

## Sparkyworld's Guide To Creating Panelled Textures V1.1

Welcome to Sparky's guide for creating panelled textures, like those featured on the popular textures at [www.sparkyworld.co.uk](http://www.sparkyworld.co.uk)

If you know how to create UVmaps, or already have texture templates, then feel free to skip stages 1-3.

### Stage 1: Preparation

Even though 3d modellers include a texture map for you to edit, the file provided may not be that useable. This isn't decrying the hard work of the model maker, but for various technical reasons. The map provided may be low resolution. So if you plan on a high resolution texture, then re-sampling/resizing the image provided may sometimes not be that useable or accurate.

The second, and main reason, is materials. Many models, from the commercial Victoria 3 or the amazing freeware meshes at [www.vanishingpoint.com](http://www.vanishingpoint.com) use multiple maps. If a modeller includes multiple "plain" maps, the file gets larger which in turns to less bandwidth available for downloading, and a slower download for you. So you'll need to create multiple maps.

Even if the modeller has kindly included an .obj or .3ds mesh within the download, it's sometimes not that suitable. The trick is for either problem is simple enough:

1. Load the SINGLE mesh into poser.
2. DO NOT pose the mesh, add extra figures, lights etc at this stage.
3. Click File Export --> Wavefront OBJ.
4. On the export range dialogue box Select "Single Frame" and OK.
5. OK the Hierarchy Selection dialogue box.
6. Choose where you want to save the file, and give the exported file a name.
6. Tick the options EXACTLY shown in figure 1 and OK.

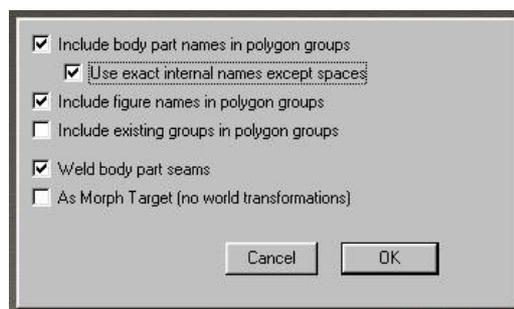


Figure 1: Poser OBJ Export Options

### Stage 2: Get some UVMapping Software

There is a good selection available for the PC, dependant on price and complexity.

For those of us who are selling our kidneys there's:

Deep UV - <http://www.righthemisphere.com/products/duv/>

For those with of us selling minor family members:

Ultimate Unwrap3D <http://www.unwrap3d.com/>  
UV Mapper Pro <http://www.uvmapper.com/uvmappro.html>

For the rest of us theres the free seats...

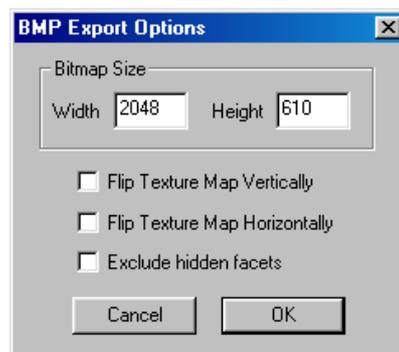
Lith Unwrap <http://www.static-lift.net/resource/resources.html>  
UV Mapper Classic <http://www.uvmapper.com/>

Personally I switch between Lith Unwrap and UV Mapper Classic depending on the task and what I need. But for 90% of texturing UV Mapper does the job fine. Plus a search around on Google will always provide you with good UV Mapper tutorials.

### Stage 3: UVMapping your mesh

*UV Mapper Classic - best for single materials.*

1. Fire up UV Mapper
2. Click File -->Load Model
3. OK the statistics dialogue box.
4. If using a multiple material mesh click Edit->Color->By Material.  
If not skip to 5.
5. Click File -->Save Texture Map  
Note: You may wish to change the default export size.  
This is for two fold reasons, it's depending on the mesh itself. Plus more importantly at what resolution you plan to texture at,  
In the example I'm using the export size has been set to 2048 x 610.



*Figure 2: UVMapper Export Options*

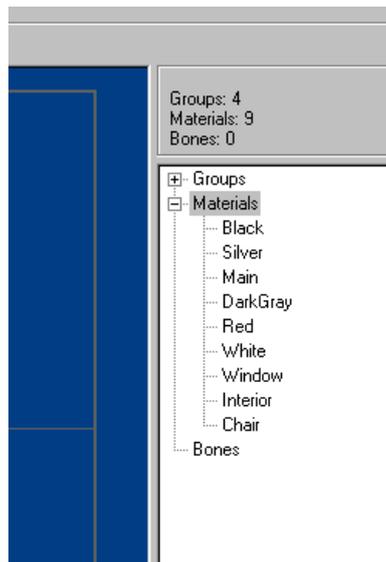
Simple ? Yes. However there's a couple of points to note. you'll see that all the materials are on one map. Great for single material meshes, a bit of a pain for multiple maps. It is possible to "re-arrange" things, however this requires that you save a new .obj file. Which sometimes is not a viable option.

I don't know if there's any for UVMapper Classic to export out multiple maps or single material groups. Hence I use Lith Unwrap.

*Lith Unwrap - best for multiple materials.*

1. Load up Lith Unwrap.
2. Click File --> Model -->Open

3. Once the mesh loads look at the right hand side of the screen. A grey Panel that list the groups, materials and bones should be present (see Figure 3). If not Click View --> Show -->Scene Window.



*Figure 3: Scene Window*

4. On the scene window select Materials.
5. Select a Material (in this example it's Main)
6. Click on the Disc icon (under the tools menu) or File -->UVMMap -->Save to save each material map.
7. As with UV Mapper - You may wish to change the default export size, depending on the mesh or desired resolution.

#### **Stage 4 - Research and a bit of Common Sense**

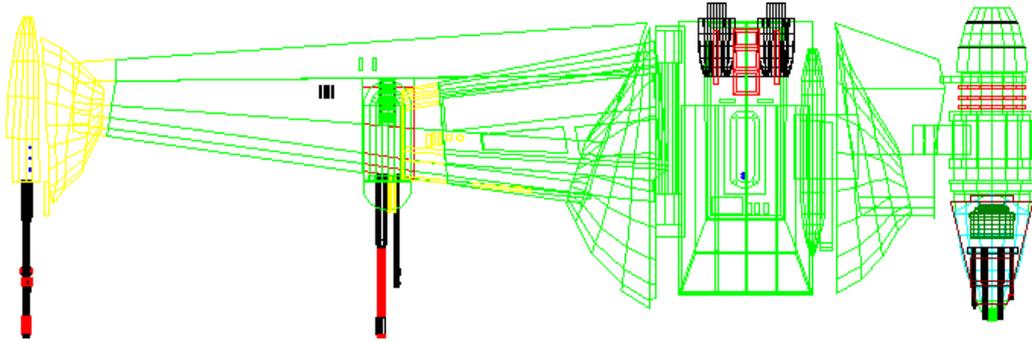
It doesn't matter whether you are texturing an x-wing or real world helicopter. This is the time consuming bit and where accuracy is essential if you want to achieve a realistic texture. The first part of this process is research. Use books, the 'net whatever.

One good trick is use plastic model makers sites, as modellers have encountered and dealt with this issue before. It also provides you with good colour references for the later stages.

Before we start, make a backup of your "plain" texture maps. Put them somewhere safe if things go wrong later.

#### **Stage 5 - Create Panel Lines**

Fire up your paint package, and load up one of the files produced by Lith or UVMapper. You'll see something like this...



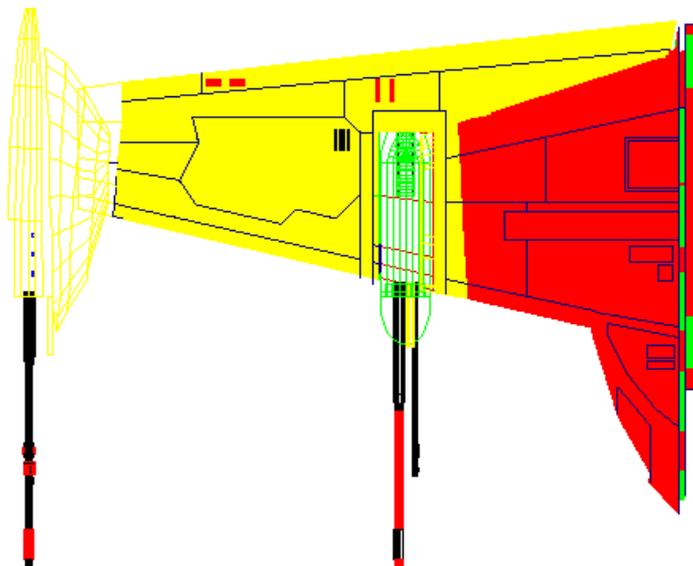
*Figure 4: Sample UVMMap*

Anything that supports adobe compatible plugin filters will do.

You don't need the latest version of PhotoShop, layers or anything advanced. I use Paintshop Pro 4.12 and that works fine. A graphics tablet can speed up the workflow, but a mouse will do just fine.

Use BMP's TIFF's or BMP's, or anything that avoids lossy compression (such as JPG). Only once you've completed your texture map, and are planning to release your creation is there any need to save as .JPG.

OK, start laying the panel lines so you get a result like below.



*Figure 5. Panel Lines*

Now load poser and apply this texture to the mesh. So you can see where things are, and to ensure the panels line up correctly on the edges. I often use various bright colours during this stage to help delineate different sections of both the mesh and the texture. Like those show in Figure 6.



*Figure 6. Work In Progress*

### **Stage 6 - Backup NOW!**

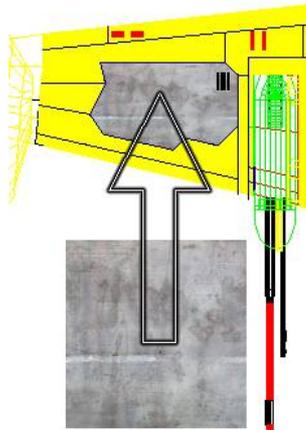
Now make a backup of your panel maps, for clarity we'll call these "plans". By now you should you should have the following files...

1. Original texture maps as produced by your UVmapping software.
2. Backups of the Original texture maps.
3. One set of plans.
4. One backup of the plans.

### **Stage 7 - Texturing Technique 1**

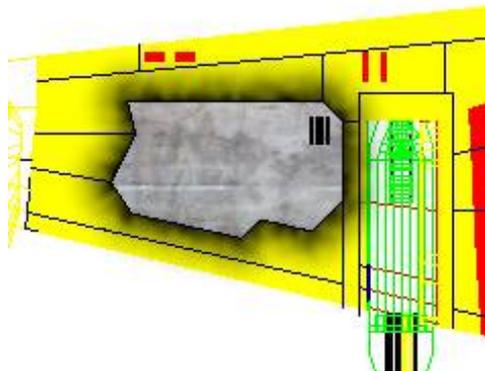
In your paint programme load a plan, now do a save as on that plan. and tile the original and saved as image side by side.

1. On the saved as image, select a panel using a selection tool (in PSP I use the magic wand).
2. Now open the texture you want for that panel and paste it into that selection.



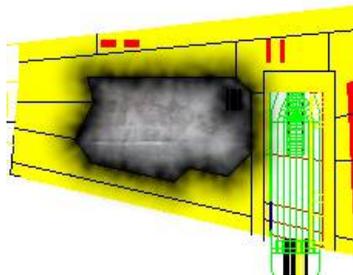
*Figure 7. Paste Texture into Panel*

3. Now run a "glow" filter like Eye Candy 3.1 Glow or Eye Candy 4000's corona.



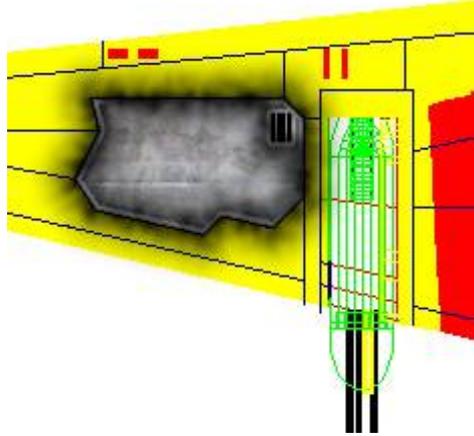
*Figure 8. Corona*

4. Next invert the selection and run the filter again. It'll look messy but don't worry.



*Figure 9. Corona 2*

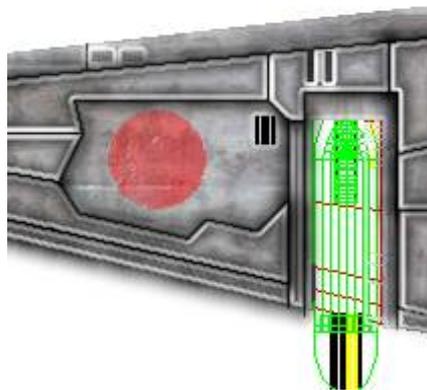
5. OK, now invert the selection again. Run a bevel type filter with the opacity set to around 50-75% according to taste.



*Figure 10. Bevell*

6. Sometimes you may need to re-run the filter, adjusting the light placement if your filter supports it, to get the desired result.

Now go over to the 1st plan, select another panel, copy and paste into the same place as on the textured plan. Repeat techniques 7.1 - 7.3 use the undo brush (not the undo command) where the texture spills over the 1st panel. Until you reach the desired effect, something like...

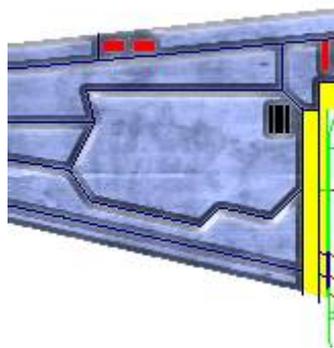


*Figure 11. Finished Wing*

### Stage 8 - Texturing Technique 2

In your paint programme load a plan.

1. On the saved as image, select a panel using a selection tool (in PSP I use the magic wand).
2. Now open the texture you want for that panel and paste it into that selection.
3. Run a glass filter, setting the glass filter to whatever the colour you desire. White, blue or grey is best for Star Wars type stuff. Playing with the opacity can also yield interesting results.
4. Use a bevel filter, if you think it works.



*Figure 12. Glass and Bevel*

### Stage 9 - Texturing Techniques 3

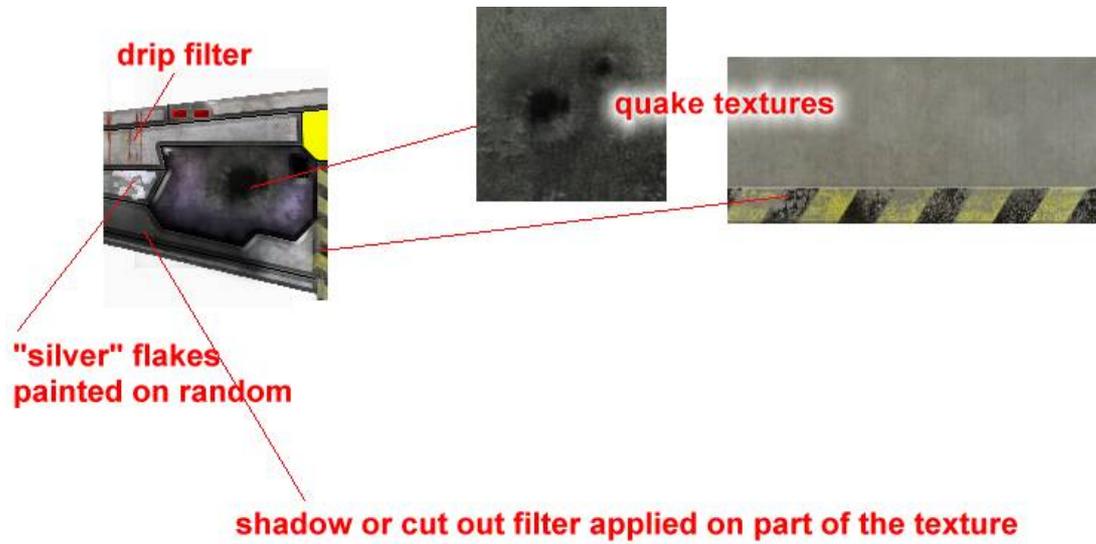
Simple - combine the 2 above until you find a solution that works well for your map. At all times keep flicking back to poser and testing your map. Move the mesh around and see what it looks like, but don't change from the default light setting. Just manipulate it, for example so you can see the base of the figure. That way you will be sure that it works on everyone's copy of poser.

### Stage 10 - Detailing.

Before you start take a look at the real world. Trains are a good example, they get a real battering during every day use. Unless your texture is going to be a straight from the factory look, it's gonna get grubby. Study that dirt, look at the wear and tear.

Look at where the paint gets chipped off around the doors, exposing bare or rusty metal. How a panel gets replaced and is a different colour than the rest. How oil and fuel leaks flow, and how warning panels are placed. That's the real trick.

It's easy to accomplish as well. Use filters, or apply another texture as a selection. over your texture and remove parts using the undo brush. Figure 13 shows what can be achieved.



*Figure 13. Weathered Texture*