Amiga

COLLABORATORS

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WRITTEN BY		June 4, 2025	

REVISION HISTORY

NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

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Chapter 1

Amiga

1.1   Amiga FMV FAQ Main

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              Welcome to the Amiga Full Motion Video FAQ!
              -------------------------------------------

                      (C) 1996 By Markus Castren

                      Version: 0.1 -   /02/1996
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  Welcome to the first Amiga Full Motion Video FAQ. This FAQ is fully
consentrated on full motion video (from now on known as FMV) on Amiga
computers. As the FMV side on Amiga is still very small I will update this
FAQ always when something new will pop out! All kinds of comments and
information for this FAQ is highly appreciated. See the
Contacing the Author part for more details.

NOTE: At the moment this FAQ is mainly meant for full motion video games
      and demos. No other software will be included as I don't have time
      nor the interest to keep track on these.

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                      PRESS HERE FOR THE CONTENTS!
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1.2   contents

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Contents:
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Larger Scale Introducton to the Subject - Why, how and when?

Full Motion Video on Amigas - How do we do it on Amiga.

Reviews of FMV Games and Demos - Not many of them, yet!

FMV FAQ History and Update Information - Check out what's new!

Contacting the Author - Support is really needed ;)

1.3   Larger Scale Introduction to the Subject

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Larger Scale Introduction to the Subject:
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Full Motion Video games, movies and clips have been already a while in
use on the PC market and are finally (but slowly) moving to Amigas too.
As everyone probably knows, Amiga is also very capable of doing FMV (and
many other things too ;)) very well. The only disadvantages on FMV specially
on Amiga computers has been the often very big size of the games as CD-Roms
aren't yet very popular and also a lousy playability (Well, it's a question
of taste).

What is full motion video then? Well, it's basicly pure video picture,
animation and sound. One might have a picture already from the name
"Full Motion Video". The games that use FMV are usually full of animated
video clips and speech (like Phantasmagoria and many others on PC).
Everything in the game is made by following the playing animation sequences
and that is the reason why the players part usually isn't so great - the
games are more like interactive movies.
The FMV clips are very often taken from some films or TV programs or even
selfmade (if someone has the equipment!).

Probably one of the reasons why FMV has become so popular is just that
it's more fun to watch and hear real picture and speech instead of some
hand-drawn looking cartoon animation stuff.

The reason for why I started writing this FAQ is that I think this kind of
a new technology, if I may call it so, needs to be supported to become more
popular. I'm also a great fan of FMV games (well, fan of everything new on
Amiga nowdays) and as I bought a CD-Rom, I realized that there were
actually NO cd-rom games only for Amiga (No CD32) and these FMV games
usually are on CD's due their big sizes.

The next part Full Motion Video on Amigas will tell more about FMV on
Amiga and how is it made etc.

In case some FMV programmer is interested in explaining a bit more about
the coding of such games, I'm sure to include it in this FAQ.

1.4   Full Motion Video on Amigas

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Full Motion Video on Amigas
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In this section we'll take a look at how can full motion video be done on
Amiga computers. I'm still ready to include details from any coder who's
willing to tell me some.

Kenneth Isley's way - The way Murder is done!

1.5   Kenneth Isley's way

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Kenneth Isley's (Murder) Way
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Probably, the most interesting thing is to see that Murder was made with
Amiga 500 equipped with a turbo. This means that the machines speed isn't
actually the MOST important thing when talking about full motion video.
The speed of the drive where the game is installed to is much more affective
The other hardware conserning the making of the digitizing were Vidi Amiga
24bit graphic digitizer, a homemade sampler for the sounds, a Samsung 4 head
VCR and a Panasonic CamCorder.

The software side of Murder was partly made with C language, DeckBrowser and
with CanDo. The video is read into a film making program as individual Ham
images in a numbered sequence, and associated with a sound file.
This data is then writen out to one long file as a series of picture data,
interleaved with sound data for that frame. The films in murder play at
10 Frames/Sec, so each image has 1/10 of a second of sound data that
plays while it's on the screen.

1.6   Reviews of FMV Games and Demos

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Reviews of FMV Games and Demos:
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This is the part where all the reviewed games and demos can be found.
I think there's no need to explain the reviewing system – it's kind of a
self explainary.

Here is the list of the games and demos currently available:

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Tomcat
Desert Apache
Murder
Rocko
Karate Babe
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(The titles are in order which I got them.)

1.7   tomcat

```
==============================================================================
Name................ TomCat – the Hunt Begins
Archive on Aminet... TOMCAT.lha (game/demo)
Author.............. John Graham/Dark Unicorn Prods. (virtual@scsn.net)
Requirements........ Any Amiga w/ 1MB Chip, 2MB Total, 12MB of HD/CD-Rom
Type................ SW
Score............... ***
==============================================================================
```

Tomcat was the first FMV game appearing to Amiga. In TomCat you take the

part of a pilot of F-14 fighter jet and fly different missions like P.O.W.
rescues, escorts and air-to-air combats with enemy Migs. I still don't
have the full version of it so I can only review the demo version. The full
version promises lots of more (The demo is only about 6MB's and the full game
12MB's). In the demo, there's only one waypoint with its missions which gives
a good picture of the game.

About the system. The game is seems to be made with AMOS as it can be quitted
by pressing CTRL-C. It runs smoothly without any bigger pauses depending on
the speed of a harddisk (Well, mine seems to be fast enough ;)). Optimizing
ones harddisk will help, if the game is too slow. TomCat plays in a 1/4
screen and the graphics are only black and white which makes it possible to
run on an ECS machine. Also voices and sounds are synchronized with the
animations.

For some reason, the demo crashes on my machine on every second target. Don't
know for sure if the bug is also in the final version. The CD-version is said
to be available soon. There's also a kind of a sequel to TomCat which is
called Desert Apache. It uses the new DVE (Digital Video Engine) system from
Dark Unicorn Productions. I'm not sure if it's already used in Tomcat so
better be quiet ;). More about the DVE system in Desert Apache.

1.8 Desert Apache

```
==============================================================================
Name................ Desert Apache
Archive on Aminet... DApacheX(1,2,3).lha (game/demo)
Author.............. John Graham/Dark Unicorn Prods. (virtual@scsn.net)
Requirements........ Any Amiga w/ 1MB Chip, 2MB Total, 7MB of HD/CD-Rom
                     Rec: 020 or Accl. Amiga w/ 000 & Fast Ram for Full
                     Screen.
Type................ SW
Score............... ****
==============================================================================
```

1.9 murder

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==============================================================================
Name................ Murder
Archive on Aminet... Murder_XXofXX(1-12).lha (game/misc)
Author.............. Kenneth Isley (krisley@eos.ncsu.edu)
Requirements........ Any Amiga w/ 1MB Chip/Fast or 2MB Chip & 45MB of HD
Type................ SW
Score............... ****
==============================================================================
```

Now this is some real FMV here ;). In Murder you take the role of a private
detective whose case is to solve a murder (Have I seen this before?).
The game play happens so that you question the people, make phone calls and
go from place to place. There's a time limit left to make the game more
difficult. I only have the unregistered version, so I couldn't play it very

far.

The game itself takes 45mb and consists of lots of animation clips and
speech and sound. It would be very nice to have it on a CD, but so far it's
not possible unless you do it your self (Zip Disks are available!). There's
a CD version coming out on March on some German Amiga magazine.
Murder rolls on HAM mode (4096 colors). Despite the fact that the docs say
Murder plays on 1/4 screen, the version I have is in NTSC full screen which
looks pretty strange (any reason for that??). The frame rate is 10 fps which
makes it run smoothly depending of harddrives speed. The lowest transfer
rate for Murder is around 140k/sec but that shouldn't be any problem nowdays.

Due to the interest of the Amiga community Murder will be ported to Macintosh
and if no interest is found after the CD release of Murder, the whole
project will be dropped from Amiga ;((.. So, all you people with CD-Roms and
big hard disks; order it now! :)

1.10 rocko

```
==============================================================================
Name................. Rocko
Archive on Aminet... rocko.lha (game/misc)
Author.............. Daniel Clinton (DM9200@appstate.edu)
Requirements........ Any Amiga with 1MB Chip
Type................ PD
Score............... **
==============================================================================
```

Rocko isn't actually a "real FMV game". First of all, it's made with AMOS,
which as a matter of fact doesn't mean a thing ;). The source code is
included in the archive so that anyone can use or edit it.

The game is made is made only by viewing digitized screens quickly after
each other and that fakes the animation from being full motion. It's only
quickly displayed ham6 frames. It doesn't actually even look like FMV but
I think I will still include it here as it's near it :). The game rolls
pretty smoothly although the small amout of frams makes it look a bit
sticky.

Rocko itself is a boxing game where you tried to beat the opponent by
hitting him untill he loses his energy (OOH!). Fighting is made via key-
board and there are some guide arrows in the screen. Despite that, I think
the game's pretty hard and messy (might be my skills). It still goes for a
"poor-mans-fmv-game" ;)

About the future of Rocko. Daniel said he hadn't planned anything yet for
sure but there might be some small improvements around like better pictures
and digitizations, more frames and even real life boxers.

1.11 Karate Babe

```
========================================================================
Name................ Karate Babe
Archive on Aminet... sknight.lha (game/demo)
Author.............. Travis Riggs (travis@axsamer.org)
Requirements........ An anim player ;)
Type................ The anim is PD and the full game will be commercial
Score............... - (looks promising)
========================================================================
```

The demo of Karate Babe is only a short animation which can be viewed by
any up-to-date animation viewer. It won't actually give any kind of picture
of the full game.

This is what the info file says about it:

     The animation sknight.anim was produced by Travis Riggs, the author of
Composite Studio Pro, a Video Toaster utility. It requires a 68000 and 1
meg of RAM to play, and although a faster CPU and more RAM are reccomended,
they are by no means neccesary.

     This demo is but a shade of what the complete game, Karate Babes, will
be. The full game will have full-screen Full Motion Video, will be in
color, with both AGA and non-AGA versions, will have a kicking soundtrack,
and will have some of the best gameplay that you've ever seen in a fighting
game. Look for the game Karate Babes coming your way soon!

 For me, it seemed like the project would have bemmen dead for a long time now
untill I emailed Travis and asked if anything is going to happen to this
demo. For my surprise he told me that the project is still running well.
The game will be out only on a CD-Rom and is planned also for multiple
platforms, such as Sony Playstation. The planned release date is sometimes
next summer. He also told that the characters of the game will be the world
& national champions in martial arts!! ;) The animations should be nothing
compared to the final game. So, let's be on a look out for this one.

1.12 history

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Amiga Full Motion Video FAQ History and Updates:
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0.1 (  /02/1996) - First release!
                 Reviewed: TomCat, Desert Apache, Murder,
                 Rocko and Karate Babe (animation).
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1.13 Contacting the Author

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How to Contact the Author:
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Find this FAQ even a little bit nice or useful? Then don't hesitate
contacting me, as I really need support because this FAQ is only in such a
early state.

Send me feedback, comments, new demos, suggestions.. anything is welcome!
I just want to see if people have noticed this FAQ and are reading it.
Also, if you're planning of doing a new FMV game, I'd really like to know
about it and include information about into this FAQ.

Here are the best ways of contacing me:

Snailmail: (Not prefered)!

Markus Castren
Bronrinne 3 as 19
02400 Kirkkonummi
Finland

EMail: slice@xgw.fi (Prefered!)

On IRC: Ganja_NVX (Usually on #NvX)

More information can also be found by "fingering" my account and
from my WWW Home page as soon as it's finished!

BTW, this FAQ might look quite much like the Amiga Texture Mapping FAQ
(Hi Steffen! Keep up the great work! :)), but does that really matter?
Better not.. =)

So, in some case mentioned above or for any other reason, contact me!
It's probably the only way of keeping this FAQ alive. If I won't get any
feedback I think I won't continue writing this FAQ!

Ofcoz, also remeber to BUY or REGISTER those games available to keep the
programmers happy!! ;)

Laters!

P.S. Sorry for all those spelling errors there. ;)
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