

# Ring of Light User Guide

## File Locations

Poser: The lights themselves are actually props and are located in Props/InaneGlory/RingOfLight

The adjustment presets and textures are in Poses/InaneGlory/RingOfLight

DAZ Studio: The lights and presets can all be found in IG Lights/RingOfLight

**Description:** The Ring of Light is pretty much what is says on the tin. It is a gigantic ring that surrounds your scene. The surface of the Ring is divided into 36 different material zones. Each material zone has been set up as its own independent light source, giving you a ring made up of 36 connected but separate lights. In its default setting there is one primary light (the sun.) As we move around the ring, the intensity of the light in each of the adjoining material zones drops roughly, simulating a Sun/Sky.

**DAZ Studio and Poser Versions:** As much as I could, I tried to make the two versions of the product as similar to each other as they can be, and maintain the same workflow. Even though the two render engines are very different, I tried to balance and make the results you can get as similar as they can be, while still retaining the individual advantages both programs offer.

**How to Use:** At its heart the Ring is very easy to use. Just drop it into your scene and hit render. In Poser you need to turn on the Indirect Lighting option in the Render Settings window, and you might want to delete all the other standard lights in the scene. Unfortunately, the light created by the Ring doesn't show up in the preview window of either program. In its default position the primary direction of the light is from the left front. If the direction of the light isn't what you want you can manually rotate it, or use one of the included position presets. If it is too dark or too light, there are presets to adjust the overall intensity of the light.

**Colors:** These presets allow you to change the color of the light being cast by the Ring. You can choose between Red, Yellow, Green, Cyan, Blue, Magenta, and White. There are also presets to apply these colors to one quarter of the ring at a time. Also included are a set of preset color combinations designed to be used with, and reflect the feel of, the included background/sky textures.

**Intensities:** These presets allow you to lighten and darken the light created by the Ring while maintaining the default balance between the 36 lights. Also included are a set of ambient only intensity presets. These are a set of uniform intensity lights. Basically they are the sky without the sun. These are intended to be used with other light sets (like my Photo Studio Lights or pretty much any other set of lights you want.)

**Positions:** These presets allow you to quickly change the direction of the light in your scene. You can also manually rotate the Ring to exactly position it how you need it. The light created by the Ring is ray-traced so anything you put in your scene that is in between your subject and the Ring is going to interact with, and affect the lighting in your scene. If you put your scene within an enclosed room, the walls, ceiling and floors are going to block the light the Ring creates. Using enclosed courtyards (like the Trinity Atrium or Stonemason's Walled City) generally require that you tilt the Ring so that the light is being cast down from above so that the light is able to enter the enclosed area.

**Notes on the Sky prop and its position in the scene:** Because of differences in Poser and DAZ Studio, the Sky prop is slightly different in each product and each one requires a slightly different workflow to get the best results.

**Poser:** If the sky prop is the same size or smaller than the Ring, it will interact with, and block the light created by the Ring. Because of this the Sky is slightly bigger than the light. This allows you to rotate the sky independently from the Ring itself, without having to worry about the two objects interacting with each other.

**DAZ Studio:** In DAZ Studio the Sky needs to be exactly the same size as the ring. If it is smaller it interacts with the light. If it's bigger it won't be visible in your render. Because of this you can't freely rotate the sky separately from the Ring. If you do, slight differences in the size and position of each of the facets of the ring and sky will cause the sky to interact with the light created by the Ring. To simulate the same effect, I have included a set of presets that offset the texture tiling allowing you to rotate the sky texture itself without moving the sky object. You can also do this manually; just make sure you select all the material zones at once before adjusting the offset.

**To adjust the horizon line:** When you load up the full Ring of Light, the light and sky load up in the same position. Depending on your camera angle the sky might not be in exactly the best location relative to your scene. In both programs you can select the Sky prop and move it up or down on the Y axis without having to worry about the sky interacting with the light.

**Quality Settings:** In both programs the Ring is set up to give you good draft quality results out of the box. In DAZ Studio you can improve the quality by increasing the number of shadow samples the program uses, but keep in mind, more samples means longer render times. Basically if the gradient between light and dark in your shadows looks choppy or blotchy you need to increase the shadow samples. I have included a set of quality presets that help balance quality results and render times. In Poser all the quality adjustments are located in the Render Setting window. Raytrace Bounces, Irradiance Caching, Indirect Lighting Quality and Pixel Samples are the primary settings you might need to adjust. I've found that each scene is unique in just what it needs, but generally for finished quality renders I max out Irradiance and ID Quality, then adjust samples and bounces as needed. As with DAZ Studio, higher settings mean better results but lead to longer render times.

**Sizes:** When I first started designing the Ring, it was much, much smaller than the size you see now. To get acceptable default results in Poser it had to get much bigger. But being bigger, the light changed from being a simple localized area light into a full environment light that affects and interacts with everything in your scene. In Poser, the quality of the light significantly drops as the size of the Ring decreases.

**Poser Note:** To maintain the same workflow as in DAZ Studio, I needed to use Semidieu's Advanced Shaders to create the complex partial materials required. Unfortunately, this means you also need to have the Advanced Shaders installed to be able to use the Intensity and Color presets in Poser. Semidieu's Advanced Shaders is a free product that is available at RDNA.

**DAZ Studio Note:** Since both the Ring of Light and the Right of Light Sky are based off the same OBJ, DAZ Studio will allow any of the presets to work on either one of the props. In DAZ Studio you need to be sure you have the right prop selected when you apply one of the presets or you could accidentally turn your light into another sky or your sky into another light.