Importing your

Logo Into Alice 2.2

This tutorial requires access & installation of AutoDesk 3DsMax.

This tutorial also requires access to Alice 2.2 for Mac or Windows.

SPIRIT

Importing your Logo into Alice 2.2

This tutorial was written by Travis East for the SPIRIT program at Purdue University. The content is provided to the end user for the express purpose of utilizing your school logo in your Alice worlds. Before using this tutorial, ensure that you have all rights reserved for the logo you intend to import. If you have questions or issues, you can contact Travis East at teast@nhj.k12.in.us.
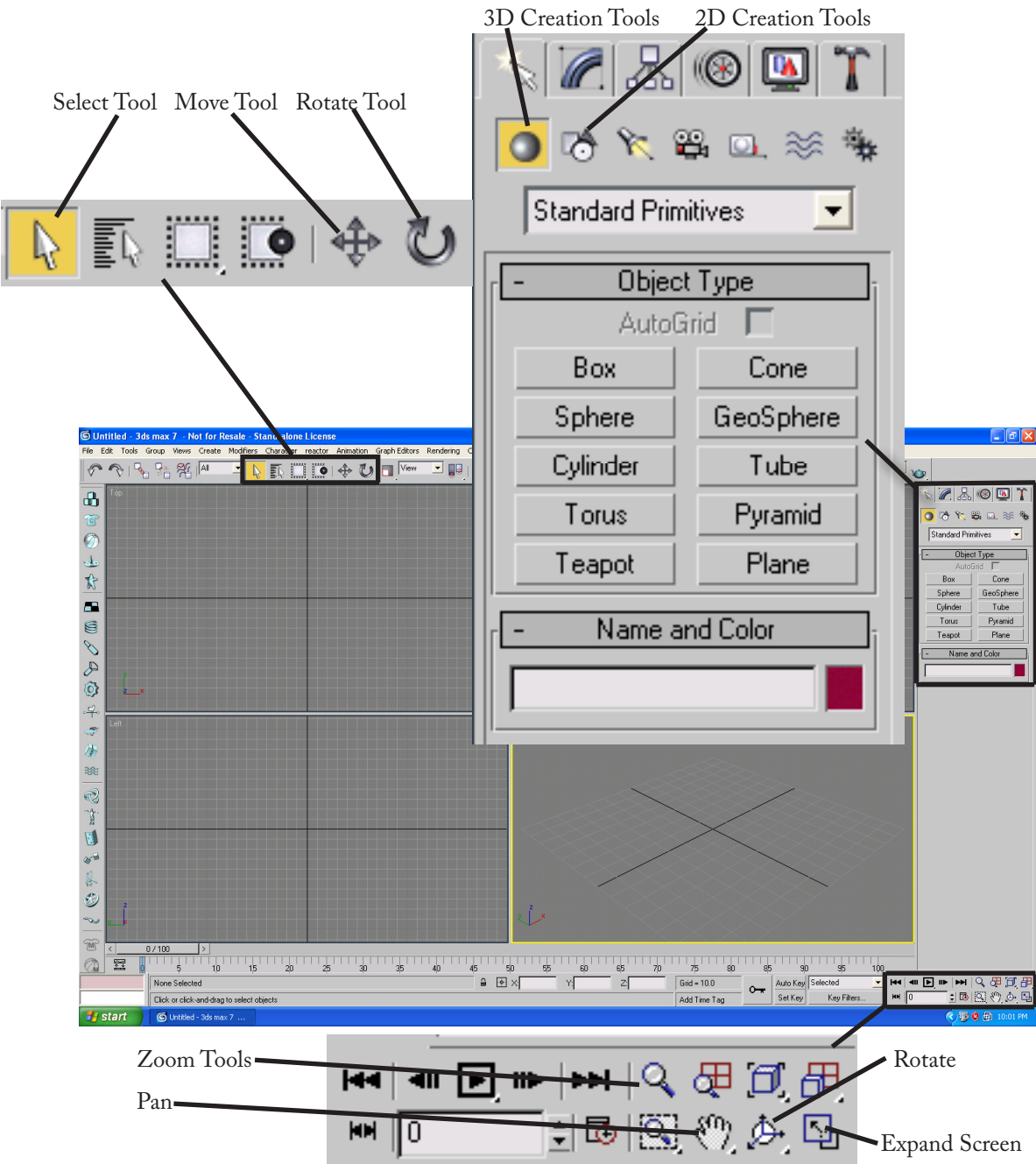

Good Luck,

Travis East

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# 1 Creation of your Logo in 3DsMax

AutoDesk 3DsMax is a 3D animation software designed for professional modeling, animation, & rendering. Even though the target audience for the software's distributor are experienced modelers, it is possible for novices to use the basic features to import and export models and get them into Alice. For the sake of this tutorial, we will be targeting only the tools necessary to get a logo modeled as quickly as possible in 3DsMax and then imported into Alice 2.2. You can download a 13 month license of 3DsMax at http://students.autodesk.com. In order to get to the download page, you will have to register with AutoDesk.

Let's Begin

Once you have installed 3DsMax on your computer, double click on the 3DsMax icon or open it from the Start Menu under All Programs: AutoDesk: 3DsMax. If you are prompted that this is a 30 day trial, simply click Next or Continue. You will have 30 days to get through this tutorial.

After the program loads and you see the main screen, look over to the right side of the interface. There you will find the Plane button listed under Standard Primitives.

Click on the Plane button and then move your cursor over to the window labeled Perspective. Click and drag to form a box on the grid system that appears by default when you open the program. When you are finished your screen should look like the one to the right.
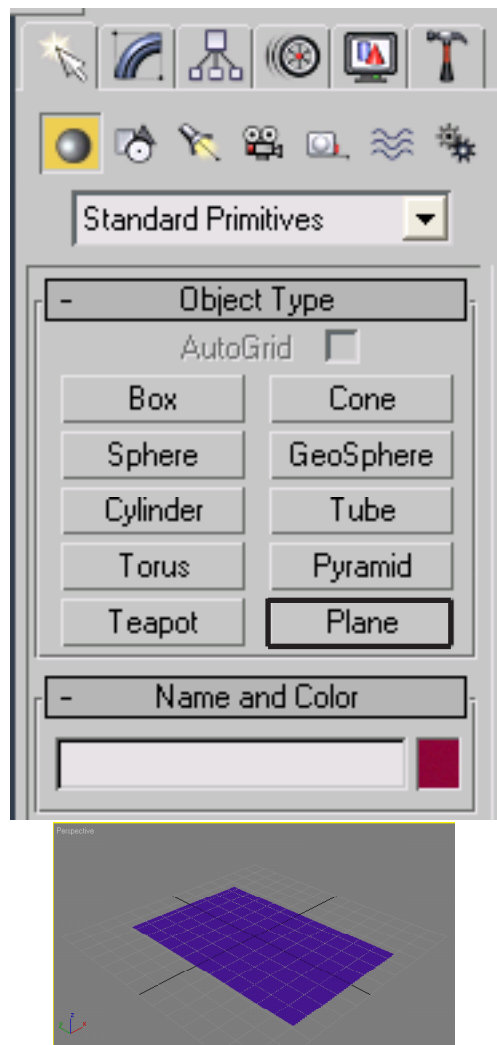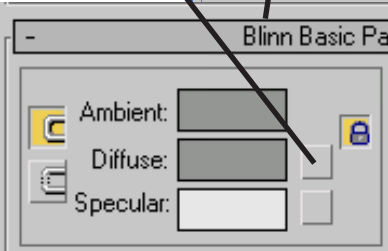
Next, move the cursor up to the Rendering menu at the top of the screen. Once you have clicked on the menu, move your cursor down to the Material Editor.. selection. The shortcut for this window is the letter M.
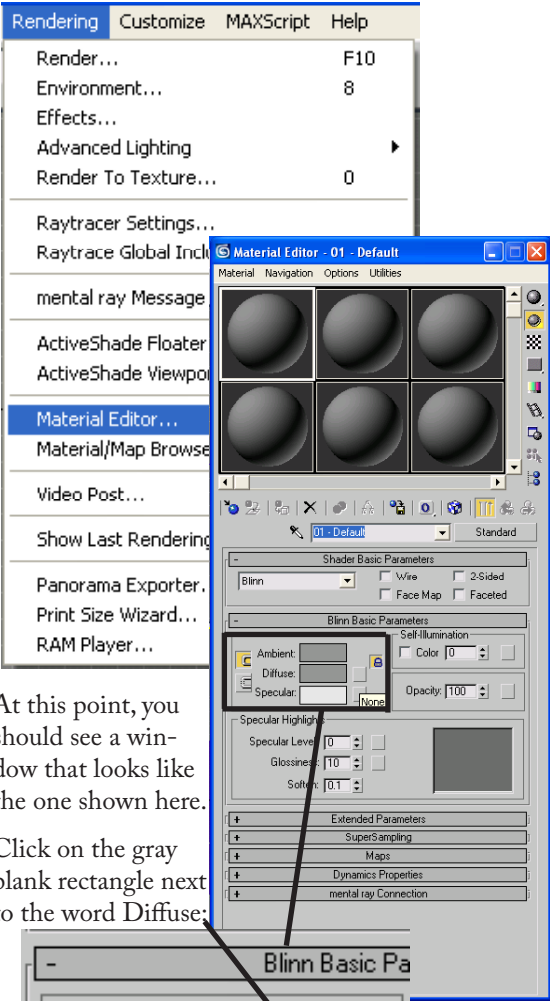

At this point, you should see a window that looks like the one shown here.

Click on the gray blank rectangle next to the word Diffuse;


The next step is involves finding the logo you intend to use. You should have a logo saved as a standard JPG, PNG, or GIF on your computer. It is advisable to have the logo graphic saved in the same directory as the model. When you go to export your model over to Alice, the material does not transfer over with it. There is only a reference to the directory the graphic or material was saved in. Note - this should only be an issue if you are exporting your model to the Alice software on another computer.
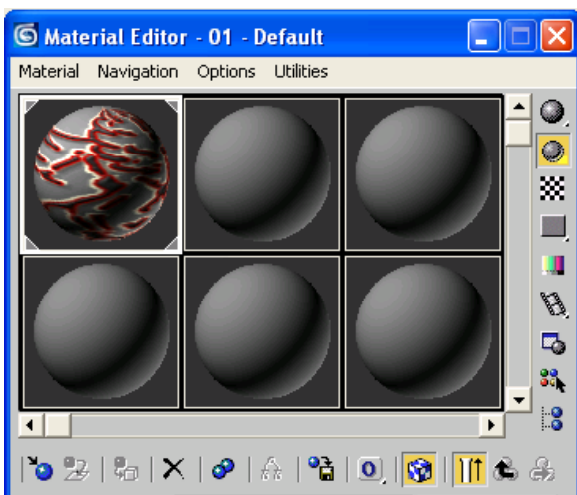
When you see this window, double click on Bitmap.
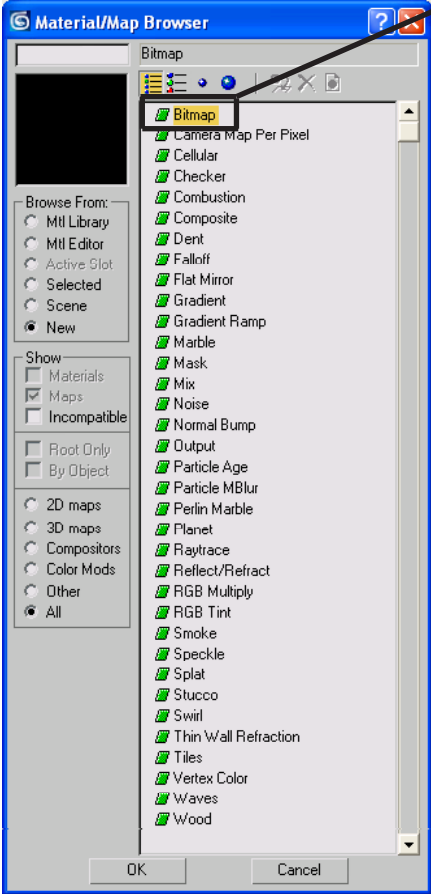
You will be prompted with a window that will allow you to find the file on your computer. Once you have navigated to the proper directory and file, click Open.
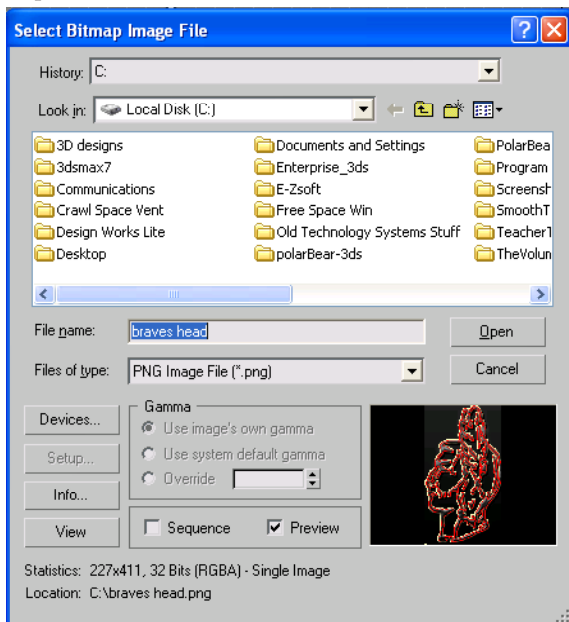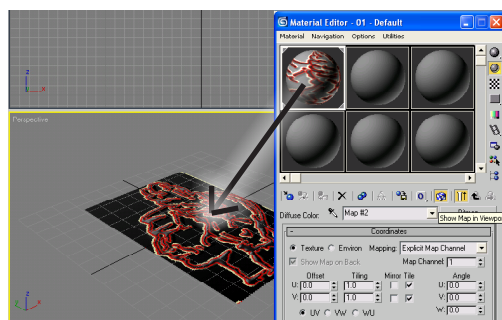

You should see your logo wrapped around one of the spheres in the Material Editor.

Directly below the sphere with your logo wrapped around it, you will see a series of tools. Make sure that the Show Map in Viewport button is turned on (highlighted yellow). If it is not, click on it.
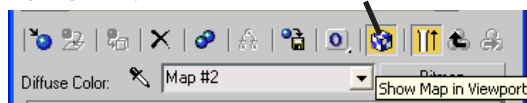
Next, click and drag the material from the sphere to the plane.

Now, use the Rotate Camera tool to position the logo so that you can view it directly in the plane. The Rotate Camera tool is located in the bottom right hand side of the interface.

It would also make tracing the logo easier if you maximize the Perspective view window.

Your Perspective view window should now have your logo facing you directly.
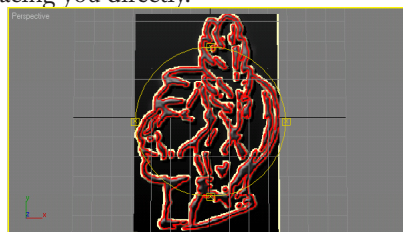
Now, click on the Shapes button located on the right hand side of the screen. Once you have clicked on it and it is highlighted yellow, you should see another series of buttons. The one we want to use is the Line tool.

Shapes button

Line tool

The idea here is to trace a linear path around the logo so that we can then make the logo have a 3-dimensional shape.
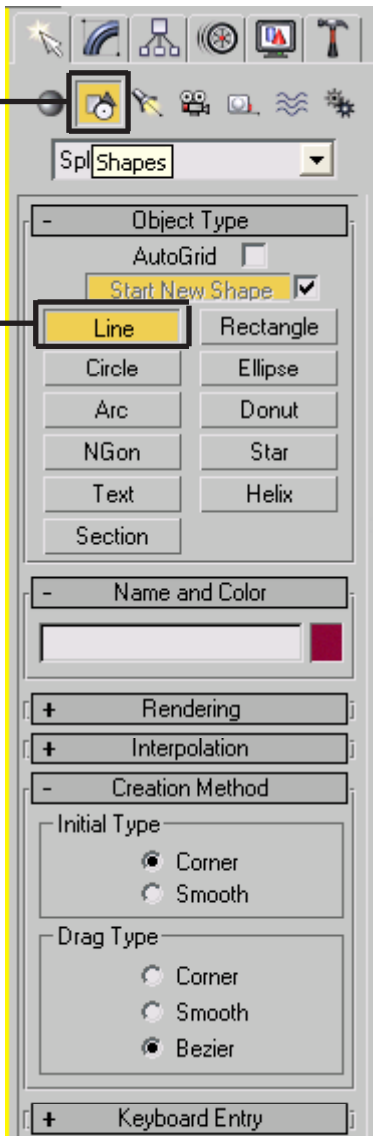

With the Line tool selected, begin tracing a path around the logo in clockwise or counter-clockwise movement. It is up to you where you begin and also how closely you follow the contour of the logo. The fewest possible points are preferred because the parts will load faster in Alice. On the example below, all of the red dots represent a place where I chose to click when going around the outline of our school logo.


Choose a Starting Point

When you get all the way around to your original starting point, you will be prompted to close the spine. Graciously accept the offer by clicking Yes.
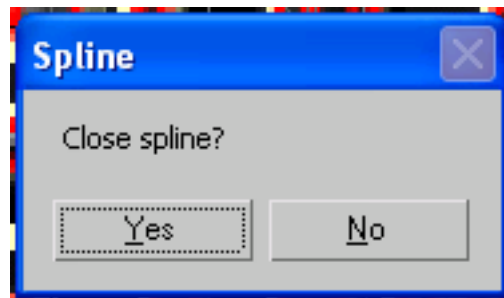
Once you have a polygon that is the exact shape of your logo, the plane you used to draw on is no longer needed. Now is a good time to go ahead and delete the plane we created in the beginning. Use the select tool at the top of the screen.
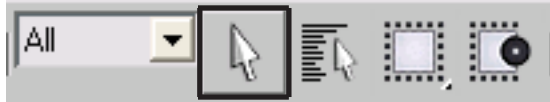
Highlight the plane that has the picture of the logo on it. Go up to the Edit menu and select Delete.
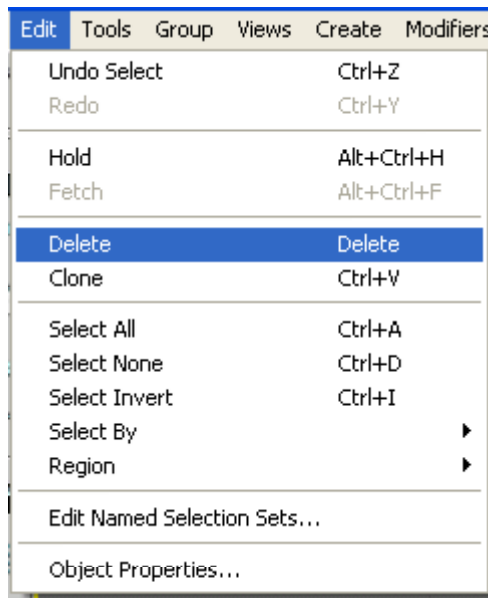
You should see a faint outline of the logo. Now, it is time to make the image 3-dimensional.

Up to this point, we have done everything under the Create tab. However, now we want to modify an existing object (a polygon).


To do this, we select a new tab to the right hand side of the screen. It is called the Modify tab.

When you click on this tab, you will see a drop down menu that has Modifer List as the default. Click on this menu and you will see a very long list of possible modifers you can use on the polygon. Remember that you must have your logo highlighted at his point or the modifier list will not contain the correct command to make your polygon 3-dimensional.
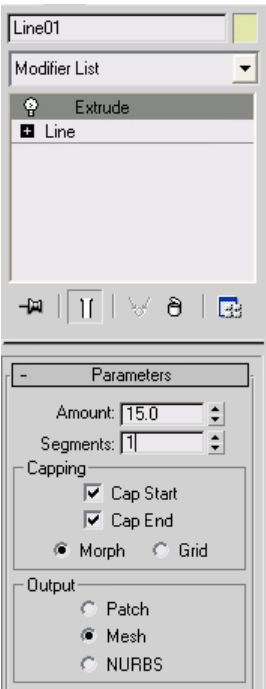

From the modifer list, you will be looking for the Extrude command. It is located under **Object-Space Modifer.**

When you select Extrude, the object will not immediately be 3D. You must complete the command by telling the software how deep you want to extrude the polygon. You can experiment with extrusion depths until you get the look you want for your logo. If you don't know exactly how deep you want the logo, just type in 15 under Amount. All other Parameters should be avoided until your comfort level increases.
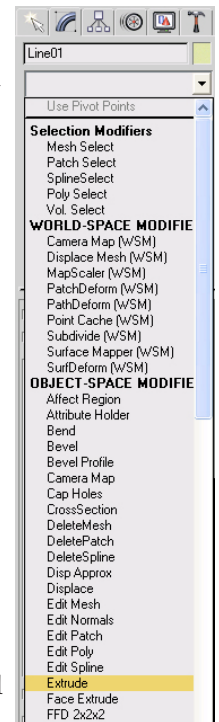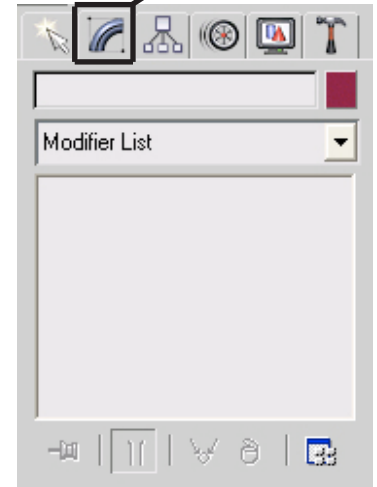
Once you have typed in 15 into the Amount, the extruded object should have a solid color. This indicates that it is 3D. It may not look like it because we are viewing it from straight on. You can rotate the camera view if you are not convinced it worked.

If you are convinced that the logo is now 3D, it is time to put the original graphic onto the new extruded version. Once again, we must open the Material Editor. This time, let's use the short cut. Press the letter M on the keyboard. Your logo should still be stored in one of the spheres of the Material Editor. You can simply drag your logo from the sphere down to the new extruded object.

If you have made it this far, a congratulations is in order. You should have a 3D logo with your graphic overlayed on it.


It is now time to export the object to Alice. Simply go up to the File menu and select Export...

When the Export dialog box appears, choose an appropriate name and location that will be easy to find when you open up Alice. Make sure that the Save as type: is set to ASCII Scene Export (*.ASE). This is the format that Alice needs to be able to import the file.
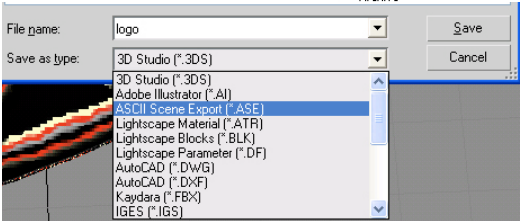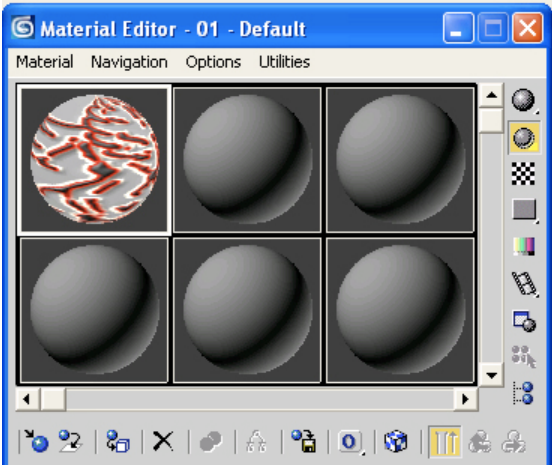
For best results, make sure that the ASCII Export options match the window below.
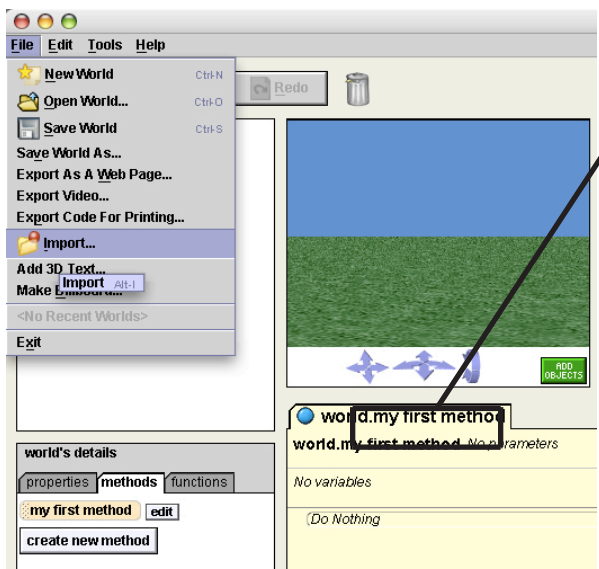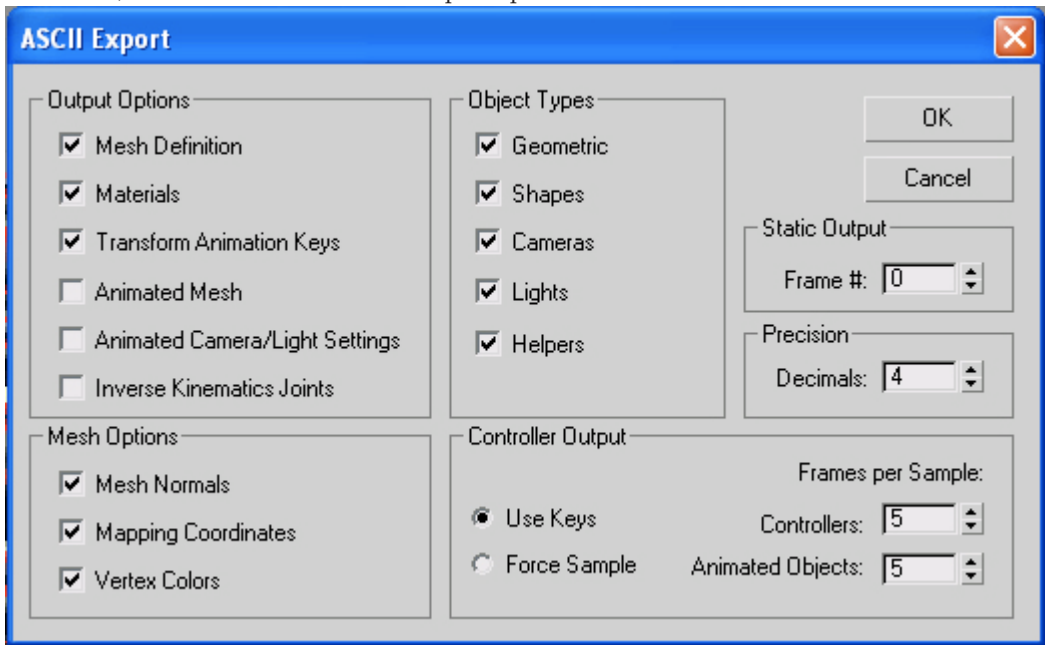
The final step is to open up Alice 2.2 and import the ASE file that you saved somewhere on your computer. When you import the file, the camera will likely be inside the object. Simply use the camera view tools to back out so you can see and manipulate your logo. You will probably want to click the Add Objects button to manipulate your logo and place it how you want it positioned in your world.
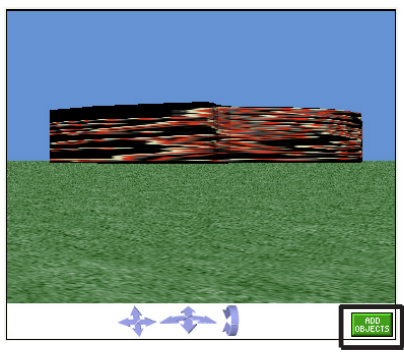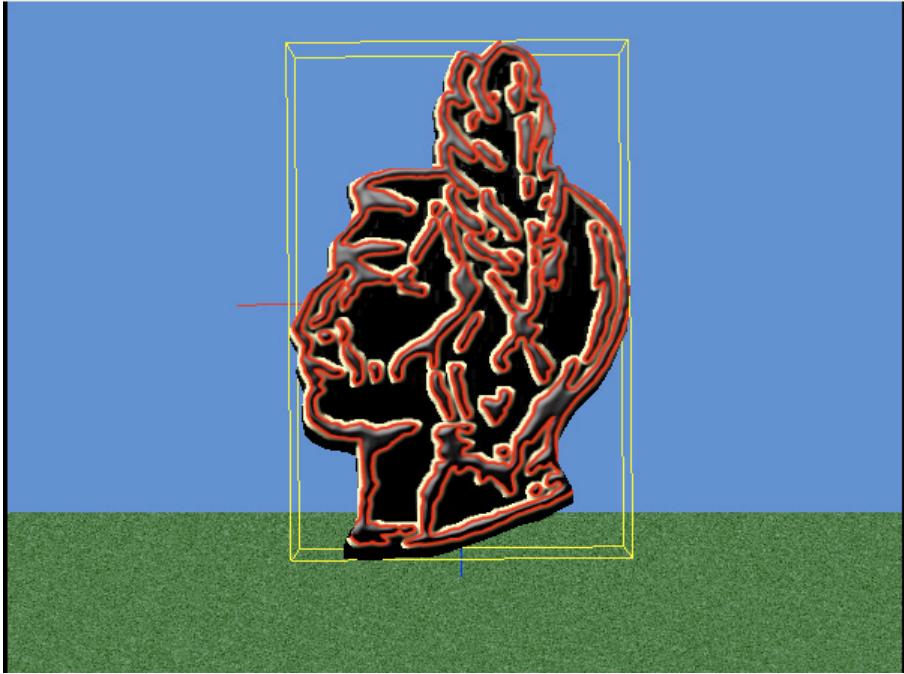
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