

3D Print First Weekend Plan

From sealed box to a trusted profile — not twenty failed Benchy hero shots.

Companions: [3D hub](#) · [Business basics](#) · [Troubleshoot with AI](#) · [3D Printing Mastery books](#)

Weekend goal

One filament + one nozzle size + one slicer profile that you would trust for a functional bracket. Document settings so “it worked once” becomes “it works on purpose.”

BOM / setup

- Working FDM printer (bed + hotend heat cleanly)
- Fresh PLA or PETG (pick one for the weekend — don't switch midstream)
- 0.4 mm nozzle unless you already live on another size
- Calipers, scraper, glue stick or preferred bed adhesion method
- Slicer: Orca / PrusaSlicer / Cura — pick one

Saturday — mechanical baseline

- ☐ Belt tension check (no harp strings, no floppy belts)
- ☐ Clean bed; verify Z-offset / first-layer ritual for your machine
- ☐ Dry-ish filament (PETG especially — wet filament lies to you)
- ☐ Print a single-wall cube or calibration square before a Benchy
- ☐ Log: nozzle temp, bed temp, speed, layer height, adhesion method

Stop rule: if first layers are trash, do not “just print the big thing.” Fix Z and cleanliness first.

Sunday morning — one trusted profile

Setting	Starter PLA	Starter PETG
Layer height	0.2 mm	0.2 mm
Nozzle	~200-210 °C	~230-245 °C
Bed	~60 °C	~70-85 °C
Cooling	Higher part fan	Lower part fan
Speed	Moderate	Slower outer walls

These are starting points — your machine wins arguments with the internet.

- ☐ Name the profile: `pla-0.4-functional-v1` (or `petg-...`)
- ☐ Export/backup the profile file
- ☐ Print a small functional object (cable clip, hook, caliper holder)

Sunday afternoon — failure log (keeps you sane)

- ☐ Photo of best first layer
- ☐ Photo of worst failure this weekend
- ☐ One sentence: “Next change I will try is ____”
- ☐ Optional: paste settings + symptom into the site’s AI troubleshooting prompt pattern

Guide: [Troubleshooting with AI assistance](#)

Done when

- ☐ You have a named profile you’d use again Monday
- ☐ One functional print is in use (not just displayed)
- ☐ You know whether PLA or PETG is your “default” for the next month

Next

- [AI design workflow](#)
- [Pi as printer controller](#)
- [Hobby → side hustle](#)
- [Upcoming posts](#)