

Tips: Importing artwork

Using 3ds Max's import feature, Lasershow Converter MAX can convert several different kinds of files directly to laser frames. These file types include Adobe Illustrator AI and AutoCAD DXF and DWG file types.

Before you start

- **If you are importing Adobe Illustrator files:** Make sure the file has a “.AI” file extension. Some newer versions of Illustrator use a “.ILL” file extension, but this will be seen as an “unknown file type”. Rename the file if necessary.
- **If you are importing DXF-format files:** 3ds Max only imports “3D” DXF files – that is, files that have X, Y and Z information. 2D DXF files are seen as an “unknown file type”. Therefore, if you have 2D DXF files, it is recommended that they be converted either to 3D DXF files or to AutoCAD DWG files.
- **If you are importing any other 3ds Max-supported file type,** follow the general principles below.

To import and convert files

1. Select the **File/Import** menu in MAX.

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2. Use the file filter to select the type of file that you want to import. In the picture below, AI format is selected.

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3. Select the file from the file dialog, and press OK.

4. A message box asks whether you want to merge this file with the existing scene, or completely replace it. Usually you should choose “Completely replace current scene”.

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5A. (for Adobe Illustrator AI)

A message box asks if you want to import this as a single object or multiple objects. Either option will work. However, the “multiple objects” method is preferred. It gives you more control – you will be able to assign colors, and laser point placement settings differently for each object if desired.

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5B. (for AutoCAD DXF).

An **Import DXF File** dialog box comes up. Most of the time, the default settings should be used. For more information about these options, see the 3ds Max help file.

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6. The file will now be imported into the top view. However, it may be out of sight. Therefore it is best to press the **Zoom Extents All** button on the lower right hand corner of 3ds Max.

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7. The object or objects are automatically selected. From the **Modify** tab, select the **Renderable** checkbox, and set the **Thickness** as close to zero as possible by manually entering 0.001. If more than one object was imported, you must select each object separately and do this.

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8. Select all objects by using the **Edit/Select All** menu.

9. Go to the Lasershow Converter MAX utility plug-in, **Object Quick-Setup** panel. Click on one of the two spline buttons, to assign preset default settings to the selected objects.

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10. Render a single frame with Lasershow Converter MAX. Later you can render an entire animation sequence. For now, it is best to view the laser output, and adjust the Lasershow Converter MAX settings as needed, to get the best results.

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