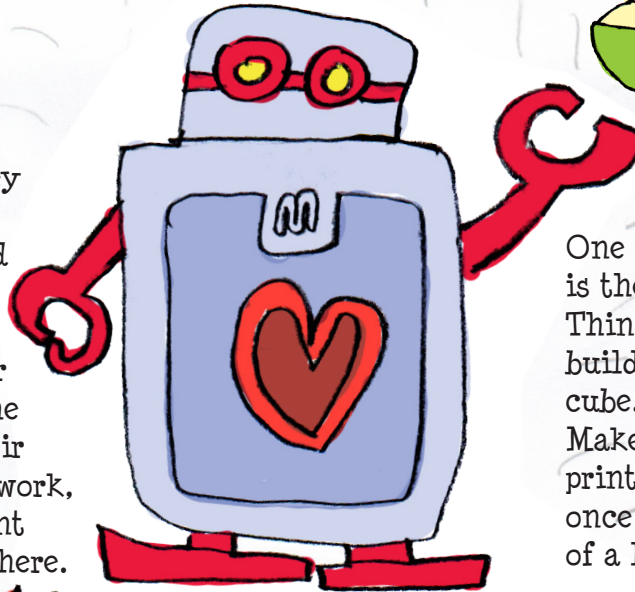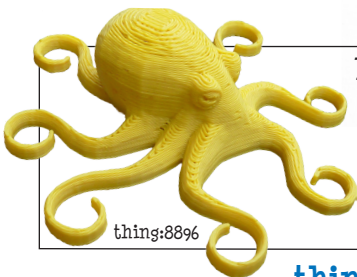# REPLICATE YOUR DREAMS WITH 3D PRINTING

Recently, big companies have been making giant machines worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, that can print an object in 3D; taking a model from a computer, digitally slicing it into hundreds of tiny layers, then printing each one on top of the other. This works just like your 2D paper printer at home, except instead of a picture of what was printed on paper, each layer stacks up on the last one to make something real that you can hold in your hand!

Some smart people thought this idea was really cool, but it was way too expensive for anyone to do at home, so they decided to reinvent it! Using long spaghetti strings of hard plastic melted and pushed through a nozzle, you can create complex 3D objects for less than 1% of the cost of the big machines. Because of their groundbreaking open source work, there are now over 25 different open source 3D printers out there.

One of the most popular is the incredible MakerBot Thing-o-Matic, capable of building objects within a 10cm cube. Their latest model, the MakerBot Replicator, can print with two materials at once on a build area the size of a loaf of bread!

MAKERBOT

You can find almost anything you can imagine on Thingiverse; from an RC car, to a walking robot, even an octopus!

thing:8896

Making a 3D model to print is getting even easier too! Websites like tinkercad.com allow anyone to design a model and send it to get printed, or download a file to print on your own. Another awesome resource is thingiverse.com, where you can find tens of thousands of free models made just for 3D printers uploaded by the community. It's time to stop thinking "Where can I buy that" and start thinking "How can I design or download and print that". 3D scanners are also quickly becoming good enough to make near instant models of real objects, getting us one step closer to our own Star Trek replicator.

The world of 3D printing is ready for *you*, are you ready for it?

Check out these Super-Awesome 3D model & printing resources:
sketchup.google.com ~ makerbot.com ~ thingiverse.com ~ tinkercad.com ~ shapeways.com