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a sub-division modelers primer

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Advices for Starters

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01-18-2006, 03:03 AM

#1

SomeArtist

Organic modeler



Join Date: Jan 2006
Posts: 65

Advices for Starters

If you are an experienced modeler, feel free to give your advice(s) to put them on the right track. If you are new you can ask a question in here so others and I will try to answer it. Do not be shy, we're here to help!! Ask as many questions as you feel like it.

Quote:

I'm quite new to modelling and unsure of the different methods to help you model correctly.

When it comes to subdivision modeling there are currently two methods that I know of.

- 1: Box modeling
- 2: Poly modeling (poly by poly, point by point, edge extrude ect...)

For me personally, the proper way to model is Box modeling. That is the main reason why I've decided to go with Wings3D instead of Blender. Blender on the other hand supports Poly modeling and is very poor at Box modeling. That doesn't mean you can't use Blender for box modeling. It's just that you will have a hard time doing it.

Since you are quite new to modeling try modeling "Forms" instead. There is no need to rush and try to model the head simply because you want to show the world that you're really modeling something. Good forms are actually nice to look at (seriously) and it's an art in itself. To be honest, I haven't seen any beginners here or elsewhere showing us their great forms! Instead all we see are first human head attempt and what they're showing us with it is that they're not ready for it yet because it shows (their mesh). That's why you don't see any ears and nose from me yet because I'm not ready for it and there is no need to rush.

Also, keep in mind that different people are different. Some find great success by modeling head on their first day while others find no success at all. Overall and in general start with a form (find any subject and practice it until you feel comfortable) and you will go very far later. Improve your senses for now and just **ignore** all the detailing, loops and topology stuff.

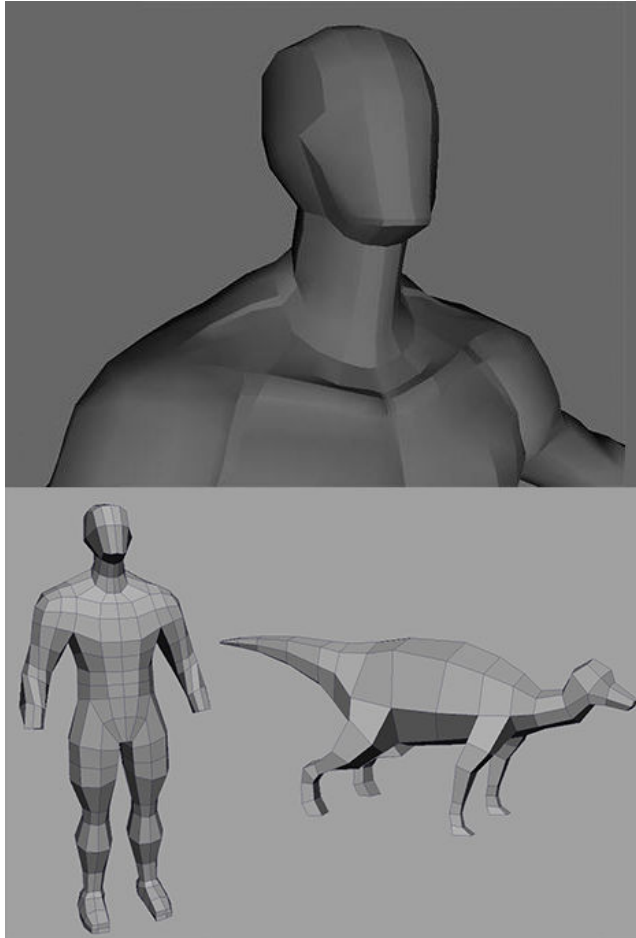
Then come back and show us your great forms because it will be a pleasure to look at! No need to have super detail in order to be admired.

Why form is the most successful path

When you study edgeloop where do you draw it on? Is it not on a form? Where do you get the form? You can't just go to someone else and ask for it... You have to make it yourself. If you do it now then you will have a form later to test out topology and detailing techniques. If you don't then you will struggle like I did.

In the past whenever I want to practice detailing I had to start from scratch every single day. What a waste of time! Why do I have to create a form everytime I need to practice detailing technique? Can't I just reuse my own forms and focus on detailing instead? That's the whole point behind all this. You are going up the ladder step by step and every step will be a golden step.

There are soo many advantages to this path. You can import your form into ZBrush later on, you can pass it on to other artists to be used as a base to start their sculpting. You can pose it if your software has bones! Wow, dynamic forms, forms that are in poses - now that's beautiful to look at!! Another bonus is that it helps improve your senses!

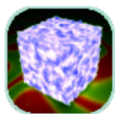


QUOTE

QUICK

01-18-2006, 06:38 AM

#2



VividHazeE
Avid Blender User



Join Date: Jan 2006
Location: Northern Ireland
Posts: 17



Thanks for that great bit of philosophy SomeArtist! Your right, I'm so wound up trying to make something amazing that I'm not concentrating on practicing general forms. (Those forms of yours are really great by the way, I love the back legs of the 4 legged animal) 😊.

I took your advice and spent half an hour working on [this](#).

Thanks again for your help, I wouldn't have made that model if it weren't for you 😊

VividHazeE

QUOTE

QUICK

01-18-2006, 07:12 PM

#3

SomeArtist
Organic modeler



Join Date: Jan 2006
Posts: 65



The things you will learn in the "Form" stage is cutting (*how, why, where, when*) and rounding out your forms (*how, why,*

where, when). Later you'll be doing a lot of cutting and rounding unconsciously. Doing it without thinking is what most people called "Talent". Now you know that talent is not a gift, it's not something you are borned with but something you learn (proper learning).

When you show your form(s) all you will get is: "It's good" or "It's blocky".

That's it, very simple critique that allows you to improve very quickly. Now if you show us your first head you might get something like this: "It's blocky, topology is bad, shape is bad, form is bad, eye is bad, nose is bad, ear is bad ect..."

To fix all that can be a lot of stress and you might not know where to start because you are dealing with: Form/Shape, Loops, Detailing and Tweaking ALL at once on your first day. So I've decided to break it down into 4 logical/golden steps to get there.

Each of those 4 steps can take a lot of time to learn. It took me 2 months to acquire the mindset for creating forms and later I'll create a thread just to talk all about it.

- 1: Form
- 2: Topology
- 3: Detailing
- 4: Tweaking

Currently I am at stage 2: Topology, far from my final destination.

For your information, the form you saw above was created using references (backdrop). Make sure to use references... and just create as many forms as you want. Make sure to save those forms so that you can reuse it later for stage 2 (Topology study).

QUOTE

QUICK

01-18-2006, 07:19 PM

#4



SimonA
LightWaver

Join Date: Jan 2006
Location: Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK
Posts: 19



I think you might have a nice idea there SomeArtist! Posing your forms in dynamic positions with some creative light would be a very good thread! Its a bit like those speed painting comps, not a lot of detail, but loads and loads of great creative ideas.

You also have a point when it comes to creating you models, but I just never thought of it this way before. I too start with the eyes, ears, nose.....but never have a body/form to put them on. But when you think about it starting the other way round is a much more sensible idea! The form gives you so much more information about a character/creature than its eyes or ears, these are just the finishing touches. The form tells you if the character is short or tall, fat or well built. You can even make the something look evil or friendly by the way their body is built.

Take your first example above, it gives the impression that it could be a well built, mid-twenties male, with chiseled features.

SimonA

QUOTE

QUICK

01-18-2006, 11:41 PM

#5

Shawn Fumo
SDM User

Join Date: Jan 2006
Posts: 18



This sounds like really sensible advice. I'd think that many of the skills in detailing is similar to the basic form except smaller. So if you learn how to control basic form, the detailing comes more from concentrating on more anatomical detail..

I'd like to ask SomeArtist if you can elaborate a bit on the issues of box modeling with Blender, though? I'm still getting used to both of these programs, so it'd be helpful to know specifically what makes it easier/harder for you with the two programs?

I do know that Blender got some improvements to the Subd tools in the last 2.40 version ([here](#) and [here](#)) and modifier

stack, but maybe you were also talking about that version when you said it isn't as good (or maybe the additions don't matter in this case).

Is it just that the workflow is slower in Blender or that some tools are missing? Also, when you say box modelling, you mean starting with a box and extruding it out to get the basic form ala zspheres as opposed to "skinning" it right?

Shawn

QUOTE

QUICK

01-19-2006, 01:17 AM

#6

PyroMonkey
Teach me! :S



Join Date: Jan 2006
Location: Northern Beaches, Australia
Posts: 15



My god....
Thank you.

I too have just started out in the 3Dness, and everytime i start a model i seem to screw up the form via detail tweaking, before the complete form is built. You have shown me how to start a model properly now. Starting has always been my weakness in anything. Looking fwd to posting some forms, keep a look out.

Once again thank you.

QUOTE

QUICK

01-19-2006, 01:22 AM

#7

SomeArtist
Organic modeler



Join Date: Jan 2006
Posts: 65



Quote:

the detailing comes more from concentrating on more anatomical detail

You are very correct.

About box modeling:

Box modeling is starting with a box and from there you extrude (my opinion anyway). Form modeling is a philosophy, it's not something you must do everytime you do box modeling. I know someone who can model very well and his method is BOX yet he ignores form all the way. He doesn't want to bother with shaping form in the early stage because he believes it's a waste of time.

"Why create the form when in the end you will have to move all the vertices into the correct places?" He got a point but unaware of what forms can do for him.

Quote:

elaborate a bit on the issues of box modeling with Blender

I explored Blender before I got to Wings3D and when I did Wings just clicked. Not on the first day though.

One of the most frustrating thing about Blender is its hotkey system, it doesn't allow me to do things my way. However, we human can adapt to changes and I know someone that now find Blender to be the most logical 3d app out there. Another thing that turns me off is not being able to bevel or slice edge(s) manually, plus the fact that it doesn't support true Ngons. Also the two programs' viewport are very different, with wings3d viewport I can block out forms very easily while in Blender I struggle. Not to mention the Virtual Mirror..

And last, it requires two clicks to move a point in Blender while in Wings3D's tweak mode it requires only 1 click. I believe the reason for having two clicks in Blender is so that you can undo on the fly if you decided to do so. What I like about Blender is its smoothness and its viewport shading. It makes you want to model and you'll know what I mean when you start extruding while in subsurf mode.

Wings on the other hand has all that you need for box modeling but the viewport shading needs more work. Viewport shading is important because you are looking at it constantly. If the look turns you off you might not want to continue

modeling that model that you started.

Quote:

Is it just that the workflow is slower in Blender or that some tools are missing?

Both the workflow and some tools are missing. I am soo used to Wings now it's hard to switch..

What's important here is not the software but your ability to adapt. If you can adapt to changes and can learn new ways to do things then software doesn't matter. However, if you cannot adapt and cannot find a way to model in that software then you must switch and find one that you are more comfortable with because if you're not comfortable with the software you're using then you're going to have a hard time modeling.

QUOTE

QUICK

01-28-2006, 12:02 AM

#8



Jay
3d Artist



Join Date: Jan 2006
Location: UK
Posts: 495



Hey Guys

Theres something I'd just like to point out too, regardless of age or experience it NEVER hurts to ask any question no matter how big or small. Dont be proud and NOT ask as Ive seen it time and time again people think they know it all and clearly dont, 3d is not easy by any means and it requires time and patience and then some...

Just my bit...

Cheers to all
Jay

www.outlaws3d.com

www.outlaws-ales.com

QUOTE

QUICK

03-03-2006, 02:01 AM

#9

logan5
SDM User

Join Date: Jan 2006
Location: UK
Posts: 2



thanks SomeArtist your forms approach is just what I needed. I've had modo for over a year, but i use it for mostly for archivz (its very fast). I stayed away from modelling organic forms because I was overwhelmed by the level of detail that I saw in models from many artists. Your approach seems very good and a good confidence builder. Its easy to fall into the trap (as I did) of trying to model a complicated mesh only to end up being afraid to move vertex x or y in case you cock the whole thing up.

cheers,

-logan5

Don't resist. Try flowing.

QUOTE

QUICK

03-03-2006, 03:03 AM

#10

johnfnoo
SDM User



Join Date: Feb 2006
Posts: 249



This idea would be a great platform for people to expand thier skills and to teach others. Here:

<http://www.subdivisionmodeling.com/f...=6560#post6560>

I hope that's not too out there for this lot.

Last edited by johnfnop : 03-03-2006 at 03:05 AM.

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