

Creating Armada 1 “Lightmaps”

Icewolf132, Version 1

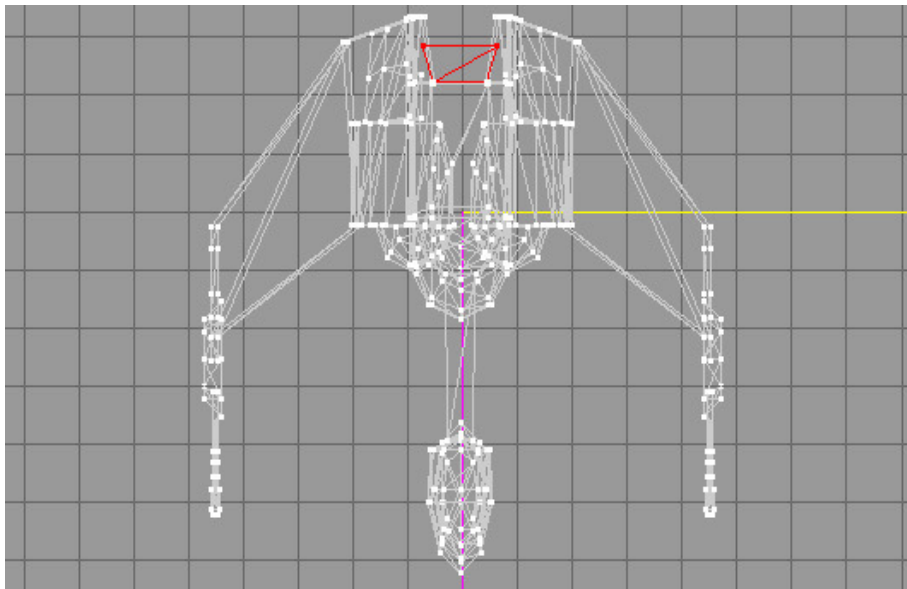
Please note that this tutorial uses Milkshape as the modeling program, and it assumes that the reader has at least basic knowledge with group creation, material creation, and joint creation. While a backwards conversion of an Armada 2 unit is used, this tutorial will not teach you how to fully convert a unit to Armada 1, or visa versa. For tutorials that teach you to do the above and more, please check out Westworld's Big Book of Modding (http://armada2.filefront.com/file/Westworlds_Big_Book_Of_Modding;8835).

Creating lightmaps for an Armada 1 unit can be an easy yet a frustrating task at times. With the Armada 2 engine, it uses an alpha map to decide which parts of the unit lights up and which parts do not. But the Armada 1 engine only uses alpha maps to decide which parts should be transparent or not. So how do we get parts of an Armada 1 unit to light up? The answer is simple; we use specific parts of the mesh it's self.

Many of the units in Armada 1, namely the ships, use an Ambiance and Emissive setting on a specific mesh group to achieve a lit up effect. The downside to this is that you can't *easily* get every window or complexed tech thingie to glow in A1 without bulking up the poly count. It is possible to achieve it, but most of the ways of doing it are a pain in the butt to set up.

Ok, so how do we set up a lightmap for Armada 1? Well, let's say that we're backwards converting a ship from Armada 2, we'll say the Klingon B'Rel (kdestroy.sod) for this tutorial. In this example, all of the nodes, extra LOD stuff, and alpha channels in the textures have been removed. The only thing you need to make sure of when you're adding lightmaps for Armada 1 usage is that the textures do NOT have an alpha channel. Otherwise you'll have a phantom ship flying around in game.

Ok, first off select the faces you'll want to be lit up in game. With the B'Rel, we'll select the back engine block.



Next, regroup the selected faces and name it something easy to figure out, such as Glow1.

Now, to make it light up. Click over to the Materials tab, create a new material, and name it MatGlow1. Afterwards Assign the same texture file that the new group you created was using to the new material,

and then assign that material to the new mesh group.



Alright, with the MatGlow1 material highlighted click the Ambient and Emissive buttons, and set them both to a white color. You could set them to the same color as what you want lit up, but this looks some what off with things other than warp grids or deflector dishes, due to part of the hull lighting up as the said color as well.

Now, there's one final thing you've got to do; node the unit. Since you now have an additional mesh group, you've got to add another node/joint for it like you would for the other mesh groups, otherwise the said group won't be loaded in the game.

And there you go! You now know how to light up certain parts of a mesh for Armada 1. This can be used in Armada 2 as well (some of the old stock ships still use it, I.E. the construction and mining ships for the original 4 Races), though it's best suited for if you're using a transparent alpha map as well.