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Subject: 3D model software

Posted by [Jacobmccafferty](#) on Wed, 29 Feb 2012 02:22:41 GMT

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hi i would like to start creating some models and i was wondering which is the best software to use?

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Subject: Re: 3D model software

Posted by [denali3ddesign](#) on Wed, 29 Feb 2012 05:07:52 GMT

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Hi Jacob, welcome to Shapeways!

It depends on what you want to design, but for free programs, Sketchup is good for geometric-type designs, and Blender or Sculptris are good for curvy, organic models.

Here is a list of (nearly) all apps that work with Shapeways.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software

Posted by [lignum](#) on Wed, 29 Feb 2012 22:42:33 GMT

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I will say "thanks" for him as I was wondering the same thing. I am new and in no way good at 3D design (I never tried before). However, I am starting a shop to help earn some side funds for my guild. I used the image popper to make the basis for what I want to create using our logo and such, but I need to find other programs to use so I can make better things. I saw some free beginner programs and they have nothing but shapes. While I'm sure some would be creative enough to see their design amongst shapes and modifying them, I prefer a bit more direct approach

I got Sculptris yesterday and was using that, but that's a lot more "organic", as you put it, than I need right now for logos and such. Although it will be fun to tool around with.

Thanks again.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [denali3ddesign](#) on Wed, 29 Feb 2012 23:43:36 GMT  
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Glad it helped someone

If you have your logo in vector format (like Illustrator or Inkscape), you can import those vectors into Sketchup or other modeling software and easily pull it into 3D.

Good luck, and post back here if you have any questions!

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [Jacobmccafferty](#) on Thu, 01 Mar 2012 01:24:20 GMT  
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Thank you for the list of apps i think ill try sculptris

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [lignum](#) on Thu, 01 Mar 2012 04:38:22 GMT  
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Alrighty. I am a complete noobie at this so I'll have to ask. I used trace bitmap and all that stuff and exported a png from inkscape. I imported into SU, but could not figure out a way to extrude. I used explode and got the push/pull to work but only the surface as a whole (the rectangle it imported as the image) and not just the logo itself (see my store for what the logo looks like). The popper thing was fine for what I need right now, but as I said I would rather learn the real way to do things.

Thanks!

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [denali3ddesign](#) on Thu, 01 Mar 2012 05:23:40 GMT  
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Have fun, Jacob...look forward to seeing what you create!

lignum, once you have run trace bitmap in Inkscape, export those vector lines as DXF and import to Sketchup with this plugin: DXF2SKP Any image imported to Sketchup will just be a rectangle, as you found out.

One option that may convert a PNG to edges inside Sketchup is this plugin: Image Trimmer. I've never tried it but I imagine it will run very slowly.

Hope that helps!

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [lignum](#) on Thu, 01 Mar 2012 13:50:06 GMT  
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I see one problem. I didn't know what splines was, but it was not importing my dxf correctly because of them. Apparently it is curved lines as that is what my logo mostly contains. \*sad\*

Still trying to figure something out. I have looked at other programs, but I am but a simple man. lol. I will figure out something! I must! I have taken it upon myself to do this for my guild and there's so many things in my head I want to experiment with and create. I just need to learn how to create them and which tools are best for what.

I am going to try that tracing thing for SU now just for the heck of it.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [lignum](#) on Thu, 01 Mar 2012 14:23:51 GMT  
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Ehhh. The trace took forever and didn't exactly look amazing. Exploding the object and then push/pulling messed up the image afterwards.

I'm starting to think maybe I should use another program? Obviously I could try to recreate the logo within the program, buuut that would be rather troublesome, especially for future efforts on other projects and designs that have been created outside of the program.

thanks again for all the help and thanks to the OP for letting me hijack your thread

Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [aeron203](#) on Thu, 01 Mar 2012 14:40:08 GMT  
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One workflow for extruding vector art that I've had success with is exporting an EPS from Inkscape, then importing into Wings3D. It works better for closed shapes. Ones that are complicated with holes and concentric features tend to get filled in. Blender also works (with .ai I think it was), but is a little trickier.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [Jacobmccafferty](#) on Thu, 01 Mar 2012 19:58:28 GMT  
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I have another question, I have some sketches and how do I upload them to the 3G app?

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [denali3ddesign](#) on Fri, 02 Mar 2012 05:08:21 GMT  
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@ lignium, apparently Inkscape doesn't convert curves well, so maybe this Inkscape tip will help you: "Make all the curved segments into lines before you export to dxf."

@ jacob, I don't understand - what "3G app"?

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [lignum](#) on Fri, 02 Mar 2012 06:09:19 GMT  
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denali3ddesign wrote on Fri, 02 March 2012 05:08@ lignium, apparently Inkscape doesn't convert curves well, so maybe this Inkscape tip will help you: "Make all the curved segments into lines before you export to dxf."

Well there was a also an extension>modify path>flatten beziers that worked. Now the import dxf thing worked fine in SU, but it won't let me push/pull/extrude/etc. \*weeps softly\*

So many problems lol. One after the other. Is there just another good free program that I can import a previously designed 2D image (even if I have to tinker with it in Inkscape first as it seems I'm becoming rather efficient at that if nothing else)?

Thanks again for all the help.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [stonysmith](#) on Fri, 02 Mar 2012 07:08:59 GMT  
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For another possible set of options, here's how I go about converting 2d drawings into 3d objects:

<http://stonysmith.com/wired/stepvan/default.asp>

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [denali3ddesign](#) on Fri, 02 Mar 2012 16:14:09 GMT  
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lignum wrote on Fri, 02 March 2012 06:09

Well there was a also an extension>modify path>flatten beziers that worked. Now the import dxf thing worked fine in SU, but it won't let me push/pull/extrude/etc.

There are probably tiny gaps between some of the lines - once you find them and close them up, you can create a face that you can push/pull. Here's a plugin that will help you find the gaps:

<http://www.smustard.com/script/StrayLines>

I know it looks like you are patching together a Frankenstein program, but hey, its all free! Once you get the workflow down, its very easy.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [Jacobmccafferty](#) on Fri, 02 Mar 2012 17:34:58 GMT  
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i meant to say how do i upload a sketch onto a 3D app.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [denali3ddesign](#) on Fri, 02 Mar 2012 20:49:44 GMT  
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Jacobmccafferty wrote on Fri, 02 March 2012 17:34i meant to say how do i upload a sketch onto a 3D app.

Do you mean import a reference sketch/picture to trace over? If so, here's a tutorial how to do it in Sketchup: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJwOA1TWw\\_Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJwOA1TWw_Q)

If that's not what you meant, give us a little more info...help us help you!

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [Jacobmccafferty](#) on Sat, 03 Mar 2012 00:11:34 GMT  
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thank you that video helped, would that work with making animals?

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [lignum](#) on Sat, 03 Mar 2012 01:30:30 GMT  
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Okay. I'm feeling really dumb. I'm probably just missing a step somewhere (also this is over a few nights so now I feel like I'm redoing things and forgetting steps that I previously did fine).

I am attaching my guild's logo (with some edits by me to make it one solid piece). I want it to be a 3D image. I won't give specifics because it's not important and I want to do it myself. The tools I am using are Inkscape and SketchUp. I am open to using other tools. If you have any favorites, please provide a link because when I google them I get all different versions (TrueSpace is the main one because it was bought out and discontinued etc etc).

I'm not too dumb though, so you don't have to be too step-by-step-ish. But I would like a little bit more of a comprehensive nudge in the right direction. Is there something I'm missing?

I hate being a pain in the butt. lol. But maybe this will pay off in the future and I'll be a wiz as it (hahaha suuure).

Thanks again to the "community" for the help and I hope someone might take the 5 minutes it should probably really take to do this and help me out further.

## File Attachments

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1) [g3007.png](#), downloaded 1331 times

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [stonysmith](#) on Sat, 03 Mar 2012 01:40:17 GMT  
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Truespace is still available, just not formally supported.  
[http://download.cnet.com/TrueSpace/3000-6677\\_4-10187286.html](http://download.cnet.com/TrueSpace/3000-6677_4-10187286.html)

I prefer version 7.6 to that of version 7.6.1 - in the latter version, they removed the native STL output, but both versions have VRML output which I've used with good success to create full color models.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [lignum](#) on Sat, 03 Mar 2012 03:18:35 GMT  
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stonysmith wrote on Sat, 03 March 2012 01:40Truespace is still available, just not formally supported.  
[http://download.cnet.com/TrueSpace/3000-6677\\_4-10187286.html](http://download.cnet.com/TrueSpace/3000-6677_4-10187286.html)

I prefer version 7.6 to that of version 7.6.1 - in the latter version, they removed the native STL output, but both versions have VRML output which I've used with good success to create full color models.

I appreciate it. I'll check it out now. It's just a bummer to have to go on a scavenger hunt to be able to do something that seems pretty basic. "See that flat thing there? Yeah. Make that not flat."

But here I go anyways!

Once I get past this step I want to start working on 3D models in a creative sense. That's the hardest part for me. I see all these things in my head that I would like to create, whether simple or complex. I sit down, and then becoming dumbfounded by the number of tools on the screen and don't know where to begin.

What am I getting myself into

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [JACANT](#) on Sat, 03 Mar 2012 12:10:33 GMT  
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Try this it is free  
<http://www.ptc.com/products/creo-elements-direct/modeling-express/>  
Does a great job on exporting STL files,. The options can really smooth out your model.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [denali3ddesign](#) on Wed, 14 Mar 2012 02:23:26 GMT  
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Hey lignum,

Did you ever find something that works for you? I tried it doing it in Inkscape and Sketchup and got a very good model in about 5 minutes. Let me know if you want to know how.

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [Zivile](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2012 10:18:56 GMT  
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Hey, I suggest you to visit this site <http://www.cgtrader.com/> Here you can get good ideas for your models

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Subject: Re: 3D model software  
Posted by [SGDesigns](#) on Sat, 16 Jun 2012 16:20:47 GMT  
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Trial and error usually works for me. I learn faster that way and I also go on youtube and search for tutorials on the program.

Blender



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ows2QTiMRPg>

3d Studio Max

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qX6nhtjtdtM>

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Subject: Re: 3D model software

Posted by [magengar](#) on Tue, 15 Jan 2013 12:25:46 GMT

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Hi everyone, I just recently joined and I'm new at This particular hobby.

For a 3D modeler I use a low-end Japanese program known as Metasequoia

<http://www.metaseq.net/english/index.html>

It's easy to use, but it still took me a long time to learn this program.

I've been using this program for over seven years, basically to make objects and models for its "cousin" program DoGA CGA where I assemble the objects as multi-jointed models for simple CG animations and still-image renders.

After learning about Shapeways recently, I've found that my latest version of Metasequoia can export objects to the .STL format.

Of course, I'd still open the exported STL object in Netfabb to clean it up, make repairs, and scale the object down to the size I want for printing at Shapeways.

The attached image shows a robot character model I made in Metasequoia.

Some of you might recognize it as a popular Japanese character from a '70s anime TV show (Mazinger-Z, known in the U.S. as "Tranzor-Z").

I wouldn't try printing this robot model at Shapeways, because it's got so many complex shapes compiling its body.

I'd have to model a simpler version that Shapeways can handle, or disassemble the model and upload its body parts a bit at a time.

I apologize for the size of this image...

Enjoy, and Thanks!

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### File Attachments

1) [MAZINGER-Z\\_1024x768.png](#), downloaded 488 times

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