

Technical Checklist for Artists in Production.

. All images that are to be used as texture files can be **.pic, .tga, .png, .map, .hdr, .exr, .hdr**. for Xsi/Softimage (Maya/Lightwave) and preferably in multiples of 2 pixels i.e 256, 512,1024, 2048, or combinations thereof. This makes best use of Mental ray's memory space at render time. Any texture space outside of UV space should be filled in black to further reduce memory load.

The 32-bit image files are harder to work with in Photoshop, so it may be best for your production to limit the texture assets to 8-bits where possible.

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Linear Gamma Workflow... learn it and prosper! Each application has it's way of allowing you to work in Linear Gamma without too much trouble. There are plenty or resources on the internet to guide you, and also ask your TD for tips.

Stay away from .tif files as not all 3D apps support them fully, and there WILL be problems if the file names become too long, and layered files are supported by .tif's, which is a bad thing in production where texture loads become a huge problem. In the same vein be sure to collapse your layered Photoshop files prior to rendering... keep the layered file at "home" for further work.

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Never append a numerical character to any texture file... 3D apps are prone to reading a numerical character as a sequence, therefore your render may fail. If you do want an animated texture sequence, make sure you understand each application's requirements for type and padding.

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Pay special attention to bump and specular maps, they are key to lending your textured assets a lifelike appearance.

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make sure everybody on the production has their monitors color corrected every week.

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Turn off any feature in a shader network that you are not using. A zero value still computes, so disable whatever you can.

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Make sure all Artists in a production are using the same Photoshop color profile.

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Make sure all Artists are using the same Light Rig for texturing.

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Use mathematics to combine vectors, not colors!

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Learn at least some scripting,Python, MEL, jscript, perl are easy and you can do tedious things with limited knowledge of a language. Don't waste the department TD's time with making you a button/addin for doing simple things.

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Learn "Normal Mapping" and "Sub-surface Scattering"

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Make sure your work is understandable to the next person to have to inspect/correct/adjust...that means name everything with it's function and/or folow the department's prefix/suffix naming conventions exactly.

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Never use scene ambient unless requested.

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Do not ever use lots of fine parallel lines.

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Texture your assets so they can be lighted, not just to have them approved by the Art Dept.

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Never use Phong unless you absolutely can not achieve a desired look otherwise, and

if you do use Phong, be sure to tune your falloff/specular decay. Phong will only look somewhat respectable in a Linear Gamma environment.

Continued.....

Naming conventions for Texture Files:

Color	-dif	(diffuse color)
Bump	-bmp	(bump map, a scalar map, 0 to 1 value)
Specular	-spc	(specular map, "" "")
Reflectivity	-rfl	(reflection map, "" "")
Ambient	-amb	(ambient color)
Environment	-env	(most often a color, HDRI, or reflection map)
Displacement	-dsp	(a scalar map)

Avoid raytraced reflections when you can, use "fake" See my "envreflection tutorial"

And finally....

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Never use phong.

Go to www.texturelighting.com for free downloads and tutorials.

