



## LEARNING MATERIAL GUIDELINES WEBSITE TUTORIALS

The Houdini community regularly contributes to the library of tutorials on the SideFX website which provides artists with a wealth of skill building opportunities. SideFX is grateful for all of these contributions and looks forward to all the new lessons you are cooking up.

When you set up and publish a lesson to the SideFX website, the lesson goes into a queue for review. This helps us weed out spam and other non educational content and gives us a chance to review your contribution to make sure it fits well with all the other lessons.

This set of guidelines will help ensure that your lesson has all the parts needed to communicate properly to students and that your lesson is easy for students to use with features such as the **My Learning** page.

### PUBLISHING GOALS

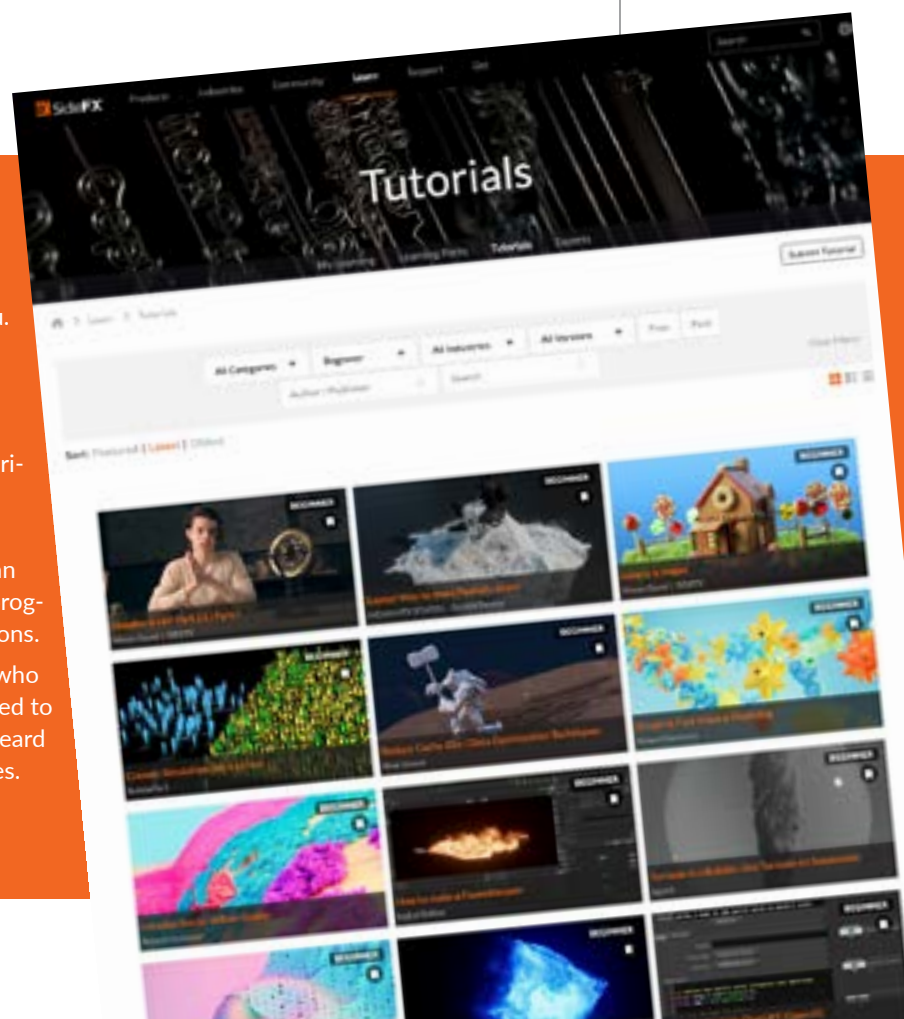
The goal of the tutorial section is to ensure that the Houdini Community has access to all of the material in one place. Even if you have a tutorial that you are charging for on another website, you can publish a preview to the SideFX site to help people find your material. This gives you the chance to categorize your material to make it easier to find.

Thanks again for contributing!

## Learning with SideFX

Artists can find tutorials using the **Learn** menu.

- The **Tutorials** page is a listing of all lessons which can be filtered based on category, level, industry and Houdini version.
- The **Learning Paths** are curated lists of tutorials that are designed to introduce and build skills in particular areas of interest.
- The **My Learning** page is where students can place bookmarked lessons and track their progress. This works best with video-based lessons.
- The **Experts** page is a listing of instructors who have popular tutorials online. This is designed to help students find authors that they have heard about and point to the authors' profile pages.



# CREATE A SIDEFX TUTORIAL

Here are the steps needed to post your tutorial to the SideFX website. This will involve figuring out which type of tutorial that you want to post then add information to promote the lesson to the community. These steps determine how students will decide whether to complete your lesson.

## GETTING STARTED

There are two places to go to start submitting a tutorial. The first is the tutorial page (**Learn > Tutorials**) where you click on the **Submit Tutorial** button in the top right. The second is to go to your profile settings (click on your profile picture in the top corner) then click on the **Tutorials** tab.



This brings you to two buttons. One is for **Video** tutorials and the other is for **Text** tutorials. Once you determine which one you want to create, click that button and add the relevant information.



## TUTORIAL TYPE

Which type of tutorial you choose depends on which type of tutorial you built. If it is primarily video-based then you create a **Video tutorial** while if it is a primarily a written tutorial (with images and videos in support) or a promotion for a tutorial that is on a different website then a **Text tutorial** should be chosen.

Video Tutorial	Text Tutorial
<p><b>Single video</b> which contains a complete lesson. The main purpose of this lesson is to be followed by the student to learn a new skill.</p>	<p>Tutorial made up of mostly <b>text descriptions</b> with supporting images/videos. The main purpose of this lesson is to be read. The only way to track progress on these lessons is to check the "Complete" button a</p>
<p><b>Multiple videos</b> which combine to create a complete lesson. Students will be able to track their progress through these videos. The main purpose of this lesson is to be watched in sequential order.</p>	<p>A <b>promo</b> for a course on another website. You should place your video trailer and description along with a <b>button</b> pointing at your course using this format. In most cases these courses would be paid [\$] courses.</p>

## TITLE

The title of your lesson will help people find your tutorial and should help inspire them to start learning. Be careful not to put lots of information into the title because it will make it overly complicated and if it gets too long then it will be truncated on the SideFX tutorials page. Your video online may have a longer title but it would be a good idea to make it more succinct when on the SideFX site.





Here are some rules for keeping your titles easier to read.

- **Don't use the word HOUDINI** - while your video online will probably say "in Houdini" to help with online searches that isn't necessary on the SideFX site because all the lessons are about Houdini.
- **Don't use the word TUTORIAL** - it is in the tutorial section so this word is redundant.
- **Don't include the level** (beginner, intermediate etc) of the lesson in the title because you will be able to label the lesson using a pull-down menu. This can then be used to assist with searching.
- **Don't include the Houdini version** - That can also be chosen using a pull down menu which aids in searching.
- **Don't say Part I or Part II in the title** - if there are multiple parts then you should put them all in one video lesson
- **Try to use active words** - instead of saying "Building" say "Build" - instead of saying "Creating" say "Create."

Bad Title	Good Title
Fire and Smoke in Houdini	Fire and Smoke
Dog Fur Tutorial	How to Groom Fur on a Dog
Modeling a Desk for beginners	Model a Desk
H19.5 USD Tips and Tricks	USD Tips and Tricks
Creating a Brick Wall Digital Asset	Create a Brick Wall Tool

## THUMBNAIL

The thumbnail is important because this is a visual first-contact for students to your lesson. For this reason you want the thumbnail to be a clear indication of what is being learned and also attractive to students. The thumbnail should not use any text or branding. The title of the lesson isn't needed on the thumbnail because it will be displayed by SideFX using a common look and font design.

	<b>Best Thumbnail</b> A nice rendered image showing the result of the lesson. Even if the tutorial doesn't take it to the final rendered stage, it helps to show what is possible after the lesson is completed.
	<b>OK Thumbnail</b> Using a Screenshot is acceptable but since the user can't read anything in the UI it is not as good as an image focused on what is being created by the student in the lesson.
	<b>Rejected Thumbnail</b> Any text or branding on an image is no longer allowed. We used to accept branding but the tutorial page got too cluttered so now we are requiring clean images. Your branding can still be on your videos which will be visible when the lesson is opened.
	<b>Rejected Thumbnail</b> Any image that has black bars on the tops or sides of images will be rejected. These bars don't lay out very well on the tutorial page and your tutorial won't look its best.

## DESCRIPTION

The description is important when tutorials are displayed in list mode. Write a two-three sentence description to help students learn more about your lesson. It is easy to forget the description, but it is very important to improve discoverability and searchability.



### Foundations | Procedural Assets for Unreal

HORE

To create game assets using Houdini's node-based workflow, it is important to start learning how to think and work procedurally. In this lesson, you will learn how to create game assets using procedural nodes and networks then deploy them directly into Unreal using the Houdini Engine.

BEGINNER

Destruction FX - Digital Assets - Environments - Unreal - Games | Robert Magee of SideFX

## VERSION

From this menu you choose the Houdini version that you created the lesson in. If your lesson requires a particular build of Houdini then add that information to the introduction. *"This lesson requires Build XXX or higher."*

## LEVEL

The level of the tutorial helps students match the lesson to their skills.

- **Beginner** - Lessons for people getting started with Houdini.
- **Intermediate** - Lessons that go into more depth and assume the student has basic skills.
- **Advanced** - Lessons that tackle more complex topics.
- **Masterclass** - This level should be reserved for SideFX staff - choose advanced if you do not work for SideFX
- **Node Reference** - For lessons that explain the parameters and interactive usage of particular nodes.
- **Quickstart** - 5-10 minute videos used to get students started.
- **Quick Tips** - Not a complete lesson, these tips provide ideas to help students.
- **Speed Modeling** - Sped up modeling video with no voiceover. Every step should be included so students can follow along. Not an ideal format - we discourage these.



Version: Houdini 19.5

Level: Beginner

Categories: Character, Hair & Fur, CineFX, Scripts

Industries: Film/TV

Paid tutorial  
If checked, this tutorial will be marked as paid.

Allow comments  
If checked, users can have a discussion about this page.

## CATEGORIES

There are a number of categories to assist with searching. Please only use the ones that are **most** relevant to your lesson to ensure that these are accurate. Putting your lesson in extra categories so it shows up more often does not help students make good choices.

## INDUSTRIES

There are a number of industries to assist with searching. Please only use the ones that are most relevant to your lesson to ensure that these are accurate. For instance if you make a **Gamedev** tutorial that could possibly be helpful for people in **Film/TV**, only label it as a gamedev tutorial - Film/TV people can branch out on their own to find it.

## PAID TUTORIAL CHECKBOX

If your tutorial is a promotional page pointing to a paid tutorial on another website then please be sure to check this box. It will indicate in tutorial lists and on the tutorial page that this lesson costs money. Please be sure to include a video trailer or image, a description and a button to the external website.

# VIDEO VS TEXT

The general information sections are used for both Video and Text-based tutorials. After that they are set up a little differently. The Video page is created from a list of chapters with video links while the Text-based page can be laid out using a drag and drop interface.

## VIDEO-BASED

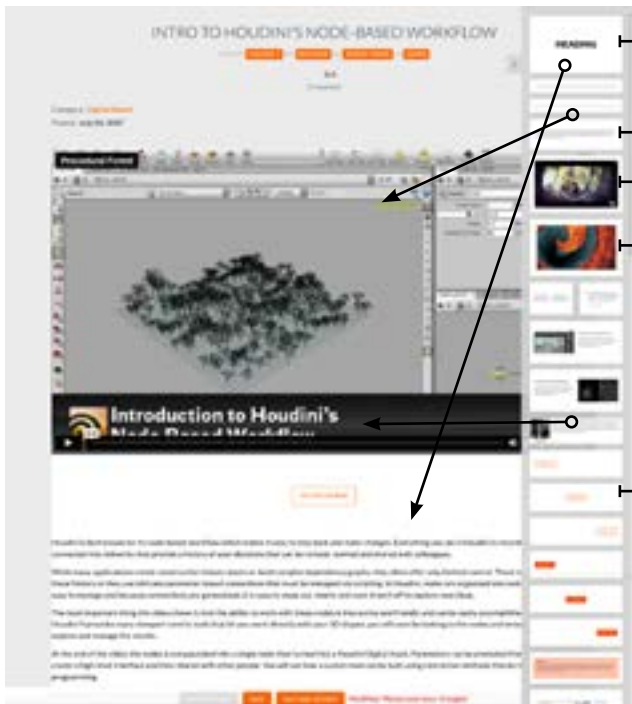
The Video-based lessons have an **Introduction** section that is different than the description. This allows for a longer overview of what is being learned in the lesson and includes the ability to apply formatting.

The main advantage of the Video page is the ability for students to track their progress through the chapters. This progress is reflected on their **My Learning** page. Below the overview fields is the interface for posting the video chapters. For each of them add a **Title**, **Video Link** (Vimeo or Youtube) and a short **Description**. To help students it is a good idea to add the length of each video to the title in square brackets.



## TEXT-BASED

For a Text-based lesson, fill out the overview information then press **Save and Continue**. This takes you to a page that has widgets on the right side that you can drag over to build up the page. When you finish press **Save** as you work then **Save and Return** to go back to the overview section.



- Drag a **heading** widget for subtitles. You don't need this for the title. It will be posted at the top automatically.
- Drag a **text** widget then click to edit.
- Drag a **video** widget to bring over a **video** then click the Edit button in the top corner to add video link.
- Drag an **image** widget to bring over an **image** then click the Edit button in the top corner to upload image.
- Drag a **button** widget then click to change the button title and add URL.

If you are creating a full tutorial using this format you can make use of a variety of widgets.

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## SUBMISSION PROCESS

- When your lesson is ready to publish, press the **Submit Tutorial** button.
- This will change the status of your lesson to **Pending Approval** and someone at SideFX will review your submission and either **Publish** it or **Request Changes**. This gives us the chance to look for and reject spam and malicious content.
- Please note that the review process may take a few days. Please be patient.
- If your tutorial title contains the words *Houdini*, *Tutorial*, or the *tutorial level* then we may change it to remove these words as suggested in this guide. If you don't like the title we chose, you can change it to something else and then resubmit.
- If changes are requested then please address the issues and resubmit.
- If you ever make changes to one of your lessons after it has been published, it has to be resubmitted and will go back to **Pending Approval** status.

## REASONS FOR “CHANGES REQUIRED”

Here are some of the reasons why a tutorial might require some changes.

- **TUTORIAL THUMBNAIL** | You have chosen a thumbnail that has text and/or black bars. These elements don't lay out very well on the tutorial page and your work won't look its best. We allowed text in the past but going forward clean images are needed.
- **TUTORIAL DESCRIPTION** | If you don't have a description for your lesson or it includes self-promotional information such as links then it will require changes. Links and bios should go in your profile.
- **PAID TUTORIAL FORMAT** | If you chose to promote a paid tutorial using the Video format, we will request that you change it to a Text format. Video is meant for free video tutorials that are available for students to work through.
- **SPLIT VIDEO LESSONS** | If you chose to publish multiple parts to a lesson as separate tutorials, we will request that you bring them together into one video lesson.

## REASONS FOR REJECTION

Here are some of the reasons why a tutorial might be rejected.

- **LANGUAGE IS NOT ENGLISH AND JAPANESE** | Right now the website is only able to handle English and Japanese lessons. Other languages will confuse people and there is not way to organize or search for them. If you include English subtitles then the lesson will be considered. We have a mirror website in Japanese therefore tutorials can be published in Japanese.
- **NO VOICEOVER OR CAPTIONS** | Tutorials that don't have any verbal instruction will also not be published. Consider subtitles if you don't want to have a voiceover. Only speed modeling tutorials can have no voiceover and we discourage this kind of lesson.

# PROFILE INFO

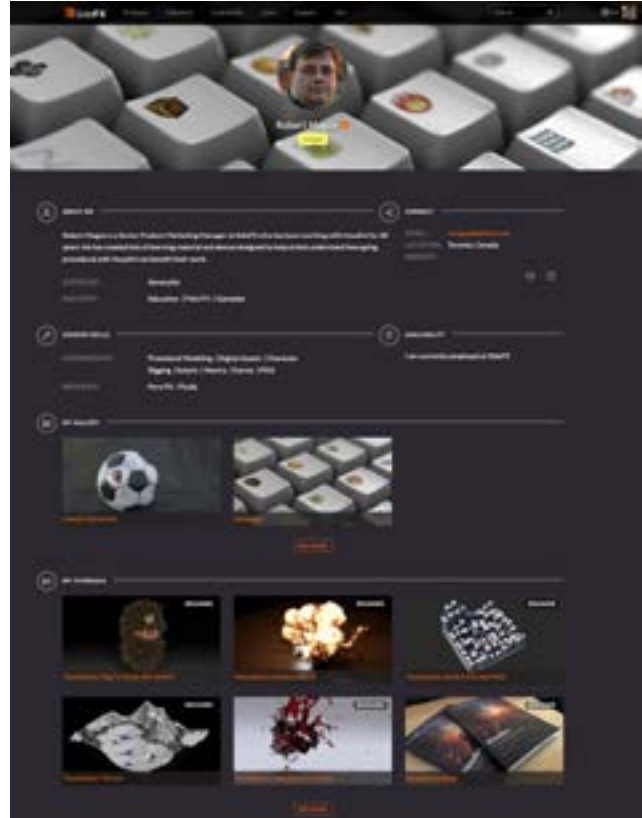
Everyone who has an account on the SideFX website has a Profile that you can use to promote your work and your skills. The profile will also list tutorials that you have submitted. A link to your profile will be added to your tutorial to help people learn more about you.

## PROFILE/CREATED BY

If you are going to publish tutorials be sure to keep your profile updated with an avatar, background image, short bio and links to your social media.

You can include your employment status to let the community know if you are looking for work.

When you publish a tutorial, your name, bio and avatar will show up at the bottom of the lesson under **Created By**. This is why you should not add self promotional info in the tutorial description/introduction.



## ARTIST DIRECTORY

You can also choose to include your profile in the **Artist Directory**. This is a listing of artists on the SideFX website and you can include it by choosing *Include my profile in the Artist Directory* in your **Profile Settings**.

Three of your gallery images will be promoted to your listing in the directory. You can either use your most recent three images or choose them from the gallery tab in the settings.

