Course: 3D Design
Title: MyBlender.blend
Dropbox File: MyBlender.zip
Blender: Version 2.45
Level: Beginning
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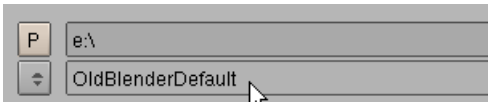
MyBlender.blend

Blender has a simple default file that is used when you press File / New (or CTRL-X). This default scene usually consists of a cube (but not always), a camera and lamp displayed in top view of a 3D viewport.

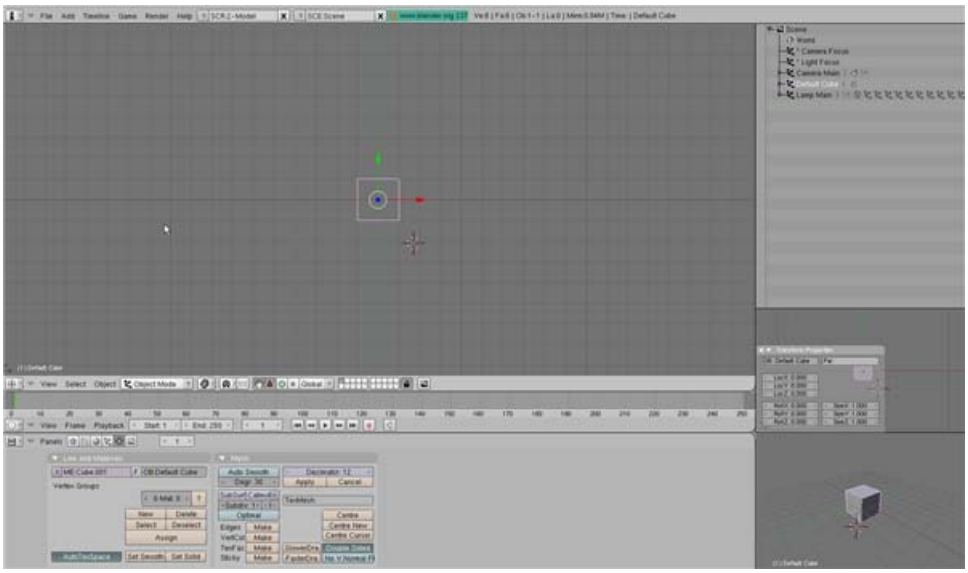
It is possible to set your own “default” blender file arranging the User Interface to better suit your needs.

Before we do this we will save a copy of the old Blender default file so you can always go back to it if you want. Open the default Blender file. Before you make any edits press F2 (Save As). Save this file as OldBlenderDefault.blend and save it in a directory where you can find it if needed.



In this tutorial we will change the Blender default file to something more useful. You can always revert back to the original default by opening the OldBlenderDefault.blend and save it as the default.

Now open MyBlender.blend This file is located in the MyBlender.zip file.



Now press CTRL-U (Save Default Settings). This file is now your default Blender file. Close Blender (QKEY) and re-open it. The new default file will be displayed.

You can of course at any time change this default file and re-save it as the default (CTRL-U) or open the OldBlenderDefault.blend file and make that the default file.

This default file is used as the default file for many of the remaining tutorials.

Default File Details:

This default file has the information panel at the top just like the old default file.

If you are using a laptop computer you may want to open this window (by dragging it down. Press the System and Open GL button and press the Emulate Numpad button.

Restore the Panel to its original position and press CTRL-U to re-save the file as the default.

The 3D viewport is divided into 4 windows. On the left is the large 3D viewport set in Top View.

On the top right is a Blender Outliner window which displays the names of all of the elements in the scene. This is a very handy window. It shows all of the objects in the scene along with their materials and parent/child relationships. It also allows you to select objects by name which is very handy when you have many objects in the scene. You can see more information about the object by clicking on the triangle to the left of the name.

On the bottom right is a small 3D window with the Transform Properties Panel (NKEY) displayed. It is a very good idea to have quick access to the Transform Properties Panel. It contains a lot of information about the selected object and most importantly it allows you to enter transform information manually. It is also a convenient method to name each of your objects which is an important modeling practice.

On the bottom of the Top View is a small and long Timeline window. It is very useful when animating objects. It displays the location of keyframes for a selected object and provides easy playback tools.

The buttons window at the bottom of the display is split into 2 windows. On the bottom left is the standard buttons window as used in the original default file. On the right is a small 3D window set Perspective View. It is always useful to have a perspective view available while modeling which give a more complete view of the model than the top, front or side views. This perspective view is in shaded mode. You can rotate/pan/zoom the window or select it and press NUM0/NUM5 to toggle between perspective and camera view.

The new default file has a cube object placed at X=0, Y=0, Z=0 just as the original default file.

Hold the SHIFT down and select Layer 10 (both layer 1 and 10 are now active). Layer 10 contains the camera named Camera Main and an empty object named Camera Focus. (An empty object is a non-renderable object.) Select the Camera focus from the Outliner window. Press the GKEY (Grab). Note that the camera will always focus on the Camera Focus object no matter where it is placed. This is a fast and convenient way to set the camera (rendered) view set-up. You can move the Camera Main or the Camera Focus object as needed.

Hold the SHIFT KEY and press the layer 20 button (add to the active layers). This layer contains a useful standard lighting arrangement. Zoom out of top view to see the lamp objects.

The lighting set-up consists of 3 Hemi Lamps. One pointing down from the top (Hemi Downlight), one pointing in from the right Side (Hemi Sidelight 01) and one pointing in from the left side (Hemi Sidelight 02). All 3 have an energy level set at .5.

The actual placement of Hemi Lamps is irrelevant. (Their position on the display has no effect on the light). You can dim these lamps by lowering the energy level.

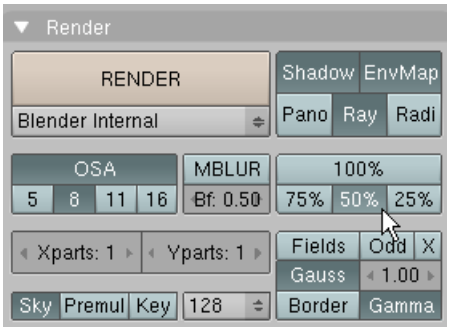
The basic lighting in the regular default Blender file is very poor. This allows you to create a good all-around diffuse lighting for use with you models. You can of course add to this setup specific lighting objects when needed.

The lighting will only affect the rendering if the Layer 20 is active. If you do not want to use the lighting set-up simply do not activate the layer.

Other features in this default file are:

The “world” background is a dark blue to light blue gradient.

The output file type is JPEG
The output image size is 640 x 512 pixels set to 50%. You can change this to 25%, 75% or 100% in the Render Panel (F10 - Scene).



Finally, the default file has the Auto Save function set to 5 files. Blender will create a new file (with the same name) for the last 5 times you save the file. These files will be appended with the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. (The regular default blender file has only 1 Auto Save file).