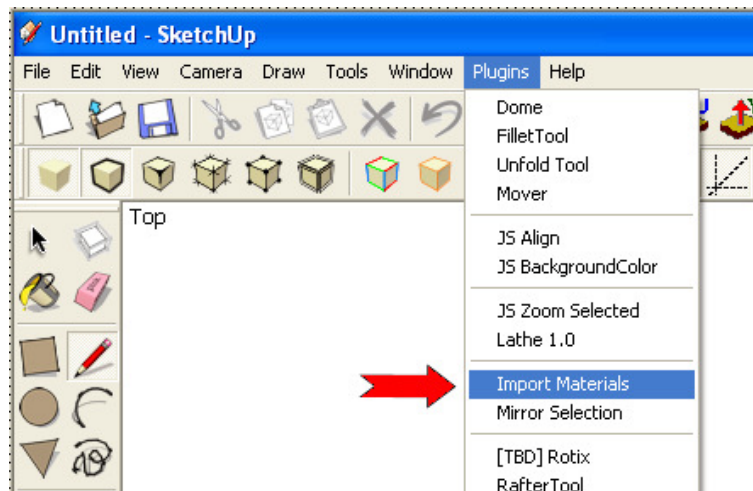
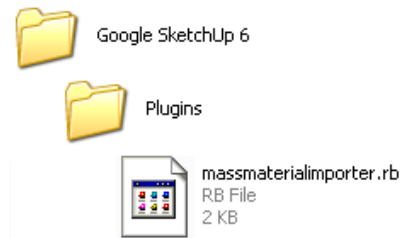


## How to batch-convert Sketchup Material files (skm) from jpg texture files (For Windows)

### Getting ready:

Download and install Sketchup plugin **massmaterialimporter.rb**. This plugin is available from the Plugin Depot. It is placed in the Plugins folder located inside Sketchup as seen here.

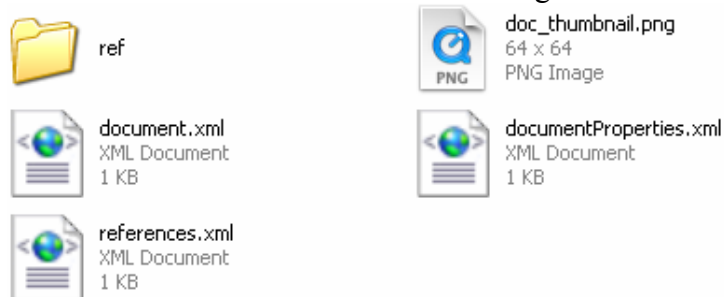
After launching Sketchup, the material importer tool will be found under Menu/Plugins/Import Materials.



You should also have one or more folders containing the various **jpg** files that you wish to batch convert into Sketchup Materials. These folders can be located anywhere on your hard drive, or even a flash drive.

It is preferable that the **jpg's** be "seamless". Seamless textures can be tiled repetitively both horizontally and vertically without producing a noticeable seam where the individual patterns join although experience shows that a perfect seamless texture is a rare item. There are numerous tutorials on the Internet explaining how to make seamless tiles from non-seamless images. Doing so requires software such as Paint Shop Pro or Photoshop.

Sketchup's **.skm** files are actually **zip** files with a **.skm** extension. Every **.skm** file contains other data such as **xml** files and images. The following graphic shows the 5 files



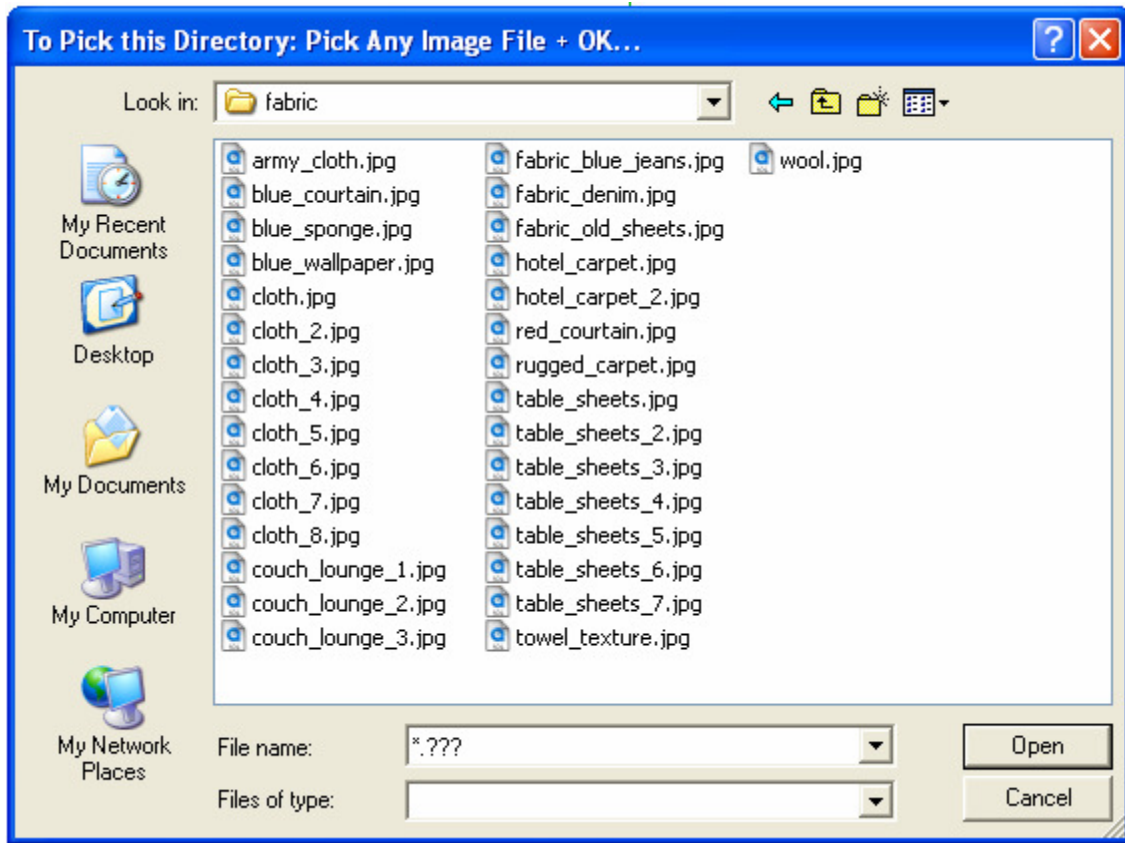
that were inside one **.skm** file.

### Getting to work:

#### Step 1:

1. Launch Sketchup. In the menu, locate the Import Materials tool as previously illustrated.

Launching this tool will open the dialog box shown on the following page.



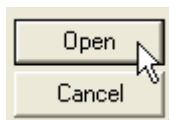
## Step 2:

1. Navigate to the folder containing the **jpg's** you wish to convert. In this example, a folder named **fabric** was opened. Inside the folder are a host of **jpg's** that will be converted into **.skm** files.

2. Also, notice the title of this dialog box. It says, "To Pick this Directory: Pick Any Image File + OK..."

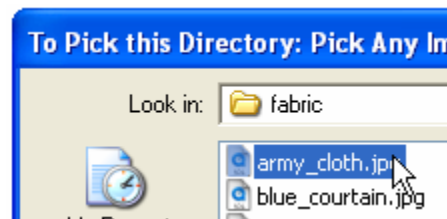
This means to select any single file that is displayed in the dialog box. **ONLY ONE FILE HAS TO BE SELECTED.**

At right, **army\_cloth.jpg** was chosen. It can be seen highlighted in blue. Any other file would work just as well.



Click the **Open** button on the dialog box. This action will import **EVERY jpg** file in the fabric

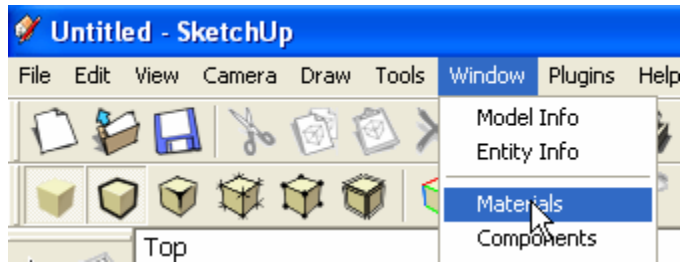
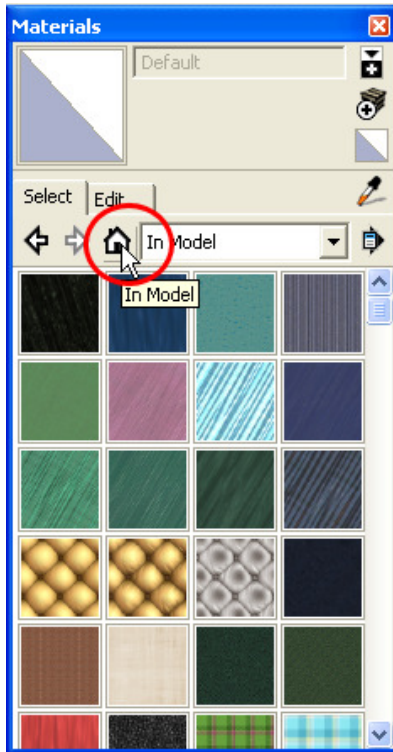
folder into Sketchup. This may take a little time depending upon how many **jpg's** you must import. Be patient.



The first thing you will notice after importing all the **jpg's** is....nothing. You will have a blank drawing screen without a single graphic showing. Don't worry; all the activity took place behind the scene. The next step will get us into the action so we can see all those converted **jpg's**.

### Step 3:

Open the Material dialog box by selecting the Paint Bucket tool or by using the Window menu, shown at right.



### Step 4:

At left, the Materials dialog box has opened. Circled in red is a small house icon. Select this button to display a thumbnail of every material that is residing inside the current Sketchup project.

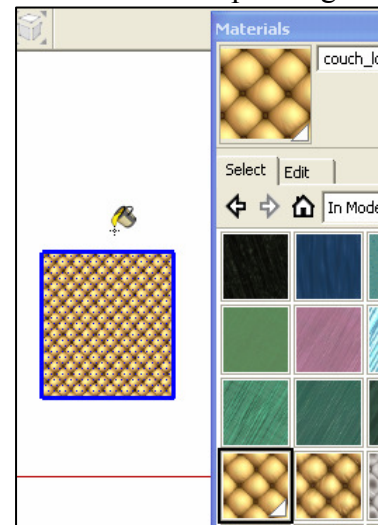
In this example, the Materials dialog box shows all the converted cloth images that were imported from the fabric folder.

At this point these textures are available for painting onto any faces in a Sketchup project.

To illustrate this in the diagram at right, a rectangle was drawn and painted with one of the new materials.

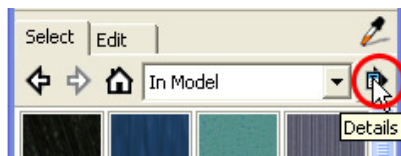
While all these newly imported images can be

used in the current project as a material without further action, this tutorial is about converting and storing them permanently for use in succeeding projects.



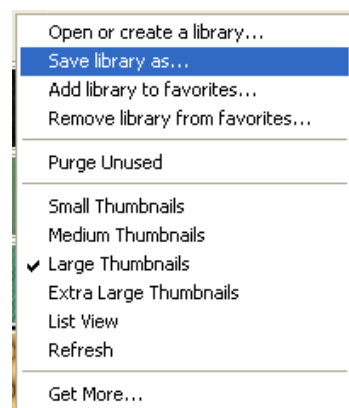
### Step 5:

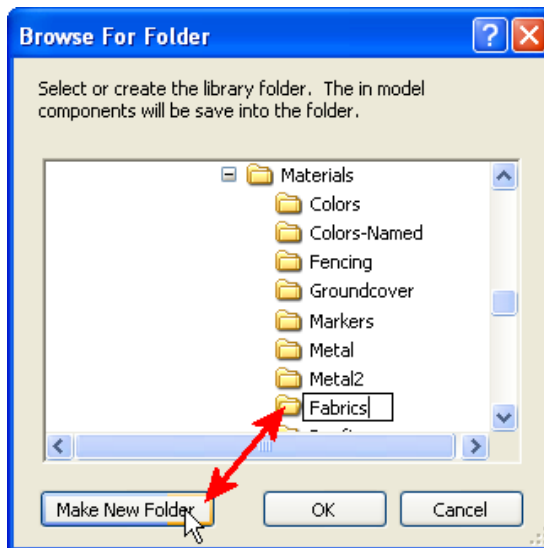
In order to retain these **jpg's** for use as a future Sketchup material, it is necessary to save them as a **.skm** file. To do that, select the arrow on the



Materials dialog box shown at left circled in red. A press on that button will open the drop-down list shown at right.

To batch-save all these **jpg's** into **.skm** files, select **Save library as...**





In the resulting dialog box, Browse For Folder, navigate to where you wish to save the new materials. In this case, a new folder named Fabric was created under the Materials folder inside Sketchup.

Then, one click on the **OK** button will save all the imported **jpg**'s into the **.skm** format. Every newly converted fabric image now resides inside the Fabric folder and will be available for any future projects.

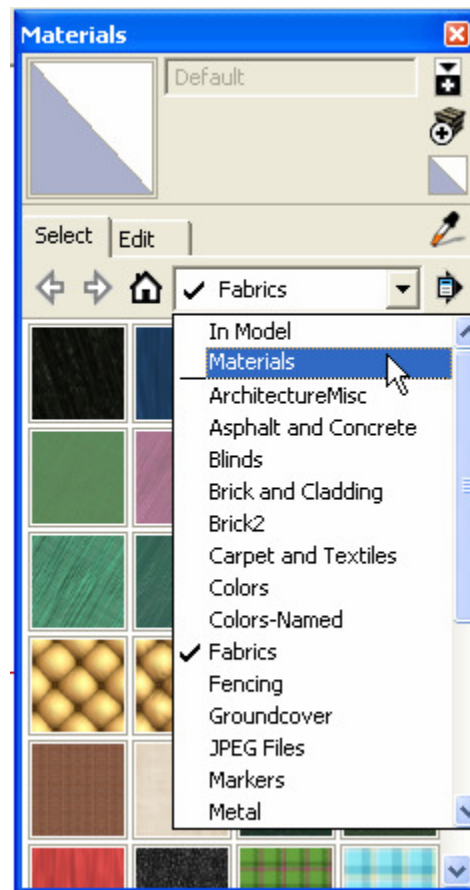
The next time you launch Sketchup, it will load the new materials. As shown at right, the Fabrics folder now appears in the drop-down list with all the other categories of materials.

Repeat the above steps for all folders that contain **jpg**'s that you wish to convert. If you have played around with the new materials by painting them on faces to see how they looked, then empty Sketchup's memory by selecting menu File/New. This will prevent any previously converted **.skm** files from interfering with a fresh batch of imported and converted **jpg**'s.

If doing a lot of conversions, plan ahead on where you will be saving the new material files. They can be placed in existing folders or a newly created folder.

This concludes this tutorial.

Glenn Copeland  
gooseglas@wmconnect.com



by