

MENTAL RAY® FOR 3DS MAX®

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Starting with support for 3ds Max 2018, NVIDIA is providing Mental Ray directly to end users as a plug-in rendering solution that can be freely used while working within 3ds Max. This version includes all the Mental Ray capabilities present in 3ds Max 2017, including its Iray mode, and full backwards compatibility with earlier 3ds Max releases. Networking rendering requires a purchased license from NVIDIA, which also enables the separately available NVIDIA Iray for 3ds Max plug-in product.

Q: What is happening with Mental Ray and 3ds Max?

A: NVIDIA is taking ownership of the 3ds Max integration of Mental Ray from Autodesk and is bringing it to market as **NVIDIA Mental Ray for 3ds Max** - a plug-in rendering solution that ensures 3ds Max artists will continue to have the Mental Ray capabilities they depend upon.

Q: What is "NVIDIA Mental Ray for 3ds Max"?

A: *NVIDIA Mental Ray for 3ds Max* is a plug-in rendering solution, seamlessly integrated into Autodesk 3ds Max. The industry standard renderer people have counted upon for years is now available directly from those creating it. 3ds Max 2018 will receive the latest Mental Ray rendering core (matching that of Mental Ray for Maya), updated workflows, enhanced MDL support, and better Satellite and Standalone usability.

Q: How will I get Mental Ray for 3ds Max now?

A: NVIDIA is supplying *Mental Ray for 3ds Max* in much the same way as it has been doing with its *Mental Ray for Maya* product. Downloads are hosted on NVIDIA.com, which provides a fully functional version for immediate use within an active 3ds Max session.

Q: When is Mental Ray for 3ds Max free to use?

A: Mental Ray for 3ds Max is fully functional, and free to use, as long as it's rendering to the 3ds Max GUI. You can render to any resolution, and for as many frames as you like when rendering to the 3ds Max "Rendered Frame Window" or "Active Shade".

Q: What does a purchased license enable?

A: A purchased license enables Mental Ray to be used with 3ds Max command line, within an automated 3ds Max rendering session (e.g., with a queue manager like Back Burner), and Mental Ray Standalone and Satellite (for rendering without a 3ds Max installation). It also enables the *Iray for 3ds Max* plug-in renderer (available separately from NVIDIA), giving you both rendering products for the price of one.

Q: How much does Mental Ray for 3ds Max cost?

A: Local licenses of *Iray & Mental Ray for 3ds Max* cost \$295/year or \$95/year for systems having a professional GPU, with 5-pack options reducing the cost by 1/3. Floating licenses are available for about 1/3 more. Greater discounts for larger volumes are available from VARs starting at 50.

Q: Will Mental Ray for 3ds Max continue to provide me the same level of functionality I depend upon?

A: Absolutely, although some defaults have changed to reflect best practices, and some terminology has been updated for consistency, and obsolete features may eventually be retired to improve ease of use. Even with these changes, you can be assured that backwards compatibility is preserved and your scenes will render properly.

Q: What's happening to the Iray renderer that used to come with 3ds Max?

A: The Iray renderer that historically shipped as part of 3ds Max was actually a mode of Mental Ray. This mode has been renamed Mental Ray Iray for clarity, and is included as part of *Mental Ray for 3ds Max*, so all of your previous files will load and render properly. You can then migrate to Iray for 3ds Max (now simply called "Iray Photoreal" in 3ds Max 2018).

Q: Will Mental Ray for 3ds Max improve over time, or will it just stay status quo?

A: NVIDIA is committed to improve and modernize the workflow for Mental Ray in 3ds Max, while also exposing untapped functionality. New capabilities will now appear in 3ds Max as they are enabled in Mental Ray itself. With Mental Ray now being a plug-in, NVIDIA can update its capabilities without having to wait for a 3ds Max release, and (in the future) can provide new versions to previously supported 3ds Max versions.

Q: What is different about Mental Ray coming from NVIDIA rather than as part of 3ds Max?

A: Historically it was Autodesk that decided how Mental Ray was exposed in 3ds Max, and its evolution had to compete with all the other priorities 3ds Max has had. NVIDIA now directs this effort entirely and will focus on improving its rendering workflow and presenting best practices without being constrained by legacy. You can see this start with v2018 and it will only get better over time.

Q: Will NVIDIA support versions of 3ds Max prior to v2018?

A: No. NVIDIA can't provide updates for earlier 3ds Max versions because there isn't a Mental Ray "plug-in" within those versions to replace. NVIDIA will support multiple 3ds Max versions going forward so you will be able to bring the latest Mental Ray advances to earlier 3ds Max versions (something that wasn't possible in the past). The

Iray for 3ds Max product (which shares a license with Mental Ray for 3ds Max) does support versions 2015, 2016, and 2017.

Q: What support will be available for Mental Ray from NVIDIA?

A: NVIDIA has a very active [Advanced Rendering Forum](#) where users get support from fellow artists as well as NVIDIA.

Q: Will there be special Mental Ray pricing for school render farms?

A: Yes. Schools with curriculum using Mental Ray and/or Iray can obtain complimentary licenses for their school's render farm by applying [here](#).

Q: What happens if I previously purchased NVIDIA Iray for 3ds Max?

A: All existing licenses of NVIDIA Iray for 3ds Max will automatically enable Mental Ray for 3ds Max.

Q: Is there a trial version of Mental Ray for 3ds Max?

A: Mental Ray for 3ds Max is fully functional while working within 3ds Max for single or multiple frames from within the 3ds Max User Interface. There is no trial for seeing how network rendering works as that is usually easy to predict. However, customers with large render farms can request a temporary license from their Reseller to examine Mental Ray's behavior with their queue management system.

Q: Does my 3ds Max subscription with Autodesk give me any discount to NVIDIA Mental Ray?

A: No. Your 3ds Max subscription was with Autodesk for the 3ds Max product, which is continuing to evolve. NVIDIA Mental Ray is a different product from a different company and not related to your Autodesk subscription.

Q: I purchased Mental Ray Standalone from Autodesk - is there any discount for me?

A: Yes. NVIDIA is providing complimentary licenses for anyone currently on subscription for the Mental Ray Standalone product previously sold by Autodesk. If you qualify, and have not been contacted by NVIDIA yet, please contact your NVIDIA Advanced Rendering Software Reseller for licenses.