

Installing Blender Add-ons

Blender has many tools built right in. Others, created by third party developers, are available as an add-on (sometimes spelled “addon”). Over time the Blender Foundation adopts some of the third party add-ons and builds them into Blender, although they may not be activated by default.

A list of the built in add-ons (also called extensions) can be found in the **Blender Add-on catalog**, categorized according to function. Third party add-ons are available from the **Blender Addon List**. Many are probably of little or no use for using Blender to make Trainz assets. But others are almost indispensable. So I’ll show you how to install and access them.

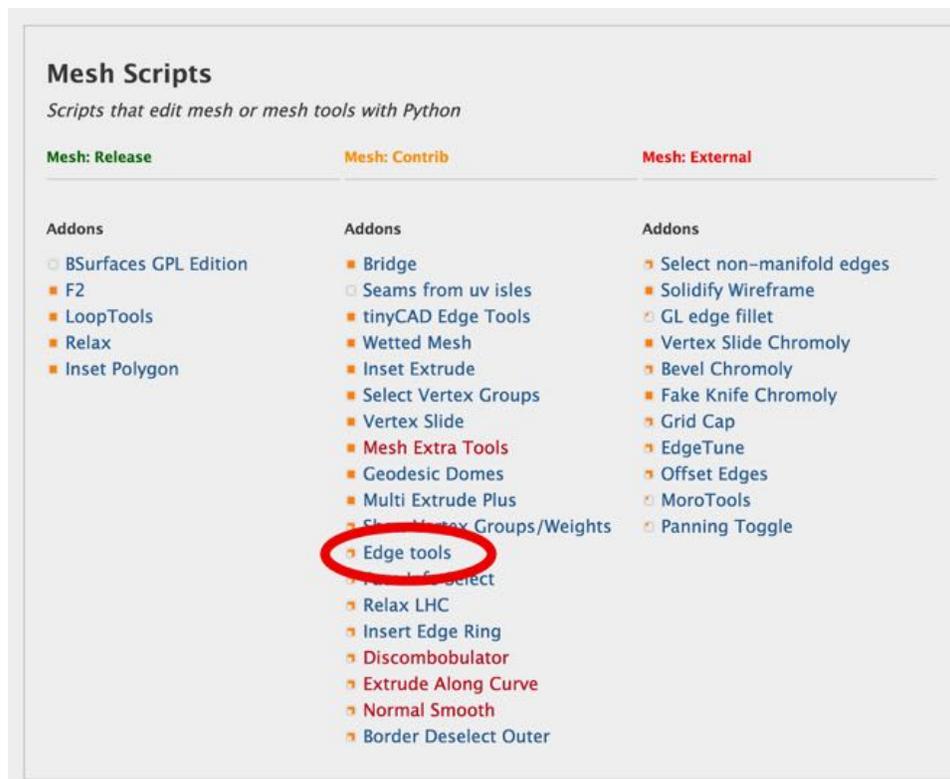
Blender Add-on Catalog

Let’s install an add-on from Blender’s Add-on Catalog.

- In your Internet browser search for “**Blender Add-on Catalog**”.
- **Scroll** down until you find **Mesh Scripts** (below Add Mesh Scipts) and in the second column select

(**LMB** click on) **Edge Tools**.

(If you have already installed this tool, you can skip this section.)



On the page that opens you will notice that this tool is designed to bring some CAD-style (Computer Assisted Design-tools) edge-based tools to Blender.

The name of the file that we want to get and install is called “mesh_edgetools.py” (the .py means it is a script type file format used by the Python computer programming language).

- **LMB** click on the Current version download link (“**Blender SVN**”) to download the file.

If the file open in your browser instead of downloading, RMB click and select “Save as” from the Dropdown Menu. The Save as: dialogue box will read “mesh_edgetools.py”.

Save this file to the desktop.

(After loading it into Blender I like to archive the file in a folder of Add-ons I have downloaded and added to Blender should I eventually need to reinstall them in a newer version of Blender.)

The screenshot shows the Blender Extensions page for 'EdgeTools'. The page header includes the Blender logo, the path 'Extensions:2.6/Py/Scripts/Modeling/EdgeTools', and a 'Log In' link. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Extensions:2.6', 'Py', 'Scripts', 'Modeling', 'Blender 2.6', 'English', and 'Page'. The main content area is titled 'Edge Tools' and includes an 'Introduction' section. The introduction states that Edge Tools is designed to bring CAD-style edge-based modeling tools to Blender, inspired by CATIA's 'Geometric Design' workbench. Below the introduction is a table with the following data:

EdgeTools			
Edge-base modeling tools			
UI location	Specials Menu (W-key)		
Version	0.8	Author(s)	Paul Marshall (brikbot)
Blender	2.63	License	GPL

Below the table is a section titled 'Executable Information' with a table containing the following data:

File name	mesh_edgetools.py
Current version download	Blender SVN

Below this table is a 'Links' section with a link to 'Forum Thread @ BlenderArtists'. The 'Installation' section includes a list of instructions:

- Download script
- Place in Blender's scripts folder
- Enable add-on from Blender's add-on menu

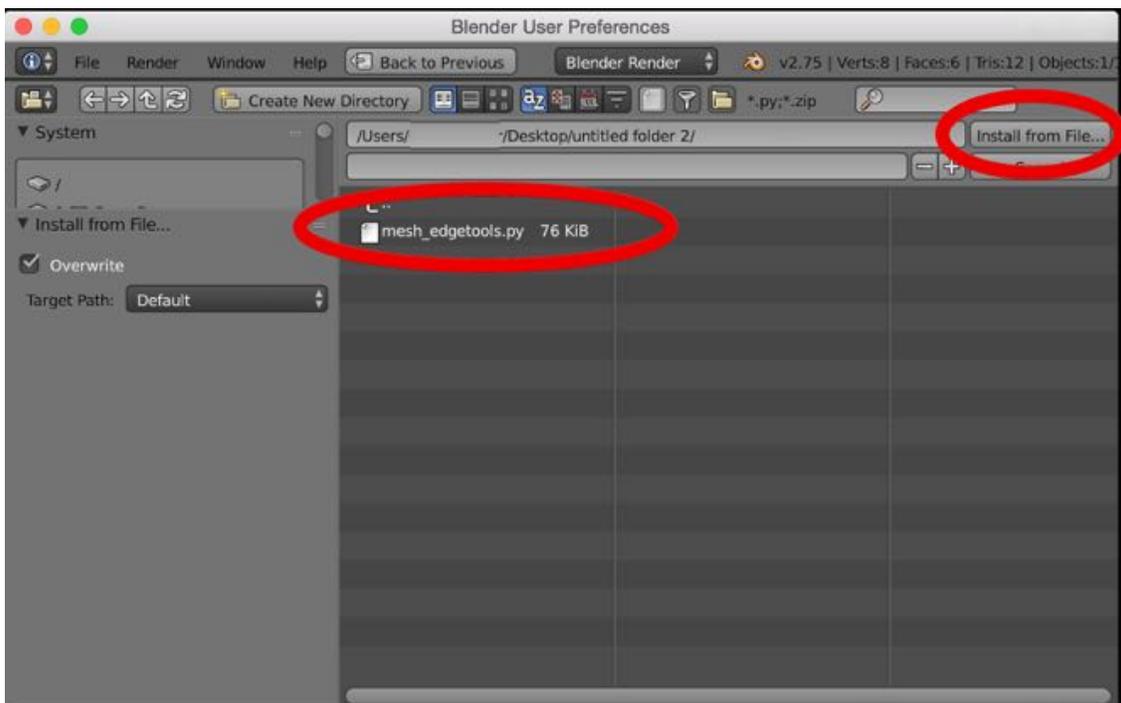
- **Open** Blender and go to the **User Preferences Window (CMD + COMMA)** (or in the Information Editor's header select the File Menu and then “Users

preferences...” .

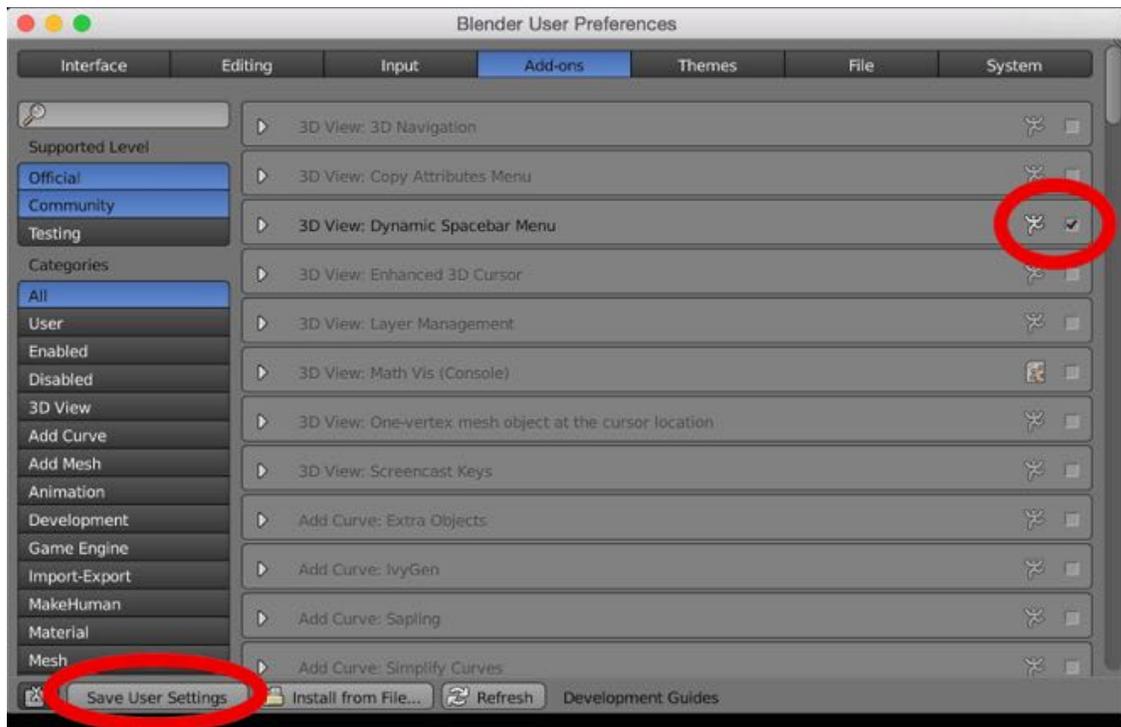
- **Select the Addons Tab** and then in the header at the bottom of the window select “Install from File...” .



- **Locate your mesh_edgetools.py** on the desktop, select it and then in the upper right-hand corner of the window select “Install from File...” .



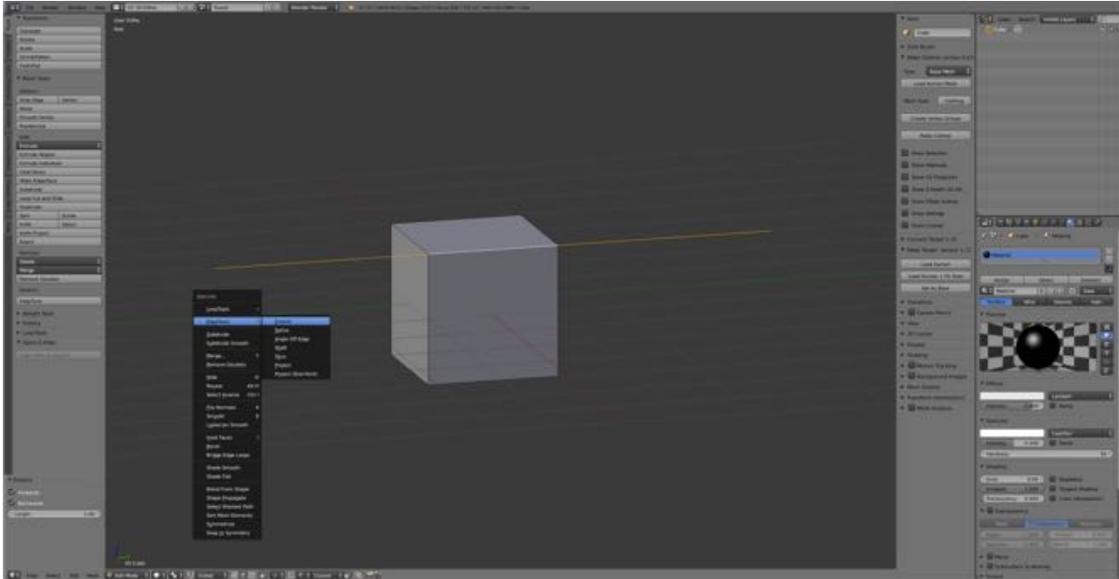
- **Locate** the installed **add-on**. If need be, select “Users” and look for “Mesh Edge Tools”.
- Make sure the check box to the right is **checked**.
- To save your changes to user preference so that they will be invoked when you close and open Blender again, **LBM** click on “**Save User Settings**” in the lower left-hand corner of the window.



- Close the users Preferences window.

Let's see what this add-on does.

Among other things, when you select an edge and then invoke the tool with the keyboard shortcut in the specials window (**S**> **Edge Tools** > **Extend**) you can extend the selected edge. In the Options Panel in the bottom part of the Tool Shelf you can select the direction of the extension (right, left or both) and the distance.

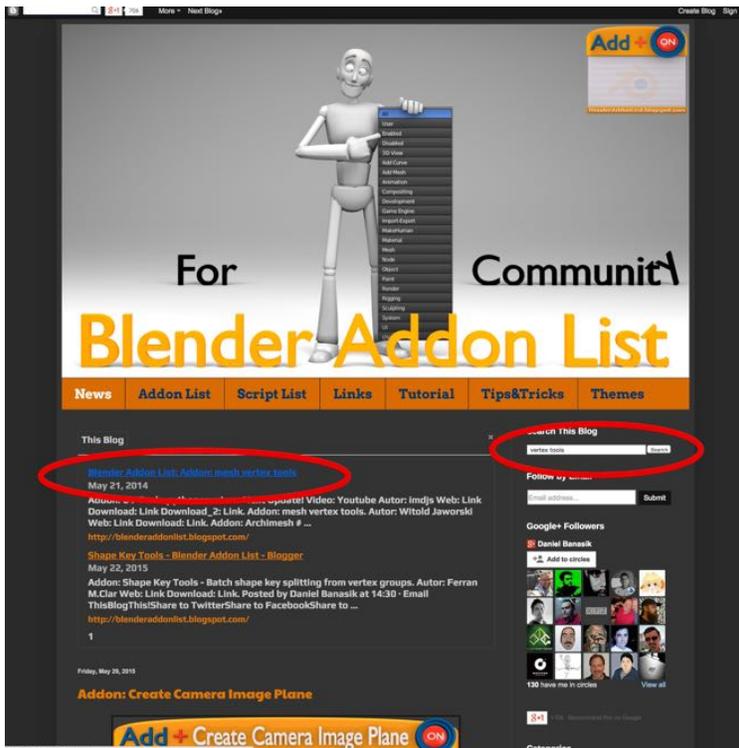


Blender Addon List

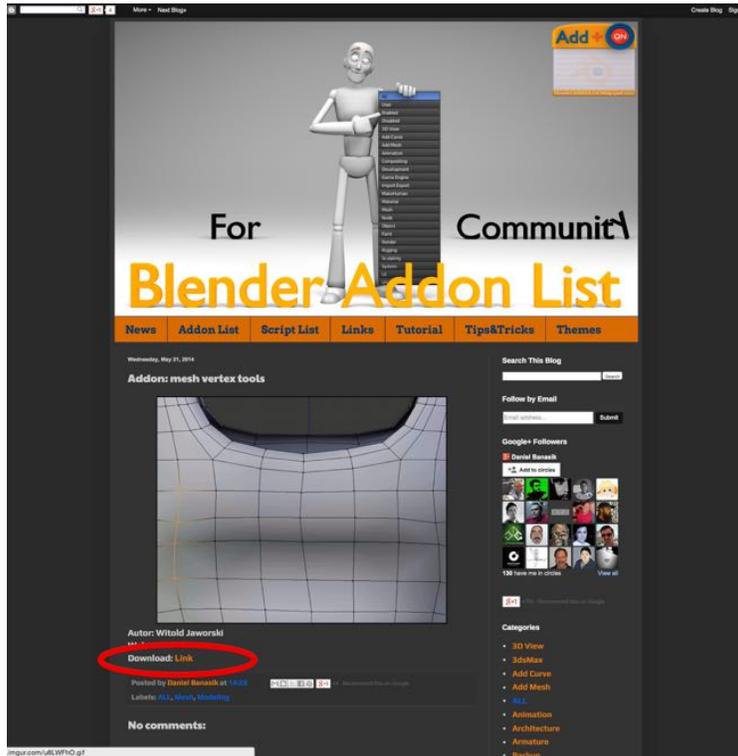
Let's install an add-on from Blender's Add-on Catalogue.

- In your Internet browser search for “**Blender Addon List**” (note the spelling).
- In the “**search this Blog**” box upper right type in “**vertex tools**” and click **Search**. A list will appear with “Blender Addon List: mesh vertex tools” at the top.

(If you have already installed this tool, you can skip this section.)



- Select this “**Blender Addon List: mesh vertex tools**” to go to the Addon: mesh vertex tools page.
- Click on the **Download Link** to download the addon as a zip archive.
- Locate the downloaded file on your computer (i.e., in the downloads folder and click on the zip archive to **extract** the **mesh_vertex_tools.py** file.

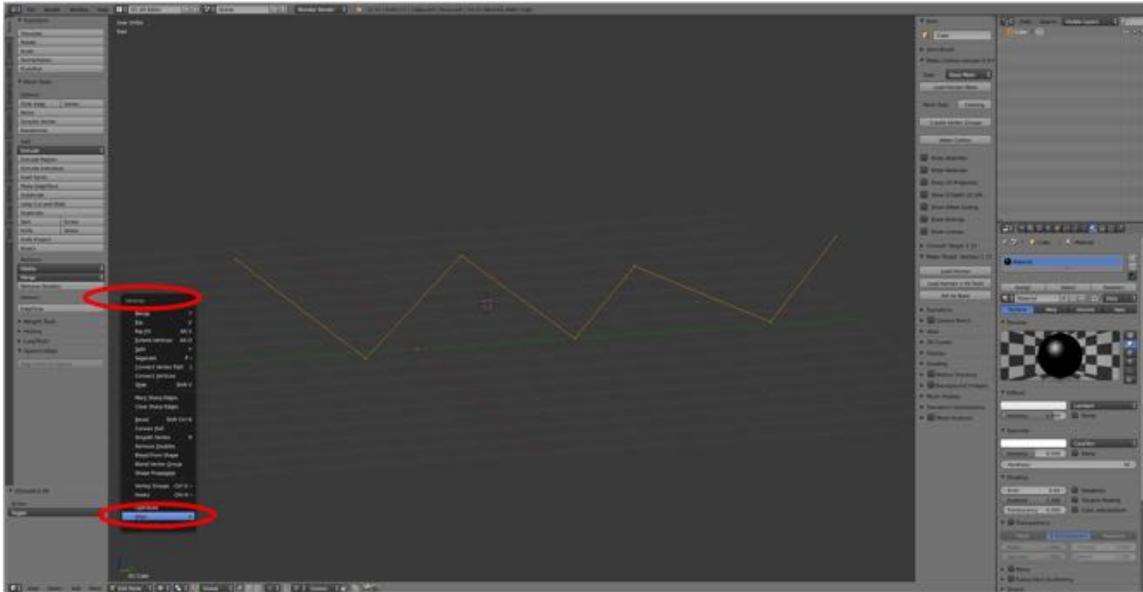


As above:

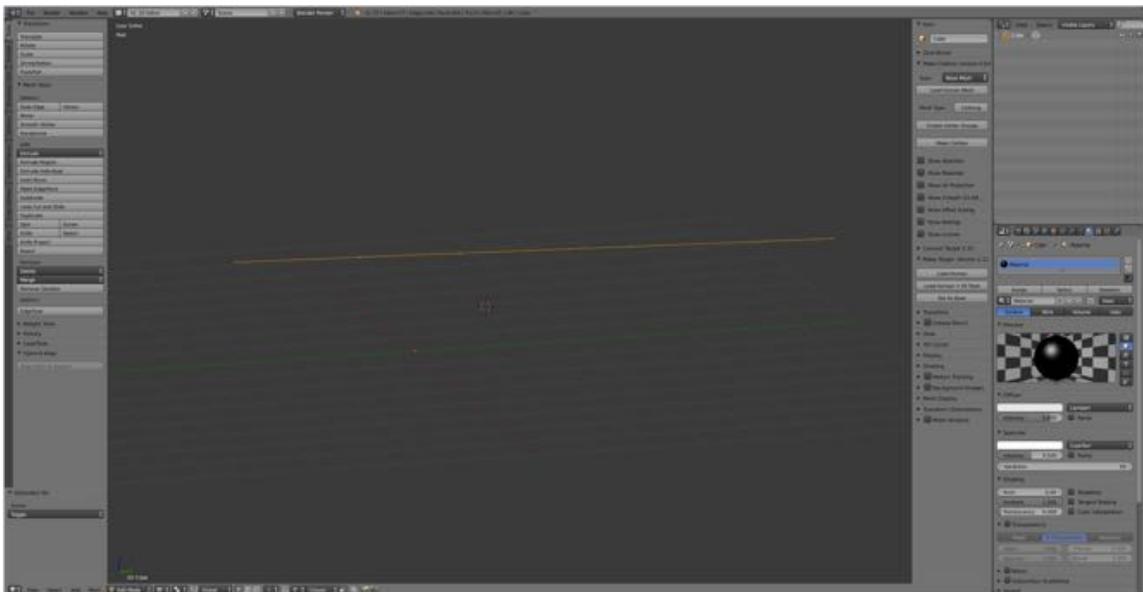
- **Open** Blender and go to the **User Preferences Window (CMD + COMMA)** (or in the Information Editor’s header select the File Menu and then “Users preferences...”).
- Select the **Addons Tab** and then in the header at the bottom of the window select “Install from File...”.
- **Locate your mesh_vertex_tools.py** in the download folder, select it and then in the upper right-hand corner of the window select “**Install from File...**”.
- **Locate** the installed **add-on**. If needed, select “Users” and look for “Mesh Vertex Tools”.
- Make sure the check box to the right is **checked**.
- To save your changes to user preference so that they will be invoked when you close and open Blender again, **LBM** click on “**Save User Settings**” in the lower left-hand corner of the window.
- **Close** the users **Preferences** window.

Let’s see what this add-on does.

Suppose you have a line of vertices you wish to align.



By selecting the vertices you can then from the Vertex Menu (**CTRL + V-KEY**) select **“Align”** to align the vertices between the first and last vertex.



For More Information

For more information on installing Blender addons see:

Quickest Way to Install Blender Addons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0v9JOEaVJu4>

Blender Tutorial: How to Install Addons

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_WOMOGyYd0