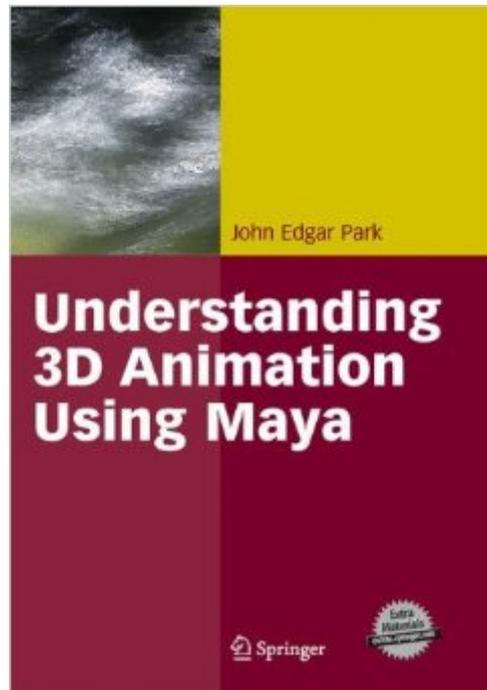


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# Understanding 3D Animation Using Maya



## Synopsis

Here is both a general guide for understanding 3-D computer graphics as well as a specific guide for learning the fundamentals of Maya: workspace, modeling, animation, shading, lighting, and rendering. Each chapter first presents an initial concept, which details a proven method, before providing hands-on tutorials and projects. This approach details how and why animation techniques work and explains how to use Maya for creating sophisticated, state-of-the-art animations. The author distills real-world experience into helpful hints and step-by-step guides for common tasks.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I HIGHLY recommend this book not only to the novice/intermediate level 3d artist, but to advanced users coming over to Maya from a different software package. There are even gems for the Maya professional ( as an experienced character animator, I found the `toon tire tutorial eye-opening re: hierarchies and transform order ). I was most impressed by the clarity with which the author covers each topic, and how the knowledge he imparts progressively builds in detail and complexity through each chapter and hands-on tutorial. If you are new to Maya, or have remained specialized in Maya ( i.e. modeling ) and would like to branch out into other areas, this is THE book to buy.

Like other books of its kind, Understanding 3D Animation Using Maya covers the fundamentals and most commonly used tools that a user must be familiar with when creating 3D content with Maya.

However, it is the way the author groups these concepts together that is the hallmark of this book. John Park explains the subject matter through a consistent theme of "stages" that a user would encounter in most real world projects. By establishing a process in parallel with an explanation of the tools, John Park provides a logical approach that a user can refer to when trying to accomplish a goal in Maya. As you progress through the book he goes beyond the basics by applying that same practice to some of the more challenging aspects of the program. Some books on Maya overwhelm the reader by hammering away at feature after feature with no example of how to apply the software tools to an intended objective. In contrast, this book presents a series of examples and exercises throughout the text, providing an opportunity for the user to complete a task and come away with a sense of accomplishment. This is extremely helpful when trying to understand new or complex topics and also serves to motivate a reader to learn more. As a long time Maya user myself, I highly recommend this book to anyone who is looking for clear and comprehensive insight in to this versatile 3D application.

I'm a programmer, but I have been interested in 3D graphics for a long time. I have dipped into both the dense academic texts that describe graphics and animation theory (too thick for a beginner, and frankly, too boring) and the fat books that describe a particular animation package (little more than a glorified user manual). This book is completely different: equal parts theory and practice with fantastic explanations backed up with tutorials you can follow through to demonstrate the ideas. In particular: Park's decision to cover all parts of the animation process (tool workspace, modeling, animation, shading, lighting, rendering) at each level means that you're working from complete examples at all stages (in programmer terms, it almost follows the Agile Process' 'integrate-first, build incrementally' model that works so successfully). First chapter alone taught me more about what those wizards do at Pixar and the like than anything else I've read. Highly recommended!

I almost didn't buy this book because of the price, but I'm really glad I did! The tutorials were way more helpful than the ones I usually see because I wasn't just blindly following instructions - there were explanations as to why I was doing things. The book also covered set driven keys and the graph editor in a way that made me understand them for the first time.

This book is great -- I've been trying to learn Maya from the online manuals, and pretty much failing miserably. This book does a much better job. I recommend it!

Park's book is exceptional because it has a simple, easy to follow tutorial format that has you modeling, shading, animating and rendering all in the first chapter. Each chapter builds on the last expanding the skills together as an integrated group. Maya is an awesome program that is fun work with, but its sheer size can make it overwhelming for a beginner. Because of this most books either specialize in only one aspect of it, or serve as a general pictorial menu of what you can do but don't adequately tell you how. Park's book stays at just the right level so you feel excited rather than overwhelmed, and by the end you have developed a working knowledge of all the major menu sets, and you have completed a rather sophisticated animation. You can then move on to any other Maya book with confidence, or just continue working with the knowledge you've gained. You don't even have to buy Maya. It comes with a copy of Maya Personal Learning Edition on the tutorial CD.

This book is expensive and really outdated. Don't get it to understand Maya. It dates back to 2004... things have changed a lot since then.

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