The Rasterization Pipeline

Computer Graphics
CMU 15-462/15-662, Fall 2016
Announcements

▪ A1 due tomorrow
▪ A2 out tomorrow
Texture mapping recap
Texture mapping

Blueberrry - The Wrecker
“Texture coordinates” define a mapping from 3D surface (triangle vertices) to points in texture domain.
Texture coordinates

Each vertex has a coordinate \((u,v)\) in texture space.
(Actually coming up with these coordinates is another story!)
Texture mapping adds detail

Rendered result

Triangle vertices in texture space
Texture mapping adds detail

rendering without

rendering with texture

texture image

Each triangle “copies” a piece of the image back to the surface.
Simple texture mapping operation

for each covered screen sample \((x, y)\):
\[(u, v) = \text{evaluate texcoord value at } (x, y)\]
\[
\text{float3 texcolor } = \text{texture.sample}(u, v); \leftarrow \text{“just” an image lookup…}
\]
set sample’s color to texcolor;

Q: How would you implement the texture.sample\((u, v)\) routine?
Texture space samples

Sample positions are uniformly distributed in screen space (rasterizer samples triangle’s appearance at these locations)

Q: what does it mean that equally-spaced points in screen space move further apart in texture space?
Texture space samples
From pixels to texels

- **Minification:**
  - Area of screen pixel maps to large region of texture (filtering required -- averaging)
  - One texel corresponds to far less than a pixel on screen
  - Example: when scene object is very far away
  - Texture map is too detailed – if undersampled, leads to aliasing

- **Magnification:**
  - Area of screen pixel maps to tiny region of texture (interpolation required)
  - One texel maps to many screen pixels
  - Example: when camera is very close to scene object
  - Texture map is not detailed enough – leads to blurry/pixelated results

Figure credit: Akeley and Hanrahan
High-frequency texture: aliasing far from camera
Filtered texture: blurry image close to camera
Mipmaps (L. Williams 83)

Texels at higher levels store integral of the texture function over a region of texture space. Texels at higher levels represent low-pass filtered version of original texture signal.
Mipmaps (L. Williams 83)

"Mip hierarchy"
level = d

Slide credit: Akeley and Hanrahan
Computing $d$

Compute differences between texture coordinate values of neighboring screen samples.

Screen space

Texture space
Computing \( d \)

Compute differences between texture coordinate values of neighboring screen samples

\[
\begin{align*}
\frac{du}{dx} &= u_{10} - u_{00} & \frac{dv}{dx} &= v_{10} - v_{00} \\
\frac{du}{dy} &= u_{01} - u_{00} & \frac{dv}{dy} &= v_{01} - v_{00}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
L = \max \left( \sqrt{\left( \frac{du}{dx} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{dv}{dx} \right)^2}, \sqrt{\left( \frac{du}{dy} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{dv}{dy} \right)^2} \right)
\]

\[
mip\text{-}map\ d = \log_2 L
\]
“Tri-linear” filtering

\[ lerp(t, v_1, v_2) = v_1 + t(v_2 - v_1) \]

Bilinear resampling:
- four texel reads
- 3 lerps (3 mul + 6 add)

Trilinear resampling:
- eight texel reads
- 7 lerps (7 mul + 14 add)
Texture Mapping: can be used to add other types of high-frequency details.
What you know how to do at this point in the course

- Position objects and the camera in the world
- Determine the position of objects relative to the camera
- Project objects onto the screen

- Sample triangle coverage
- Compute triangle attribute values at covered sample points
- Sample texture maps
What else do you need to know to render a picture like this?

**Surface representation**
How to represent/manipulate complex surfaces?

**Occlusion**
Which surface is visible to the camera at each sample point?

**Lighting/materials**
How to describe the way light interacts with objects in a scene?
Course roadmap

Geometry

Materials and Lighting

Drawing Things

Introduction

Drawing a triangle (by sampling)

Transforms and coordinate spaces

Today: putting it all together: end-to-end rasterization pipeline

Perspective projection and texture sampling
Occlusion
Which triangle is visible at each pixel?
Q: How do we compute the depth of sampled points on a triangle?
Interpolate it just like any other attribute that varies linearly over the surface of the triangle.
Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

For each coverage sample point, depth-buffer stores depth of closest triangle at this sample point that has been processed by the renderer so far.

Initial state of depth buffer before rendering any triangles (all samples store farthest distance)

Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance

Black = small distance
White = large distance
Example: rendering three opaque triangles
Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

Processing yellow triangle:
depth = 0.5

Color buffer contents

Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance
White = large distance
Black = small distance
Red = sample passed depth test

Depth buffer contents
Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

Processing yellow triangle:
depth = 0.5

Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance
White = large distance
Black = small distance
Red = sample passed depth test

Color buffer contents

Depth buffer contents
## Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

### After processing yellow triangle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color buffer contents</th>
<th>Depth buffer contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Color buffer" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Depth buffer" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance:
White = large distance  
Black = small distance  
Red = sample passed depth test
Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

Processing blue triangle:
depth = 0.75

Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance
White = large distance
Black = small distance
Red = sample passed depth test

Color buffer contents

Depth buffer contents
Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

Processing blue triangle:
depth = 0.75

Color buffer contents

Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance
White = large distance
Black = small distance
Red = sample passed depth test

Depth buffer contents
Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

After processing blue triangle:

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Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance:

- White = large distance
- Black = small distance
- Red = sample passed depth test

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Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

Processing red triangle:
depth = 0.25

Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance
White = large distance
Black = small distance
Red = sample passed depth test

Color buffer contents

Depth buffer contents
Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

Processing red triangle:
depth = 0.25

Color buffer contents

Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance:
White = large distance
Black = small distance
Red = sample passed depth test

Depth buffer contents
Occlusion using the depth-buffer (Z-buffer)

After processing red triangle:

Color buffer contents

Grayscale value of sample point used to indicate distance
White = large distance
Black = small distance
Red = sample passed depth test

Depth buffer contents
Example: rendering three opaque triangles
Does the depth-buffer algorithm handle interpenetrating surfaces?

Of course!

Occlusion test is based on depth of triangles at a given sample point. The relative depth of triangles may be different at different sample points.

Green triangle in front of yellow triangle

Yellow triangle in front of green triangle
Does the depth-buffer algorithm handle interpenetrating surfaces?

Of course!
Occlusion test is based on depth of triangles at a given sample point. The relative depth of triangles may be different at different sample points.
Does it work with super sampling?

Of course! Occlusion test is per sample, not per pixel!

This example: green triangle occludes yellow triangle
Color buffer contents
Color buffer contents (4 samples per pixel)
Final resampled result

Note anti-aliasing of edge due to filtering of green and yellow samples.
Summary: occlusion using a depth buffer

- Store one depth value per coverage sample (not per pixel!)
- Constant space per sample
  - Implication: constant space for depth buffer
- Constant time occlusion test per covered sample
  - Read-modify write of depth buffer if “pass” depth test
  - Just a read if “fail”
- Not specific to triangles: only requires that surface depth can be evaluated at a screen sample point
- Range of depth values is limited. That’s why the near and far planes are used in defining the view frustum!
But what about semi-transparent objects?
Compositing
Alpha: additional channel of image (rgba)

α of foreground object
Representing opacity as alpha

Alpha describes the opacity of an object
- Fully opaque surface: \( \alpha = 1 \)
- 50% transparent surface: \( \alpha = 0.5 \)
- Fully transparent surface: \( \alpha = 0 \)

Red triangle with decreasing opacity

\( \alpha = 1 \)
\( \alpha = 0.75 \)
\( \alpha = 0.5 \)
\( \alpha = 0.25 \)
\( \alpha = 0 \)
“Over" operator

Composite image B with opacity $\alpha_B$ over image A with opacity $\alpha_A$

$A \over B \neq B \over A$

“Over” is not commutative
"Over" operator

Composite image B with opacity $\alpha_B$ over image A with opacity $\alpha_A$

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} A_r & A_g & A_b \end{bmatrix}^T$$
$$B = \begin{bmatrix} B_r & B_g & B_b \end{bmatrix}^T$$

Composited color:

$$C = \alpha_B B + (1 - \alpha_B) \alpha_A A$$

What is $\alpha_C$?

$$\alpha_C = \alpha_B + (1 - \alpha_B) \alpha_A$$
"Over" operator

Composite image $B$ with opacity $\alpha_B$ over image $A$ with opacity $\alpha_A$

First attempt:

\[
A = [A_r \ A_g \ A_b]^T \\
B = [B_r \ B_g \ B_b]^T \\
C = \alpha_B B + (1 - \alpha_B)\alpha_A A \\
\alpha_C = \alpha_B + (1 - \alpha_B)\alpha_A
\]

Premultiplied alpha (equivalent):

\[
A' = [\alpha_A A_r \ \alpha_A A_g \ \alpha_A A_b \ \alpha_A]^T \\
B' = [\alpha_B B_r \ \alpha_B B_g \ \alpha_B B_b \ \alpha_B]^T \\
C' = B + (1 - \alpha_B)A
\]
Color buffer update: semi-transparent surfaces

Color buffer values and tri_color are represented with premultiplied alpha

\[
\text{over}(c1, c2) \{ \\
\quad \text{return } c1 + (1-c1.a) * c2; \\
\}
\]

\[
\text{update\_color\_buffer}(\text{tri\_d}, \text{tri\_color}, x, y) \{
\quad \text{if (pass\_depth\_test(\text{tri\_d}, zbuffer[x][y])} \{
\quad \quad \text{// update color buffer}
\quad \quad \text{// Note: no depth buffer update}
\quad \quad \text{color}[x][y] = \text{over(\text{tri\_color}, \text{color}[x][y])};
\quad \}
\}
\]

Q: What is the assumption made by this implementation?
Triangles must be rendered in back to front order!
Rendering a mixture of opaque and transparent triangles

Step 1: render opaque surfaces using depth-buffered occlusion (If pass depth test passed, triangle overwrites value in color buffer at sample)

Step 2: disable depth buffer update, render semi-transparent surfaces in back-to-front order. If depth test passed, triangle is composited OVER contents of color buffer at sample
Putting it all together
End-to-end rasterization pipeline ("real-time graphics pipeline")
The real-time graphics pipeline

Operations on vertices
- Vertex stream

Operations on primitives (lines, triangles, etc.)
- Primitive stream

Operations on fragments
- Fragment stream

Operations on screen samples
- Shaded fragment stream

Input: vertices in 3D space

Vertices in normalized coordinate space

Triangles positioned on screen

Fragments (one fragment per covered sample)

Shaded fragments

Output: image (pixels)
The real-time graphics pipeline

Operations on vertices

- Vertex Processing
  - Vertex stream

Operations on primitives (lines, triangles, etc.)

- Primitive Processing
  - Primitive stream

Operations on fragments

- Fragment Generation (Rasterization)
  - Fragment stream

Operations on screen samples

- Fragment Processing
  - Shaded fragment stream

- Screen sample operations (depth and color)

Pipeline inputs:

- Input vertex data
- Parameters needed to compute position of vertices in normalized coordinates (e.g., transform matrices)
- Parameters needed to compute color of fragments (e.g., textures)

Input: vertices in 3D space
transform matrices

Input vertex data
parameters needed to compute position of vertices
parameters needed to compute color of fragments
textures
Command: draw these triangles!

Inputs:

list_of_positions = {
    v0x, v0y, v0z,
    v1x, v1y, v1z,
    v2x, v2y, v2z,
    v3x, v3y, v3z,
    v4x, v4y, v4z,
    v5x, v5y, v5z
};

list_of_texcoords = {
    v0u, v0v,
    v1u, v1v,
    v2u, v2v,
    v3u, v3v,
    v4u, v4v,
    v5u, v5v
};

Object-to-camera-space transform \( T \)

Perspective projection transform \( P \)

Size of output image \((W, H)\)
Step 1:
Transform triangle vertices into camera space
Step 2:

Apply perspective projection transform to transform triangle vertices into normalized coordinate space.
Step 3:

- Discard triangles that lie complete outside the unit cube (culling)
  - They are off screen, don’t bother processing them further
- Clip triangles that extend beyond the unit cube to the cube
  - Note: clipping may create more triangles
Step 4:

Transform vertex xy positions from normalized coordinates into screen coordinates (based on screen w,h)
Step 5:

Triangle preprocessing

Compute triangle edge equations
Compute triangle attribute equations

\[
\begin{align*}
E_{01}(x, y) & \quad U(x, y) \\
E_{12}(x, y) & \quad V(x, y) \\
E_{20}(x, y) & \\
\frac{1}{w}(x, y) & \\
Z(x, y) &
\end{align*}
\]
Step 6:
Sample coverage, evaluate attributes z, u, v at all covered samples
Step 7:

Compute triangle color at sample point (color interpolation, sample texture map, or more advanced shading algorithms)
Step 8:

Perform depth test (if enabled) and update depth value at covered samples (if necessary)
Step 9:

update color buffer (if depth test passed)
OpenGL/Direct3D graphics pipeline*

Operations on vertices
- Vertex Processing (Vertex stream)
  - Operations on vertices

Operations on primitives (lines, triangles, etc.)
- Primitive Processing (Primitive stream)
  - Operations on primitives

Fragment Generation (Rasterization)
- Fragment stream
  - Operations on fragments

Operations on fragments
- Fragment Processing (Shaded fragment stream)
  - Operations on screen samples

Operations on screen samples
- Screen sample operations (depth and color)
  - Output: image (pixels)

* Several stages of the modern OpenGL pipeline are omitted

Note: “Shader” programs define behavior of vertex and fragment stages
Shader programs

Define behavior of vertex processing and fragment processing stages
Describe operation on a single vertex (or single fragment)

Example GLSL fragment shader program

```glsl
uniform sampler2D myTexture;
uniform vec3 lightDir;
varying vec2 uv;
varying vec3 norm;

void diffuseShader()
{
    vec3 kd;
    kd = texture2d(myTexture, uv);
    kd *= clamp(dot(-lightDir, norm), 0.0, 1.0);
    gl_FragColor = vec4(kd, 1.0);
}
```

Shader function executes once per fragment.

Outputs color of surface at sample point that corresponds to fragment.
(this shader performs a texture lookup to obtain the surface’s material color at this point, then performs a simple lighting computation)

Shader outputs surface color

Modulate surface albedo by incident irradiance (incoming light)
Graphics pipeline hardware implementation: GPUs

Specialized processors for executing graphics pipeline computations

Discrete GPU card (NVIDIA GeForce Titan X)

Integrated GPU: part of modern Intel CPU die
GPU: heterogeneous, multi-core processor

Modern GPUs offer ~2-4 TFLOPs of performance for executing vertex and fragment shader programs.

T-OP’s of fixed-function compute capability over here

Take Kayvon’s parallel computing course (15-418) for more details!
GPUs render very high complexity 3D scenes

- 100’s of thousands to millions of triangles in a scene
- Complex vertex and fragment shader computations
- High resolution screen outputs (2-4 Mpixel + supersampling)
- 30-60 fps
Summary

- Occlusion resolved independently at each screen sample using the depth buffer

- Alpha compositing for semi-transparent surfaces
  - Premultiplied alpha forms simply repeated composition
  - “Over” compositing operations is not commutative: requires triangles to be processed in back-to-front (or front-to-back) order

- Graphics pipeline:
  - Structures rendering computation as a sequence of operations performed on vertices, primitives (e.g., triangles), fragments, and screen samples
  - Behavior of parts of the pipeline is application-defined using shader programs.
  - Pipeline operations implemented by highly optimized parallel processors and fixed-function hardware (GPUs)