PINXS 3D Model Viewer

Customer Setup and User Guide

Version 1.4.26 | Plugin Nexus

Thank you from Mike Edmonston

Thank you for choosing a Plugin Nexus product. This guide explains how to install, licence, configure and publish interactive 3D model viewers in WordPress. It has been laid out as a practical customer guide for WordPress administrators, WooCommerce store owners, product teams and web designers who need a reliable way to present 3D models directly on pages, posts and product pages.

Website https://pluginnexus.com	**Product** PINXS 3D Model Viewer for WordPress
Document type Install, setup and user instructions	**Audience** WordPress admins, store owners, product teams and web designers

Contents

Use this guide as a full setup reference. The sections are organised in the same order most site owners will use when installing the plugin, creating the first model and publishing it on a live page.

Important user responsibility

Always keep a current backup before installing or updating WordPress themes, plugins or custom code. Test new plugins and updates on a staging site where possible before using them on a live customer website.

- 1. Overview and main workflow
- 2. Requirements and compatibility
- 3. Licence requirement and activation
- 4. Installing and updating the plugin
- 5. Admin menu overview
- 6. Global settings and defaults
- 7. Creating your first 3D model record
- 8. Supported file formats and preparing model files
- 9. Uploading GLB, GLTF, STL, OBJ and DAE files
- 10. Using the preview window
- 11. Save to Record and Save as New Defaults
- 12. Lighting and environment settings
- 13. Background, material and camera settings
- 14. Visitor controls on desktop and mobile
- 15. Displaying models with shortcodes
- 16. Gutenberg, Elementor and WooCommerce usage
- 17. Performance and file optimisation
- 18. Accessibility and mobile usability
- 19. Data retention, backups and uninstall behaviour
- 20. Troubleshooting
- 21. Frequently asked questions
- 22. Final pre-launch checklist
- 23. Quick reference tables

1. Overview and main workflow

PINXS 3D Model Viewer is a commercial WordPress plugin for publishing interactive 3D model viewers on WordPress websites. It is designed for product demonstrations, technical previews, portfolio work, WooCommerce product pages, downloadable product pages, documentation pages and any situation where visitors should be able to rotate, zoom and inspect a 3D object directly in the browser.

Interactive 3D viewing Visitors can rotate, zoom and pan compatible 3D models using mouse, trackpad or touch controls.	**Model library workflow** Create and manage saved model records inside WordPress rather than manually coding each viewer.
Live preview controls Test lighting, camera, background, shadows and model settings before publishing.	**Reusable defaults** Save a good setup as new defaults so future models start with the same visual style.

Important terminology

This guide uses “model record” to mean a saved item in the PINXS 3D Models area. A model record normally contains a model file, viewer settings and a shortcode that can be placed on pages, posts or product descriptions.

Typical workflow

1. Install and activate the plugin ZIP.
2. Activate the Plugin Nexus licence using your licence key and licence email.
3. Review global settings and choose sensible defaults.
4. Create a new model record.
5. Upload a supported 3D model file or ZIP package.
6. Open the preview window and adjust the visual presentation.
7. Save the model record, copy the shortcode and place it on a page, post or WooCommerce product.
8. Test on desktop, tablet and mobile before using it on a live sales page.

2. Requirements and compatibility

Before installing the plugin, check that the website can run a modern WordPress plugin and serve 3D model files correctly. Larger model files need more hosting resources than normal images, so it is worth confirming upload limits and browser support before a large rollout.

Requirement	Recommendation
WordPress	WordPress 5.0 or newer. A current maintained WordPress version is recommended.
PHP	PHP 7.4 or newer. PHP 8.1+ is recommended for modern WordPress sites.
Browser	Modern browser with WebGL support, such as current Chrome, Edge, Firefox or Safari.
Hosting	Standard WordPress hosting with sufficient upload limits, memory, bandwidth and HTTPS.
WooCommerce	Optional. Useful when placing 3D model viewers on product pages.
Elementor	Optional. The plugin can be used with normal WordPress content and page builders.

WebGL requirement

Interactive 3D viewing depends on WebGL support in the visitor browser and device. Older browsers, locked-down corporate devices, very old mobile devices or disabled hardware acceleration may prevent the viewer from loading.

3. Licence requirement and activation

The retail version of PINXS 3D Model Viewer is a licensed Plugin Nexus product. A valid licence key and matching licence email are required before the full plugin features are available on the website.

Item	What it means
Licence key	The unique key issued for your purchase. Keep this private and do not publish it publicly.
Licence email	The customer email address associated with the purchase or licence record.
Site activation	The process of linking the licence key to a specific WordPress installation.
Updates	Access to product updates depends on the update period included with your purchase.
Support	Support is provided according to the support terms supplied with your Plugin Nexus purchase.

Activation steps

9. Install and activate the plugin ZIP from WordPress admin.
10. Open the PINXS 3D Model Viewer licence or setup screen if prompted.
11. Enter the licence key exactly as supplied.
12. Enter the licence email associated with the purchase.
13. Save or activate the licence.
14. Wait for the success message before using the plugin on the live site.

Licence troubleshooting

If activation fails, check that the key has not been mistyped, the licence email matches the purchase account, the site can connect to Plugin Nexus and the licence has not reached its activation limit.

4. Installing and updating the plugin

The plugin is normally supplied as a ZIP file. Install the ZIP through the WordPress admin area rather than extracting it manually into the plugins folder unless Plugin Nexus support specifically asks you to do so.

Installation from WordPress admin

15. Sign in to WordPress admin as an administrator.
16. Go to Plugins > Add New.
17. Select Upload Plugin.
18. Choose the PINXS 3D Model Viewer ZIP file.
19. Select Install Now.
20. When WordPress finishes installing the plugin, select Activate.
21. Complete licence activation if prompted.

Updating safely

- Back up the site before installing updates.
- Use the supplied Plugin Nexus update or plugin ZIP package.
- Do not rename the internal plugin folder manually.
- After updating, refresh WordPress admin and check that your existing model records still appear.
- Test at least one live page containing a model viewer.

Do not rename plugin folders manually

When updating the plugin, keep the supplied ZIP structure intact. WordPress should update the existing plugin when the package structure is preserved.

5. Admin menu overview

The plugin groups its admin tools under the PINXS 3D Models menu. This keeps model creation, saved model records, settings and documentation together.

Menu item	Purpose
Dashboard	Overview of plugin tools and shortcuts.
All PINXS 3D Models	Lists saved 3D model records. Use this to edit, duplicate, view or manage existing models.
Add New PINXS 3D Model	Creates a new model record and opens the upload/settings editor.
Settings	Controls global defaults used by new model records and viewer output.
Documentation	Built-in quick reference and help information for the plugin.

Admin permissions

Only users with suitable WordPress permissions should manage models and settings. Avoid giving public or untrusted users access to add, edit, upload or delete model records.

6. Global settings and defaults

Global settings are the starting values used when new model records are created. They help keep the website consistent and reduce repetitive setup work. Open global settings from PINXS 3D Models > Settings.

Viewer size and loading Set default width, height, lazy loading and basic viewer behaviour.	**Lighting defaults** Set ambient light, directional light, shadows, environment lighting and light position defaults.
Background defaults Choose solid, gradient, transparent, texture or HDRI style backgrounds where supported.	**Material defaults** Set mesh colour, roughness and metalness for untextured models such as STL files.
Camera defaults Control elevation, zoom and scale behaviour so models appear at a consistent size.	**Data retention** Choose whether plugin data should be preserved or removed if the plugin is uninstalled.

Best practice

Configure a reasonable global starting point, then use the preview window on one well-prepared model to create a final set of defaults. The Save as New Defaults feature is especially useful for this workflow.

7. Creating your first 3D model record

Each model should be created as its own model record. This allows you to manage the model file, settings, shortcode output and future edits without changing the page where the model is displayed.

22. Go to PINXS 3D Models > Add New.
23. Enter a clear model title. Use a title that helps administrators identify the model later.
24. Upload or choose the 3D model file.
25. Check the basic viewer size, loading and orientation settings.
26. Select Preview to inspect the model before publishing.
27. Adjust lighting, background, scale and camera controls as needed.
28. Use Save to Record when the model looks correct.
29. Publish the model record.
30. Copy the shortcode and place it on the required page, post or product.

Use meaningful model names

A clear naming system makes model management much easier later. For example: “Product Name - Front Demo”, “Product Name - Technical Assembly” or “Client Project - Final GLB”.

8. Supported file formats and preparing model files

The quality of the visitor experience depends heavily on how well the model file has been prepared before upload. The plugin supports common web and 3D model formats.

Format	Best use / notes
GLB	Recommended for most websites. A single binary file can contain the model, materials and textures.
GLTF	Useful during development. May reference external texture or binary files.
OBJ + MTL	Upload as a ZIP containing the OBJ, MTL and texture files. Avoid absolute file paths.
DAE / Collada	Upload as a ZIP when textures or linked files are used.
STL	Useful for simple geometry or 3D-print style models. STL does not contain material data, so mesh colour and material settings are used.

Preparing ZIP files for OBJ or DAE models

- Place the main model file, material file and texture files together.
- Use simple file names without unusual characters.
- Avoid deep folder structures where possible.
- Make sure material files reference textures by relative file name rather than a local computer path.
- Create one ZIP file for one main model.
- Upload the ZIP to the model record.

Model size guidance

Large 3D models can slow down pages, especially on mobile. Optimise geometry, texture size and file size before upload. A GLB should be web-friendly, not just exported at maximum quality from the modelling application.

9. Uploading GLB, GLTF, STL, OBJ and DAE files

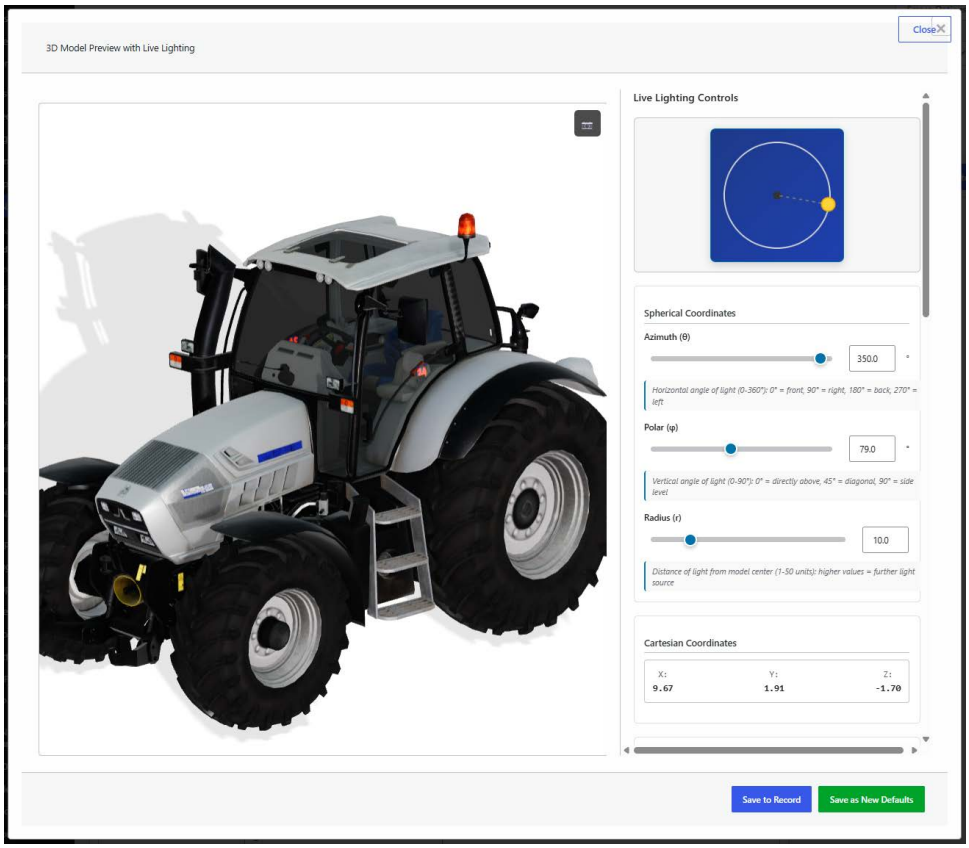
Upload handling depends on the file type. GLB and STL files are usually direct uploads. OBJ and DAE projects often have multiple files and should normally be packaged as a ZIP.

Upload type	Recommended method
Single GLB	Upload the .glb file directly to the model record.
GLTF with assets	If the GLTF references external files, keep the supporting files together and test carefully.
STL	Upload directly, then use material colour and lighting settings because STL has no texture data.
OBJ project	Zip the OBJ, MTL and texture files together, then upload the ZIP.
DAE project	Zip the DAE and any linked texture files together, then upload the ZIP.

- After upload, use the preview window to confirm that the model loads correctly.
- If the model appears untextured, check that texture paths are relative and included in the ZIP.
- If the model is too large or too small, adjust camera, scale or export settings.
- If upload fails, check the hosting file-size limit and WordPress upload limit.

10. Using the preview window

The preview window is one of the most important workflow tools in the plugin. It allows you to view the model and adjust settings before the model is shown to visitors.



Product image and example viewer concept.

Light position

Use visual light positioning controls and presets to choose the direction and height of the main light.

Camera and scale

Adjust elevation, zoom and scale so the model is framed cleanly.

Background

Check how the model looks against the selected colour, gradient, transparent or environment style.

Shadows

Enable and tune shadows where they improve the visual presentation.

Preview changes must be saved

Preview changes are visual until they are saved. Always use the appropriate save option before leaving the editor or expecting the settings to appear on the frontend.

11. Save to Record and Save as New Defaults

The preview window contains two important save actions. Understanding the difference between them is essential for efficient setup and consistent model presentation.

Button	Use this when	Result
Save to Record	You want to apply the current preview settings to the current model only.	The current model record is updated. Future models are not changed.
Save as New Defaults	You have created a good general setup and want future model records to start with the same settings.	The current preview settings are saved as new global defaults for future model records.

Recommended workflow for consistency

Create one model that represents your typical product or object. Use the preview window to perfect the lighting, background, camera elevation, scale and shadows. When it looks right, use Save as New Defaults. Future models will then start with that setup, saving time and keeping the website visually consistent.

- Save as New Defaults does not automatically redesign every existing model.
- Existing models should be reviewed and saved individually if you want them to use the same settings.
- Save to Record should be used before copying the shortcode to a live page.

12. Lighting and environment settings

Lighting has a major impact on how professional a 3D viewer feels. Use lighting settings to make the model readable, avoid harsh shadows and highlight important surfaces.

Setting	Purpose
Ambient light	Adds general light across the model. Too little may make dark surfaces hard to see.
Directional light	Creates a stronger main light from a chosen direction. Useful for shape and depth.
Light position	Controls where the main light appears to come from. Adjust this in preview while viewing the model.
Shadows	Adds depth and realism when used carefully. May reduce performance on low-end devices.
Lighting presets	Quick starting points such as studio-style lighting for product display.

Practical lighting tip

Use enough light to show the model clearly, but avoid a washed-out look. Test dark objects, metallic objects and light-coloured objects separately because they react differently to the same lighting setup.

13. Background, material and camera settings

Background, material and camera settings control the presentation style of the model viewer. They help the model match the website design and make the object easier to inspect.

Background colour Use a clean light or brand-aligned colour for product pages.	**Transparent background** Useful when the page section already has a designed background.
Gradient background Can make product displays feel more polished without needing a separate image.	**Material colour** Useful for STL or untextured models that do not contain their own materials.
Roughness and metalness Tune how simple materials respond to lighting and highlights.	**Camera FOV and zoom** Set how close the model appears and how much perspective is visible.

Camera framing checklist

- The model should not be clipped at the edges of the viewer.
- The first view should show the most useful angle.
- Visitors should be able to rotate without losing the object out of frame.
- The viewer height should suit both desktop and mobile layouts.
- The same product range should use consistent zoom and framing where possible.

14. Visitor controls on desktop and mobile

The frontend viewer is designed so visitors can interact with the model using common desktop and mobile controls. Always test the model on the devices your customers are most likely to use.

Action	Desktop behaviour	Mobile / touch behaviour
Rotate / orbit	Click and drag with the mouse or trackpad.	Drag with one finger.
Zoom	Mouse wheel or trackpad zoom where supported.	Pinch zoom where supported.
Pan	Modifier key or pan control depending on viewer mode.	Two-finger drag where supported.
Reset view	Use reset button if enabled.	Tap reset button if enabled.
Fullscreen	Use fullscreen button if enabled.	Tap fullscreen button where the browser supports it.

Mobile testing matters

A model that looks excellent on a desktop monitor may feel too tall, too small or too slow on a phone. Test each important model on at least one modern mobile device before publishing widely.

15. Displaying models with shortcodes

Each saved model record provides shortcode output. The shortcode is the easiest way to place the model on a page, post, product description, custom layout section or widget area that supports shortcodes.

Basic shortcode workflow

31. Open the saved model record.
32. Locate the generated shortcode.
33. Copy the shortcode exactly.
34. Edit the target page, post or WooCommerce product.
35. Paste the shortcode into a Shortcode block, paragraph area or suitable builder widget.
36. Update the page and test the viewer on the frontend.

Shortcode handling

Do not manually change the model ID unless you are certain it belongs to the model record you want to display. If the shortcode stops working, return to the model record and copy a fresh version.

Placement	Recommended approach
WordPress page/post	Use a Shortcode block in Gutenberg or paste into an area that renders shortcodes.
WooCommerce product	Place the shortcode in the product description, short description or a product layout area that supports shortcodes.
Elementor	Use a Shortcode widget or suitable HTML/content widget.
Custom theme area	Ask the developer to render the shortcode safely in the required template area.

16. Gutenberg, Elementor and WooCommerce usage

PINXS 3D Model Viewer can be used in normal WordPress content workflows. The exact placement method depends on the editor, theme and page builder used by the site.

Gutenberg Use a Shortcode block. This is usually the cleanest method for WordPress pages and posts.	**Elementor** Use the Shortcode widget or a compatible content widget that renders shortcodes.
WooCommerce Add the shortcode to product content areas to show a model near product details, images or technical specifications.	**Theme templates** Developers can place the shortcode in custom templates when a consistent model area is needed across many products.

WooCommerce product page ideas

- Place a product model below the main product gallery for technical products.
- Add a 3D viewer tab for product demonstrations or assembly previews.
- Use models on high-value product pages where interaction helps customers understand shape, scale or construction.
- Keep fallback images available because not every customer device will handle 3D equally.

17. Performance and file optimisation

3D files can be much heavier than normal website images. Optimising models before upload improves page speed, mobile usability and customer experience.

Area	Good practice
Geometry	Reduce unnecessary polygons and hidden parts before export.
Textures	Use sensible texture sizes. Very large textures can slow down mobile devices.
File format	Prefer GLB for most web delivery because it packages the model and assets cleanly.
Lazy loading	Use lazy loading where appropriate so models do not slow the initial page load unnecessarily.
Page placement	Avoid placing many large 3D viewers on one page unless there is a strong reason.
Testing	Test with browser developer tools and real mobile devices.

Optimise before upload

The best performance improvements usually happen before the file reaches WordPress. Export a web-ready model from the 3D application instead of uploading the largest original working file.

18. Accessibility and mobile usability

Interactive 3D content is visual and may not be fully accessible to all visitors. Use the viewer as an enhancement, not the only way a customer can understand the product or information.

- Add normal text descriptions near the viewer explaining what the model shows.
- Provide standard images or screenshots as supporting content.
- Avoid relying on 3D interaction as the only way to access critical product information.
- Make sure the page layout remains usable if the viewer does not load.
- Use clear headings and product copy around the viewer for screen readers and search engines.
- Keep controls large enough and spacing comfortable on mobile.

Accessibility principle

A 3D viewer should improve the page for visitors who can use it, while the surrounding page content should still make sense without it.

19. Data retention, backups and uninstall behaviour

Model records, settings and uploaded files are valuable content. Treat them as part of the website, especially if models are used on product pages or sales pages.

Item	Recommendation
Site backups	Back up the WordPress database and uploads folder before major changes.
Model files	Keep original source files and exported web-ready files outside WordPress as a master archive.
Settings	Document important defaults for lighting, background and camera if consistent branding matters.
Uninstall behaviour	Review plugin data retention settings before deleting the plugin from a live site.
Migration	When moving sites, migrate both database records and uploaded files.

Before uninstalling

If you delete a plugin from WordPress, some plugins may remove settings or data depending on their uninstall settings. Confirm what will be retained before deleting anything from a live site.

20. Troubleshooting

Use this section when a model does not upload, does not display, appears untextured or behaves differently from expected.

Issue	Likely cause	Suggested fix
Model will not upload	Hosting upload limit, file type restriction or security plugin.	Check upload size, allowed file types and security plugin logs.
Viewer does not load	Browser WebGL issue, JavaScript conflict or file path problem.	Test in another browser, clear cache and check browser console errors.
Model appears black or too dark	Lighting is too low or material is not reacting as expected.	Increase ambient/directional light and test a lighter background.
Textures are missing	Texture files are not included or paths are wrong.	Rebuild the ZIP with relative texture paths and all required files.
Model is too small or too large	Export scale or viewer camera settings need adjustment.	Adjust scale, zoom, camera FOV or re-export with corrected scale.
Page is slow	Model file too large or too many viewers on one page.	Optimise model geometry/textures and use fewer models per page.
Shortcode displays as text	Shortcodes are not being rendered in that editor area.	Use a Shortcode block/widget or a theme area that supports shortcode rendering.

Support information to collect

When asking for support, include the WordPress version, PHP version, plugin version, file format, approximate file size, browser used and a screenshot or link showing the issue. Do not share private licence keys in public messages.

21. Frequently asked questions

Is GLB the best format?

For most website use, yes. GLB is usually the easiest format because it can contain the model, materials and textures in one file.

Can I use OBJ files?

Yes, but OBJ projects often need a matching MTL file and textures. Package them as a ZIP and use relative paths.

Can I use STL files?

Yes. STL is useful for simple geometry, but it does not include material or texture data, so use the plugin material settings.

Can I put models on WooCommerce product pages?

Yes. Copy the generated shortcode into a product description, short description, product tab or page builder area that supports shortcodes.

Will it work on mobile?

Modern mobile browsers usually support WebGL, but performance depends on device capability and model size. Always test on real devices.

Can I use different settings for different models?

Yes. Each model record can store its own settings. Global defaults are only the starting point for new records.

What happens if I change the shortcode?

Changing the model ID or shortcode manually can break the output. Copy a fresh shortcode from the model record if needed.

Do I need Elementor?

No. Elementor is optional. The plugin can be used with standard WordPress pages and posts.

22. Final pre-launch checklist

Use this checklist before adding a 3D model viewer to an important public page or product page.

- The plugin is installed and activated.
- The licence is active and valid.
- The model record has a clear administrator-friendly title.
- The model file loads in the preview window.
- Lighting, background, scale and camera framing have been checked.
- The model has been saved with Save to Record.
- The shortcode has been copied from the saved record.
- The shortcode has been placed in a suitable page, post or product area.
- The frontend page has been tested while logged out.
- The viewer has been tested on desktop and mobile.
- The page still makes sense if the visitor cannot use 3D interaction.
- A site backup exists before launch or major updates.

Launch recommendation

For important product pages, keep the normal product images and written details. Use the 3D model viewer as a strong interactive enhancement rather than the only source of product information.

23. Quick reference tables

Recommended setup values

Task	Recommendation
First model format	Use GLB where possible.
Product display background	Use a clean light background or brand-aligned subtle gradient.
Mobile performance	Keep file size and texture size controlled.
Consistent product range	Tune one representative model, then use Save as New Defaults.
WooCommerce placement	Place shortcode in an area that supports shortcodes and does not conflict with the gallery layout.

File preparation checklist

- Export a web-ready GLB where possible.
- Reduce unnecessary geometry.
- Resize overly large textures.
- Use simple filenames.
- Package linked assets correctly when using OBJ or DAE.
- Test in preview before publishing.
- Keep the original source model in a separate archive.

Support and documentation

For help, use the Plugin Nexus support options available from your customer account, product documentation area, support ticket system or website chatbot. Website: https://pluginnexus.com