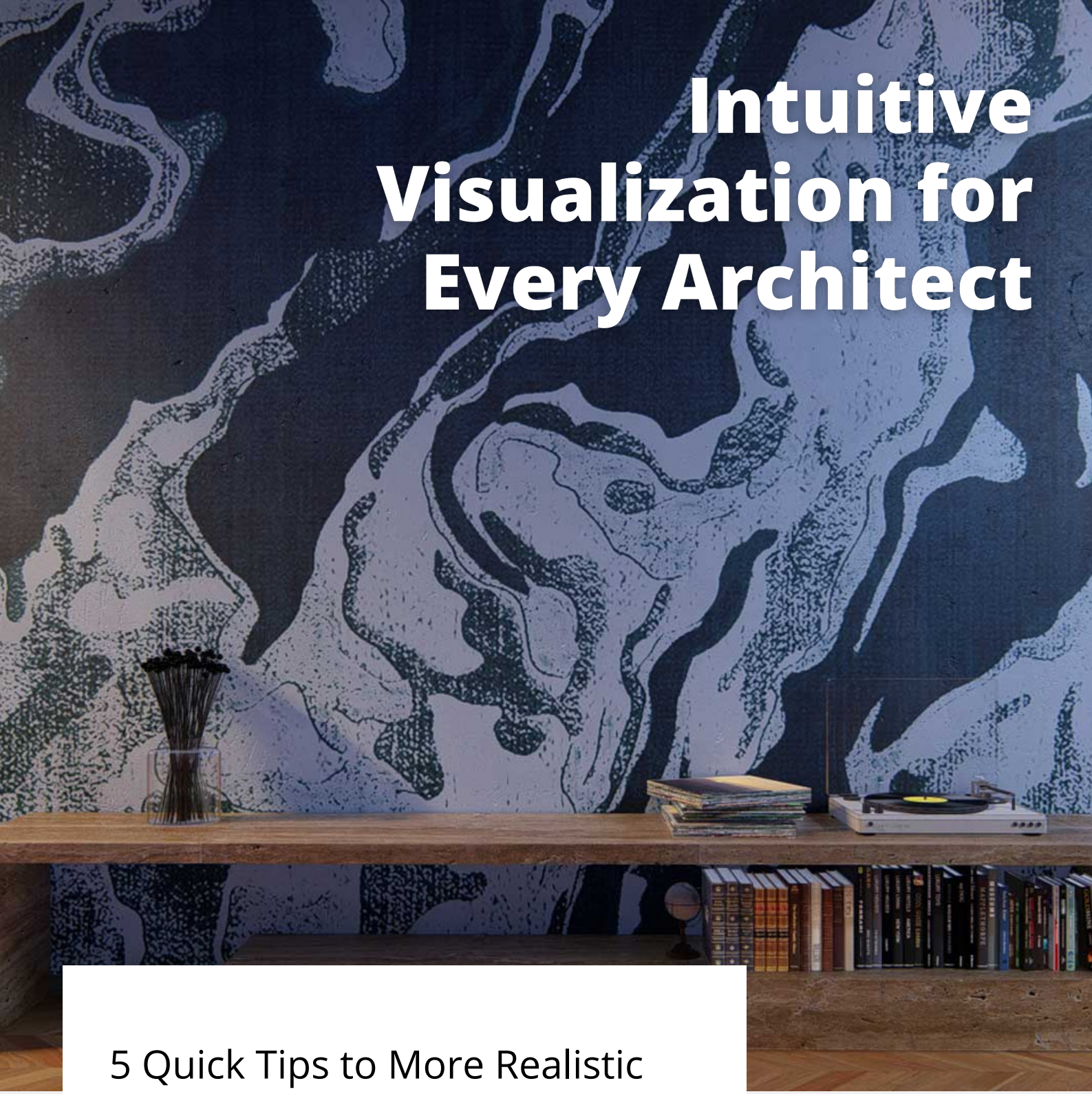
LUMION

WHITEPAPER

5 Quick Tips to More Realistic Renders with Lumion



Intuitive Visualization for Every Architect

5 Quick Tips to More Realistic Renders with Lumion

If you're an architect, designer, or interior designer looking to simplify your architectural design workflows, then this is the guide for you. With Lumion, you'll discover how easy it is to render your designs and produce stunning results.

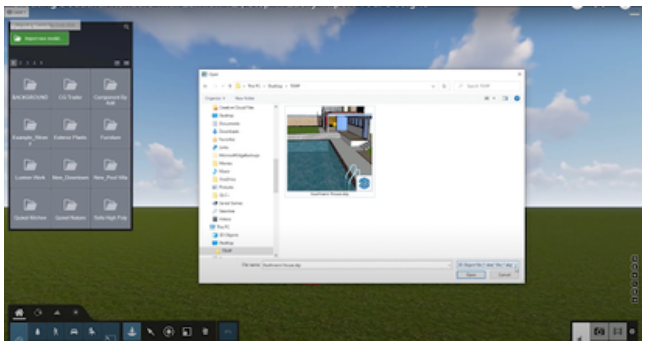
Is Lumion Right for you?

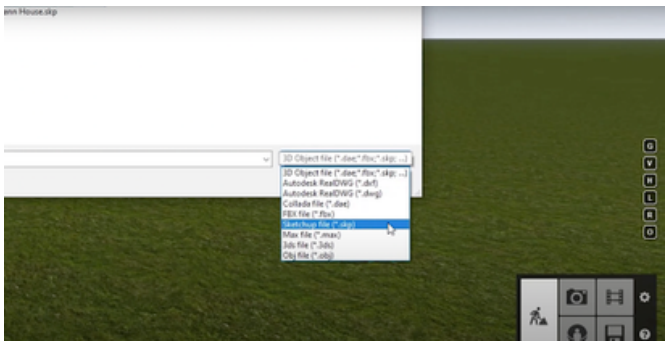
How do you know if Lumion is right for you? Well, if you enjoy curating beautifully realistic architectural renders without needing to compromise speed, design, and quality, then Lumion is a perfect fit.

Over the years, Lumion has helped many architects and artists delight their clients by showcasing designs brimming with life.

Lumion is renowned for speedy renders of images, 360 panoramas, and videos. Our software is powerful, easy to use, intuitive, and guaranteed to make you fall in love with the world of rendering.

Import Your Designs from the CAD or 3D Modeling Program of Your Choice



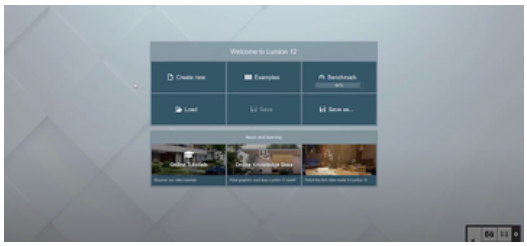


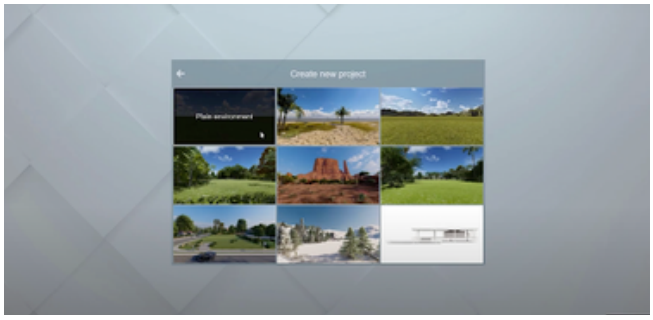
First, begin importing your model from the preferred CAD or 3D modeling program of your choice. Lumion can directly import models from most CAD softwares like SketchUp, Vectorworks, Autodesk Revit, AllPlan, Rhinoceros 3D, ArchiCAD, AutoCAD, 3ds Max, BrisCAD. If you can't directly import your work, you can easily export it into a 3D format file that's accepted by Lumion.

PRO TIP

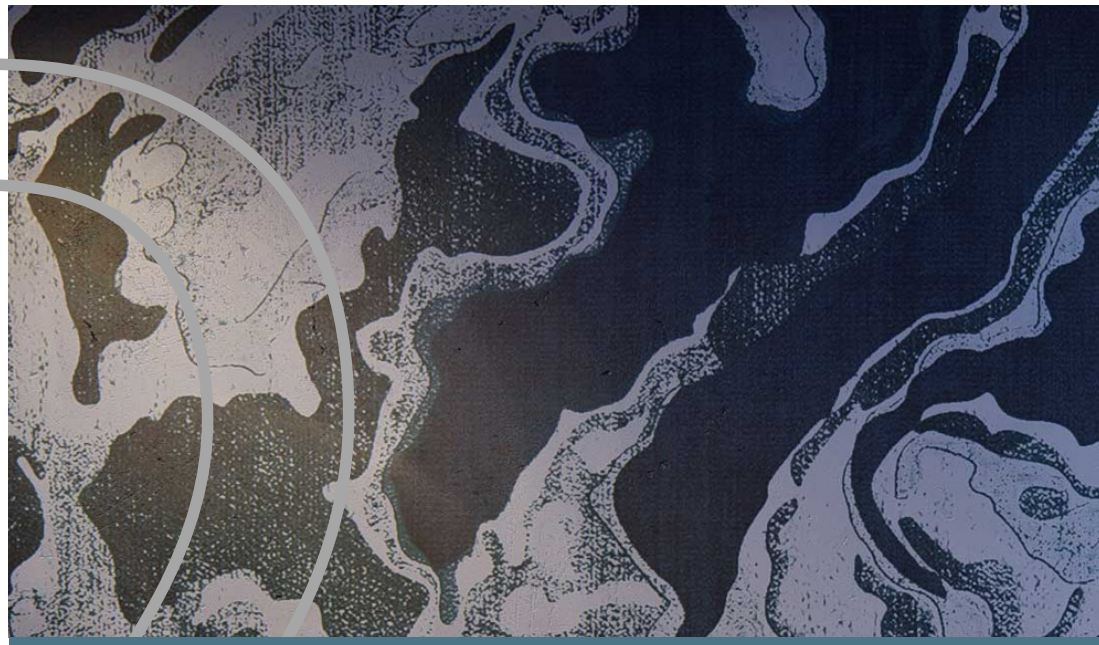
You can also easily sync any changes made to your model using our LiveSync feature. It's fully compatible with the tools mentioned above. Through LiveSync, you can visualize the lighting, atmosphere, environment, and more, all in real-time!

Then, the next step is to get your model into Build Mode. You can quickly set up the backdrop of your design by creating a new project and choosing the right template. Lumion has several different templates for you to begin with.





Once you have your model loaded into the environment of your choice, make sure you have the coordinates properly set to the origin you want.



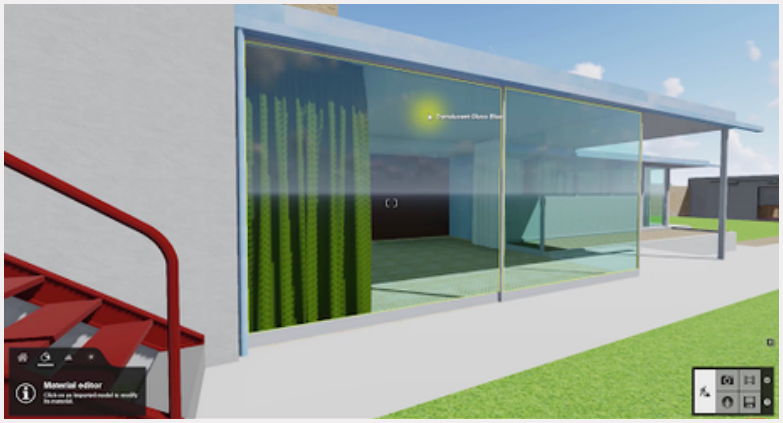
Assign Materials to Your Models

Now that you have your model properly imported, it's time to make your renders pop by assigning materials!

Here’s how you can replace your static materials with Lumion’s realistic ones:

1 In Build Mode, select the Materials tab.
(Note: Lumion has 1,292 options for you to choose from)

2 Hover your mouse over any surface. It should be highlighted when you do so.

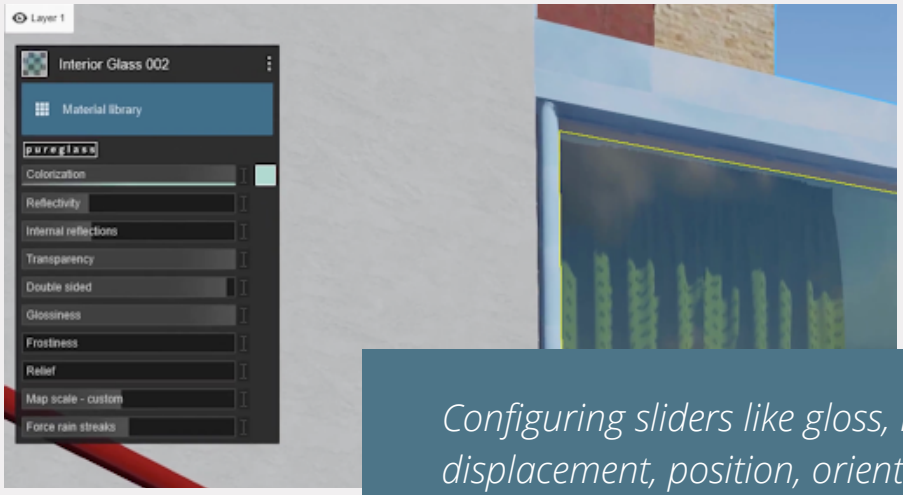


3 If you click on the highlighted material, you should see the Lumion Material dialog box appear on the upper left corner of your screen.

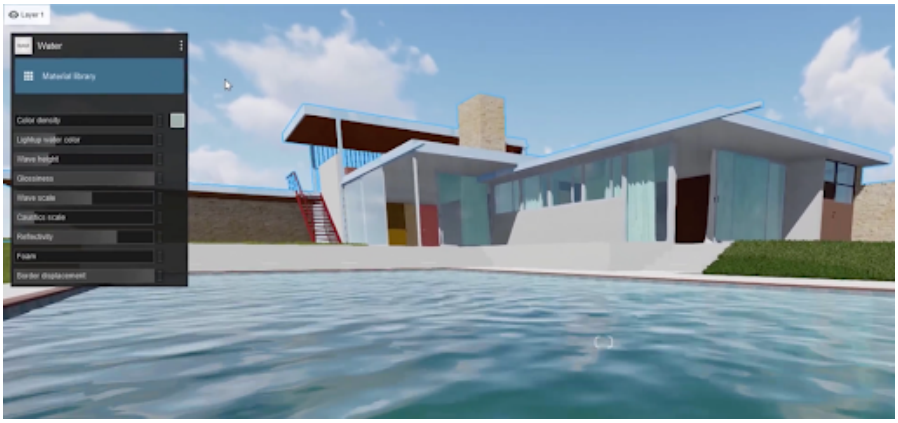
PLEASE NOTE

There are 5 main categories of materials. Various, indoor, outdoor, custom, and new.

4 When you've chosen the material type you want, you can explore the built-in presets or play with the sliders yourself to get the exact look you want. All Lumion materials are completely configurable!

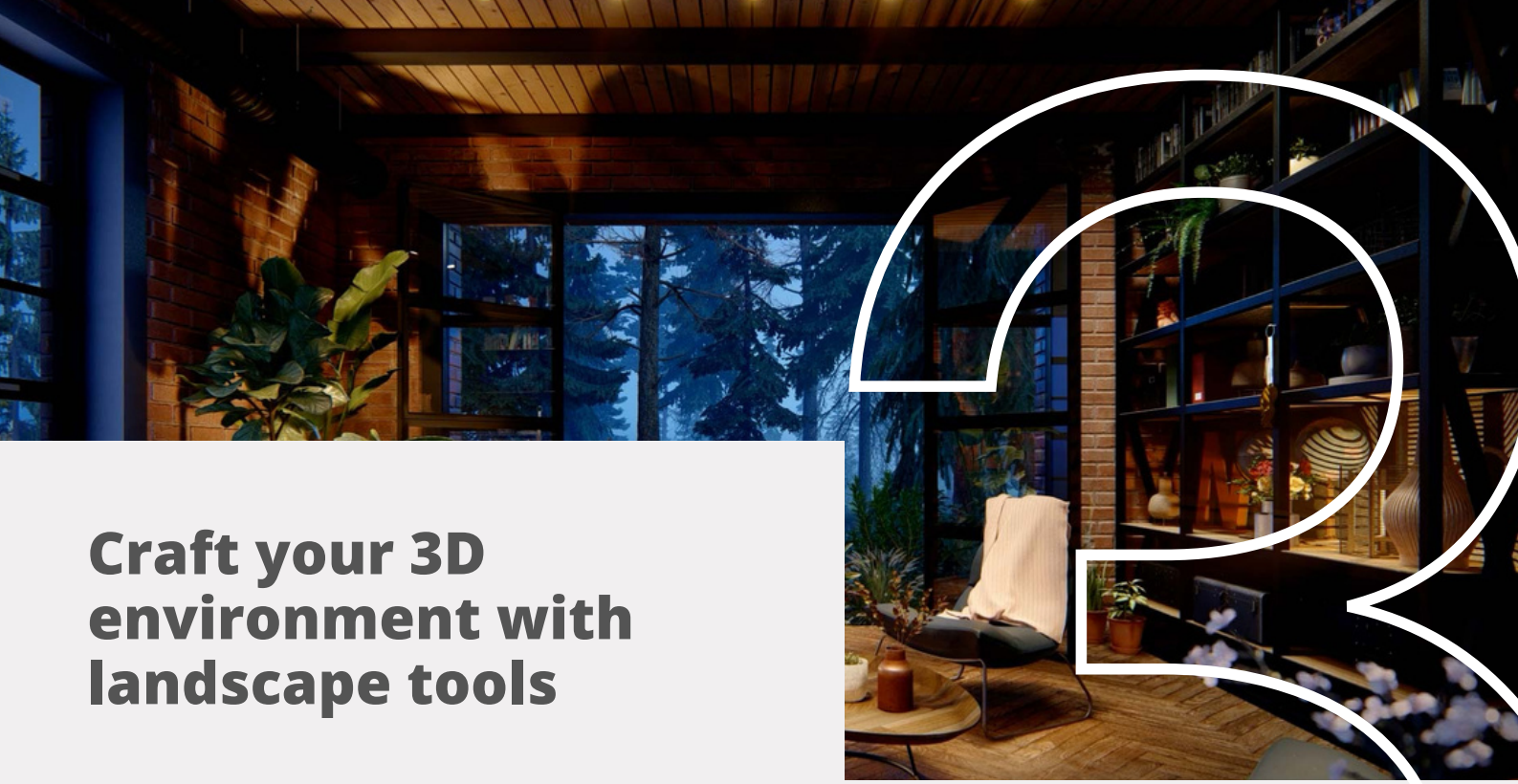


Configuring sliders like gloss, reflectivity, relief, displacement, position, orientation, transparency, settings, weathering, and foliage can make a huge difference in making your renders more realistic.



PRO TIP

Lumion automatically detects the right kind of materials that need to be assigned to the object in the model. For example, if your design includes a pool, Lumion immediately assigns water materials. You can effortlessly adjust how you'd like your water to look in the Materials library.



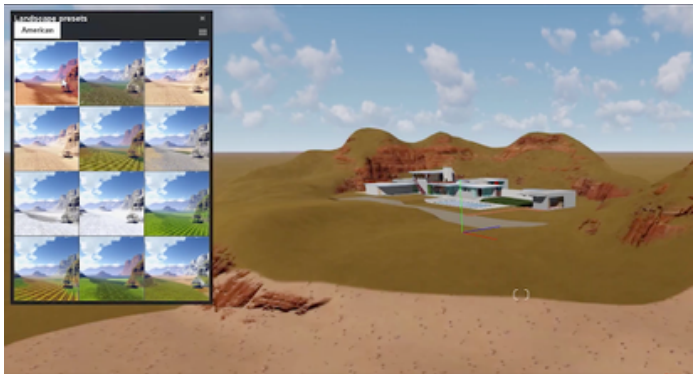
Craft your 3D environment with landscape tools

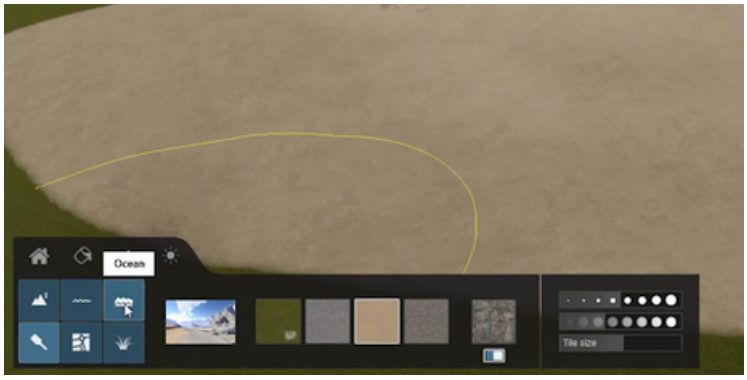
Let's take a look at the Landscape tab. Back in Build Mode, click on the third tab on the bottom left corner of your screen. It's right next to your Materials tab.

In this tab, you can switch on the 3D landscape grass and further refine its appearance. Using the Height tool, you can make some mountains and rolling hills to give your environment a more dimensional look.

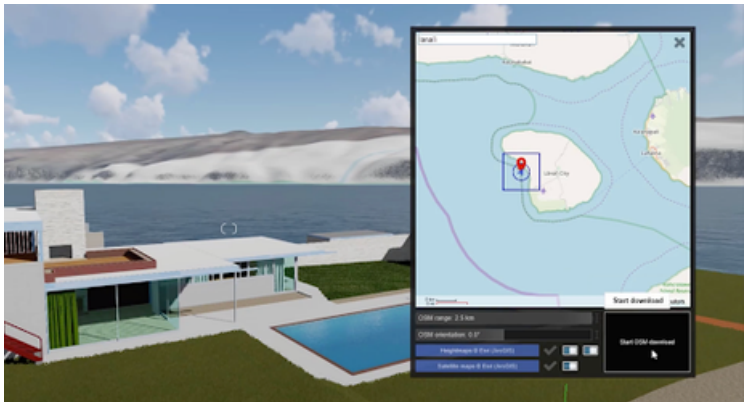
The Height tool allows you to adjust your brush size and speed while you modify your terrain. You can raise, lower, flatten, jitter, and smooth your terrain for a better landscape fit. If you're creating steep terrains, it's automatically rendered as cliffs.

Now that you've created the exact terrain you want, you can modify the texture by painting your terrain and fine-tuning them by adjusting the pattern, brush size, and speed. Once the terrain is up to your liking, you can change the terrain style by utilizing the built-in landscape presets. Each preset represents all different kinds of geographic regions.





If you need to add an ocean, you can do so with just one click. You can alter properties like water intensity, height, surface brightness, and water brightness to create the right look.



Next, turn on OpenStreetMaps and pick a real location by entering the correct GPS coordinates. With the help of OSM, you can import 3D terrain and aerial imagery to fit your design in a real-life context.

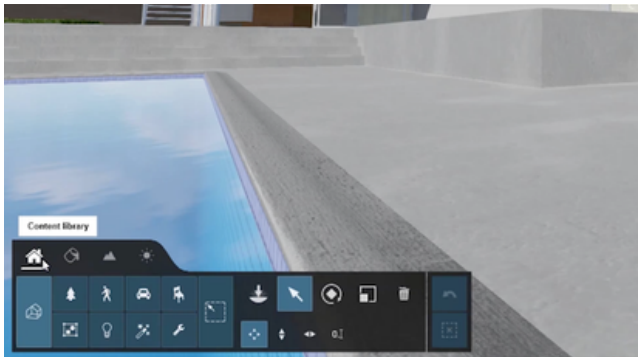
Populate your scene with animated objects

Objects help populate and enrich your design spaces in order to help share your design in a more tangible way. When you implement Lumion's 6,400+ diverse content library, you can leverage it to amplify your workflow.

To begin populating your scene with realistic objects, you first need to get started on the Content Library tab, where you can access all the necessary objects for furniture, trees, motor vehicles, people, and more.

PRO TIP

There are plenty of options for you to explore. Within these categories are sub-categories, and within each sub-category, there are several different items to choose from.



In order to see the full content library, you need to click on the Place tool. From there, you can peruse through top-level categories to find the objects that fit your scene.

The other essential tools you need when using the content library feature are the Move, Rotate, Scale, Delete, and Mass Placement tools.

PRO TIP

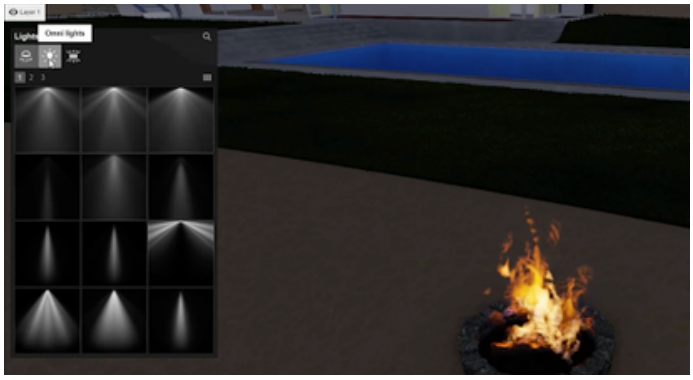
The Mass Placement is especially helpful when you need to add fine-detail nature objects to your model. With this tool, you'll be able to add the specific amount of objects you need to create your environment.

Another alternative you can explore is the Effects category. The Effects category allows you to add the essential details needed to make objects and items as close to its real life counterpart as possible.

PRO TIP

We suggest taking advantage of the properties' sliders in each effect you lay down. This is a surefire way to achieve better renders.

Within the Effects tab, you'll be able to utilize different features like Fog, Volumetric Fire, Smoke, Sound Effects, and Surface Decals, which is the newest addition to Lumion 12.



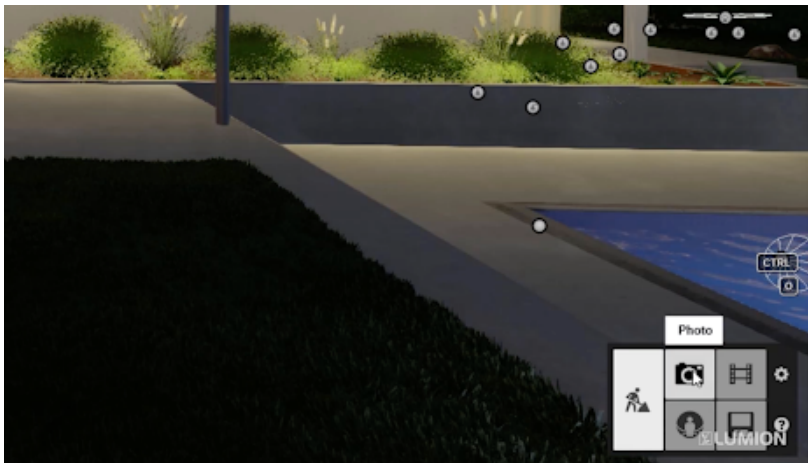
Once you've added all the effects to your scene, you're now ready to bring lighting into the mix. Play around with important features like Omni-light, Spotlights, and Custom IES Spotlights. Be sure to add them on spots that you want to highlight so that those aspects will stand out in your final result.

Mix effects and render

Objects help populate and enrich your design spaces in order to help share your design in a more tangible way. When you implement Lumion's 6,400+ diverse content library, you can leverage it to amplify your workflow.

Every wise architect or designer knows that it's better to show than tell when it comes to presenting their designs to their clients. In order for clients to understand your vision, you'll need to be able to convey how the space will feel. Luckily, Lumion has a way to help you with that.

Before you render, you have the ability to generate the right atmosphere with just one click! However, if you're looking for ways to make your design your own, you can also tweak and mix your effects to achieve your desired result.

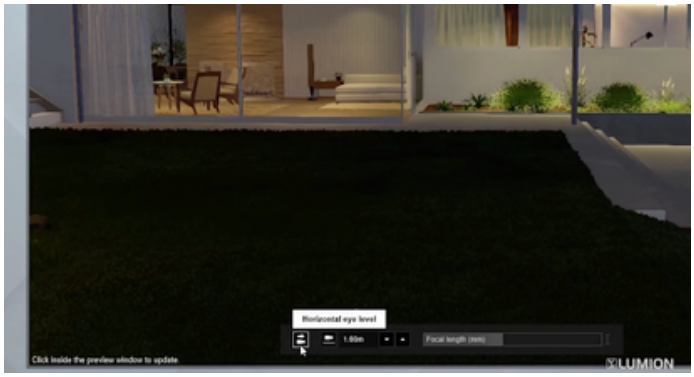


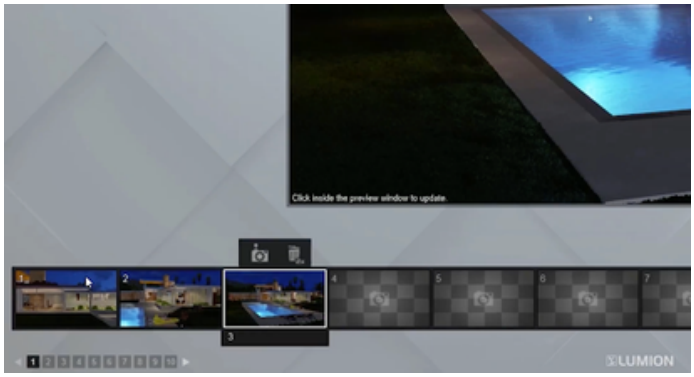
Click on the Camera icon, which is located at the bottom right corner of your screen. This will take you to your Photo studio, where you can take snapshots of your scene and add effects to make a more compelling image.

When in Photo mode, you can adjust your focal length, set your eye height, and level out your horizon. After you've set up your camera position, you can save it by clicking on the store camera button above each camera slot.

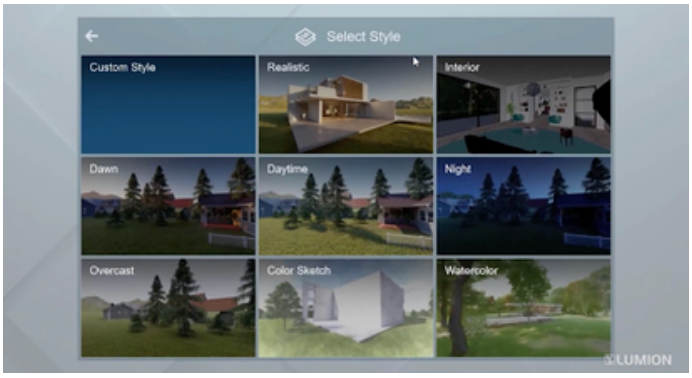
PRO TIP

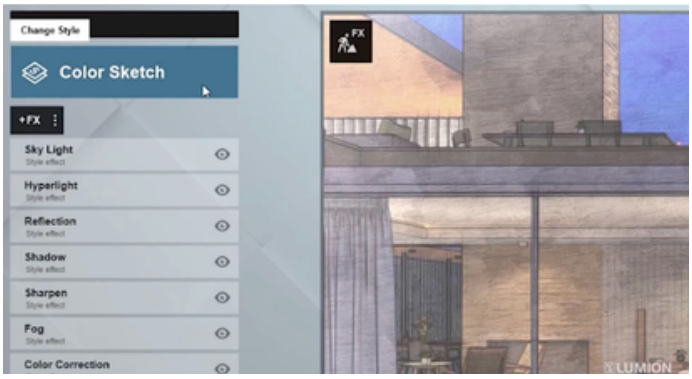
You can store up to 100 camera shots and clicking on each shot will bring you back to the original saved version. If you want to see how your render will look, simply click on the viewer window for a high-quality preview.

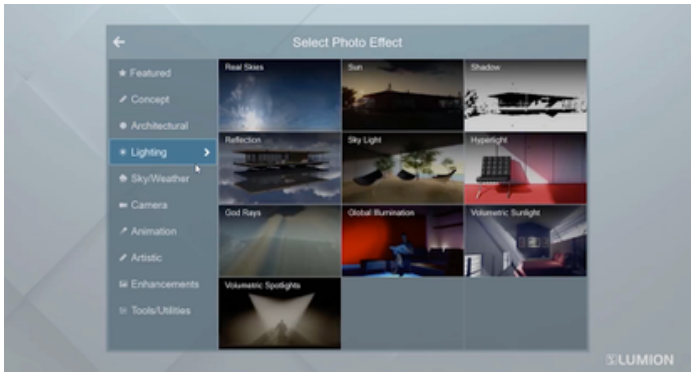




If you want to quickly render an image, video, or panorama, you can do so by choosing the preset styles set in Lumion. Lumion presets range from realistic to watercolor. You can clear the style you've chosen by setting it back to Custom on the Style presets page.







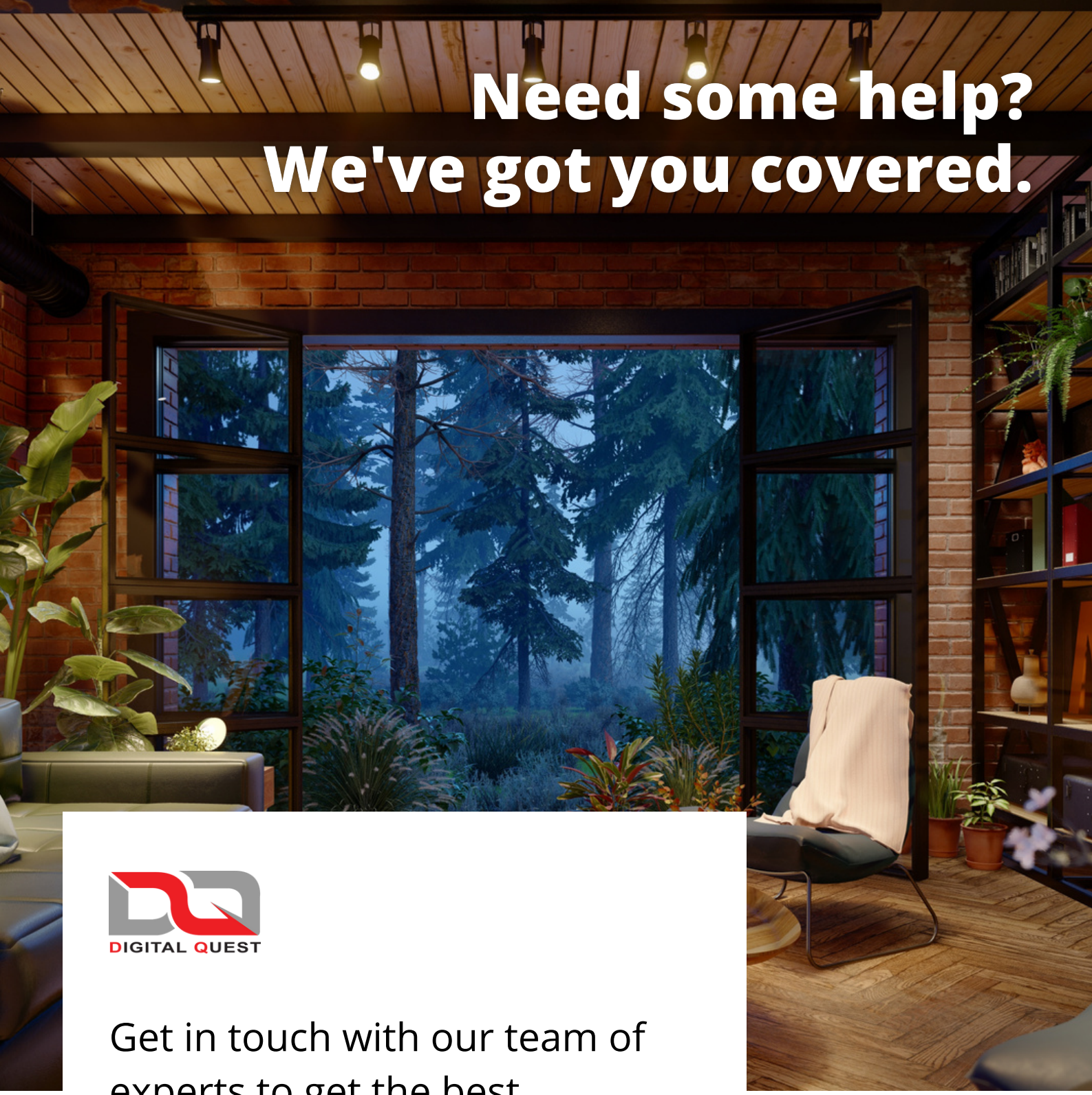
When you click on the FX button in Photo mode, you can smoothly design your own set of effects. Adding effects like Real Skies, Precipitation, Shadow, Volumetric Sunlight, Reflections, Color Correction, Chromatic Aberration, and more to secure a realistic render.

Once you're ready, click on the green Render button to either render that specific photo or the entire photoset.

VOILA!

You have a beautifully rendered 4K image that only took a minute to complete!

Now that you understand this easy five-step process, you're ready to create your own stunning image, video, and panorama.



Need some help? We've got you covered.

DIGITAL QUEST

Get in touch with our team of experts to get the best experience with Lumion!

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