

Hints for Smarter Modeling in SketchUp

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ORGANIZATION

Use the Entity Info dialog box to make sure your Groups and Components have meaningful names.

Use Components for elements of your model that will be repeated.

Use Groups for elements of your model that are unique.

Use the Layers dialog box to control the visibility of large numbers of similar Components, like furniture, trees or people.

Creating separate Layers for each of these types of things makes it easier to hide or unhide them all at once.

Use the Outliner dialog box to control the visibility of large, unique chunks of your model, like terrain, floor levels and alternate design schemes.

Using the Outliner instead of Layers makes it easier to hide or unhide exactly what you want. You can also use the Outliner to rearrange the nesting hierarchy of Groups and Components in your model.

MODELING

Reduce the number of sides in your circles and arcs if you plan to use Push/Pull or Follow Me on them.

1. Draw a circle with the Circle tool or an Arc with the Arc tool.
2. Before you do anything else, type a number representing the number of sides, and the letter "s".
3. Press Enter.

Example: To create a circle with only ten sides, you would type **10s**, then **Enter**.

Make multiple copies at once with the Move tool.

1. Make the first copy.
2. Before you do anything else, type a number representing the total number of copies you'd like, followed by the letter "x".
3. Press Enter.

Example: To make five copies instead of one, you would type **5x**, then **Enter**.

When using the Follow Me tool, select your extrusion path first.

1. With the Select tool, select the edge(s) you'd like to "follow" first.
2. Activate the Follow Me tool.
3. Click on the face you'd like to extrude.

As you model, delete any edges and faces you don't need.

Subdivide any edge into any number of shorter edge segments.

1. Right-click on the edge you want to subdivide and choose **Divide** from the context menu.
2. Type the number of edge segments you'd like to end up with.
3. Press **Enter**.

DISPLAY

Switch to Wireframe mode when you're using the Eraser tool to make sure you're only erasing what you mean to erase.

If you're using Scenes, turn off Enable Scene Transitions to keep your computer from having to work too hard to render your model.

This is especially useful if your model stutters while trying to transition from one Scene to the next.

When you're working on a big model, turn off Shadows, Profiles and any other edge effects to improve performance.

When you're working on your model, create a scene that only switches over to a simple rendering style.

This allows you to jump into an "easy-modeling mode" very quickly, without having to mess with the Styles and Shadows dialog boxes every time.

1. Open the Scenes dialog box.
2. Create a new scene.
3. Make sure Shadows and Fog are switched off.
4. Create a Style with no edge effects (including Profiles), watermarks or any other fanciness. Name it Simple Style.
6. Expand the Scenes dialog box by clicking the Expand toggle in the upper-right corner.
7. Deselect all of the Properties to Save except **Style and Fog** and **Shadow Settings**.

