

Environment Variables

Version 6.5



Maya®, Version 6.5

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Graph Layout Toolkit

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Environment Variables

About

Environment variables

Overview of environment variables

Environment variables are a useful way to modify the standard path locations and behavior of Maya. For example, you can:

- Set Maya to look in a different directory than the default for custom scripts using the `MAYA_SCRIPT_PATH` environment variable.
- Point to an area with more disk space so you have enough room for temporary render cache files using the `TEMPDIR` environment variable.

Many of the variables used by Maya are set automatically when you start Maya.

Setting and getting environment variables within Maya

You can set the value of environment variables within Maya by using the `putenv` command.

You can get the value of an environment variable within Maya by using the `getenv` command.

Setting environment variables using `Maya.env`

There are two ways to set environment variables outside of Maya: using the standard operating system commands, or editing the `Maya.env` file. Using the `Maya.env` file is recommended so that you don't clutter the standard environment settings with Maya-specific variables. You can also set up `Maya.env` as a roaming profile to be shared by many machines; this can be useful, for example, when you are performing distributed rendering among several Windows machines. See your networking documentation for details on setting up roaming profiles.

(All platforms) To set environment variables in a `Maya.env` file

- 1 Create a text file named `Maya.env`.

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About > Setting environment variables using Maya.env

(Mac OS X) `Maya.env` is a text file that you can create and edit with any text editor. If you use TextEdit or a word processing program, be sure to save it as an ASCII (basic) text file, not RTF. (In the TextEdit Preferences window, set New Document Format to *Plain text*, and under Saving, turn off the option *Append ".txt" to plain text files*.)

Because the `.env` extension is not recognized as a text file, you may need to open `Maya.env` from a word processing application instead of double-clicking the filename or icon.

2 Save it to one of the following directories:

- (Windows)
 - `drive:\Documents and Settings\username\My Documents\maya\version`
 - `drive:\Documents and Settings\username\My Documents\maya`
- (Mac OS X)
 - `/Users/username/Library/Preferences/Alias/maya/version`
 - `/Users/username/Library/Preferences/Alias/maya`
- (IRIX and Linux)
 - `~/maya/version`
 - `~/maya`

Note

- Make sure to capitalize `Maya.env`.
- On Windows, Linux, and IRIX, you can change the location where Maya looks for `Maya.env` by setting the `MAYA_APP_DIR` environment variable using the operating system methods described below.

3 Set each variable on a single line in the format:

`NAME = value`

- You can set any variable, including ones that you define yourself. The only variables you cannot set in `Maya.env` are `MAYA_APP_DIR`, and `HOME` (IRIX, Linux and Mac OS X) or `USERPROFILE` (Windows).
- If you define your own variable, make sure it does not contain spaces, tabs, or any of the following characters: `/ : * " < > |`
- You can use variable substitution by typing either `$variable` (IRIX, Linux and Mac OS X) or `%variable%` (Windows). For example:

`MAYA_PLUG_IN_PATH = $MAYA_APP_DIR/scripts/test` (IRIX, Linux and Mac OS X)

`MAYA_PLUG_IN_PATH = %MAYA_APP_DIR%\scripts\test` (Windows)

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About > Setting environment variables using system commands on Windows, IRIX, and Linux

- For directory paths use backslash (\) on Windows and forward slash (/) on IRIX, Linux and Mac OS X.
- To separate several paths, use a semicolon (;) on Windows and a colon (:) on IRIX and Linux.
- Maya ignores blank lines and whitespace around the name, equal sign, and value. Lines that begin with # are considered comments and also ignored.

Examples

- This example uses Mac OS X-specific formatting and typical folders.

```
USER_SCRIPT_PATH = /Volumes/Sapphire/render/scenes/lego pov library/Library;/
Volumes/Sapphire/render/scenes/maya/scripts;
MAYA_SCRIPT_PATH = $USER_SCRIPT_PATH;$MAYA_SCRIPT_BASE/scripts/
test;$MAYA_SCRIPT_BASE/scripts/unsupported;
```

- The following example shows how you can define your own variable (SHARED_MAYA_DIR) and use it to set the value of other Maya variables.

```
SHARED_MAYA_DIR = HostName:/usr/localhome/public/maya/6.5
MAYA_SCRIPT_PATH = $SHARED_MAYA_DIR/scripts:$MAYA_APP_DIR/scripts/custom
MAYA_PLUG_IN_PATH = $SHARED_MAYA_DIR/plug-ins
TMPDIR = /disk2/temp space
```

- This example is the same as IRIX and Linux, but with Windows-specific formatting.

```
MAYA_SCRIPT_PATH = %MAYA_APP_DIR%\scripts\test
MAYA_PLUG_IN_PATH = %MAYA_LOCATION%\devkit\plug-ins;%MAYA_LOCATION%\devkit\test
TMPDIR = D:\temp space
```

Note

Although we show platform-specific formatting for such things as path separators and variable markers above, Maya will understand the different formatting styles no matter which platform you are on.

We still recommend using the formatting conventions specific to your platform to avoid any possible errors (for example, copying and pasting paths between Maya.env and a shell).

Setting environment variables using system commands on Windows, IRIX, and Linux

The variables set in the operating system take priority over any settings in the Maya.env file. However, when Maya verifies the environment settings, it may add default settings.

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About > Standard paths

- On IRIX and Linux, you can use `setenv` to set environment variables. You can add commands to your `.cshrc` file to make sure the environment variables are always available.

```
setenv MAYA_SCRIPT_PATH /remote/scriptDisk/scriptFiles/
```

- On the Maya command line, you can use the MEL command `putenv` to set environment variables.

```
putenv "MAYA_SCRIPT_PATH" "/remote/scriptDisk/scriptFiles/";
```

- On Windows, right-click My Computer and choose Properties (or double-click System in the control panel), then click the Advanced tab, and click Environment Variables.
- On the Mac OS X you can only set environment variables using `Maya.env`.

Standard paths

When Maya loads environment variable settings into its memory, it adds some standard paths to certain environment variables to ensure that some things Maya requires to run are always available. This affects the following variables:

```
MAYA_PLUG_IN_PATH  
MAYA_MODULE_PATH  
MAYA_SCRIPT_PATH  
XBMLANGPATH
```

When you set these paths yourself, variables you set using the operating system methods override all other settings, variables you set in `Maya.env` override standard settings, and the standard settings are used if not overridden by system variables or `Maya.env`.

Because your path settings take priority over standard Maya paths, it is possible to override Maya needs to run.

On Windows, IRIX, and Linux, you can try starting Maya with only default settings by typing `maya -default` at the following at the command line.

Other path settings

For the system `PATH` variable, Maya adds `$MAYA_LOCATION/bin`. On IRIX and Linux, it also adds `/usr/aw/com/bin`.

Maya checks whether the directory specified by the `HOME` variable (IRIX, Linux, Mac OS X) or `USERPROFILE` variable (Windows) exists and is writable. If not, Maya issues a prompt for you to provide a writable home directory. Note that `HOME` and `USERPROFILE` cannot be set in the `Maya.env` file.

General variables

MAYA_DEBUG_ENABLE_CRASH_REPORTING (Windows, IRIX, and Linux)

When Maya encounters a fatal error, this variable writes a crash report file (.crash) in the current working directory. This file contains a detailed description of what Maya was doing when the failure occurred.

To enable this option, set the value equal to 1. To disable it, set the value to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined.

MAYA_DISABLE_BACKSPACE_DELETE (Windows, IRIX, and Linux)

Disables the functionality of the Backspace key. To enable this option, set the value equal to 1. To disable it, set the value to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined.

MAYA_FUR_LIGHT_CLAMPING

In a scene in which the intensity of the lights exceeded 1.0, rendered fur would never be brighter than the diffuse and specular color values defined for the fur. You would expect the rendered fur to become increasingly brighter as the lighting increased. This is not only logical, but also consistent with how other renderers, including the Maya Software renderer, behave with identical lighting and material assignments. In order to make this fix in Maya 6.0 and subsequent versions, a change in the shading calculations for rendering fur was implemented. The effect is that fur rendered with Maya 6.0 and subsequent versions may look different compared with previous versions. If you want to maintain compatibility, define the environment variable MAYA_FUR_LIGHT_CLAMPING. To enable this option, set the value equal to 1. To disable it, set the value to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined.

MAYA_FUR_OLD_BEHAVIOR

As of Maya 6.0, in a scene in which the transform node of FurFeedback has transformations applied, interactive or rendered fur no longer ignores these transformations. This is not only logical, but also consistent with how other transform nodes behave in Maya. In order to make this fix, a change was made in the transformation calculations for displaying or rendering fur. The effect is that fur displayed or rendered with Maya 6.0 and subsequent versions may look different compared with previous versions if there are transformations on the FurFeedback node.

Apart from transforming Fur, as described above, if this variable is set it does a few more things:

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About > General variables

- It ignores the Casts Shadows and Primary Visibility attributes in the Render Stats section of the FurFeedbackShape node.
- You can assign geometry and fur (FurFeedback) separately on different render layers and the Maya Fur renderer ignores the render layer of fur (as it did formerly).
- There may be inconsistencies, for example, in a test scene where fur is assigned to display layer1 and geometry is assigned to display layer2, if you turn off the visibility of layer2 then fur will be invisible in the display, but it will show up when rendered using mental ray.

Essentially there will be behavioral differences between mental ray Fur and Maya Fur if this environment variable is set.

If you want to maintain compatibility in MayaFur display or render, define the environment variable MAYA_FUR_OLD_BEHAVIOR. To enable this option, set the value equal to 1. To disable it, set the value to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined.

MAYA_HELP_URL

This variable is used to override where help files are found. Maya prepends this value to its help paths to create a URL which is passed to the browser.

You can use this to point Maya to a central help server, or set it to a file: URL to have Maya get its help files directly from the filesystem instead of a help server (make sure to unzip the help directories before you try to use a file: URL).

Incorrect use of this flag will prevent Maya Help from working within Maya.

MAYA_OVERRIDE_UI

If this environment variable is set, Maya won't load the file `initialLayout.mel`, which creates the interface. You must specify an alternate file to run (for example, `MAYA_OVERRIDE_UI = test.mel`). This variable should only be specified if you want to completely replace Maya's UI for your own, custom-programmed interface.

MAYA_PAINT_EFFECTS_THREADS

Paint Effects uses the multiple processors on your machine when painting and rendering. You can set this variable to control the number of processors used by Maya. The minimum is one (1) and the maximum is three (3).

WINEDITOR (Windows, IRIX and Linux)

Allows you to override the Expression Editor and use your own editor. The editor must be set to run in the foreground.

File path variables

MAYA_APP_DIR (Windows, IRIX, and Linux)

This variable defines your personal Maya application directory. This directory contains your projects and other important items:

- the prefs directory
- the projects directory
- mayaRenderLog.txt
- mayaLog
- mayaJournal
- the scripts directory
- (Maya.env, if you choose to create it, can also reside in this directory)

You can only set MAYA_APP_DIR from the operating system; you cannot use Maya.env. If you do not set it, the default values are:

~username/maya (IRIX and Linux) or *drive:\Documents and Settings\username\My Documents\maya* (Windows).

For Mac OS X, you cannot set an environment variables from the operating system.

MAYA_FILE_ICON_PATH

This variable has become obsolete since Maya 3.0. See "XBMLANGPATH" on page 16 as this variable should be used instead.

MAYA_MODULE_PATH

Defines the search paths for Maya module files. A module file describes the install location for certain Maya components, such as subdivision surfaces. Generally, you don't need to set this variable. But, keep in mind that for each path extracted from the modules files, Maya appends the suffixes "plug-ins", "scripts", and "icons", and then adds the appended path to MAYA_PLUG_IN_PATH, MAYA_SCRIPT_PATH, and XBMLANGPATH, respectively.

The following table lists the default paths, which will always follow any path that you specify.

1 | Environment Variables

About > File path variables

Default for Windows	Default for Mac OS X, IRIX, Linux
<user's directory>/My Documents/ maya/6.5/modules <user's directory>/My Documents/ maya/modules C:/Program Files/Common Files/Alias Shared/Modules/maya/6.5 C:/Program Files/Common Files/Alias Shared/Modules/maya <maya_directory>/modules/	\$MAYA_APP_DIR/maya/6.5/modules \$MAYA_APP_DIR/maya/modules /usr/aw/modules/maya/6.5 /usr/aw/modules/maya

MAYA_MOVIE_DIR

This variable is used to override the directory where movie files are found. The default is \$MAYA_LOCATION/movies.

MAYA_LOCATION

The path for the Maya installation directory. If it is not set, it defaults to /usr/aw/mayaVersionNumber (IRIX and Linux) or C:\Program Files\Alias \MayaVersionNumber (Windows).

On Mac OS X, Maya is installed as /Applications/Maya 6.5/Maya.app. Since Mac OS X architecture makes it difficult to access the contents of the Maya application package, we strongly discourage the use of MAYA_LOCATION on Mac OS X. Instead, use the following alternate locations:

- /Users/Shared/Alias/maya/6.5
- /Users/Shared/Alias/maya
- under your Home folder, in Library/Preferences/Alias/maya/6.5
- under your Home folder, in Library/Preferences/Alias/maya.

MAYA_PLUG_IN_PATH

Search path for plug-ins. When a plug-in is specified by relative path name, the directories in this path will be searched for the given plug-in name. This path also determines which directories will be listed in the Plug-in Manager.

1 | Environment Variables

About > File path variables

Default for Windows	Default for IRIX and Linux	Default for Mac OS X
<user's directory>/My Documents/maya/6.5/plug-ins <user's directory>/My Documents/maya/plug-ins <maya_directory>/bin/plug-ins	\$MAYA_APP_DIR/maya/6.5/plug-ins \$MAYA_APP_DIR/maya/plug-ins /usr/aw/userconfig/maya/6.5/plug-ins /usr/aw/userconfig/maya/plug-ins \$MAYA_LOCATION/bin/plug-ins	In your Home folder, under Library/Preferences/Alias/maya/6.5 In your Home folder, under Library/Preferences/Alias/maya /Users/Shared/Alias/maya/6.5 /Users/Shared/Alias/maya Inside the Maya package in /Applications/Maya 6.5/Maya.app

MAYA_PRESET_PATH

Defines the location for Maya presets. Each entry in the path points to the directory above the attrPresets directory.

MAYA_PROJECT

Defines the default location of your project. You can change the location at any time by choosing File > Project. This variable simply defines the default.

MAYA_SHELF_PATH

Specifies the directories that Maya searches to access the shelves. You can store shelves in a location accessible by different groups who then set the MAYA_SHELF_PATH variable for their workstation.

You can specify more than one directory using MAYA_SHELF_PATH, separated by colons; for example, Production/shelf:Shot/shelf:MyDir/shelf specifies three different shelf directories. At startup, Maya searches each directory in the order specified to instantiate shelves. After searching the directories specified in MAYA_SHELF_PATH, Maya continues to add shelves from the default shelf directory. Once a shelf exists, a shelf with the same name in the subsequent searched directories is ignored.

When a new shelf is created, it is always saved in the default shelf directory. To share it, move it to the desired directory (that is, one of the ones specified by MAYA_SHELF_PATH).

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About > File path variables

To restrict access to a shelf directory, disable the write permission of that directory. A warning appears when a user attempts to write into a restricted shelf directory (while exiting or saving all shelves).

MAYA_SCRIPT_PATH

Colon-separated search path for MEL scripts. If an unresolved MEL procedure is called, then this path will be searched for a script that implements it. Also, if a MEL file is sourced without giving the full path, then this path will be searched. The following table lists the default paths, which will always follow any path that you specify.

1 | Environment Variables

About > File path variables

Default for Windows	Default for IRIX and Linux	Default for Mac OS X
<user's directory>/My Documents/maya/projects/default/mel	\$MAYA_APP_DIR/maya/6.5/scripts	In your Home folder, under Library/Preferences/Alias/maya/6.5
<user's directory>/My Documents/maya/6.5/scripts	\$MAYA_APP_DIR/maya/scripts	In your Home folder, under Library/Preferences/Alias/maya
<user's directory>/My Documents/maya/scripts	/usr/aw/userconfig/maya/6.5/scripts	/Users/Shared/Alias/maya/6.5
<user's directory>/My Documents/maya/6.5/presets	/usr/aw/userconfig/maya/scripts	/Users/Shared/Alias/maya
<user's directory>/My Documents/maya/6.5/prefs/shelves	\$MAYA_APP_DIR/maya/6.5/prefs/shelves	Inside the Maya package in /Applications/Alias/Maya 6.5/Maya.app
<user's directory>/My Documents/maya/6.5/prefs/markingMenus	\$MAYA_LOCATION/scripts/startup	
<maya_directory>/scripts/startup	\$MAYA_LOCATION/scripts/others	
<maya_directory>/scripts/others	\$MAYA_LOCATION/scripts/AETemplates	
<maya_directory>/scripts/AETemplates	\$MAYA_LOCATION/scripts/paintEffects	
<maya_directory>/scripts/paintEffects	\$MAYA_LOCATION/scripts/cloth	
<maya_directory>/scripts/fluidEffects	\$MAYA_LOCATION/scripts/live	
<maya_directory>/scripts/hair	\$MAYA_LOCATION/scripts/fur	
<maya_directory>/scripts/cloth		
<maya_directory>/scripts/live		
<maya_directory>/scripts/fur		

TEMP or TMPDIR

This variable specifies the directory location Maya uses for various temporary files, such as:

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About > File path variables

- temporary render cache files during a render
- crash files if Maya crashes

On IRIX and Linux, set TMPDIR only. On Windows, set both TEMP and TMPDIR. If not set, the temporary directory is /tmp (IRIX and Linux), or C:/temp (Windows), or under your Home folder in Documents/temp.

XBMLANGPATH

For both all, this variable specifies the location of icon files, such as icons used for Shelf buttons. On IRIX and Linux, the syntax is slightly different then other paths. For example:

```
XBMLANGPATH = ". /icons/%B:$HOME/dev/icons/%B"
```

In this example, %B is acts as a placeholder that will be replaced by Maya with the bitmap filename.

The following table lists the default paths, which will always follow any path that you specify.

Default for Windows	Default for IRIX and Linux	Default for Mac OS X
%MAYA_APP_DIR%\maya\6.5 \prefs\icons%MAYA_APP_DIR %\maya\prefs\icons	\$MAYA_APP_DIR/maya/ 6.5/prefs/icons/%B \$MAYA_APP_DIR/maya/ prefs/icons/%B	In your Home folder, in Library/Preferences/Alias/ maya/6.5/prefs/icons
%MAYA_LOCATION%\icons %MAYA_LOCATION%\icons \paintEffects	/usr/aw/userconfig/maya/ 6.5/icons/%B	In your Home folder, in Library/Preferences/Alias/ maya/prefs/icons
%MAYA_LOCATION%\icons \cloth	/usr/aw/userconfig/maya/ icons/%B	/Users/Shared/Alias/ maya/6.5/icons
%MAYA_LOCATION%\icons \live	\$MAYA_LOCATION/ icons/%B	/Users/Shared/Alias/ maya/icons
%MAYA_LOCATION%\icons \fur	\$MAYA_LOCATION/ icons/paintEffects/%B \$MAYA_LOCATION/ icons/cloth/%B \$MAYA_LOCATION/ icons/live/%B \$MAYA_LOCATION/ icons/fur/%B	Inside the Maya package in /Applications/Alias/Maya 6.5/Maya.app

Rendering variables

AW_JPEG_Q_FACTOR

This variable can be used to specify the quality of JPEG files that Maya renders out. The valid values are 1 through 100, with 100 being the highest quality.

MAYA_NO_JITTER_FINAL_COLOR

If you are quantizing to 8-bit color, we apply some randomness, or jitter, to the color. To enable this option, set the value equal to 1. To disable it, set the value to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined.

MAYA_RENDERER_RT_BACKGROUND_COLOR

If you set this variable to 1, Maya includes the camera background in the calculation of reflection and refraction rays. If you set this variable to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined, Maya ignores the background color for these rays.

MAYA_USE_V1_CAMERA

Allows you to revert to the old (Maya 1.0/1.5) camera model behavior. Starting with Maya 2.0, we have fixed how the camera behaves when lens squeeze is not 1.0, or when the resolution's aspect ratio is not the same as the x-resolution divided by the y-resolution. If you are in the middle of a job started with Maya 1.0/1.5, you may need the old (incorrect) behavior for continuity.

To enable this option, set the value equal to 1. To disable it, set the value to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined.

MAYA_USE_VERSION1_DISPLACEMENT

Allows you to revert to the old (Maya 1.0) displacement mapping behavior. Starting with Maya 1.5/2.0, we significantly improved displacement mapping. If you are in the middle of a job started using Maya 1.0, you may need the old behavior for continuity.

To enable this option, set the value equal to 1. To disable it, set the value to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined.

MAYA_USE_VERSION1_POLY_TANGENT

Allows you to revert to the old (Maya 1.0) polygon tangent calculation behavior. For Maya 1.5/2.0 we significantly improved the way we calculate tangents on polygon objects. This primarily affects bump-mapping. If you are in the middle of a job started using Maya 1.0, you may need the old behavior for continuity.

To enable this option, set the value equal to 1. To disable it, set the value to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined.

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About > Mac OS X specific variables

MAYA_HW_FILE_TEXTURE_RESOLUTION_OVERRIDE

Enable this flag to force baked file textures to be the maximum of the texture resolution attribute on the file texture or the actual file texture dimensions.

Mac OS X specific variables

MAYA_MAC_BUTTON_MAP

Set to 1 to use a one-button mouse with Maya, 2 for a two-button mouse, leave undefined or set to 3 for a three-button mouse.

:The documentation assumes a three-button mouse. The following table shows the keystroke and button combinations for mice with fewer than three buttons.

For model views, the mouse works in standard 3-button mode.

For view manipulation, editors do not recognize the middle mouse button. Instead, the mouse buttons are mapped as follows:

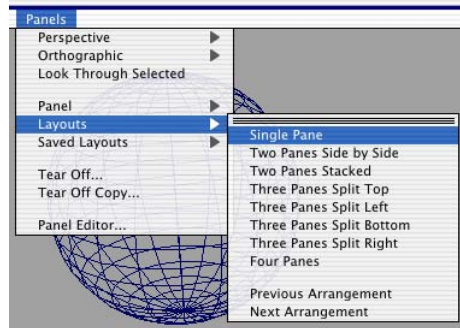
Three button mouse	Two button mouse	One button mouse
the left mouse button	the left mouse button	the left mouse button
the middle mouse button	command + the left mouse button	command + the left mouse button
the right mouse button	the right mouse button	ctrl + the left mouse button
option + the right mouse button or command + the right mouse button	option + the right mouse button	ctrl + option + the left mouse button

MAYA_MAC_MENUS_ARE_OPAQUE

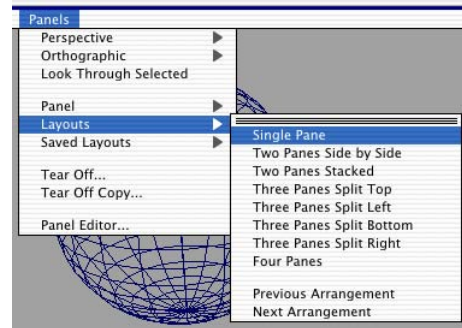
This environment variable lets you change the opacity of pane menus. If you set the variable to 1, then the pane menus appear opaque. If you set the variable to 0 (zero) or leave it undefined, then the pane menus appear with Mac OS X default transparency. This variable does not affect the opacity of the main menus.

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About > Linux and IRIX specific variables



MAYA_MAC_MENUS_ARE_OPAQUE
= 0



MAYA_MAC_MENUS_ARE_OPAQUE
= 1

MAYA_MAC_SET_UMASK (Mac OS X Only)

This environment variable lets you set file sharing permissions. The following example sets the permissions of any file created by Maya to be readable/writable by any user:

```
MAYA_MAC_SET_UMASK = 0
```

MAYA_MAC_WINDOW_OPACITY

This environment variable lets you set the opacity of editor windows. Set this variable to an integer number between 0 and 100, where 100 is full opacity. The following is an example of setting the editor window opacity to 80%:

```
MAYA_MAC_WINDOW_OPACITY = 80
```

MAYA_NO_ALTIVEC

There is some special AltiVec code to speed Maya up in a few places, including the Maya software renderer. In case of problems, this code can be disabled by setting the value of the environment variable MAYA_NO_ALTIVEC to 1.

Linux and IRIX specific variables

MAYA_MMSET_DEFAULT_XCURSOR (Linux only)

Creates a left pointer cursor to use when resetting the cursor on use of the Marking Menus. Useful when using GNOME window managers that otherwise revert back to the default "X" cursor.

MAYA_SOUND_SCRUB (Linux only)

Disables the ability to scrub sound.

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About > Linux and IRIX specific variables

MAYA_WEBBROWSER (IRIX and Linux only)
WEBBROWSER

Overrides the web browser used by the 'browseURL' command (used by help). This is especially useful if Netscape is not in your path. First MAYA_WEBBROWSER is checked, then WEBBROWSER.