SIX RULES FOR MODELING IN SKETCHUP

1. Save your work frequently.
2. Layer0 should always be active when modeling.
3. Draw one part at a time.
4. As soon as a part takes 3D shape, make it a component.
5. As soon as a component is created, move it to the layer where it will reside.
6. Draw a complete model before creating scenes, texturing or dimensioning.

Rule 1

Save your work frequently

- Under the Window menu, choose Preferences. Select the General panel and under “Saving” make sure both “Create backup” and “Auto-save” check boxes are checked.
- Set “Every” to five minutes.
- You must save your file once before “Create backup” takes effect, so do it immediately upon beginning a model.
- In addition, get into the habit of saving your file frequently using the File/Save (or File/Save As, if it is the first save).
- 3D modeling is a lot of work and losing multiple hours of work can make you blood curdling-angry. Follow this basic rule to avoid hypertension.

Rule 2

Layer0 should always be active when modeling

- Access the Layers dialog box with menu Window/Layers and make sure the radio button to the left of Layer0 is selected.
- This should remain true through the entire modeling phase.
- This ensures that all primitives reside on Layer0, and more important, that the primitives of a given group or component are not on different layers, which would make using Layers to view and hide individual parts nearly impossible.

Rule 3

Draw one part at a time

- *Never* allow a part in its primitive state to touch another part in its primitive state.
- The word "primitive," or "primitives," means points, lines, faces, rectangles, circles, polygons and arcs including construction lines and points. In short, a primitive is any drawn object *except* a solid, group or component. Primitives are the most fundamental of drawing objects, from which all other geometry is drawn.
- A part is in its primitive state *unless* it is made into a group or component.
- It is very important to understand that when two primitives touch, even when they are on different layers, they *stick* together.

Rule 4

As soon as a part takes 3D shape, make it a component

- Components save time and frustration.
- In addition, they dramatically reduce the file size of your model.
- Groups are similar to components but components have several advantages, most importantly reducing file size and increasing efficiency in editing.
- Avoid groups if possible.
- A part doesn't have to be completed before making it a component; in fact, it should be made a component as soon as it takes on a 3D shape.
- Further modeling of the part, or edits to it, can be made later using the protected Component Edit or Group Edit tools.

Rule 5

As soon as a component is created, move it to the layer where it will reside

- The best way to move a component to a different layer is by using the Entity Info box.
- If the desired layer does not exist, use the Layers box to create it and then move the desired component onto the layer.
- Both the Layers and Entity Info box can be found on the Window menu, along with other helpful boxes.

Rule 6

Draw a complete model before creating scenes, texturing or dimensioning

- Draw a complete model first, including joinery.
- Be sure all parts are components.
- All components must have a unique and descriptive Definition Name.
- All components should have a unique instance Name.
- Only when the 3D model is complete should you move on to creating scenes, texturing or dimensioning.