

Creating Custom Shapes in Illustrator and Importing to Blender

Introduction

In this guide, you will learn how to create custom shapes in Adobe Illustrator, export them as .SVG files, and import them into Blender for 3D modeling. This workflow allows you to go beyond basic 3D shapes and create intricate, custom objects for use in game engines.

Step 1: Creating a Custom Shape in Illustrator

1. Open **Adobe Illustrator** and create a new document (**File > New**).
2. Use the **Pen Tool (P)** or **Shape Tools (Rectangle, Ellipse, Polygon, etc.)** to design your custom shape.
3. Adjust the shape using the **Direct Selection Tool (A)** to refine anchor points.
4. Ensure the shape is a **closed path** for best results in Blender.

Exporting the Shape as an .SVG

1. Select your shape. *(You may only export a single basic shape with a fill. Do not select multiple shapes, do not use strokes. Colors won't carry across, and other effects should also be avoided.)*
 2. Go to **File > Export > Export As**.
 3. Choose **SVG** as the file format.
 4. Check **Use Artboards** if necessary and click **Export**.
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Step 2: Importing the .SVG into Blender

1. Open **Blender** and create a new project.
2. Go to **File > Import > Scalable Vector Graphics (.svg)**.
3. Locate and select your exported .SVG file.
4. Click **Import SVG**.

Selecting the Imported Shape

- Your shape may import at a very small size.
- **Zoom in** using the scroll wheel or trackpad pinch to locate it.
- Select the shape by clicking on it.

Step 3: Converting and Cleaning Up the Shape

1. With the shape selected, go to **Object > Convert > Mesh** to turn it into a mesh.
 2. Switch to **Edit Mode** by pressing **Tab**.
 3. Press **A** to select the entire shape.
 4. Go to **Mesh > Clean Up > Limited Dissolve** to simplify the shape and avoid issues.
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Step 4: Extruding the Shape to Make It 3D

1. Ensure your shape is still selected in **Edit Mode**.
 2. Press **E** (Extrude) and click and drag to give the shape depth.
 3. Adjust the extrusion to your desired thickness.
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Saving Your Blender File

1. Go to **File > Save As**.
2. Choose a location and name your file.
3. Click **Save As** to preserve your work for future edits.

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have successfully created a custom shape in Illustrator and transformed it into a 3D object in Blender. This technique allows for intricate, custom designs beyond basic geometric shapes.

If you want to take your design further into a game engine, refer to the guide titled **Exporting 3D Objects from Blender to Unreal Engine**, available at the game club website under **Resources > Guides**.

The next guide will explain how to **export your shape as an .FBX file** for use in Unreal Engine.

Happy designing!