3D Printing

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In the Beginning, Manufacturing was “Subtractive”
Today’s 3D Printing Process

“3D Printing” is defined as some sort of “additive” process. (Additive manufacturing is also sometimes called Stereolithography.) The current frenzy in 3D Printing consists mostly of desktop systems that deposit layers of molten plastic:
Examples of 3D Printing
Portland's Laika uses Color 3D Printing for Stop-motion Movies

Kubo and the Two Strings
The 3D Printing Geometry File

3D Printers are fed a file called an “STL File”, which lists all the triangles in the object. All 3D CAD systems (as well as TinkerCad, Thingiverse, and Blender) can produce this type of file for you.

In this particular file, these coordinates are in units of inches. Some 3D Printers use **inches**, most now seem to use **millimeters**.

Check! It matters!

Note: there are 25.4 mm/inch
Name of project

Parameters you can set

Retrieve the STL file
Object Rules for 3D Printing

1. The object must be a mesh and **consist only of triangles**.

*In Blender:* Modifiers → Add Modifier → Triangulate
Object Rules for 3D Printing

2. The object must be a legal solid. It *must* have a definite inside and a definite outside. It can’t have any missing face pieces.

“Definite inside and outside” is sometimes called “Two-manifold” or “Watertight”
Object Modeling Rules for 3D Printing

3. You can’t make a compound object by simply overlapping two objects in 3D. If you want both shapes together, do a Boolean union on them so that they become one complete object.
Object Rules for 3D Printing

4. Each edge in the mesh must bound 2 and only 2 triangles (this is known as the **Vertex-to-Vertex Rule**).
The Simplified Euler's Formula* for Legal Solids

\[ F - E + V = 2 \]

- **F** Faces
- **E** Edges
- **V** Vertices

6 – 12 + 8 = 2

*sometimes called the Euler-Poincaré formula
The Full Euler's Formula* for Legal Solids

\[ F - E + V - L = 2( B - G ) \]

- \( F \) : Faces
- \( E \) : Edges
- \( V \) : Vertices
- \( L \) : Inner Edge Loops (within faces)
- \( B \) : Bodies
- \( G \) : Genus (number of through-holes)

\[ 6 - 12 + 8 - 0 = 2( 1 - 0 ) \]

*sometimes called the Euler-Poincaré formula
Watch Out for Overhangs!

This layer will fall to the plate

These layers will build fine
Note that, if you build this object upside-down, it will probably be fine
Watch Out for Overhangs!

Some 3D printers handle this by leaving unused material in place to support the overhangs.
Watch Out for Overhangs!

Some 3D printers handle this by using software to add “support structures” to the overhangs.

Some 3D printers handle this better than others…
What Happens if You Don’t Follow the Rules?

Check here:
http://twistedsifter.com/2013/08/when-3d-printing-goes-wrong/
Another way to Model:
Remember Venn Diagrams (2D Boolean Operators) from High School?

Two Overlapping Shapes

Union

Intersection

Difference
Solid Modeling Using 3D Boolean Operators

Two Overlapping Solids

Union

Intersection

Difference

This is often called Constructive Solid Geometry (CSG)
Like many CAD systems, TinkerCAD uses 3D Boolean operators (3D Venn diagrams). This guarantees a legal solid for 3D Printing.
1. Select both (Shift-left click)

2. “Group”
TinkerCAD
Blender’s 3D Printing Options aren’t there by Default

But, by default, Blender doesn’t let you see its 3D Printing options. You need to tell Blender to turn these on.

1. Click **Edit → Preferences**
Blender’s 3D Printing Options aren’t there by Default

1. Click on the Addons tab
2. Click on the Mesh tab
4. Click the **Mesh: 3D Print Toolbox**
Blender Options for 3D Printing

This now shows up in your Properties Region (hit the ‘n’ key to turn it on)

Objects destined for 3D Printing must be “legal solids”. Clicking on Check All will try to determine that.

Tab over to Edit Mode. Clicking on any of these will highlight where they are on your object.
An overhang face is not necessarily a bad thing. The entire bottom of the part will consist of, by necessity, overhang faces.

However, overhang faces that are not the bottom of the part could be a problem.
Heightmap Files are Straightforward to use with 3D Printing
A Very Special Heightmap 3D Printing Model
A Very Special Heightmap 3D Printing Model
The OSU Library’s 3D Printers

To watch one of the OSU Library’s 3D Printers, go to:

http://webcam.oregonstate.edu/3dprinter/
The OSU Library’s 3D Printers

To send an STL model to the OSU Library’s 3D Printers, go to:

http://guides.library.oregonstate.edu/3Dprinting/3Dprintform