

Getting The
Most
Out Of
Your Merfolk

A Useful Guide

by

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Introduction

Thank you for purchasing the Mermaid Genesis, Mermaid Genesis 2 Female, or one of the bundles that includes these items. This guide is intended to help you get the most for your money by using all of the options offered by your new products.

You may not need this guide at all, because you already own many fine products that use extra bone and morph features, and you have a good understanding of how conforming items work in DAZ Studio. You may be able to figure out the best course of action just by looking at the pieces themselves and their folders and icons; we've certainly done our best to make that as easy as possible.

Should you find yourself in difficulties using your new mer tails, however, you may find this document to be of assistance. In that case, read on.

Chapter 1: Using The Tail Pieces

There are a couple of things you should know in order to get the best use of your mermaid tail pieces.

Only a few of the pieces in the set are designed to conform to Genesis or G2F. The others are meant to conform to the main tail piece. Those which are meant for Genesis, such as the finger webs and dorsal fin, are labeled on their icons with a red G.

Before you conform the tail to Genesis or G2F, you should click on the preset in the Characters/SickleFuse/MermaidMegapack folder that is called “!Apply to (Genesis/G2F) first.” This will hide the character's legs with both a morph and a visibility preset.

If you accidentally conform the tail pieces to the figure Genesis or G2F instead of the main tail, they will crumple hideously. You will need to **delete and reload them from the library** without the figure selected in order to eliminate the crumpling, and conform them to the main tail piece, NOT Genesis or G2F.

Chapter 2: Posing Genesis/G2F With The Tail On

You can apply poses to your Genesis or Genesis 2 Female as normal, but **you must afterward zero the legs.**

The reason is that the tail needs to be painted to the thigh area to make the waist work properly, but actually moving the thighs will distort the front central area.

If you see an inappropriate dimple or distortion in the front lap or crotch area, it is probably because you did not do this.

A preset for zeroing the legs of Genesis or G2F is found in the Characters/SickleFuse/MermaidMegapack/Utilities folder.

Chapter 3: Posing Many Bones At Once (Easily!)

The main tail piece of the Mermaid Megapack has 19 bones! That might seem like a lot to deal with in your scene, but don't worry, you can move all of them together very easily and get great poses in just seconds. Here's how.

The keys are twofold: the Pose Controls, and the Scene tab.

First of all, you should always have a Parameters tab, which you can create using Window—Panels(Tabs)--Parameters. In the Parameters tab you can find the Pose Controls heading of your Main Tail piece. This contains dials that let you move the tail around all at once, including just the lower half if necessary. This will be adequate for many scenes and poses.

When the Pose Controls are not enough, there is another method using the Scene tab. You can create a Scene tab in the same way as the Parameters tab, if you do not have one.

You might be thinking that you have to pose individual bones in the tail one at a time, but actually, you never have to do this. Double-click your main tail to expand its bone list, or right click and choose “Expand From Selection.” If you look under the pelvis node you can see all 19 tail bones.

Don't be intimidated! You can select many bones at once. You can do this using shift+click (to select all the bones between two, say between 1 and 10), using ctrl+click (to select different individual bones), or using right-click and choosing select—children (to select all the children of a bone plus that bone itself).

Why does multi-selecting help? Because once you have selected multiple tail bones, you can go to Parameters and move them all at once! Their Bend, Twist, and Side-Side dials are all still there for you to use. Moving the slider for Bend will bend all of the bones you have selected by the same number of degrees, creating a smooth curve of movement. The same is true of the other values.

Using these methods you can pose all the bones in the tail, or pose in smaller sections in order to wrap an eel tail around a rock or twist a mer-tail into a spiral. There's a great deal you can now do in a short amount of time.

This applies to any item with a long series of bones, not just to your mer tails. Try it! It takes all of the frustration out of using items with dozens or even hundreds of bones.

Chapter 4: Don't Forget the Morphs!

The main tail piece comes with extra morphs to adjust the tail's length, flatness, hip size, etc. These morphs are to be found in your Parameters tab, which you can create using Window—Panels (Tabs) – Parameters if you do not already have one.

The morphs are listed under Morphs—Shaping. Some of these are needed to work with certain tails, such as the Fit Fancy Tail morph for use with the Fancy Tail from the Mermaid Tails expansion. No special morphs are needed to use the flukes that come with the Mermaid Genesis or Mermaid G2F base packs.

If you find yourself thinking that your tail would be better shorter, or longer, or with smaller hips, etc., this is where you find those options.

Most flukes and fins that come with sets in the Megapack also have some extra morphs, enabling you to change their style and move them about gracefully. They are always in Parameters—Morphs.

Chapter 5: Materials Options

You may notice that each set comes with two sets of material folders, some labeled “Standard” and some labeled “SSS.”

Those labeled “Standard” use the regular DAZ Studio base shader. They are better optimized for rendering quickly and/or on lower-end systems.

Those labeled “SSS” use the Sub Surface Scattering shader for DAZ Studio, which is available for version 4.6. These take longer to render, but give a more attractive and realistic result on higher-end systems.

In the main Mermaid Genesis/Mermaid G2F pack, there is also a folder of alternate Specular presets. These make the tail look wetter or shinier, for when your mermaids are beached, out of the water, or otherwise need the tail pieces to look slick or slimy. They affect only the specular and reflective channels and are tiling, so you can just click them with a piece selected to apply them.