3D Printing Resources

A good place to start when looking for someone to do your 3D printing is your local library. Call them and ask if they have a printer and what the instructions are to use it.

A second option is to go to [**3D Hubs**](http://3dhubs.com/) ([www.3dhubs.com](http://www.3dhubs.com)). This website allows you to search for 3D printers in your neighborhood and directly upload your file to that 3D printer from the website with the option to print in a number of different materials. It’s an easy process with the additional benefit of being connected to a local 3D printing expert.

If you do not find any luck with those two resources then check out the following:

## 1) Shapeways

We will start off with Shapeways, the world’s most popular online 3D printing service. Shapeways offers 2 services.

The Shop service, where you can choose from a big collection of items designed by professionals, customize them and then have them printed at your specifications. That means that professionals can also use the platform to upload their work and get for it when people decide to print their creations.

The Make service is exactly what it sounds like. You give Shapeways an object or 3D design of what you want to print, you tell them your needs, being material, color, etc, and they will take care of the rest for you. You will also get a quote of how much your print job will cost instantly. It really is as simple as that.

Their material selection varies from metal, plastic, ceramic, sandstone and even wax. As far as payments go, they accept Credit Card, PayPal, and Bank Transfer. Shapeways ships worldwide using services such as DHL, UPS, and USPS.

Shapeways website: shapeways.com

## 2) i.materialise

Materialise is a company that works with industrial clients to produce prototypes and 3D printed products. But for the general public and individual designers, Materialise offers an online 3D printing service called i.materialise.

Like Shapeways, the 3D printing service allows anyone to just upload their 3D models, have them analyzed and then printed by the company for you. Once an object has been uploaded and successfully printed, a designer can offer it for sale either via the gallery on the i.materalise online store, or embedded on their website.

I.materialise gives the ability for items to be printed in materials such as plastic, metal, ceramic, resin or wood. They support all the major payment methods like Credit Card and PayPal and ship worldwide using UPS.

i.materialise website: i.materialise.com

## 3) Stratasys Direct

One of the leading manufacturers of industrial-grade 3D printers, Stratasys is also offering a high-quality 3D printing service. Fittingly, Stratasys sports a dazzling assortment of materials, from which its user can choose from. This online 3D printing service is aimed at professionals in engineering, medicine, and industrial design. Another great feature of its online quoting page is the ability to create and edit styles (consisting of the printing method, material, finishing and surface treatment) that can be applied to successive projects. Stratasys is also sharing its expertise with companies interested in switching to additive manufacturing.

Stratasys Direct allows for items to be printed in materials such as metal, plastic, acrylic, ceramic, foam and wax. Since they are in direct contact with professionals, the payment details, as well as the shipping methods, are internally chosen.

Stratasys Direct website: stratasysdirect.com

## 4) Sculpteo

Like Shapeways and i.materialise, Sculpteo is an online 3D printing service that allows anyone to upload 3D models and have them fabricated in a wide variety of materials. In keeping with its competitors, Sculpteo also allows individuals and professionals to open up an online store front and sell their designs to the public. Sculpteo’s stable of printers includes high-end machines by 3D Systems, EOS, Stratasys, and ZCorp. Its extensive technical documentation will help you detect design flaws and choose the right material for your project.

Sculpteo is able to print items in materials like metal, plastic, ceramic, resin and wax. They accept standard Credit Card, Debit Card and PayPal payments and are able to ship worldwide using UPS or other services for specific locations.

Sculpteo website: sculpteo.com

## 5) Protolabs

With 500 machines placed around the world, Protolabs services industries worldwide since the early 2000s. This 3D printing service offers the full spectrum of rapid prototyping technologies since you can order parts made with injection molding. Consequently, you can produce high-quality prototypes that have similar properties to the finished products. These parts can be used for promotional photo shootings and be subjected to extensive functional testing. After uploading the 3D design files, you get an instant quote of how much the parts will cost for the selected settings and materials.

Protolabs can print using materials such as metal, plastic, and nylon. They accept payment using invoices or PayPal and are able to ship worldwide.

Protolabs website: [protolabs.com](https://www.protolabs.com/)

## 6) Ponoko

Ponoko provides an online 3D printing service plus laser etching and engraving too. The company has designers, 3D printers and robots on hand, and pricing starts as low at $5 depending on what needs printing and the materials you choose. Ponoko also offers same day shipping if you order before a cut-off point. In theory, that means it is possible to convert your STL or CAD files into actual physical products and have them in your hands within the space of a day. Ponoko’s professional 3D printers are from 3D Systems and ZCorp.

Ponoko’s services can only print in metal and plastic materials using ColorJet, FDM or SLS processes. They seem to accept PayPal as their main payment option and ship worldwide using services such as UPS and USPS.

Ponoko’s website: ponoko.com

## 7) Treatstock

Treatstock is another web service that bundles the forces of 3D printing services all over the world. Its instant quote system is very well designed for newcomers as you can choose between major 3D printing applications (prototyping, jewelry and dental), and special materials (multi-color and metal). Each category displays the relevant printing materials in a wide range of colors.

Another great feature that Treatstock offers to its users is a 3D model selling platform. Treatstock invites artists to open storefronts and upload their designs so customers can purchase and 3D print them. What is more, Treatstock features a handful of apps on its website that enables the creation of braille labels to make life easier for the visually impaired, and relief 3D images based on photos.

Treatstock can fabricate items in materials like metal, plastic, gypsum, paper, powder, resin, wax as well as wood. They accept payments via Credit Card and can ship worldwide.