JR Cloudscapes for Blender

Introduction

This asset pack provides a set of procedural cloud volumes that provide realistic-looking cloud formations. They interact nicely with light sources, causing them to diffuse (e.g. Blender's Nishita sky in the world shader). They are formatted for use with Blender's Asset browser.

Each cloudscape object comes with its own unique material, which lets you quickly adjust typical settings such as cloud position, scale, density and more.

Please note: these volumes are large, and depending on your default view and renderer settings you may not be able to visualise them correctly. See the Further Instructions & Troubleshooting section below for more information.

Installation

1. Extract the *JR Cloudscapes* folder to a disk location of your choice.

2. Within Blender, go to Edit>Preferences and navigate to the **File Paths** section.

3. Under the **Asset Libraries** category, click the plus icon to add a new path. Navigate to and enter the *JR Cloudscapes* folder, then choose **Add Asset Library**.

4. Now access the **Asset Browser**—you can do this by changing one of the editor types within the default *Layout* workspace, or you can duplicate the workspace beforehand. My preference is to duplicate the Layout workspace, then change the **Outliner** view to the **Asset Browser**.

5. Change the asset category to **JR Cloudscapes**. You should now see all the assets listed: simply drag-drop an asset of your choice onto your scene to place it.

6. Once a cloudscape asset is placed, I would recommend immediately using Alt+G (Windows) / Option+G (macOS) to reset its location. This will ensure it is placed in a suitable location for the sky as opposed to 0 on the Z axis.
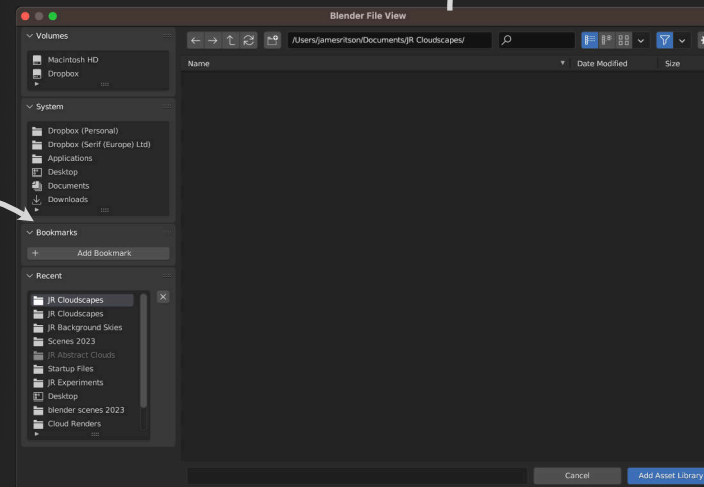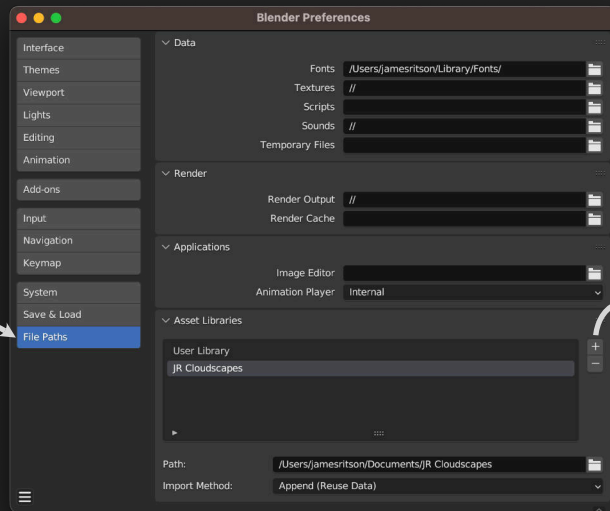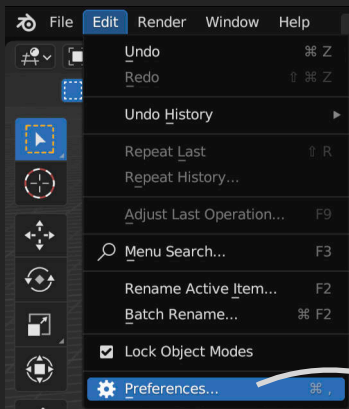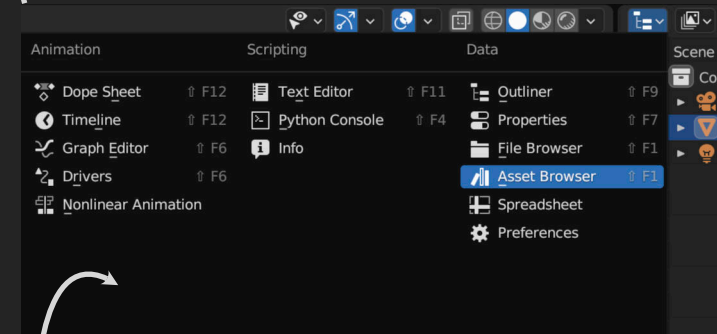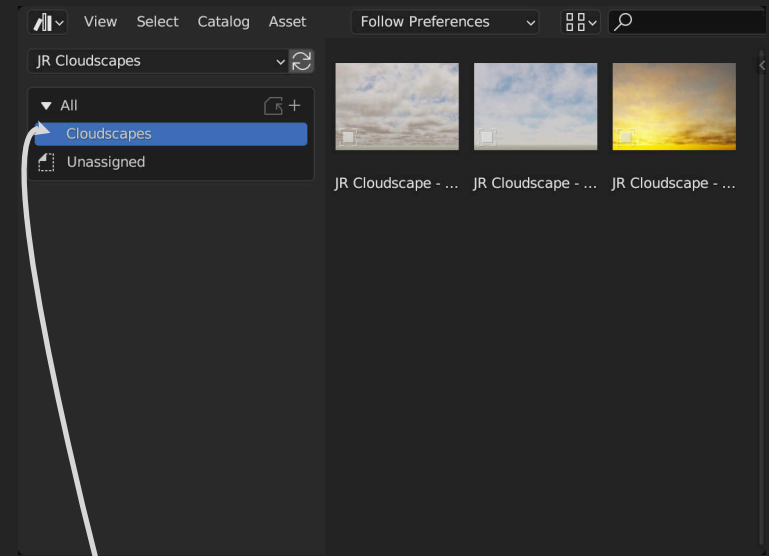
Further Instructions & Troubleshooting

Each cloudscapes asset has its own unique material and node group.

Without going to the **Shader Editor**, you can access the **Material Properties** section on the **Outliner** and modify volume properties including colour, density and anisotropy (labelled as *Light Absorption*).

Each volume is physically *huge*. You will definitely need to adjust your clip end values in both the viewport and camera settings (see below).

With Cycles rendering, the default **Volumes** settings can be quite slow. I generally find that changing **Step Rate Render** to between *0.01-0.05* and **Max Steps** to between *16-50* will render faster with sufficient detail. The **Viewport** setting can be larger than **Step Rate Render** to improve viewport performance (see screenshots below).
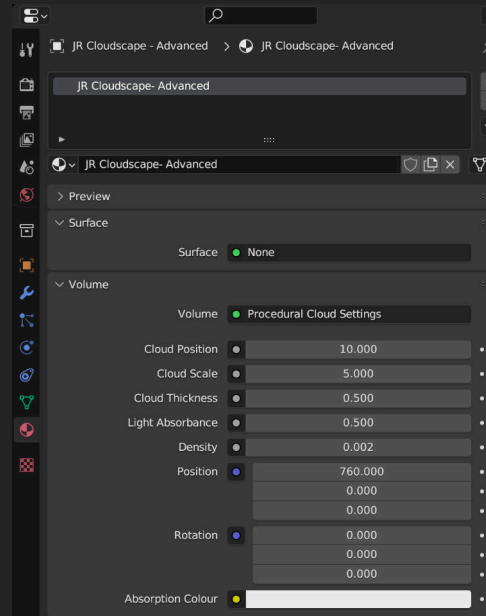
As mentioned on the previous page, drag-dropping one of the cloudscape assets onto your scene will typically place it at 0 on the Z axis. You will need to raise the asset up into the relative sky area of your scene. You can do this quickly using Alt+G (Windows) / Option+G (macOS) to reset its position.

If you are not able to see the volumes at all, your **Clip End** value may be too low.

Access the side **N panel** (by pressing "N") and switch to **View**. Check the Clip End value—try raising it to at least 800000m.

You will likely need to change the **Clip End** value of your Camera as well. This defaults to *100m*—again, try raising this to at least *800000m*.
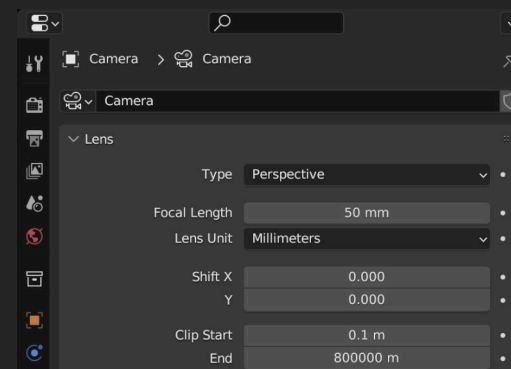
Further Instructions & Troubleshooting

These assets have been developed with Cycles rendering in mind—they are unlikely to work successfully in Eevee.

In terms of performance, GPU acceleration is recommended as these are large procedural volumes. Changing the Volume render settings (as mentioned above) will absolutely help with render times when using these. You can likely get away with a lower Max Steps value (e.g. 15-24) if the cloudscape is the only volume in your scene.

If you have any questions or issues, please do contact me on james@jamesritson.co.uk
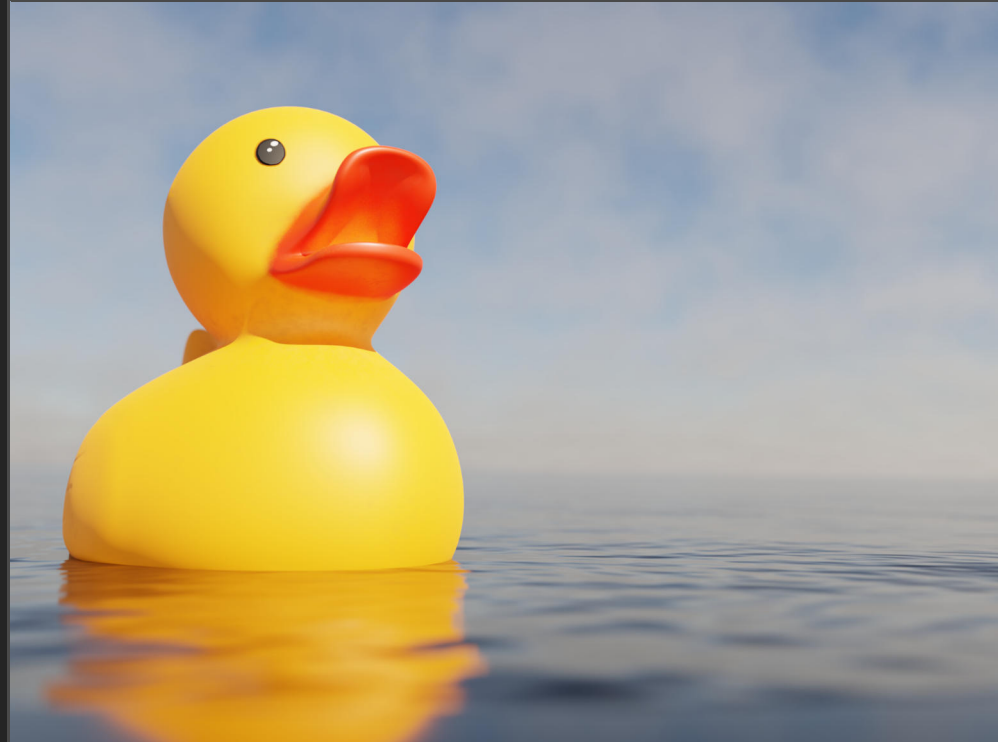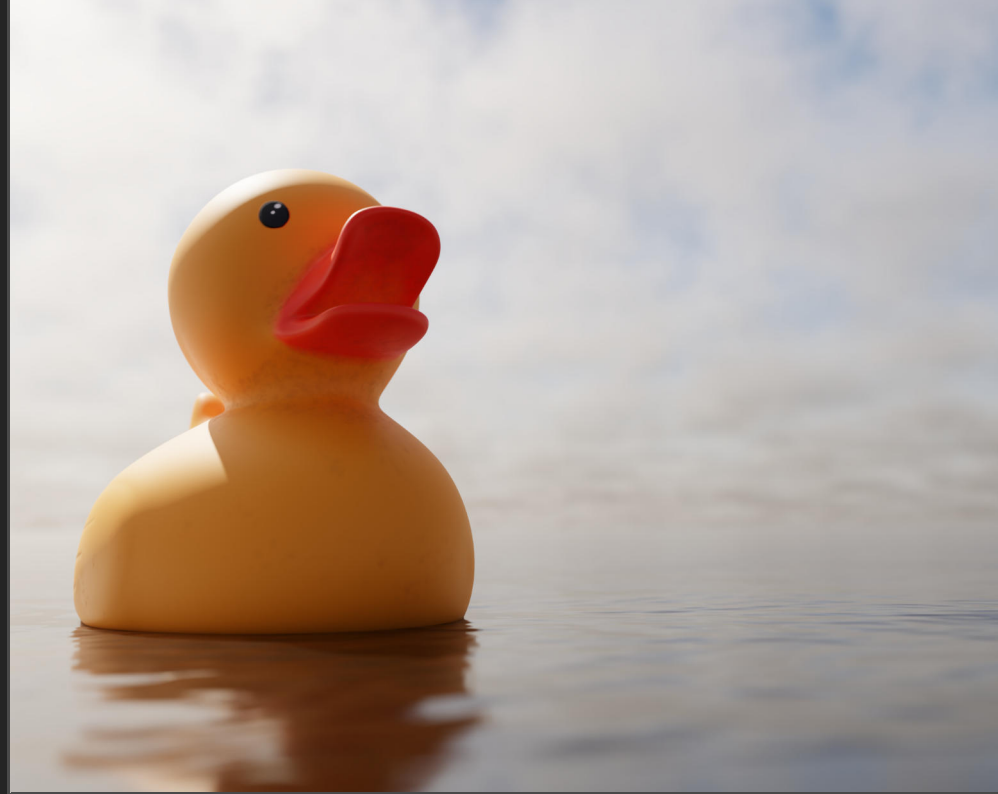
Credits

All 3D renders and editing by James Ritson (http://www.jamesritson.co.uk)