

### DETAILS

**PRICE**  
• £99\* / \$195 / €130\*  
\*Currency conversion

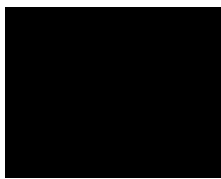
**PLATFORM**  
PC

**RECOMMENDED SYSTEM**  
• Any system capable of running 3ds Max 9 or later

**MAIN FEATURES**  
• Fragmentation of geometry (local to impact and global)  
• Automatic timing of impact lights  
• Add any object at the impact site  
• Automatically placed decals

**DEVELOPER**  
Mir Vadim

**WEBSITE**  
www.mirvadim.com



### DETAILS

**PRICE**  
• £78\* / \$154 / €103\*  
\*Currency conversion

**PLATFORM**  
PC

**RECOMMENDED SYSTEM**  
• Any system capable of running 3ds Max 5 or later

**MAIN FEATURES**  
• Huge collection of poly modelling tools  
• New symmetry tools work across different objects  
• Viewport painting tools for quick edge blending

**DEVELOPER**  
Carl-Mikael Lagnecrantz

**WEBSITE**  
www.polyboost.com

# RayFire 1.32

Design, create and amend automated fragmentation, impacts, and explosions with this cost-effective visual effects plug-in for 3ds Max **BY PETE DRAPER**

**C**alling upon existing features of 3ds Max (and those of other plug-ins you may have installed),

RayFire intuitively automates the process of creating animated mayhem.

From within one handy interface, users can create destruction ranging from bullet impacts, surface displacement, bullet holes,



● Objects can be procedurally fragmented via RayFire, with numerous parameters for fragmentation complexity available

geometry fragmentation, smoke, sparks, and more. Of course, you could create all of these with 3ds Max's standard tools, but the beauty of this plug-in is the way it allows for repeated updates and simulations without worrying about breaking your scene. To shoot a bullet that creates a hole, fragments the geometry or creates animated lights for impacts, RayFire calls on Sitni Sati's FumeFX, if you've got it, and performs the simulation immediately. Don't like the results? Simply reposition the gun (or bomb for explosions) and fire again: RayFire simply provides a starting point for more complex effects.

There are a few areas that could use some enhancements. Fragmentation is relatively uniform across a surface: a more intuitive approach, with fragment size varying according to distance from the

impact site, would be preferable. Dynamics simulations, which call on Reactor, are quick and realistic, but to further adjust the simulation, you need to dive into Reactor itself: something that will be addressed in future builds. Apart from those small issues, RayFire is a time-saving tool that should be in your effects kitbag. ●

### VERDICT

- PROS**
- Fast to create and edit effects
  - Automatic fragmentation and simulation
- CONS**
- Particle systems use legacy systems, not Particle Flow
  - Some Reactor tweaks required

**RANGE OF FEATURES** 8  
**VALUE FOR MONEY** 8  
**OVERALL** 8

# PolyBoost 4.0

The hugely popular 3ds Max workflow assistant returns with a complete rewrite of the core code and an armful of new productivity shortcuts **BY CHRIS OLLIS**

**C**overing all areas of workflow, from selection and modelling to mapping and texturing, PolyBoost

is a suite of tools designed to enhance 3ds Max's existing toolset and provide a huge boost to artists' productivity. It provides dozens of handy shortcuts to make your life easier - and even fun.

Version 4 continues the relentless pace of change that earlier releases established. The biggest change is that PolyBoost has been converted to C++; it runs a lot faster and feels more resilient, which is especially welcome with the viewport painting tools.

New features include some impressive symmetry tools that enable you to use reference objects as the source of the symmetry, which is handy for working with morph targets. There are some excellent

quick texture passes for providing cavity, mesh density and subsurface maps, which make a great starting point for texture work. There are also several minor new selection tools, along with a Texture Wrap feature that automatically wraps a texture around an object without causing any stretching or seams.



● New symmetry tools translate vertex offsets between objects: the purple head is the pink head plus opposite halves of the other two

PolyBoost is a worthwhile investment for every Max artist, beginner or veteran. It adds functionality to almost every area of the package, and offers more shortcuts than you know what to do with. It's still remarkably cheap, given the number of tools provided, and, as usual, the new version is free to existing users. ●

### VERDICT

- PROS**
- Dozens of workflow shortcuts
  - New texture passes
  - Even faster than before
- CONS**
- A lot of tools for a beginner to learn

**RANGE OF FEATURES** 10  
**VALUE FOR MONEY** 10  
**OVERALL** 9