

Rendering an Animation on the Render Farm

Step 1. Make absolutely sure there are no errors or missing map files in your file. If you receive a warning when you open your file or when you do a test render, your render will surely fail on the render farm. If you do not know how to fix these errors, please ask for assistance in 223 Marvin before you send your job to the farm.

Do a test render. Start 3D Studio Max and render as you normally would on a single computer. To make the test go faster, render only a single frame, turn off ray-tracing and reduce the output resolution. We not concerned about quality here, just making sure there are no problems. If your test render completes without errors or warnings, you may proceed to step 2.

Step 2. You must authenticate to the render farm and create an output folder. To do this, minimize your 3D Studio Max window, click the Windows “Start” button, select “Run” and in the dialog box, type **netrender** and click “OK”. Next, open an explorer window (just double-click “My Computer”) and type `\\nr_manager\output` in the address bar. Create a new folder here and use your KU online id for the folder name. Close this window and return to Max.

Step 3. We are now ready to send the job to the farm. Open the render dialog in Max and setup your render as you normally would. Scroll to the bottom of the render dialog window and click the “Files” button under the “Render Output” heading. This is where you will store the frames as they are finished. The location MUST be the folder you created in step 2. So in the Output File dialog window, in the “File Name” field, you will type `\\nr_manager\output\foldername\filename`, replacing “*foldername*” with the actual name of your folder, and “*filename*” with whatever you want to call your file. Select the type of image file you want to render to in the “Save as type” field. Note: DO NOT use movie file types like *.avi or *.mov. Instead, use a still image file type like *.tif or *.jpg (I highly recommend using *.tif). We will stitch the frames together later to make the animation. Click the “Save” button. Depending on which image type you selected, you will get another dialog box for image quality. Use the defaults or make adjustments here, then click “OK” to continue. You will notice the “Save File” check box under “Render Output” is now checked.

Now check the “Net Render” box and click the “Render” button. We’re almost done!

Step 4. You will now see a “Network Job Assignment” dialog window. Here you can change the job name, or leave it default and give it a description (optional). In the next section, uncheck the “Automatic Search” checkbox and type **nr_manager** in the field above. Click the “Connect” button. After a short pause, you will see the available servers populate the box in the upper right portion. Now check the box labeled “Include Maps”, make sure “Use All Servers” is selected, and click the “Submit” button.

At this point, you can monitor your job, and collect the output when it is finished. Return to the index to find instructions on each of those tasks.