Maya Interface overview

This section is a brief summary of the main Maya interface. As you read, keep in mind the following:

- You can show or hide any of the UI elements in the main window using the Display > UI Elements menu. Alternatively, you can -click the double-dotted edge (▨▨▨▨) of an existing UI element and select the desired UI element from the pop-up menu.
- If you can't find the menu you're looking for, it may be hidden. You can show or hide menus using the menu hotkeys.
- You can hide all the interface elements and instead use the Maya quick command features: the Hotbox and Marking menus.
- You can resize some UI elements by dragging the dotted edge (▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮).
- You can rearrange the interface to suit your preferences. For more information, see Rearrange the interface.

- A menu icon appears to the right of the mouse pointer when a right mouse button pop-up menu is available for the control over which the mouse is hovering.

(see file attached for the following illustration: "Maya_Interface_02.jpg")
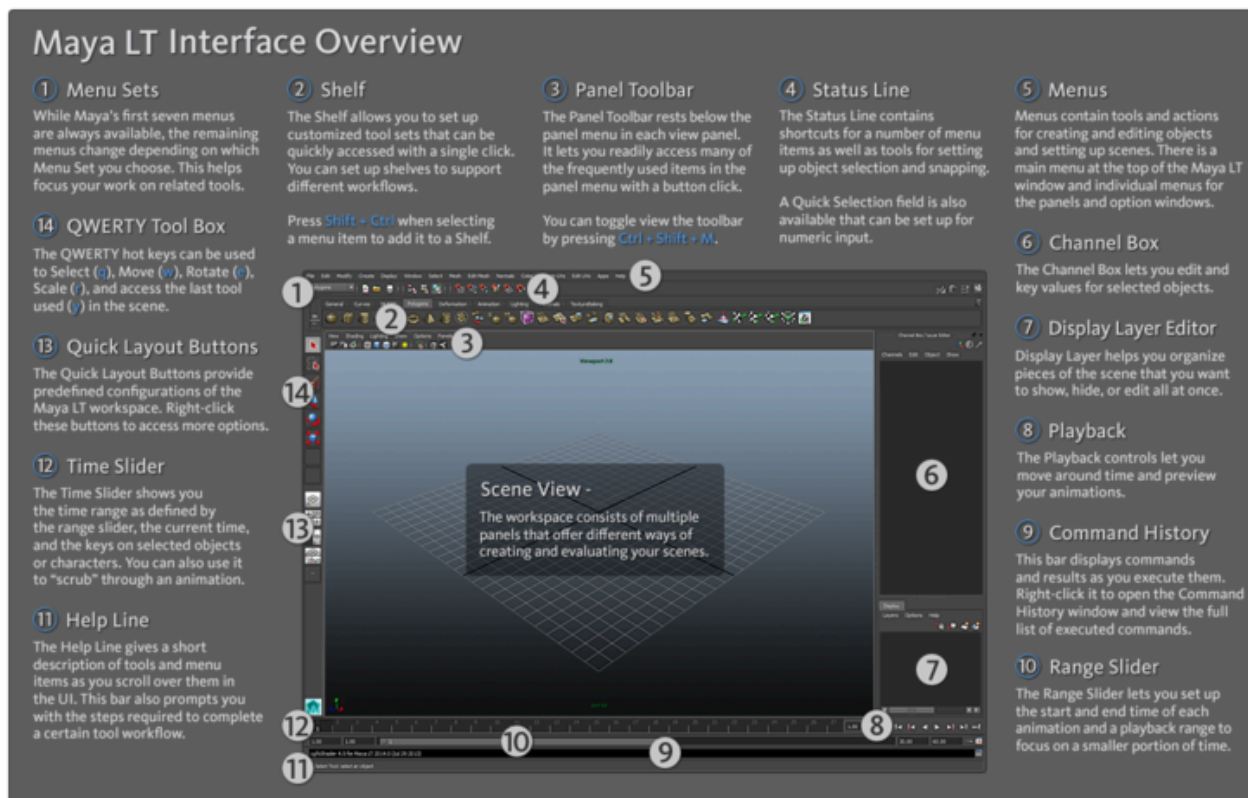
Refer to the following topics for more detailed information on each area.

- [Status line (toolbar)](#)
- [Shelves](#)
- [Panel toolbar](#)
- [Tool Box](#)
- [Quick layout buttons](#)
- [Animation controls](#) (Time Slider and Range Slider)
- [Channel Box](#)
- [Layer Editor](#)

Topics in this section

- [Menu items, tools and shelves](#)
- [Work with menu items, tools, and options](#)
- [Start Maya from the command line](#)
- [Autodesk Maya Error Report](#)

Display > UI Elements

The items in this menu control the visibility of various user interface elements, including the Status Line, the Shelf, the Time Slider, and so on.

Hide All UI Elements

Hide all UI parts so only the panels and menus are visible.

Show All UI Elements

Show all UI parts.

Restore UI Elements

Restores the visibility of UI parts to their state before you selected Hide All UI Elements. If certain parts were hidden before you selected Hide All UI Elements, they will still be hidden.

Selection modes

There are three main types of selection modes: Hierarchy, Object and Component. You use these modes in order to limit or *mask* the selection of other objects in order to select only the types of items you want. When you use a selection mask you are filtering out or masking items you don't want to be chosen as part of the selection.

The icons for the three modes appear on the Status Line.

When you first start Maya, the selection mode is set to Objects. This is useful for much of your selection work with Maya, with a few exceptions. When you want to select items that have been grouped, set the selection mode to Hierarchy.

Tip

If you set the selection mask, it will remain that way until you change it again. If an item won't select for you in Maya, you should check the selection mask setting to see if it is set correctly.
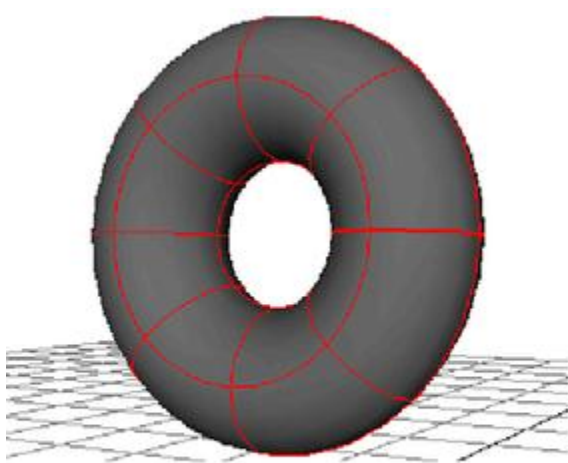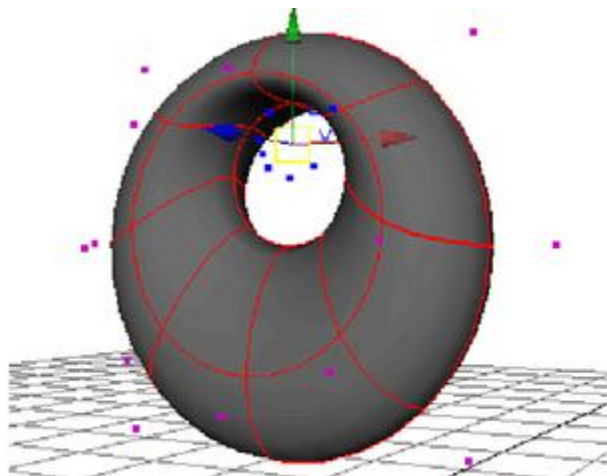
Object mode   Component mode

Related topics

- Selection, tools, and actions
- Edit > Select All
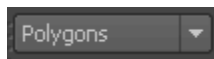- Edit > Select All by Type

Status line (toolbar)

Updated

The status line (or toolbar) lets you:

- Change the menu set
- Access common functions
- Control the selection mask
- Set various options
- Change the contents of the sidebar

Menu set menu

- [Menus and menu sets](#)
- [Select tools and actions](#)

File buttons

These buttons let you start a new scene file, open an existing scene file, or save the current scene file.

- [Create, open, or save a scene file](#)

Selection mask

The Status Line (toolbar) contains several different controls to change the selection mask. The selection mask determines what type of objects or components you can select.

The selection mode menu lets you select common preset selection masks.

The selection mode buttons let you switch between Select by hierarchy and combinations mode, Object mode, and Component mode.

The selection mask buttons let you make specific object/component types selectable or unselectable.

- [Select objects or components](#)
- [Tools, and actions](#)

Selection options

Lock /unlock current selection

>   Click the lock to lock the selection so the left mouse button operates the manipulator instead of selecting. Click the lock again to unlock the selection.

Highlight Selection mode

>   When you are selecting components in any component mode, object selection is disabled, so that you can stay in component selection mode; for example, to select multiple components (vertices, faces, and so on). To override this setting, so that clicking on a non-component part of your object selects the entire object (putting you back in object mode), turn Highlight Selection off.

- [Select objects or components](#)

Snapping buttons

Snap to grids

>   Snaps a vertex (CV or polygonal vertex) or pivot point to a grid corner. If you select Snap to grids before you create a curve, its vertices snap to the grid corners.

Snap to curves

>   Snaps a vertex (CV or polygonal vertex) or pivot point to a curve or curve on surface.

Snap to points

>   Snaps a vertex (CV or polygonal vertex) or pivot point to a point. This can include face centers.

Snap to Projected Center

When enabled, snaps an object (joint, locator) to the center of the selected mesh or NURBS surface.

NoteSnap to Projected Center overrides all other snapping modes.

Snap to view planes

Snaps a vertex (CV or polygonal vertex) or pivot point to a view plane.
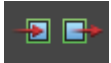
Make the selected object live

Updated

Converts the selected surface to a live surface.

Extension The name of the live surface displays in the field next to the Make Live icon.

- Snap to the grid, a curve, points, a view plane, or the center of a geometry
- Snap to a live surface
- Set a live surface
- Modify > Make Live

Construction buttons

Click the these buttons to open a pop-up menu that lets you select, enable, disable, or list the construction inputs and outputs for a selected object.

- Edit completed commands (construction history)

Input box

Use the Input box to quickly select, rename, or transform objects and components within the Maya scene without having the Channel Box displayed. Click the arrow to the left of the input fields to choose an Input mode; Absolute transform, Relative transform, Rename, or Select by name. The default setting is Absolute transform. The Input mode is saved with your user preferences.

Input Mode	How to use
▽ ⊞ X: [ ] Y: [ ] Z: [ ]	Absolute transform Type numbers in the X, Y, Z fields to move, scale, or rotate, based on the currently selected transformation tool. The objects or components are transformed with reference to their original creation position. You can also enter a single value in one field (for example, X) without affecting the other transformation values.
▽ ⊞ X: [ ] Y: [ ] Z: [ ]	Relative transform Type numbers in the X, Y, Z fields to move, scale, or rotate based on the currently selected transformation tool. The objects or components are transformed with reference to their current position. You can also enter a single value in one field (for example, X) without affecting the other transformation values. • [Move, rotate, or scale objects and components](#)
▽ ⊞a [ ]	Rename Edit the name of the currently selected object. When more than one object is selected, Maya increments a number at the end of the name for each object. • [Change the name of one or more objects](#)
▽ ⊞ [ ]	Select by name Type the name of an object to select it. You can use wildcard characters (* and ?) to select multiple objects. • [Select objects or components](#)

Click a button to show a sidebar:

- Modeling Toolkit
- Attribute Editor/notes
- Settings for the current tool
- Channel Box/Layer Editor

Panel toolbar

Updated

The panel toolbar rests below the menu bar in each view panel.

You can toggle view the toolbar by pressing `Ctrl` + `Shift` + M. View buttons

	Select Camera	Selects the current camera in the panel. You can also perform this operation by choosing View > Select Camera from the panel menu.

Right-click on this button to toggle between camera views or create new camera views. |
| | Camera Attributes | Opens the Camera Attribute Editor. You can also open the editor by choosing View > Camera Attribute Editor from the panel menu. |
| | Image Plane | Toggles the display of the existing image plane. If your scene does not contain an image plane, you are prompted to import an image. You can also access the image plane by choosing View > Image plane from the panel menu.

Right-click on this button to import an image plane, adjust the display mode of the current image plane, or delete an image plane.

For more information about image planes, see:

- Image plane attributes
- Create, edit, or position an image plane |

Shading buttons

	Wireframe	Toggles the Wireframe display. Wireframe is the default shading display. You can also toggle the Wireframe display by choosing Shading > Wireframe from the panel menu or press the hotkey 4.
	Smooth Shade All	Toggles the Smooth Shade All display. You can also toggle the Smooth Shade All display by choosing Shading > Smooth Shade All from the panel menu or press the hotkey 5.
	Wireframe on Shaded	Toggles a wireframe display on all shaded objects. You can also toggle the Wireframe on Shaded display by choosing Shading > Wireframe on Shaded from the panel menu.
	Textured	Toggles the Hardware Texturing display. You can also toggle Hardware Texturing by choosing Shading > Hardware Texturing from the panel menu or press the hotkey 6.

Lighting buttons

	Use All Lights	Toggles the illumination of surfaces by all lights in the scene. You can also toggle Use All Lights by choosing Lighting > Use All Lights from the panel menu or press the hotkey 7.
	Shadows	Toggles hardware shadow maps when Use All Lights is on. You can also toggle Shadows by choosing Lighting > Shadows from the panel menu.

Isolate Select

	Isolate Select	Limits the view panel to only display the selected objects. You can also isolate selected objects by choosing Show > Isolate Select from the panel menu.

XRay buttons

	X-Ray	Toggles semi-transparency on all shaded objects. You can also toggle X-Ray display by choosing Shading > X-Ray from the panel menu.
	X-Ray Joints	Toggles the display of skeleton joints over top of other shaded objects. You can also toggle X-Ray Joints by choosing Shading > X-Ray Joints from the panel menu.

Tool Box

The Tool Box displays on the left side of the Maya interface by default. (See Interface Overview.)