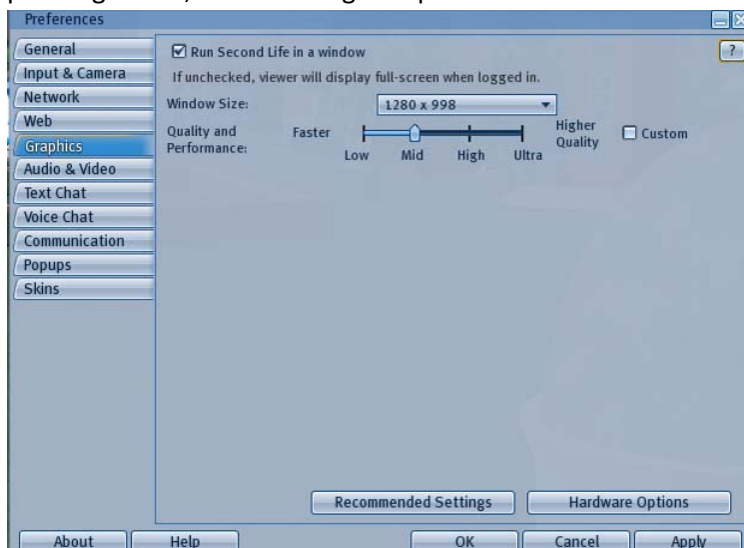


Second Life Graphics & Draw Distance

This tutorial will give you background information on Second Life graphics and Draw Distance

1. First and foremost, it is important that your computer is capable of running Second Life. To run in correctly, the most important pieces of hardware to pay attention to are the **Graphics Card** (GPU) and **CPU**.
 - a. Please be sure to check the System Requirements:
<http://secondlife.com/support/sysreqs.php>
If your computer does not meet these requirements, please seek information on how to upgrade your system to support it. For ECU's Second Life campus, we recommend the "Recommended" requirements.
 - b. Please note the Important Notes at the bottom. Some graphics cards are not supported by Second Life.
 - c. For a complete and detailed information, see
http://wiki.secondlife.com/wiki/Graphics_Cards
2. Graphics settings in Second Life can be accessed via the View > Preferences menu, or by pressing Ctrl+P, and selecting "Graphics"

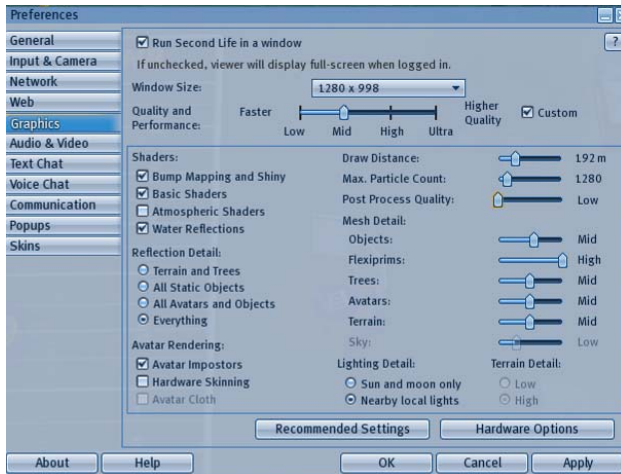


The graphics settings window

3. There is no general recommended "Quality and Performance" setting. Newer and faster graphics cards can handle the "Higher Quality", while older cards will be better leaving at "Faster".

The **best** method to finding the right setting for your computer is the try and see method. Set the selector one range higher, and walk around and interact in Second Life for about a half hour. If the graphics move fluidly, then you may wish to try a higher selection. The graphics should not shutter and pause, but should move fluidly like a movie.

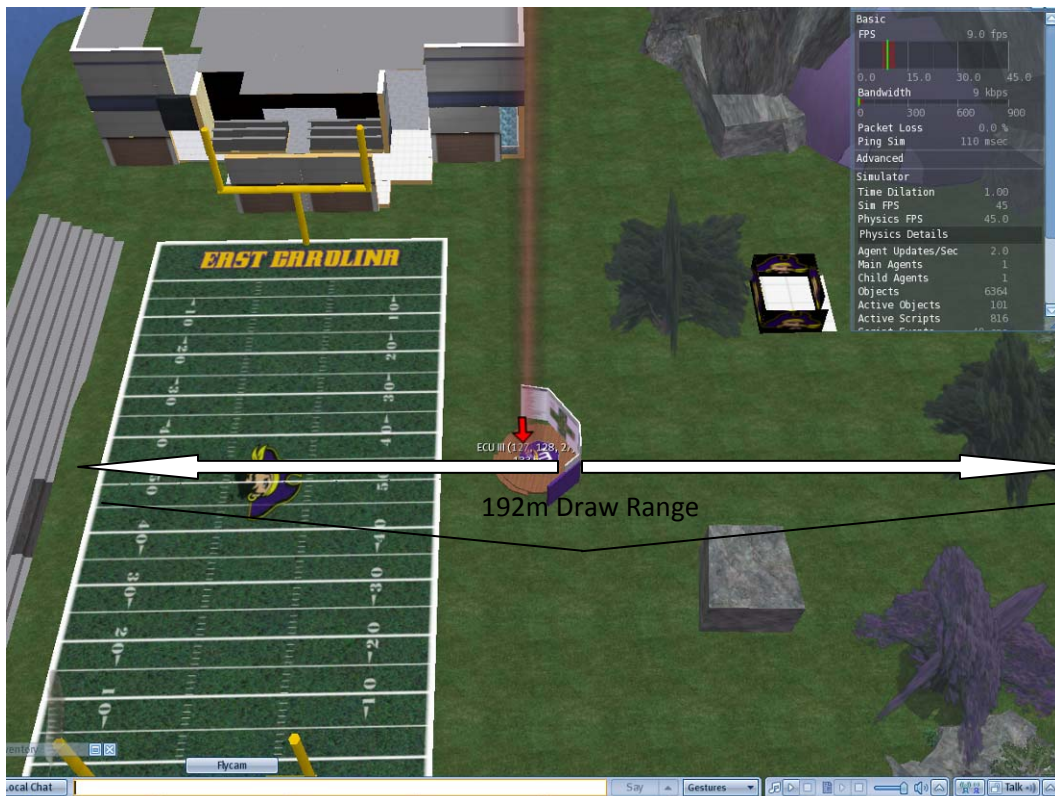
4. To change draw distance, and other settings, select the “custom button”.



5. How Draw Distance works:

- a. Draw distance is calculated from your avatar and camera view. So for example, if your Draw Distance is set to 192m, all objects within 192m of your view are “drawn” by the graphics card. This allows you to walk to fly within 192m and not have any lag time in waiting for something to load. The higher the draw distance, the more you can see. (512m max). To see across a “region” (256mx256m) from the center, you would need a draw distance of 128m.

For ECU’s campus, we recommend a **minimum** draw distance of **192m**. A higher number would be recommended.



6. The Remaining Options:



The Bump Mapping and Shine setting effects objects which have had bump patterns and shininess set on the texture panel. Recommended on: Bump Mapping & Basic Shaders. Water optional.

Reflection Detail controls what objects are reflected on a reflective surface, typically water. Terrain and Trees means that just terrain and trees will be reflected. Useful in water surrounded regions.

Avatar Rendering controls the drawing of an avatar by the graphics card. It is recommended to leave **Hardware Skinning OFF** if you have an older graphics card driver. Due to driver conflicts, your avatar may suddenly turn black when adjusting the appearance on a second screen. As per the recommended system requirements, only the latest drivers are supported by Linden Labs.



Max Particle Count controls the number of particles drawn when near a particle script (water, snow, leaves, glowballs, etc).

The Mesh Detail settings determine how much time the graphics card spends in creating detail in a object. Most noticeable is the settings for trees.

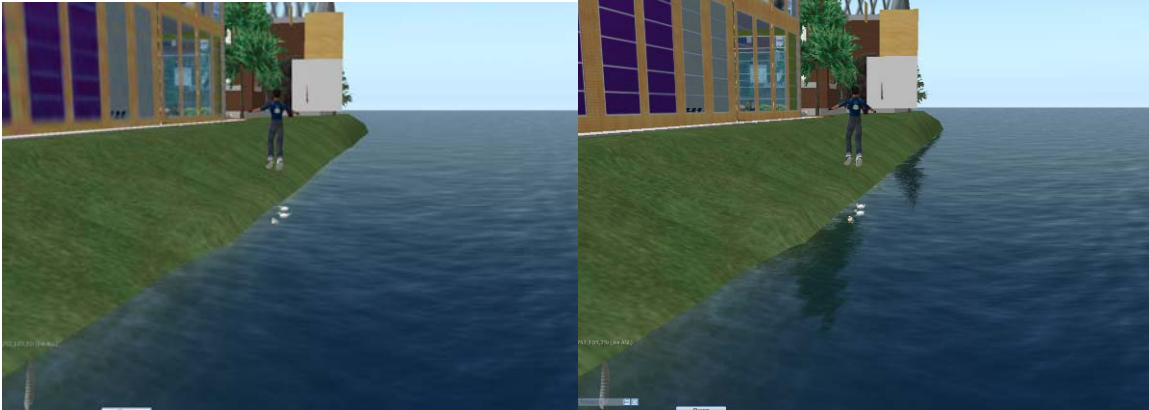


← Trees on LOW detail

Trees in HIGH detail →

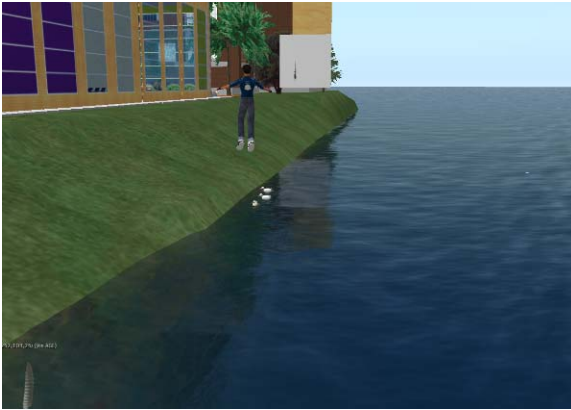


Water Reflections:



No reflections

Trees and Terrain



All reflections