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MEL Scripting a Character Rig in Maya

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Whether for big budget films and game productions or lower budget TV and Internet content, creating flexible and believable character rigs is an essential skill required to bring any 3D animation to life. As the leading software used for cutting-edge animation, Maya has an established rigging toolset for creating realistic character controls. Traditionally, however, the process of manually building custom rigs in the software interface has been time-consuming and expensive for those who want to produce high-quality 3D characters. Now for the first time and from the author of the best-seller, *Maya Character Creation*, comes an in-depth guide on how the pros are using MEL (Maya Embedded Language) scripting to streamline and automate the rigging process. With MEL Scripting a Character Rig in Maya, you'll learn how you can build custom character rigs in a matter of seconds, as opposed to days or weeks.

In this detailed guide, you'll learn:

• The techniques used to build a complex character rig in the software interface, followed by instructions for writing the equivalent MEL code for scripting the entire process.
• Fundamental concepts of creating animation controls in Maya, from the basics of creating, editing, and binding skeletons, to more complex rigs with controls that employ spline IK and channel connections.
• Important coding techniques such as using conditional statements, loops, variables, and procedures.
• How to create a character animation GUI (Graphical User Interface) that makes animating the character easy and fast.
• Important skills for building rigs using numerous hands-on exercises, all code examples and Maya files available on the companion Web site.

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