make a mistake. You might think that pencil is a better medium if you make mistakes when drawing floor plans, but please try not to use a pencil as it tends not to be clear enough on the graph paper. If you do wish to use pencil, then please ensure your lines are clear enough to redraw from by going over them a few times.

Measuring

Always use a good quality laser or tape measure – never use a sonic laser or any other budget measuring device as it will provide inaccurate measurements.

Compass

If you'd like to include the directional orientation of the property on the final floor plan, then you'll need a compass to mark the north point of the floor plan onto your sketch. This is very helpful if the property is also booked for copywriting, as the team will use this in the write up.

1.2

Starting your sketch

Before you start

Before sketching the property we recommend having a quick look round the inside and outside of the property, making a mental note of any sections that protrude, that are unlevel or if there are any extensions or integrated garages. Getting a good look around can prevent any surprises when you start measuring.

Where to start on the paper

Think carefully about where you'll start your sketch on the paper. If you start in the wrong place you will run out of room and may have to start again. We always advise that you start in an outside corner of one of the larger rooms.

Measuring

Start by measuring one wall, from the corner of the room to another. Read the measurement from the laser and draw the line to scale clearly on the paper and make a record of the measurement – please ensure that all the numbers are easily legible.

Most rooms will be simple four-walled rooms however some may be oddly shaped and more difficult to measure. If you come across a room like this, it's always best to draw any angles by eye as best as possible and to mark as many measurements onto the plan as possible. Please mark the length and width measurement of each room onto your sketch.



If you can visualise measurements approximately then you can save time by drawing your lines without having to take hundreds of measurements, although it is essential to measure the main length and width of each room. Try practising this skill with straightforward houses first – see how your accuracy develops by 'double checking' with a measuring tool.

Everyone sketches slightly differently; to start with it will be a slow process but as you build up experience you'll find it quicker and easier. If you're a complete beginner and you struggle to visualise measurements, we advise that you use the 'sketch as you go' method. This method involves sketching to scale and you can use the graph paper to help you visualise the scale. For an average size property, we recommend that you draw your sketch so that 2 x 0.5 cm squares on the graph paper = 1 metre.

Fixtures and Fittings

Please mark all fixtures and fittings that you would like included on the floor plan on your sketch. For example, door openings (include the direction of the door opening), window location and size, fireplaces, bathrooms, bifold doors and any leisure facilities, such as swimming pools or saunas.

1.3

Imperial or metric measurements?

We strongly recommend you sketch in metric (metres/centimetres) rather than imperial (feet/inches). It's more accurate, easier to visualise and also what's recommended in the International Property Measuring Standards (IPMS), as well as the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) guidelines.

If you do prefer to measure in feet and inches that's not a problem. If you're using the Fourlabs sketching template, we recommend 1 x 0.5 cm squares on the graph paper = 1 foot.



Click [here](#) for a good tutorial on how to sketch using feet and inches.

1.4

Sketching Checklist

Before leaving the property, you can use the below checklist to make sure you have everything covered.

1. Is the full property address and job number written on your sketch?
2. Have you marked the layout of the walls and rooms within the building?
3. Are all windows and doors marked, both internal and external?
4. Have you provided a length and width measurements for all rooms?
5. If it is unclear where a measurement is taken to and from, have you added an arrow to confirm?
6. Have you labelled the floors - Ground, First, Second etc?
7. Have you labelled each room clearly – Sitting Room, Kitchen etc?
8. Have you shown kitchen worktops, fixtures and fittings – sinks and hobs etc?
9. Have you marked all bathroom fixtures and fittings? Fireplaces?
10. Is your sketch clear enough for someone to redraw from?

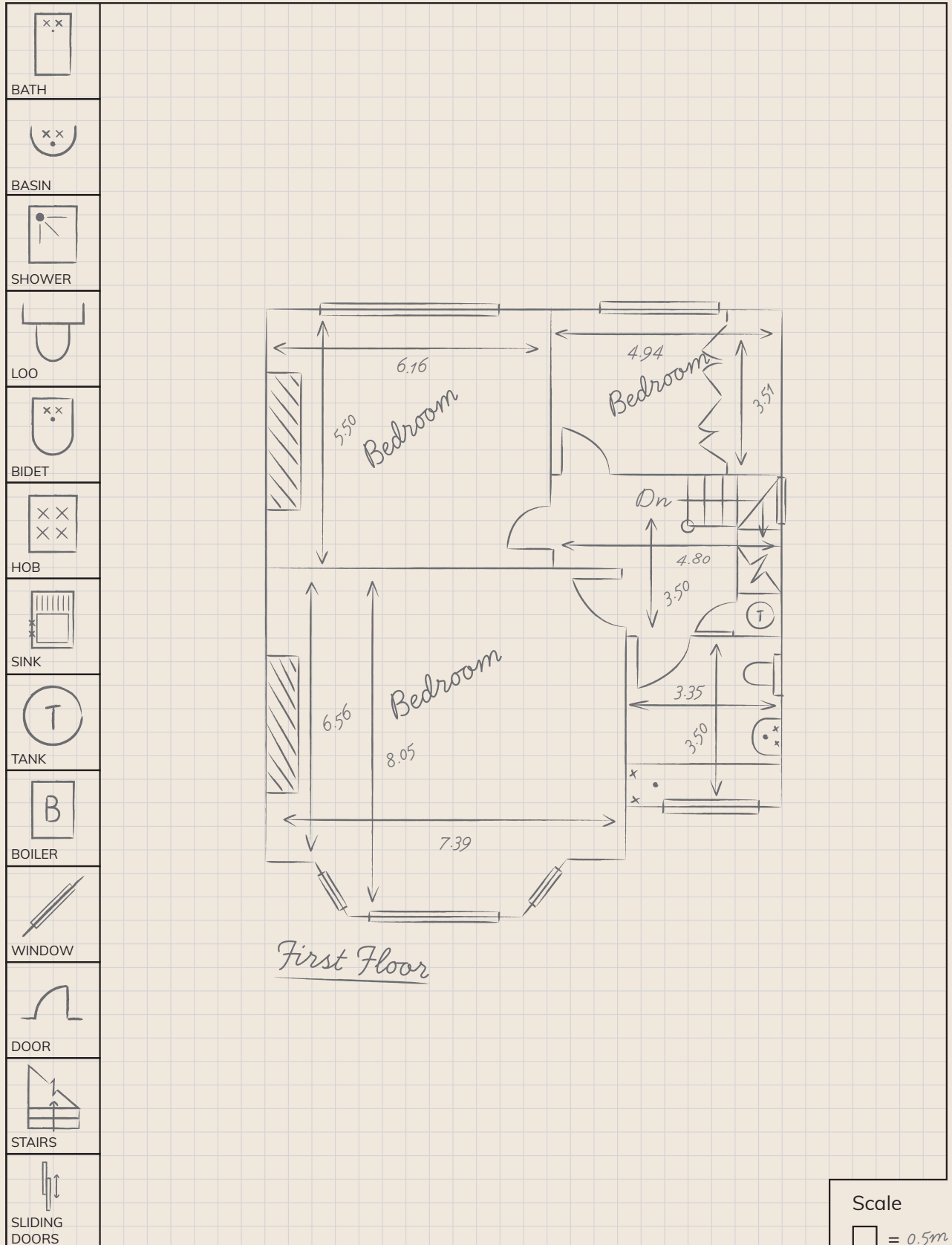
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SAMPLE SKETCH



Property Address / Reference

15 Any Street Anywhere England SN12 2PQ



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UPLOADING YOUR SKETCH TO FOURLABS

You can upload your sketch in many different formats including jpeg, PDF, a photograph from your phone or a scan. As long as the sketch is clear and legible to draw from any method is fine.

We find that most clients chose to take a photograph of their sketch nowadays. If you prefer this method, please try to take the image in natural daylight conditions with no shadows and please ensure the flash is off. A single image encompassing the whole of an A4 sketch should be clear enough; there is no need to take multiple images of a single A4 sheet unless you think an area is particularly complicated.

To place an order with us at Fourlabs you'll need to have an account created. You can register an account following this [link](#).

Once you've registered for an account you'll be able to place orders. Please click on the large green 'New job' button on the floor plan page. This will take you to the 'submit a new job' form where you need to input the property address / reference, any additional notes (e.g. please add in the bathroom labels) and upload your sketch. Once this is complete click on the 'submit order' button and your order will go through to our drawing office to start processing.

If you want to upload your sketches whilst out and about it is much easier to use the Fourlabs mobile app which is available for Apple and Android devices. For further details and links to download please visit our website.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4.1

Service Information

All floor plans are returned with one working day turnaround, with amendments returned within the hour depending on the time of day. You can select up to three formats for your floor plan to be returned; the most common formats are jpeg and PDF.

If you require a particular format or style for your plans, we can work with you to tailor the format to your own or your clients' requirements. Once each template / standard is agreed you can select your different preferences and formats quickly and easily when placing orders. If you'd like to use this service, you can create your own bespoke preference by clicking on the 'Preferences' tab of your Fourlabs account or call / email our UK head office to discuss your styling with a member of our team.

We offer a free amendment service via our Screen Sketch feature. Screen Sketch allows you to draw and annotate your floor plan quickly on-screen.

4.2

Additional sources & questions

Remember: if you're a registered user of the Fourlabs system we're more than happy to help with any technical queries you might have. For further advice please call our UK head office on +44 (0) 203 301 7216 or hq@fourlabs.co.

If you have additional questions please do not hesitate to contact us for advice.



Your sketches do not need to be perfect so don't stress over them! As long as the length and width measurements of each room are included on the sketch, we'll be able to redraw from the sketch.

Please note: The drawing office will return your draft plan with red markings on the floor plan. These red markings denote any queries that the drawing office may have with your measurements or certain elements of the floor plan. Please check these over to ensure your plan is correct.

CONTACT US

hq@fourlabs.co
+44 (0) 2033 017 216

