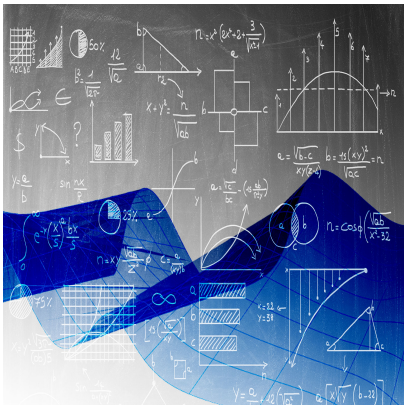

Rhino Grasshopper: Learning Resources

Description

Grasshopper is famous among designers. Coming as a visual programming interface for Rhinoceros3D® it allows for endless ways to generate forms, patterns, structures. Being famous comes with a price however – designing by programming (although in a visual, eye-friendly way) is not intuitive.

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So for most of us using Grasshopper means to learn lots of new things. And it's not only about getting aquainted with just another software suite. It's first of all about thinking in terms of parametric conditioning and programming in order to develop designs.

Taking my first steps into these arcane fields I found some especially useful sites and other sources of introductory help that I want to share with you.

How to get Grasshopper

First of all: How do you find/install Grasshopper? Answer: When using the newest available versions of Rhinoceros® you have it already:

- Rhinoceros 6® for Windows
- Rhinoceros 5® for Mac

Grasshopper is simply part of those 2 software suites and can be started via command prompt. ("grasshopper", of course.) Mind you, this only works with a valid licence – you'll need at least an evaluation licence which is good for 90 days of use. So when your trial expires you can still use Rhino but without being able to save and without Grasshopper.

The Grasshopper Primer

The Grasshopper Primer is published by Modelab. It is available not only in English but also in German and Russian. (The advertised Spanish version seems to be in English completely.)

Grasshopper Primer serves as a good introduction to Grasshopper principles. Some sample file downloads don't work, but I would strongly recommend redoing things yourself anyway.

TU Delft

Technical University Delft, Netherlands, has some excellent pages on essential Grasshopper workflows. Similar to Modelab's Primer it shows a sound balance between explaining Grasshopper's "philosophy" and practical advice on solving basic tasks.

Grasshopper Site and Forum

This "official" Grasshopper site shows, in it's visually unique way, a profound collection of up-to-date Grasshopper wisdom. Grasshopper forum is the place to go for getting answers to nearly every possible problem.

Mind you, this is also the place where Grasshopper inventor and mastermind David Rutten personally shows up and helps out with videos and explanations.

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PHD-Thesis: Daniel Davis on Flexible Parametric Models

Just reading this myself (October 2018): Daniel Davis, Modelled on Software Engineering: Flexible Parametric Models in the Practice of Architecture, PHD-Thesis, RMIT 2018. You can download it for free.

Daniel writes on fundamental risks inherent to parametric modeling in architecture. His proposals for avoiding them are based on analogies to software engineering. Although I'm just diving into it I already want to strongly recommend reading this eloquent study for a deeper understanding of the essence of parametric design.

Another Book: Elements of Parametric Design

Robert Woodbury, Elements of Parametric Design, 2010: Seems to be helpful (not read yet). I think I'll buy and read it although I find the idea of reading a real book that could well be a kindle rather annoying. (Beware: Affiliate Link)

Learning Platform I: ThinkParametric

On thinkparametric.com you will find video courses on Rhino and Grasshopper (and related stuff). Grasshopper 101 series concentrate on data trees and lists thus giving you a fundamental understanding of how Grasshopper is to be used.

Learning Platform II: Udemy

Udemy.com offers video courses, too. As of now I am taking some Rhino and Grsahhopeer lectures there myself. Interesting how course styles differ between platforms – on Udemy courses are cheaper than on ThinkParametric, longer too, which is a good thing. But then, ThinkParametric comes along a bit more concentrated on essentials. Decide yourself.

YouTube & Vimeo

Of course, you'll find zillions of videos on Grasshopper on YouTube and Vimeo. Some channels I want to recommend:

- Individualized Production in Architecture
- Mode Lab (yes, the guys that wrote the Grrasshopper Primer)
- Daniel Christev
- Nick Senske

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Round Up

As you see there's a lot of company for your first Grasshopper endeavours. In case you know some more supportive stuff let me know so I can add them to my list.

Most important however is that you start playing around with Grasshopper itself as soon as possible. I will present you with my own little projects as soon as I have the tutorials written.

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Category

1. Rhino/Grasshoppper

Tags

1. BIM Model
2. Parametric Modeling

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hsondermanncom