

SIM1: Physics-Aligned Simulator as Zero-Shot Data Scaler in Deformable Worlds

Yunsong Zhou^{1*,†}, Hangxu Liu^{1,2*}, Xuekun Jiang^{1*}, Xing Shen^{1*},
Yuanzhen Zhou¹, Hui Wang^{1,3}, Baole Fang¹, Yang Tian^{1,4}, Mulin Yu¹, Qiaojun Yu¹, Li Ma¹, Hengjie Li¹, Hanqing Wang¹, Jia Zeng¹, and Jiangmiao Pang^{1†}

¹ Shanghai AI Laboratory ² Fudan University
³ Shanghai Jiao Tong University ⁴ Peking University

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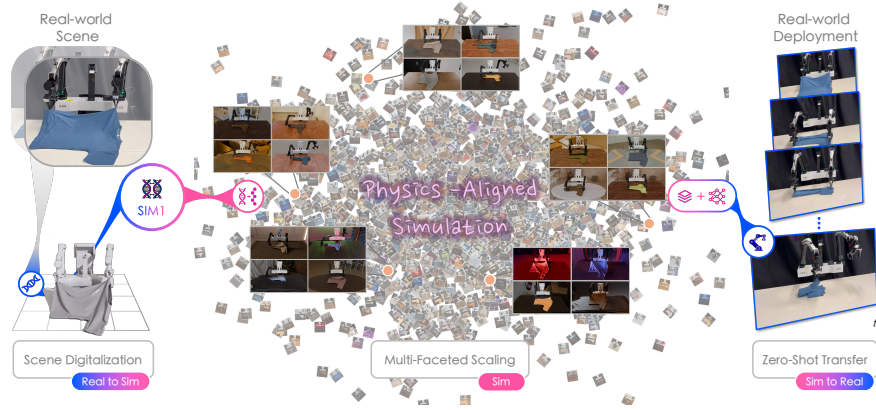


Fig. 1: SIM1 pioneers *real-to-sim-to-real* data generation for deformable manipulation. It constructs **simulation** data whose deployment behavior is the **same one** as reality, enabling zero-shot transfer and scalable performance on physical robots.

Abstract. Robotic manipulation with deformable objects represents a data-intensive regime in embodied learning, where shape, contact, and topology co-evolve in ways that far exceed the variability of rigids. Although simulation promises relief from the cost of real-world data acquisition, prevailing sim-to-real pipelines remain rooted in rigid-body abstractions, producing mismatched geometry, fragile soft dynamics, and motion primitives poorly suited for cloth interaction. We posit that simulation fails not for being synthetic, but for being ungrounded. To address this, we introduce SIM1, a physics-aligned real-to-sim-to-real data engine that grounds simulation in the physical world. Given limited demonstrations, the system digitizes scenes into metric-consistent twins, calibrates deformable dynamics through elastic modeling, and expands behaviors via diffusion-based trajectory generation with quality filtering.

*Equal contribution. †Co-corresponding authors.

This pipeline transforms sparse observations into scaled synthetic supervision with near-demonstration fidelity. Experiments show that policies trained on purely synthetic data achieve parity with real-data baselines at a 1:15 equivalence ratio, while delivering 90% zero-shot success and 50% generalization gains in real-world deployment. These results validate physics-aligned simulation as scalable supervision for deformable manipulation and a practical pathway for data-efficient policy learning.

1 Introduction

Dexterous manipulation of deformable objects, notably garments, underpins a wide spectrum of daily human activities and remains a frontier for robotics. Recent advances [2,3,7,23] reveal a clear scaling trend whereby expanding real-robot datasets consistently improves performance, reinforcing the growing consensus on data scaling as a primary driver of embodied learning. While this paradigm shows promise in rigid-object settings, deformable manipulation intensifies the hunger for data, as its evolving geometry and contact-rich dynamics demand substantially broader state and visual coverage. Yet, acquiring real-world manipulation data at scale remains prohibitively expensive. Such efforts demands skilled operators, specialized hardware, and extensive human labor, placing practical limits on dataset scale. Consequently, vision-language-action models trained on limited deformable-interaction data exhibit constrained generalization.

In the field, sim-to-real (S2R) synthetic data generation has emerged as a compelling strategy for scaling manipulation data [15, 18, 21, 42, 45]. In rigid-object domains, increasing synthetic diversity often translates into measurable real-world gains, supported by rich asset libraries and automated generation pipelines [11, 35, 36]. However, this paradigm breaks down in deformable manipulation. *Simulated scenes* are often weakly aligned, or not aligned at all, with real environments, relying on coarse calibration or manually constructed assets without metric fidelity [16, 29, 32, 41]. Such geometric inconsistencies are amplified under soft-body deformation. *Physics engines* are predominantly optimized for rigid-body dynamics, producing unstable or inaccurate responses for cloth and other soft materials [11, 15, 49]. *Behavior generation* follows rigid-object paradigms based on grasp-point and simple pick-and-place primitives, rendering these strategies inadequate for garment manipulation [44]. As a result, synthetic data serves primarily as pre-training signals, while reliable performance still depends on real-world post-training.

We contend that the first principle of simulation is grounding; scaling becomes valuable only once simulated physics correspond to reality. Real-to-sim (R2S) alignment is thus foundational for deformable manipulation, prioritizing correspondence between simulated and physical dynamics over superficial realism or asset import [36, 46]. This motivates a shift from post-hoc adaptation to alignment-first simulation, raising a central question: *how can simulation be grounded so that synthetic data is a reliable substrate for real-robot deployment?*

To address this, we advocate that a real-to-sim-to-real (R2S2R) paradigm offers a principled path toward real-equivalent simulation by aligning each stage

with the physical world, thereby enabling direct transfer to real robots [38]. As depicted in Fig. 1, we present SIM1, the *first* physics-aligned simulation pipeline for deformable manipulation that digitalizes real scenes (R2S) and generates scalable, unbiased synthetic data consistent with real-world settings (S2R). By expanding limited demonstrations into diverse training data, SIM1 enables policies that transfer directly to real-robot deployment without additional tuning.

Specific designs operationalize the R2S2R paradigm across three complementary alignment stages. For *geometric alignment*, high-precision 3D scans are re-constructed into metric-accurate, textured meshes, producing simulation-ready digital representations of real-world scenes. For *dynamical alignment*, a stabilized soft-body solver [17] enforces physically consistent elastic and bending responses while suppressing excessive deformation, thereby enabling realistic interaction modeling. A coupled simulation infrastructure maps robot operations to simulation, supporting parameter calibration and stable soft-body manipulation. For *movement alignment*, deformable manipulation trajectories are synthesized through structured two-stage planning that decouples interaction from motion. Diffusion-based trajectory generation models human-like behavior [10], while automatic filtering and appearance randomization [37] enhance diversity and robustness. These components transform simulation into a real-equivalent data source for scalable generation to real robots.

We summarize our contributions as follows: 1) We introduce SIM1, which minimizes the sim-to-real gap through a physics-aligned R2S2R paradigm, enabling synthetic data to serve as high-fidelity training data for direct deployment in deformable manipulation. 2) We enhance simulation fidelity and data utility through metric-accurate scene digitization, a deformation-stabilized solver with physics-based calibration, and a diffusion-based motion framework coupled with filtering to generate high-quality manipulation data. 3) Experiments on $\pi_{0.5}$ and π_0 achieve zero-shot success rates of 90% and 76%, with generalization gains of +50% and +56% over real-data baselines. Furthermore, 15 synthetic samples from SIM1 provide training value comparable to a real demonstration, validating its effectiveness as a data scaler for deformable manipulation.

2 Related Work

Data scaling and manipulation datasets. Scaling real-robot data improves vision-language-action models (VLAs) [2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 23, 28, 31, 43, 48]. Large-scale datasets such as Open X-Embodiment [14], DROID [27], and BridgeData v2 [40] advance rigid and articulated manipulation, while simulation datasets (*e.g.*, ManiSkill2 [18], RoboCasa [35], Genie Sim 3.0 [46]) extend data coverage for rigid scenarios. However, deformable manipulation remains underrepresented: soft-body dynamics introduce continuous shape variation and contact-rich behaviors that are more data-hungry than rigid-object tasks. Our work addresses this gap by using simulation to synthesize scalable deformable demonstrations, expanding training data specifically for soft-object manipulation.

Simulation-to-real synthetic data generation. Recent methods generate large-scale demonstrations via transformation [25, 33], R2S alignment [38], and

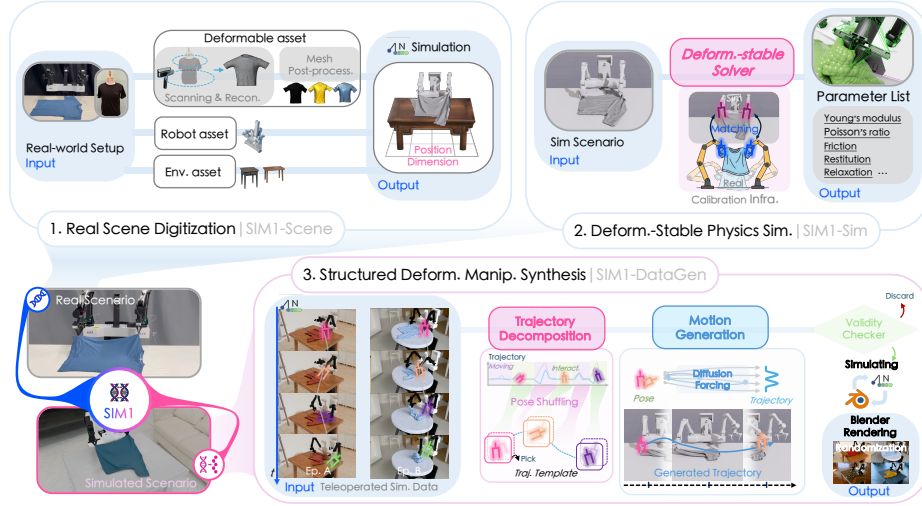


Fig. 2: Framework of SIM1. (1) Real-world objects are reconstructed into metric-accurate, textured simulation assets; (2) They are then executed within a deformation-stable simulation framework calibrated through real-to-sim behavior matching. (3) Upon physical alignment, diverse manipulation trajectories are synthesized via structured subtask decomposition and diffusion-based motion generation, and rendered with appearance randomization to produce real-equivalent synthetic training data.

physical twin reconstruction [24], achieving strong results in rigid manipulation and emerging capabilities for humanoid [21, 42] and deformable tasks [47]. Nevertheless, S2R degradation persists because simulated dynamics are not fully aligned with real-world physics. Our R2S2R framework addresses this by grounding simulation in physical reality through mesh-level alignment, physics-faithful dynamics solving and human-like trajectory generation, producing synthetic data that supports zero-shot transfer to real robots.

Real-to-simulation asset digitization. The digitization of deformable objects employs MPM [13], spring-mass models [24], and platforms such as Garment-Lab [32], which integrate multiple physics engines. However, solver accuracy remains limited: VBD suffers from unrealistic stretching [9], while PBD and FEM involve trade-offs between accuracy and efficiency [5, 34]. Recent solvers [17] improve strain limiting but remain isolated from broader pipelines. While existing solvers achieve accurate offline deformation through particle-state optimization, they are not designed for the real-time requirements of embodied manipulation where rigid-soft interaction must be updated dynamically during control. Our solver and calibration infrastructure support online rigid-soft coupling with stable deformation dynamics, enabling high-fidelity simulation and data generation for deformable manipulation.

3 SIM1 Framework

SIM1 adopts the real-to-sim-to-real (R2S2R) paradigm to bridge geometry, dynamics, and motion across stages. This approach addresses the asymmetry of one-way simulation or reconstruction methods and enables synthetic data to function as a real-equivalent substrate for robot learning (Fig. 2). High-precision scans (*e.g.*, garment meshes) and object imports (*e.g.*, URDFs, environment assets) are converted into metric-accurate digital scenes, providing simulation-ready geometric configurations (Sec. 3.1). Within the simulator, a deformation-stabilized solver and parameter calibration infrastructure reproduce realistic dynamics, enabling interactive soft-body manipulation with calibrated physics (Sec. 3.2). Demonstration data from teleoperated simulation are first decomposed into motion segments and subsequently synthesized via diffusion, with visual randomization used to generate scaled training data that enhances generalization (Sec. 3.3).

3.1 SIM1-Scene: Real Scene Digitization

The first stage establishes metric-accurate geometric alignment as a prerequisite for closing the sim-real gap. Since even minor discrepancies in shape, scale, or spatial configuration can propagate into dynamic and contact errors, we construct static simulation assets that faithfully reproduce their real-world counterparts. In particular, recovering high-quality meshes for deformable clothing is complicated by fine wrinkles and intricate topology. We address this challenge by combining high-precision 3D scanning with dedicated mesh post-processing to obtain textured and dimensionally accurate models. Robots and static environments are incorporated using calibrated URDF imports and asset libraries. The following sections detail the digitization for each asset type.

Deformable assets. For garments, we employ a professional 3D scanner (Ein-Scan Rigil Pro) to capture high-fidelity meshes and textures. The garment is mounted on a mannequin to maintain its natural shape during scanning. Multi-view RGB images and LiDAR scans are captured and fused to generate a dense point cloud. As the scan includes the mannequin, we perform a manual segmentation step to remove mannequin points, retaining only the garment. The resulting point cloud is then processed through surface refinement (*e.g.*, Poisson reconstruction [26]) followed by mesh post-processing, including hole filling, smoothing, and remeshing to obtain a clean, watertight mesh suitable for simulation. Texture is mapped from the RGB images onto the static mesh, resulting in a textured OBJ asset. This process yields a geometric replica of the real garment with submillimeter precision.

Robot assets. The robot used in this study is the ARX ACONE robot, a bimanual platform designed for dexterous manipulation tasks. Its kinematic structure, joint limits, collision geometries, and visual meshes are defined in a URDF file generated from CAD models (*e.g.*, SolidWorks) provided by the manufacturer. We directly import this URDF into our simulation environment, ensuring that each arm’s degrees of freedom and workspace exactly match the real hardware.

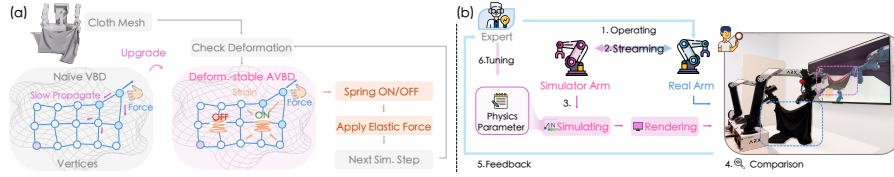


Fig. 3: Paradigm of deformation-stable physics simulation. (a) After naive VBD [9] updates under external forces, edge deformation is monitored and virtual elastic constraints are activated when stretch exceeds a threshold, injecting strain forces that accelerate convergence toward physically plausible cloth configurations. (b) A bidirectionally synchronized simulation infrastructure replaces identical dual-arm executions in simulation and aligns deformation behaviors through visual calibration.

No additional scanning is required; however, we verify dimensional accuracy and adjust the root transform to align with the world coordinate frame. The two arms are calibrated relative to each other to preserve correct bimanual coordination. **Environment assets.** Static objects in the environment (*i.e.*, diverse tables) are obtained from publicly available 3D model repositories or created manually. These assets are imported as mesh files and placed in the scene at positions and orientations that replicate the real-world setup. Dimensions are scaled according to real-world measurements to maintain physical consistency.

3.2 SIM1-Sim: Deformation-Stable Physics Simulation

Achieving reliable S2R transfer for deformable manipulation requires physically consistent rigid–soft coupling, a setting that remains poorly supported by existing simulation engines. Modern physics solvers are typically optimized for either rigid-body (widely used in robotics [11, 29, 41]) or soft-body (largely studied in graphics [5, 19, 22, 30]), but not their interaction. In soft-body solvers, deformation is resolved through iterative updates of particle vertex states, where contact forces propagate gradually across the mesh (Fig. 3 (a)). While accurate deformation can emerge with sufficient solver iterations in offline simulation, embodied manipulation requires cloth states to update in lockstep with robot motion during online teleoperation. Limited force propagation and delayed strain updates, therefore, lead to excessive stretching, unstable contact, and misalignment with real worlds (see the supplementary material for implementation details). To close this gap, we design a deformation-stable solver that constrains strain evolution during contact, enabling stable soft-body dynamics under real-time interaction, and establish a calibration infrastructure that aligns simulated and real behaviors under identical control inputs.

Stabilized solver via Augmented Vertex Block Descent. We develop a deformation-stable solver inspired by the Augmented Vertex Block Descent (AVBD) formulation [17], extending the Newton–VBD solver [9]. Instead of relying solely on energy minimization to update vertex positions, our solver introduces explicit strain constraints between vertices during optimization. These

constraints act as adaptive elastic links that rapidly propagate forces across the cloth mesh, allowing vertex motion to remain consistent with gripper dynamics. This design stabilizes rigid–soft interaction while preserving the efficiency required for large-scale simulation data generation.

Solver workflow. As illustrated in Fig. 3 (a), the solver operates on a cloth mesh whose vertices represent particles connected by edges. When external forces are applied (*e.g.*, robot contact), vertex positions are first updated through the standard Newton–VBD iteration. After each update, we examine the deformation of every mesh edge. If the distance between two connected vertices exceeds a predefined stretch threshold, a virtual elastic constraint is activated. This constraint introduces an additional tensile force between the vertices, which is injected into the VBD optimization and accelerates convergence toward physically plausible configurations. The procedure iterates until vertex positions stabilize.

Strain constraint. Consider an edge $\mathbf{e}$ connecting vertices i and j with rest length l_0 . Let $\mathbf{e}_i, \mathbf{e}_j \in \mathbb{R}^3$ denote their current positions. We define a maximum stretch ratio $\xi > 0$ such that the edge length should not exceed $(1 + \xi)l_0$. The strain constraint is therefore:

$$C(\mathbf{e}) = \|\mathbf{e}_i - \mathbf{e}_j\| - (1 + \xi)l_0 \leq 0. \quad (1)$$

The constraint becomes active when $C(\mathbf{e}) > 0$, indicating that the local deformation exceeds the allowable limit.

Constraint energy formulation. When activated, we apply an additional energy term that penalizes excessive stretch:

$$E_{\text{strain}}^{(n)}(\mathbf{e}) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2}k^{(n)}C(\mathbf{e})^2 + \lambda^{(n)}C(\mathbf{e}), & C(\mathbf{e}) > 0, \\ 0, & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

where $k^{(n)}$ is the penalty stiffness parameter at Newton iteration n , and $\lambda^{(n)}$ is the Lagrange multiplier accumulating constraint forces. The gradient of $E_{\text{strain}}^{(n)}$ are added to the Newton system and solved within the VBD vertex updates. Intuitively, this term acts as a virtual spring that activates only when excessive stretching occurs, injecting corrective forces that guide vertices toward physically consistent configurations.

Parameter update. After each Newton iteration, the penalty stiffness and variables are updated to progressively enforce the strain constraint:

$$k^{(n+1)} = \min\left(k_{\text{max}}, k^{(n)} + \beta|C(\mathbf{e})|\right), \quad \lambda^{(n+1)} = \lambda^{(n)} + k^{(n)}C(\mathbf{e}), \quad (3)$$

where k_{max} is the maximum stiffness and β controls the ramping rate. This update integrates correction forces over iterations, preventing explosive stretching and improving deformation stability during contact-rich manipulation.

Simulation infrastructure for parameter calibration. Physical parameters list $\Theta = \{\rho, E, \nu, \mu, \eta, \zeta\}$ (density, Young’s modulus, Poisson’s ratio, friction, restitution, relaxation) cannot be recovered to their true physical values through direct optimization. Instead, we calibrate simulation by aligning its behavior with

real observations. Fig. 3 (b) shows the calibration pipeline following a bidirectional workflow. An expert operates the dual-arm robot to execute representative manipulation sequences. The robot’s joint states are streamed to the simulator so that the simulated twin reproduces identical motions. The renderings are visually compared with real executions, allowing experts to assess discrepancies in draping, folding, and contact behavior. Based on this visual feedback, parameters Θ are iteratively adjusted until simulated interactions exhibit behavior that matches the real system at an operational level. This process does not guarantee recovery of true physical parameters, but it establishes behavioral consistency: simulated scenes respond to manipulation in ways that closely resemble reality.

3.3 SIM1-DataGen: Structured Deformable Manipulation Synthesis

Rigid-object manipulation can often rely on trajectory slicing and recombination of motion primitives [25, 33]. For deformable objects, however, contact dynamics are state-dependent and highly non-deterministic: valid grasp locations cannot be reliably detected, and naive slicing breaks interaction fidelity. To address this, we generalize trajectory decomposition by decoupling interaction from motion (Fig. 2 right-bottom). Grasp configurations are directly reused from expert demonstrations; selection is randomized to increase diversity while preserving the original ordering. Motion between interactions is synthesized via diffusion-based generation, learning human-like transitions from demonstration data. Visual randomization further expands appearance diversity, producing large-scale training data suitable for policy learning (see the supplementary material).

Trajectory decomposition. Given demonstrations $\mathcal{D} = \{\tau_i\}$ collected via teleoperation, each trajectory is segmented into **interacting** and **moving** regions. **Interacting** segments encode stable grasp configurations and contact states; these are preserved and pooled without modification. To generate new demonstrations, we randomly pick segments from this pool, reusing templated grasp poses while varying sequence order and task context. This shuffling operation expands behavioral diversity while maintaining physically valid interactions, addressing the lack of reliable grasp detection under deformation.

Diffusion-based motion generation. Between consecutive **interacting** segments, we generate smooth transitions by treating trajectory synthesis as sequence completion. Given picked boundary poses $(\mathbf{p}_s, \mathbf{p}_e)$ and robot history $\mathbf{h}$, the model predicts intermediate motions that satisfy physical and kinematic consistency. We employ conditional diffusion forcing [10], where a transformer sequence model reconstructs trajectories from partially corrupted tokens. The diffusion process applies stochastic masking with noise level $\mathbf{k}$, and learning proceeds by recovering the original sequence from soft-corrupted inputs. Formally,

$$\forall \mathbf{k} \in (0, 1]^\mathcal{T}, \min_{\theta} \mathbb{E} \|\epsilon - \epsilon_{\theta}(g(\mathbf{x}^0, \mathbf{k}); \mathbf{h}, \mathbf{p}_s, \mathbf{p}_e, \mathbf{k})\|_2^2, \quad (4)$$

where g denotes the corruption function that applies noise to the clean sequence $\mathbf{x}^0$ according to noise $\mathbf{k}$, and ϵ_{θ} is a transformer predicting the noise residual conditioned on history and keyposes. This formulation enables physically consistent motion synthesis that bridges interaction segments while preserving realism.

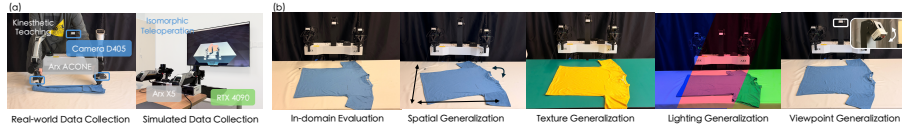


Fig. 4: Illustration of data collection and evaluation. (a) Real-world and simulated data collection via kinesthetic teaching and isomorphic teleoperation on Arx Acone and Arx X5. (b) Domain settings for in-domain and out-of-domain evaluation in real-world experiments. Representative long-horizon T-shirt folding task (over 20 seconds) illustrating complex sequential manipulation capabilities.

Validity checking. Even with optimization, rigid-soft interaction is inherently uncertain: gripper contacts with deformable objects can produce penetration or adhesion, yielding physically implausible trajectories.

To filter such failures, we first perform lightweight state-based filtering using garment particle states. From simulation-derived positive and negative trajectories, we leverage vibe coding to synthesize threshold rules over particle statistics, defining admissible regions that favor positive states and exclude negative ones. This step efficiently prunes invalid samples early. We then train a binary video discriminator D on head-view RGB observations $\mathbf{V}$ to distinguish valid demonstrations from low-quality samples. Negative cases arise naturally during simulation, avoiding manual annotation. A ResNet-18 feature extractor [20] and Transformer encoder [39] aggregate temporal information and output a validity score $s = D(\mathbf{V})$. Trajectories with $s > \tau_{\text{disc}}$ are retained; others are discarded. This lightweight filtering removes implausible demonstrations without costly physics-based validation.

Visual randomization. Valid trajectories are rendered in Blender [4] with appearance randomization of materials, lighting, and camera parameters. Multiple variations are generated per trajectory using cycle path tracing to produce photorealistic RGB images synchronized with trajectory timestamps. The final dataset combines rendered observations with robot states and actions in the LeRobot format [6] for imitation learning.

4 Experiments

We evaluate whether a physics-grounded simulation pipeline can serve as a scalable and reliable substitute for real-world data in structured deformable manipulation. Our experiments focus on S2R transfer, cross-domain generalization, and data scaling efficiency under purely simulation-trained policies. Specifically, we investigate the following questions. **Q1:** Can models trained solely in simulation achieve performance comparable to real-data-trained counterparts? **Q2:** Does simulation-induced diversity improve out-of-domain robustness beyond real-world data? **Q3:** Does synthetic data enable more efficient performance gains through scaling than real-world collection?

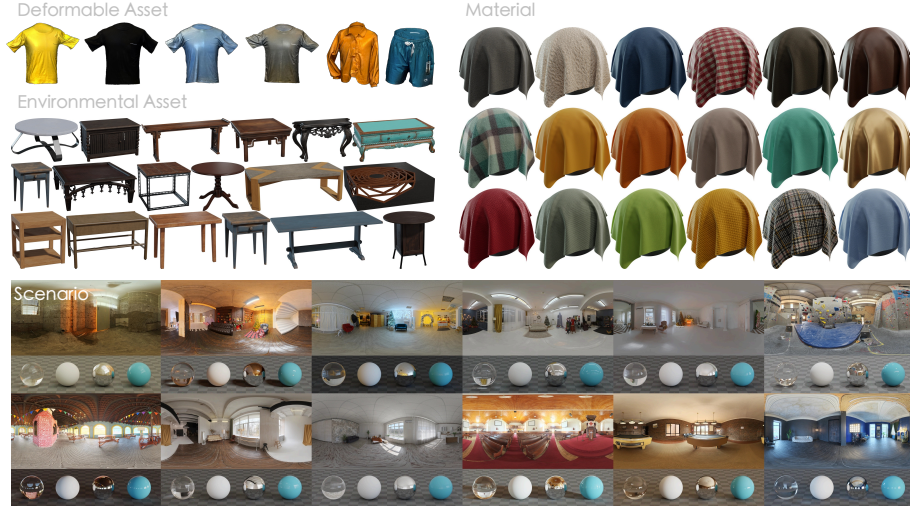


Fig. 5: Illustration of assets used in data generation. Scanned deformable assets and open-source environmental assets used in simulation (top-left). Diverse garment textures for appearance variation (top-right). Room-scale environments with randomized layouts and lighting for scene-level randomization (bottom).

4.1 Protocol and Setup

Data collection. Data are collected in both real and simulated environments. In Fig. 4 (a), we use an ARX ACONE dual-arm platform equipped with parallel-jaw grippers. In the real world, we adopt kinesthetic teaching, in which the operator directly guides the robot’s end-effectors by hand; in total, 1,000 real trajectories are recorded. In simulation, we deploy our Newton-based simulation infrastructure with the deformation-stable AVBD solver on an RTX 4090 workstation, aligning garment geometry, robot kinematics, and camera parameters with the physical setup. A teleoperator controls two ARX X5 arms, whose motions are mapped to the simulated robot in real time. The operator observes rendered simulator views and performs folding through visual teleoperation. This process yields 200 source simulation demonstrations, which serve as seeds for subsequent synthetic data generation.

Tasks and baselines. T-shirt folding is used as a representative benchmark for real-world validation and does *not* constrain the scope of the proposed simulation pipeline, which targets a broader class of deformable manipulation tasks. We introduce additional manipulation tasks in the following section to further demonstrate the general applicability of our framework. Policies are trained using either real demonstrations or our synthetic data exclusively, and evaluated over 30 trials per configuration. A trial is considered successful if the garment reaches the target folded configuration without dropping or unfolding. We conduct both in-domain and generalization evaluations (Fig. 4 (b)). In-domain experiments use the same spatial layout, garment, table surface, lighting, and camera con-

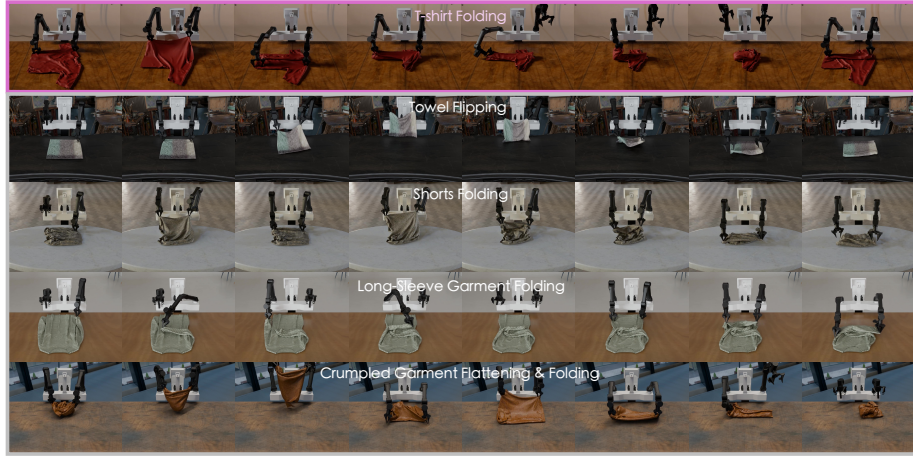


Fig. 6: Visualization of generated data across garments and tasks. The pink box highlights the representative T-shirt folding task used as the real-world benchmark in this work. The gray box shows additional garments and manipulation tasks generated in simulation, including folding, flipping, and flattening, illustrating the broader task coverage enabled by our framework beyond the single benchmark task.

figuration as training. For generalization, we introduce controlled distribution shifts along multiple factors: the garment is randomly translated up to 8 cm and rotated within $\pm 15^\circ$ (spatial); unseen table and garment textures are substituted with corresponding changes in friction properties (texture); illumination direction and intensity are randomized (lighting); and the camera elevation is perturbed within $\pm 5^\circ$ (viewpoint).

Synthetic data generation. For synthetic data generation, we follow the pipeline detailed in the supplementary material. The framework supports diverse asset combinations and environment variations; in this work, we use a representative configuration for real-world validation while demonstrating the general capability of the approach. To enhance diversity during synthesis, the garment is translated within 5 cm and rotated within $\pm 15^\circ$, table and cloth materials are sampled from 17 and 28 types, respectively, and 90 randomized environment combinations are applied with head-camera elevation perturbations of $\pm 5^\circ$ (Fig. 5). Generated samples are visualized in Fig. 6.

4.2 Main Experiment Results

We evaluate policies trained in simulation and real data under both in-domain and out-of-domain settings (Fig. 7). Real demonstrations and teleoperated simulation data use 200 samples, while simulation-generated data are scaled to 10k samples for in-domain training and 2k samples for out-of-domain evaluation.

Simulation versus real-data performance (A1). Simulation-trained policies achieve performance comparable to real-data-trained counterparts under equal

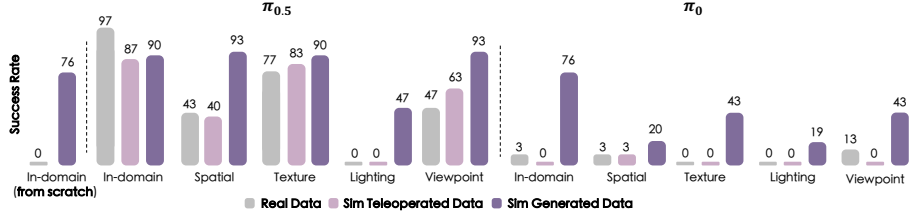


Fig. 7: In-domain and out-of-domain evaluation. Policies are trained with real data, collected simulation data, or simulator-generated data. Groups: $\pi_{0.5}$ trained from scratch, $\pi_{0.5}$ post-trained, and π_0 post-trained. Simulated data matches real episodes under equal budgets and surpasses them when scaled, especially under domain shifts.

data budgets. For the representative $\pi_{0.5}$ setting, real data reach average success **97%**, while policies trained on sim-teleoperated data achieve **87%**, a marginal gap of **10%**. This suggests that physics-aligned simulation provides supervision of considerable fidelity to match real-world training with controlled data volumes.

Out-of-domain robustness (A2). Simulation-induced diversity yields substantial generalization gains under domain shifts. In spatial shifts, texture variation, and lighting perturbations, simulation-trained policies outperform real-data-trained baselines by **50%**, **13%**, and **47%**, respectively. These improvements indicate that simulation enables broader coverage of variations than limited real-world demonstrations, enhancing robustness beyond the training distribution.

Pretraining confound analysis. To isolate the effect of pretrained priors, we evaluate task learning under de novo initialization with no reliance on preexisting manipulation knowledge. The real-data baseline ($\pi_{0.5}$ trained from scratch) fails completely (**0%** success), indicating that limited real demonstrations alone do not enable deformable manipulation. In contrast, the synthetic training pipeline achieves strong task acquisition (**76%**) under the same from-scratch condition, demonstrating that performance gains originate from generated data rather than pretrained skills. These results dispel the possibility that task success is driven by prior knowledge and confirm the effectiveness of synthetic supervision.

Scaling analysis (A3). Fig. 8 examines whether synthetic data enables more efficient performance gains through scaling than real-world collection. As data volume increases, the success rates of $\pi_{0.5}$ and π_0 improve steadily, following the fitted scaling curves. Simulation demonstrates favorable scaling behavior compared to real-world data. For the representative $\pi_{0.5}$ model under in-domain evaluation, one real demonstration provides comparable benefit to approximately **15** synthetic samples. In a representative out-of-domain setting (texture generalization), the equivalence shifts to roughly **5** synthetic samples per real sample.

Findings. (1) Synthetic data is weak in extremely low-data regimes but scales more effectively than real data as volume increases. Performance grows rapidly with additional simulation samples and eventually surpasses real-data training, while real-data gains saturate due to limited diversity. (2) $\pi_{0.5}$ outperforms π_0 under fixed budgets because of richer pretraining or a more expressive state

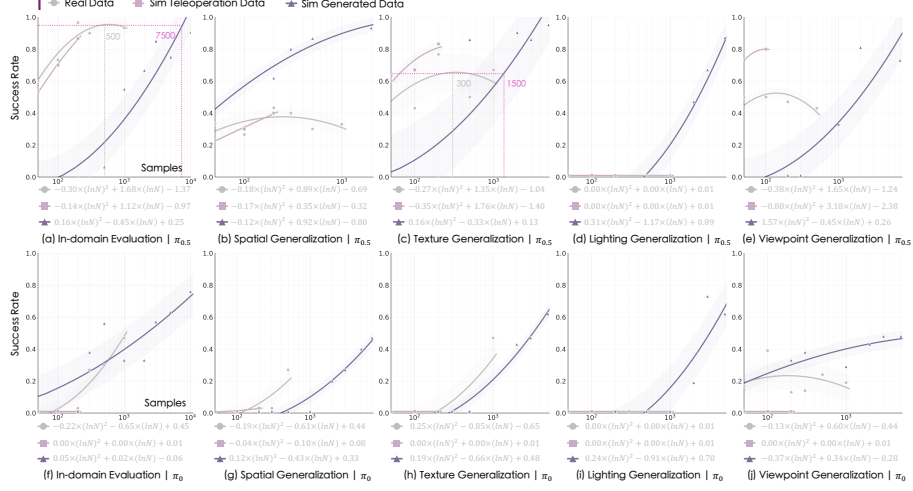


Fig. 8: Curves of performance versus data scale. Synthetic data scaling improves performance and can surpass real-data-only training. Dashed lines denote the equivalence points where M synthetic samples match one real sample at saturation.

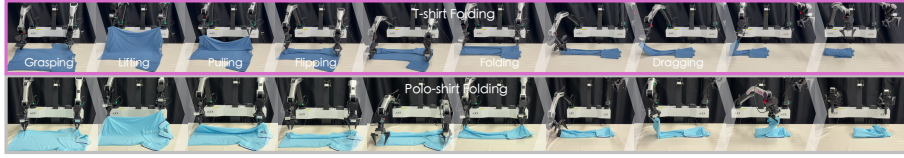


Fig. 9: Qualitative results of zero-shot sim-to-real transfer. Top: Real-robot deployment of our representative T-shirt folding task using policies trained on synthetic data, illustrating successful folding from grasping to completion. Bottom: Deployment on highly dissimilar garments with material, shape, and size configurations absent from training and simulation, demonstrating generalization across extreme domain shifts.

representation. π_0 requires greater data volume to achieve similar performance, consistent with lower data efficiency rather than fundamental task limitations.

Qualitative Results. Fig. 9 shows real-world deployments of policies trained purely on synthetic data. The policy successfully performs garment folding on a physical robot without any real demonstrations. It further generalizes to an unseen polo shirt with different material, texture, and geometry, where the real-data baseline achieves **20%** success while ours reaches **70%** on the real robot.

4.3 Ablation Study

Scene reconstruction and physics solver. Fig. 10 presents qualitative comparisons of scene reconstruction and physics simulation. Marker-assisted Reconstruction (*e.g.*, AR Code [1]) produces centimeter-level meshes with noticeable artifacts. In contrast, our pipeline reconstructs assets with sub-millimeter

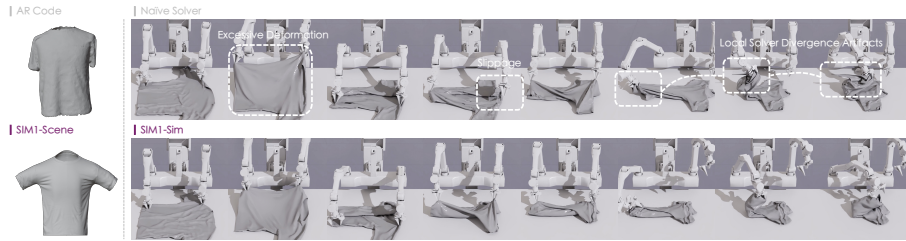


Fig. 10: Scene digitization and solver stability. Our pipeline produces detailed geometry suitable for simulation, whereas marker-based methods (*e.g.*, AR Code) yield coarser reconstructions. Conventional solvers exhibit artifacts in rigid-soft interaction (dashed regions); our solver remains stable and closely matches real-world behavior.

level accuracy, enabling precise geometry alignment for simulation. Generic deformable solvers (*e.g.*, FEM [50], VBD [9], *etc.*) are not designed for rigid-soft interaction and exhibit unrealistic dynamics due to particle motion lag. This leads to excessive stretching during pulling, particle gaps that cause slipping, and local delays that produce spiky deformations. Our solver eliminates these artifacts and yields stable, physically consistent garment behavior, demonstrating the necessity of both *geometric alignment* via accurate scene reconstruction and *dynamical alignment* via stabilized physics simulation.

Quantitative evaluation. Tab. 1 evaluates module contributions. The baseline trajectory strategy, adapted from rigid-body manipulation MimicGen [33], fails to generate valid training data (pass rate **0%**), confirming that naive segmentation is insufficient for deformable tasks. Trajectory decomposition enables data synthesis but produces discontinuous segments and no task success, indicating limited utility without physical consistency. Diffusion-based generation improves data realism (in-domain **47%**) and captures more human-like trajectories, yet generalization remains weak. Incorporating the deformation-stable solver yields substantial gains (in-domain **67%**, average **76%**), demonstrating that solver stability is essential for translating scalable simulation data into policies that generalize to the physical world, underscoring the role of *movement alignment* in synthesizing physically consistent manipulation trajectories.

5 Conclusion

We present a physics-aligned real-to-sim-to-real pipeline that transforms limited real demonstrations into scalable synthetic data for deformable manipulation. By jointly addressing geometric accuracy, dynamic fidelity, and motion synthesis, our approach achieves zero-shot sim-to-real transfer in garment folding. Experiments demonstrate that policies trained purely on synthetic data achieve comparable performance to real-data baselines, with consistent improvement as data scales. These results show that high-fidelity simulation is a viable and scalable source of supervision for deformable manipulation, complementing real-data collection and enabling broader policy learning at reduced cost.

Table 1: Ablation on designs in SIM1. Pass rate denotes the proportion of generated samples accepted by the discriminator. All designs contribute to the final performance.

Method	Pass Rate (%)	Success Rate (%)					Average (%)
		In-domain	Spatial	Texture	Lighting	Viewpoint	
Baseline	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
+ Traj. decomposition	65	0	0	0	0	0	0
+ Diff.-based generation	38	47	33	60	20	7	33
+ Deform.-stable solver	40	67 (+20)	93 (+60)	90 (+30)	82 (+62)	47 (+40)	76 (+43)

Limitations and broader impact. A current limitation is that material calibration requires expert-guided parameter tuning for each asset, which constrains full automation across arbitrary cloth types. By demonstrating that high-fidelity simulation can complement real-robot data and enable scalable policy learning, this work provides a practical foundation for data-efficient robotic development.

Acknowledgement

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Shanghai AI Laboratory throughout this project. We sincerely thank Jiafei Cao, Yang Li, and Junjie Xia for their invaluable support in building and maintaining the data pipeline. We are also grateful to all data collection contributors for their dedicated efforts in large-scale data acquisition. We appreciate Chaoyang Lv for his assistance with the simulation system and related technical support. We thank Haochen Tian for developing the visualization and plotting scripts used in this work. We also acknowledge the support and guidance from Prof. Minyi Guo and Prof. Hongzi Zhu.

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