



SkyTracer2

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What Is SkyTracer2?

- A tool for creating sky backgrounds
- Easy to use
- Long render times
 - SkyBaker

Finding SkyTracer2 (Part 1)

- Setting the menus:
 - Layout
 - Interface
 - Edit Menu Layout
 - » Presets
- Change presets to the desired menu style
 - Styles based on program version
- Scene Tab
 - Effects Toolbox
 - Backdrop – (CTRL + F5)

Finding SkyTracer2 (Part 2)

- In the *Effects* window, select *Backdrop* tab
- Click (and hold) *Add Environment*
 - Un-click on SkyTracer2 to add environment
- Open SkyTracer2 by double clicking link

The SkyTracer2 Window

- *Dissolve*: blending the sky into the scene
- *Planet Radius*: Default is set to Earth
- *Atmosphere / Haze Tabs*:
 - Controls the light scattering
 - Adjust after the clouds have been perfected
 - Adjust settings to get the feel desired
 - Quality Settings:
 - *Low* setting for faster, test renders
 - *High* setting for final, day-long renders

The SkyTracer2 Window

- The *Clouds* tab:
 - Low Altitude Clouds – *Enable / Disable*
 - The Texture Editor
 - The most popular sky texture – STClouds
 - » Texture along the Y axis instead of Z
- Use VIPER for a real-time rendering
 - » Start tinkering with settings for the desired effect
 - High Altitude Clouds – *Enable / Disable*
 - Same as Low Altitude Clouds

The SkyTracer2 Window

- Use Volumetric Rendering of clouds for best effect
 - High quality rendering takes hours instead of minutes
 - Ability to change cloud heights in atmosphere and their shadows (Texturing Shadows)

The SkyTracer2 Window

- The *Suns* tab:
 - The light source for the sky
 - Choose between a Sun or Moon
 - Have 1 or 2 suns, (or a sun and a moon)
 - The Sun position
 - A paradise for people who like to adjust settings
 - Easiest way of changing things up:
 - Month

The SkyBaker Window

- Use as high a resolution as possible:
 - 2048 is adequate
- Choose an image type (JPEG for most)
- Mapping – Spherical
- Antialiasing – Use at great risk to render times!
- Start baking!

Using the SkyBaked Image

- Create a sphere in Modeler
 - 250 radius on each axis
 - Create the surface for the sphere
 - Face surface normals *inwards*
 - Open the Surface Editor
 - Open the Texture Panel for the Color channel
 - Load the baked JPEG file as an image map
 - » Projected as Spherical
 - » Turn off Texture Antialiasing
 - » Set Texture Axis to Y instead of Z
 - » Set Diffuse to 0% and Luminosity to 100%
 - » Turn on Smoothing

What Has Been Covered

- SkyTracer2
 - Powerful tool with long render times
- SkyBaker
 - Used to save a SkyTracer environment as an independent image file



Thank You

Have a Nice Day