

Create Your Own Texture Templates

If you like texturing 3D items, you've probably often found that the object you wanted to texture didn't come with templates. So, instead of starting to work on your idea right away you had to contact the store or the content creator and ask for the templates and then you had to wait for the people to answer.

Wouldn't it be nice if you just could create your own texture templates, in exactly the size you want, whenever you need them?

This tutorial here is going to show you how. It's really easy, the tool you need for it is free, and once you know how it works, the whole process won't take you longer than a few minutes!

Some Background Info

Practically all 3D objects that are used in Poser and/or DAZ Studio or similar programs are UV-mapped. That means, they contain a set of data that tells the software which part of the 2D image goes on which area of the object. This data is usually called "the UVs". You don't have to create it, and you don't have to (actually you shouldn't) change it, it is already in the objects and you just have to pull it out so you can see it.

Step 1: Get UVMapper Classic

To display the UVs we need a tool. I recommend UVMapper Classic because it is free.

If you have already bought the UVMapper Pro version you can use that as well, of course.

- To download UVMapper Classic go to <http://uvmapper.com/downloads.html>
- Download the version you need for your operating system (Win or Mac).
- Unpack the file on your harddrive.

Step 2: Locate Or Prepare Your obj File

Tools like UVMapper work with files in the .obj format.

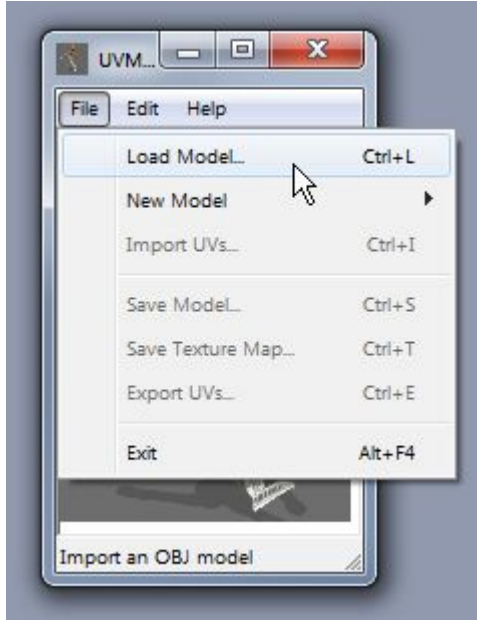
Now, where can you find your obj files?

All products made primarily for Poser come with obj files but they are usually quite well hidden in some subfolder inside the Runtime\Geometries folder. Products made primarily for DAZ Studio nowadays come in a totally different file format. So, the quickest (and for DS products, the only) way is to export it yourself:

- Load the item into Poser / DAZ Studio.
- Make sure nothing else is in the scene, in Poser hide the ground plane (Ctrl-G).
- Go to File – Export and choose the .obj file format for exporting.
- In the following dialogues you can accept the default settings.
- Save the file to a location where you can easily find it.

Step 3: Load The obj File in UVMapper

- Start UVMapper Classic.
- Then click *File – Load Model*.



UVMapper will display an info message with statistics, just click OK.

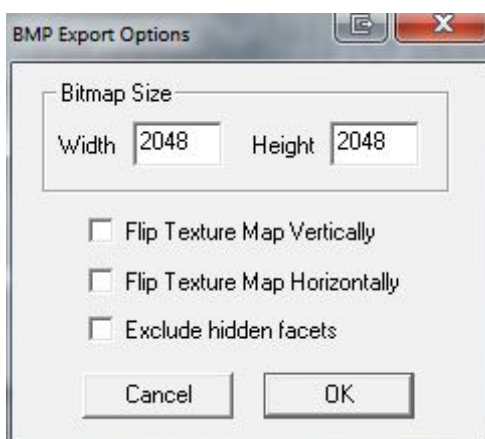
If the program tells you that something is out of range and asks you if you want to correct this, choose no. Such corrections would change the UV data and this is not what we want.

Now you'll see the template in UVMapper's workspace. You can grab the window at a corner and resize it to get a better look. The way it is displayed has no influence on the way it will be saved.

Step 4: Save the Template

- Go to *File – Save Texture Map* (in the Pro version this is called *Save Template*)
- Now enter the size for the template and click OK.

Usually the templates are in square format, so you have the same number of pixels for height and width.



Some Comments on Texture Size:

The bigger the object, the bigger your maps should be, otherwise the textures will look pixelated, especially in close-ups.

And if you want fine details in your texture map, like embroidery or lace, you'll also need bigger maps so you have enough pixels to work with.

Some Examples:

For a small, simple thing like a ring without any engravings you'll probably be fine with a map of 256x256 pixels.

For a long dress with lots of fine lace you might need 3000x3000 pixels or even more.

The files are saved in bmp format which you can open in a paint program of your choice.

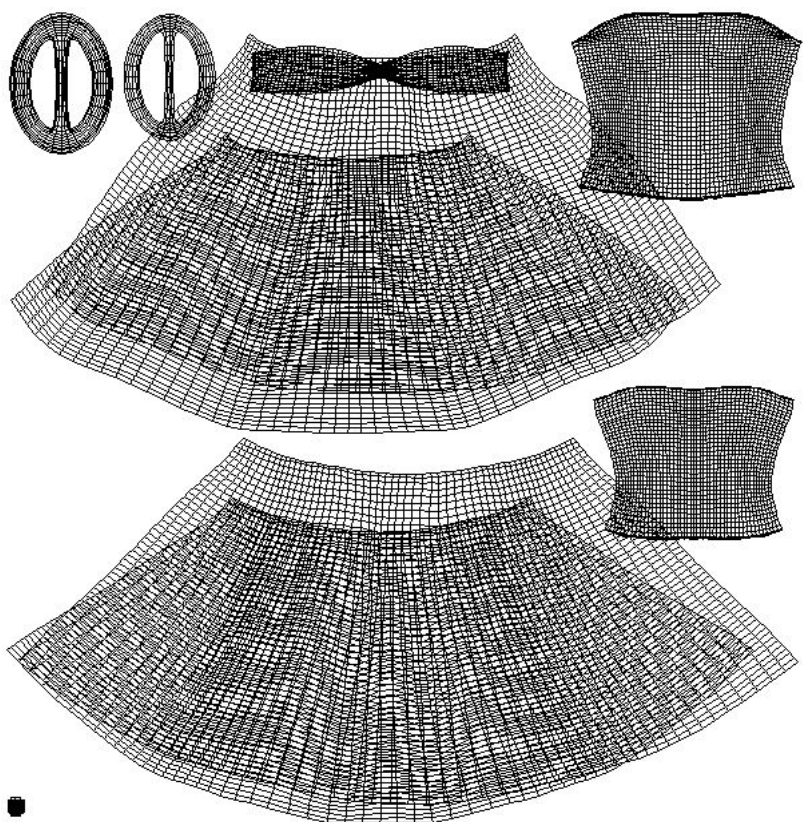
Now you have your template and can start texturing!

Special Case: Layered Templates with Multiple UVs

Sometimes the parts of an object would end up too small if they were all crammed into one template, and so the creator of the file decided to split the UVs but to keep all the parts in one obj file. This means you as a texture creator need two or more templates for this object.

When you load such an object, the UVs are displayed on top of each other.

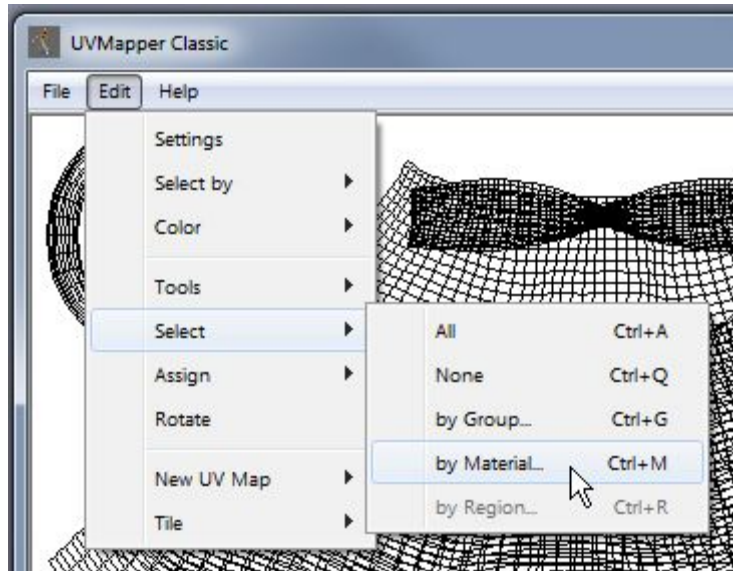
One example is shown here:



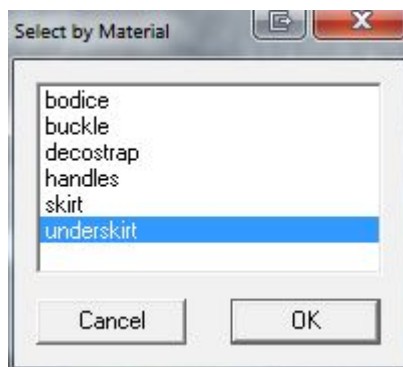
This is a cocktail dress with a skirt and an underskirt. As we can see, a skirt shape covers much of the other parts. We need to make this a separate template.

First we have to find out which part it is, and then we need to save two different templates.

Go to *Edit – Select – by Material*



This will give us a list with all the materials of this obj file.



Now we take a guess which material it could be. Let's try the underskirt, and hit OK.

UVMapper highlights the part of the template that is assigned to the underskirt material. And indeed, it is the one that covers the others.

If you've picked the wrong material, just hit Esc or Enter to de-select it and try a different material.

Note:

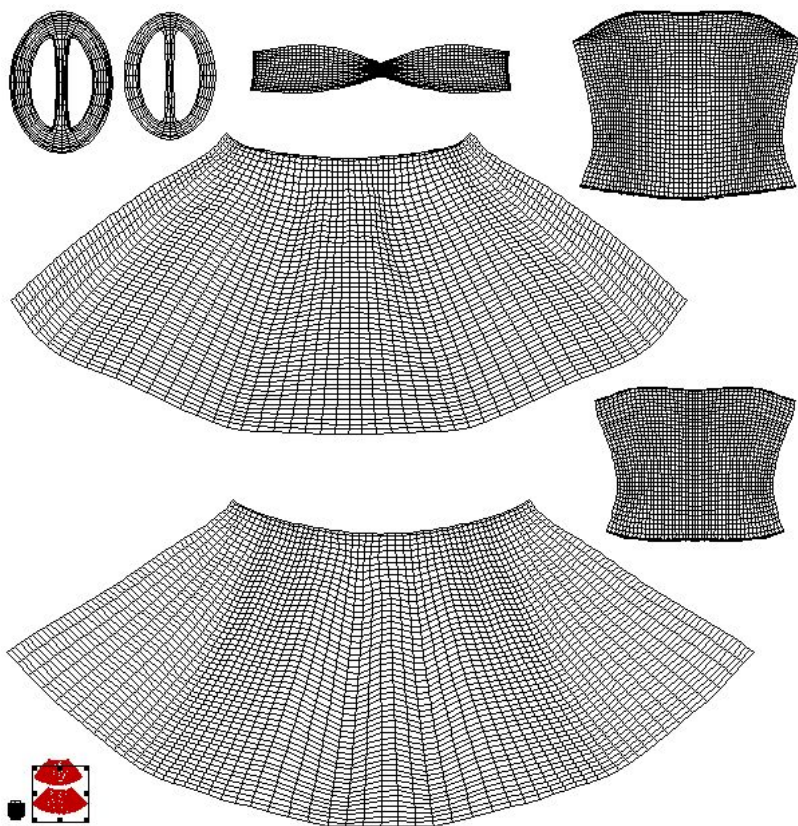
Make sure you don't move your selection accidentally with the mouse. If you move it, and use that changed template as a base for your textures, the textures won't fit the model afterwards.

If you've moved something by mistake, re-load the obj file to get the original UVs back.

Ok, so now we know which material we need to pack on a separate template.

UVMapper Pro has a feature to hide some parts of the map but with the free Classic version we have to resort to a less refined method:

- Go to *Edit – Select – by Material* again.
- Select all the materials you don't want on the first template. You can select more than one material from the list by holding down the Ctrl key while clicking on the material names.
- Now grab a corner of the selection with your mouse and re-size it until it is tiny and/or move it to the side, to an empty area where it doesn't interfere with the other parts.



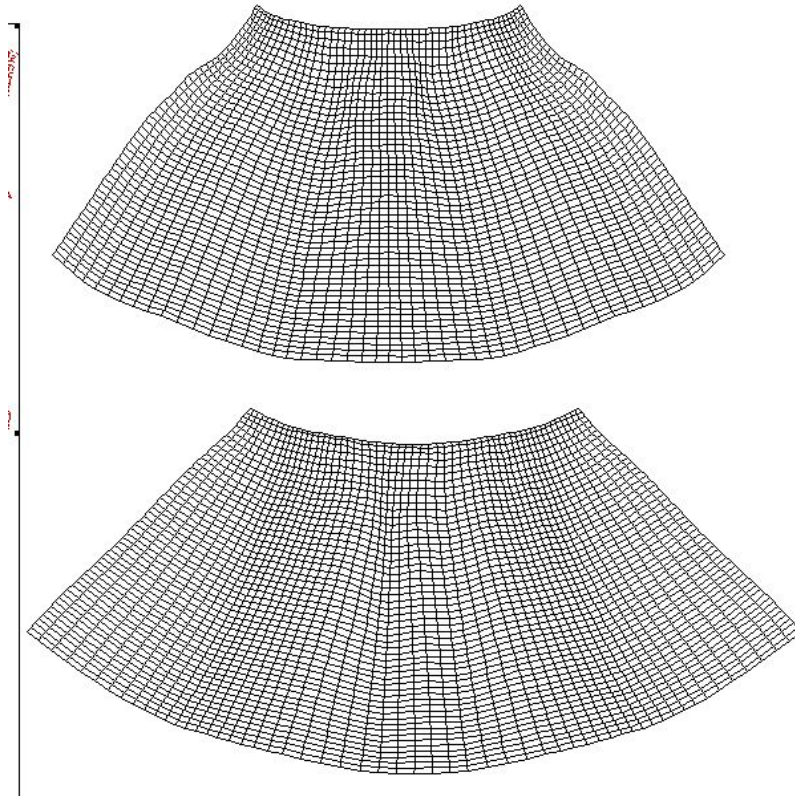
- Save the template (see Step 4).
Make sure you save the template / texture map and NOT the model!!! If you happened to save the model instead you'll have to re-export it from Poser/DS.

Note: When you have the selection still active when you save the template, UVMapper will ask you if you want to proceed. Click yes. UVMapper will drop the selection and save the map.

Ok, the first template is done.

Now we need to save the template for the rest. But we've moved that, and as I said previously, you shouldn't use templates that you've scaled or moved or changed in any way. So we need to get the original back first.

- Re-load the model.
- Again, go to *Edit – Select – by Material*.
- Now select all the other materials that were part of the first template.
- Scale those and/or move them out of the way, like you did before.
- Save that template, too, under a new name.



Now you have both templates for your texture work!

I hope you found this tutorial helpful.
Enjoy your texturing, and happy rendering!

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