



## SeedyDeedee's top tips for starting out in 3D

So you want to have a go at making 3D art...

**First of all, do your research.** Don't jump in head first and buy yourself Maya Unlimited, then spend the rest of the year wondering what the hell it's for. Start off with cheap / free software and see how you get on. There are many programmes readily available that are great for absolute beginners and will help you decide whether you want to explore further.

The two main hobbyist programmes readily available are Poser and Daz|Studio. They both come with some pre-supplied 3D content, and are compatible with the majority of popular 3D formats available today. Both enable you to customise and pose pre-made models, load scenery, render images and create animation (for starters!). Although they offer similar functionality, there is one main difference: Daz|Studio has always been available for free. This is a good place to start if you want to figure out whether you're going to enjoy playing with 3D programmes.

These links take you to the respective home pages for these two software packages:

[Daz Studio](#) [Poser](#)

### Find Freestuff

You can get free props, clothing, sets, figures, morphs, textures, backgrounds, lights, you name it from lots of places on the web. If you just do a search for 'free 3d models' or '3d free stuff', you'll get tons of links. I've put a few of my favourites at the bottom of the page to get you started.

**For landscapes and backgrounds**, there are plenty of landscape generation programmes out there, some of which are available for free, and all of which vary in quality! One of the more popular free landscape programmes is **Terragen**, which gives some very realistic effects. You can download the free version from [Planetside](#).

[E-On Software](#) has a full range of software, which caters for everyone, from the hobbyist to the movie studio, with prices to suit.

like Daz's Bryce (which has a full working interface with Daz|Studio) and E-On Software's Vue.

Get yourself some **image editing software**, if you don't already have it. Photoshop is popular, but also expensive. You can get many free image editing programmes, and there are a few listed [here](#).

### Making your own 3D models

There are plenty of free programmes available for this, such as Blender and Wings3D – neither of which I can vouch for particularly as I've only played with them briefly. Daz3D currently offer Carrara 5 (and soon Carrara 6, which I think they're doing some pre-order deal on), which is what I use, although again, this isn't free. There is a long list of links on Daz to [other free 3D software](#).

My advice on modelling is don't try to run before you can walk. Get to know the posing and landscape programmes first, and when you're comfortable with them, then look around at what software best suits your modelling needs.

To begin with, I'd recommend just getting your hands on Daz|Studio, as it's completely free, and then downloading a load of freestuff to play with. Pick up some computer / computer art / digital art / 3d art magazines. They all come with free CDs which often have demos or restricted versions of lots of software (and freestuff like textures, backgrounds, photoshop brushes etc) and you can try them out to see what you like best. It's also worth looking around the many 3D websites, browsing the forums and reading as many reviews as you can get your hands on. :)

#### **A few good freestuff links:**

[Renderosity](#)

[Daz 3D Freestuff](#)

[Content Paradise](#)

[Runtime DNA](#)

[Andi-3D](#)

[Aery Soul](#)

[Artist-3D](#)

[3D Cafe](#)

#### **SeedyDeedee and Daz3D**

**Daz3D gives away a bunch of freestuff if you register with them (which is free), and if you join their Platinum Club (which you do have to pay for), you get lots more free stuff, and lots of other stuff at \$1.99. They also have a 'Freepository', which is made up of users' freebies and can be found [here](#).**

I do realise that I mention Daz3D and their products quite a bit in this document, but that's only because they have a ton of cheap stuff and a free 3D posing application. I also use them quite a lot to source my props and costumes, but you don't have to!

**Deedee**

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