

3D Printing for Mobile Robots

Andrew Spielberg*

Vicki Crosson†

Abstract

Midway project report.

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1 Introduction

For our project, we seek to equip a Kuka YouBot (TODO: image) with a plastic extruder (namely, the 3Doodler) in order to allow a mobile manipulator to create freeform 3D shapes. As the 3Doodler can only extrude plastic strands, all shapes that we create must be compositions of 3D curve segments.

Creating such a system requires several components, which we outline here. In particular, the system requires:

- A tool for holding the 3Doodler in the youbot's fingers.
- An electronics interface to the 3Doodler to allow it to be remotely controlled and monitored via the YouBot PC.
- A GUI which allows users to easily create designs.
- A tool for exporting those designs to an ordered collection of paths for the YouBot gripper to draw.
- A velocity controller for the YouBot arm which allows for smooth extrusion in three dimensions without collisions upon previously extruded paths.

We now, in turn, discuss each of these components, their challenges, how they are currently being implemented, the remaining work which we'll aim to deliver in this class, and what will probably have to be left for future work. Finally, we discuss our goal for our final deliverable (demonstration prints).

Our code is being hosted on Github in a private repository, if you would like access to see our files we can add you to the repository!

2 YouBot 3Doodler Clamp Tool

We designed a 3Doodler clamp with four ideas in mind - first, that it fit onto the existing gripper fingers of the YouBot so that the robot could equip and unequip it as necessary; second, that it be fabricated in two halves, so that it can be easily disassembled by us if necessary, third, that it hold the 3Doodler rigidly in place, and fourth, that it not weigh more than the YouBot's payload (1.6 kg).

In order to achieve the third point, we designed a two ringed structure which snugly fits 3Doodler geometry at two locations, reducing the degrees of freedom to merely rotation about its extrusion axis.

*e-mail: aespilberg@csail.mit.edu

†e-mail: viccro.mit@gmail.com

Rotation here probably doesn't affect the output. The clamp was 3D printed, and so the clamp was coated with an outer layer of 0.3 mm TangoBlack+ to increase the grippiness of the clamp.

The 3Doodler initially was designed to be used with short "sticks" of ABS or PLA that the 3Doodler company sells. Since we want to have potentially long prints without a reloading mechanism, we are feeding in material from a reel that the YouBot carries along with it.

Unfortunately, right now the 3Doodler with the clamp is too heavy, and so right now we are only using one half of the clamp (which isn't as rigid but mostly works). We are considering shortening the clamp to reduce the weight, but we need to explore a way to do so that also leaves enough room for the plastic feed-in.

The 3Doodler Clamp was designed in openSCAD. See figure 1 for a rendering of the design.

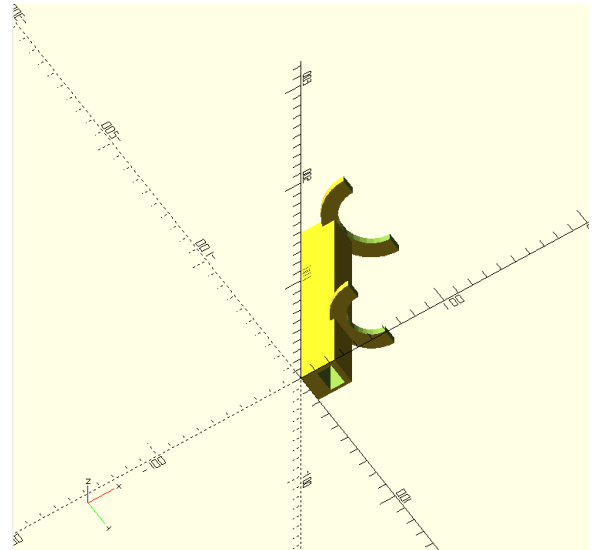


Figure 1: 3Doodler Clamp.

3 Electronics for ROS-3Doodler Interfacing

TODO: Vicki

4 GUI

5 Path Ordering

6 YouBot controller and Path Planning

7 Demonstrations

TODO: Vicki

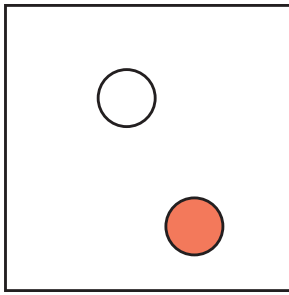


Figure 2: *Sample illustration.*

8 Exposition

9 Conclusion