Lights

V-Ray lights are designed specifically to work with V-Ray and optimize its features. V-Ray also provides shadow options for standard Maya lights and utilities to assist in the lighting process.

Overview

While you can use Maya standard lights with V-Ray, V-Ray includes a set of lights designed specifically for rendering with the V-Ray engine. As with standard Maya, they are created using the Lights tab on in the create menu. Alternatively, they can be created using the V-Ray Shelf.

- *Area* lights shine from a light source contained within a specified area or boundary. There are several types of Area lights.
- A *Sun* light simulates the sun, creating a single bright light for daytime exterior and interior scenes.
- *Photometric* lights use IES files to determine the shape of the light cone and light falloff.
- *Mesh* lights turn polygon objects into lights that emit both direct and indirect illumination.

V-Ray also provides Light Attributes for standard Maya lights. These lights work similarly to their standard Maya counterparts but are optimized to work with V-Ray.

The V-Ray Light Meter utility helps evaluate the lighting in a scene so adjustments can be made to improve exposure.

Using V-Ray lights and V-Ray materials within the Maya scene will produce a more accurate lighting solution than using standard Maya lights and materials.
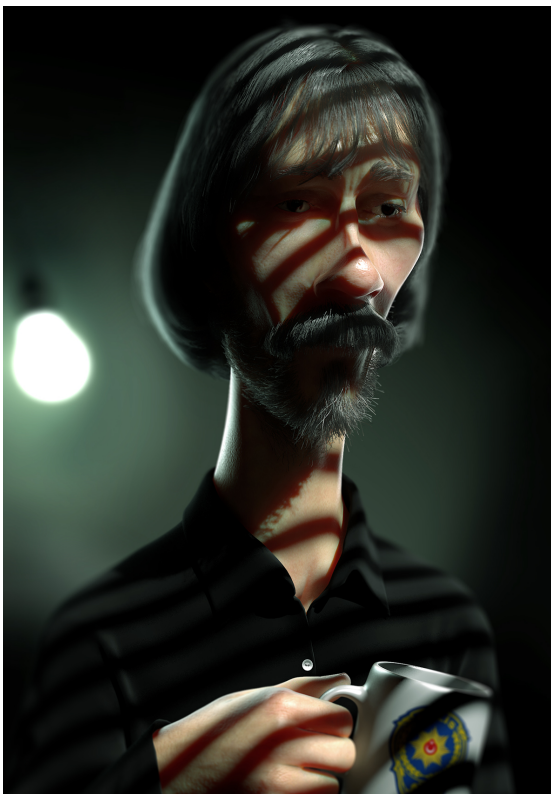

Image courtesy of Mehmet Fatih Usta

Types of Lights

- **VRayLightRect**, also known as the V-Ray Rectangle light or an Area light, is a planar light source with the shape of a rectangle or circular disk. Rectangle lights are useful for simulating man-made light sources in an interior environment, such as lamps. A rectangle light can have any one of two different shapes: plane or disc. For more information, see VRayLightRect.
- **VRayLightSphere** is a VRay Light object in the shape of a sphere, casting light outward in all directions. For more information, see VRayLightSphere.
- **Photometric lights** are designed to simulate a light source's distribution pattern exactly as they behave in real life by loading and using an IES (Illumination Engineering Society) file. An IES profile contains details about the light's behavior, such as how the light passes through fresnel lenses, its intensity and falloff. For more information, see VRayIES.
- **VRayLightDome** (also considered an area light) creates light within a dome or spherical shape to create a traditional global illumination setup. This Light is frequently used to load HDRI environment images. For more information, see VRayLightDome.
- **Sun light** is a spherical light source placed at a specific location that simulates the sun in the sky. A Sun light has some unique qualities. Check VRaySun page for more information.
- **VRayLightMesh** can create light sources that have volume and shape defined by geometry in the scene, without the need to use self illuminated objects and global illumination. For more information, see VRayLightMesh.
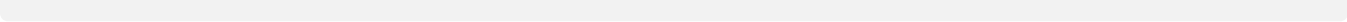
Utilities

Light Meter

Shows how a scene is illuminated, which aids in troubleshooting or in adjusting lights.

V-Ray Light Lister

Provides quick access to many of the most important attributes and actions for all the lights in your scene.

Lighting your scene

Watch this tutorial to learn how you can use V-Ray for Maya to light your scenes. We cover different approaches you can choose from, including V-Ray Sun and Sky's procedural lighting, image-based lighting as well as artificial lighting. Plus, we show you how to easily fine-tune your lighting without re-rendering using Light Mix.