

VR Scout 1.1

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Chaco is interested in licensing VR Scout 1.1 for bundling with other network application software, under much more favorable terms. Contact us at the address below (or in the help file) for details. If you like VR Scout 1.1, ask your favorite network software company to bundle VR Scout with their browser, and maybe you'll get it free with their next release.

The full license agreement has been sent with VR Scout 1.1, in the file LICENSE.WRI.

VR SCOUT TECHNICAL HIGHLIGHTS

VR Scout 1.1 is a viewer for Virtual Reality Modeling Language (VRML) files. . VRML is a standard for representing 3 dimensional scenes and objects on the World Wide Web VR Scout is an external viewer for your web browser. This release runs on Windows 3.1, Windows95, and Windows/NT. VR Scout works with NetManage WebSurfer, Netscape Navigator, Mosaic, and other browsers. With VR Scout, you can load VRML files from the World-Wide Web and walk around in 3D interactively!

In VR Scout, you maneuver through the scene with a click-and-drag interface. In examine mode, you rotate the entire scene around its center. In walk mode, you move around on a horizontal plane. In fly mode, you choose your viewpoint, flying through a scene upside down or tilted. Clicking on "anchor" objects in the scene may cause other VRML scenes to be loaded or load another web page in your web browser.

VR Scout raises the bar for VRML viewers, implementing the full VRML 1.0 standard at a high frame rate. In particular, VR Scout 1.0 supports GIF, JPEG and BMP textures, ASCII text and font displays, point-sets, and texture transformations, unlike other VRML viewers. VR Scout uses Intel's 3DR technology, letting it exploit new 3D rendering boards for speed.

VR Scout:

1. Runs on Windows 3.1, Windows 95, and Windows NT,
2. Supports the entire VRML 1.0 specification, including GIF, JPEG, and BMP textures, anchors which go to other VRML scenes or to any other MIME type, Inline VRML objects, point-sets, transformed textures, LOD (Level-of-Detail), ASCII text and fonts.
3. Honors hints, like background colors, when rendering scenes.
4. Processes WWWInline files intelligently, including relative URLs, nested inlines, etc. While inlines are being downloaded, VR Scout lets you view and navigate the partial scene. As inlines are obtained, VR Scout adds them to the scene.
5. Decompresses GZIP and ZIP files automatically,
6. Integrates with your current HTML browser, using an adaptive DDE mechanism. If your browser supports only a partial DDE interface, VR Scout uses what it provides and does the rest. If you click on an anchor to an HTML document, we'll start up your browser automatically!
7. Simultaneously downloads different parts of the scene using multithreading on Windows95 and NT.
8. Can work as a standalone VRML viewer (without your browser) using its internal HTTP network support.
9. Caches scenes and textures cleverly, checking once per session, at every download, or never.
10. Provides a headlight with a brightness control.

11. Lets you navigate through the scene using Walk, Fly, and Examiner viewing modes
12. Improves speed by altering the rendering algorithm while you are moving through a scene.
13. Provides extensive help.

INSTALLING VR SCOUT IN NETMANAGE WEBSURFER

First start WebSurfer. Next select the 'Preferences' menu entry in the 'Settings' menu. Click on the 'Viewers' tab, click the 'Add' button, and use these values for these fields:

MIME Type: x-world/x-vrml
Extension: wrl
Viewer: VRScout.exe

Then click 'OK'. Websurfer will add VR Scout to the 'Document Viewers:' list. Click 'OK' again to finalize the new viewer.

INSTALLING VR SCOUT IN NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR

One way to install an external viewer with Netscape is to download a file of the type for which you want to add a viewer. Netscape will ask what to do with the file, and one of the options is to add a viewer.

To add VR Scout without first accessing a VRML file, follow this procedure:

First start Netscape. Next select the 'Preferences' menu entry in the 'Options' menu. Click on the 'Helper Apps' tab. If there is no entry for "x-world/x-vrml", click on 'Create New Type' and set the 'Mime Type' field to "x-world". Set the 'Mime SubType' to "x-vrml".

Once the "x-world/x-vrml" type is created, select it in the File type list, then click on 'Launch the Application', then select 'Browse'. Locate VR Scout in the browser, select it, and select 'OK'.

3D CAVEATS

VR Scout uses Intel's 3DR rendering library. If you have a special polygon accelerator card that 3DR recognizes, you should have extremely fast 3D graphics! 3DR is a complex piece of software, so it has a few problems:

1. If your graphics are darker than you think they should be, you can change the 3DR "gamma correction" factor. This is in the '3DR.INI' file, which should be in your Windows directory. Find the line which looks like this:
 Gamma=1.0
and change it to a higher value. Values between 1.0 and 2.0 are typically correct for PC video hardware.

A future version of VR Scout will likely have a "brightness" preference box slider which will set the gamma correction value.
2. The 3D graphics preference box in VR Scout allows you to turn on and off texture size reduction. Texture size reduction works around a bug in 3DR: tiled (repeated) textures which are larger than 128x128 pixels do not display correctly.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If you run into problems with VR Scout, first check our web site at <http://www.chaco.com/vrscout/> in case we have a response to a similar problem. Otherwise, feel free to mail us at scout-

support@chaco.com.

VR SCOUT UPGRADES

Information about getting the latest version of VR Scout is available from <http://www.chaco.com/vrscout/>. Future versions will include significant speed enhancements.

PUEBLO

If you are interested in using VRML to create multi-user environments, you should check out Chaco's Pueblo. Pueblo is an Internet client application with built-in support for text "muds", Interactive HTML, 2d graphics, and Interactive VRML. For more information, point your Web browser at: <http://www.chaco.com/pueblo>.

ABOUT CHACO

Chaco Communications, Inc. was founded in 1994 to develop software that brings people together. For more information, point your web browser at <http://www.chaco.com/>. The company, based in Cupertino, California, is establishing marketing and engineering partnerships and licensing its technologies.

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