

AUTODESK ANIMATOR STUDIO RELEASE NOTES

Release 1.1

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This README text file lists known problems, cautions, and documentation errors for Animator Studio release 1.1.

1.0 INSTALLATION

- o Release 1.1 of Animator Studio runs on both Windows 3.1 and Windows 95 systems. It is not supported on Windows NT systems.
- o IMPORTANT: If you are upgrading from a previous release, we recommend that you delete the previous \animator directory and install this 1.1 release from scratch. If you have saved personal files in the \animator tree, be sure to move them before you delete the directory. It is possible to install release 1.1 without deleting \animator. The install program will overwrite the earlier version.
- o If you install to your "root" directory -- that is, C:\ or an equivalent -- you will see spurious error messages during installation. Disregard them.
- o If you encounter problems installing or running Animator Studio while your display driver is set to truecolor (16M colors), try changing the driver to display high color (32K or 64K colors). Also, check with the vendor of the card or video driver to see if a more recent driver is available.
- o If you install Asymetrix Digital Video Producer, this product's setup overwrites DSEQFIL.DLL with an earlier version of the DLL. The earlier version causes problems in Animator if you try to load BMP, DIB, or RLE files.

WORKAROUND: Make a backup copy of the DSEQFIL.DLL file prior to installing Asymetrix Digital Video Producer, and after installation is complete, replace the older version with the version Animator Studio installed or use the DOS command EXPAND to decompress the file DSEQFIL.DL_ from the CD version or floppy disks.

2.0 ALL MODULES

+ MEMORY REQUIREMENTS AND TEMP FILE SPACE

After any abnormal termination of an Animator Studio program, your Windows \temp directory (c:\windows\temp, or your equivalent pathname) might contain temporary files. These can take up a lot of disk space. Animator Studio release 1.1 deletes these temp files in Windows 3.1 when you restart it, but you must delete them by hand if you are running it on Windows 95 or aren't going to run Animator Studio again immediately. These files start with ie*. or ~avi*.

CAUTION: Don't delete files in the temp directory while Windows is running.

If you aren't certain of the \temp directory's location, type SET at a DOS prompt. The pathname appears on a line that begins "TEMP=".

+ ESTIMATING DISK SPACE NEEDED TO OPEN MOVIES:

We recommend that you estimate disk space requirements before you open a movie. The requirements are summarized here:

If a movie (or still-image sequence) is not already saved as an AVI movie in Autodesk RLE format, it is converted to that format when you open it, and saved in the \temp directory. Then as you edit the movie, every modified frame (which could include all frames) is saved in a changes-stream file as well.

The worst case of disk space required is for frames that don't compress well. In such a case, each frame occupies the following number of bytes (width and height are in pixels):

width x height x 3 x frames	(for the RGB color)
+ width x height x frames	(for the alpha channel, if present)
+ width x height x frames	(for the selection layer, if present)
+ width x height x frames	(for the mask, if present)

For example, a movie with a resolution of 320 x 240 that contains 10 frames requires 2,304,000 bytes to load, assuming it doesn't have any editing layers (RGB data only). The changes-stream file contains a frame for each frame that is modified. For example, if you paint on every frame in the sample movie, the requirement becomes:

$$2,304,000 \times 2 = 4,608,000 \text{ bytes.}$$

The changes-stream file also contains a mask, selection, or alpha channel for each frame in which one of these layers is added or changed. For example, if in addition to painting on each frame in the movie, you created a mask for every frame, the disk space requirement becomes $4,608,000 + 768,000 = 5,376,000$ bytes.

When you use Save to save a file, Animator and SoundLab create a temporary file so you can cancel the save without destroying the original movie. For our example, this would require an additional 2,304,000 bytes of disk space, not counting any modifications to the original movie.

The Animator Undo command also allocates a disk file for saving the Undo/Redo history list. By choosing Settings / Preferences, you can see the size of this file with the Disk Usage control.

+ STILL IMAGE FILE SEQUENCES

When you have sequentially numbered still image files in the same directory -- for example, hand01.tga, hand02.tga, hand03.tga, and so on -- Animator and SoundLab can create a movie out of these stills. Opening one of the stills in the sequence starts movie creation beginning at that still. However, if the sequence is long or the images are large, Animator can fail by running out of disk space. To avoid failure after a lengthy wait, estimate your disk space requirements before you begin to create the movie. See the previous item for how to estimate disk space requirements. Remember that the new movie will occupy disk space *in addition* to the original still image files, approximately doubling the disk space required.

New warning dialogs have been added to help you avoid problems when you save a movie created from a still image sequence.

Animator and SoundLab always build the movie from the first specified frame in the sequence to the highest numbered file (with the same root name) in the directory. If you want to build a movie from a subset of a longer sequence, move only the frames you want to use into a separate directory before you use File / Open.

- o The English-language version of Animator Studio cannot open files that have characters with accents (or other diacritics) in their filenames.

WORKAROUND: Use DOS or the Windows File Manager to give the file a name that has only "plain" characters with no diacritics, and then open the file.

3.0 ANIMATOR

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+ FILE I/O AND COMPRESSION:

- o The Save File As dialog does not behave consistently with most other Windows applications.

The "native" editing format for all movies is the Audio-Video Interleave (AVI) format. If you use Save As to save to a different file format, the frame window title in Animator does *not* change -- you continue to edit the original AVI file.

WORKAROUND: After using Save As to save to the different file format, close the original frame window, and then open the new, non-AVI file.

- o Animator cannot interleave video and audio when you save a movie that has an active selection layer. If you need to save a movie with audio and video interleaved (for example, if you want to distribute the movie on a CD), do the following:
 1. Choose Time / Put All of Movie in Segment.
 2. Click the Time mode button to turn on Time mode.
 3. Choose Edit / Deselect segment.
 4. Save the movie.
- o When you use Save As to create a TIFF file, Animator now displays a dialog that lets you choose which of this file format's compression options you want to use. (The lower four options of this dialog are always grayed out.)
- o If you attempt to use the File Browser or File / Open to open a corrupt file this may cause Animator to fail.
- o If the control panels or the File Browser won't display, try exiting Animator, renaming animator.ini (e.g., 'animator.old'), and then restarting Animator.
- o If a file takes too long to read, the File Browser times out and displays a red "X" in the thumbnail for that file. For some files, it might display the "X" when you first look at a directory, but then display garbage in the thumbnail when you leave the directory and then return to it. This is only a display problem, the file is untouched.

- o When Animator loads Targa (.TGA) and TIFF (.TIF) files that have an alpha channel, Animator checks whether the value is premultiplied ("associated") or matte ("unassociated"). If the flag indicates unknown, Animator assumes premultiplied. If the original alpha channel was actually matte, this can cause View / Alpha to display the alpha channel incorrectly.
- o If you select the Microsoft RLE codec (Settings / Compression), make sure Data Rate is not checked (OFF). If this option is ON when you save (it is ON by default), the codec discards some delta frames, which results in a low-quality movie.
- o If you save a movie with the Microsoft Video 1 codec, Scriptor won't be able to display a thumbnail for it.
- o Always save QuickTime movies with compatible codecs such as CinePak or Intel Indeo 3.2.
- o Saving an AVI movie with 16-bit stereo sound as a QuickTime for Windows (.MOV) movie can distort the soundtrack.
- o Targa (.TGA) files with 8-bit color-indexed or grayscale images that weren't created in compliance with the Targa specification might not load correctly.
- o Saving a file as a FLIC (.FLC) file changes black values of (0,0,0) to (2,2,2).
- o CEL files from the original Animator are not supported.
- o If you save a mask created in a new movie, then Animator doesn't prompt you to save changes to the movie, even if you choose File / Close or double-click the control box while there are unsaved changes. Make sure to save your work if you have also saved a mask file.

+ COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER PRODUCTS:

- o Copying selections to the Clipboard for pasting to other applications:

When you have made a selection with one of the selection tools, use Action / Float, then choose Edit / Copy Object. This copies the selection (object) in Metafile (Picture) format. (Other formats also appear on the Clipboard -- Metafile is specifically for sharing data among Windows applications.) If the application you're pasting to doesn't support Metafile format, paste to the Windows Paintbrush program instead, then copy the selection back to the Clipboard -- it will now be in Windows bitmap format and you can paste it to your application.

When you make a selection with the Edit menu while NONE of the selection tools is active, the Copy command copies an entire frame or frame segment to the Clipboard. In this case, the selection is copied as AVI data, including the selection, mask, and alpha layers, if those have been defined.

- o Applying the Aldus stained glass filter to a tall, skinny rectangle can cause Animator to fail (Photoshop also fails using this filter.) If the preview window shows a blank right column, beware.
- o You can't use VidEdit to edit files saved with the Microsoft RLE codec.
- o Clipboard data copied from Adobe Premiere cannot be pasted into a movie.

WORKAROUND: In Premiere, save the movie as an AVI file, then open the movie in Animator and use the selection tools to duplicate the selection you made in Premiere.

- o Sequential Targa (TGA) files created with Razor Pro 1.0a don't always open correctly. Also, some AVIs, including those saved with the Autodesk RLE codec, might be displayed with blank thumbnails in the film strip.
- o Fractal Painter 2.0 can't read TIFF files saved by Animator if they have an alpha channel.

WORKAROUND: Save the still as a Targa (.TGA) file, which Painter can open correctly.

- o Because Photoshop uses alpha values for selection, files saved by Photoshop with an all-zero alpha channel have strangely modulated transparency when you view the alpha channel in Animator.

WORKAROUND:

1. Choose Edit / Select from Alpha Channel. This preserves the selection you created in Photoshop.
2. Make Alpha ink the current ink.
3. In the Ink: Alpha properties dialog, ensure Set Alpha is selected & Opacity=255.
4. Make Rectangle the current tool.
5. Draw a rectangle that encloses the entire frame.

The frame is now fully opaque and the selection layer contains the original selection, which you can view by making one of the selection tools active.

- o FLICs created by non-Autodesk applications might show incorrect colors, due to a bug in Video for Windows 1.1e.
- o When you have a digitizing tablet, starting Animator can alter the preferences you have set for it.
- o Animator disregards pressure-sensitive data from some types of CalComp tablets.

+ PAINT TOOLS:

- o With the Ellipse tool, clicking the mouse while you hold down CTRL + ALT causes Animator to fail.
- o The Sprite tool disregards pressure sensitivity even when these options are enabled and turned on.
- o The Sprite tool does not work with Filter ink in Frame mode -- this creates crosshatching artifacts. Sprite with Filter ink in Time mode works correctly. (Sprite is used with the Color Ink by default.)
- o With a one-pixel brush, Airbrush strokes are not visible.

- o When Airbrush is the current tool, the keyboard shortcut toggle for setting the brush size to/from one-pixel ('b') is unavailable.
- o The Sensitivity slider for the Airbrush tool is reversed from the way it's labeled.
- o If you float an object created with the Edge Fill tool, Rotate and Stretch do not operate correctly, and changing the brush has no effect.

+ INKS:

- o By default, Clone ink uses the bird animation SPRITE.AVI. If you use Clone ink and haven't yet set a source, the bird image appears. To change the source of Clone ink, click the Set Source button in the Ink: Clone properties dialog.
- o Alpha ink, Clone ink, and Darken ink can create incorrect "box" shapes when you use them with a soft-edged Paintbrush or an Airbrush and draw too rapidly.

WORKAROUND: Draw your strokes more slowly. Decreasing the ink strength value can also help reduce this problem or use the geometric tools to apply the ink.

+ FILTER INKS:

- o Animator cannot load Photoshop filters as Filter inks -- it can load only Photoshop-compatible filters that weren't created exclusively for the Photoshop program. (The filters supplied with Photoshop are not true plug-ins; Photoshop-compatible filters can run under a variety of programs, such as Animator.)
- o To change the intensity of a Filter ink (intensity is a different effect from opacity), follow these steps:
 1. Select a filter (e.g., Pixel Storm, Vortex Tiling).
This doesn't apply to the Filter ink "extensions" such as the Gradient Designer -- these have a dialog to adjust their effects. (See below.)
 2. While holding down a numeric button from the keypad, use a paint tool or choose Edit / Apply Ink. (You have to hold down a key on the keypad -- the numeric keys above the alphabetic keys won't work.)

Holding down 1 gives the least intensity and holding down 0 gives the greatest intensity; other numeric values might be scaled in between, or might create alternative effects, depending on the ink.

- o To animate a Filter ink intensity, you can try these steps:
 1. Select the filter.
 2. Change to Time mode.
 3. Create a floating object by using a paint tool or choosing Edit / Apply ink.
 4. On the numeric keypad, hold down the number of the intensity level you want (see the previous item) while you press ENTER to render the object. Continue holding down the number until the Rendering dialog shows at least some progress.
 5. While the Rendering dialog is visible, you can change the intensity by pressing

another number on the keypad. (The keyboard will beep.) You must hold down the new number until the Rendering dialog displays further progress. After further progress is shown, you can choose a new number or release the numeric key to leave that value as the last one used while rendering.

Animating Filter ink gives better results with some filters than others, because intensity values don't always represent a gradation from one value to another. For example, the Page Curl intensity controls which edge will curl, not the amount of the curl, which is constant.

- o To animate the effect of Filter ink "extensions" -- in other words, Filter inks whose effects are controlled by a dialog, such as the Gradient Designer, follow these steps:

1. Change to Time mode.
2. Use a painting tool or choose Edit / Apply Ink.
3. Press ENTER to render the effect.
4. The ink's control dialog appears.
5. Choose a setting for the ink, and then hold down the SHIFT key when you click OK.

Holding down SHIFT forces the dialog to reappear before the next frame is rendered. Be sure to continue holding down SHIFT while the Rendering and Filtering Image progress meters are displayed.

6. Repeat step 5 for each frame in which you want the settings to change.

- o Using some Filter Inks with Geometric tools in Time Mode outside the frame will occasionally cause Animator to fail. The Filter Inks are Glass Lens Soft and Glass Lens Bright. If you choose to use these filters, ensure that they are only used with large (greater than 10-15 pixels high) shapes with no less than half their area on the frame. Also, save your work before drawing your object.

+ FLOATING OBJECTS AND TIME ACTIONS:

- o A floating object cannot be larger than 10,000 x 10,000 pixels.
- o When you drag a selection, the dX and dY display in the status bar might be incorrect on slower systems.

WORKAROUND: Pause slightly between the time you click the selection (mouse down) and the time you start to drag it.

- o Rotating an object uses antialiasing even when antialiasing is turned off (=0 in the Settings / Preferences dialog).

+ USER INTERFACE:

- o Thumbnails in the film strip don't show good detail when you paint outlines, especially when you use a one-pixel brush.

WORKAROUND: Use Settings / Film Strip Preferences to increase the thumbnail height

to 50 or 60 pixels.

- o When you choose Utilities / Record Macro, Animator doesn't warn you that a previously created macro exists, when that is the case. Make sure to save a macro you want to keep, before you create a new one.
- o Macros with commands that invoke dialogs requiring user input and input that differs from that with which the macro was originally recorded, are not supported and in some cases can cause Animator to fail.

4.0 SOUNDLAB

- o Some programs (such as Creative Labs' SoundOLE and WaveStudio) save sound with compression formats that are variations on standard ADPCM compression. These variants have no Windows codecs, and will either not play or not be editable in Animator or SoundLab. Animator Studio supports standard ADPCM compression.
- o If you save an AVI movie as a .WAV file, SoundLab doesn't warn you that the video stream will be lost.
- o Saving a file to a still image format can cause SoundLab to fail on Windows 3.1. WORKAROUND: Use Save As to write to the AVI format.
- o Not all sound cards can reliably record or play back at sample rates lower than 8000Hz or above 44100Hz. With such cards, you might hear sounds playing back more slowly than the indicated time and at the wrong pitch (sometimes a sound might play back too quickly, also at the wrong pitch). Some sound cards are known to hang at sample rates less than 100 Hz.
- o The File / Open command dialog shows some inappropriate filename extensions in the File Name field. For example, when you choose Microsoft AVI Files, the File Name field shows "*.avi;*.msk".
- o Always save QuickTime movies with a compatible codec such as CinePak or Intel Indeo 3.2.
- o Saving an AVI movie with 16-bit stereo sound as a QuickTime for Windows (.MOV) movie can distort the soundtrack.

5.0 SCRIPTOR

- o Scriptor can now load and play all file formats supported by Animator although they are not listed in the List of File Types drop down menu. WORKAROUND: Enter *.* in Filename field and press <Enter>.
- o If you are running a slide show or your script contains an "infinite" loop, *do not* set the Ignore Key and Mouse Clicks option (in Script / Settings). This prevents you from stopping the script, causing Scriptor to stop responding to the system.
- o A right-click does not break out of a loop. Use CTRL + L to get out of a loop.
- o Scriptor doesn't display thumbnails correctly for movies saved with the Microsoft Video 1 codec.

- o Pressing CTRL + C during playback gives an error message (instead of being ignored).
- o The smart arrows (in the File/Open dialog as well as the Movie & Sound panels) do not work under Windows 95.
- o The List of File Types wildcards do not work under Windows 95 after elements have been added to the script. WORKAROUND: Select the file types individually from the drop down list (i.e. *.FLC).

6.0 PLAYER

- o Player can now load and play all file formats supported by Animator. (Note that this is only the Player installed with the other Animator Studio modules. Due to limited disk space, the standalone Player installed from a single diskette cannot support these still image formats: GIF, JPEG, PCX, Targa, or TIFF.)
- o Player can load and play QuickTime for Windows (.MOV) files if they are version 1.1. It cannot load or play version 2.0 QuickTime for Windows movies unless QuickTime for Windows version 2.x is installed on your system.
- o To stop Unattended mode playback, type the password while the movie is playing.
- o You must reset the full screen option (Options / Fullscreen) whenever you load a new file.
- o Player can't play more than one WAVE file, or overlapping MIDI files, unless your system has more than one of the appropriate sound cards installed.
- o When Player encounters an error, it closes the current file.

7.0 ANIMATOR HELP

- o "File Browser" topic: Configure options on the playback window pop up are different in Windows 95. In particular, the Windows 95 version of this dialog doesn't display the codec, resolution, or playback rate. You can use Explorer in Windows 95 to highlight the file, then click File / Properties to view this information.

8.0 MANUAL -- BASICS OF DIGITAL MOVIE MAKING

- o All references to Windows features and applications are for Windows 3.1. The manual does not mention Windows 95 equivalents.

9.0 REFERENCE -- PRINTED VERSION OF ON-LINE HELP

- o The reference does not cover some new functionality available in release 1.1. In particular, it does not describe relative macros command or DLL checking. Both of these features are covered in the on-line help for the Animator command Settings / Preferences.
- o On pages 36-38, the section on the Curve tool actually describes Closed Curve. To see the correct Curve tool documentation, use the on-line Animator Help.

10.0 TIPS, TRICKS, AND TROUBLESHOOTING DOCUMENT

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- o The paragraph about saving Targa file sequences should be reworded as follows:

To save a .TGA sequence to the DPS PAR, load the 24-bit movie into SoundLab. (Create a new audio stream, if necessary.) Save the file with a filename such as file0001.tga. When the Save AVI Stream dialog appears, delete all streams except the video and choose Full Frames compression (i.e., no compression).