



Step 1: Gather Your Reference

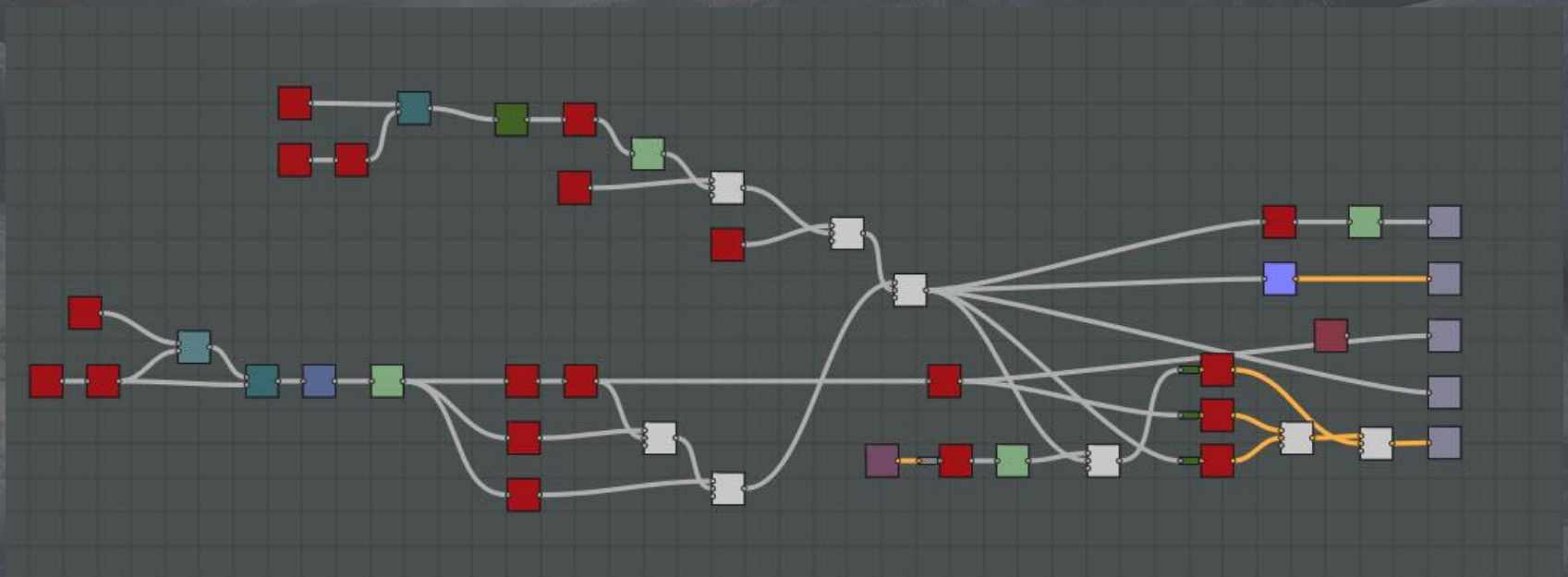


Step 2: Start Planning and then Execute

- After you have gathered your reference, it's important not to over think it. Find reference with an idea in mind for what you want to create. Too much reference can lead to a scene that doesn't match and is all over the place.
- Now let's start working. Start from the ground up. I started by creating my snow first a very simple tiling snow inside of substance.

Simple Soft Snow Substance Graph

- BlendMask/Roughness/Height are merged into one texture



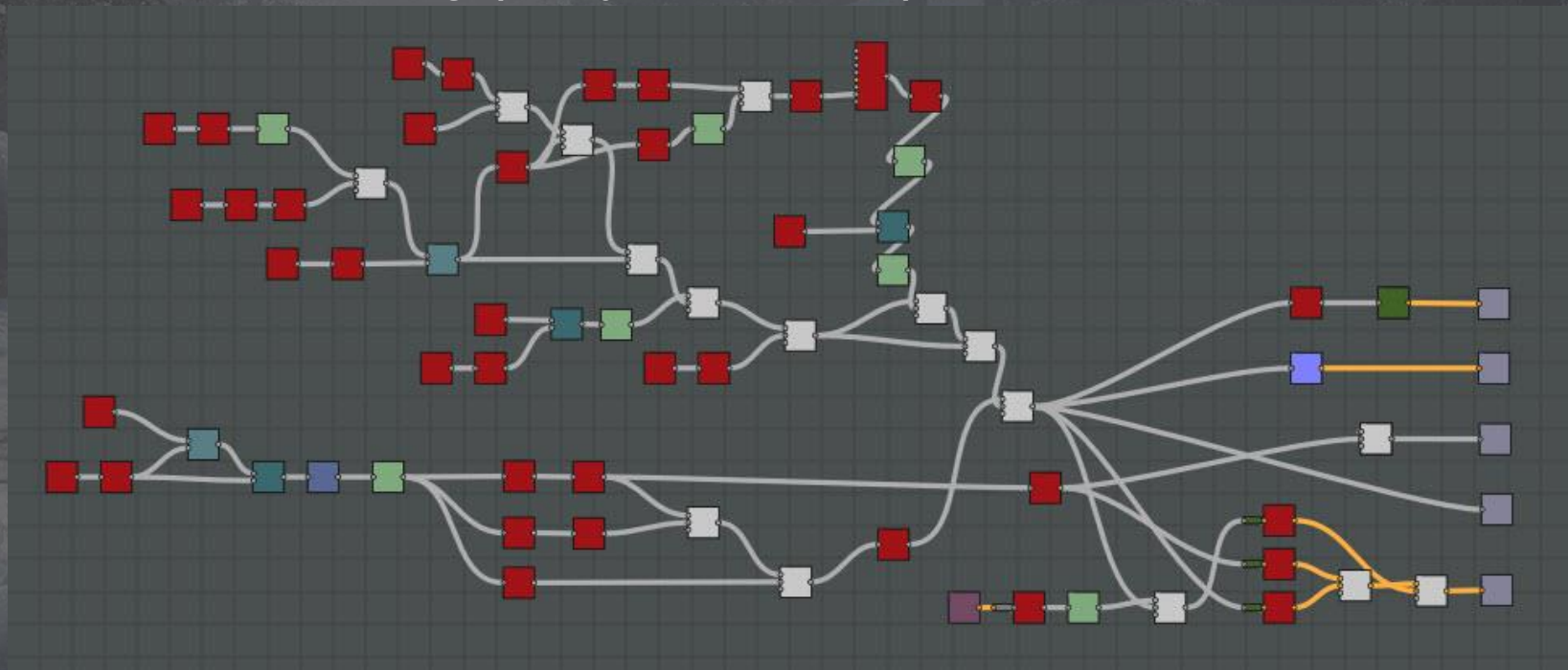


- It's a very simple snow with some speckles and not a lot of detail. This helps reduce the visibility of the tiling when placed on a large landscape.

Step 3: What's Next?

- We have a strong but simple base for our landscape now. This is great for us to start building on top of.
- Think of secondary details you want to add.
- Snow Clumps, Rough Walked on Snow, Twigs, leaves, grass, dirt, mud, ice (staying on the ground for now)
- Then pick one and keep going!

I decided to go with creating a Rough "Walked in" or "Lived in" snow ground next. Here is the substance graph, it's just a bit more complicated than the last, for the details.





- I looked a lot at my reference to try to get the idea of chunked snow that has had birds land on it, rocks fall on it, chunks taken out of it. Etc.
- It uses the same speckle graph from the last snow and also merges the BlendMask/Roughness/Height into a single texture for the unreal engine.

Step 4: Let's see how it looks

- At this point I will bring it into the engine and start setting up the landscape material to see how the two textures are blending together. See if anything needs adjusting/updating to make them feel more like they belong on the same ground together.
- If they look good, then let's start laying out the base work for our scene now. Start to think about composition, what elements do you want in the foreground, midground, and background.
- Here's where I am at by this point.

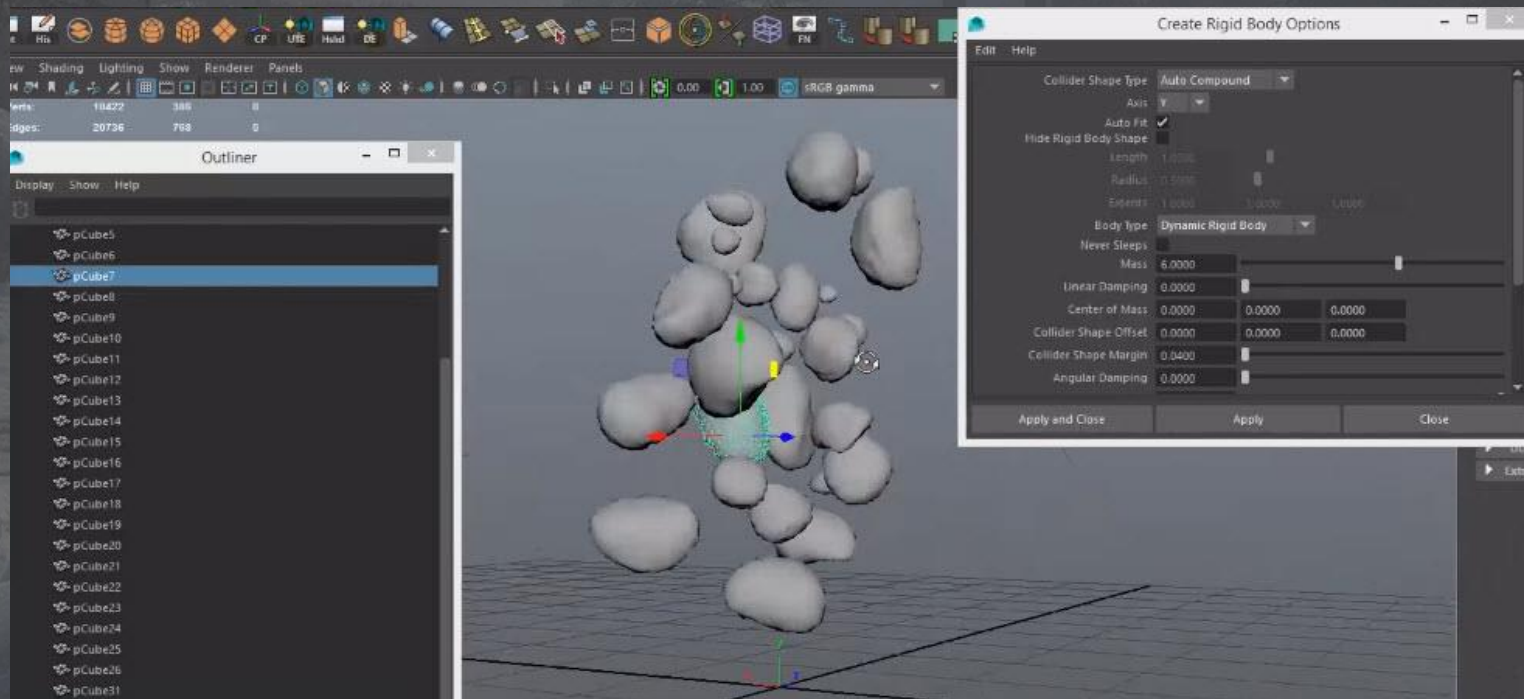
I've also added in my "**Forest Ground**" Texture here from my previous tutorial and a simple ice created inside of the Unreal Engine without any textures for "preview" purposes.



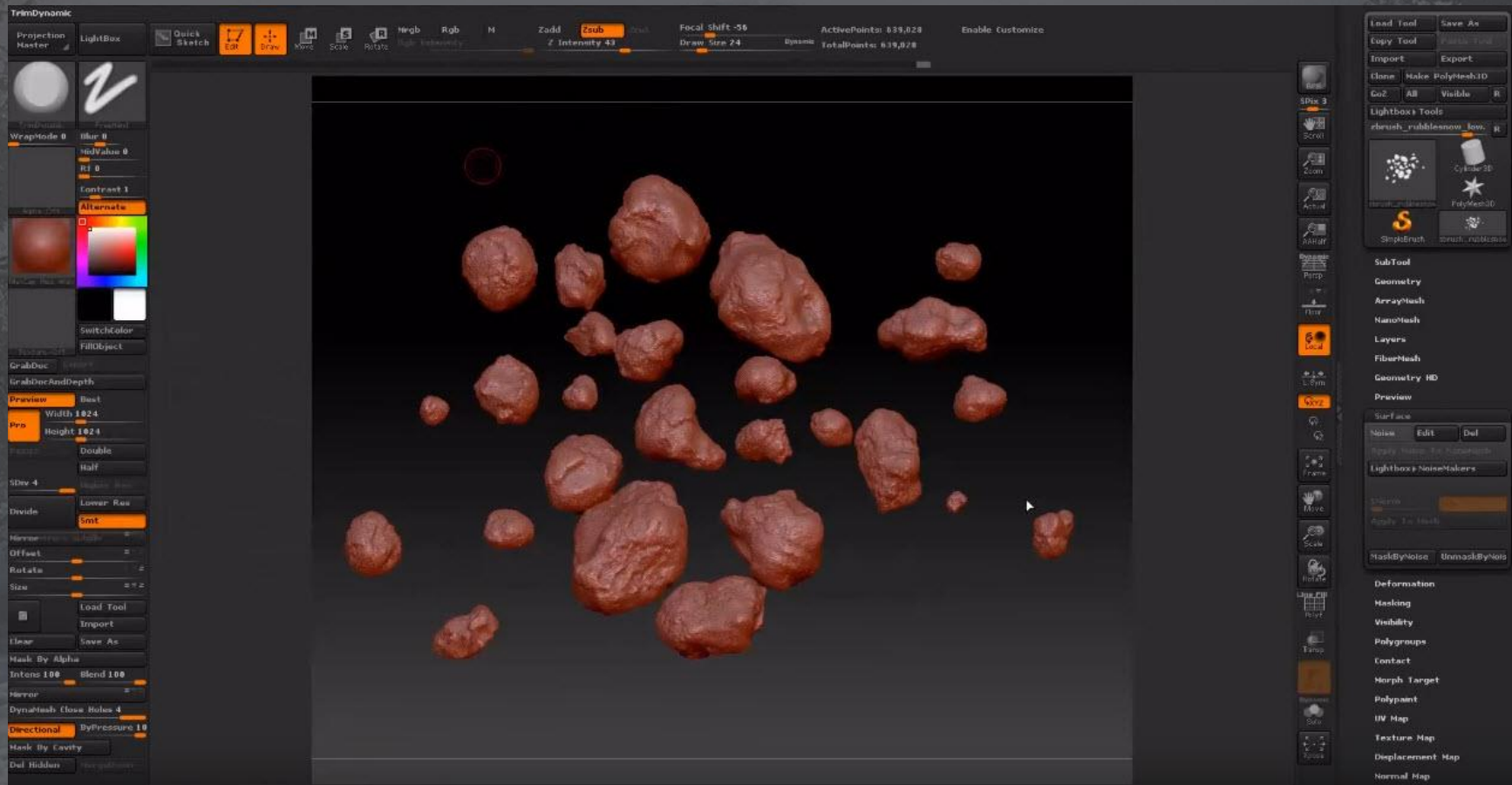
Step 5: Time to add some assets

- At this point it's good to start thinking about what you want on top of the ground. Do we want human elements, such as wood fences, or cottages? Perhaps we want to keep it all in nature where humans haven't been to or discovered yet. It's up to you and also... how much work you want to put into it lol
- So I had a tree blueprint already from my "[Procedural Nature Pack](#)" as well as some grass. So I can really easily add that at some point. But you may want to think about that.
- So I personally felt some snow clumps would be very helpful at this point, since I had the trees and grass already. I started out with the reference seen at the top of the breakdown and modeled some simple spheres into maya.

I used physics and let them all fall to the floor to create a simple snow "rubble"



Then I added some detail in zbrush and baked them down



- Once it was all baked I went ahead and brought it into Unreal to add my “snow shader” as well as set the snow clumps up as foliage so I can easily paint them around my scene where I want.
- Let’s see where I am at by this point.

This is actually where the Tutorial is completed



Final Tutorial Result & Included Files

- I included some timelapse videos in the “complete package” version at this point showing how to easily make grass inside of zbrush, then put it together in maya. As well as painting the grass foliage in unreal and placing the Pine Trees inside of the scene. As well as adding composited mountains in post inside of photoshop. But I am getting ahead of myself. Let’s break all that down a bit more for you.

Step 6: Let's get some composition and atmosphere into the scene

- At this point I continue to think about composition when I am placing my trees/foliage into the scene. As well as where are the shadows going to be? That's very important, because the shadows might start covering up details that I want to display in my shot.
- Watch the heights of your trees, you don't want an up and down even zigzag pattern. Nature grows "naturally" for a reason lol
- I like to place things in 3's where two objects are spread out from each other a certain distance and then the 3rd object is placed slightly closer to one or the other. To break up the evenness of the trees/asset.
- Snow now I have placed my trees. I will play with the atmosphere a bit more and continue to tweak the lighting until it feels right.
- I add touch ups of grass patches, snow clumps, or small details to also compliment the larger shapes in the scene and push the composition I have going so far.
- Let's also checkout a few different angles of the scene, make sure that we aren't missing some other awesome shots and screengrabs that may be evading us. Feel free to add more trees shrubs to compliment another view that you have found as well. Or even prop your scene specifically for whatever view you are currently taking a picture. It can actually help a lot and if this is for your portfolio no one will know! Haha
- Now we generally want to be able to simply screengrab our scene and post it online. That's great and what we should aim for, occasionally though we may want to add a very small or subtle detail that can be done much easier in photoshop. So feel free to add a little post to your scene as long as it isn't completing hiding or overpowering your work.
- Maybe some smoke from a distant fire, some birds in the sky, a frozen body under the ice haha whatever you want I won't judge you.
- Then add it in photoshop, make sure to put your name and website on all your images so people know how to reach you. Then post it up!

Final Images



Thanks everyone! Definitely checkout the full length tutorials when you can.

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