

**Autodesk®**  
FBX® 2011



Autodesk Maya FBX Plug-in Help

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Autodesk® FBX® 2011.1 Plug-in

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# Maya FBX Plug-in What's New

# 1

The following section contains the new features and known limitations for this version of the Autodesk Maya FBX Plug-in.

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**NOTE** Consult the readme file for any last-minute changes to this release. Windows users can find the readme, along with this Help system, in the Program Files > Autodesk FBX folder. Macintosh users are offered the option to save the readme during the installation process.

---

## What's new in this version

This section lists the new features included with this version of the Maya FBX Plug-in. Click the hyperlinks below to see more details.

### New features

This version of the Maya FBX plug-in includes the following new features:

- [MotionBuilder Front/Back Plate support](#) on page 2
- [UI changes](#) on page 2
- [Embedded Texture folder](#) on page 2
- [Preserve Instances](#) on page 3
- [New Troubleshooting section](#) on page 3
- [Remove single keys](#) on page 3
- [Embedded Textures](#) on page 3

- [New FBX format version](#) on page 3
- [Animation layer support](#) on page 4
- [Maya FBX References](#) on page 4
- [Resample All option](#) on page 4
- [MotionBuilder preset](#) on page 4
- [Holes and Sharp corner support](#) on page 4
- [Maya Pixel Aspect Ratio value support](#) on page 4

## MotionBuilder Front/Back Plate support

The Maya FBX Plug-in now imports both the MotionBuilder Front and Back Plate planes into Maya, as well as exports Foreground and Background image planes from Maya back into MotionBuilder. Previously, when you imported a scene into Maya only one MotionBuilder plate would appear.

## UI changes

The Maya FBX Plug-in is now shown within the Maya Import and Export dialog boxes, instead of being in a stand-alone FBX Importer or Exporter window. For more information see [FBX Plug-in UI](#) on page 25.

---

**NOTE** This UI change affects Maya 2011. Older versions of Maya (2010, 2009) will still use the “classic” FBX Importer/Exporter window UI.

---

## Embedded Texture folder

In previous versions of the Maya FBX Plug-in, when you imported an FBX file with embedded media, the embedded files were extracted to a folder in the same location as the FBX file.

If you did not have write permission to create that new folder, the media files were not imported. This lack of write permission can occur when you work over a network. Now, instead of not importing the media files, they are extracted directly to a Temp folder.

## Preserve Instances

A new option in the FBX Exporter lets you export Maya Instances. See [Preserve Instances](#) on page 47 for more information.

## New Troubleshooting section

The Maya FBX Plug-in documentation contains a new [Troubleshooting and Limitations](#) on page 119 chapter where you can locate the answers to some common problems. In previous versions of the documentation, the Known Limitations section appeared in the What's New chapter. Now, these limitations are documented in the Troubleshooting chapter.

## Remove single keys

By default, the Maya FBX Plug-in exports all key animation even if it contains only one key.

But a new option, Remove single keys, gives you the choice to ignore animation that has only a single key on export to reduce file size. See [Remove single key](#) on page 48.

## Embedded Textures

You can now embed textures in ASCII files. This functionality does not exist in FBX versions 2010 and earlier. See [Embed media](#) on page 56.

## New FBX format version

A new FBX file format version has been created for this version of the Maya FBX Plug-in. This new version of the FBX format contains file size optimizations that result in a smaller exported file size. For example, a file that once was 7 megabytes at export can export as small as 1 megabyte.

This size reduction gives you a quicker import speed due to the potential data reduction.

## Animation layer support

This version of the Maya FBX Plug-in fully supports Maya and MotionBuilder animation layers.

## Maya FBX References

You can now use FBX files as References in Maya.

## Resample All option

A new Resample All option lets you bake all supported and unsupported elements. See [Resample All](#) on page 51.

## MotionBuilder preset

Use the Autodesk MotionBuilder preset if you are using a Maya to MotionBuilder back to Maya workflow. See [Autodesk MotionBuilder preset](#) on page 42

## Holes and Sharp corner support

This version of the Maya FBX Plug-in supports Smooth Mesh Preview Holes and Sharp Corners.

## Custom attributes and properties

The Maya FBX Plug-in supports custom properties (or extra attributes,) on material nodes.

## Maya Pixel Aspect Ratio value support

The FBX plug-in now supports the Maya Render Settings Pixel Aspect Ratio value. The Pixel Aspect Ratio value is automatically exported and imported into Maya. This support assists with the import of cameras into Maya Composite by maintaining camera fidelity.

The aspect ratio represents the aspect ratio of the display device on which you view the rendered image. The device aspect ratio represents the image aspect ratio multiplied by the pixel aspect ratio.

This process occurs automatically; there are no settings to activate to obtain this support.

## Conversion support

The following sections are about how the Maya FBX Plug-in converts Maya objects and their properties.

For a detailed report of conversion support for this version, see the *Maya FBX Compatibility Chart*. The FBX compatibility chart explains what is supported and at what level, when you export from Autodesk Maya and import into Autodesk 3ds Max, Autodesk Mudbox or Autodesk MotionBuilder.

## File textures, procedural, and map channels

The Maya FBX Plug-in supports texture files in almost any standard material channel. Anything that you map in the Color, Bump mapping and other channels translate to FBX, as long as they are not procedural maps.

Map channel	Support
Color	Supported
Transparency	Supported
Ambient color	Supported
Incandescence	Supported
Bump	Supported
Diffuse	Supported
Cosine power	Supported
Specular color	Supported
Reflectivity	Supported

Map channel	Support
Reflected color	Supported

The Maya FBX Plug-in supports file texture maps. If you are using either 2D or 3D procedural textures, convert them to a file texture first.

**NOTE** The Maya FBX Plug-in ignores any maps applied to unsupported channels on export.

## Camera support

The following tables indicate how both Maya and the FBX file format treat cameras.

### Camera export

The following table lists Maya cameras and how the FBX file format treats them on export:

In Maya	Becomes in FBX
Camera	Camera without interest.
Camera and Aim	Camera with interest.
Camera, Aim, and Up	Camera with interest and up vector.
Angle of View	Field of View FCurve. The view is consistent even though the focal length values change when you import the FBX file into 3ds Max.
Near/far clipping planes	Near and Far clipping plane values are supported but not animation.
Stereo Camera	CameraStereo

**NOTE** Any animation applied to a Maya camera's Up node is baked onto the camera's rotation you import it into 3ds Max.

### Custom camera export

When the Maya FBX Plug-in exports Maya and 3ds Max custom cameras, the exporter sets the Render resolution/PixelAspectRatio for all cameras. If no custom cameras exist, the Render resolution/PixelAspectRatio values are not exported.

---

**NOTE** Make sure your custom camera is the current camera in the scene when exporting to FBX for the correct transport of the camera Render resolution/PixelAspectRatio.

---

### Camera import

The following lists how Maya treats MotionBuilder cameras on import:

---

In FBX	Becomes in Maya
Free Camera	Camera
Camera (With a look-at Target/Interest)	Camera and Aim
Orthographic Camera	Camera with an orthographic setting.

---

### Custom camera import

When the Maya FBX Plug-in imports Maya and 3ds Max custom cameras, the Render resolution/PixelAspectRatio applied to the scene is set by the current camera. That is, the Render resolution/PixelAspectRatio from additional cameras are ignored. If the current camera is not a custom camera, the Render resolution/PixelAspectRatio values are not imported.

## Light support

The following tables list Maya lights and how the plug-in treats them when they are exported to the FBX file format and imported into Maya:

### Light types

---

In Maya	When imported back into Maya
Ambient light	Point light
Directional light	Directional light

---

<b>In Maya</b>	<b>When imported back into Maya</b>
Spot light	Spot light
Area light	Point light
Point light	Point light

## Custom properties

Because of type limitations in FBX files, the following conversions are applied.

<b>Exported from Maya</b>	<b>Becomes in FBX</b>
Vector	VECTOR
Boolean	BOOL
Integer	INTEGER
String	STRING
Enum	ENUM
Float	REAL

<b>Imported FBX</b>	<b>Becomes in Maya</b>
REAL	Float
BOOL	Boolean
INTEGER	Integer
STRING	String
VECTOR	Vector

The Maya FBX Plug-in supports Extra Attributes (or custom properties) applied to Materials and Transform nodes.

## **Level of Detail group nodes**

The Maya FBX Plug-in supports LOD (level of detail) group nodes. See the Maya documentation on LOD group nodes for more information.

## **Joint Orients**

The Maya FBX Plug-in converts Maya Joint Orients to pre-rotation on export.



# Installing the Maya FBX Plug-in

# 2

Maya uses the Maya FBX Plug-in to import, export, and convert files using the FBX file format. This chapter describes how to install the Maya FBX Plug-in on Windows®, Mac® OS X, and Linux systems.

The Maya FBX Plug-in comes with Maya and is installed automatically. This procedure is included so you can upgrade your Maya FBX Plug-in with later versions.

---

**NOTE** The Maya FBX Plug-in that accompanies your version of Maya may not be the most recent version. It is a good practice to check for updates, as each subsequent Maya FBX Plug-in version has enhanced functionality, and is available free. See [Web updates](#) on page 35 for instructions on how to verify that your plug-in version is the latest.

---

**IMPORTANT** Plug-ins run only on the version of Maya for which they are created; verify that the version of the Maya FBX Plug-in that you are installing is appropriate for the version of Maya you are running.

---

The Maya FBX Plug-in is available for Windows®, Mac® OS X, and Linux systems.

## Windows installation

The Maya FBX Plug-in is compatible with the following versions of Microsoft Windows®:

- Windows XP (32/64-bit)
- Windows Vista (32/64-bit)
- Windows 7 (32/64-bit)

**To install the Maya FBX Plug-in:**

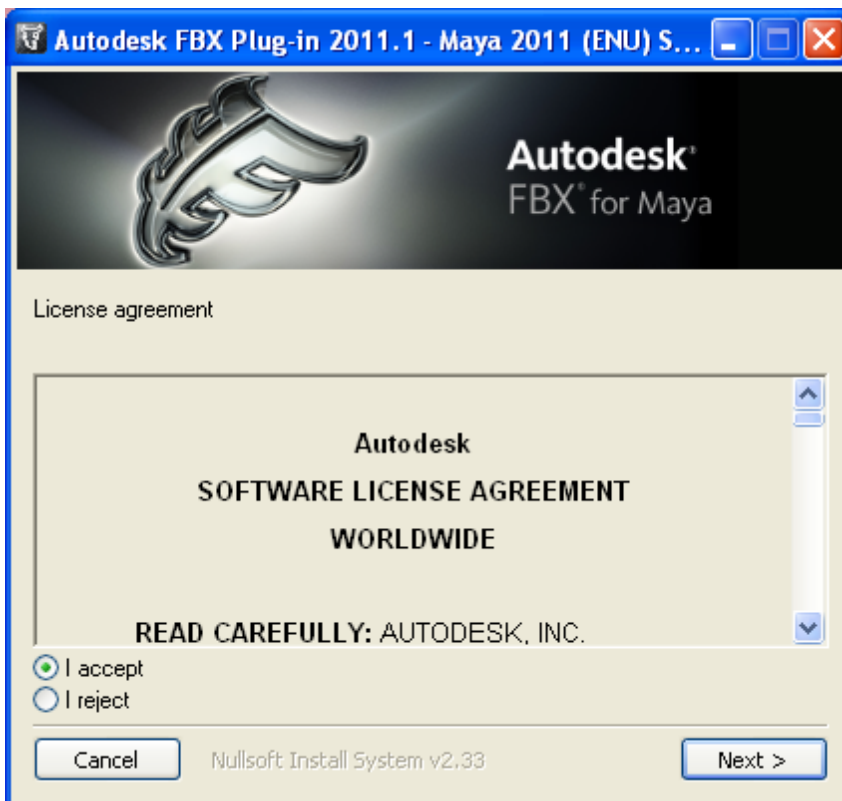
- 1 Exit Maya or deactivate fbxmaya.mll in Maya's Plug-in Manager before installing.

---

**NOTE** If you install the Maya FBX Plug-in while the fbxmaya.mll driver is in use, the installation cannot occur and an "Error opening file for writing" message displays.

---

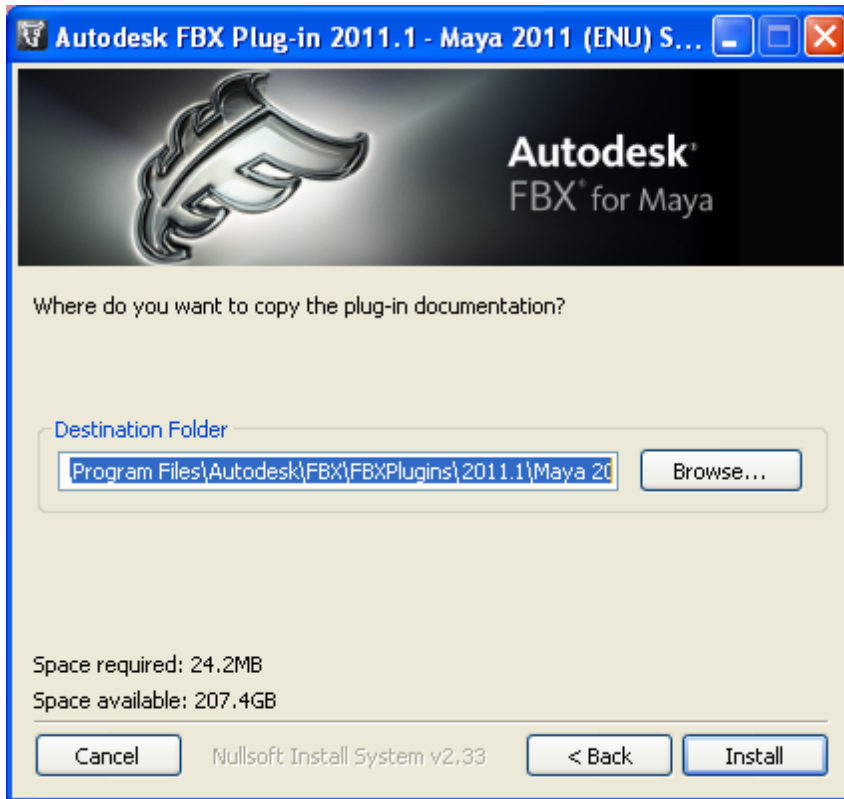
- 2 Download the install file from [www.autodesk.com/fbx](http://www.autodesk.com/fbx). See [Downloading the Maya FBX Plug-in](#) on page 19 for information on downloading the latest Maya FBX Plug-in.
- 3 Double-click the install file to launch the Autodesk Maya FBX Plug-in installer.
- 4 Click I accept to accept the terms of the license agreement, and then click Next.



- 5 The next window shows the recommended installation location for the plug-in. To specify another location, click Browse to launch the file browser.



- 6 Click Next.
- 7 The next window shows the recommended installation location for the plug-in documentation. To specify another location, click Browse to launch the file browser.



- 8 Click Install.
- 9 A series of dialog boxes appear asking if you would like to keep older versions of the plug-in (if applicable), open the plug-in documentation or view the read me file. Select Yes or No for each of these options.

---

**NOTE** The readme is located in the Program Files > Autodesk FBX folder, along with this Help system.

---

- 10 The Installation completed window appears. Click Close to exit the installer.

The Maya FBX Plug-in is now installed.

## Removing the Maya FBX Plug-in from Windows

To remove the Maya FBX Plug-in manually:

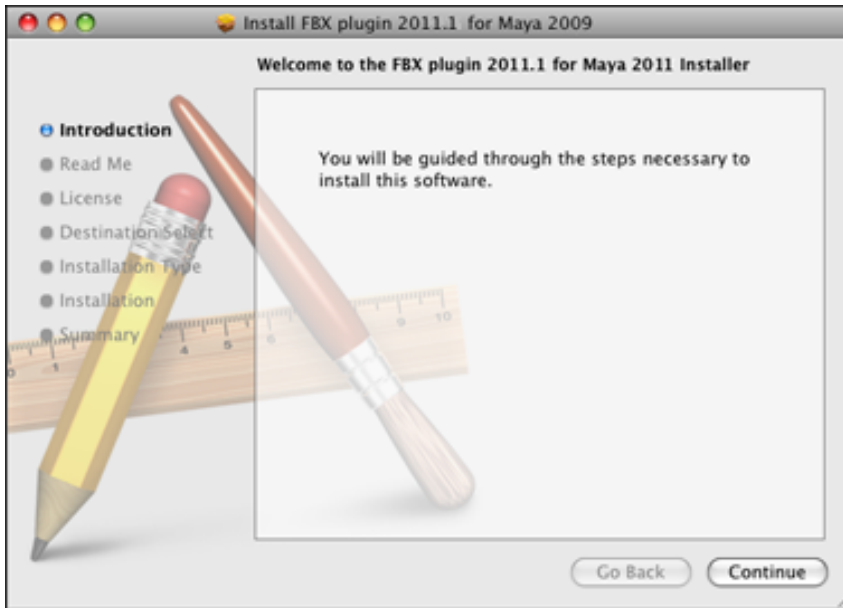
- 1 In Maya, disable the fbxmaya.mll Loaded and Autoload options in the Plug-in Manager.
- 2 Exit Maya.
- 3 Delete fbxmaya.mll from the Maya<ver>\bin\plugins directory, where <ver> is the version of Maya you have installed.

## Macintosh installation

The Maya FBX Plug-in is available for Mac OS X 10.6.

To install the Maya FBX Plug-in:

- 1 Download the TGZ file from the Autodesk web site ([www.Autodesk.com/FBX](http://www.Autodesk.com/FBX)) to your desktop.
- 2 Double-click the TGZ file to extract the Installation disk image.
- 3 Double-click the package icon to start the installation. The Welcome pane appears.



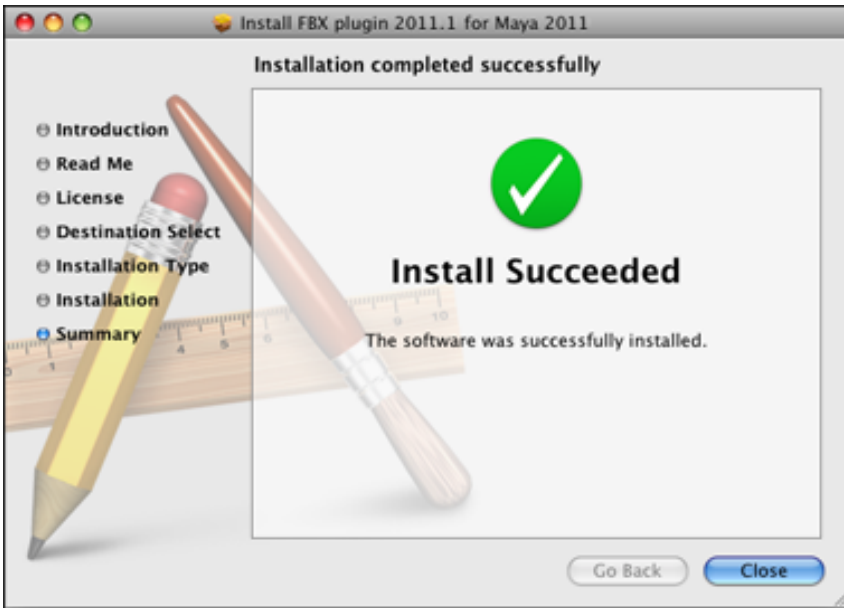
- 4 Click Continue to start the installation process. The Software License Agreement pane appears.
- 5 Read the License Agreement and click Continue. A dialog box appears asking if you accept the terms and continue with the installation.
- 6 Click Agree to accept. The Select a Destination pane appears. Select the destination disk where you want to install the Maya FBX plug-in and click Continue.
- 7 The Easy Install pane appears. Click Upgrade.
- 8 A dialog box appears asking you to enter your name and login password to continue the installation.

---

**NOTE** You must obtain administrator privileges to continue installation.

---

- 9 The installation begins. A progress bar indicates the time remaining of the installation. When the progress reaches 100%, the Finish Up pane appears.



- 10 Click Close to exit the installation program.
- 11 Start Maya and navigate to Window > Settings/Preferences > Plug-in Manager.

---

**NOTE**

This installs the Maya FBX Plug-in to the following directory: <Macintosh Drive>/Applications/Autodesk/maya<ver>/Maya.app/Contents/MacOS/plug-ins, where <ver> is the version of Maya you have installed.

---

- 12 Activate the Loaded option for *Fbxmaya.bundle* in the Plug-in Manager.
- 13 Activate the *Fbxmaya.bundle* Autoload option so Maya loads the Maya FBX Plug-in automatically at start-up.

---

**NOTE** The FBX readme file is available during the installation process. An option to save the readme is offered at this time. This lets you save the readme so that you can determine where to store it.

---

## Removing the Maya FBX Plug-in from Mac OS X

### To remove the Maya FBX Plug-in:

- 1 In Maya, deactivate the *fbxmaya.bundle* Loaded and Autoload options in the Plug-in Manager.
- 2 Exit Maya.
- 3 Locate the *fbxmaya.bundle* plug-in. This file resides in the <Macintosh Drive>/Applications/Autodesk/maya<ver>/Maya.app/Contents/MacOS/plug-ins directory, where <ver> is the version of Maya you have installed.
- 4 Delete the *fbxmaya.bundle* file.

## Linux installation

The Maya FBX Plug-in is available for Linux.

### Linux compatibility

The Maya FBX Plug-in is compatible with the following versions of the Linux Operating system:

- GCC 4.0.2 (32- and 64-bit)

### To install the Maya FBX Plug-in:

- 1 Download the installation file from the Autodesk web site ([www.Autodesk.com/FBX](http://www.Autodesk.com/FBX)).
- 2 Remove the old plug-in from the */usr/Autodesk/maya<ver>/bin/plug-ins/* (where <ver> is the version of Maya you have installed,) directory by entering `rm -f fbxmaya.so` at the command prompt.
- 3 Type the following command to install the Maya FBX Plug-in:

```
./fbx<ver>_maya<ver>_linux_enu
```

(Where *FBX<ver>* is the version of the Maya FBX Plug-in you have installed).

This installs the plug-in to the following directory:

*/usr/Autodesk/maya<ver>/bin/plug-ins/* (where <ver> is the version of Maya you have installed).

If you install Maya in another folder, you can specify the path on the Command Line after: `./fbx<ver>_maya<ver>_linux_enu /home/maya/mypath/` (Where *FBX<ver>* is the version of the Maya FBX Plug-in you have installed.)

- 1 Start Maya and navigate to Window > Settings/Preferences > Plug-in Manager.
- 2 Activate the Loaded option for *Fbxmaya.so* in the Plug-in Manager.
- 3 Activate the *Fbxmaya.so* Autoload option so Maya loads the Maya FBX Plug-in automatically at start-up.

## Removing the Maya FBX Plug-in from Linux

### To remove the Maya FBX Plug-in:

- 1 In Maya, deactivate the *fbxmaya.so* Loaded and Autoload options in the Plug-in Manager.
- 2 Exit Maya.
- 3 Log into your system as root.
- 4 Remove the Maya FBX Plug-in by entering the following command:

```
rm -f /usr/Autodesk/maya<ver>/bin/plug-ins/fbxmaya.so
```

# Downloading the Maya FBX Plug-in

The Maya FBX Plug-in is available for free download.

The Maya FBX Plug-in that accompanies your version of Maya may not be the most recent version. It is a good practice to check for updates, as each subsequent Maya FBX Plug-in version has enhanced functionality, and is available free. See [Web updates](#) on page 35 for instructions on how to verify that your plug-in version is the latest.

### To download the Maya FBX Plug-in:

- 1 Go to [www.autodesk.com/fbx](http://www.autodesk.com/fbx)
- 2 Click the Download FBX Plug-ins and Tools link for the latest SDKs and FBX plug-in releases.
- 3 Click the FBX Plug-ins, Converter, and QuickTime Viewer Downloads link.

- 4 Fill out the form that appears and click Submit. This takes you to a page where the plug-ins reside.

---

**NOTE** The Maya FBX Plug-ins are categorized by type, operating system, then application version.

---

- 5 Click the FBX plug-in link to download the corresponding FBX installer.

---

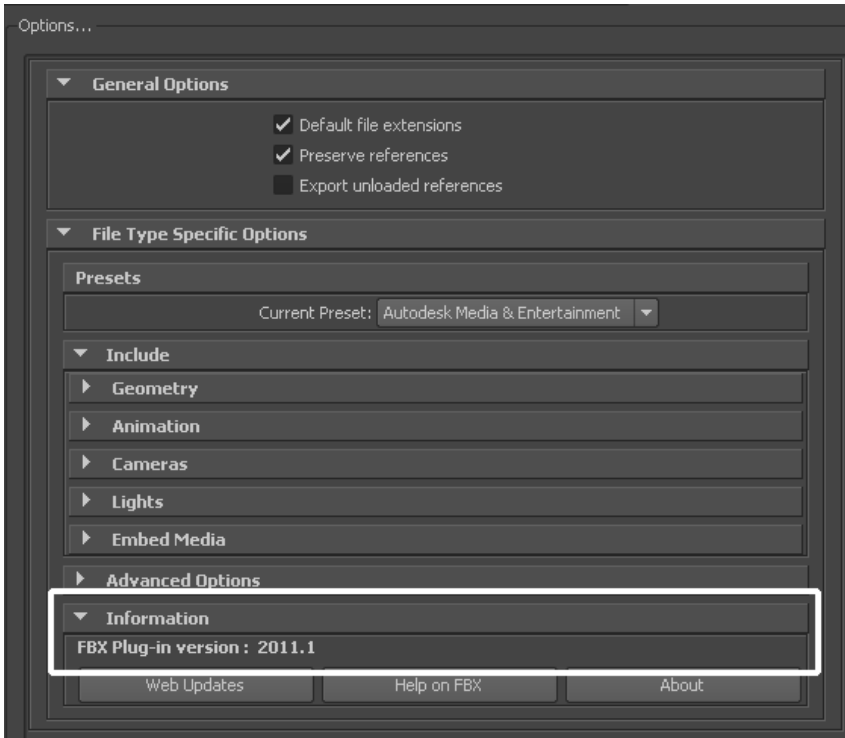
**NOTE** To find older versions of the Maya FBX Plug-ins, click the Plug-in and Converter Archives link at the bottom of the web page.

---

## Checking your version number

Once you complete the installation, run the Maya FBX Plug-in. When you import and export, you can find the FBX version number in the Options > File Type Specific Options > Information.

The Maya FBX Plug-in that accompanies your version of Maya may not be the most recent version. It is a good practice to check for updates, as each subsequent Maya FBX Plug-in version has enhanced functionality, and is available free. See [Web updates](#) on page 35 for instructions on how to verify that your plug-in version is the latest.



If your version is not the latest, you can update it for free. See [Downloading the Maya FBX Plug-in](#) on page 19.

## Removing the plug-in

When you install the Maya FBX Plug-in, it installs two instances of the plug-in: the actual FBX plug-in that is copied to the source directory (C:\Program Files\Autodesk\Maya2011\bin\plug-ins) and a copy that is stored in the FBX folder that you specified during the installation.



The installation screen that specifies a destination folder

When you uninstall the Maya FBX Plug-in, the uninstall process only removes the plug-in copy from the destination folder you specified during the installation. To remove the FBX plug-in completely, you must delete it manually. The reason you must perform a manual deletion is because the FBX plug-in is a part of the default Maya installation.

Essentially, when you uninstall, you remove the contents of the FBX backup folder, for example, `C:\Program Files\Autodesk\FBX\FBXPlugins\2011.2\Maya 2011 64-bit`, as well as any related entries in the Start menu.

It is good practice to keep the previous version of the plug-in, especially if you are working on a project where the workflow is heavily dependent upon the plug-in. If the newer version of the plug-in disrupts your process in some way, you can revert to the previous version. If you do not want to lose access to the FBX plug-in that ships with the Maya software, select Yes when asked if

you want to accept saving copies of the old plug-in. This option occurs whenever you install newer versions of the FBX plug-ins.

---

**NOTE** For additional notes on uninstalling Macintosh and Linux versions of the Maya FBX Plug-in, see [Removing the Maya FBX Plug-in from Mac OS X](#) on page 18 and [Removing the Maya FBX Plug-in from Linux](#) on page 19.

---

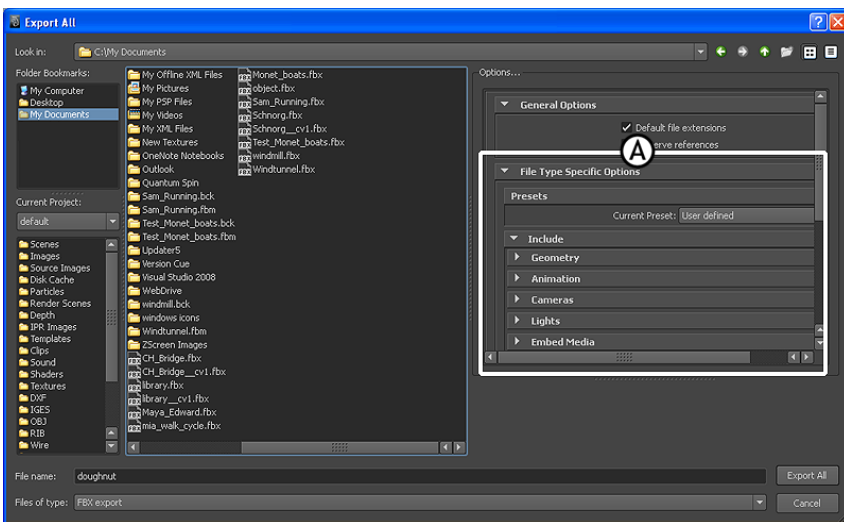


# FBX Plug-in UI

# 3

This section describes the Maya FBX Plug-in user interface which appears on the right side of the Maya Import or Export dialog box under the General options when you select the Maya Import and Export functions from the File menu.

The FBX options and menus are contained within rollout menus that you can expand and collapse.

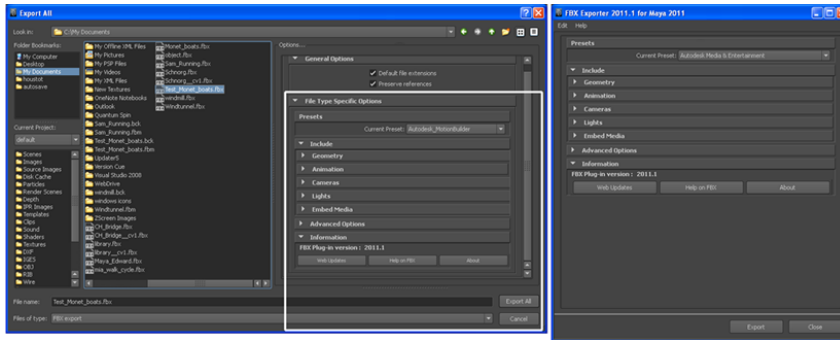


Maya Export All window A. FBX Exporter options

## Switching the FBX UI

The Maya FBX Plug-in is available to you in two ways: the OS Native UI, which shows the plug-in in a stand alone Importer or Exporter window, or the Maya

Default, which shows the plug-in as options within the Maya Import or Export dialog boxes.



Two versions of the FBX UI A. Maya Default B. OS native

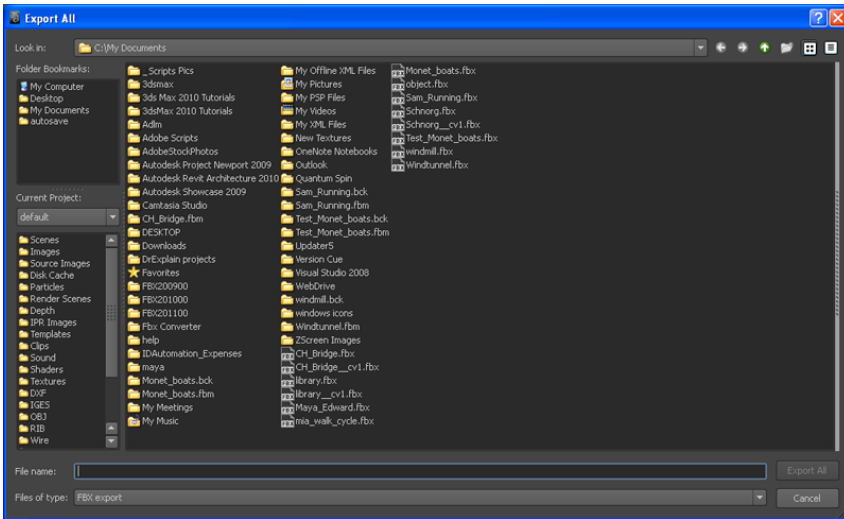
## Changing the UI

To switch between the OS Native “classic”-look UI and the Maya Default UI, select Window > Settings/Preferences > Preferences. In the Preferences dialog box, locate Files/Projects and scroll down to the File Dialog options.

You can also create your own presets. See [Creating a custom preset](#) on page 27.

## Hiding the UI

You can hide the plug-in when it is in the Maya Default setting if you drag the center splitter bar to the right. This collapses the FBX Plug-in options.

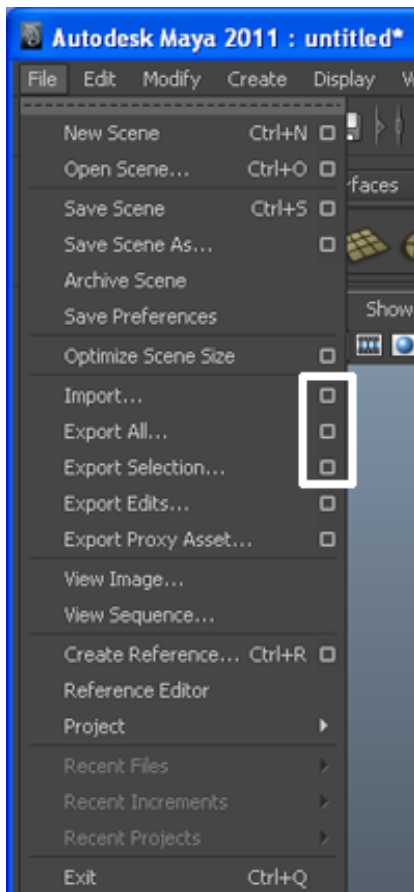


## Creating a custom preset

You can design your own preset where you design the UI with options and settings specific to you needs. You can then share this preset with others.

### To create a custom preset

- 1 Select File and click the option box next to Import, Export All, or Export Selection.



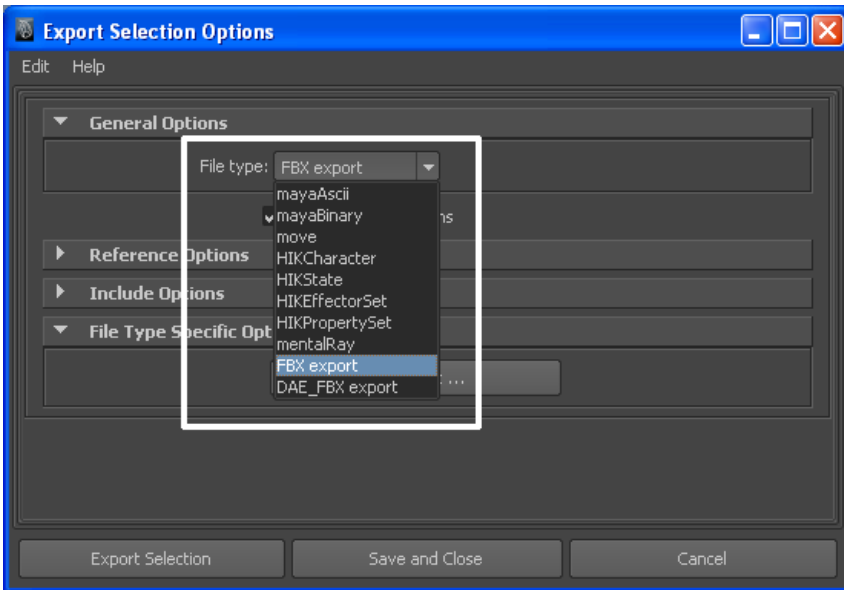
---

**NOTE** You cannot create custom FBX presets using the Export Edits and Export Proxy Asset option boxes.

---

The Options dialog box appears.

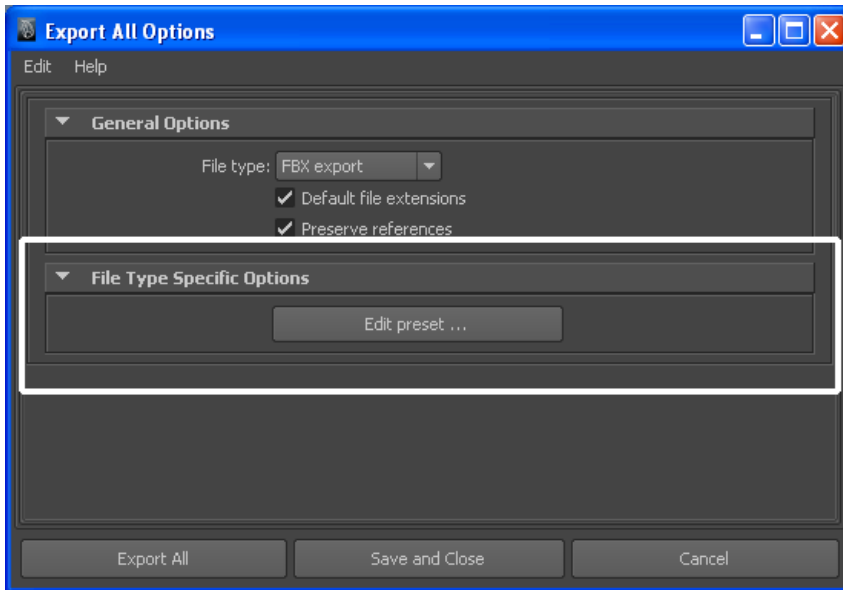
- 2 Select FBX export from the General Options File type menu.



### File type menu

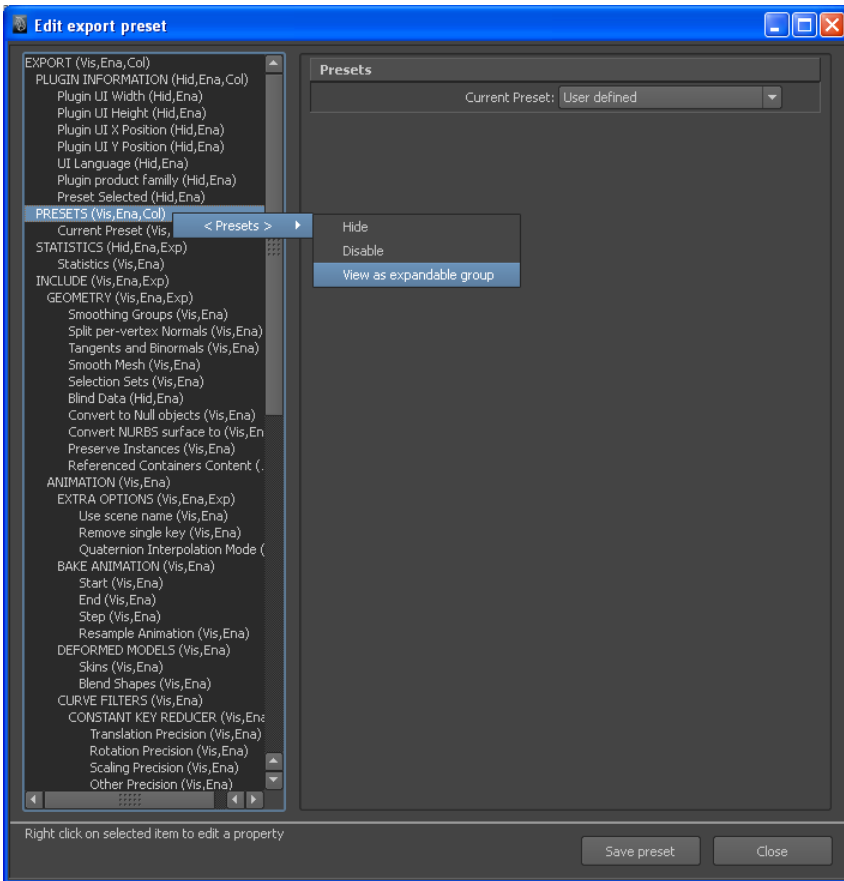
The Edit Preset button appears in the File Type Specific Options rollout.

- 3 Click the Edit Preset button to show the Export/Import Options dialog box.



#### Edit preset option

- 4 The UI of the Edit Preset dialog box is split into two sections, adding a tree view of the FBX options in the left section.
- 5 Select, and then right-click elements in the Tree View to access the Edit options. See [Edit mode options](#) on page 33 for a guide to the available preset design options.



---

**NOTE** Some edit options are common to all structure levels, while some are specific to a particular structure level. You can apply some options at any level of the options structure. See [Edit mode options](#) on page 33.

---

- 6 Once you have finished, click Save preset.
- 7 The Saving new preset dialog box appears. Type the name of the new preset for example, “MyNewPreset”.



The new preset appears in the Maya FBX Plug-in the next time you load Maya.



The Maya FBX Plug-in stores custom presets in a file so you can share them with other users. You can find custom preset files in My Documents\Maya\FbxPresets directory.

---

**NOTE** Bake Animation Start/End/Step values cannot be saved in presets. The Maya FBX Plug-in always derives these values from the exported scene. For more see [Preset Bake Animation settings](#) on page 125

---

## Storing presets

You can save your custom presets in a file that you can share with other users. Consult the table for the location of your saved presets.

Platform	Preset location
Windows	C:/Users/<username>/Documents/maya/FBX/Presets/<current plug-in version>
Macintosh	/Users/<username>/Library/Preferences/Autodesk/maya/FBX/Presets/<current plug-in version>/import

Platform	Preset location
Linux	/home/<username>/maya/FBX/Presets//<current plug-in version>/import

**NOTE** The table above shows the path for the import presets. Export presets follow the same path but use “export” instead.

Preset files have the file extension `.fbximportpreset` (for import) and `.fbxexportpreset` (for export), for example, `My Preset.fbximportpreset`.

These presets are stored by user name so that multiple users can store custom presets on the same machine.

You can also run the MELscript command to locate the FBX users preset path:

```
internalVar -userAppDir
```

## Edit mode options

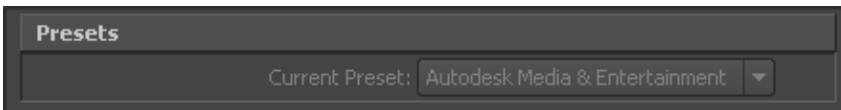
Use the Edit Mode options to customize your Maya FBX Plug-in UI preset.

### Show/Hide

Use this option to activate or disable the visibility of a group or option in the UI.

### Enable/Disable

Use this option to lock the group or option so that it appears grayed-out in the UI and cannot be modified.



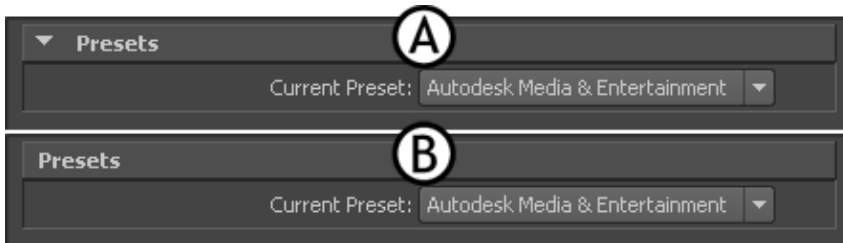
### Expand/Collapse

Use this option to change whether the group or option is expanded (A) or collapsed (B) by default in the UI.



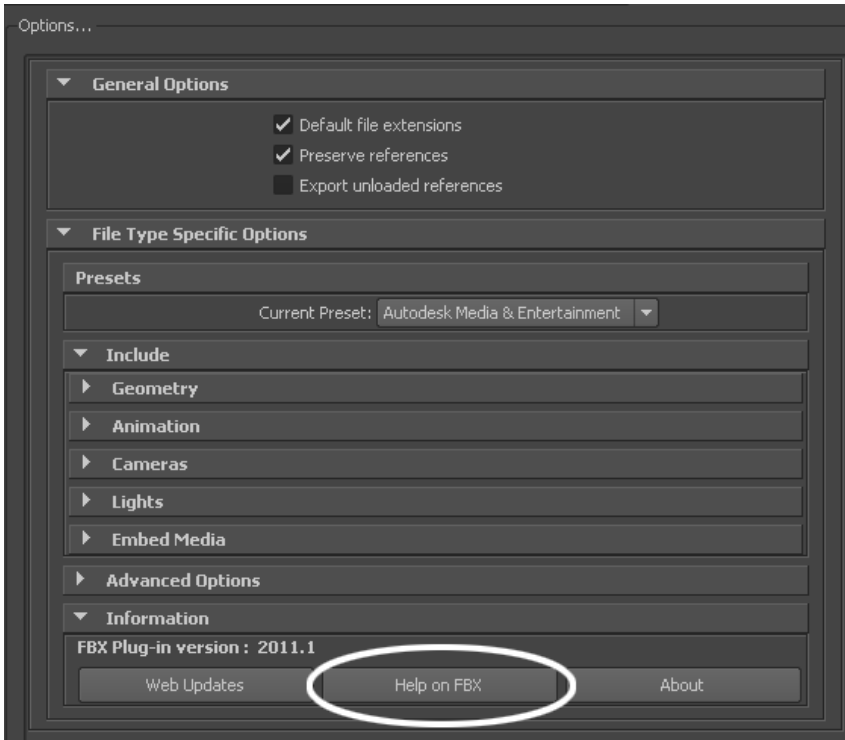
### **View as expandable group/View as expanded Panel**

Use this option to set whether a group is expandable (A) or not (B).



## **Help**

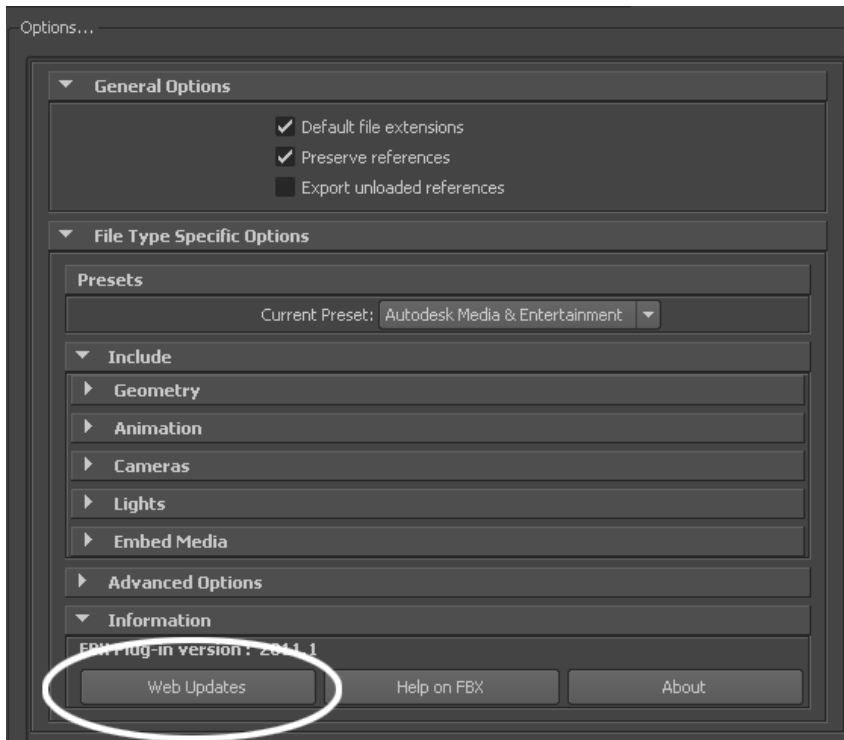
Click the Help on FBX button in the Information rollout to access the Maya FBX Plug-in documentation.



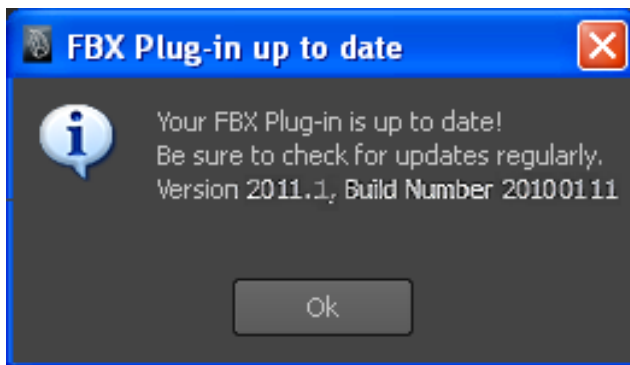
## Web updates

Click the Web Updates button in the Information rollout to make sure that you are using the latest version of the Maya FBX Plug-in.

This function searches the Autodesk web site for a newer version of the plug-in you are currently using.



If you have the latest version, the following message appears:

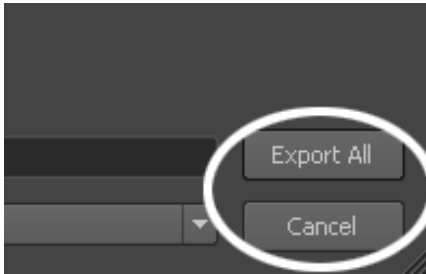


If a newer version of the Maya FBX Plug-in is available, a window appears to inform you.

See [Windows installation](#) on page 11, [Linux installation](#) on page 18, and [Downloading the Maya FBX Plug-in](#) on page 19 for information on downloading and installing the latest Maya FBX Plug-in.

## Export/Import or Cancel

At the bottom of the Maya Import or Export window, you can find Export/Import and Cancel buttons.



### Export/Import

Use the Export All, Export Selection, or Import button to start the export or import process.

### Cancel

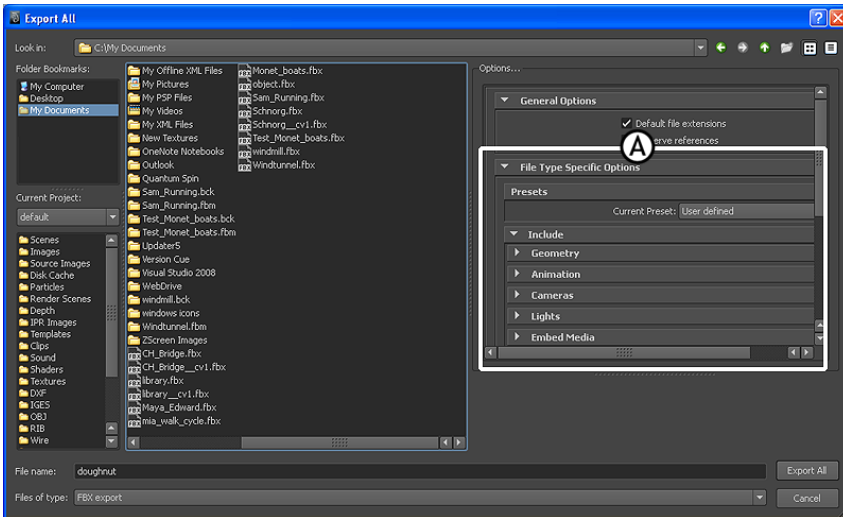
The Cancel button closes the Export or Import window without performing any action.



# Export

# 4

This section contains information about options you can use in the Maya FBX Plug-in Exporter window.



Maya Export All dialog box A. FBX Export options

## Exporting from Maya to an FBX file

To export your Maya scene:

- 1 Launch Maya.
- 2 Select File > Export All, or File > Export Selection. The Export All, or Export Selection dialog box appears.

- 3 Select FBX from File of Type menu.

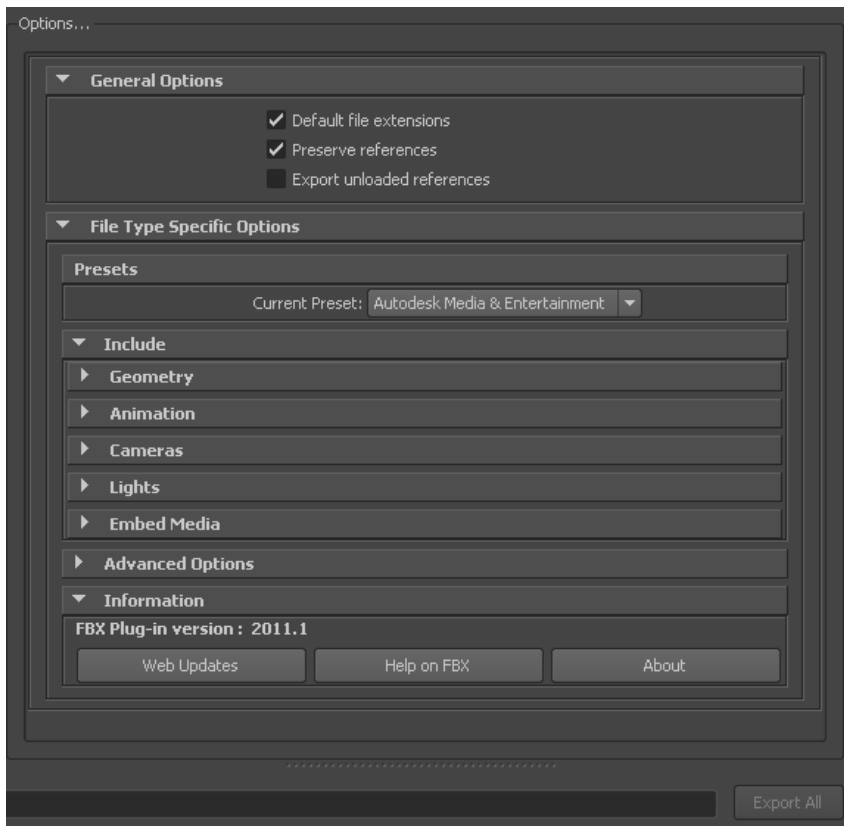
---

**NOTE** If you do not see the FBX file extension in the File of Type menu, activate fbxmaya.mll in Maya's Plug-in Manager.

---

- 4 Enter a name for the FBX file you want to export.
- 5 The FBX Export options appear at the right of the Maya Export dialog box.
- 6 Set the export options you want to use or select a preset from the Presets menu. The Autodesk Media and Entertainment preset contains the best balance of options for a general animation workflow. The Autodesk MotionBuilder preset contains options set for character animation using Maya and MotionBuilder.

See [Selecting a preset](#) on page 70 for more information about presets.



- 7 Click Export in the Maya Export dialog box.
- 8 If conversions or errors occur during the export process, the Warning Manager reports them at the end of the export process. See [Show/Hide Warning Manager](#) on page 87 for information about the Warning Manager.

---

**NOTE** There is a difference between “Errors” vs. “Warnings”. The plug-in reports an error when something unexpected occurs. When the plug-in reports an error, it indicates that the consequences of that error are unknown. Warnings inform users when the plug-in applies conversions to the source data to convert the data into a format that the destination application can read.

---

## File Type Specific options

### Presets

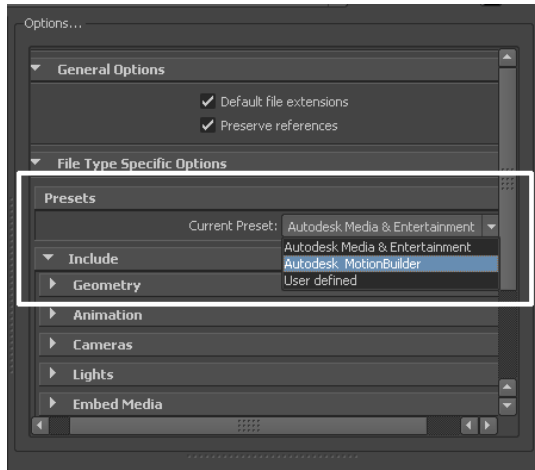
The Maya FBX Plug-in has two export workflow presets:

- [Autodesk Media & Entertainment preset](#) on page 42
- [Autodesk MotionBuilder preset](#) on page 42

The Autodesk Media and Entertainment preset is the default preset for the Maya FBX Plug-in Exporter. The Autodesk MotionBuilder preset is used for exporting animation files to MotionBuilder.

#### Selecting a preset

Choose your preset by selecting it in the menu of the Maya FBX Plug-in Presets section.



## Editing presets

If you change a preset, the preset field displays User defined, to show that the preset differs from its default state. The plug-in saves the User defined state in a temporary file so that the settings are the default the next time you use the plug-in.

You can also use save your settings as a custom preset. See [Creating a custom preset](#) on page 27.

## Autodesk Media & Entertainment preset

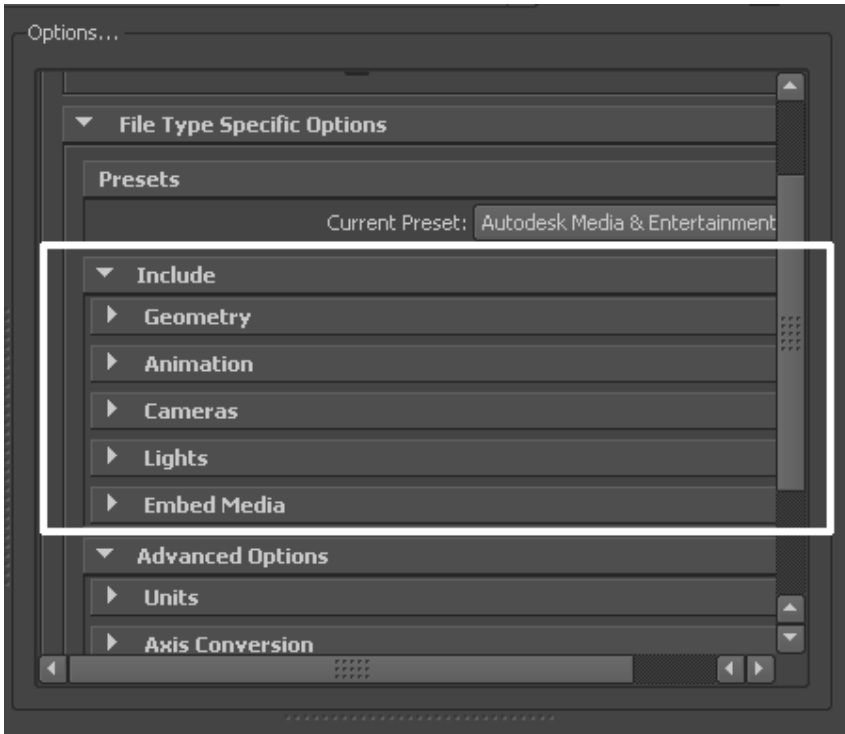
The Autodesk Media and Entertainment preset contains the optimal settings for most animation workflows.

## Autodesk MotionBuilder preset

Use the Autodesk MotionBuilder preset if you are using a Maya to MotionBuilder back to Maya workflow. This preset uses the [Constraints](#) on page 55 and [FBIK definition](#) on page 55 options set for optimal Character animation using Maya and MotionBuilder.

# Include

The Include rollout lets you decide what data and conversions the plug-in applies to your scene at export from a host application.



## Geometry

Expand the Geometry rollout to access options related to exporting geometry from your scene.

## Smoothing Groups

When you activate this option the Maya FBX Plug-in converts edge information to Smoothing Groups and exports them with the file.

When this option is disabled, no edge information is converted to Smoothing Groups.

## Smoothing Groups and Collada

The FBX Collada exporter does not export Smoothing Groups data from 3ds Max. Because of this, the FBX Collada importer will generate Smoothing Groups during the import process.

If you disable the Smoothing Groups option, no Smoothing Groups are generated by the FBX Collada importer.

## Split per-vertex Normals

Activate this option to split geometry vertex normals based on edge continuity. Vertex normals determine the visual smoothing between polygon faces. They reflect how Maya renders the polygons in smooth shaded mode.

This option only applies to older MotionBuilder workflows to ensure visual fidelity of surface continuity. It lets you transfer hard edge information to MotionBuilder.

This workflow is required because of limitation in MotionBuilder versions 2010 and earlier where there is no support ByPolygonVertex Normals.

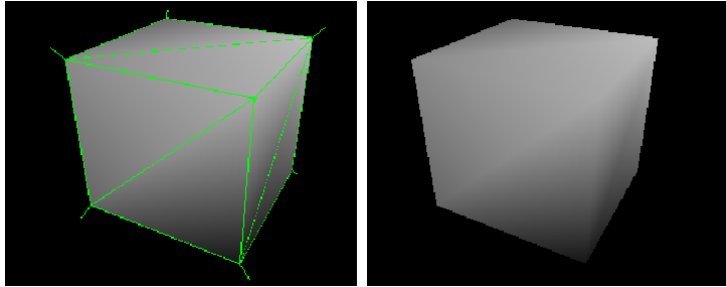
### Why would I use this?

This option lets you keep the same hard/soft edge look that you get from Maya in MotionBuilder.

Do not use this option if you do not require hard edges in MotionBuilder, since this operation duplicates vertex information and converts the geometry itself. You can use the Combine per-vertex Normals option in the FBX Importer to perform the inverse operation, but this may result in incorrect UV texture maps, see the note that follows this entry.

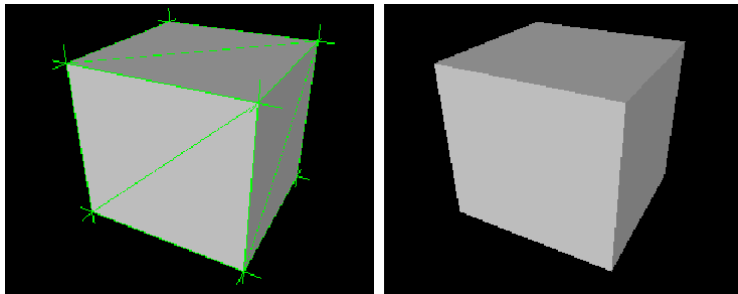
If you are not using a merge-back workflow (merging FBX into existing scene) using this option may result in incorrect UV mapping when reimporting the FBX file into Maya. Import your FBX file into to your original Maya scene, to avoid geometry UV issues with split geometry.

Exporting with the Split per-vertex Normals option disabled produces the following result in MotionBuilder 2010 and earlier:



**Split per-vertex Normals option disabled on export produces this result in MotionBuilder 2010 and earlier**

Exporting with the Split per-vertex Normals option activated produces the following result in MotionBuilder:



**Split per-vertex Normals option activated on export produces this result in MotionBuilder 2010 and earlier**

---

**NOTE** Using this option alters UV maps applied to geometry permanently. The UVs are then properly reassigned to the newly split geometry. When you import this geometry into an empty Maya scene, there is a UV limitation where using Combine per-vertex Normals in the FBX Importer might result in incorrect UV assignments.

---

## Tangents and Binormals

Activate this option if you want the Maya FBX Plug-in to create tangents and binormals data from UV and Normal information of meshes. This way you have a tangent space representation of your meshes that you can use for advanced rendering.

---

**NOTE** Your geometry must have UV information or the Maya FBX Plug-in cannot create tangents and binormals.

---

### **Why do I want to do this?**

Exporting tangent and binormal data is useful when you define the local coordinate system for each vertex in the mesh, which is referred to as “Tangent space”. This is often required for advanced rendering techniques such as normal mapping.

The Maya FBX Plug-in reads the UV data and uses it to calculate the Tangent space data for normal perturbation in per-pixel lighting.

## **Smooth Mesh**

The Smooth Mesh option lets you export source mesh with Smooth mesh attributes. To export the source mesh, disable the Smooth mesh Preview attribute in Maya, and then export.

If you activate the Smooth Mesh option, the mesh is not tessellated, and the source is exported with Smooth Mesh data. If you disable the Smooth Mesh option, the mesh is tessellated and exported without Smooth Mesh data.

---

**NOTE** If you export a Smooth Mesh Preview from Maya with the FBX Exporter Smooth Mesh option disabled, it will not affect the mesh in the scene. Instead your result is a tessellated mesh in the file, but with the original source mesh unaffected/unchanged in the Maya scene.

---

## **Selection Sets**

The Selection Sets option lets you include or exclude Selection Sets during the export process.

Because including Selection Sets can potentially increase the file size, this option is disabled by default, and the Selection Sets not are exported.

You must activate this option to export Selection Sets.

## **Convert to Null Objects**

Activate this option to convert all geometry into locators (dummy objects) during the export process.

This option is often used for animation only files. It creates a smaller file size, and is supported by FBX Importer when you import it into the original scene.

In this case, the plug-in imports only animation onto original geometries, and does not add incoming Nulls to the existing scene. If you import the same file into a new scene, the plug-in imports Nulls with the animation applied.

## Convert NURBS surface to

This option lets you convert NURBS geometry into a mesh geometry during the export process. This option is useful if you are exporting a scene to a package that may not support NURBS.

By default, this option is set to “NURBS”, meaning the plug-in applies no conversion and NURBS geometry is exported as NURBS.

---

Option	Function
NURBS	No conversion applied.
Interactive display mesh	Converts geometry based on the NURBS display settings.
Software Render Mesh	Converts geometry based on the NURBS render settings.

---

## Preserve Instances

Activate the Preserve Instances option to retain Maya instances in the FBX export. If you disable this option, instances are converted to objects.

## Referenced containers content

Activate the Referenced containers content option so that the content of referenced containers is not exported. In other words, the containers are exported but their content is ignored.

---

**NOTE** You can only use the Referenced containers content option when you export an FBX file. If you import this file back into Maya, the contents of your containers are not imported.

---

Disable this option to export the content of referenced containers. Doing this means that they are no longer references, but instead become objects in the exported FBX file. This is the default behavior.

---

**NOTE** This option has been added to the Maya FBX Plug-in for use with Maya versions 2009 and later. For more information on Maya Containers, see the Maya documentation.

---

## Animation

Activate this option to export animation found in the scene.

Expand this option to access advanced animation options and features.

## Extra options

Expand extra options to view additional options for export.

## Use scene name

Normally, the Maya FBX Plug-in saves Maya scene animation in the FBX file as Take 001. If you want the scene animation to instead be named for the Maya scene, activate this option.

This option is deactivated by default, so the take is automatically named Take 001, and so on.

## Remove single key

When you activate this setting, the exporter removes keys from objects on export if the plug-in determines that the animation has only one key. When two or more keys exist in the file, the keys are exported.

If you disable this option, the plug-in does not remove keys from the animation on export.

---

**NOTE** This option is disabled by default.

---

### **Why do I need this?**

Sometimes, even though objects in a file contain no animation, they have a single key assigned to them for use as a locator. If you do not need these single keys in your file, you can reduce the file size by activating Remove single keys to discard them.

## **Quaternion interpolation mode**

Use the Quaternion interpolation mode menu to select how to export your quaternion interpolations from the host application. Select from the following three options:

### **Resample as Euler interpolation**

This is the default conversion setting for quaternion interpolations.

This option converts and resamples quaternion interpolations into Euler curves to ensure interoperability.

### **Retain quaternion interpolation**

This option retains quaternion interpolation types during the export process.

---

**NOTE** Use this option when you export animation that has quaternion interpolations. This option is only compatible with applications supporting this interpolation type, such as Autodesk MotionBuilder. Also note that the resulting animation will not be identical since quaternion evaluations are different in Maya vs. MotionBuilder. Use the default option (Resample as Euler interpolation) to obtain visual results identical to your animation in MotionBuilder, or other applications.

---

### **Set as Euler interpolation**

This option changes the interpolation type of quaternion keys to a Euler type, without resampling the animation curves themselves.

---

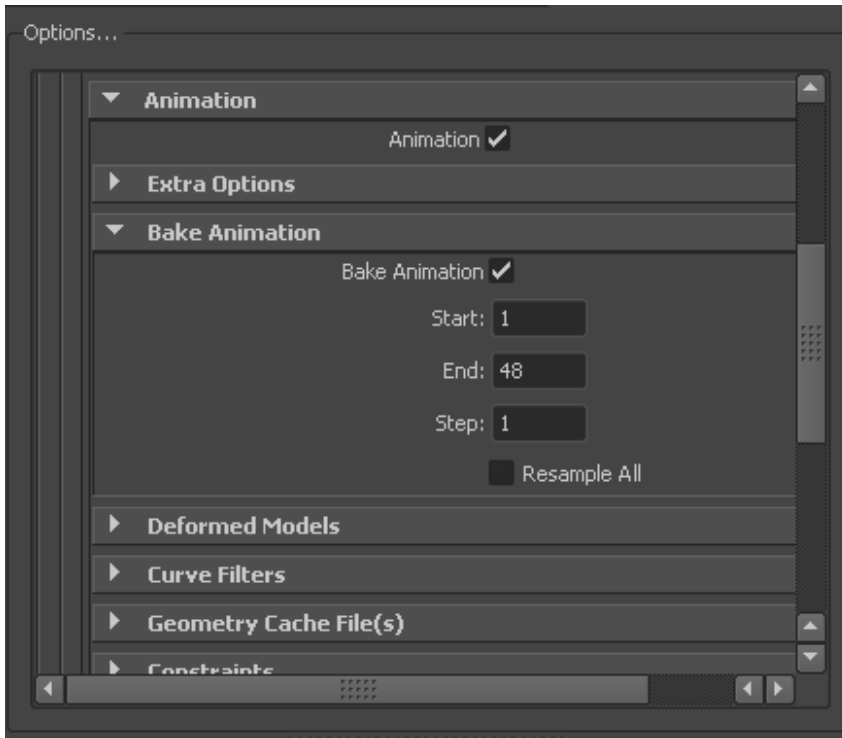
**NOTE** Using this option results in the same number of keys, set as Euler types. The visual result will be different since it is now evaluated as a Euler interpolation. Use the default (Resample as Euler interpolation) option in order to obtain visual results identical to your animation in MotionBuilder, or other applications.

---

## Bake animation

This option lets you Bake (or Plot) Animation at export time.

This bakes all unsupported constraints, including Maya-supported and FBX constraints, into animation curves. You can then import these curves into another application that does not support these Maya constraints.



By default the Maya FBX Plug-in takes the Start and End values automatically from the current Timeline settings of the host application. You can manually enter in a custom start, end, and step value to bake a specific section of time.

The Step value defines how many keys are created per frame, and has a value of 1 by default. Setting a Step value of 2 for example, only bakes and exports a key every other frame.

---

**NOTE** Bake Animation Start/End/Step values cannot be saved in presets. The FBX plug-in always derived these values from the exported scene. For more see [Preset Bake Animation settings](#) on page 125.

---

## Why do I want to do this?

If you have animation in a scene that has a small section that contains unsupported constraints or controllers, you can use this setting to customize the Maya FBX Plug-in export process to avoid resampling an entire scene worth of animation data when only a small part of it is unsupported.

## Resample All

Use the Resample All option to bake even the supported animated elements. This is unlike the [Bake animation](#) on page 50 option which selectively bakes unsupported elements only.

---

**NOTE** The Resample All option resamples animation using the host application's frame rate or Time setting.

---

The Resample All option reacts to the state of the Bake Animation option. If Bake animation is activated, Resample All is also activated.

## Deformed Models

Activate the Deformed Models option to export Skin and Blend Shape deformations.

You can choose to export Skins and Bend Shapes specifically by expanding Deformed Models to access individual options.

---

Option	Description
Blend Shapes	Activate this option to export all geometry Blend Shapes used in your scene.
Skins	Activate this option to export all skin deformation into your scene.

---

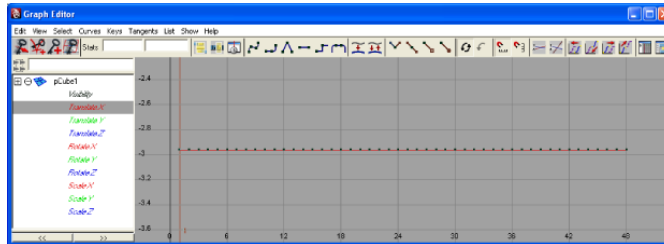
## Curve filters

The Curve filters let you apply animation filters to function curves during the export process.

## Constant Key Reducer

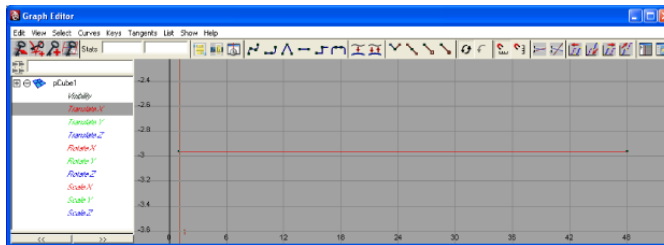
Activate the Constant Key Reducer filter to remove redundant keys. Redundant keys are keys that have the same value, which are equivalent to flat horizontal interpolations on a curve. Redundant keys are often a result of a resampled FCurve before filtering.

Before:



Resampled FCurve before filtering

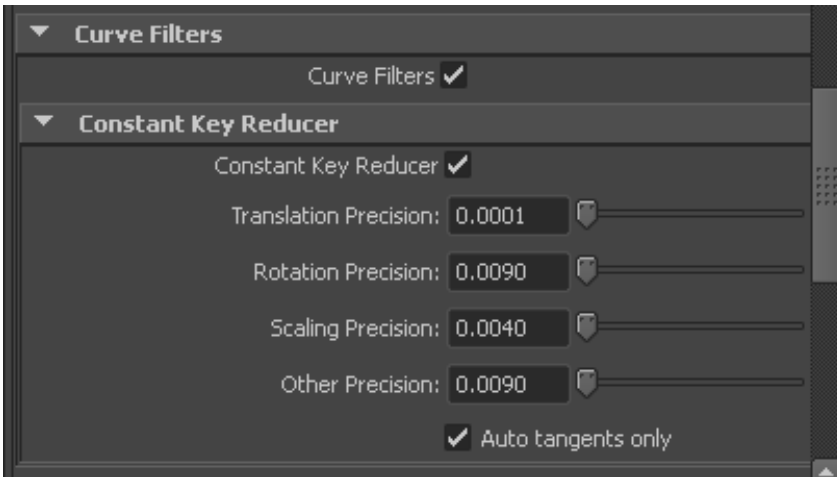
After:



Filtered FCurve with redundant keys removed (based on Threshold setting)

You can set specific thresholds for each type of transform. Translation Precision, Rotation Precision, Scaling Precision, and Other. Other includes transforms like Blend Shapes and custom attribute curves.

The default values are:



Values represent generic units. This is why you may need to modify threshold values in relation to the world scale of your scene, for example with very large or small scale scenes.

If you use this filter to eliminate noise, for example, from motion capture data, then you may need to modify values.

Setting	Description
Translation Precision	Threshold for translation curves in generic units.
Rotation Precision	Threshold for rotation curves in generic units.
Scaling Precision	Threshold for Scaling curves in generic units.
Other Precision	Threshold for other curves in generic units.
Auto tangents only	This option ensures that only “auto” key types are filtered. Otherwise, keys with interpolation values greater than a certain threshold may get deleted.

**NOTE** The Maya FBX Plug-in converts all animation keys to User, which is not an Auto auto tangent. To ensure that constant key reducing occurs, deactivate Auto Tangents Only in the Constant Key Reducer options.

## Geometry cache file(s)

Activate this option to create a geometry cache file of a chosen selection set. To use this option, create a selection set of the objects for which you want to retain the vertex animation in Maya.

---

**NOTE** You must apply the set to the Objects Transform node and not the Shape node.

---

**By default, any Geometry cache files created are in .MC format. When you activate this option, three files are generated:**

- an FBX file
- an XML file
- an MC file

The Maya FBX Plug-in stores the XML and MC files in a subfolder named after the FBX file and has the suffix FPC (`_fpc`).

For example, if you export a scene containing a cube named `pCube1` to the FBX file `myTest.fbx`, you create the following files and folders:

- `myTest.fbx`
- `myTest_fpc`
- `pCubeShape1.xml`
- `pCubeShape1.mc`

The plug-in retains any MC geometry cache files that are already recorded (within the selection set).

Use the Set menu to select an appropriate set to export the geometry cache file.

### When would I use this?

Use this option when you export nCloth deformations on an object to 3ds Max.

## Constraints

Activate this option to ensure that certain supported constraints are exported to FBX.

**FBX supported constraints include:**

- Point
- Aim
- Orient
- Parent
- IK handle (including Pole Vector)

This option lets you export your constraints effectively without the need to bake the animation first, if you are transferring to a package that which supports these constraints, like MotionBuilder.

---

**NOTE** If you export your scene with the intention of importing it into a package that does not support these constraints (such as 3ds Max), bake the animation first. See [Bake animation](#) on page 50 for more information.

---

## FBIK definition

Activate this option to include your FBIK definitions in the file on export. This can be useful if you are transferring to MotionBuilder, which also supports characters.

## Cameras

Activate this option to export all cameras contained in the scene.

The Maya FBX Plug-in exports camera settings, but not render settings associated to the camera with the file. This can change rendering results depending on the source application used in comparison. For more information on why this occurs, see [Why are my cameras inconsistent?](#) on page 122

---

**NOTE** When you export, Maya cameras are converted into FBX camera types for interoperability.

---

## Lights

Activate this option to export all lights contained in the file. The Maya FBX Plug-in exports and converts light types to ensure FBX interoperability.

The Maya FBX Plug-in supports Standard Point, Spot, and Directional light types exported to FBX for Autodesk 3ds Max, Autodesk MotionBuilder, and other Autodesk applications.

## Embed media

Activate this option to include (or embed) all media associated with your scene in the FBX file itself. For example, texture images.

Activate the Embed Media option to make the Maya FBX Plug-in include (embed) associated media (textures, for example) within the FBX file, which it then extracts to an .FBM folder at import. The Maya FBX Plug-in copies the embedded media to a <fileName>.fbm folder in the same location as the FBX file and is named after the FBX file. Since this media is contained within the FBX file itself, this has an impact on file size. Therefore, use this option only when you transport an FBX file to a location where the original media source is no longer accessible by the receiver.

---

**NOTE** When you import an FBX file with embedded media, the embedded files extract to a folder in the same location as the FBX file. If you do not have write permission to create that new folder, the media files are imported to the user's temp folder, such as C:\Documents and Settings\\Local Settings\Temp.

---

If you disable the Embed Media option, the Maya FBX Plug-in stores the relative and absolute paths of the associated media files at export time. This causes problems if, for some reason, the path is no longer accessible. Make sure that the associated media is accessible to ensure the proper import of these media files.

---

**NOTE** If you export your file in ASCII format in FBX versions 2010 and earlier, no textures are embedded. See [Type](#) on page 62.

---

### Why do I want to do this?

Embed your media to ensure that all your textures are carried over and loaded when you open the FBX file on another computer. You do not need to do this

if you are working on a local machine or over a network database that ensures that the paths to media are not changing.

## Connections

Expand this section for options about exporting connections.

## Input Connections

This option causes the Maya FBX Plug-in to export selected objects without automatically exporting all related input connections. In Maya, when you do an export selection to FBX, the Input Connections option appears in the Maya FBX Exporter.

If this option is disabled, no input connections associated with the selected object are exported during the export selection operation. If the option is active, however, all associated input connections to the selected object are exported.

This option is active by default, so the Maya FBX Plug-in includes any objects that influence the selected ones.

## Display Layers

---

**NOTE** The export of display layers occurs automatically and does not appear as an option in the Maya FBX Plug-in user interface.

---

The Maya FBX Plug-in automatically exports Display Layers found in your Maya scene to FBX. This lets you transfer display layers from Autodesk Maya to 3ds Max, and so on.

**The following Maya Display layer properties are supported by the Maya FBX Plug-in:**

- Layer Membership List
- Display Layer name
- Level of Detail
- Display types
- Visibility

- Color

## Advanced options



The Advanced Options section primarily contains additional options that let you modify the default plug-in behavior. In most cases, you do not need to modify these options to have a successful export. The section also holds additional settings specific to the Collada file type.

### Units

The Units option lets you view the conversion factor (scaling value) the plug-in uses as well as modify the conversion units.

---

**NOTE** This does not change the System unit settings in Maya.

---

### Automatic option

Activate the Automatic option if you want the Maya FBX Plug-in to automatically identify and set the units of the destination file to match units of the host application

When you activate Automatic, the Scene units converted to option is disabled, although it shows the resolved unit & Scale Factor. If you disable the Automatic option, the Scene units converted to option becomes available.

When Automatic is active, the File Units will match the system units, and the plug-in applies no conversion. The displayed Scale Factor is 1.0 in this case.

## Scale Factor

Displays the conversion value or Scale Factor that the plug-in applies to the entire scene during export.

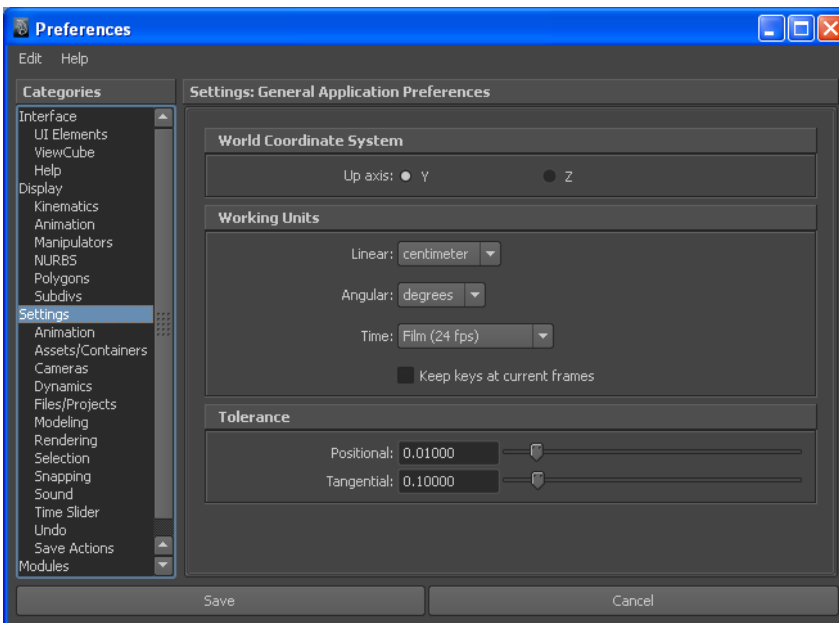
By default, the Maya FBX Plug-in uses the system units set in the host application to determine what units to use to export the FBX file. This means that the default export Scale Factor is always 1.0, and the plug-in applies no unit scale conversion during the export process.

You can modify what units the Maya FBX Plug-in uses to export your scene if you change the File units converted to option. If you change the File units converted to option, you modify the Scale Factor value and units applied to the exported data.

## Scene units converted to

Use this menu to specify the units to which you want to convert your exported scene. Modifying this setting directly affects the Scale Factor value applied to the exported data.

The plug-in determines the default units by looking at the Maya System Units option in the Window > Settings/Preferences > Preferences > Settings category.



In the FBX UI, the displayed Scale Factor uses the FBX Unit setting for its calculation. The plug-in determines the FBX Unit setting from the host application system units.

On export, the plug-in applies no default scaling since the export and system units match. This results in a Scale factor of 1.0.

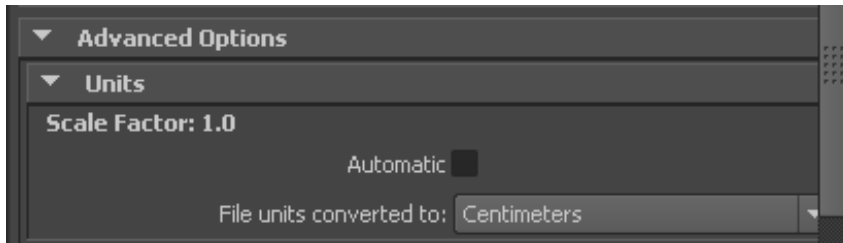
---

**NOTE** Verify the system units your Maya scene uses so that you can control whether the plug-in needs to scale your scene. This way, it exports with the units you want. Maya lets you change the System Units without affecting the scale of your scene. Changing the system unit in Maya avoids scaling on export when not required.

---

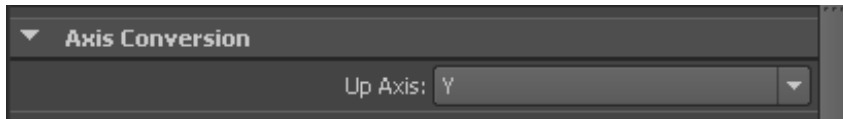
### Example

If you export a file that is in the same Unit setting as the System Units of your Maya scene, there is a match of units and the displayed Scale Factor is 1.0. No scale conversion is applied.



### Axis conversion

The Maya FBX Exporter has two options for Axis Conversion in the UI. Y-up, or Z-up.



By default, the FBX Exporter always exports the Up Axis of the Host application. For Maya, this means that all scenes are exported with a Y-up world axis.

You can export your scene to a Z-up axis if the destination application does not support the Y-up world axis and cannot convert the Y-up world axis of your scene.

---

**NOTE** The FBX Exporter applies Axis Conversions only to root elements of the outgoing scene. If you have animation on a root object that must be converted on export, these animation curves are resampled to apply the proper axis conversion. To avoid resampling of these animation curves, make sure to add a Root Node (dummy object) as a parent of the animated object in your scene, before you export to FBX.

---

## UI

These options let you set display options of the UI. This lets you show or hide the Warning Manager and FBX UI windows.

You can customize these display options, save them as a new Preset, and share this preset file. See the [Creating a custom preset](#) on page 27 section for more information.

## Show/Hide Warning Manager

This option lets you disable the Warnings and Errors dialog box that appears during the export process. The Warning Manager is active by default.

### What is the difference between an Error and a Warning?

The Maya FBX Plug-in uses errors and warnings to alert you of conversions and potential problems during the export process.

When something unexpected occurs during the conversion, the plug-in reports an error. This error occurs when the plug-in encounters an unknown behavior and the conversion is going to produce an unexpected result.

When the plug-in must apply a conversion to the source data for it to be in a format that the destination application can read, the Maya FBX Plug-in reports a warning. This warning is not the indication of a problem, but instead exists to provide a report of conversions that the plug-in has applied to the incoming data.

## Generate log data

Deactivate the Generate log data option if you do not want warning and error information written to the log. However, if you do deactivate this option, the FBX Exporter/Importer does not write log data (such as errors and warnings.)

to the generated log file. However, the file name and time stamp are still recorded in the log.

The Maya FBX Plug-in stores log files with the FBX presets, in C:\My Documents\Maya\FBX\Logs.

### **Why do I want to do this?**

Occasionally, some batch imports/exports create very large warning/error files, and in this case you might want to disable this option.

Normally, it is recommended to leave the Generate log data option active, which is the default, as this helps you identify problems with file conversions.

Log files are important for tracking errors and warnings on export. It is not recommended to deactivate this option when you export a series of files, for example, in an automation or batch export because you will not receive any feedback about any issues that concern files during export. This lack of feedback can make it difficult to identify problem files which, in turn, makes diagnosing problems difficult.

---

**TIP** Because log data is appended to the same log file, after a while the size of this file become large. It is a good practice to delete the log file after a few exports, or before processing batch export or import.

---

## **FBX file format**

This section lets you determine what form you want your FBX file to take.

### **Type**

Save your FBX file as one of these two types, Binary or ASCII. While binary is the normal format for FBX files, ASCII files give you a plain text version of the file format, which lets you search the file for information retrieval.

---

<b>Mode</b>	<b>Function</b>
Binary	Activate this option to save the FBX file in the standard format.

---

Mode	Function
ASCII	<p>Activate this option to save the FBX file in ASCII format.</p> <p><b>NOTE</b> If you export your file to ASCII format in FBX versions 2010 and earlier, you cannot embed media.</p>

## FBX version

Expand the FBX Version menu to select an FBX version.

The following table lists the different versions available for you to select from the FBX exporter.

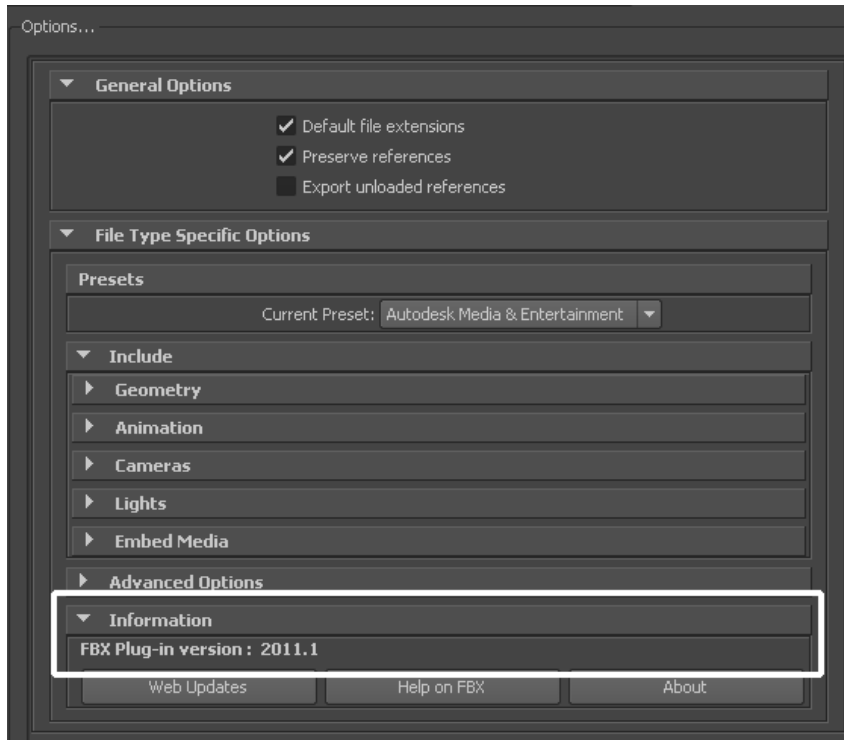
Version	Description
FBX 2011	Select this FBX version to export a file that is compatible with Autodesk 2011 applications and 2011 FBX plug-ins. This is the default FBX version.
FBX 2010	Select this FBX version to export a file that is compatible with Autodesk 2010 applications, 2010 FBX plug-ins and MotionBuilder 2009..
FBX 2009	Select this FBX version to export a file that is compatible with Autodesk 2009 applications and 2009 FBX plug-ins.
FBX 2006	Select this FBX version to export a file that is compatible with Autodesk 2006 FBX plug-ins and MotionBuilder 7.5, 7.0, and 6.0. .

### When do I use this?

You do not need to change this option if you are using the latest FBX Plug-ins in the source and destination applications. You only need to use this option if you plan to import your file using an older plug-in version.

For example, if you want to export from Maya 2011 and import to Maya 2009 using the latest FBX 2011 versions of the plug-ins in both applications, you do not need to change the export FBX version. The file is compatible when you use the FBX 2011 versions of the plug-in.

## Information



The Information rollout contains data about the Maya FBX Plug-in as well as buttons you can use to check for more recent versions of the software and accessing the Maya FBX Plug-in Help.

### Web Updates

Click the Web Updates button to make sure that you are using the latest version of the Maya FBX Plug-in. This function searches the Autodesk web site to check if there is a newer version of the plug-in that you are currently using. See Web updates

## Help

Click the Help button to launch the Maya FBX Plug-in user documentation.

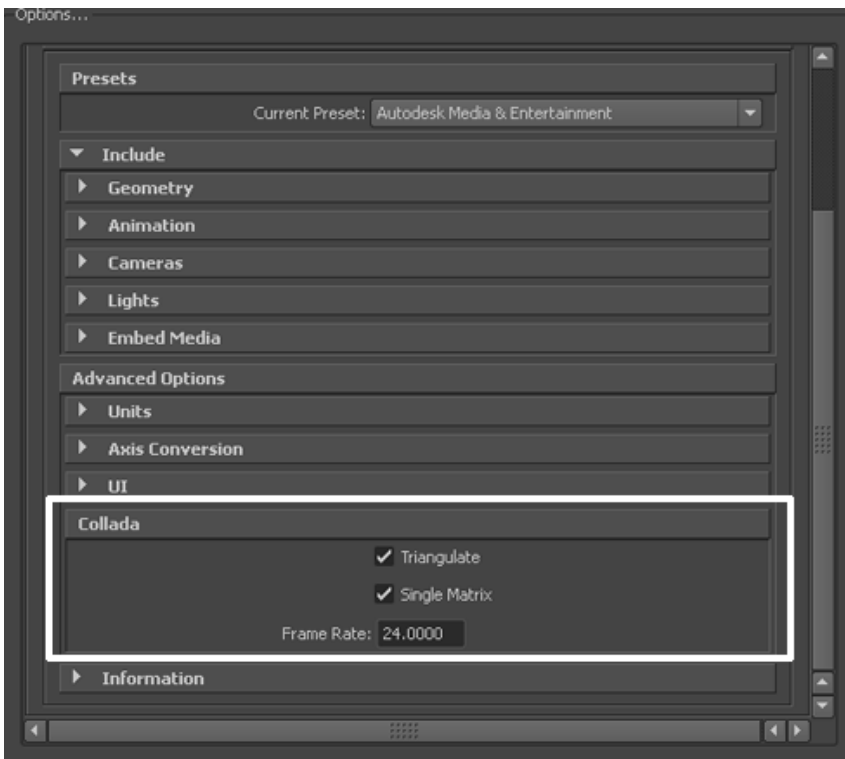
## Collada

The Collada options only appear in the UI when you select the DAE\_FBX file type from the file browser when you export.

---

**NOTE** When you export in Collada format, textures are not embedded, even when the Embed Textures option is activated. See [Embed media](#) on page 56.

---



### Triangulate

This option automatically tessellates the exported polygon geometry.

### **Single matrix**

This option ensures that there is only a single animation matrix for each node/object by baking all animation matrices into one.

### **Frame Rate**

Use this field to set the frame rate of the scene on export.

---

**NOTE** The Maya FBX Plug-in does not support Lines or Linestrip nodes.

---

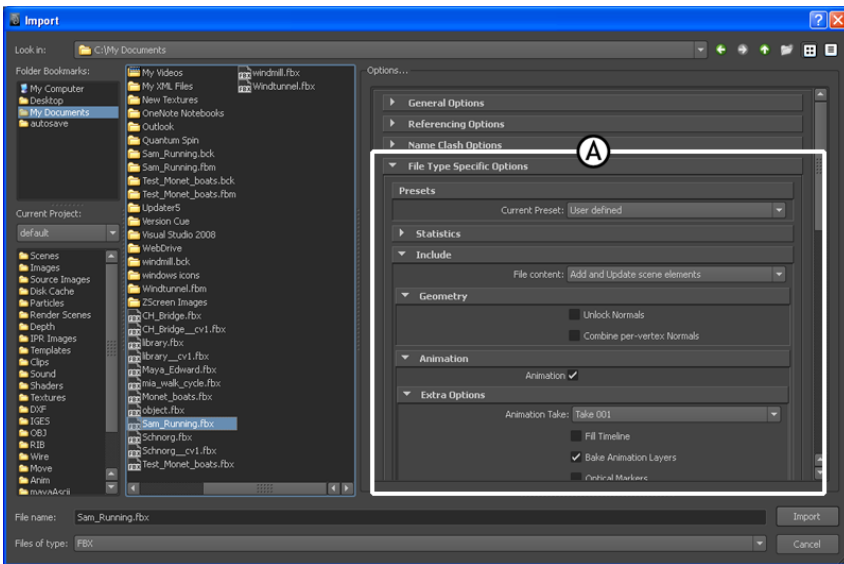
**NOTE** The Smoothing Groups option in the Collada importer does not import Smoothing Groups from the FBX file. Instead, when you activate this option, the Importer creates the Smoothing Groups during the import process. The Collada importer must create Smoothing Groups on Import because the FBX Collada exporter does not export Smoothing Groups data from 3ds Max. If you disable the Smoothing Groups option, no Smoothing Groups are generated by the Importer.

---

# Import

# 5

This chapter contains information about options you can use in the Maya FBX Plug-in Importer functions that appear to the right of the Maya Import window.



Maya Import dialog box A. FBX Import options

## Importing FBX files into Maya

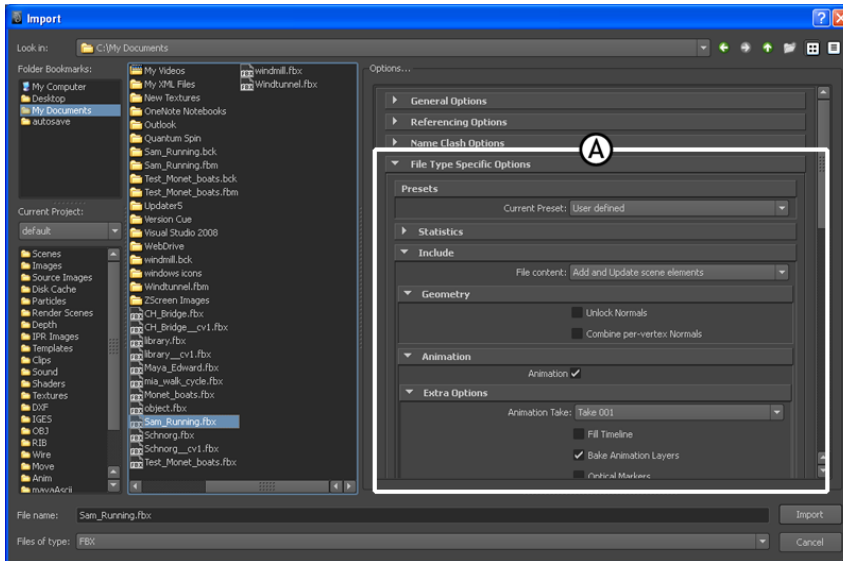
This section describes how to import files using the Maya FBX Plug-in:

**To import an FBX file:**

- 1 Launch Maya.

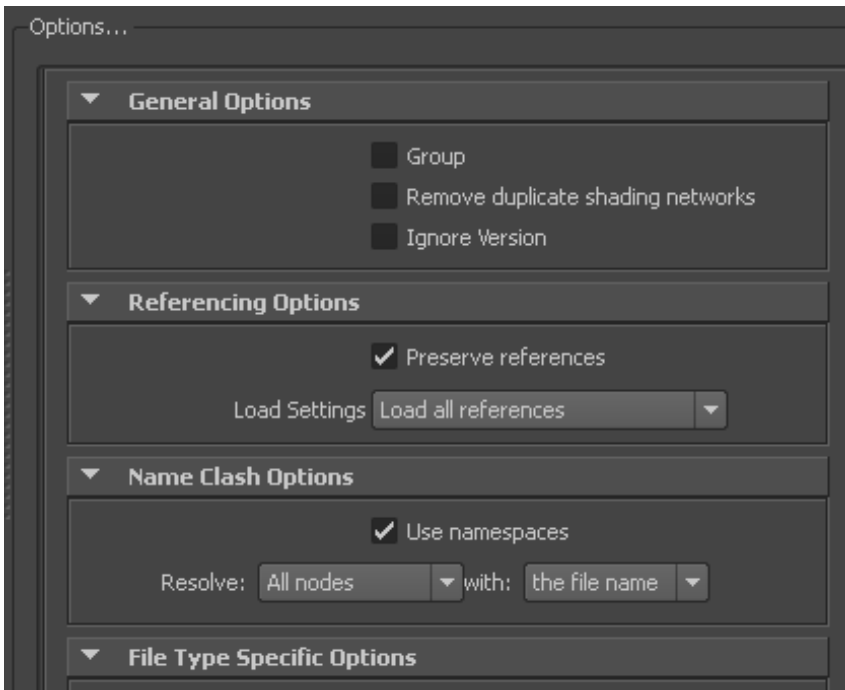
- 2 Select File > Import. The File Import dialog box appears. Locate the FBX file you want to import.
- 3 Select FBX from the File of Type menu.

**NOTE** If you do not see the FBX file extension in the File of Type menu, activate fbxmaya.mll in Maya's Plug-in Manager.



Maya Import dialog box A. FBX options

- 4 The FBX Import options appear at the right of the Maya Import dialog box.



### Import options

- 5 Set the import options you want to use or select a preset from the Presets menu. The Autodesk Media and Entertainment preset contains the best balance of options for a general animation workflow. Use the Autodesk MotionBuilder preset if you are using a Maya to MotionBuilder back to Maya workflow.  
See [Presets](#) on page 70 for more information about the Autodesk presets and for information about import options and which are appropriate for you, review the [Import](#) on page 67 section.
- 6 Click Import in the Maya Import dialog box.
- 7 If conversions or errors occur during the import process, the Warning Manager reports them at the end of the import process. See [Show/Hide Warning Manager](#) on page 87 for information about the Warning Manager.

---

**NOTE** There is a difference between “Errors” vs. “Warnings”. The plug-in reports an error when something unexpected occurs. When the plug-in reports a warning, it indicates that the consequences of that error are unknown. Warnings inform users when the plug-in applies conversions to the source data to convert the data into a format that the destination application can read.

---

## File type specific options

These settings concern what gets included with your file on import.

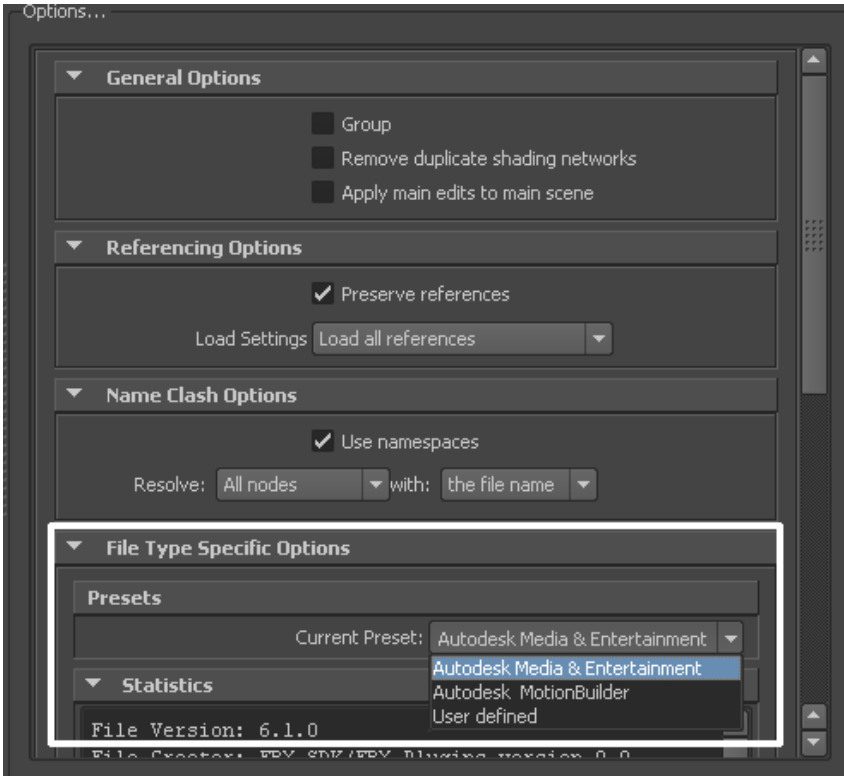
## Presets

The Maya FBX Plug-in includes the following import workflow presets:

- Autodesk Media and Entertainment
- Autodesk MotionBuilder

### Selecting a preset

Choose your preset by selecting it from the Current Preset menu in the File Type Specific Options rollout of the Maya FBX Plug-in.



**Current Preset menu**

Preset	Description
Autodesk Media and Entertainment	The Autodesk Media and Entertainment preset contains the most options since it contains the optimal settings for most animation workflows. All available options are visible in the UI so you can access and customize them.
Autodesk MotionBuilder	Use the Autodesk MotionBuilder preset if you are using a Maya to MotionBuilder back to Maya workflow. This preset uses the Constraints and FBK Definition options set for optimal Character animation using Maya and MotionBuilder.

Preset	Description
User Defined	User Defined preset label displays whenever you modify a setting that is different from the preset default.

### Editing presets

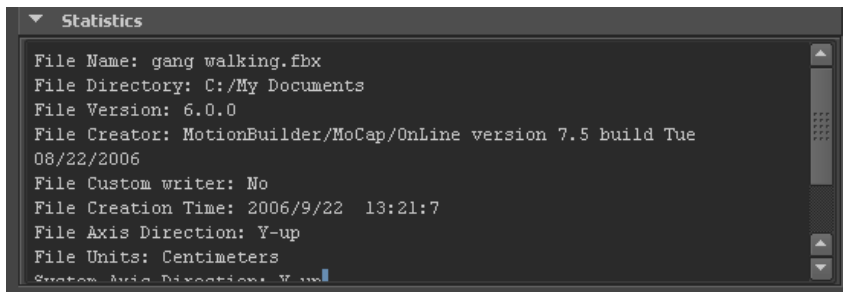
If you change a preset, the preset field displays User defined, to show that the preset differs from its default state. You can find the user-defined states in a temporary file so that the settings are the default the next time you use the plug-in.

You can also save your settings as a custom preset. See [Creating a custom preset](#) on page 27.

## Statistics

The Statistics window lets you view relevant meta information about the incoming (FBX) file and system (application) settings. Information varies depending on what is in the file.

**NOTE** Sometimes statistics information is hidden below the window edge; use the scroll bar to view it.



### File name

Displays the name of the file.

### File directory

Displays the location of the file directory.

**File version**

Displays the FBX file format version of the file.

**File creator**

Displays the name and version of the application that created the file.

**File creation time**

Displays the date and time that the file was created.

**File axis direction**

Displays the up-axis of the file.

**File units**

Displays the unit of measurement in the file.

**System axis direction**

Displays what the up-axis is in the current application.

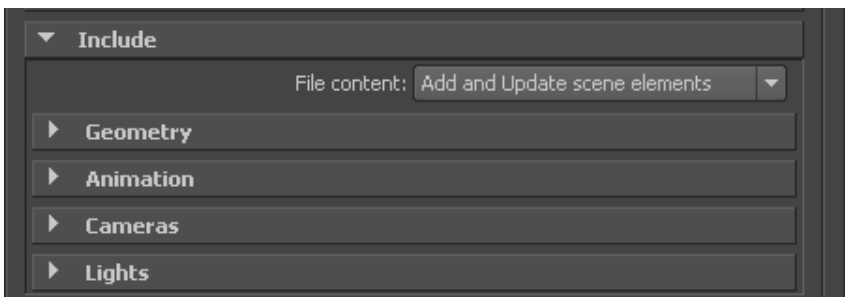
**System units**

Displays the unit of measurement used in the current application.

**File content**

Displays the contents of the file.

## Include



The Include rollout lets you decide what data and conversions to apply to your scene at import from a host application.

## File Content

Use the File content menu to select how to import the content of your file into the host application.

Select from the following three options:

Option	Definition
Add and update scene elements	<p>This option adds the content of the FBX file to your scene and updates existing elements. Use this option to add non-existent elements to the scene, and replace the animation of elements already present in the host application. Select this setting to combine the effects of the Add to scene and Update scene elements options.</p> <hr/> <p><b>NOTE</b> Add and update scene elements is the default setting for the Autodesk Media &amp; Entertainment preset.</p>
Update Scene Elements	<p>This option updates the existing elements in your scene. Use this option to update (exclusive merge) elements that already exist in the host application. Update scene elements does not create new elements in the host application.</p>
Add to Scene	<p>This option adds all content of the FBX file to the host application. If elements exist in the host application, the plug-in duplicates them.</p>

## Geometry

Expand the Geometry rollout to access options related to importing geometry into your scene.

## Unlock Normals

Activate this option to unlock geometry normals and force Maya to re-compute the edge continuity.

---

**NOTE** Normals are automatically unlocked for all deformed geometry imported into Maya.

---

When you disable the Unlock Normals option, Maya imports the locked geometry normals as they were represented by the application that generated the FBX file.

---

**NOTE** Locked normals can create shading issues for geometry if a deformer is applied after import. Unlocking geometry normals resolves this.

---

### Maya fully smooth or faceted geometry

If you activate the Unlock Normals option, the object imports with unlocked normals.

If you then unlock the normals faceted edges may appear. This occurs when importing from 3ds Max. If this happens, select the object in Maya and apply the Maya soften edge function to smooth the object.

If you disable Unlock Normals, the object imports with the correct look and the normals will be unlocked.

### Maya combination of soft and hard edges

With the Unlock Normals option activated, the object imports correctly with its normals locked. If you intend to deform this geometry you must to unlock the normals, but if you do this the object becomes hard edged in Maya.

Re-import the FBX file with the Unlock Normals option activated to resolve this issue.

If you disable the Unlock Normals options, the object imports correctly with unlocked normals.

### Maya deformations

When you activate Unlock Normals, Deformed geometry always imports unlocked. The unlock function does not apply in this case.

If you do not have the Unlock Normals option activated, deformed geometry imports unlocked. The unlock function does not apply in this case.

### **Maya smooth mesh preview**

If you activate Unlock Normals, objects imported with smooth meshes import with unlocked normals

If you disable the Unlock Normals option, the normals of objects with smooth meshes import locked.

## **Combine per-vertex Normals**

Activate this option to combine geometry vertex Normals.

Common uses of this option include reverting the Split per-vertex Normals option of the FBX Export window. For more information regarding this workflow see [Split per-vertex Normals](#) on page 44.

When you use the Combine per-vertex Normals option in the FBX Importer, the Maya FBX Plug-in performs the inverse operation of the Split per-vertex Normals option in the FBX Export window. This can result in incorrect UV texture maps (see the note below).

If you are not using a merge-back workflow (merging FBX into an existing scene) this option might result in incorrect UV mapping when you re-import the FBX file into Maya. Import your FBX file into your original Maya scene to avoid geometry UV issues with split geometry.

---

**NOTE** Using this option permanently alters any UV maps applied to geometry. The plug-in properly re-assigns the UVs to the newly split geometry. There is a limitation in regards to UVs, when importing this geometry into an empty Maya scene, using the Combine per-vertex Normals option in the FBX Importer, as it may result in incorrect UV assignments.

---

## **Animation**

Activate this option to import animation found in the scene.

Expand this option to access advanced animation options and features.

## **Extra options**

Expand this section to view additional import options.

## Animation Take

Displays the current animation take in the FBX file.

If no animation take exists in the file, the field shows a No animation message.

If several animation takes exist in the file, the currently selected take is displayed in the field.

You can change the selected take of animation by selecting another take from the menu. The Maya FBX Plug-in lists all available takes of animation contained in the file.

---

**NOTE** You can only select and import a single take of animation at a time.

---

## Fill timeline

Activate this option when you want to update the application timeline by the animation range in the incoming FBX file. “Animation range” refers to the first and last keys of animation contained in the file.

## Bake animation layers

When the Bake Animation Layers option is active, the plug-in collapses all layers into the base layer. If you disable the Bake Animation Layers option, all the layers in the FBX file will be imported.

## Optical markers

Activate this option to convert optical markers contained in the file into dummy objects on import.

If you disable this option, the import process ignores this data.

Optical markers normally come from motion capture data, as a cloud of animated points or markers. The Maya FBX Plug-in does not import the animation as the data type is incompatible. However, the Maya FBX Plug-in converts optical data into a cloud of static null objects in Maya.

---

**TIP** If your optical data originates from MotionBuilder, you can set the state of all optical markers to Done in MotionBuilder which lets you import the animation data as curves in Maya.

---

### **Why do I want to do this?**

This option is useful if you need to import optical data that is stored within an FBX file. For example, if you wanted to send an FBX file containing optical data that someone needs to use in Maya but they do not use MotionBuilder, you can activate this option to use the FBX file format to store optical data.

## **Quaternion interpolation mode**

This is the default conversion setting for quaternion interpolations.

This option converts and resamples quaternion interpolations into Euler curves to ensure interoperability.

### **Resample as Euler interpolation**

This is the default conversion setting for quaternion interpolations.

This option converts and resamples quaternion interpolations into Euler curves to ensure interoperability.

### **Retain quaternion interpolation**

This option retains quaternion interpolation types during the import process.

---

**TIP** Use this when you import animation that has quaternion interpolations. This is only compatible with applications supporting this interpolation type, such as Autodesk MotionBuilder. Also, the resulting animation is not identical since quaternion evaluations are different in Maya and MotionBuilder. Use the default (Resample as Euler interpolation) option in order to obtain visual results identical to your animation in MotionBuilder, or other applications.

---

### **Set as Euler interpolation**

This option lets you change the interpolation type of quaternion keys to a Euler type, without resampling the animation curves themselves.

---

**TIP** Using this option results in the same number of keys, set as Euler types. The visual result will be different since it will now be evaluated as a Euler interpolation. Use the default (Resample as Euler interpolation) option to obtain visual results identical to your animation in MotionBuilder, or other applications.

---

## Protect driven keys

Activate this option to prevent any incoming animation from overwriting channels with driven keys. Maya has special driven keys that link one attribute value to another object attribute. These keys are exclusive to Maya and are not supported by FBX. When this option is active, the Maya FBX Plug-in prevents the disconnection or overwrite of attributes that use driven keys.

If the option is active, the driven keys are protected and no incoming animation is applied to the driven channels.

If the option is not active, the driven keys are discarded and the incoming animation is applied to the driven channels.

## Deforming elements to joints

Activate this option to convert deforming elements into Maya joints. This option was originally provided because Maya did not support locator elements (that is, transform nodes that are not joints,) within a joint chain.

If this option is not active, all elements other than joints being used to deform are converted to locators. See [Cluster import](#) on page 126 for information about cluster problems.

## Update pivots from Nulls

Activate this option only when you import older (pre-MotionBuilder 5.5) FBX files that contain an animated joint hierarchy, for example, an animated character.

This option lets you assign the rotation transformation of the null (or joints) elements in the hierarchy that are used as pre- and post-rotation to the joint orient and the rotate axis of the original node.

The pre-rotation and post-rotation nodes are then deleted. Older files created with the Export Pre/Post Rotation as Nulls option are merged back to the original Maya setup.

## Geometry cache file(s)

Activate this option to import FBX-exported geometry cache data during the FBX import process.

**The Maya FBX Plug-in generates three files when you export Geometry cache files using FBX:**

- an FBX file
- an XML file
- an MC file

The plug-in stores XML and MC files in a subfolder named after the FBX file and has the suffix FPC (`_fpc`).

For example, if you export a scene containing a cube named `pCube1` to the FBX file `myTest.fbx`, you create the following files:

- `myTest.fbx`
- `myTest_fpc`
- `pCubeShape1.xml`
- `pCubeShape1.mc`

## Deformed Models

Activate the Deformed Models option to import Skin and Blend Shape deformations.

You can choose to import Skins and Blend Shapes specifically by expanding Deformed Models to access individual options.

You also have the option to Pre-normalize weights. Pre-normalizing weights normalizes the weight assignment of skin deformations so that smooth skin weights add up to one.

Option	Description
Skins	Activate this option to import all skin deformation into your scene.
Blend Shapes	Activate this option to import all geometry Blend Shapes into your scene.
Pre-Normalize Weights	Activate this option to normalize weight assignment.

### **What is pre-Normalizing?**

During the import process, the Maya FBX Plug-in can pre-Normalize weights to ensure that every vertex on a skinned mesh has a weight no less than a total of 1.0. You can have many joints that influence a single vertex, however, the percentage of each deforming joint always equals a sum total of 1.0.

### **Why do I want to do this?**

Use this function if you import older FBX files that result in abnormal mesh deformations.

## **Constraints**

Activate this option to ensure that certain supported constraints contained in the FBX file are imported into Maya.

If this option is not active, no supported constraints are imported.

### **FBX supported constraints include:**

- Point
- Aim
- Orient
- Parent
- IK handle (including Pole Vector)

## **FBIK definition**

Activate this option to import your FBIK character definition into Maya.

If this option is not active, the rig is imported without characterization.

Activating this option can be useful if you import FBX files from Maya or MotionBuilder.

## **Cameras**

Activate this option to import all cameras contained in the file.

The plug-in imports camera settings, but not render settings. This can change rendering results depending on the source application used in comparison. See [Why are my cameras inconsistent?](#) on page 122 for more about render settings limitations.

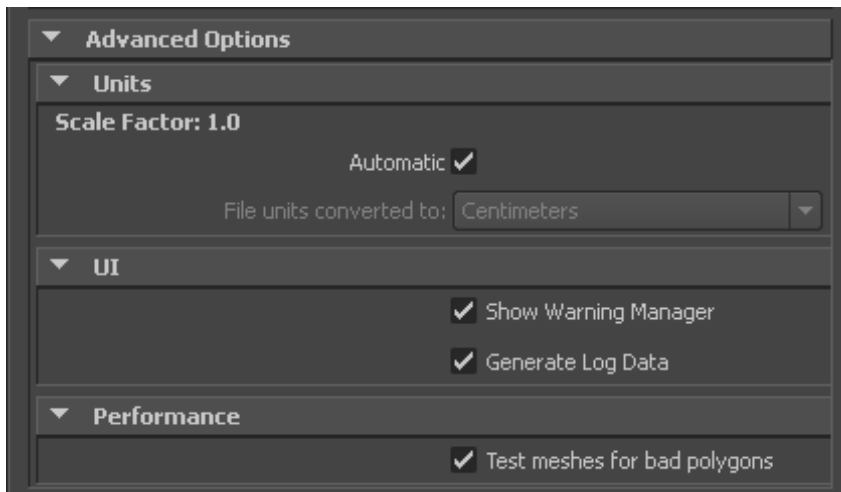
The plug-in saves cameras as FBX types in the FBX file for interoperability. This means they must convert into Maya camera types on import.

## Lights

Activate this option to import all lights contained in the file. The Maya FBX Plug-in exports and converts light types to ensure FBX interoperability.

FBX supports Standard Point, Spot, and Directional light types from Autodesk 3ds Max, Autodesk MotionBuilder, and other Autodesk applications.

## Advanced options



Use the Advanced Options to customize your general settings and import process.

## Units

The Units option lets you view the conversion factor (scaling value) the plug-in uses as well as modify the conversion units.

This option automatically identifies, sets, and converts units of the incoming file to match units of the host application.

If this option is active, but the File Units match the system units, there is no need for scale conversion and the plug-in applies no conversion. The displayed Scale Factor is 1.0 in this case.

---

**NOTE** This conversion affects only incoming data. This conversion does not change the settings in Maya.

---

## Automatic

Activate the Automatic option if you want the Maya FBX Plug-in to automatically identify, set, and convert units of the incoming file to match units of the host application.

When you activate Automatic, the Scene units converted to option is disabled, although it shows the resolved unit and scale factor. If you disable the Automatic option, the Scene units converted to option becomes available.

When Automatic is active but the file units match the system units, there is no need for scale conversion and the plug-in applies no conversion. The displayed Scale Factor is 1.0 in this case.

---

**NOTE** This conversion affects only incoming data. This does not change the settings in Maya.

---

## Scale Factor

Displays the conversion value or Scale Factor that the plug-in applies to the entire incoming scene.

The Maya FBX Plug-in compares the units used in the host application with the units used in the file imported to determine the Scale Factor value. The plug-in then proposes a unit conversion that matches the system units in the host application. The displayed Scale Factor is the result of this calculation.

For example, if you import a scene from software that used centimeters as the working units to software that uses feet as units, the Scale Factor will be 2.54.

This option is always active, but if your File Units match the system units, the plug-in does not apply a scale conversion. No conversion is applied. The displayed Scale Factor is 1.0 in this case.

---

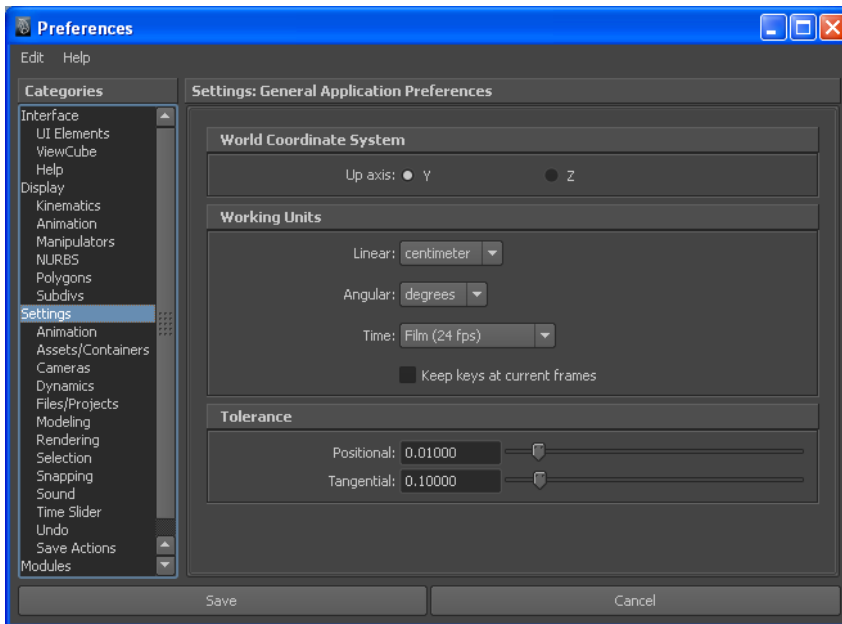
**NOTE** If you change the File Units Converted to: option, you can modify the Scale Factor value applied to incoming data.

---

## File Units converted to

Use this menu to specify the units to which you want to convert the file. Modifying this setting directly affects the Scale Factor value applied to the incoming data.

The Maya FBX Plug-in looks at the Settings/Working Units in the Preferences window of Maya.



The displayed Scale Factor uses this unit setting for its calculation.

This automatic behavior ensures that the plug-in respects units, and proper scaling is applied by default.

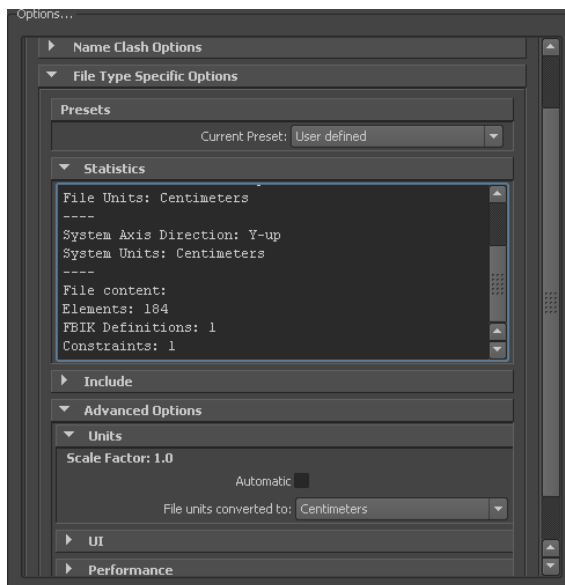
---

**NOTE** Verify the System Units your Maya scene uses so that you can control whether the Maya FBX Plug-in needs to scale your scene.

---

## Example

If you import a file that is in the same unit setting as the Working Units of your Maya scene, there is a match of units and the plug-in displays “1.0” as the Scale Factor. No scale conversion is applied.



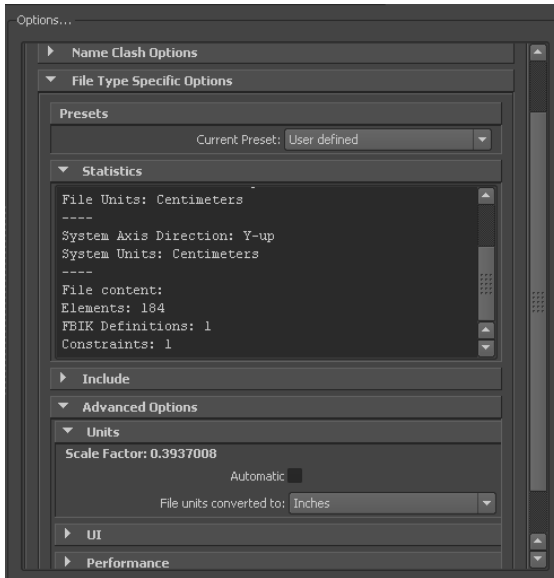
If the units do not match and your Maya scene is empty and/or changing the System Units is not a concern, change the Maya System Units to match the File Units used in the incoming file before you start to import. This results in a match of units, Scale Factor of “1.0”, and no scale conversion is applied.

For example, if you import a file that is in centimeters into a Maya scene set to inches, it results in a Scale Factor of 0.3937008. In this case, the incoming data is scaled down to match the scene's unit system.

---

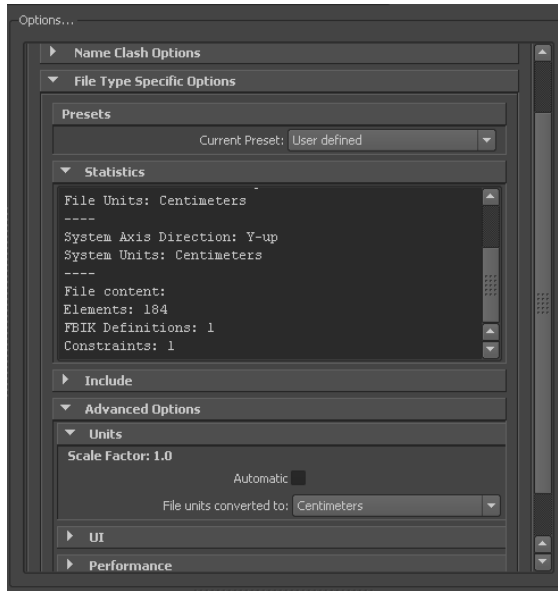
**NOTE** If the Scale Factor is 1.0, no scaling is applied. If the Scale Factor is greater than 1.0, the incoming data is scaled up. If the factor is smaller than 1.0, the incoming data is scaled down.

---



If, with the previous example, you do not want to change the System Units of your Maya scene and do not want the plug-in to scale your incoming data, you have another option:

Change the File Units Converted To option to match the File Units. This results in a Scale Factor of “1.0”, and no scaling is applied, even though units do not match between the file and the Maya System Units.



## UI

These options let you set display options of the UI. This lets you show or hide the Warning Manager.

You can customize these display options, save them as a new preset, and share this preset file. See the [Editing presets](#) on page 72 section for more information.

## Show/Hide Warning Manager

This option lets you disable the Warnings and Errors dialog box that appears during the import process. The Show Warning Manager option is active by default.

### What is the difference between an Error and a Warning?

The Maya FBX Plug-in uses errors and warnings to alert you of conversions and potential problems during the import process.

When something unexpected occurs during the conversion, the plug-in reports an error. This error occurs because the Maya FBX Plug-in encounters an

unknown behavior and the conversion is going to produce an unexpected result.

When the Maya FBX Plug-in must apply a conversion to the source data for it to be in a format that the destination application can read, a warning is reported. This warning is not the indication of a problem, but instead exists to provide a report of conversions that have been applied to the incoming data.

## **Generate log data**

Deactivate the Generate log data option if you do not want warning and error information written to the log. However, if you do deactivate this option, the file name and time stamp are still recorded in the log.

### **Why do I want to do this?**

Normally, it is recommended to leave the Generate log data option active, which is the default, as this helps you identify problems with file conversions.

Occasionally, some batch import/export create very large warning/error files, and in this case you might want to disable this option.

## **Performance**

The Performance options let you detect performance issues with your file.

### **Test Meshes for Bad Polygons**

Activate this option when you want to test your mesh objects for polygons that may have issues.

## **Axis conversion**

The FBX Importer does not have an Axis Conversion option in the UI. Only the FBX Export window has this option exposed in the UI.

This is because the Maya FBX Plug-in calculates and applies the Axis Conversion automatically upon import.

### **What does the automatic conversion do?**

The FBX Importer looks at the up-axis used in the host application. It then compares this to the up-axis set in the incoming file. If both up-axes match, the FBX Import window applies no conversion. If they do not match, the importer applies a conversion to the imported data to match the host application's up-axis automatically.

---

**NOTE** The importer applies Axis Conversions only to root elements of the incoming scene. If you have animation on a root object that must be converted on import, these animation curves are resampled to apply the proper axis conversion.

---

## **Collada**

If you select the DAE\_FBX file type from the file browser when you import, the Maya FBX Plug-in automatically uses the optimal DAE import settings.

### **Collada and Smoothing Groups**

The Smoothing Groups option in the FBX Collada importer does not import Smoothing Groups from the FBX file. Instead, when you activate this option, the Importer creates the Smoothing Groups during the import process. The Collada importer must create Smoothing Groups on Import because the FBX Collada exporter does not export Smoothing Groups data from 3ds Max. If you disable the Smoothing Groups option, no Smoothing Groups are generated by the Importer.

## **Information**

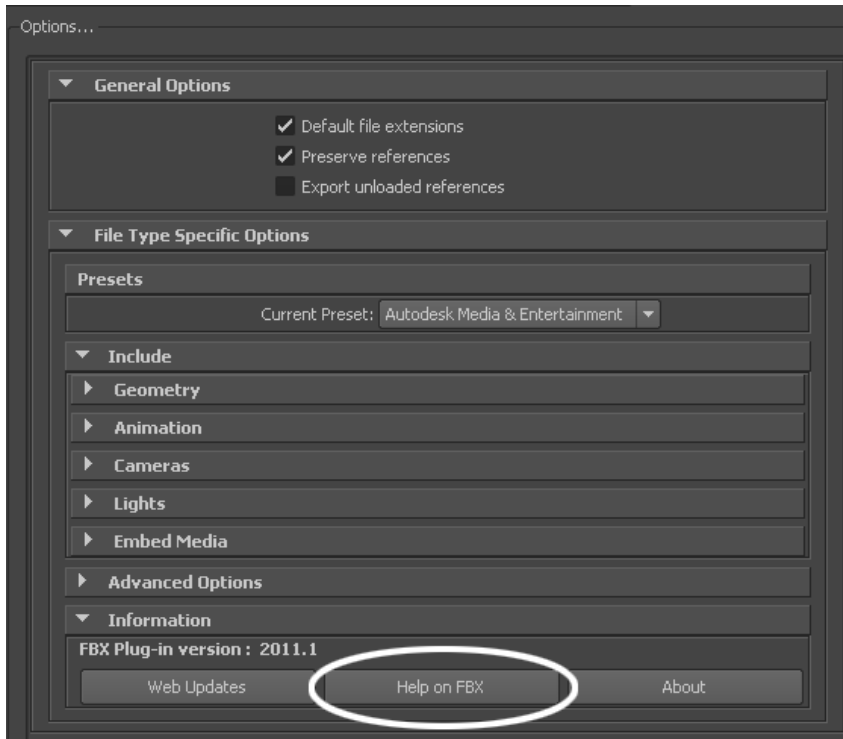
The information rollout contains information about the Maya FBX Plug-in.

## **Web Updates**

It is important to use the latest Maya FBX Plug-in as each subsequent plug-in contains numerous bug fixes and features. See [Web updates](#) on page 35 to learn how to download a free update to the plug-in.

## Help on FBX

Click the Help on FBX button in the Information rollout to access the Maya FBX Plug-in documentation.



Information rollout: Help button

# Maya FBX Plug-ins Workflows

# 6

The following are some tips for certain workflows that will provide optimal results.

## IFFFS

### **Importing and Exporting Cameras**

You can either import a camera you created and edited in Action, or import one from another 3D application. Once a camera is imported, you can edit its parameters, change its animation, and then export it back to the application it came from.

### **Flame Cameras**

Flame supports the import and export of 3D data saved in the FBX 3D format. The FBX standard format provides a means for exchanging 3D data for scene compositions—such as cameras—between tools and packages developed by different manufacturers.

### **To export a camera to FBX format:**

- 1 In Flame, select the camera you want to export.
- 2 In the Camera menu, click Export. The Export Camera file browser appears.
- 3 From the Export Type box, select Autodesk FBX.

- 4 Select which elements of the FBX files you wish to export by clicking the corresponding filter button.

<b>Enable:</b>	<b>To:</b>
Rotate Axis	Rotate the exported camera by -90° on the X-axis so that it is compatible with the coordinate system of the 3D application.
Export Axes	Export the animated axes present in the Action scene.
Export Point Cloud	Export the 3D point cloud created by the 3D Tracker.

- 5 Navigate to the location where you want to export the camera animation.
- 6 Enter a name for your exported camera in the file field.
- 7 Click Save.

## Renaming strategy

When the Maya FBX Plug-in discovers objects or elements that have the same name, a naming conflict occurs. The Maya FBX Plug-in compensates for this by renaming the elements on import or export. The same is true for any upper- and lower-case conflicts.

### When does this happen?

This occurs when, for example, you export an FBX scene from 3ds Max that contains two objects named “Box01”. The result in Maya is that the first object called “Box01”, and the second object, originally called “Box01” as well, is now named “Box01\_ncl1\_1”. This must happen because Maya does not support objects with the same names.

The following is a description of what happens:

### Redundant names

When the Maya FBX Plug-in finds multiple instances of the same name in the scene, a symbolic code is used. The Maya FBX Plug-in can read older files, although it no longer writes them this way.

The new suffix is then: `_ncl1_x` (where *x* is the instance number).

## Case conflicts

When the Maya FBX Plug-in finds upper- and lower-case conflicts in the names of objects or elements in the scene, a more complex suffix is used to keep track of which character was/is upper- or lower-case so it can be converted back on import/merge.

The following suffixes are used to indicate the case:

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Suffix</b>
Indicates case	_ncl2
To depict characters that were originally upper case and have become lower case	_ulXXXX
To depict characters that were originally lower case and have become upper case	_luxxxx. (Where xxxx is a four-digit integer representing the character position in the string (bit-wise). For example, _ul5 indicates that the first and third characters in the string have been changed from upper to lower case. A suffix can be made of the combination of _ul and _lu sub-suffixes.)



# Maya MEL Scripting

# 7

This section contains scripts required for scripting with Maya MEL commands.

All of the Maya FBX Plug-in's MEL commands begin with the FBX prefix. When error conditions are encountered, they will display error messages in the script editor window. The MEL commands that are registered by the Maya FBX Plug-in are listed in the Plug-in Manager information dialog box.

---

**NOTE** To use the following MEL commands, the Maya FBX Plug-in must be installed on your computer.

---

## Hiding the UI

If you are writing a script and want to prevent the FBX UI from appearing each time a file is imported you can use a specific command:

```
FBXImport -file "c:/myfile.fbx";
```

This automatically suppresses the FBX UI on import.

## Scripting commands

Use these script commands to list, query, or set FBX I/O Settings properties for the Maya FBX Plug-in, including properties created with a plug-in extension.

---

**NOTE** The scripting commands do not affect the settings in the FBX Export/Import Presets window.

---

The FBXProperty command lets you use every option available in the FBX plug-in user interface.

There is generally a scripting command that represents every option found in the Maya FBX Plug-in. However, if an option is added at the last moment and there is not yet a corresponding scripting command for it, you can use `FBXProperty` to access the new unscripted option.

Another use for the `FBXProperty` command is if no scripting command exists for you to use for a specific scripting workflow. With `FBXProperty`, you can still access the command.

---

**NOTE** We recommend using the normal scripting command if one exists. But if a command does not exist for an option, you can use the `FBXProperty` to reach it.

---

Command	Description
<code>FBXProperties</code>	Use this command to list all import and export properties available. This command returns the property path, type, and current value. If the property is an Enum, it returns every possible value.
<code>FBXProperty ImportIncludeGrpLight -v true</code>	Use this command to set an import value to true.
<code>FBXProperty ImportIncludeGrpLight -q</code>	Use this command to query an import value.
<code>FBXProperty ExportIncludeGrpLight -v true</code>	Use this command to set an export value to true.
<code>FBXProperty ExportIncludeGrpLight -q;</code>	Use this command to query an export value.

---

All script commands and paths in this section are case sensitive, so it is good practice to copy and paste them so you can have the exact path for the IO Settings when querying for a list of properties and their path.

---

**NOTE** These script commands support only Integer, Double, Bool, and Enum properties

---

## Export commands

The following are the Maya MELscript commands as they would appear in the FBX Exporter interface:

Command	Script
Presets	<a href="#">FBXLoadExportPresetFile</a> on page 117
Statistics	<none>
Include: Geometry	<a href="#">FBXExportDxfDeformation</a> on page 102
Include: Animation	<a href="#">FBXExportAnimationOnly</a> on page 98 <a href="#">FBXExportBakeComplexAnimation</a> on page 99 <a href="#">FBXExportBakeComplexEnd</a> on page 99 <a href="#">FBXExportBakeComplexStart</a> on page 99 <a href="#">FBXExportBakeComplexStep</a> on page 100 <a href="#">FBXExportShapes</a> on page 105 <a href="#">FBXExportSkins</a> on page 106 <a href="#">FBXExportCacheFile</a> on page 100 <a href="#">FBXExportConstraints</a> on page 101 <a href="#">FBXExportQuaternion</a> on page 104 <a href="#">FBXExportApplyConstantKeyReducer</a> on page 98
Include: Other	<a href="#">FBXExportCameras</a> on page 100 <a href="#">FBXExportLights</a> on page 104 <a href="#">FBXExportEmbeddedTextures</a> on page 102
Advanced: Units	<a href="#">FBXExportScaleFactor</a> on page 105 <a href="#">FBXConvertUnitString</a> on page 115
Advanced: UI	<none>
Advanced: FBX File Format	<a href="#">FBXExportInAscii</a> on page 103 <a href="#">FBXExportFileVersion</a> on page 102
Advanced: Other	<a href="#">FBXExportAxisConversionMethod</a> on page 98 <a href="#">FBXExportColladaFrameRate</a> on page 101 <a href="#">FBXExportColladaSingleMatrix</a> on page 101 <a href="#">FBXExportColladaTriangulate</a> on page 101

## FBXExport

```
FBXExport -f [filename] [-s]
```

Exports the specified file.

Add the `-s` flag if you want to change the export process so it exports the selected objects instead of an “export all” operation.

For example:

```
FBXExport -f myfile.fbx -s
```

## FBXExportAnimationOnly

```
FBXExportAnimationOnly -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportAnimationOnly -q
```

Use this script to export only animation. See [Animation](#) on page 48 for more information.

## FBXExportApplyConstantKeyReducer

```
FBXExportApplyConstantKeyReducer -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportApplyConstantKeyReducer -q
```

This is the script equivalent of the [Constant Key Reducer](#) on page 52 for more information.

### True

Filters FBX animation FCurves through a Constant Key Reducer. This eliminates constant keys on a FCurve and helps to reduce the size of resampled FCurves, especially Scale.

### False

Setting this command to False ensures that the animation data is not filtered.

## FBXExportAxisConversionMethod

```
FBXExportAxisConversionMethod [none|convertAnimation|addFbxRoot]
```

```
FBXExportAxisConversionMethod -q
```

This command lets you set an export conversion method. See [Axis conversion](#) on page 60 for more information.

### **None**

No conversion takes place and the exported data is unaffected.

### **Convert animation**

Recalculates all animation FCurves so their values reflect the new World system.

### **Add FBX\_Root node**

Adds a transformation node to the top of the scene to contain the transformations needed to transport the data into the new World system. This option facilitates backward compatibility as it generates the FBX file the same way as earlier releases of the plug-in.

---

**NOTE** If the plug-in does not detect a need for the conversion, no Fbx\_Root node is added.

---

## **FBXExportBakeComplexAnimation**

FBXExportBakeComplexAnimation -v [true|false]

FBXExportBakeComplexAnimation -q

This command is the script equivalent of the Bake animation option. See [Bake animation](#) on page 50.

## **FBXExportBakeComplexEnd**

FBXExportBakeComplexEnd -v [int]

FBXExportBakeComplexEnd -q

This command is the script equivalent of the End field in the Bake animation option. The passed value is an integer number. See [Bake animation](#) on page 50 for more information.

## **FBXExportBakeComplexStart**

FBXExportBakeComplexStart -v [int]

FBXExportBakeComplexStart -q

This command is the script equivalent of the Start field in the Bake animation option. The passed value is an integer number. See [Bake animation](#) on page 50 for more information.

## FBXExportBakeComplexStep

```
FBXExportBakeComplexStep -v [int]
```

```
FBXExportBakeComplexStep -q
```

This command is the script equivalent of the Step field in the Bake animation option. The passed value is an integer number. See [Bake animation](#) on page 50 for more information.

## FBXExportBakeResampleAll

```
FBXExportBakeResampleAll -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportBakeResampleAll -q
```

This command is the script version of the Resample All option in the FBX Exporter. See [Resample All](#) on page 51.

## FBXExportCacheFile

```
FBXExportCacheFile -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportCacheFile -q
```

This command is the script version of the Geometry Cache file(s) option in the FBX Exporter. See [Geometry cache file\(s\)](#) on page 54.

---

**NOTE** You must apply the set to the Objects Transform node and not the Shape node.

---

## FBXExportCameras

```
FBXExportCameras -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportCameras -q
```

Use this function to either include or exclude cameras in your FBX export. See [Cameras](#) on page 55 for more information.

## FBXExportCharacter

FBXExportCharacter -v [true|false]

FBXExportCharacter -q

Use this function to either include or exclude Character definition in your export.

## FBXExportColladaFrameRate

FBXExportColladaFrameRate [float]

FBXExportColladaFrameRate -q

This function is the script equivalent of the Collada [Frame Rate](#) on page 66 option.

## FBXExportColladaSingleMatrix

FBXExportColladaSingleMatrix [true|false]

FBXExportColladaSingleMatrix -q

This command is the script equivalent of the Collada [Single matrix](#) on page 66 option.

## FBXExportColladaTriangulate

FBXExportColladaTriangulate [true|false]

FBXExportColladaTriangulate - q

This command is the script equivalent of the Collada [Triangulate](#) on page 65 option

## FBXExportConstraints

FBXExportConstraints -v [true|false]

FBXExportConstraints -q

Causes all the constraints defined in the Maya scene to be either included or excluded from the exported FBX file. See [Constraints](#) on page 55.

## FBXExportDxfTriangulate

FBXExportDxfTriangulate [true|false]

FBXExportDxfTriangulate -q

---

**NOTE** This command is for the Macintosh and Linux platforms only.

---

## FBXExportDxfDeformation

FBXExportDxfDeformation [true|false]

FBXExportDxfDeformation -q

---

**NOTE** This command is for the Macintosh and Linux platforms only.

---

## FBXExportEmbeddedTextures

FBXExportEmbeddedTextures -v [true|false]

FBXExportEmbeddedTextures -q

### **True**

Saves all textures in the FBX file. This command performs the same action as the Embed Media option in the FBX Exporter window. See [Embed media](#) on page 56.

## FBXExportFileVersion

FBXExportFileVersion [version]

Where [version] is the following:

- FBX201000
- FBX200900
- FBX200611
- FBX200608
- FBX200602\_MB75

- FBX200508\_MB70
- FBX60\_MB60

See [FBX version](#) on page 63 for more.

## FBXExportGenerateLog

```
FBXExportGenerateLog -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportGenerateLog -q
```

Use this command to generate a log file on export. See [Generate log data](#) on page 61 for more information.

## FBXExportHardEdges

```
FBXExportHardEdges -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportHardEdges -q
```

Duplicates all vertices in the scene's meshes for each polygon connected to them. The vertices' normals are set accordingly, depending on whether they are connected to a hard or smooth edge.

---

### NOTE

This function allows MotionBuilder to display hard edges.

---

If two vertices are located exactly at the same position, a warning is issued, as this causes unpredictable results when `FBXImportHardEdges` is set to `True`.

This command is the script version of the Split per Vertex Normals option in the FBX Exporter. See [Split per-vertex Normals](#) on page 44.

## FBXExportInAscii

```
FBXExportInAscii -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportInAscii -q
```

Use this function to export as an ASCII file. See [Type](#) on page 62 for more information.

## FBXExportInputConnections

FBXExportInputConnections -v [true|false]

FBXExportInputConnections -q

Use this function to query the current value of the input connection option. The function returns 0 for False, and 1 for True.

Use this function with the [FBXExport](#) on page 97 script if you are performing an export of selected objects. Set False so that the input connections to selected objects are not considered during export. The default value for this command is True, which makes the plug-in include all the objects that influence the selected ones.

This is the script equivalent of the [Connections](#) on page 57 option in the UI.

---

**NOTE** This command is ignored during the “Export All” process.

---

## FBXExportInstances

FBXExportInstances -v [true|false]

FBXExportInstances -q

This is the script equivalent of the [Preserve Instances](#) on page 47 option in the UI.

## FBXExportLights

FBXExportLights -v [true|false]

FBXExportLights -q

Use this function to either exclude or include lights in the exported FBX file. See [Lights](#) on page 56 for more information.

---

**NOTE** This option is activated by default.

---

## FBXExportQuaternion

FBXExportQuaternion -v [quaternion|euler|resample]

FBXExportQuaternion -q

Use the quaternion interpolation script to select how to export your quaternion interpolations from the host application.

## FBXExportQuickSelectSetAsCache

```
FBXExportQuickSelectSetAsCache -v "setName"
```

```
FBXExportQuickSelectSetAsCache -q
```

This command stores the setName as the set to be used when exporting the cache file.

This command does not validate the received string. However, if the string used here does not correspond to an existing (and valid) set in the Maya scene, the cache export fails.

## FBXExportReferencedContainersContent

```
FBXExportReferencedContainersContent -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportReferencedContainersContent -q
```

This command is the script version of the Referenced Containers Content option in the FBX Exporter. See [Referenced containers content](#) on page 47.

## FBXExportScaleFactor

```
FBXExportScaleFactor [float]
```

```
FBXExportScaleFactor -q
```

This command is the script version of the Scale Factor field in the FBX Exporter. See [Scale Factor](#) on page 59 for more information.

## FBXExportShapes

```
FBXExportShapes -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportShapes -q
```

Use this function to either exclude or include shape deformations with your FBX file. See [Deformed Models](#) on page 51 for more information.

---

**NOTE** This option is on by default.

---

## FBXExportSmoothingGroups

```
FBXExportSmoothingGroups -v true|false
```

```
FBXExportSmoothingGroups -q
```

This command is the script version of the Smoothing Groups option in the FBX Exporter. See [Smoothing Groups](#) on page 43 for more information.

## FBXExportSmoothMesh

```
FBXExportSmoothMesh -v true|false
```

```
FBXExportSmoothMesh -q
```

Use this function to export the subdivision level of the mesh.

## FBXExportSkins

```
FBXExportSkins -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXExportSkins -q
```

Use this function to either exclude or include skin deformations in your FBX file. See [Deformed Models](#) on page 51 for more information.

---

**NOTE** This option is on by default.

---

## FBXExportUpAxis

```
FBXExportUpAxis [y|z]
```

```
FBXExportUpAxis -q
```

This command lets you define the up axis in your FBX file. The up axis is the global axis that points upwards. See [Axis conversion](#) on page 60 for more information.

By default, the up axis in Maya is the Y axis.

### **Y**

Sets the up axis to Y-up. This setting is the default.

## Z

Sets the up axis to Z-up.

## FBXExportUseSceneName

FBXExportUseSceneName -v [truelfalse]

FBXExportUseSceneName -q

This command is the script version of the [Use scene name](#) on page 48 option in the FBX Exporter.

## FBXExportTangents

FBXExportTangents -v [truelfalse]

FBXExportTangents -q

This command is the script version of the [Tangents and Binormals](#) on page 45 option in the FBX Exporter.

## FBXImport

FBXImport -f [filename] -t [take index]

Imports the file specified in [filename] and the take specified in [take index].

The file imported is the one accessible for take querying after the execution of the command.

Specify the appropriate take number to load the corresponding take. If you specify 0, the plug-in imports no animation. (This is the same as if you select No Animation from the menu in the Maya FBX Plug-in user interface.)

If you specify -1, the plug-in retrieves the last take in the take array. The plug-in considers any number of takes greater than the amount of takes contained in the file or any negative value less than -1 to be invalid. If this occurs, a No such take error displays.

## FBXImportAxisConversionEnable

FBXImportAxisConversionEnable -v [truelfalse]

FBXImportAxisConversionEnable -q

This command is the script version of the Axis conversion option in the FBX Importer. See [Axis conversion](#) on page 88 for more information.

## FBXImportCacheFile

FBXImportCacheFile -v [true|false]

FBXImportCacheFile -q

This command is the script version of the Import geometry Cache file(s) option in the FBX Importer. See [Geometry cache file\(s\)](#) on page 79 for more information.

## FBXImportCameras

FBXImportCameras -v [true|false]

FBXImportCameras -q

Use this script to either import or exclude cameras with your FBX file. See [Cameras](#) on page 81 for more information.

---

**NOTE** This function is on by default

---

## FBXImportCharacter

FBXImportCharacter -v [true|false]

FBXImportCharacter -q

Use this function to either import or exclude Character definitions with your FBX file. See [FBIK definition](#) on page 81 for more information.

## FBXImportConstraints

FBXImportConstraints -v [true|false]

FBXImportConstraints -q

Causes all constraints defined in the FBX file to be ignored by the importing process and excluded from the Maya scene. See [Constraints](#) on page 81 for more information.

## FBXImportConvertDeformingNullsToJoint

FBXImportConvertDeformingNullsToJoint -v [truelfalse]

FBXImportConvertDeformingNullsToJoint -q

Converts deforming elements into Maya joints.

### True

Transforms all deforming elements into joint nodes.

---

**NOTE** This option was originally provided because Maya did not support locator elements (that is, transform nodes that are not joints,) within a bone hierarchy. While Maya now supports this, in some cases this option improves the skinning behavior.

---

See [Deforming elements to joints](#) on page 79 for more information.

## FBXImportDxfWeldVertice

FBXImportDxfWeldVertice [truelfalse]

FBXImportDxfWeldVertice -q

---

**NOTE** This command is for the Macintosh and Linux platforms only.

---

## FBXImportDxfReferenceNode

FBXImportDxfReferenceNode [truelfalse]

FBXImportDxfReferenceNode -q

---

**NOTE** This command is for the Macintosh and Linux platforms only.

---

## FBXImportDxfObjectDerivation

FBXImportDxfObjectDerivation [layer|entity|block]

FBXImportDxfObjectDerivation -q

---

**NOTE** This command is for the Macintosh and Linux platforms only.

---

## FBXImportFillTimeline

FBXImportFillTimeline -v [true|false]

FBXImportFillTimeline -q

Fills the scene timeline on import (instead of using the Maya default).

## FBXImportGenerateLog

FBXImportGenerateLog -v [true|false]

FBXImportGenerateLog -q

Use this command to generate a log file on export. See [Generate log data](#) on page 88 for more information.

## FBXImportHardEdges

FBXImportHardEdges -v [true|false]

FBXImportHardEdges -q

Merges back all vertices located at the same exact position as a unique vertex. The Maya FBX Plug-in then determines if the edges connected to each vertex are hard edges or smooth edges, based on their normals.

Use this function when FBXExportHardEdges is set to True on export.

This command is the script version of the Combine per-vertex Normals option in the FBX Importer. See [Combine per-vertex Normals](#) on page 76 for more information.

## FBXImportLights

FBXImportLights -v [true|false]

FBXImportLights -q

Use this function to either include or exclude lights from the import process. See [Lights](#) on page 82 for more information.

## FBXImportMergeBackNullPivots

FBXImportMergeBackNullPivots -v [true|false]

FBXImportMergeBackNullPivots -q

### True

Assigns the rotation transformation of the null (or joints) elements in the hierarchy that are used as pre-rotation and post-rotation to the joint orient and the rotate axis of the original node.

The pre-rotation and post-rotation nodes are then deleted.

The look-up is done by name as the pre-rotation node's name contains the “\_\_Pre\_” suffix, while the post-rotation node's name has a “\_\_Post\_” suffix.

---

### NOTE

When the import mode is set to Exmerge or Merge this option is automatically set to True.

---

## FBXImportMergeAnimationLayers

FBXImportMergeAnimationLayers -v [true|false]

FBXImportMergeAnimationLayers -q

Activate Bake animation layers to bake (or Plot) animation layers contained in the incoming file.

## FBXImportMode

FBXImportMode -v [exmerge|add|merge]

FBXImportMode -q

This command has three possible states:

### Exmerge

Merges the imported FBX file to the current scene in the following way:

Nodes of the same name and nature have only their animation curve replaced. No new nodes are created.

### **Add**

Creates a new scene prior to the file import.

### **Merge**

Merges the imported FBX file to the current scene in the following way: any node without its equivalent in the scene is created. Nodes with the same name but not of the same nature, for example, sphere and bone, are replaced. Nodes with the same name and nature only have their animation replaced.

## **FBXImportProtectDrivenKeys**

```
FBXImportProtectDrivenKeys -v [true|false]
```

```
FBXImportProtectDrivenKeys -q
```

Use this script to prevent any incoming animation from overwriting channels with driven keys.

If set to True, the driven keys are protected and no incoming animation is applied to the driven channels.

If set to False, the driven keys are discarded and the incoming animation is applied to the driven channels. See [Protect driven keys](#) on page 79 for more information.

## **FBXImportQuaternion**

```
FBXImportQuaternion -v [quaternion|euler|resample]
```

```
FBXImportQuaternion -q
```

Lets you specify how quaternion rotations should be treated on import into Maya. This option compensates for differences between Maya and MotionBuilder quaternions. See [Quaternion interpolation mode](#) on page 78 for more information.

## **FBXImportResamplingRateSource**

```
FBXImportResamplingRateSource -v [Maya|FBX|Custom]
```

```
FBXImportResamplingRateSource -q
```

This command lets you set the rate that the FBX Exporter uses to produce keyframes when it needs to resample data.

Resampling is used when the interpolation of the Maya animation curve cannot be accurately represented by curves in MotionBuilder.

## FBXImportScaleFactorEnable

FBXImportScaleFactorEnable [true|false]

FBXImportScaleFactorEnable -q

This command is the script version of the Scale Factor option of the FBX Importer. See [Scale Factor](#) on page 83 for more information.

## FBXImportScaleFactor

FBXImportScaleFactor [float]

FBXImportScaleFactor -q

This command is the script version of the Scale Factor menu in the FBX Importer. See [Scale Factor](#) on page 83 for more information.

## FBXImportSetMayaFrameRate

FBXImportSetMayaFrameRate -v [true|false]

FBXImportSetMayaFrameRate -q

This command lets you import the frame rate from the FBX file. This overwrites the rate used in Maya.

## FBXImportSetLockedAttribute

FBXImportSetLockedAttribute -v [true|false]

FBXImportSetLockedAttribute -q

This command is the scripting equivalent of the UI dialog box Keep all locked or unlock all options. Use this command when you import an FBX file that contains animation onto an object that has locked channels.

When you use the UI, the Maya FBX Plug-in prompts you to either keep all the channels locked or unlock the locked channels, which imports the animation correctly. This had created problems for users who tried to do this without working in the UI.

### **False**

Unlocks all channels.

### **True**

Channels remain locked.

### **Example code**

```
FBXImportSetLockedAttribute -v False;FBXImport -f "C:/myFile.fbx";
```

## **FBXImportShapes**

```
FBXImportShapes -v [truelfalse]
```

```
FBXImportShapes -q
```

Use this script to import or exclude shapes from your FBX file. See [Deformed Models](#) on page 80 for more information.

## **FBXImportSkins**

```
FBXImportSkins -v [truelfalse]
```

```
FBXImportSkins -q
```

Use this function to import or exclude skin deformations from your FBX file. See [Deformed Models](#) on page 80 for more information.

## **FBXImportUnlockNormals**

```
FBXImportUnlockNormals -v truelfalse
```

```
FBXImportUnlockNormals -q
```

Overrides the default Maya locking of normals.

**True**

Recomputes the normals on the objects using Maya internal algorithms.

## FBXImportUpAxis

FBXImportUpAxis [y|z]

FBXImportUpAxis -q

This command is the script version of the Axis conversion option in the FBX Importer. See [Axis conversion](#) on page 88.

## FBXConvertUnitString

FBXConvertUnitString [mm|dml|cm|ml|km|In|ft|yd|mi]

This command returns the Scale Factor required to convert one centimeter to the specified unit and is the script version of the File Units Converted To menu in the FBX Exporter and Importer windows. See [File Units converted to](#) on page 84 for more information.

## FBXGetTakeComment

FBXGetTakeComment [index]

Returns the comment attached to the take at the specified index in the take array. This command uses the file stored in the file buffer.

You can load a file into the file buffer with the FBXRead command.

---

**NOTE** You must enter numbers from 1 to the number of takes contained in the file otherwise the script returns the message: No such take. The Maya FBX Plug-in considers any number of takes greater than the amount of takes in the file, negative values, or zero, to be invalid.

---

## FBXGetTakeCount

FBXGetTakeCount

Returns the number of takes saved in the file stored in the file buffer.

You can load a file into the file buffer with the FBXRead command.

---

**NOTE** If Maya FBX Plug-in does not find any takes in the file, the script returns a value of 0.

---

## FBXGetTakeIndex

FBXGetTakeIndex [take name]

Returns the index of the first take named as the parameter in the take array. This command uses the file stored in the file buffer.

You can load a file into the file buffer with the FBXRead command.

---

**NOTE** If [take name] does not contain a valid name, the script returns the message: No such take.

---

## FBXGetTakeLocalTimeSpan

FBXGetTakeLocalTimeSpan [index]

Returns the local start and stop time of the take at the specified index in the take array. This command uses the file stored in the file buffer.

You can load a file into the file buffer with the FBXRead command.

---

**NOTE** You must enter numbers from 1 to the number of takes contained in the file, otherwise the script returns the message: No such take. The Maya FBX Plug-in considers any number of takes greater than the amount of takes in the file, negative values, or zero, to be invalid.

---

## FBXGetTakeName

FBXGetTakeName [index]

Returns the name of the take in the take array's specified index. This command uses the file stored in the file buffer.

You can load a file into the file buffer with the FBXRead command.

---

**NOTE** You must enter numbers from 1 to the number of takes contained in the file otherwise the script returns the message: No such take. The Maya FBX Plug-in considers any number of takes greater than the amount of takes in the file, negative values, or zero, to be invalid.

---

## FBXGetTakeReferenceTimeSpan

FBXGetTakeReferenceTimeSpan [index]

Returns the reference start and stop times of the take at the specified index in the take array. This command uses the file stored in the file buffer.

You can load a file into the file buffer with the FBXRead command.

---

**NOTE** You must enter numbers from 1 to the number of takes contained in the file, otherwise the script returns the message: No such take. The Maya FBX Plug-in considers any number of takes greater than the amount of takes in the file, negative values, or zero, to be invalid.

---

## FBXLoadExportPresetFile

FBXLoadExportPresetFile -f [filepath]

Sets the export preset file path.

## FBXLoadImportPresetFile

FBXLoadImportPresetFile -f [filepath]

This command lets you set the import preset file path.

## FBXRead

FBXRead -f [filename]

Reads the specified FBX file without importing anything into Maya. The file is instead stored in a buffer. This command is used for take querying.

Once read or imported, use the commands FBXGetTakeCount, FBXGetTakeName, FBXGetTakeIndex for take querying.

---

**NOTE** The file you are reading must match an existing file name, otherwise the file in the buffer is destroyed if you attempt to read or import a non-existent file.

---

## FBXResetImport

FBXResetImport

This command restores the default values of the FBX Importer.

## **FBXResetExport**

`FBXResetExport`

This command restores the default values of the FBX Exporter.

## **FBXResamplingRate**

`FBXResamplingRate -v [float]`

`FBXResamplingRate -q`

Sets the rate at which the exporter produces keyframes when it needs to resample data.

Resampling is needed when the interpolation of the Maya animation curve cannot be perfectly represented by curves in MotionBuilder.

# Troubleshooting and Limitations

# 8

Because the Maya FBX Plug-in supports so many software packages, it is inevitable that occasional problems will occur or some details will not yet have attained perfect support.

Occasionally, the default settings of plug-in do not respect a particular workflow, or the conversion process creates conflicts between two packages with similar but not identical functions. Sometimes a file is exported correctly but becomes inexplicably larger, or the assets in the file are no longer in the same location as they were before conversion.

This section contains a troubleshooting guide for problems with the import or export process as well as contains details on known limitations for the Maya FBX Plug-in.

## Troubleshooting

This section contains descriptions of some advanced problems, explains why they occur, and if available, offers workarounds.

If none of the topics in the Troubleshooting or Limitations section help you, search the *FBX Forums*. The forums contain ongoing discussion about the Maya FBX Plug-in, as well as an e-mail address where you can contact support.

- [Where did the FBX UI go?](#) on page 120
- [Where are my textures?](#) on page 120
- [Where are my MotionBuilder layers?](#) on page 121
- [Why are my cameras inconsistent?](#) on page 122
- [Why are my normals locked on import?](#) on page 122
- [Why does the plug-in not match the help documentation?](#) on page 123

- [The plug-in does not run](#) on page 123
- [Why do my MotionBuilder edges look different?](#) on page 123
- [Why are my sets empty?](#) on page 124

## Where did the FBX UI go?

If you import or export FBX files and the FBX Importer or Exporter window does not appear, it could be because the Maya FBX Plug-in cannot find MEL scripts that are included by the FBX installer. The scripts are automatically installed to the following path:

```
<Maya version>/scripts/FBX
```

If they are deleted, the FBX user interface no longer appears. You can restore these files which will bring back the interface if you reinstall the plug-in.

### Maya Default UI

If you are using the Maya Default UI setting, the FBX options to the right of the file browser area may be collapsed. Drag the splitter bar at the right side to the center of the dialog box to expand the FBX options.

## Where are my textures?

Textures disappear from files when if you move or delete any texture from the relative and absolute paths of the associated media files location. This can happen when you give the FBX file to someone using a different computer who does not have that texture in that your directory on the your computer drive.

Use the Embed Media option to make the FBX plug-in includes (embeds) the associated media (textures, for example) within the FBX file. The plug-in then extracts the media to an .fbm folder at import. The plug-in copies the embedded media to a <fileName>.fbm folder in the same location as the FBX file and is named after the FBX file.

---

**NOTE** When you activate Embed Media, the media is contained within the FBX file itself, and this has an impact on file size. It is good practice to use this option only when you transport an FBX file to a location where the original media source is no longer accessible by the receiver.

---

If you disable the Embed Media option, the FBX plug-in stores the relative and absolute paths of the associated media files at export time. This causes problems if, for some reason, the path is no longer accessible. Make sure that the associated media is accessible to ensure the proper import of these media files.

### **Why should I embed media?**

If you export a file to FBX and do not activate the Embed Media option, no problems occur if you open the file on the same computer and all the images used in the scene are in the same locations that they were when the file was exported.

It is a good practice to embed media when you are going to give the FBX file to another person. It is also a good practice to embed when you use FBX for storing assets, as you may eventually delete the reference images or move all the files to another drive or computer with different paths.

---

**NOTE** If you export your file in ASCII format in FBX versions 2010 and earlier, no textures are embedded.

---

### **Embed Media is active, but I still do not see my textures**

In previous versions of the Maya FBX Plug-in, when you saved an FBX file with the Embed Media option activated, the embedded files were extracted to a folder in the same location as the FBX file. If you did not have write permission for the folder, then the media files were not extracted. You can experience this lack of write permission when you work over a network.

With the current version of the Maya FBX Plug-in, if you do not have write permission for the folder creation, the media files are sent to a temp folder instead.

---

**NOTE** If you export your file in ASCII format using FBX versions 2010 and earlier, no textures can be embedded.

---

## **Where are my MotionBuilder layers?**

The Maya FBX Plug-in lets you import animation layers without baking them. Otherwise, the animation is baked into the base animation layer.

### **To retain animation layers as separate layers in Maya:**

When you import an FBX file, disable the Bake Animation Layers option in the Maya FBX importer. See [Bake animation layers](#) on page 77

If the option is active, the plug-in automatically bakes the animation layers during the import process.

## **Why are my cameras inconsistent?**

If you import a Maya camera into 3ds Max using a Fit Resolution Gate setting of Vertical or Fill, the results will differ.

For better support between Maya cameras in 3ds Max, set the Fit Resolution Gate setting to Horizontal, rather than Vertical or the default, Fill.

---

**NOTE** You can import 3ds Max cameras into Maya with no difficulty; Maya renders the same result.

---

## **Why are my normals locked on import?**

If you import non-deformed geometry, the normals are locked on import to Maya. These locked normals can create problems when you deform the geometry in Maya.

For example, if you import blend shape targets that were created in 3ds Max and then export them to FBX, they import into Maya with their normals locked.

You can address this problem if you unlock the deformed object's normals in Maya. To unlock the normals, import the geometry into Maya and then select Normals > Unlock normals.

### **What causes this?**

If you import non-deformed geometry the normals are locked when you import it to Maya.

When normals are locked by Maya, they will not move with the geometry when you deform the imported objects. If you do not unlock these normals, you may experience shading issues when you apply modifiers such as skin or blendshapes.

## Why does the plug-in not match the help documentation?

If you find something in your version of the Maya FBX Plug-in that does not appear in the documentation, consult the readme file that accompanied the plug-in. The readme will contain last-minute changes to the software that are not reflected in the documentation.

It is also possible that your version of the Maya FBX Plug-in may not be the most recent version. It is a good practice to check for updates, as each subsequent Maya FBX Plug-in version has enhanced functionality, and is available free. See [Web updates](#) on page 35 for instructions on how to verify that your plug-in version is the latest.

---

**NOTE** You can also use the comment link at the bottom of the online help to send a comment to the FBX team.

---

## The plug-in does not run

Plug-ins run only on the version of Maya for which they are created; verify that the version of the Maya FBX Plug-in that you are installing is appropriate for the version of Maya you are running.

## Why do my MotionBuilder edges look different?

Older versions of MotionBuilder (versions 2010 and earlier) do not support hard/soft edge normals and can result in shading issues in MotionBuilder.

If you are using an earlier version of MotionBuilder and this problem occurs, activate the Split per-vertex normals option. When you activate this option, geometry vertex normals are split based on edge continuity. Vertex normals determine the visual smoothing between polygon faces. They reflect how Maya renders the polygons in smooth shaded mode.

### Why would I use this?

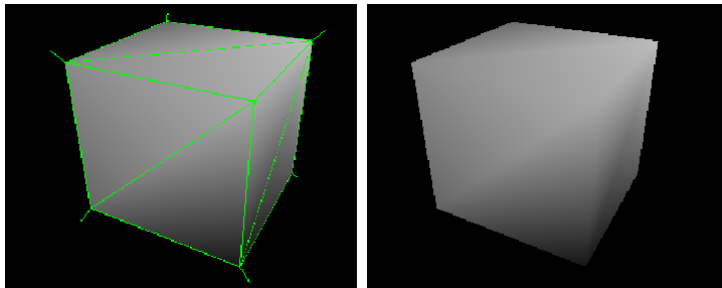
This option lets you keep the same hard/soft edge look that you get from Maya in MotionBuilder.

Do not use this option if you do not require hard edges in MotionBuilder, since this operation duplicates vertex information and converts the geometry itself. You can use the Combine per-vertex Normals option in the FBX Importer

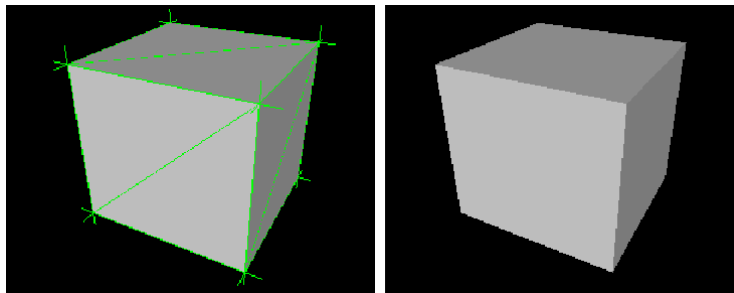
to perform the inverse operation, but this may result in incorrect UV texture maps, see the note that follows this entry.

If you are not using a merge-back workflow (merging FBX into existing scene) using this option may result in incorrect UV mapping when reimporting the FBX file into Maya. Import your FBX file into to your original Maya scene, to avoid geometry UV issues with split geometry.

Exporting with the Split per-vertex Normals option disabled produces the following result in MotionBuilder:



Exporting with the Split per-vertex Normals option activated produces the following result in MotionBuilder:



---

**NOTE** Using this option alters UV maps applied to geometry permanently. The UVs are then properly reassigned to the newly split geometry. When you import this geometry into an empty Maya scene, there is a UV limitation where using Combine per-vertex Normals in the FBX Importer might result in incorrect UV assignments.

---

## Why are my sets empty?

This is due to a limitation. See [Selection sets](#) on page 127 for more information.

## Limitations

The following section contains a list of known limitations for this version of the Maya FBX Plug-in. If you have problems with the plug-in that are not listed here, refer to the [Troubleshooting](#) on page 119 section.

- [Preset Bake Animation settings](#) on page 125
- [Non-orthogonal matrices](#) on page 125
- [Cannot cancel file overwrite](#) on page 126
- [Cluster import](#) on page 126
- [Scale compensation](#) on page 126
- [Selection sets](#) on page 127
- [Instanced geometry](#) on page 127

## Preset Bake Animation settings

You cannot save Bake Animation settings (Start/End/Step values) in Preset files. If you created a preset that had specific settings for the Bake Animations values, these values will not be used the next time you load the preset. Instead, the FBX plug-in will always default to the values set for the scene's timeline.

For example, if the animation in the scene is 102 frames long, the Start value will be 1, the End value will be 102, and the Step value will be 1, regardless of what is values you may have stored in the preset for this setting.

## Non-orthogonal matrices

“Orthogonal” is a term used to describe two vectors that are perpendicular (at 90 degrees) to each other. In 3D space, when the X, Y, or Z-axes are not perpendicular, they are considered “non-orthogonal” and the FBX plug-in does not support their representation as a matrix. For example, a non-orthogonal set of axes can occur when you use rotation and scaling to skew an object.

Because the FBX plug-in assumes that there is always a 90 degree angle between the X, Y, and Z axes, it can support only orthogonal matrices. Any transformed axes that have non-orthogonal TRS matrices are ignored by the FBX plug-in,

so it does not import or export effects created when axes are not orthographic. Because of this, any non-orthogonal effect (such as skewing) is lost.

This can cause problems even when you have transformation data that has been inherited from other objects, for example, scaling via a parent object where the result is a non-orthogonal local TRS matrix.

## Cannot cancel file overwrite

In previous versions of the Maya UI (before version 2011), as well as the "Classic" OS Native UI that is still available in Maya 2011, if you want to overwrite an existing file, the Overwrite dialog box appears. If you select Yes, and then cancel the export in the FBX exporter window that appears, the FBX file that was to be overwritten is instead deleted.

This is not a problem if you use the Maya 2011 default UI while exporting to FBX because the file browser and exporter options now appear in the same window. If you use the Maya Default UI to export to FBX, you can cancel the export operation without deleting the original FBX file. See [Switching the FBX UI](#) on page 25.

## Cluster import

To import clusters correctly into Maya, deactivate the [Deforming elements to joints](#) on page 79 option. Otherwise their cluster pivots do not import correctly.

## Scale compensation

There is no limitation for the scale compensate setting in the Maya FBX Plug-in itself.

However, there is a limitation in 3ds Max. If you modify the scale of joints that are parents of other joints in Maya, a conversion is performed that compensates for the scaling behavior that is not found in 3ds Max. This is done by animating the scale of the child joint. This conversion maintains the visual fidelity of Maya animation in 3ds Max.

### What does Scale Compensate do?

If you scale a parent joint in Maya using scale compensation, it creates an offset for a child joint rather than scaling it.

But if you do the same thing in 3ds Max, the child scales and creates no offsets.

## **Selection sets**

A known limitation exists where sets that contain NURBS Sub-components, such as Isoparm, Control Vertex, or Surface Patch, are not retained in sets and will not be exported.

## **Instanced geometry**

A limitation exists where FBX does not support instanced geometries that have materials that differ from the original geometry object.



# Maya FBX Plug-in glossary

# 9

**.fbm file** The file generated when you export an FBX file with the Embed Media option activated. The FBM file contains all the associated textures in the FBX file. The “M” in FBM is for “Materials”. See [Embed media](#) on page 56.

**.mc file** Autodesk point cache file extension.

**.pc2 file** Legacy 3ds Max point cache file extension.

**.xml file** Extensible Markup language file. The Maya FBX Plug-in creates an XML file when it processes point cache data.

**ASCII** Stands for American Standard Code for Information Interchange.

**bake** Baking is a re-sampling of all the animation data within your scenes.

**Bind pose** (Maya) In animation, the default position of a skeleton, used to keep track of transformation attributes for all the skeleton’s joints and influence objects.

**bone** Bones are 3D objects that you can link like human joints to create animation.

**curve** See [FCurve](#) on page 130.

**Degrees of Freedom (DOF)** Degrees of Freedom (DOF) are MotionBuilder properties that let you limit translation, rotation, and scaling of objects or animated hierarchies. Defining Degrees of Freedom for objects in a scene lets you restrict their range of movement.

**destination application** The application in which you want to use your FBX file.

**dummy** A type of 3ds Max helper object, a placeholder.

**edge** An edge is a straight or curved line that connects two vertices in a mesh object or spline. You can modify object shapes by transforming its edges.

**Euler** In animation, a method of rotation that uses three angle values (X, Y and Z) plus a rotation order to specify three-dimensional orientation. Euler rotation has several drawbacks, including [Gimbal lock](#) on page 130 and choppy interpolation between keyframes.

**FBX file** An Autodesk FBX format file used as a universal 3D Asset Exchange.

**FCurve** (MotionBuilder) (Also referred to as a Function Curve.) A graphic depiction of an animated value. The time and value of the animated value displays on two axes: the vertical axis representing the value, and the horizontal axis representing the time.

**fps** Frames per second.

**geometry** (Maya) In general, a surface, [NURBS](#) on page 130, NURBS curve, subdivision surface, or polygonal surface (mesh). (3ds Max) Geometry refers to all objects that are not cameras or lights. Meshes, polys, patches, NURBS, splines, helper objects, etc.

**Geometry cache** A file that stores positions of vertices. Cache files let you preview the results of a simulation without rendering the scene.

**Gimbal lock** A Gimbal Lock occurs when you rotate one axis and accidentally align the two other axes. When these two axes align, you lose one axis because you cannot separate them. When a gimbal lock occurs, your bone can rotate only in two axes instead of all three.

**host application** The application used to create the file you are going to save as an FBX file.

**key** A reference point, or key point, that marks the position of an important action or change in a scene at a specific point in time.

**mesh** In polygonal modeling, a collection of polygons, which can be of different types (triangles, quads, n-sided).

**morph** Morphs (or per-vertex) is a method of 3D computer animation that is sometimes used as an alternative to skeletal animation. Morph target animation is stored as a series of vertex positions. In each keyframe of the animation, the vertices are moved to a different position.

Depending on the renderer, vertices move along paths to fill the empty time between keyframes. The renderer can also switch between different positions.

Animation composed in one 3D application suite may require transfer to another, such as for rendering. To avoid export issues, native animation formats often convert to morph target animation. This is necessary to accommodate the implementation of bones and other special effects in different 3D application suites

**normal** In modeling, the directional line perpendicular to a surface. Polygon normals indicate the orientation of polygonal faces. Because shaded (or rendered) faces are visible only when the normals are facing towards the viewer, it is sometimes necessary to reverse a normal to correct a face's orientation.

**NURBS** Non-Uniform Rational B-Spline. A type of geometry that includes curves, patches, surfaces, etc. NURBS are a superset of conics, splines, and Bezier curves. They are particularly

suited for modeling in 3D, because they provide excellent continuity with a minimum number of control points.

**NURMS** Non-Uniform Rational MeshSmooth. A NURMS object is similar to a NURBS object in that you can set different weights for each control vertex.

**Orthogonal** Describes vectors that are perpendicular (at 90 degrees) to each other. In 3D space, when the X, Y, or Z-axes are not perpendicular, they are considered "non-orthogonal". The Maya FBX Plug-in has a limitation related to non-orthogonal axes. See [Non-orthogonal matrices](#) on page 125.

**Point cache** (3ds Max) A file (or series of files) that stores positions of vertices. Cache files let you preview the results of a simulation without rendering the scene.

**polygons** An n-sided shape defined by a group of ordered vertices and the edges that are defined between pairs of those vertices. Polygons can be either simple shapes, such as polygonal primitives, or complex models built from the various polygonal tools. A polygonal object can be closed, open, or made up of shells, which are disjointed pieces of geometry. Also known as mesh.

**procedural image map** An image not composed of a fixed matrix of colors, but rather generated procedurally by a mathematical algorithm. You cannot transfer these textures through the FBX format.

**Quaternion interpolation** A method of rotation that uses a unit quaternion (a quaternion of length one) to represent an orientation in three dimensions. A quaternion is a four dimensional extension to complex numbers. Quaternion rotation is an option that is useful for avoiding [Gimbal lock](#) on page 130.

**resample** The process of creating a key for every nth frame of an animation's interpolation (or curve).

**selection set** (3ds Max) A group of objects that have a name assigned to them.

**skin** A deformation tool that lets one object deform another, for example a skeleton deforms a mesh.

**smoothing groups** Smoothing groups define whether a surface is rendered with sharp edges or smooth surfaces.

Smoothing groups are numbers assigned to the faces or patches of an object. Each face or patch can carry a maximum of 32 smoothing groups. If two faces or patches share an edge and share the same smoothing group, they render as a smooth surface. If they do not share the same smoothing group, the edge between them renders as a corner.

**take** (MotionBuilder) An animation scene done between one start and the following stop, a segment.

**triangles** Objects in 3D scenes are composed of triangles. The triangles are defined as three XYZ vertex coordinates.

**UI** User interface.

**up-axis** The up axis is the global axis that is pointing upwards.

(Maya) There are two choices of axis (Y or Z) as the world up direction. The Y axis is used as the default up axis.

(3ds Max) The Z axis is used as the world up axis. This cannot be changed.

**Y-axis** Maya's default up-axis.

**Z-axis** 3ds Max's default up-axis.

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