The Sims 2™ Body Shop

The Sims 2 Body Shop™ is an astoundingly powerful tool for sculpting the physical forms of Sims for the upcoming *The Sims 2*.

THE SIMS 2 BODY SHOP is divided into two parts: Build Sims and Create Parts.

Note For basic functionality and the specifics on creating custom items, consult *The Sims 2 Body Shop* manual and online and downloadable tutorials. All these items, along with a Help page and downloadable content packs, can be found at TheSims2.com.

Well, that's not quite accurate. *The Sims 2 Body Shop* is, in fact, *two tools* that do very different things. *The Sims 2 Body Shop* consists of:

- Build Sims
- Create Parts

Build Sims vs. Create Parts

It's important to comprehend specifically what each tool in *The Sims 2 Body Shop* does.

In brief:

- Build Sims: Assemble created or downloaded parts into a finished Sim. You may also duplicate any Sim in the bin and use it as the basis for another new Sim.
- Create Parts: Use built-in, already created, or downloaded Sim pieces to create brand new parts.

Build Sims

Build Sims consists of two sections:

- Clone Sims: Using the bin full of Sims you've downloaded or assembled, you can pick one to form the basis of a new Sim or choose to start a brand new Sim from scratch. Saved Sims may be deleted from here too.
- Build Sims: Once a Sim has been cloned or freshly created, you can mix and match any Genetics (eye color, skin tone, or hair), Faces (entire face or by region), Modifications (several for each facial region), Facial Hair, Makeup, Glasses, Eyebrows, Stubble, Costume Makeup, or Clothing. These elements may have been created by you, by Maxis, or by other users.

Build Sims is where the pieces are assembled to construct a new being.

Build Sims allows you to put together various Sim parts you've created or downloaded into one glorious, statuesque creation. You can't, of course, name these Sims or tinker with their personalities or aspirations, but you can choose how they look.

Build Sims vs. Create-A-Sim

Much but not all of what can be done in Build Sims can be done in the in-game Create-A-Sim.

For example, in Build Sims, you can effectively edit finished Sims; this isn't possible in Create-A-Sim.

In Create-A-Sim, when you work your magic on a Sim from scratch or from the Sim Bin, you save that Sim into a family. Once the family is saved, that Sim exists only in that family and cannot be changed. Likewise, there's no saved original copy of your creation that you can go back to; if you want to make the same Sim with a different personality or aspiration, you must start from scratch.

In *The Sims 2 Body Shop*, however, any Sim you've completed can be cloned and modified. Though you aren't really editing the original Sim, the effect is the same: you can fix problems or create small variations and save that Sim too. The original is still available and unchanged; you may delete it and save only the altered clone if you like.

The Final Step: Package Sim

When a Sim is finished, you can package it either into a file or directly up to *TheSims2.com*.

A packaged file can be traded among users. If you receive one, just double click on the package file and the new Sim will be saved into the right place (presuming you have *The Sims 2 Body Shop* or the game installed).

Packaging gets the file ready to share with others. To simply use your creation in your own game, packaging is unnecessary.

Create Parts

Create Parts is what really differentiates *The Sims 2 Body Shop* and Create-A-Sim. In Create Parts you don't change the Sim as a whole, but rather many of the components that make up a Sim. Want to create hot pink eyes? This is where you go.

Create Parts consists of two tools:

• Start New Project: Take any Sim part in the catalog and alter it to your precise vision.

• Load Saved Project: Reload your own projects for further editing.

Create Parts has two areas: one for beginning a new project and one to bring up an old one. Note the Change Mannequin button; it's only available at this screen and the subsequent Start New Project menu.

Start New Project

Parts fall into three categories:

• Create Genetics: Create the color of eyes and the shape of pupils and irises, the tone of skin, and the color of hair.

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- Create Facial Hair, Makeup, and Glasses: Generate the texture of eyebrows, the amount of men's facial hair stubble, the look of beards and mustaches, the color and pattern of makeup (blush, eye shadow, eyeliner, and lipstick), costume makeup (a.k.a. face painting/facial tattoos), and the color and texture of eyeglasses.
- Create Clothing: Design clothing for each sartorial category (Everyday, Formal, Undies, PJs, Swimwear, and Athletic). You may even change an outfit's classification, for example, turn Undies into Formal (see below).

Create Genetics

Genetics are the basic Sim features that are passed from generation to generation: eyes, hair, and skin tone. Each is edited differently in *The Sims 2 Body Shop*.

Skin Tone

Within each skin tone are textures for each age group, gender, and fitness level. To completely manipulate a skin tone, you must alter every file in the project folder.

Genetics include eyes, hair, and skin. Other elements to your Sims will be handed down to their children, but these are the most basic.
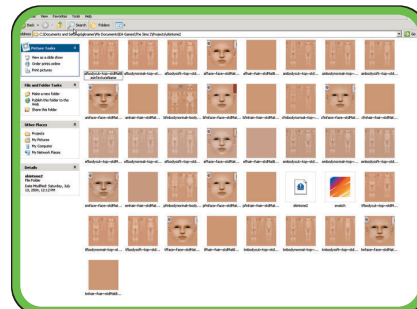
To completely alter a skin tone, you must edit all of these texture files. If your goals are a bit more limited, do only the ones for the age and genders you have in mind.

Tip If you want to get really snazzy, you can actually edit the arrangement or color of Sims' teeth via the skin tone files. On each facial texture you'll find a row of teeth that show when your Sim is animated in the game.

One could, for instance, paint the teeth to appear pointy for that vampiric look or give your Sim a gold tooth.

Every skin tone is actually a collection of 39 files:

Note Note that the face texture only changes the *color* of the face, not the shape.

- Five textures each for male and female elders (soft, neutral, fit, face, and the head).
- Five textures each for male and female adults (soft, neutral, fit, face, and the head).
- Five textures each for male and female teens (soft, neutral, fit, face, and the head).
- Three textures for children (body, face, and the head).
- Three textures for toddlers (body, face, and the head).
- Three textures for babies (body, face, and the head).

Genetics include eyes, hair, and skin. Other elements to your Sims will be handed down to their children, but these are the most basic.

If you alter only some of these files, when a Sim changes to the unmodified age or fitness level in the game, he or she will suddenly revert to the original skin tone. The same would happen for offspring; if the Sim has a child and that age is not modified, the child won't look like the parent.

Note You might want your Sim to have a different skin tone for different ages. If, and we're about to get really geeky here for a second, the morphology of the alien Sims you've created dictates that they don't appear alien until puberty, it'd make sense to leave the baby, toddler, and child skin tone files unchanged and alter only the ones from teen and up.

Note You can alter a Sim's "fit" state, but it's the one fitness state that you can't select as a default in Build Sim. The only way to display the fit state in the game is to earn it by working out.

Eyes

Eyes are exported as two files: the texture file and the alpha channel file. In the texture file, you may change the coloring and shape of the iris and the color and shape of the pupil.

Hair

A hair project contains files for each age group (except babies; they're bald) for the specified gender.

The texture files can be changed to alter the color or texture of the hair, though not the hairstyle's overall shape or configuration. Hairstyles are actually 3D models that can't be altered with *The Sims 2 Body Shop.*

Note Sims take off their hats when they shower, sleep, exercise, swim, are pregnant, or are naked for whatever reason. For Sims that use hair/hat combinations, extra textures show the hairstyle without the hat for teen, adult, and elder Sims.

Shortening hair with the alpha channel file (by coloring some of the white parts black) before and after.

You can use the alpha channel file to superficially change the shape of the hair. By making parts of the image black, you can cover up parts of a hairstyle to make it look shorter or show bare patches. However, because the hairstyle is a 3D model, an alpha-channel-altered hairstyle in-game still moves as if it's longer hair.

Create Facial Hair, Makeup, and Glasses

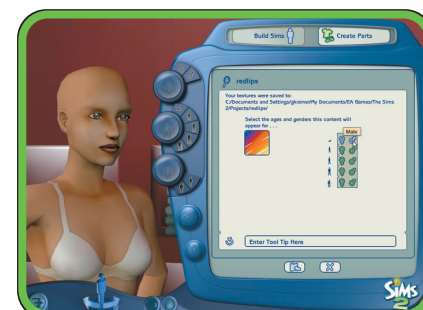Anything that goes *on* the face is constructed here.

Eyebrows, Stubble, and Beard

Eyebrow, stubble, and beard projects consist of colored and gray (for elders) versions of the facial hair. The texture file can be altered for color, shape, and texture of the hair.

Makeup

All makeup projects, regardless of type, export a texture and an alpha channel file. The texture file dictates the color and shading of the makeup. The alpha channel file can be changed to extend the makeup into other parts of the face (by painting parts of the file white instead of black). For example, if you want ancient Egyptian-style eye shadow, you'd extend the outer eye corners.

With makeup, you have the power to choose what ages and genders can apply it.

Right after you export the files, you can specify (in *The Sims 2 Body Shop*) which ages and genders you want the makeup to apply to (from toddler to elder).

Glasses

While you cannot change the *shape* of glasses or the lens colors in *The Sims 2 Body Shop*, you can alter the color of the frames.

The project folder contains several texture files, each of which represents a piece of the frames (the temples, the rims, etc.). Edit them all to completely change the frame color.

Clothing

Clothing of every type (Everyday, Formal, Undies, Swimwear, PJs, and Athletic) can be altered. You can even change an item's classification to have it appear as a different type.

Clothing projects consist of three files: the texture, the alpha channel, and the bump map.

Alterations to the texture file change the garment's color.

The alpha channel file lets you superficially change the shape of the garment, though drastic changes aren't possible. You can, for instance, create cut-outs to show off a little skin by painting part of the white portions black.

This granny dress becomes a bit more risqué with some alpha channel fiddling.

> **Note** The ability to edit the bump map file is available only in *The Sims 2 Body Shop* version.

The bump map file creates the illusion of three dimensionality in the garment. If you want to make a smooth T-shirt look ribbed, for example, you could change the bump map.

Changing Clothing Classification

Want to make some manly undies into any Sims' everyday wear? In Create Parts, choose Create Clothing. Select the clothing category and specific item you wish to change, then click the Export Selected Texture button. Name the project and click the checkmark. When the clothing finishes exporting, you may select in which category your clothing will appear. Choose something other than its original category (and enter a tool tip if you like), and click the Import To Game button.

Now, when you go into *The Sims 2 Body Shop*'s Build Sim mode or Create-A-Sim in the *The Sims 2*, there'll be some real scandalous formal wear for Sims brave enough to don it.

The Final Step: Import to Game

When a project is complete, click on the Import to Game button and the part will henceforth be available in the Build Sims portion of *The Sims 2 Body Shop* or in Create-A-Sim in *The Sims 2*.

If you don't yet have *The Sims 2* installed, the appropriate files will be automatically moved over into the game when it's installed.

Changing clothing classification is easy: Select any additional classifications you want the garment to assume.

> **Note** You can delete any custom content from *The Sims 2 Body Shop* or Create-A-Sim by clicking on it, and then the trash can icon nearby.

> **Note** To share your project with a friend or upload it to a fansite, go to My Documents\EA Games\The Sims 2\Saved Sims and look for the filename that includes your project name. The recipient drops that file into his *Downloads* folder and, presto, he's got the fruits of your labor.

Advanced Hot Keys

Several features dear to the hearts of Sim designers and fansite webmasters are available with a single keystroke.

> **Note** ⌨️F3, ⌨️F5, ⌨️F6 are available only in the version of *The Sims 2 Body Shop* that ships with *The Sims 2.*

The free camera gives you perspectives such as this.

- ⌨️F3: Free camera. Hold the left-mouse button and drag to move the camera. Hold the right mouse button and drag to zoom. Hold both mouse buttons and drag to pan. To return to the standard camera, press ⌨️F3 again.

- ⌨️F5: Turns off the room background. Normally, this replaces the room background with a black void. You can customize this void by creating a pattern and saving it with the name *userBkg.bmp*. Place this file in *\My Documents\EA Games\The Sims 2*. Henceforth, when you turn off the room with ⌨️F5, it will be replaced with this texture. This is very handy if you'll be posting Sims on your fansite and want to know how they'll look against your site's background.

- ⌨️F6: Puts the Sim in the awkward looking, but easier to view, "Bind" pose. To get out of this pose, click on any thumbnail of in the panel to the right.

- ⌨️F7: Jump to far zoom.

- ⌨️F8: Jump to close zoom.

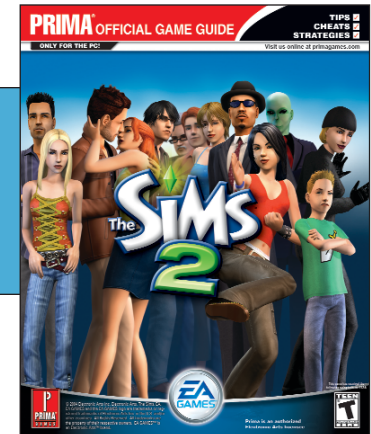- ⌨️F9: Drops the *The Sims 2 Body Shop* interface. Pressing again restores it.

- ⌨️Alt ⌨️Enter: Toggles *The Sims 2 Body Shop* into/out of Full Screen mode.

With a custom background and the ⌨️F5 key, you can easily see how your Sim looks in any environment or against any color.

> **Note** You may set *The Sims 2 Body Shop* to run in full screen mode every time by altering its Windows shortcut. For more information, see the Help FAQ in the Showcase on TheSims2.com.

For more great information on THE SIMS 2, check out Prima's Official Game Guide!

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