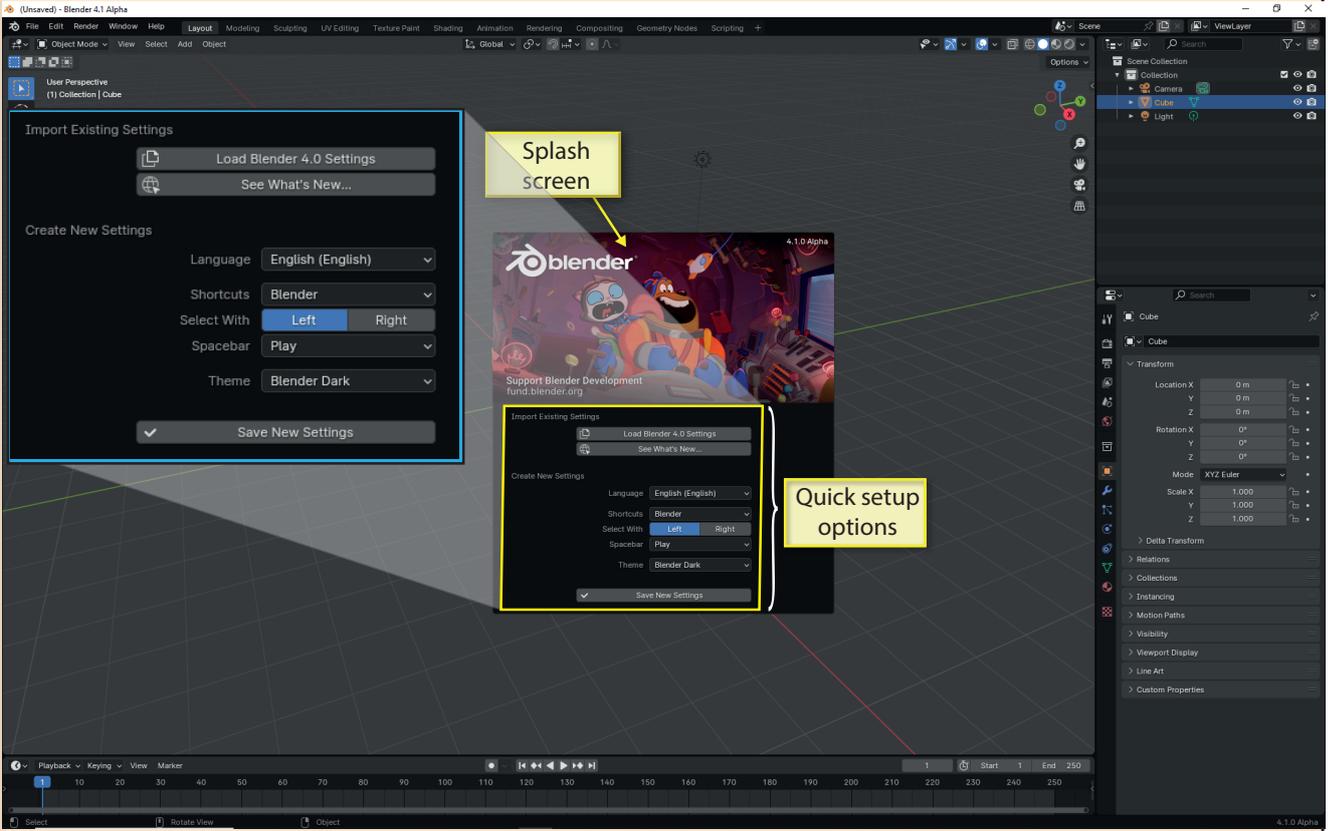


STARTING BLENDER

In this section we'll identify the main elements of the Blender interface and have a closer look at how to use the *3D Viewport* where we will do most of the work needed to create the basic layout of the scene we are working on.

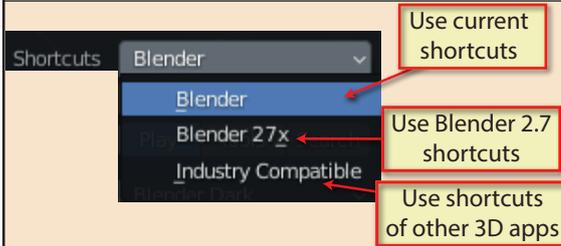
Starting Blender

The very first time we open Blender it displays a splash screen image in the centre of its window. Look carefully, because this is the one and only time it will look this way. In the bottom half of the splash screen there's a **Quick Setup** option.

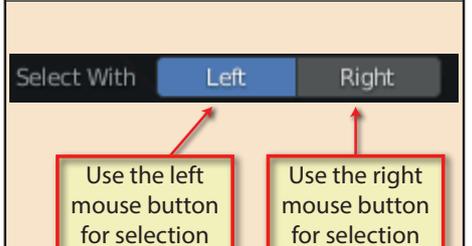


Load Blender 4.0 Settings, allows us to install the settings we may have created in our previous version of Blender. **See What's New...** is a link to the web page showing the new features in this version of Blender. **Language**, allows us to choose which language is displayed in all Blender menus and messages.

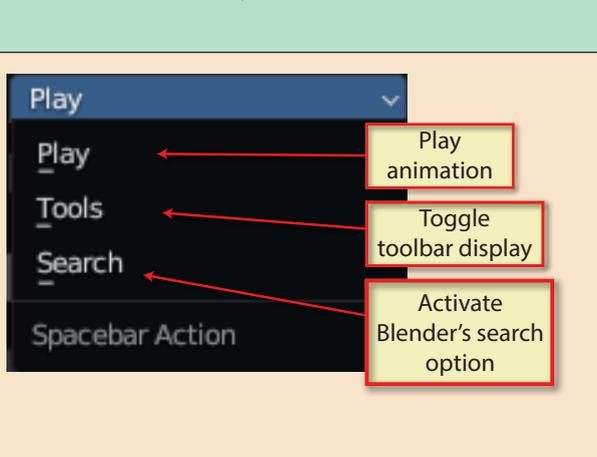
Shortcuts allows us to select which keyboard shortcut standard we wish to use.



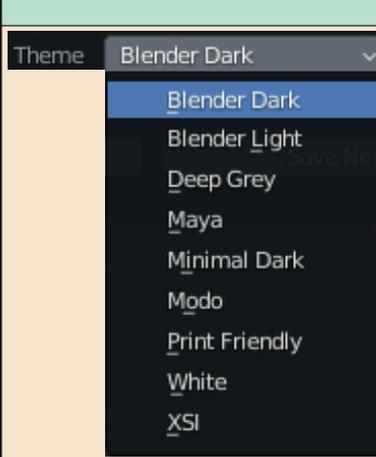
Select With determines which mouse button is used to select objects in a scene.



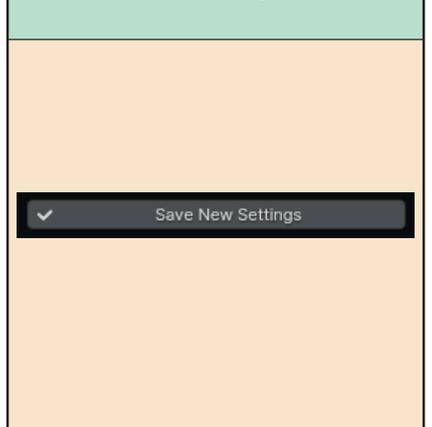
Spacebar sets which action is to be performed when the spacebar on the keyboard is pressed.



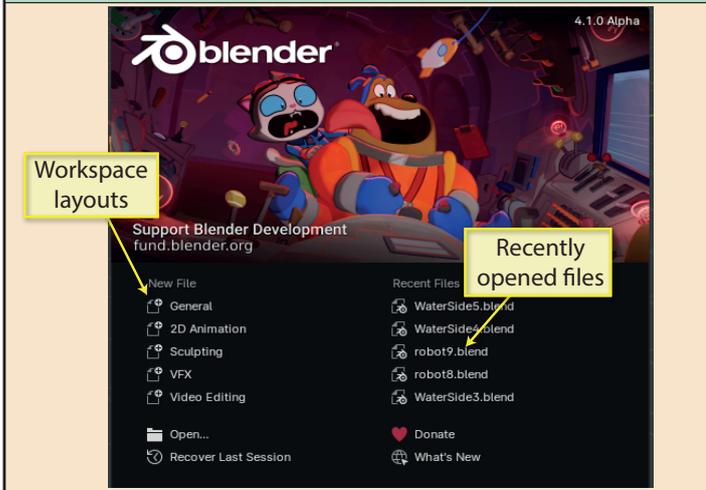
Theme selects the "look" (or theme) of the Blender window elements.



Save New Settings saves the options we have selected here, using them in this and future projects.

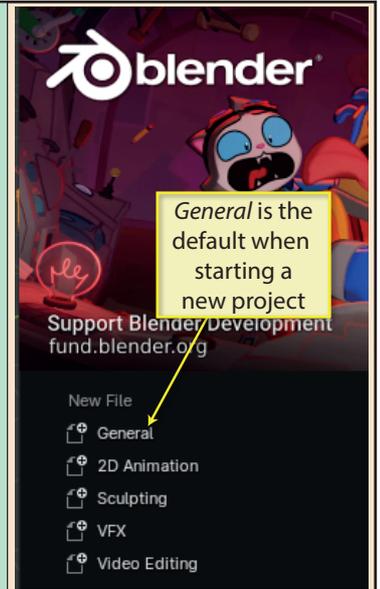


The next time you load Blender, the *Splash screen* will have changed. Now it shows mainly *file open* options including the names of recently opened files and the *screen layout* options.

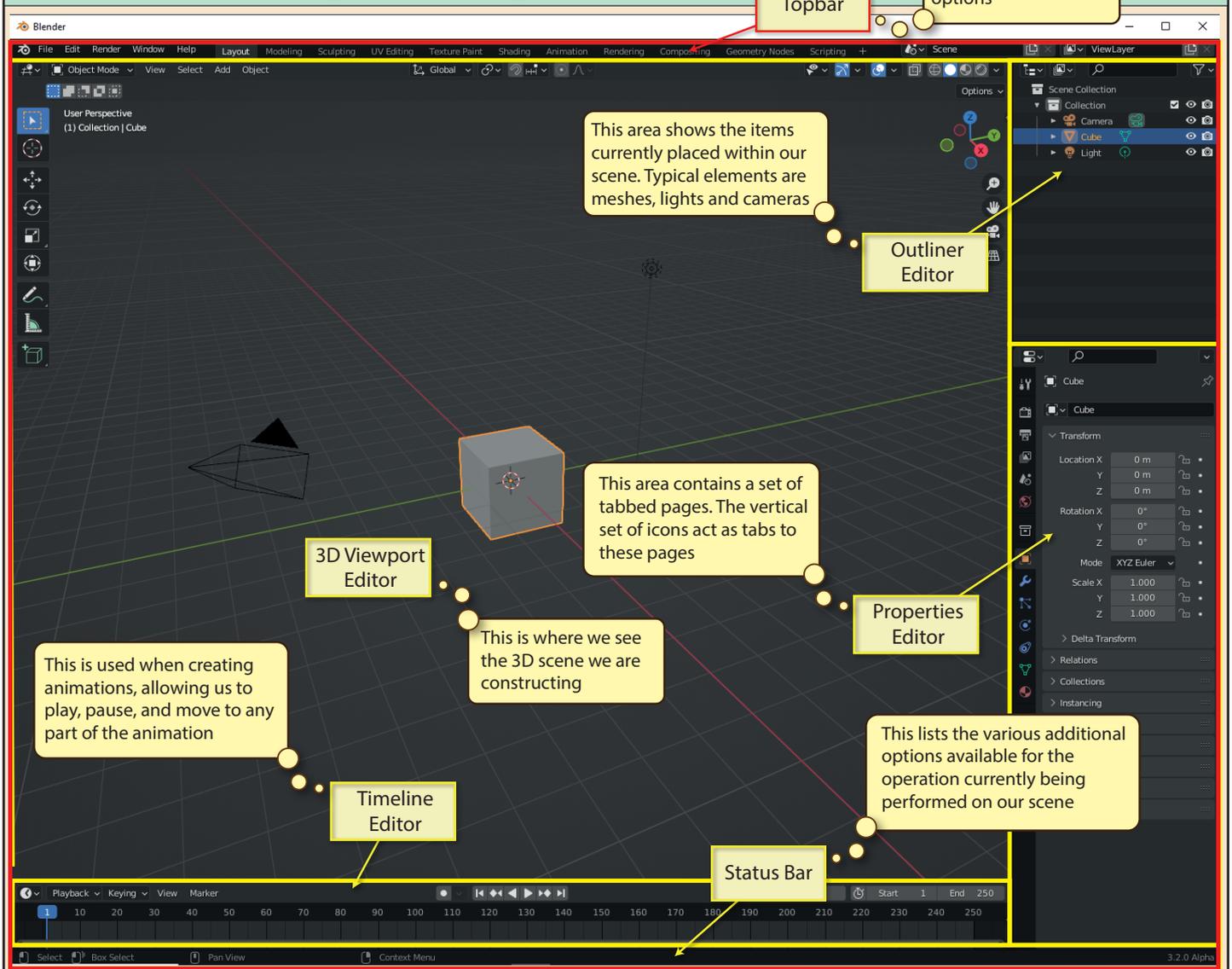


When we start a new Blender project, chances are we'll want to use the **General** layout which is the default option.

We can do this by left-clicking on **General** in splash screen, selecting **File>New File>General** from the main menu, or simply by clicking anywhere outside the splash screen.



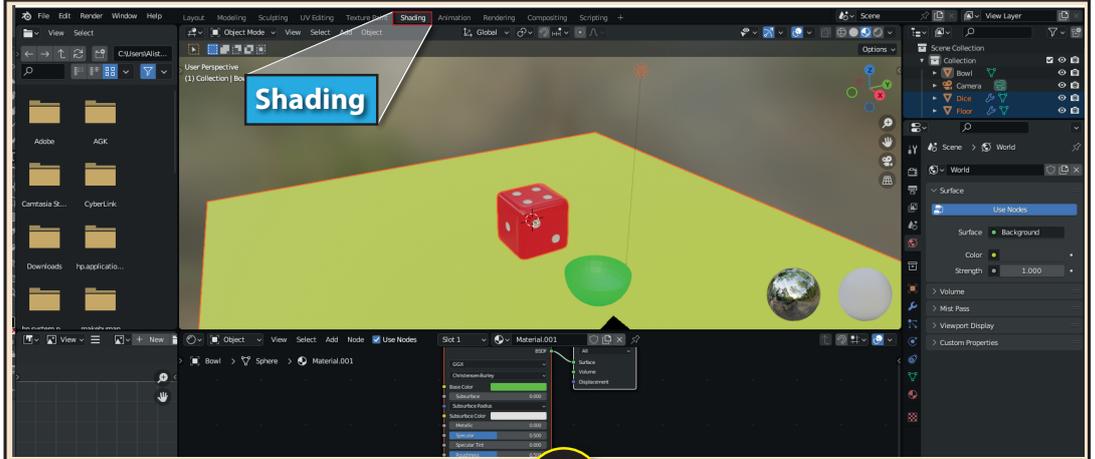
Having selected *General*, the splash screen is removed and we are presented with the layout shown below. The layout is divided into **regions**. The various regions are labelled below.



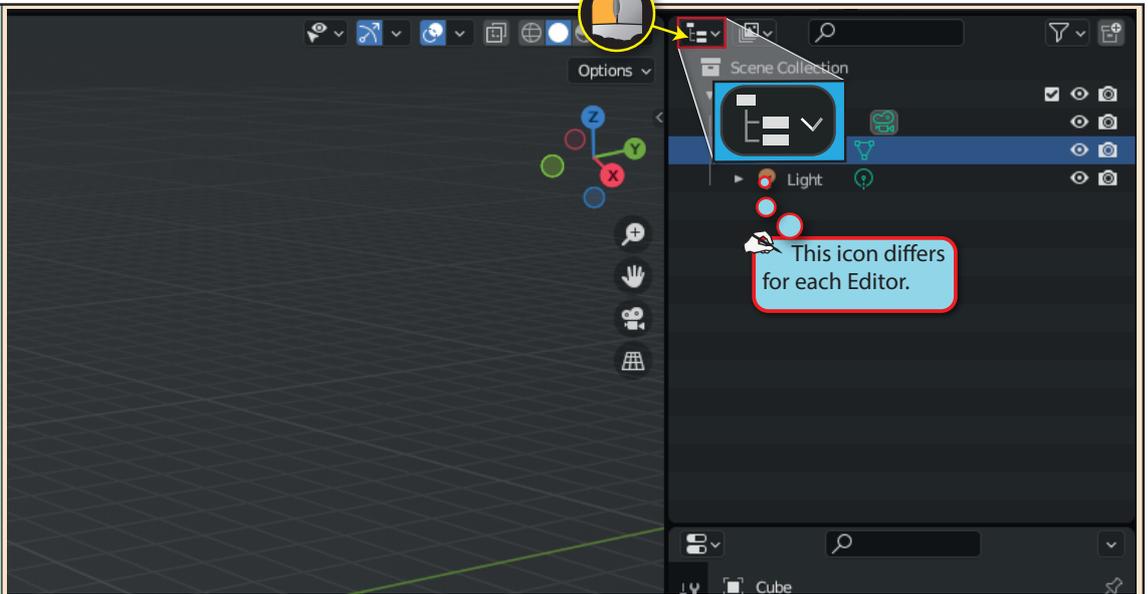
Workspace Adjustments

Before discussing the various parts of the Blender interface in more detail, we'll take a moment to see how the layout of the Blender window can be modified.

One of easiest ways of adjusting the Blender workspace is by selecting a new layout from the options available in the **Topbar**. Below we can see part of the layout created by the **Shading** option.



But we can also change individual elements of the layout. For example, any Editor within the window can be changed to a different Editor by first clicking on the symbol in the top left of the Editor to be changed. Here, the symbol in the **Outline Editor** has been selected.

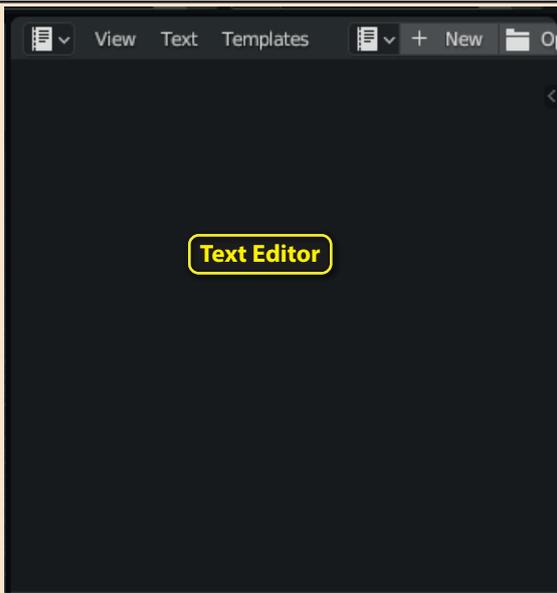


Once we click on the icon, a large table of Editor options appear. From the options given here, we can change the Editor displayed in that area of the Blender window.

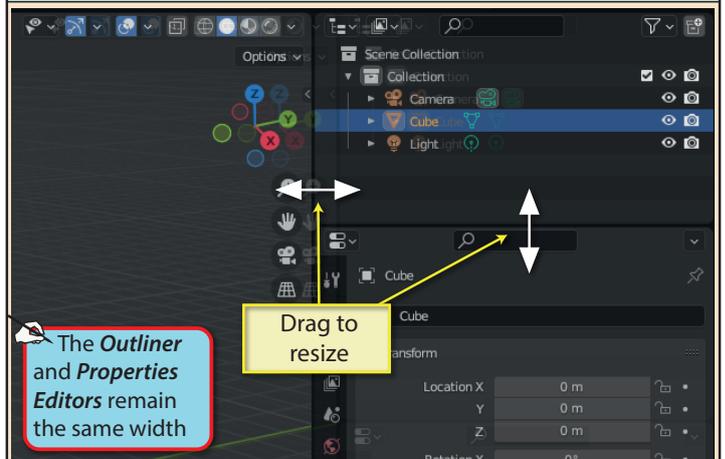
General	Animation	Scripting	Data
3D Viewport (Shift F5)	Dope Sheet (Shift F12)	Text Editor (Shift F11)	Outliner (Shift F9)
Image Editor (Shift F10)	Timeline (Shift F12)	Python Console (Shift F4)	Properties (Shift F7)
UV Editor (Shift F10)	Graph Editor (Shift F6)	Info	File Browser (Shift F1)
Compositor (Shift F3)	Drivers (Shift F6)		Asset Browser (Shift F1)
Texture Node Editor (Shift F3)	Nonlinear Animation		Spreadsheet
Geometry Node Editor (Shift F3)			Preferences
Shader Editor (Shift F3)			
Video Sequencer (Shift F8)			
Movie Clip Editor (Shift F2)			

Click the required Editor

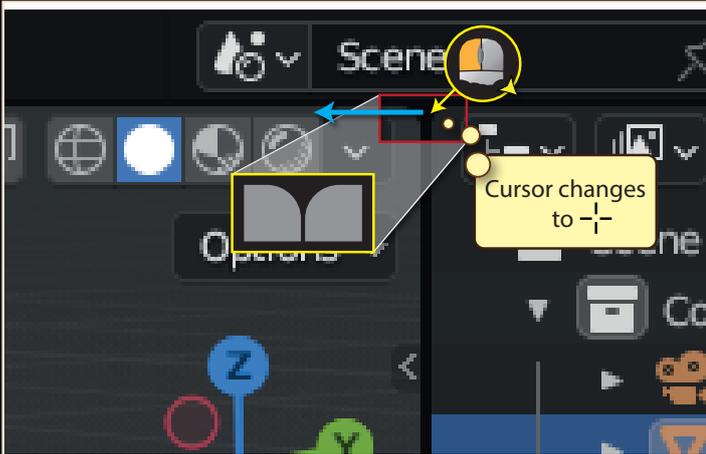
The new Editor will occupy exactly the same space as the previous one.



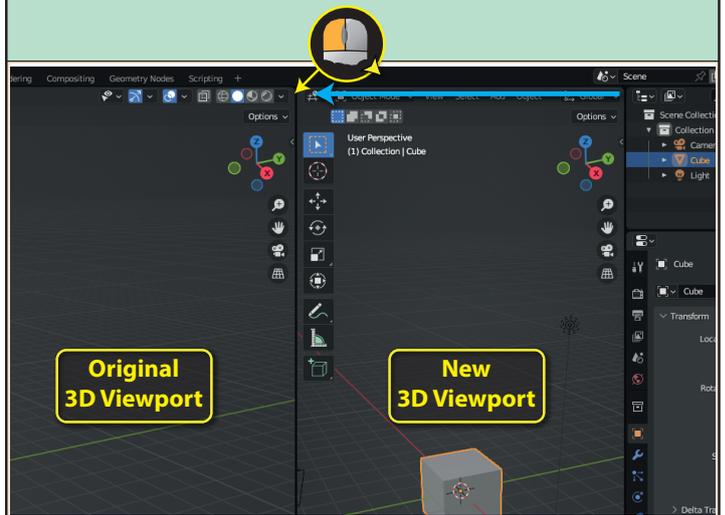
Each Editor window can be resized by dragging on an edge.



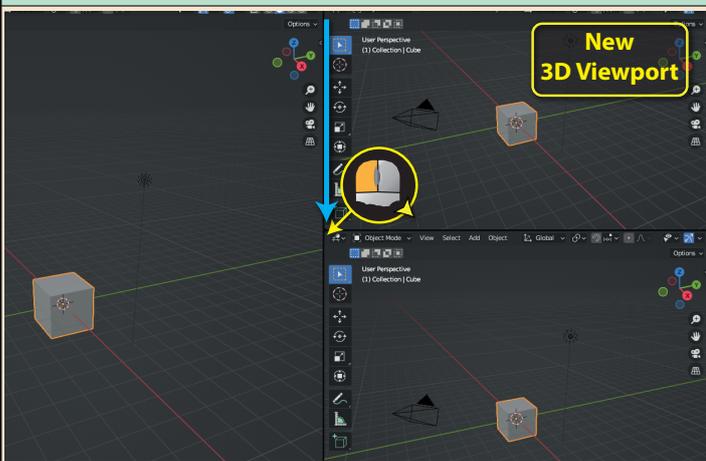
We can even split an Editor area into two separate areas by dragging on the hard-to-see curved boundary displayed in every corner of all Editors. The mouse cursor will change to crosshairs if over the correct position.



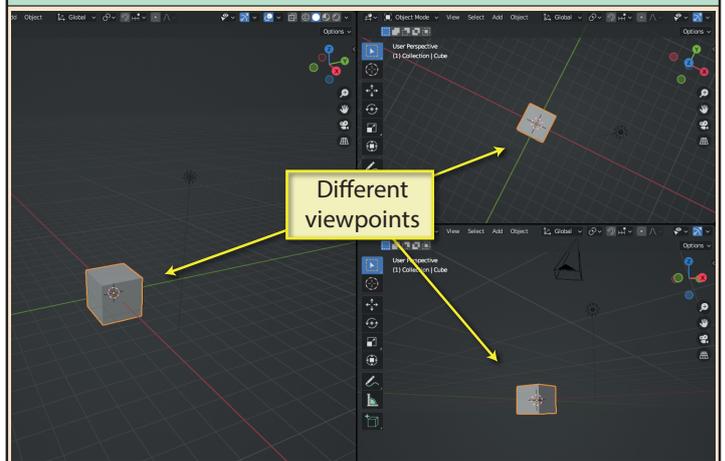
Below we can see the result of dragging the curved edge between the 3D Viewport and Outliner Editor to the left.



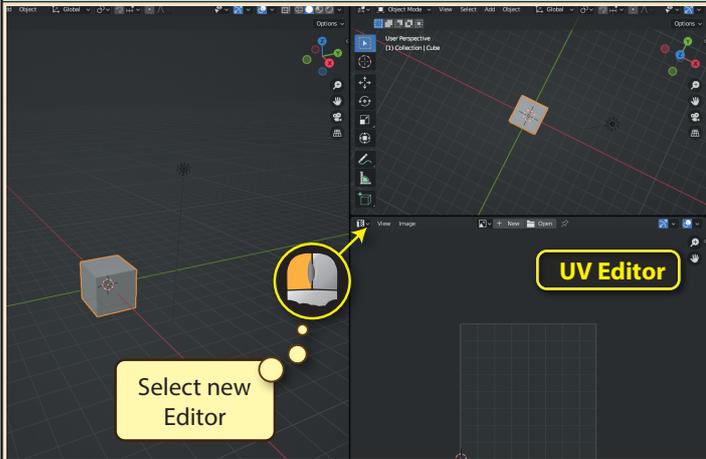
If we drag vertically, the area will split horizontally.



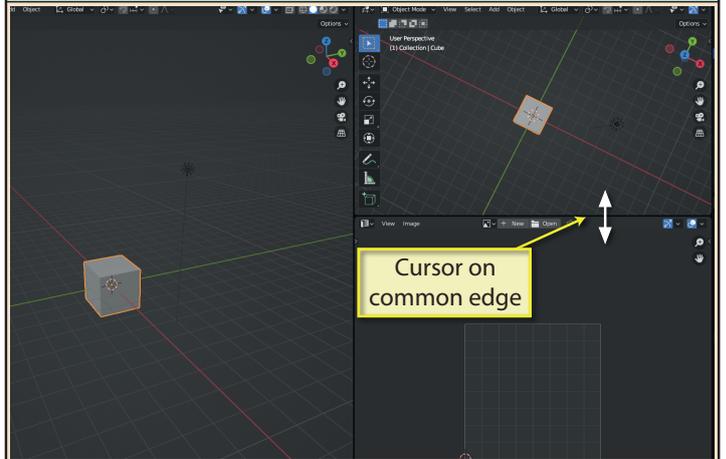
Each area is completely independent, so we could, for example, have different viewpoints in each area (we'll see how to change viewpoints shortly).



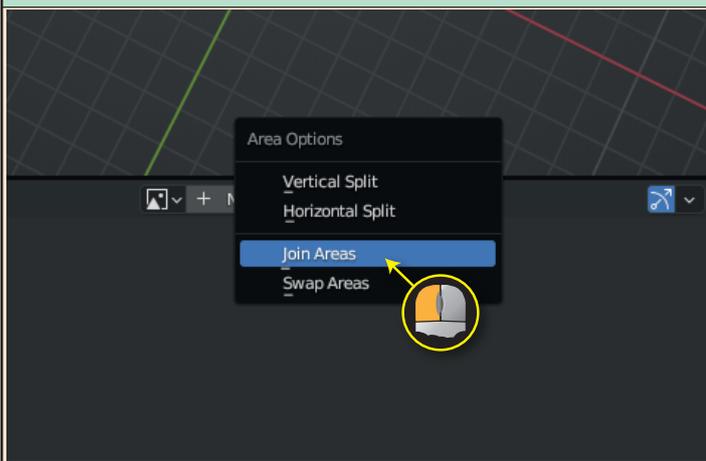
Since each newly created area is separate and independent, we are free to change the Editor appearing in that area using the same approach as we saw earlier.



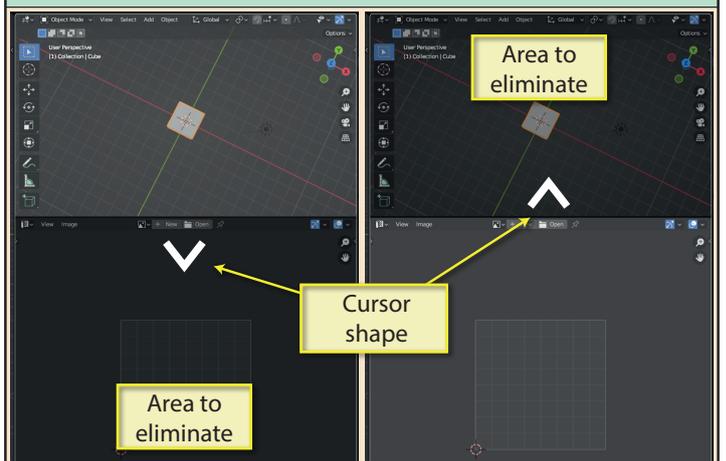
The simplest method of merging two areas into a single area is to start by moving the cursor over the common edge between the Editors - where it changes to a double arrowed line.



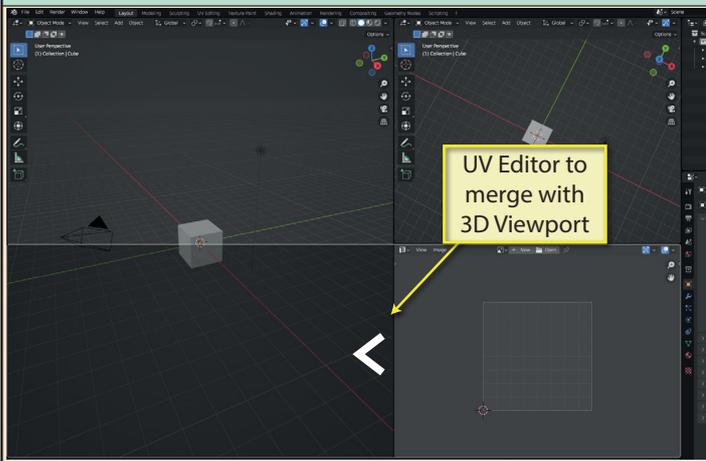
Right-clicking the mouse at this point produces a popup menu from which we need to select **Join Areas**.



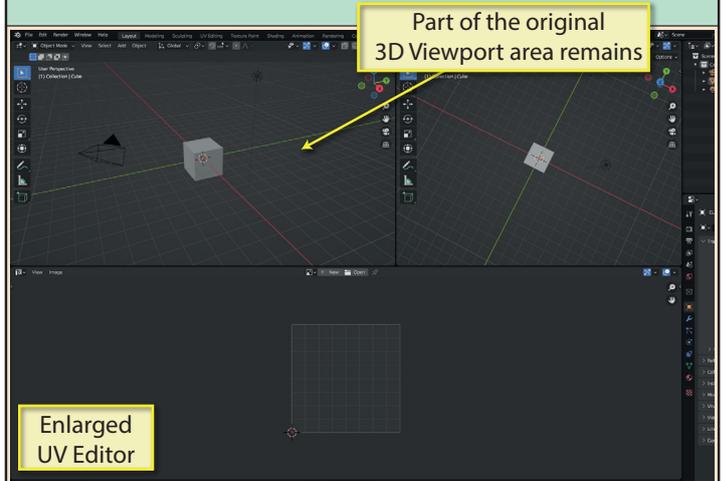
Now we need to move the mouse into the area we wish to eliminate. The two options in our example are shown below.



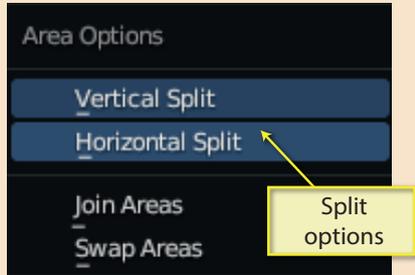
Note that, where the common edge between the two areas to be merged are of a different length, additional area splitting will occur. For example, if we try to merge the **UV Editor** to the **3D Viewport** to its right...



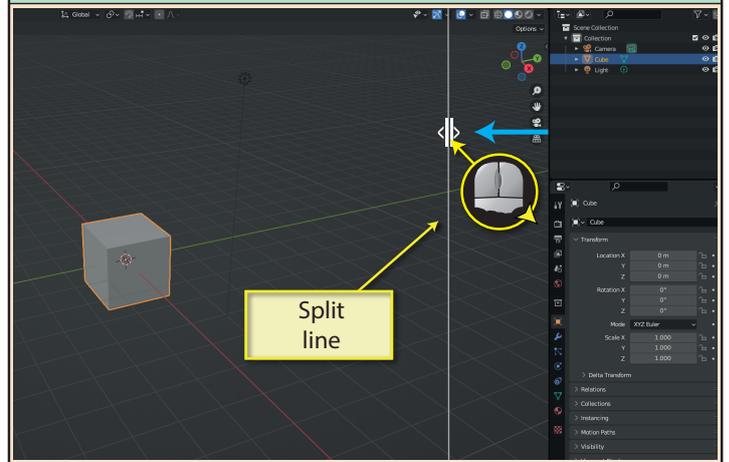
...the **3D Viewport** splits to ensure that the new area has the same height as the **UV Editor**.



We can also see that the popup menu not only offers a merge option, but also offers two split entries. These can be used as an alternative way of splitting an area into two.

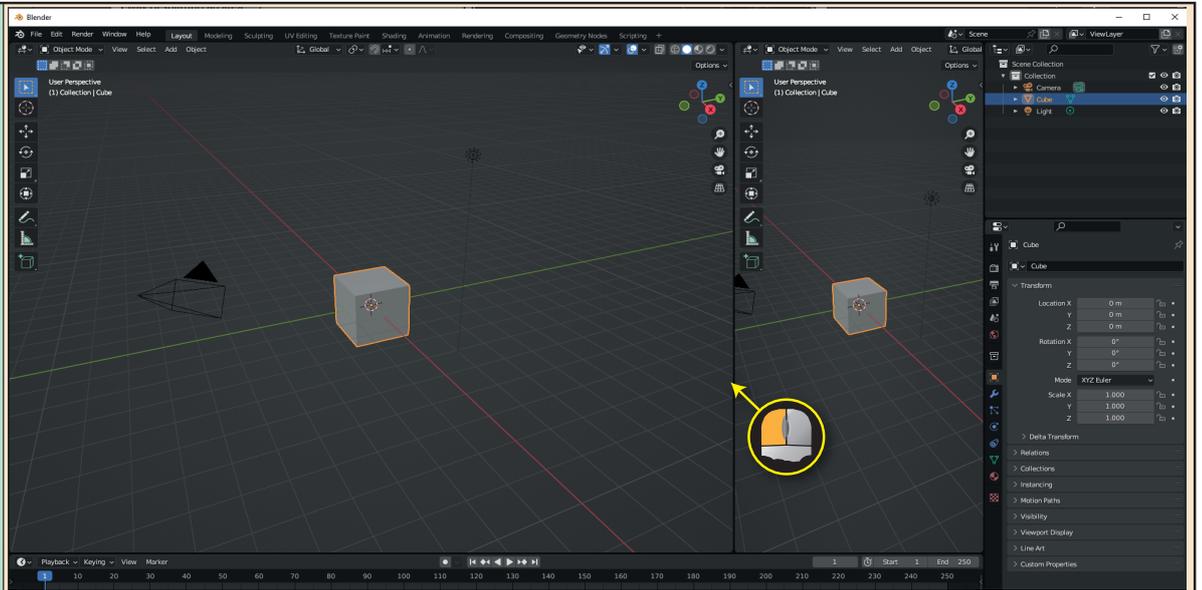


After selecting one of these options (*Vertical Split* in the example below), a vertical or horizontal line appears (which depends on the menu option selected). We can drag this to define the width/height of the new area.

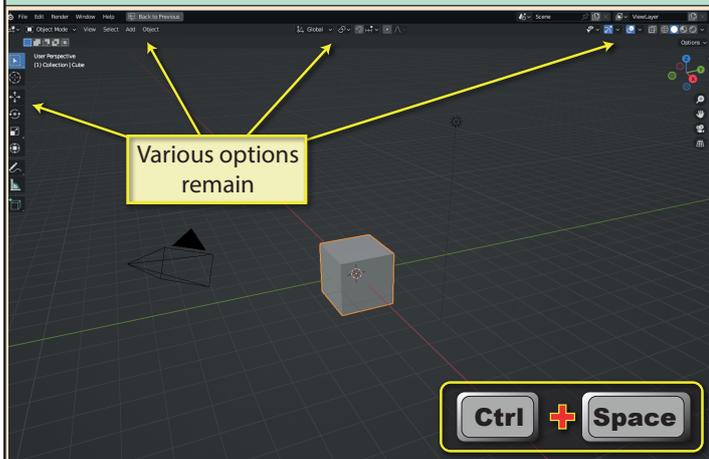


To finalise the size of the new area, we need to click the left mouse button.

The resulting new area is shown here.



When we are working in a specific area of the Blender window, we can expand that area to occupy the full window by pressing one of two key sequences. Pressing **Ctrl+Space** when working in the *3D Viewport*, gives the result shown below.



Pressing **Ctrl+Alt+Space** fills the Blender window completely with the scene being constructed. Press the same key combination (**Ctrl+Space** or **Ctrl+Alt+Space**) to return to the previous layout.

