



Virtual Airplane - Detailing and Rendering: Create realistic aircraft models using free software: Blender, GIMP, and Inkscape

Witold Jaworski

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The four volumes of the "Virtual Airplane" series will teach you how to create the model shown on the cover. It assumes that you may know nothing about the 3D modeling software, so it starts the course from the very basics (in Volume I and Volume II). In subsequent volumes the author builds a computer model of the P-40B fighter. Every step of this workflow is shown in numerous illustrations.

This last volume ("Detailing and Rendering") teaches how to finish a 3D digital model of a historical aircraft. This book demonstrates some advanced modeling techniques, as well as additional materials and textures (used to recreate cockpit interior and landing gear elements). In the final chapter it shows how to compose a convincing scene using a 3D model and a background photo. In this volume you can find:

- Advanced modeling techniques - like simultaneous deformation of multiple objects, or using a curve to control the mesh shape
- Methods used to recreate complex mechanical assemblies, like the complete landing gear
- Rigging ("mechanization") of various movable parts, like the control surfaces or landing gear (its extension and retraction)
- Creation of the cockpit interior
- Creation of other minor details (cowling flaps, landing light, position lights, wing flap mechanism, etc.)
- Introduction to postprocessing in Blender and its "building bricks": the compositing nodes
- Composition of several flight scenes using this model and a background photo
- Methods used for matching the foreground model and the background picture
- Various motion blur effects (spinning propeller blades, blurred environment around low-flying aircraft) and their usage
- Composition of two "ground" scenes using this model and a background photo
- Casting the shadow of a 3D model onto the background photo
- Creation of a 3D grass effect, integrated with the background picture of a grassy airfield

In the 20th century you could make an aircraft model from paper or plastic. At the beginning of the 21st century the time has come for yet another variation of this hobby: computer models. The primary goal of the "Virtual Airplane" series is the popularization of this new branch of scale modeling. To make this hobby more affordable, the author exclusively uses the free (Open Source) software. However, this publication may also be useful to all who want to apply the free, powerful 3D graphics suite to other purposes.

Supplementary downloads for these series include various resources (drawings, samples, add-ons) as well as the models and textures created in every lesson from volumes: II, III, and IV.

Technical note: "Virtual Airplane" is a "picture book". This volume contains 1000 illustrations, which significantly increase its size (it may take longer to download this guide). These illustrations look best on a color display of appropriate resolution. Thus the **Kindle Fire** tablets (especially the HD and HDX versions) provide the best reading experience. You can also read it on PC computers or other tablets, using the corresponding free **Kindle applications** (for Windows, Mac, and Android). The book from this site is not optimized for the **iPads**.

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