

Shadow Type	Advantages	Disadvantages	Scanline supported	Mental ray supported
Advanced Ray-Traced	Supports transparency and opacity mapping. Uses less RAM than standard ray-traced shadows. Recommended for complex scenes with many lights or faces.	Slower than shadow maps. Does not support soft shadows. Processes at every frame.	Yes	No
Area Shadows	Supports transparency and opacity mapping. Uses very little RAM. Recommended for complex scenes with many lights or faces. Supports different formats for area shadows.	Slower than shadow maps. Processes at every frame.	Yes	No
mental ray Shadow Maps	Can be quicker than ray-traced shadows with the mental ray renderer.	Not as accurate as ray-traced shadows.	No	Yes
Ray-traced Shadows	Supports transparency and opacity mapping. Processes only once if there are no animated objects.	Can be slower than shadow maps. Does not support soft shadows.	Yes	Yes
Shadow Maps	Produces soft shadows. Processes only once if there are no animated objects. Fastest shadow type.	Uses a lot of RAM. Does not support objects with transparency or opacity maps.	Yes	Yes