Blender key shortcuts 03 – selection

A hyphen indicates the keystrokes should be entered one after the other; an underscore indicates they should be pressed at the same time.

Blender defaults to RMB (right mouse button) selection, though this can be changed in User Preferences. The LMB sets the 3D cursor, the location where the origins of new objects are placed. The 3D cursor can also be defined as the center of operations.

If something is selected, selecting something else will deselect the first set. Holding down the Shift key, however, will add to the previous selection.

If one object is hidden behind another in Object mode, you can bring up a list of objects under the cursor with Alt_RMB. In Edit mode, however, this selects an edgeloop or faceloop depending on which selection mode you are in.

ABC selection commands
Pressing A toggles Select All or Deselect All. If something is already selected the A key will deselect it before selecting all with the second click.

The B key enables Box selection. A window wide crosshair appears. Dragging with LMB selects everything inside the box; dragging with the MMB deselects everything in the box. Clicking the RMB exits the command. Once a selection has been created the command closes.

The C key is Circle select. Pressing C produces a circular cursor; scrolling the mouse wheel or using the keypad Plus or Minus keys changes its size. Dragging with the LMB adds to an existing selection. Dragging with the MMB removes from the selection. Clicking the RMB exits the command. Note that the Circle select option is persistent: you have to right click or use Escape to stop the operation.

The D key used to be Lasso selection, but that is now Grease Pencil. To enable Lasso selection in versions of Blender after 2.64, hold down the Control key and LMB drag. Everything inside the lasso will be selected. Hold down Shift_Control with the LMB to deselect items inside the lasso.

Selected and Active
When you select an object (that is not part of a group) it is outlined in yellow. Holding down Shift allows you to add to the selection set. The last thing you select is always outlined in yellow. However, all other members of the selection set are outlined in orange.

In Object mode, the last selected item is the Active object. All previously selected objects are Selected. The Active object has a special status, so the order in which you select items matters. The last item is always Active, all the rest are Selected. The Active object can transfer its properties to the others, or become their parent in a hierarchy, or do many other things. Shift clicking again on any member of the Selected objects will turn it into the Active object.

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