

Base Weight Map rigging of clothing in 10 minutes

OK, I'm just going to spell out the path I take to bring an object into Poser and get base weight map rigging into the garment. Just so it's out there.

You have modeled a dress (just an example) and now it's time to rig it. Here's how I do that in PP14. Your methods may vary, and there are multiple ways to achieve the same thing.

First I load the figure the dress is designed for. You can, though I usually don't bother, load the DEV Rig of the figure if you have one. I have found no advantage in doing so. I simply load the base figure, in the zero pose and with IK turned off.

Import your grouped object. (While Poser will auto group, I find it's grouping inferior to a dedicated product like Auto Group Editor.)

At this point, you have the figure and the dress in the scene.

Go to the Fitting Room

Click New on the Fitting Sessions screen

(Session name is unimportant)

From the Object dropdown, choose Props>your imported object

From the Goal dropdown, choose the figure the dress is designed for and in the scene

Ensure Zero Prop/Zero Figure boxes are checked, Keep Deformations NOT checked

Click OK. After a few second delay, you will see the figure and clothing on the screen

From the Fitting Session tab, click Create Figure

Type in a Figure name

Now you are presented with the Transfer Body Parts screen. This is the hierarchy menu of the Figure in your scene.

It is important that you delay transferring morphs at this point. Ensure that checkbox at the bottom of the menu is unchecked. Also, if you have a properly grouped item, there is no reason to regroup and should ensure that checkbox is unchecked. I always leave zero rotations checked.

From the menu choose the body parts you wish to add to the skeleton of the DRESS. (Hint, uncheck all body parts by selecting the figure name, then scroll down the list and check the body parts you want)

Click OK

After a few seconds, the process is complete.

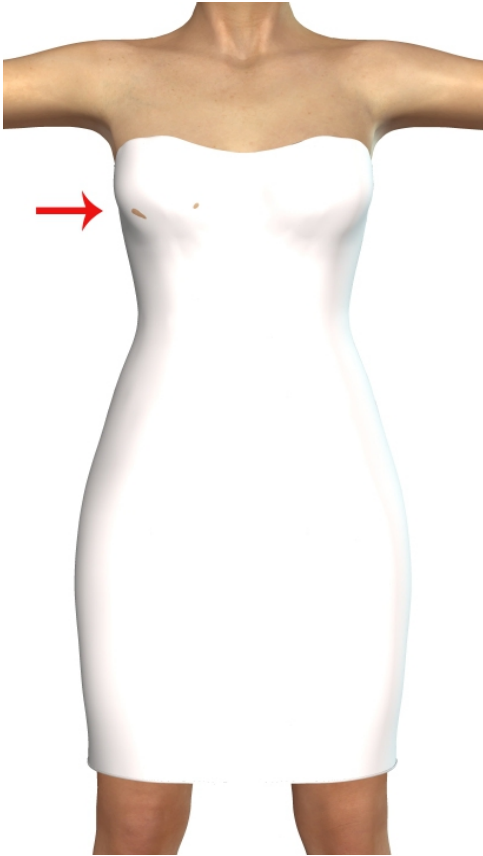
Return to the Pose room

Select the imported object from the Props dropdown menu and delete it from the scene.

Select the newly rigged dress from the Figure menu and Conform it to the figure.

Save your rigged dress to the library.

Now, you have base weight maps in the garment, changes and refinements will be necessary to get good movement, but you have a conforming weight mapped dress in your library.



First, let me discuss why I don't transfer morphs at the beginning. Mostly, because doing so has the potential to be wasted effort. Once the base rigging is in, you need to check for pokethrough and issues with the model itself. With all the morphs loaded, it's harder to determine if you have a problem with the mesh or if morphs need adjusting. Since the biggest issue at this point is that you have a clean, well fitted mesh, morphs are simply adding potential questions.

In my example, I have issues with fitting in the breast area. At this point I know it is a mesh issue and need to go back into the modeler and repair those issues before going forward. **If those repairs involve re-grouping the mesh, the rigging will simply explode on posing and will require a complete re-rigging.**

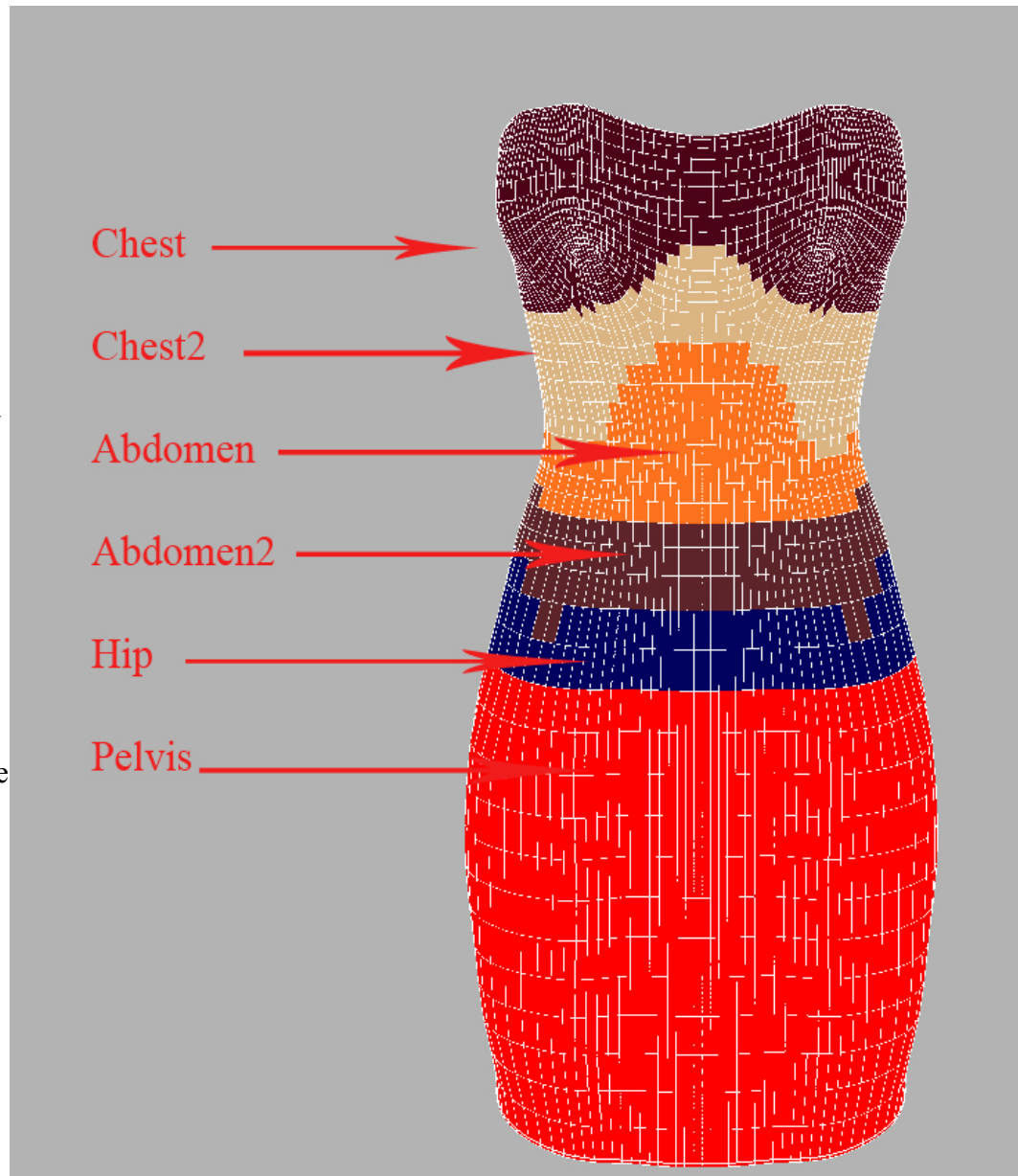
Grouping

As I stated, I still prefer to use Auto Group Editor which is an addon purchase. While Poser's grouping has improved with PP14, I still lose control I want over groups and their placement.

Using AGE, below is the grouping for the dress. Please note, I have not grouped the thighs into the skirt - I stopped at the Pelvis (for Dawn). I would have stopped at the hip for figures that contain no Pelvis group (like V4).

You can't use Poser's grouping if you rig the thighs to follow the figure pose. Doing so will group the thighs into the dress causing a split in the skirt for each thigh.

Hint: In a pinch, I have used Poser grouping by going through the Fitting Room twice - the first time to rig and group just to the pelvis, then the 2nd time to re-rig adding in the thighs to the object Poser saved in the figure folder with the dress (Make certain to use the correct object file).



When rigging, even though I have stopped with the pelvis group I want the thigh rigging included so that the dress follows the thigh poses. Grouping in the thighs will result in the mesh splitting for each thigh.



In adding the thighs to the rigging without a group, the thigh weight maps are a bit wonky and will require some editing. The left thigh weight map intrudes on the right thigh and vice versa. We will need to get those weight maps edited a bit to control the movement by opening the Joint Editor and editing the weight map for each rotation (bend, side-side, twist).



And after the edits, I have a dress which follows whatever pose I use for my model.

On this one, I will continue to edit and refine the weight maps, just because I'm not happy with the "folding" of the dress on twist, but those are simple refinements and nit picking.



Alternatively, if you have a dress you have already rigged and refined, you can use that dress as a donor for rigging the new dress.

At the point where you have exited the Fitting Room, deleted the imported object and conformed your new dress, load your pre-rigged dress into the scene without conforming it. Once you have the donor dress in the scene, follow these steps:

From the Figure menu, select your newly rigged dress

From the Figure menu, choose Figure>Copy Joint zones from and select your donor dress.

Delete the donor dress from the scene.

Save the rigged dress to the library.

