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Subject: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [vmoore20](#) on Wed, 15 Aug 2012 09:58:27 GMT

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Hi all, I have just been introduced to the world of 3D printing. I have been looking through all your designs and I am super excited to get started. My questions is what is the best application for a novice to start on? I've seen Solidworks mentioned a lot and also seen the free app from Shapeways called blender. I'm pretty good using apps and have used Vectorworks in the past for interior design. (just offering a level of my competence - or lack off! )

Your advice would be most welcome.

Thanks

Victoria - United Kingdom.

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Subject: Re: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [Mswlik](#) on Wed, 15 Aug 2012 13:34:40 GMT

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If you want to make more organic objects I would reccomend sculptris  
<http://www.pixologic.com/sculptris/>

if you want very geometrical objects that are rather simple you should use sketchup  
<http://www.sketchup.com/>

If you are really not sure what kind of things you will be making I would reccomend blender 3D(my favorite)  
<http://www.blender.org/>

hope this helps

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Subject: Re: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [vmoore20](#) on Wed, 15 Aug 2012 20:09:44 GMT

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Hi, Thank you, really appreciate you taking the time to help. Think I'm going to give Blender a try. Watch this space.

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Subject: Re: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [Dragoman](#) on Thu, 16 Aug 2012 12:41:19 GMT

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Blender is well supported with tutorials, manuals, forums etc.

Still, be prepared to invest some time. It took me a few weeks of dabbling to get my first model right. If you have somebody to teach you, a day or two should be enough to get started.

You will get much quicker with practice!

Greetings

Dragoman

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Subject: Re: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [eNonsense](#) on Mon, 27 Aug 2012 17:05:12 GMT

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If you're going to be making precisely measured parts I would suggest Sketchup, and I'd then also suggest investigating some various add-ins which add more functionality. Sketchup is suited more towards architectural modeling by default, but there are various free add-ins/ruby scripts which give capabilities such as boolean operations and easy fillets, which make solid modeling easier.

I actually use SolidWorks mostly, but have been interested in checking out this new program from Cubify which looks like it works very similarly and is intended to be used for 3D printing design.

[http://cubify.com/products/cubify\\_invent/index.aspx](http://cubify.com/products/cubify_invent/index.aspx)

It's got a free 15 day trial and is only \$50 past that.

The main practical differences related to modeling for 3D printing that I've seen between free programs like Sketchup and expensive professional programs like SolidWorks is sometimes you have to go through more steps in the free program to get the same ends.

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Subject: Re: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [Fredd](#) on Mon, 27 Aug 2012 18:18:16 GMT

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vmoore: for help with blender, #blender on the irc channel Freenode is loads of help.

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Subject: Re: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [Modelsbymarsden](#) on Thu, 30 Aug 2012 16:20:50 GMT

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Rhino3D hands down, easy to use and is incredibly versatile.

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Subject: Re: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [beagley](#) on Wed, 03 Oct 2012 15:16:55 GMT

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Hi,

I have been trying out a bunch of different tools, too.

Any comments on Sketchup vs. Tinkercad?

I don't need Tinkercad's community/share features, but it sure was easy to learn, pretty and browser based.

-D

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Subject: Re: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [denali3ddesign](#) on Wed, 03 Oct 2012 16:01:40 GMT

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beagley wrote on Wed, 03 October 2012 15:16Hi,

I have been trying out a bunch of different tools, too.

Any comments on Sketchup vs. Tinkercad?

I don't need Tinkercad's community/share features, but it sure was easy to learn, pretty and browser based.

-D

Tinkercad will be easier to use, while Sketchup will give you far more options for advanced designing.

If Tinkercad looks like it can do what you need, by all means use it as you'll be on your way to printing much faster. Look around their gallery to see what people have done with it, and get a feel for what it can do.

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Subject: Re: Which Application to Use?

Posted by [psalmu](#) on Sun, 14 Oct 2012 15:49:10 GMT

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I'd dare recommend ViaCAD 2D/3D to anyone who wants to try "real CAD" real cheap (you can get them on eBay for around \$50). It does actual solid modeling, so no surface logic problems or mesh messes and it's relatively easy to get started with.

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