

Level Of Detail

LOD (Level Of Detail) is a very cool feature that helps you to speed up your renders. For my project I have a box that will contain very detailed features but if you are far away then there is no visible need to have all that detail. By using the LOD in Maya I am able to save myself with render time and detail by creating two objects. What will happen is, when you are up close you will see the detailed object and when you zoom out, Maya will switch the objects so you will then see the low poly object.

If the two objects are similar.

Step 1 Model the two boxes that you want to appear as one. (you can have as many as you'd like, but normally just three are used; low, med, and high poly models) I just made 2.

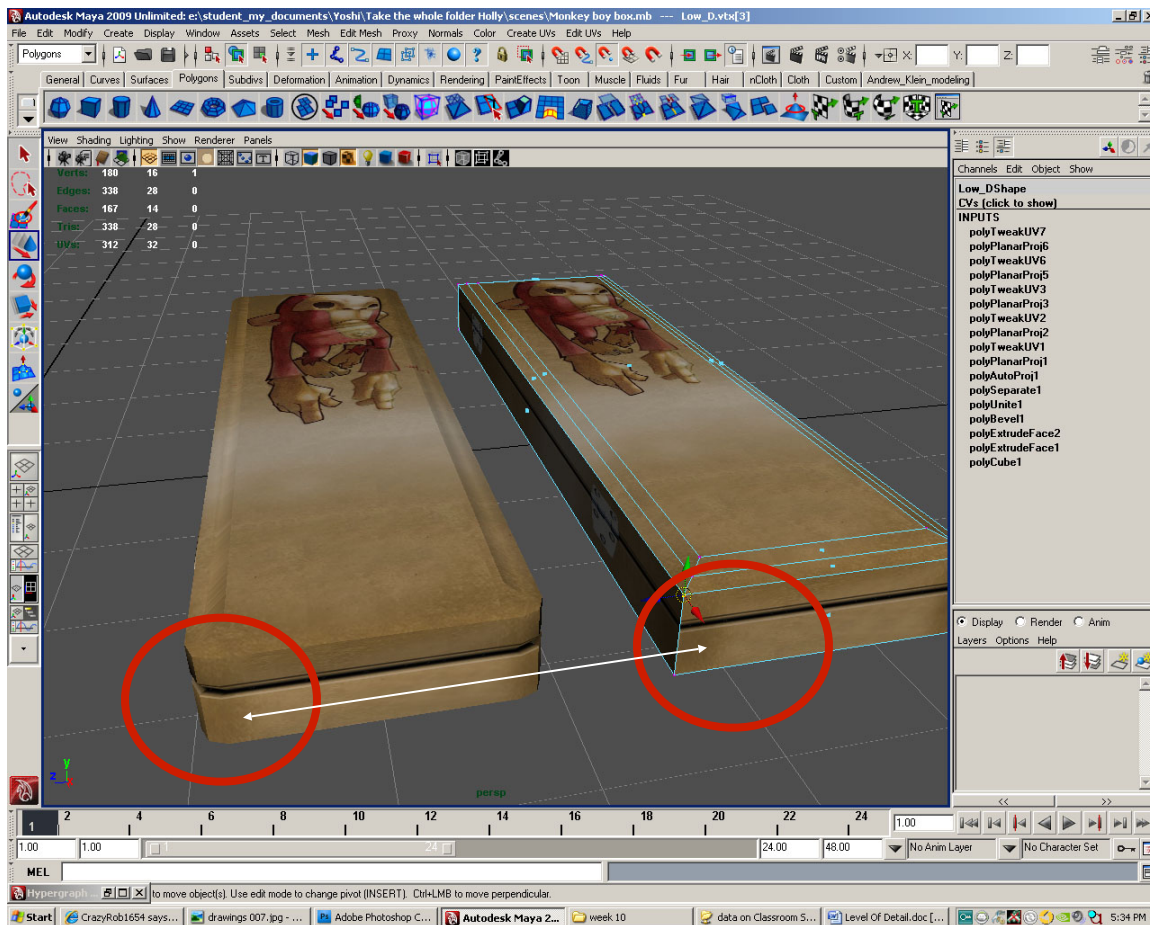
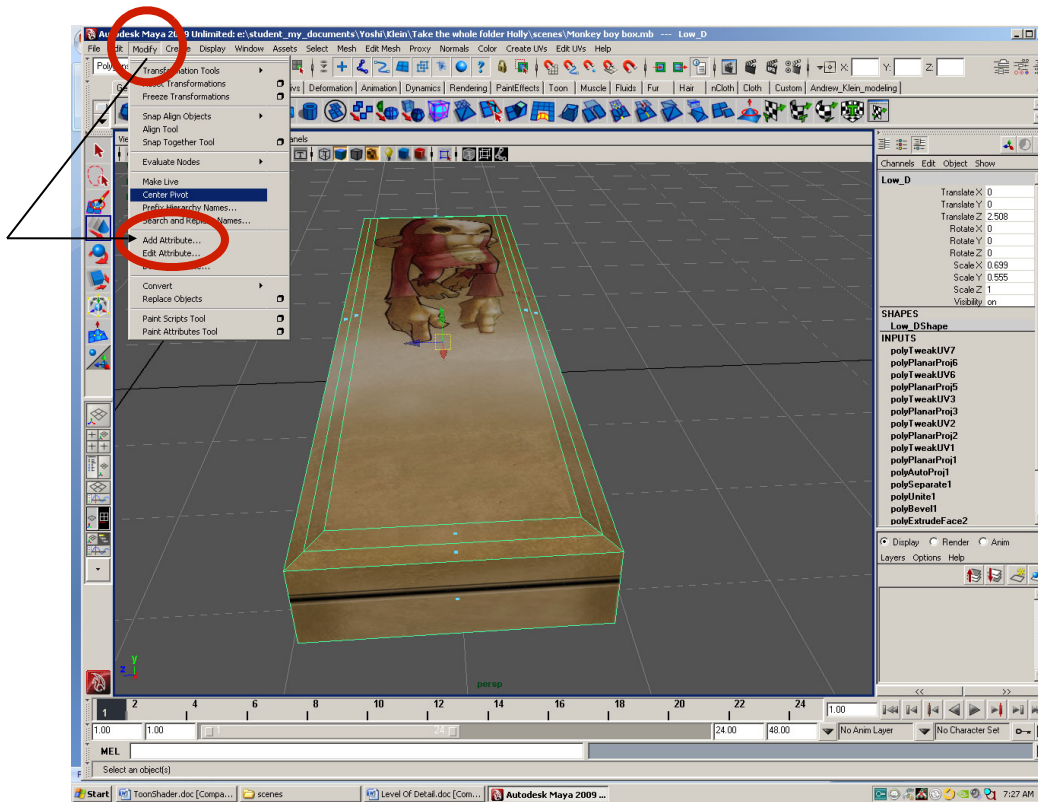
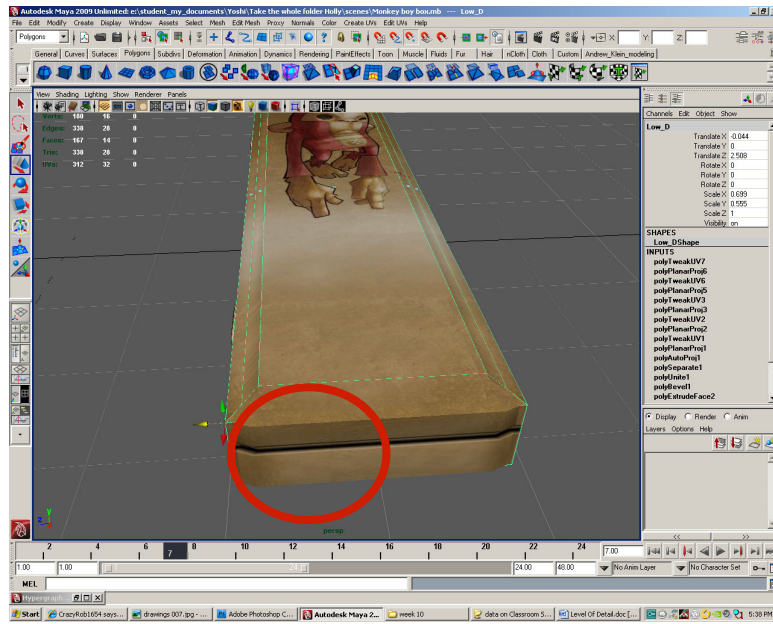
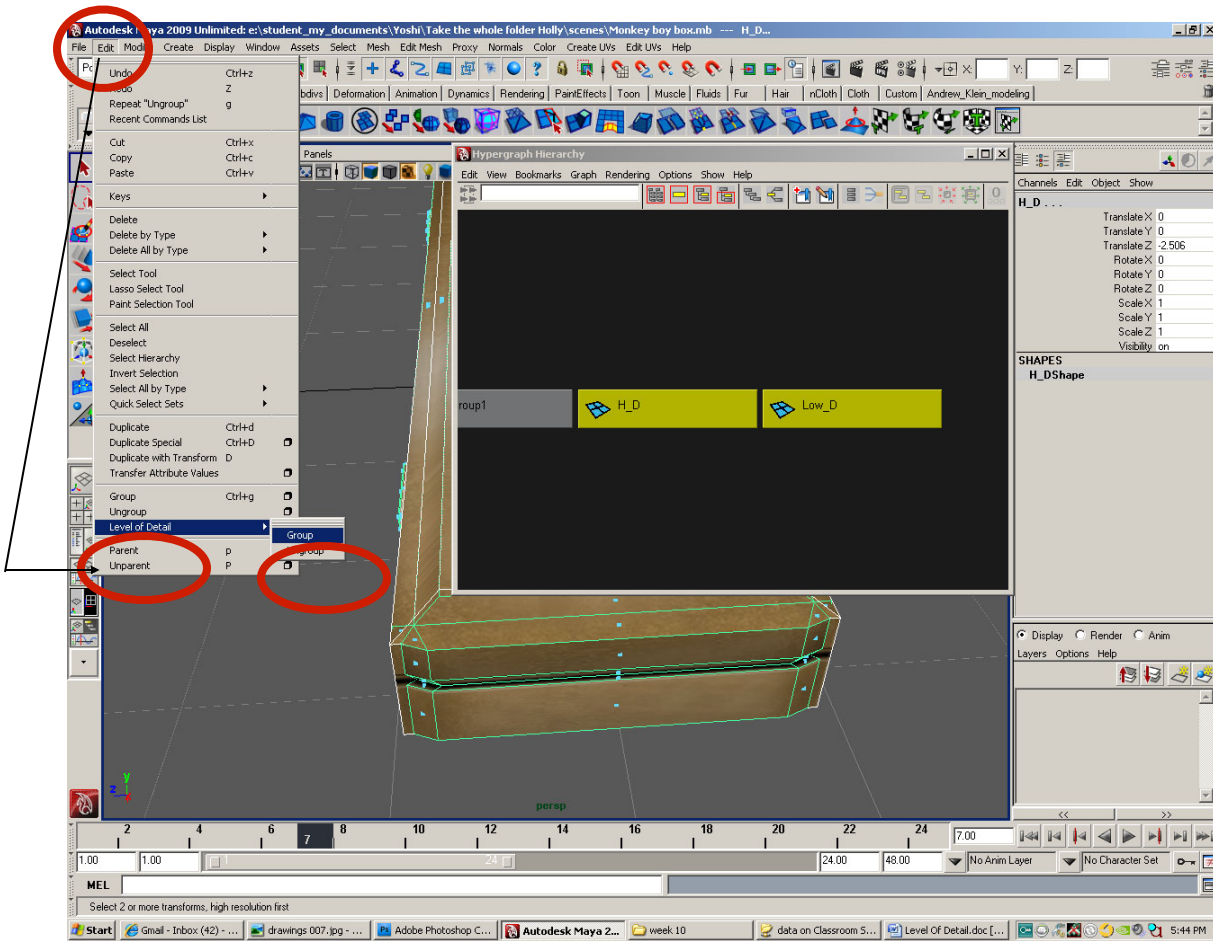


Figure 1

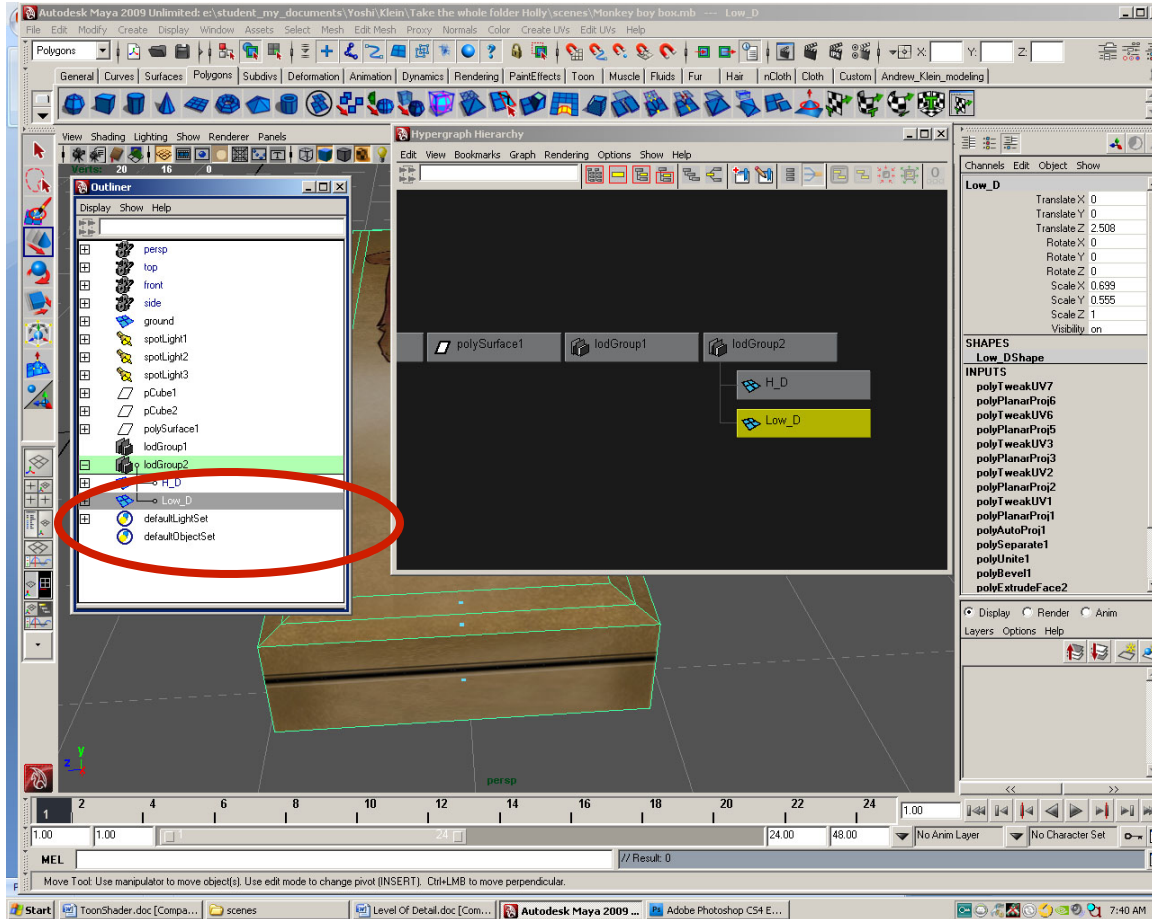
Step 2 In order to achieve this switching effect the two objects must be directly on top of each other. If the two objects are of similar shape you can use the V-snap tool by moving the pivot point to an edge and snapping that edge with the other object and then Modify → Center Pivot (Modify → Center Pivot) - Or - you can just snap the objects on each other by moving the object



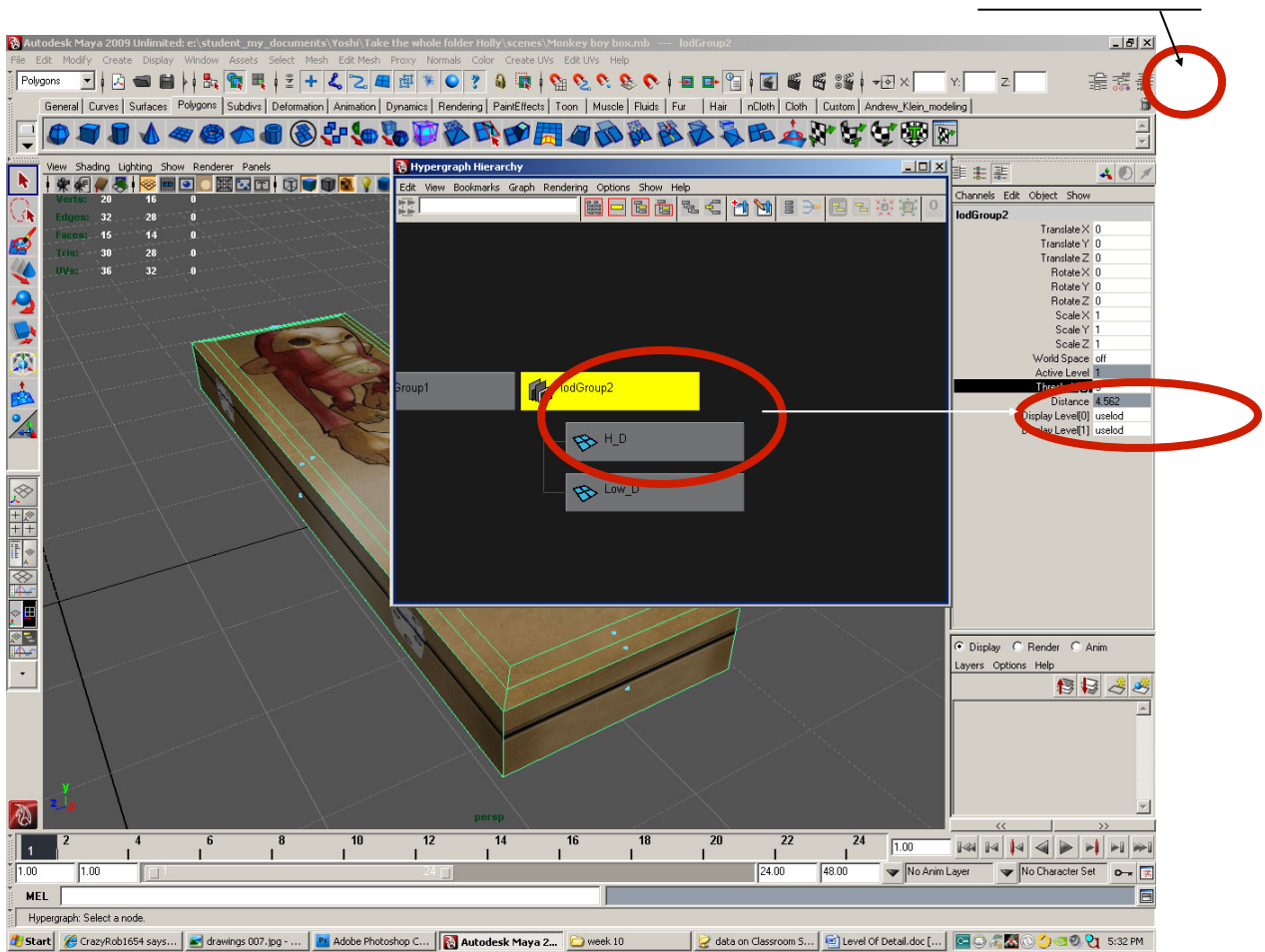
Step 3 Once they're placed directly on each other **select both objects** and go to Edit → Level of detail → Group. This will make one of your objects disappear and you will have a grouped object called lodGroup1. In my case it's called lodGroup2.



Step 4 Keep in mind that the object that you want to be able to see when close up, select first and the farthest object, last -OR- you could rearrange the order by selecting the lodGroup and by holding the middle mouse button to rearrange it in the OUTLINER (Window → Outliner).



To adjust how far or close you want to be able to view the transition you can adjust the threshold by selecting the LOD layer in the HYPERGRAPH/OUTLINER and in the Attribute editor adjust the number of the threshold. The bigger the number the farther away the change will be.



And that's all.