

Poser to 3dsMax

Exporting Poser 5 Figures to 3dsMax 5 using .Obj files

2003 by Prasutagus (v1.1)

1. Outline

Transferring Poser figures into 3dsMax is not a difficult task but many have struggled with little tweaks such as DAZ Victoria's eyeballs or opacity maps. The approach explained here is not the only way to accomplish the task but it will get you started and allow you to apply your own improvements to the process. It is targeting beginner to intermediate level users and assumes basic knowledge of both Poser and 3dsMax - object manipulation and navigation are not covered for either application. Import of animations is not part of this document.

The example is using DAZ Victoria 2 with clothes and hair to illustrate export from Poser 5 SP3 to 3dsMax5. A step-by-step approach is used for simplicity and understanding.

Enough talking, let's get started !

2. Poser Setup

2.1. Get Victoria up, either by creating a new scene or loading an existing one. It doesn't matter if additional objects are present since we'll select what to export later. Your scene has to be complete with all textures and poses applied; some changes are still possible in 3dsMax but considerably more difficult unless you have good knowledge of the 3dsMax material editor.

2.2. From the *File* menu select *Export -> Wavefront OBJ...*

2.3. In the the Export Range Window select *Single Frame*.

2.4. Unselect the root node in the Hierarchy Selection, then select the base node for all objects that need to be exported, in our case the figure, hair and clothing. Leave *Universe* and *Ground* unchecked. Underlying components automatically get checked (eg Head, Neck, Chest etc).

2.5. Click Ok and select a location to store the OBJ file.

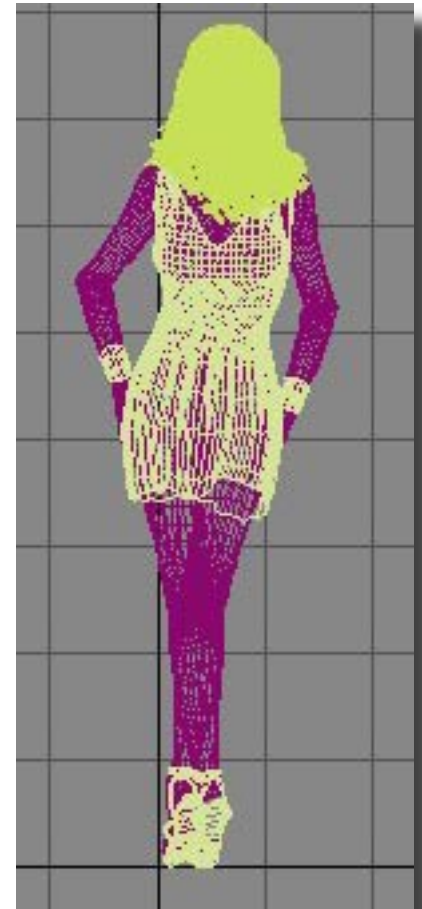
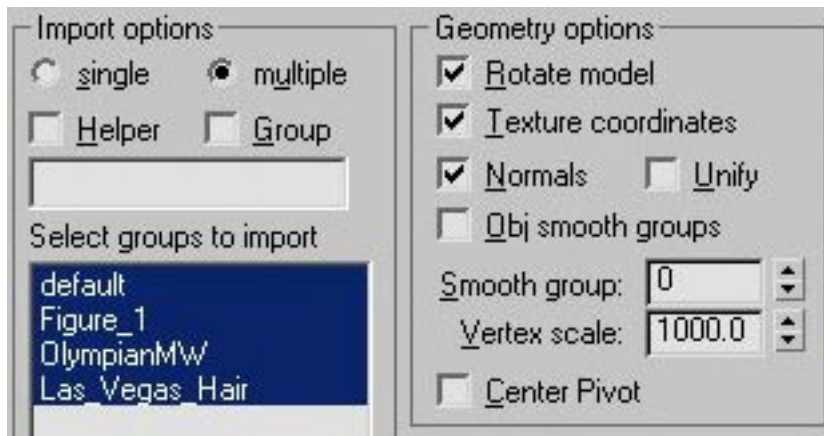
2.6. The next window defines export options. There are different opinions as to what should be checked. For normal processing select *Include figure names in polygon groups* and *Weld body part seams*.

2.7. Once you click *Ok* the export starts and we're done with Poser, so let's close it to free up some memory (particularly if you're working with complex hair !).



3. The HABWare Obj Plugin

In order to import the generated .obj file into 3dsmax you need a plugin. The most commonly used is the HABWare Obj2Max plugin. It can be downloaded for free at <http://www.habware.at/duck.htm>. Version 4 will work just fine for Max5. While you're there you might want to grab its counterpart Max2Obj as well. Drop the plugin file into your 3dsMax *plugins* directory and fire up Max.



4. 3dsMax Import

- 4.1. From the *File* menu select *Import -> WaveFront Object (.OBJ)*. Navigate to the file you exported from poser and *Open* it. Depending on the complexity of the figure this can take a moment, even on a fairly fast machine.
- 4.2. Switch to *Perspective* view, focus on the face and zoom in.
- 4.3. Try running a test render - the system will complain about missing texture maps. Use the *Browse* button to navigate to each of the missing textures and add them by click on the *Use path* button. Once the list of missing maps is empty click on *Continue* but be warned, it's not going to be a pretty sight !

The main issues you'll notice are a) Eye Textures, b) Skin Bumpmap, c) Eyelashes, d) upper Eyebrows and - if you used hair e) Hair transparency. So let's fix her up - but first we need to get the textures into the material editor.

5. Loading textures into the material editor

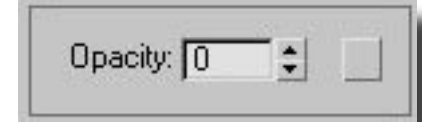
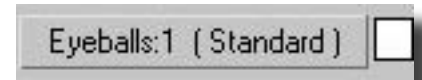


- 5.1. Open the Material Editor and select the first slot.
 - 5.2. Use the *Eyedropper Tool* and click on any part of the skin. This will load the texture and you'll see the different body parts appear in the *Multi/Sub-Object Basic Parameters Box*.
 - 5.3. Now select the second slot and repeat the process on the hair.
 - 5.4. Repeat again for clothing and any other parts you imported.
 - 5.5. Switch back to the first slot and save your work.
- We're all set now so let's start fixing her up.



6. Fixing Eyes and Upper Eyebrows

- 6.1. Click on the *Eyeballs* submaterial button in the *Multi/Sub-Object Basic Parameters* Box.
- 6.2. Under *Blinn Basic Parameters* (if you changed the shader it will be another shader name instead of Blinn) change the opacity value from 100 to 0.
- 6.3. Use the pulldown menu next to the Eyedropper tool to switch back to the full material/figure view.
- 6.4. Click on the *Upper Eyebrows* submaterial button in the *Multi/Sub-Object Basic Parameters* Box and repeat the same process described under point 6.2.
- 6.3. You will notice the pupils appear in shaded mode - Render if you want to double check the result.



7. Adjusting Bump Maps

Objects may or may not have bump maps applied to them. The example used here (*Elowen by Blackhearted*) had a bump map applied to the face but not the body. Unfortunately the typically generated bump map value of 30 results in skin that looks like sandpaper in 3ds Max (see page 2). All we have to do is lower the value to something as low as 5-10. For body parts such as lips or eyebrows I tend to completely remove it.

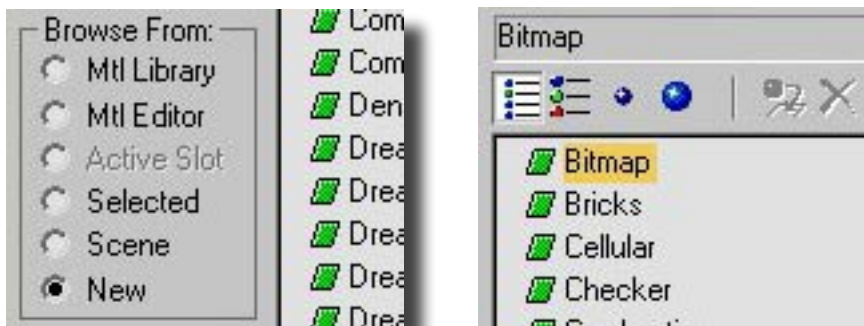
- 7.1. Click on the *SkinBody* submaterial (assuming it has a bump map applied to it - you'll usually spot that right away) , then open the *Maps* foldout box.
- 7.2. Scroll down to *Bump* and change the value to 5-10 (for skin).
- 7.3. Use the pulldown menu next to the Eyedropper tool to switch back to the full material/figure view.
- 7.4. Test your render, it should start to look fairly decent.



8. Mapping Eyelashes

Eyelashes are loaded without transparency maps so we'll have to manually complete this task.

- 8.1. Select the *Eyelashes*, then open the Maps foldout box.
- 8.2. Check the *Opacity* map box it and change opacity value to 50.
- 8.3. The button next to the value reads *None* - click on it to load a transparency map.
- 8.4. You will be presented with the *Material/Map Browser*.
- 8.5. Select *New* in the *Browse From* box and *Bitmap* from the main listing, then navigate to the appropriate transparency map. Most textures come with a custom transparency map, otherwise the default map for your figure might do. After confirming the selection you should see the map filename on the *Opacity* map button.
- 8.6. Render to see the result.



9. Hair and Clothing

The same techniques described above also work for any other figure or parts that you may have imported. Hair and clothing typically require an opacity map to be loaded and applied - you may have to play around with the opacity value to find the best results but it is fairly straight forward.

10. Closing Thoughts

- 10.1. Keep in mind that complex figures with multiple hair layers and clothing parts can drain your machine - save frequently !
- 10.2. Sometimes reloaded Max files will show poly shaped figures. Just apply a *Mesh Smooth* modifier, that'll fix it.
- 10.3. Some props do not import properly - instead you get an error. Try using a different method such as 3ds files.
- 10.4. Handpainted hair will always look better than rendered, try getting your skills with Photoshop and a tablet up.
- 10.4. The 3ds Max forum on Renderosity has an excellent Poser FAQ with compiled messages relating to specific issues such as animation import or mapping problems.

Happy rendering !
Prasutagus, May 2003.

