# CHARACTER MODELING
## 3D Character Design/Render

## *What kind of work is this?*

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Being as active on a lot of artist's Twitter accounts and Artstations as I am, I come across a lot of neat character designs that I really enjoy. Sometimes, people want their characters as avatars in games like VR Chat or Garry's Mod. Sometimes, I just like the character design enough to dedicate hours to working on it for them. Either way, I have a passion for turning flat, 2D characters into usable, low-poly 3D models, for use in games or animation. The work that comes along with this is usually creating a reference sheet if none are provided, creating the model itself using relatively low poly mesh, texturing and UV mapping the model, and if for use in animation or games specifically, rigging and weight painting the model.



In this essay, I will cover a couple of the projects I've worked on, animated and still images will be provided for easier viewing of the models themselves while I go over the process and details of my workflow in this document. To briefly cover what "role" I had in the creation of these models and the associated media, all character designs are owned by their individual creators, I only created reference sheets and the models themselves. Any media outside what I provide that include my models, work, or artist's characters etc. are not my creation and will not be provided as a part of my portfolio.

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*Programs used:*
Blender/Autodesk Maya
Photoshop

## WORKFLOW DESCRIPTION

*How do I make it happen?*

    My workflow is pretty plain and simple, yet effective. The first thing I do is either create a reference sheet if one wasn't provided, or import a currently existing reference sheet for the character I'm about to model. Creating one from scratch definitely has its difficulties, as I'm not as apt at 2D art as I'd like to be, but by cropping together snippets of images of the subject, or by completely redrawing it from scratch, I make it workable enough to use in a 3D environment.
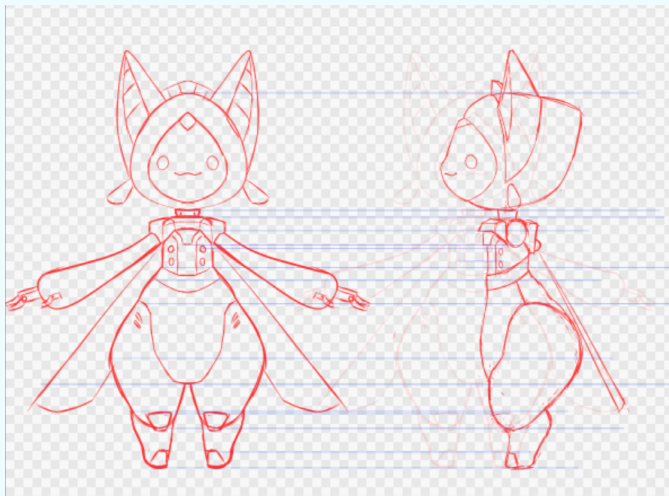


(Creating a 3D reference from scratch)
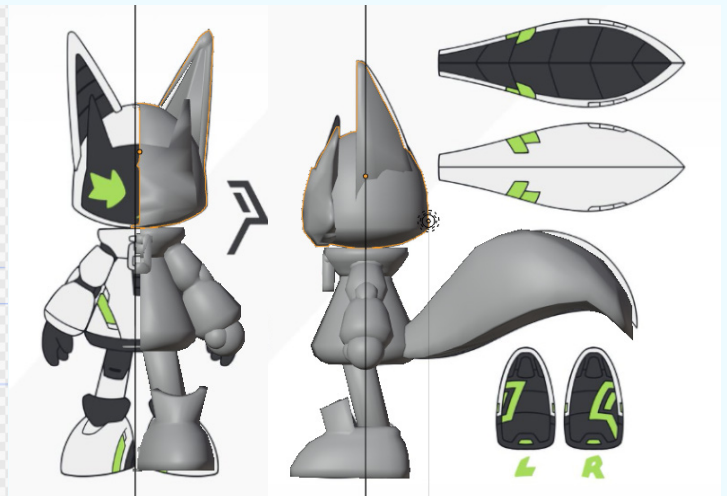
(Modeling in progress with premade reference)

    From then on the process is pretty simple, for most low-poly models I'll use a 6 sided cylinder with 12 vertices to create the outline of the model, moving from front to side views according to the reference to fine-tune the sizes and add detail if needed, although there are arguably better methods to achieve these same results,  I find that it's easiest to use my workflow to most accurately replicate a drawing or reference of the character, then fine tune later as needed or as requested, as it can sometimes be hard to pinpoint some of the more intricate details of a character using only 2D space for a 3D model. For texturing and UV mapping, I'll usually use shaderless texture images or materials in place of high-quality images or shaders, as it cuts down on memory and space and gives a more cartoony-stylized look that some people really enjoy.

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## Why do it this way?

## DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

One thing you might come to notice is my habit of using flat, shaderless base colors and a thick, solid outline for all of my models. This is both a design choice and a self-imposed restriction of freedom. One of my favorite things growing up and playing video games during the newly emerging 3D era was the emphasis on both simplified and yet aesthetically pleasing character models. One of the major reasons I work in low-poly in the first place is because I yearn to recreate that aesthetic choice that defined the N64/Gamecube era by imposing the same limitations that 3D artists would have to work in on myself. While I could use Substance Designer/Painter or more refined node-based shaders to create more "impressive" visual results, I feel as if that would detract from the design philosophy I set for myself, and so I try to avoid those approaches when possible. Although there's no doubt I'm much farther away from my low-poly dreams than I'd like to admit, I feel that with a formal education in the field I'd be only a couple skips away from achieving the results I've been trying to replicate with my recent work.