

How to Install a Blender Extension

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Introduction

This tutorial will go over how to install and use a Blender extension. For the purposes of this tutorial, we will be installing the LoopTools extension.

Blender has two main ways of installing extensions, but we will only cover the newer method. This new method was introduced into Blender version 4.2 LTS and allows users to download and install extensions directly from the built-in Blender Extensions menu inside of the application.

What is Blender?

Blender is a free and open source, general purpose, 3D creation software that gives you all the tools you will need to produce 3D art. It provides tools for modeling, sculpting, texture painting, composition, video editing, scripting, shaders, geometry nodes, and even basic support for 2D animation.

What is LoopTools?

LoopTools is a mesh modeling toolkit that provides useful tools for editing and manipulating meshes in Blender. Meshes are a combination of vertices, edges, and faces that make up a 3D model's geometry data.

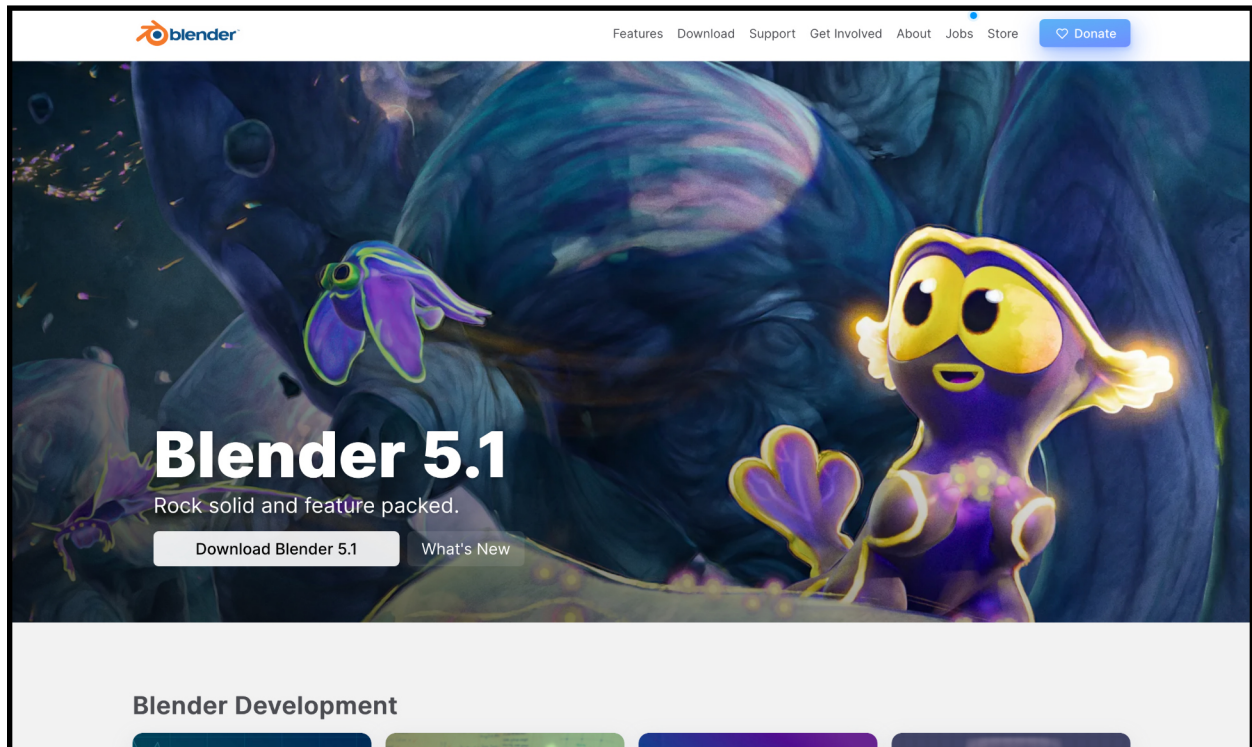
Read more about meshes here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polygon_mesh

Resources

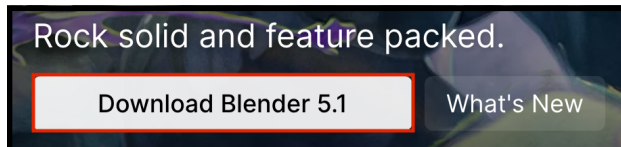
You will need to download and install Blender 4.2 LTS or newer. Blender is supported on all major platforms: Windows, macOS, and Linux.

Installing Blender

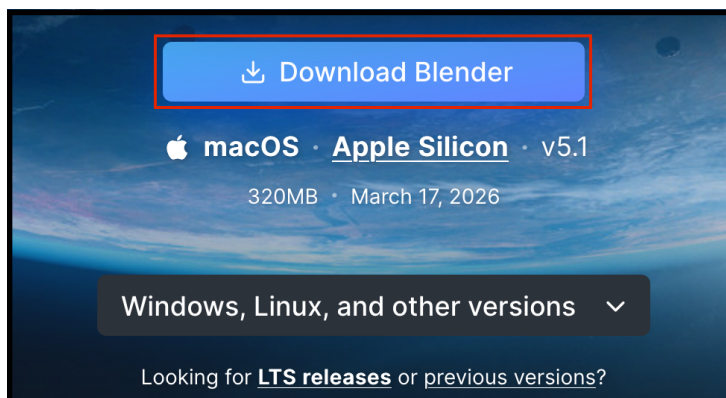
1. Go to <https://www.blender.org>



2. Click on the "Download Blender" button which will take you to the download page.



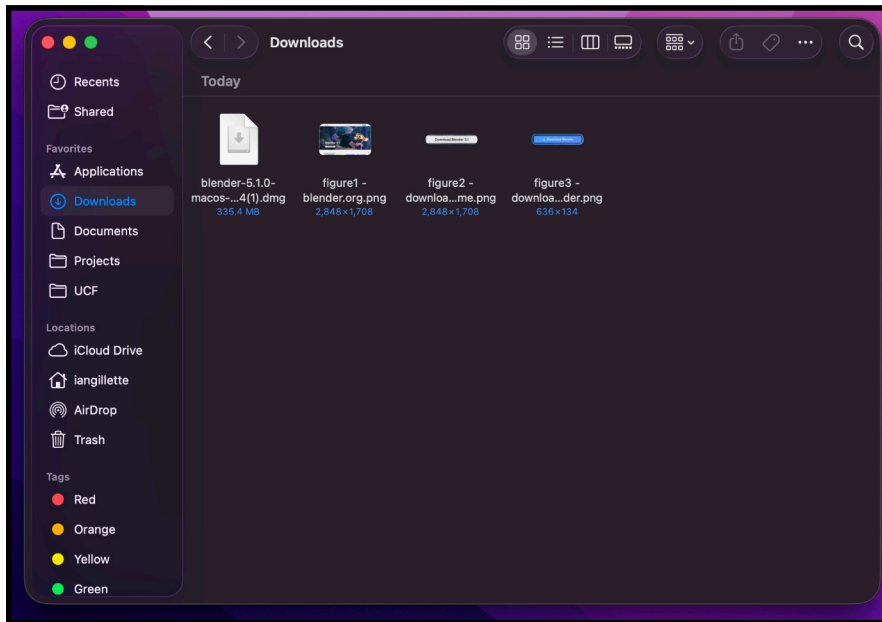
3. On the download page, click on the "Download Blender" button. It should automatically detect your operating system and provide the correct executable. If prompted, save the executable to your Downloads folder.



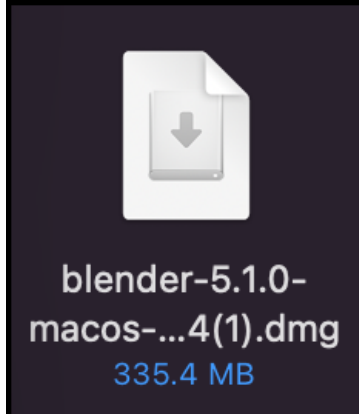
Note: Blender dropped support for Intel based Macs since v5.0. Check your chip set here: <https://support.apple.com/en-us/109033>

If you have Intel Mac, click on "LTS releases" under "Windows, Linux, and other versions" and download v4.5 LTS.

4. Open your Downloads folder.

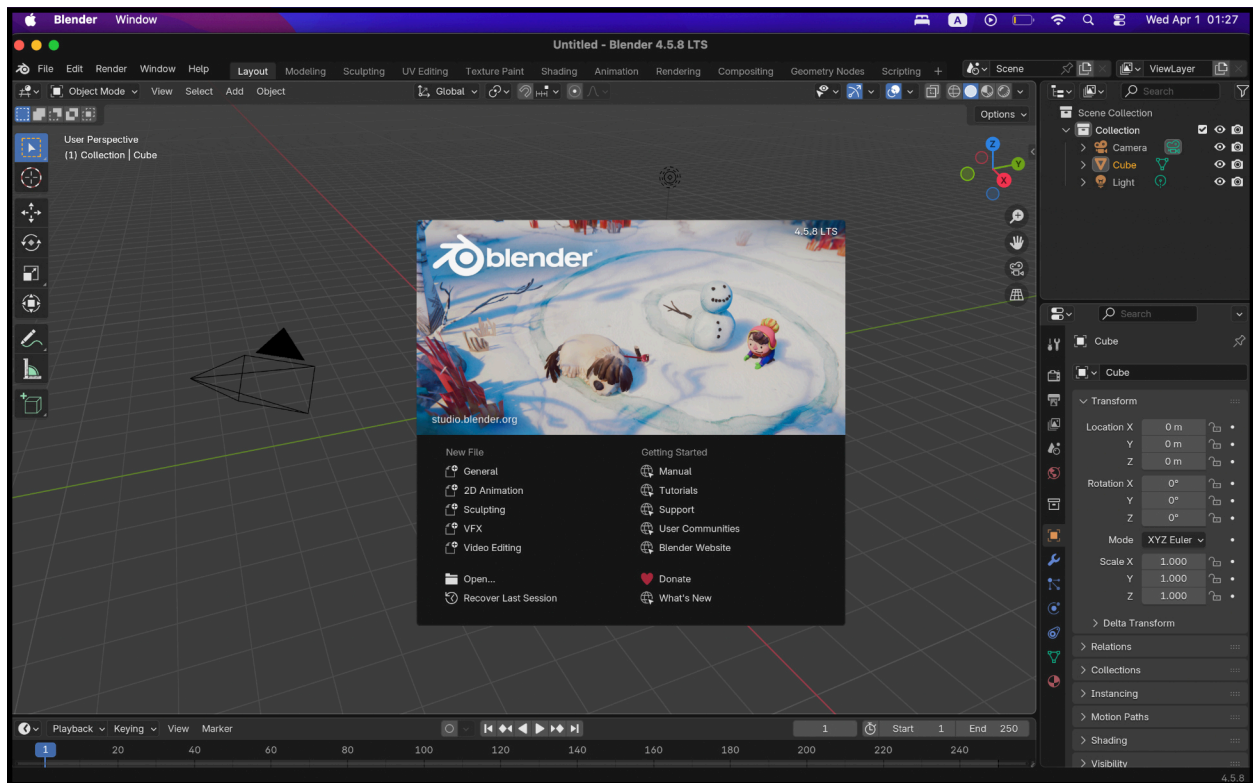


5. Click on the downloaded Blender executable which should be a .dmg for macOS and .msi for Windows and follow the steps provided by the operating system to finish installing Blender.

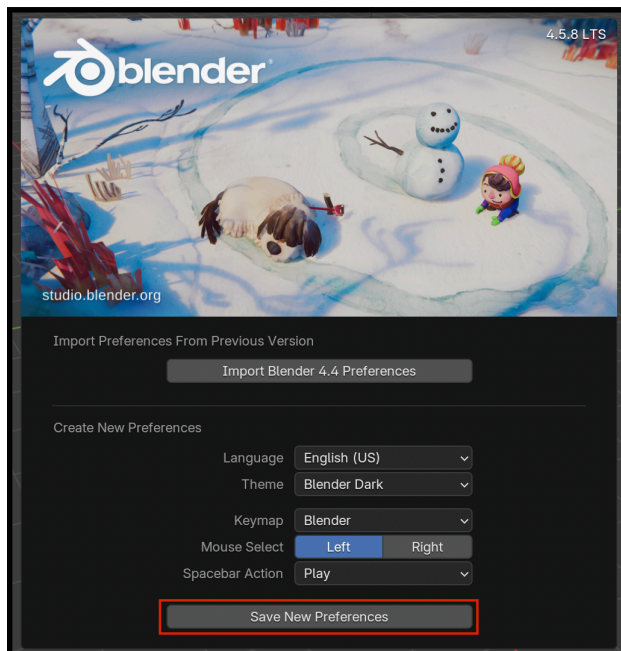


Setting Up Blender

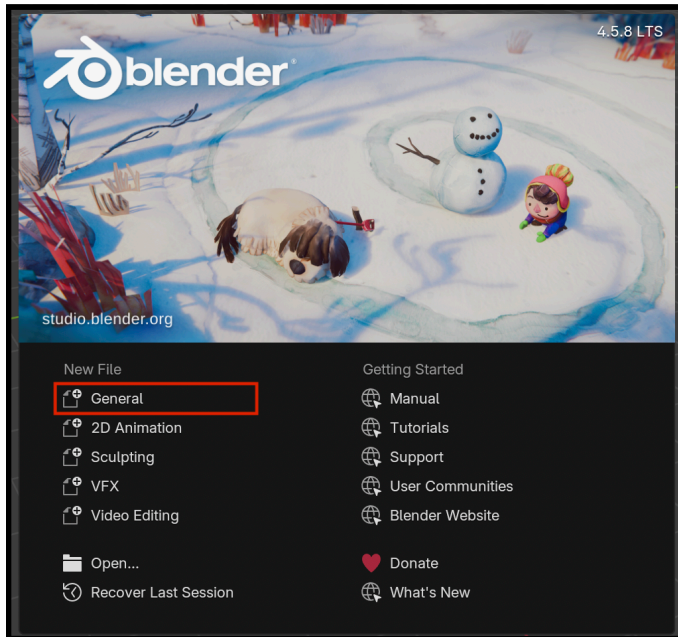
1. Once you have Blender installed, open Blender.



2. After opening Blender for the first time you should see a welcome menu. Select your preferred settings, and then click “Save New Preferences” at the bottom.

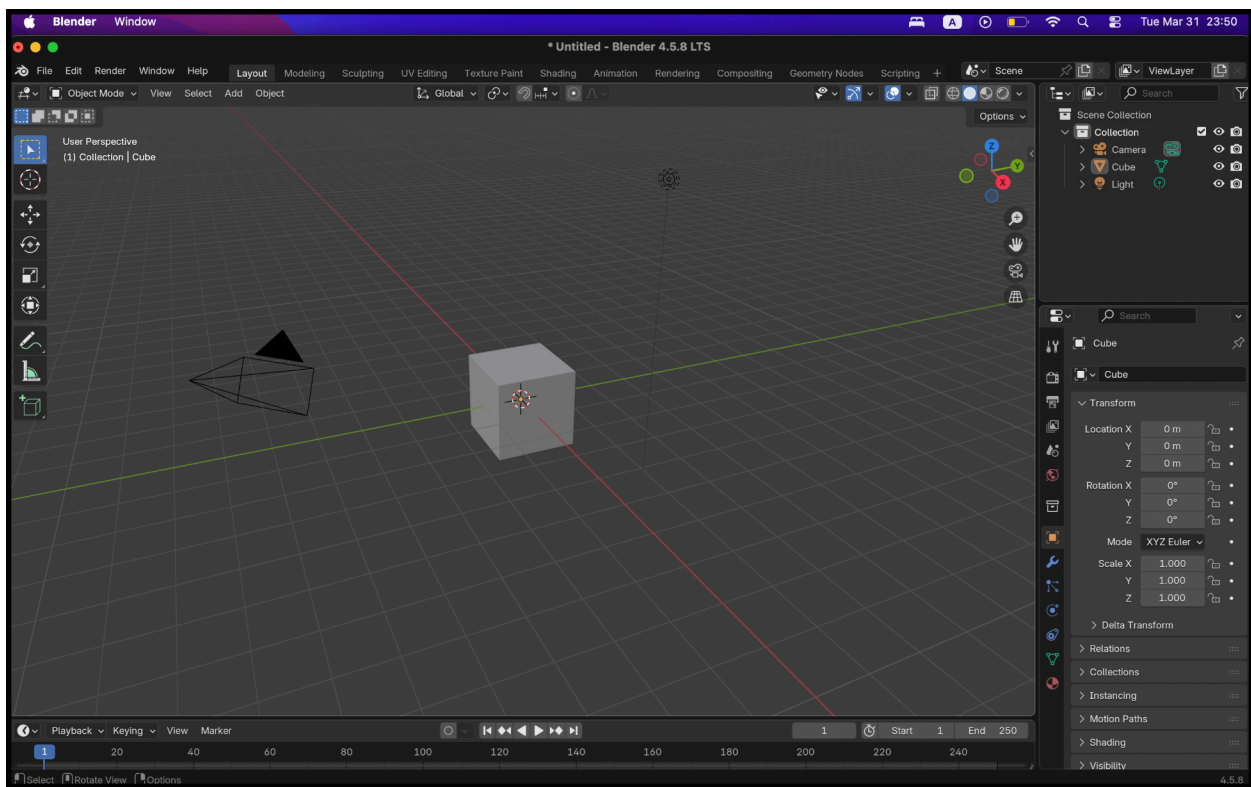


3. Now you should see a menu that gives you project presets. Under “New File” select the “General” preset.



Result

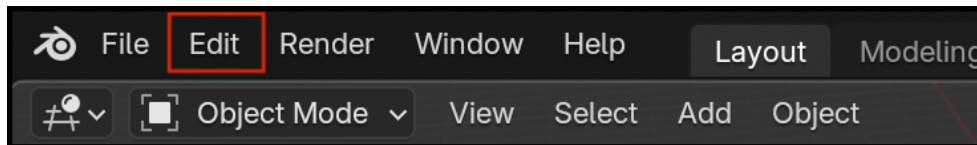
You should see something that looks like this:



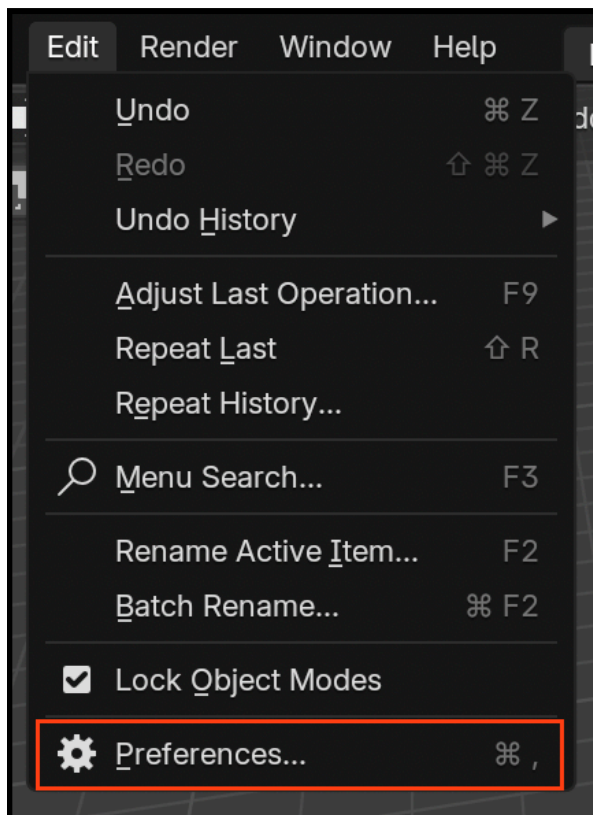
Installing a Blender Extension

Now that you set up Blender and have opened your first project, we will start to install the LoopTools extension directly through the Blender Application.

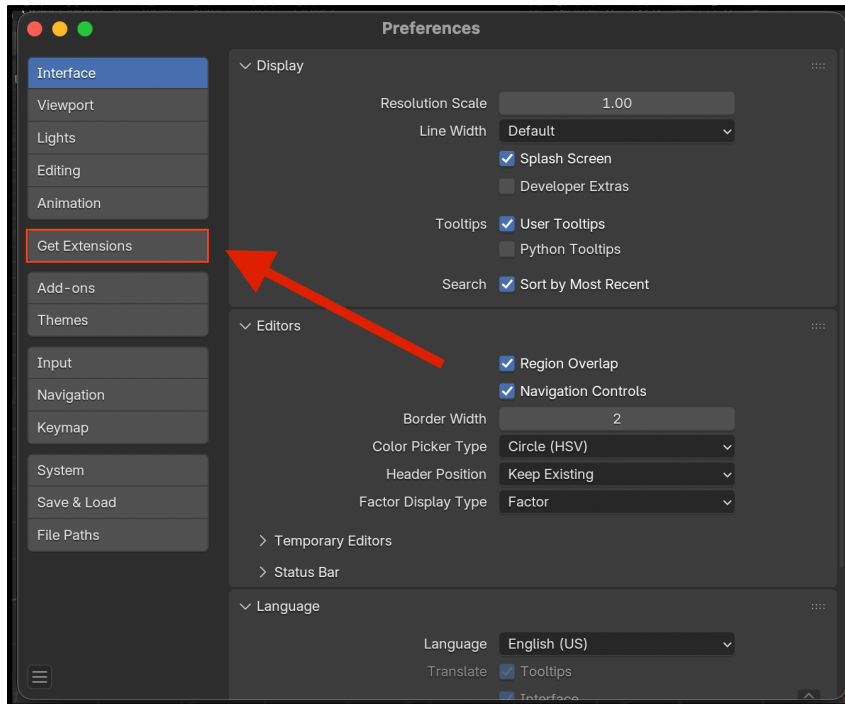
1. Click on the “Edit” button in the top menu bar.



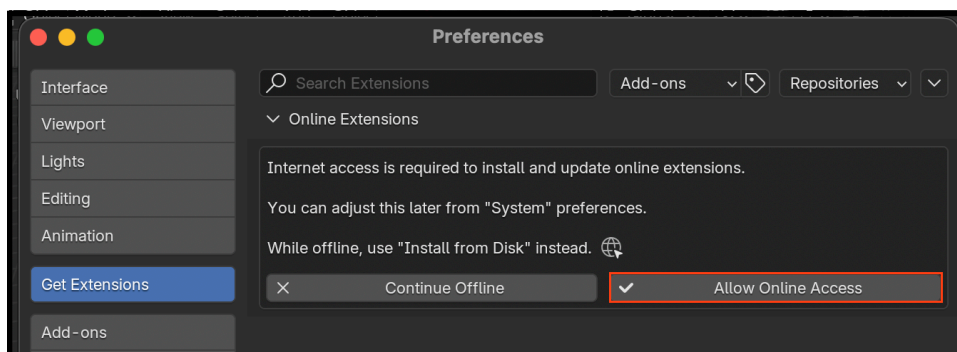
2. In the dropdown, click on “Preferences” at the bottom.



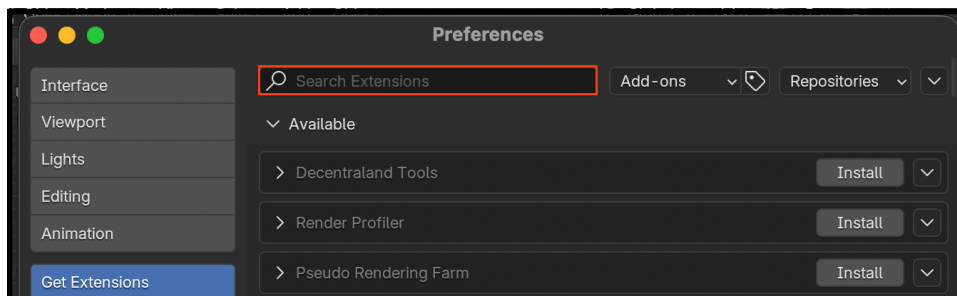
3. The preferences window should have opened. Click on the “Get Extensions” tab in the side bar.



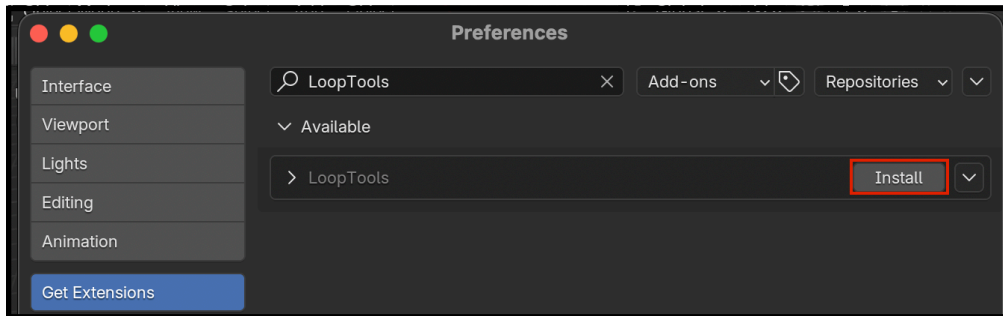
4. Here it will ask you to enable online services, click on enable.



5. Now you should see a list of available extensions. Type “LoopTools” without the quotes into the search box and press 'Enter' or 'Return'.



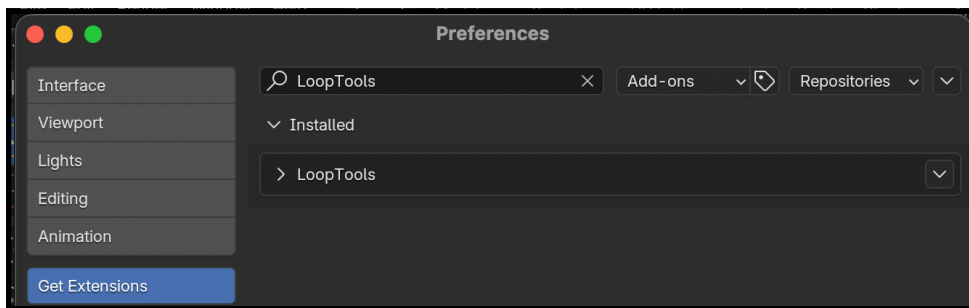
6. You should see an available extension called LoopTools. Click on the “Install” button on the right side of the extension.



Note: If you can't see LoopTools as an available extension, check if you are filtering “Add-ons” in the filter right next to the search box. If that doesn't work, check if the extension name is spelled correctly.

Result

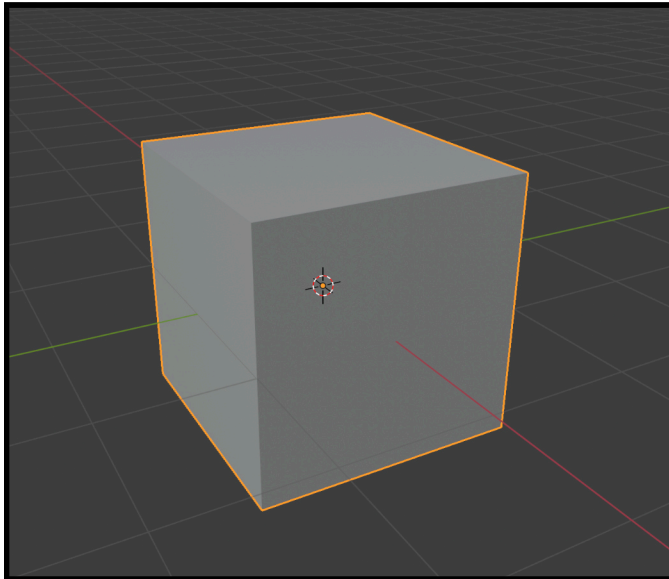
The LoopTools extensions should now be installed. You can close the Preferences window now.



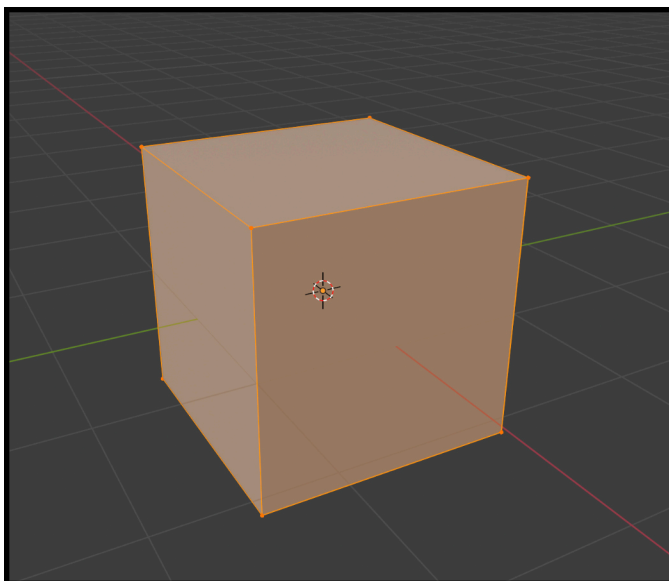
Using a Blender Extension

This section will go over how to use the LoopTools extension and will also confirm if you have installed the extension. Assuming you kept Blender open, you should see three elements in the scene: a default cube, a light, and a camera. We only care about the cube for this tutorial.

1. If the cube isn't highlighted, left click on the cube to select it.

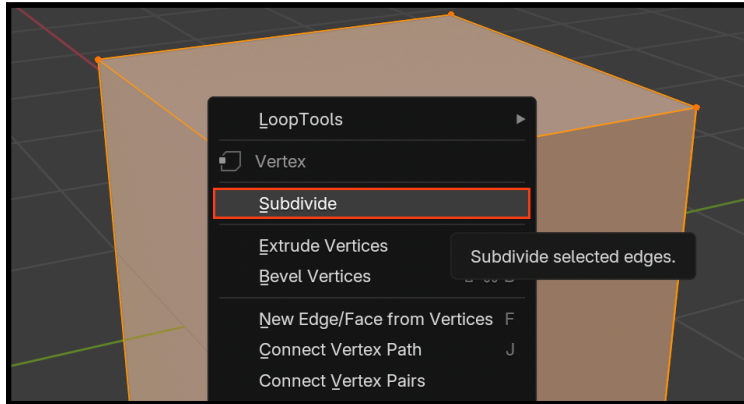


2. Press the 'Tab' key on your keyboard to switch to edit mode. Edit mode allows you to interact with the mesh of the selected object.

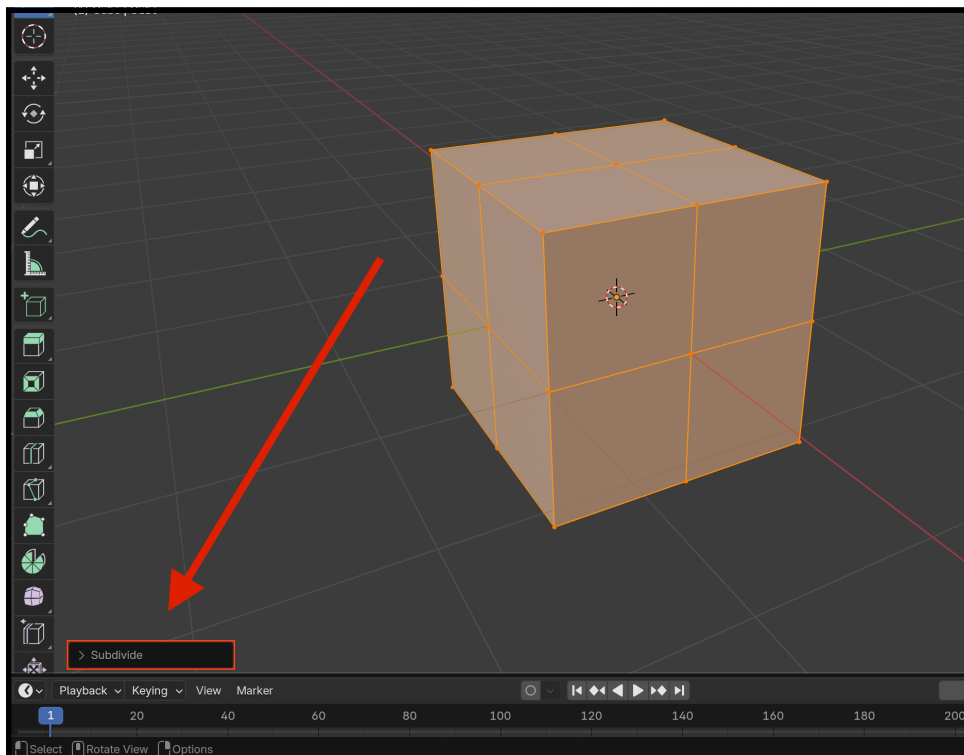


3. Right click, with the cube selected, to open the context menu.

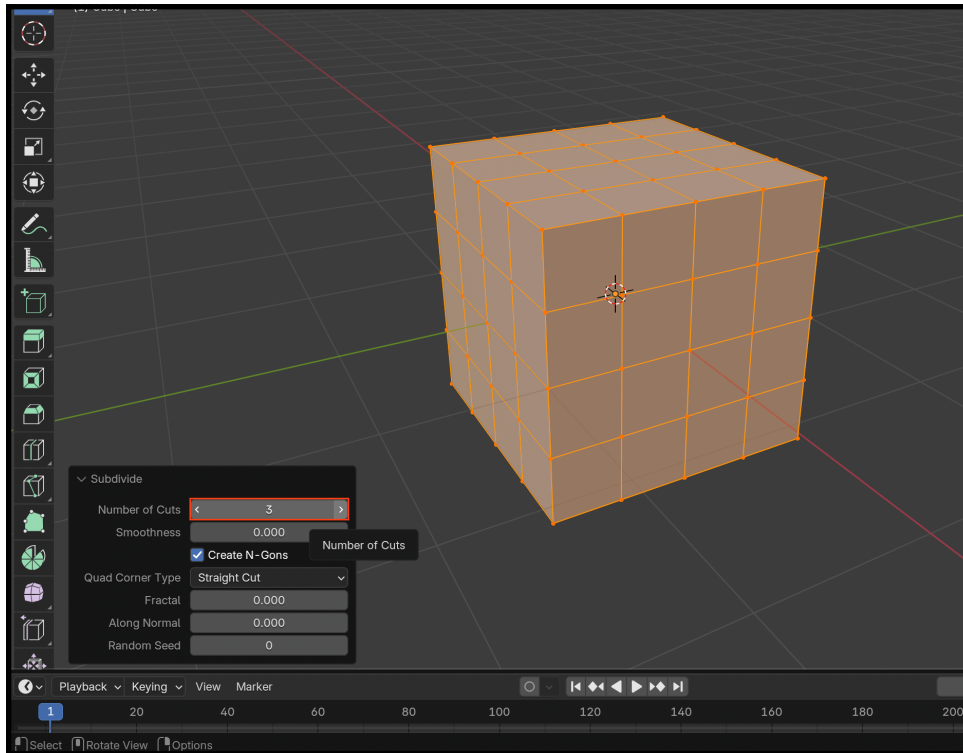
4. In the context menu, click on the option called “Subdivide”.



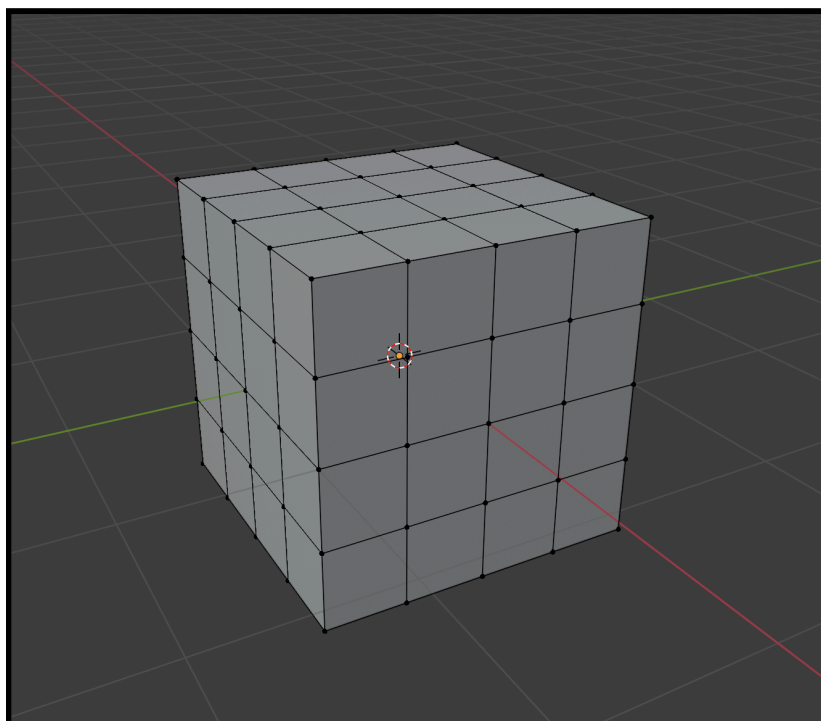
5. You should notice that the cube gets segmented into smaller segments. In the bottom left corner of the screen, you should see the Adjust Last Operation menu with “Subdivide” on it. This menu allows you to modify the settings of the last action you performed. Click on the menu to expand it.



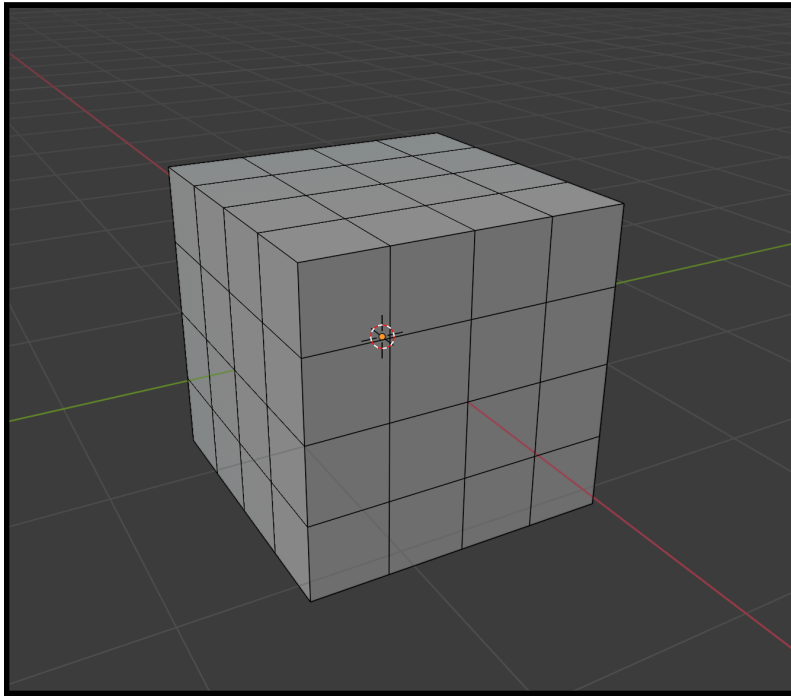
6. Once the menu expands, change the "Number of Cuts" value from 1 to 3. The mesh of the cub will update live as you change the value.



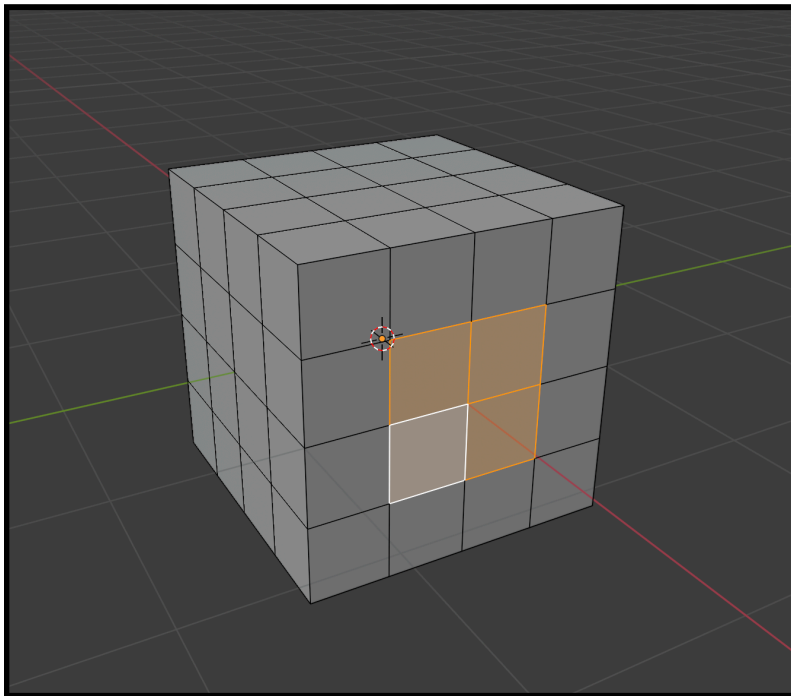
7. Click off the menu to confirm the change. This should also deselect the cube. You should also notice that there are dots where the edges of the mesh meet.



8. Now press 3 on your keyboard to switch into face select mode. You were previously in vertex select mode. Those dots should no longer be visible.

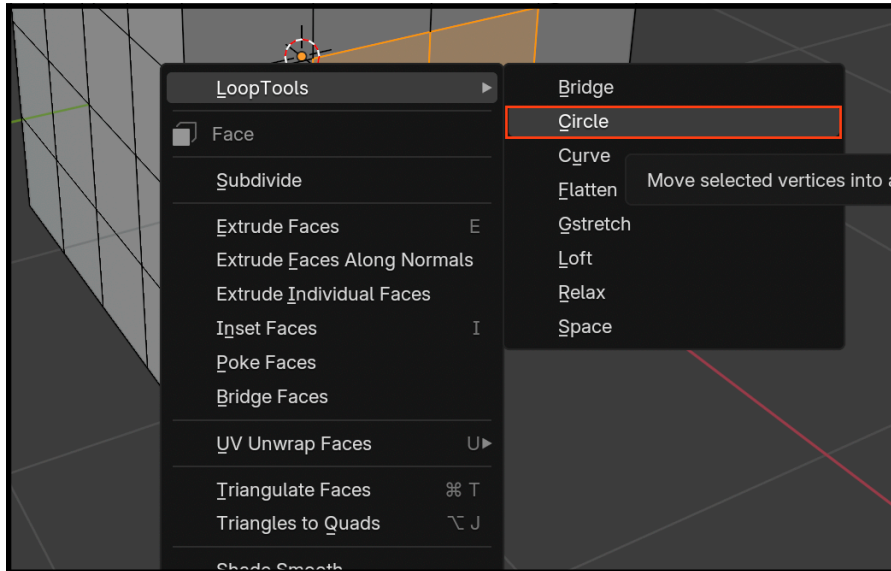


9. Hold 'Shift' and left click on the four faces in the center of one the sides of the cube to select them.



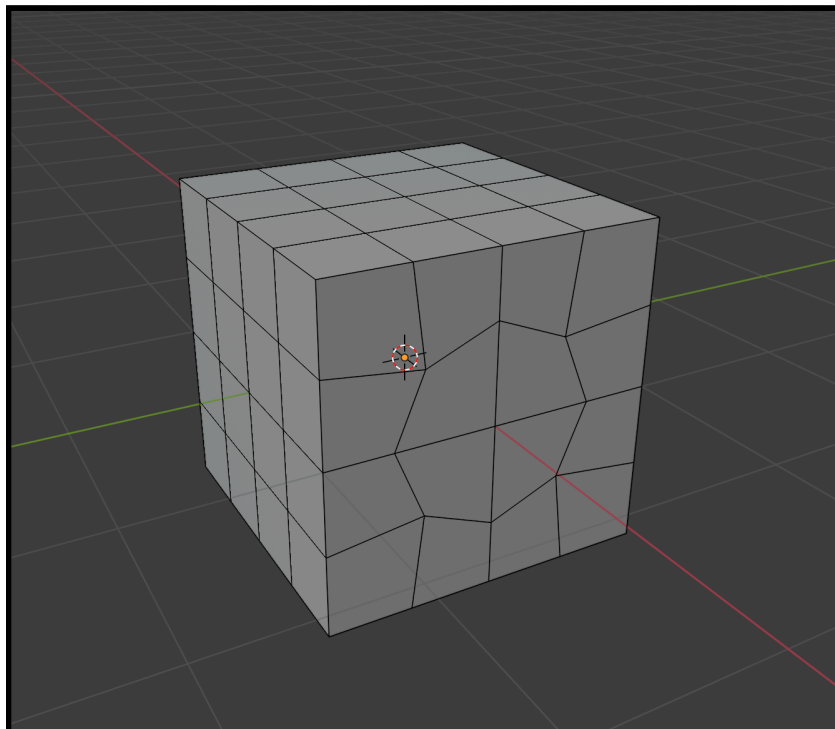
10. Right click to open the context menu.

11. In the context menu, click on the "LoopTools" option at the top of the context menu and then, in the sub menu, click on the "Circle" option.



Result

You should see the four faces you selected now form a circle.



Conclusion

To review, you were introduced to Blender, LoopTools, and the concept of a mesh and we went over how to install and set up a blender for the first time, how to install a Blender extension, and how to use an installed Blender extension.

If you still have any troubles, please refer to Blender's user manual here: <https://docs.blender.org/manual/en/latest/>