

Introduction

The Standard shader is one of the many misunderstood parts of Unity in VRchat. It provides a fairly realistic look thanks to it's physically based approach, but with some huge pitfalls that anyone who can't tell their "smoothness" and "metalness" apart will fall in to.

The important thing to know about the Standard shader is that it follows the convention of PBR, or Physically Based Rendering. PBR is a set of shading rules made to react in a graceful and believable way across different light conditions. It also means that materials are energy conserving - they don't reflect any more light than they take in. Instead, they spread that light across their surface according to carefully tuned algorithms that have been tested to match the real world for similar conditions.

I won't go into the *details* of PBR here, though I'll link to them at the end. But there are some very important things you have to know about using the Standard shader.

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