

AdRevolver



 Editor Picks

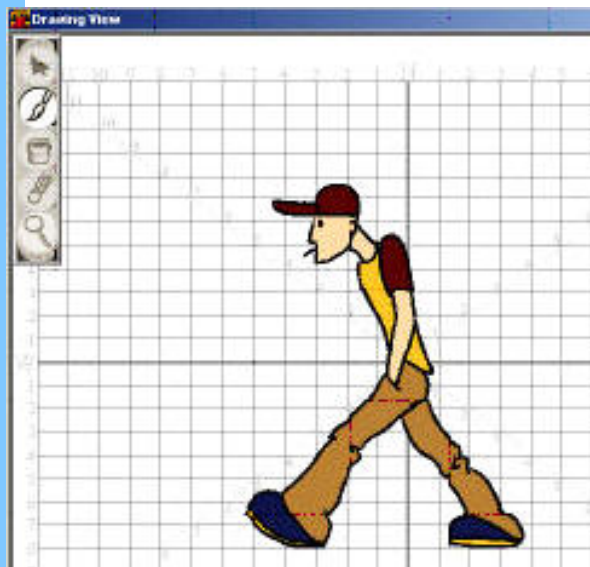

## Toon Boom Studio Express



**Type of Program:** 2D Animation Editor  
**Supported Platforms:** Win9x/NT/W2K - MAC  
**Company Name:** Toon Boom Technologies  
**Version:** 2.0.1  
**Price:** \$ 144.00  
**Installed Size:** 40MB


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Toon Boom Studio Express is a state-of-the art tool when working with 2D animation and should not be considered your typical Shareware application. From the makers of one of the finest in 2D animation software (USAnimation) comes this newest member to their family. Toon Boom Studio Express is the little brother to Toon Boom Studio and functions pretty much the same with a few absent features (listed below). But even with the few minimal features not available, Toon Boom Studio Express allows you to really get your feet wet in 2D animation! If you've ever wanted to try your hand at 2D animation at a reasonable price, Toon Boom Studio Express is your answer



Toon Boom Studio Express follows the same logic of your traditional animation production but has the power that the computer gives it. It supports your creativeness for any type of conventional animation or Web animation. Although you can use a mouse to draw I suggest you acquire and use a graphics tablet.

When you first launch the program you have a number of available options. You have the drawing view area (as seen to the left) in which you begin your drawings. As you continue to develop your animation you will find the usefulness of having the Exposure Sheet a great benefit.

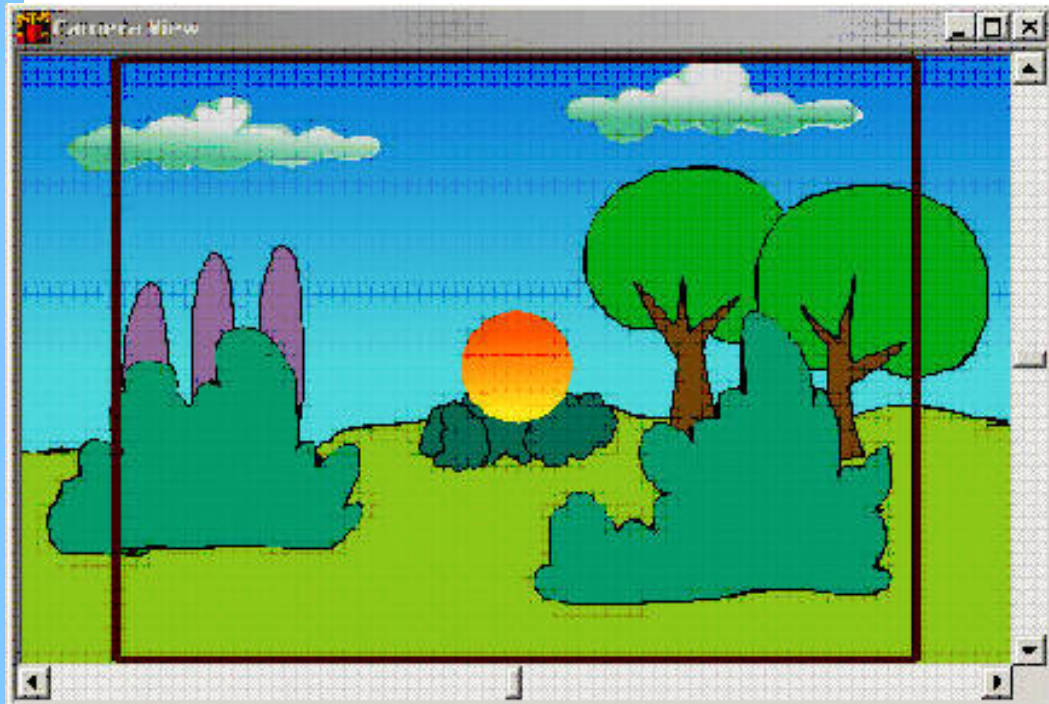


Whether you are the Traditional Animator, or a Digital Animator, Toon Boom Studio Express combines everything together for you into one easy-to-use package. It is a program that no matter which type of animator you are you will feel comfortable using. Once you've used this program you probably won't be going back to your old ways of creating animations!

Many will feel right at home using the Exposure Sheets, Light Table, the Storyboarding Tools, the Painting Tools, and more. As you work on your project you will be impressed with the ease of moving around, jumping forward, inserting new ideas here and there until you've created the perfect artwork and animation. Toon Boom Studio Express makes it a snap to tweak adjustments here and there at any time without any disruption in the flow of your work. Once you have all of your sketches and artwork laid out in the Drawing Mode you can setup your Pens and Color Palettes by name to suit your scene (also discussed below).

## THE CAMERA VIEW IN SCENEPLANNING MODE

The Sceneplanning Mode is not only a great time saver but where you may spend a lot of your time in as you define and refine your creativity.

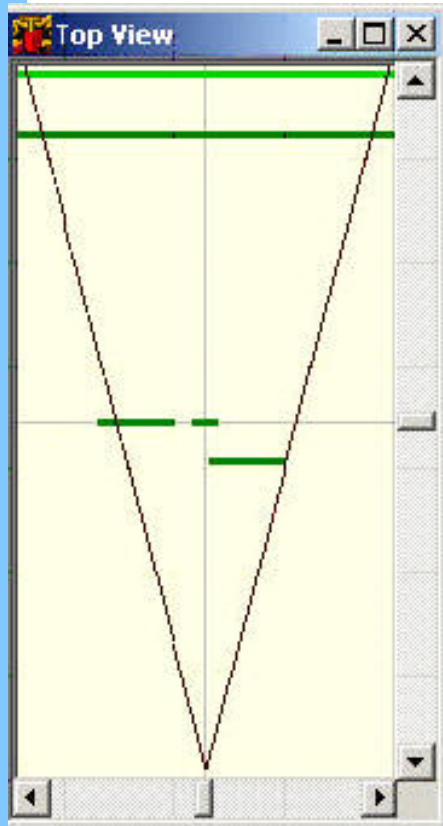


When you are ready to see more detail and to adjust the animation switch to the Sceneplanning Mode to go "behind" the camera to set your choreography! Like a true Director or Cameraman you view your creation through the eye of the camera lens.



While

still in the Sceneplanning Mode you can adjust and watch your presentation as you tweak the camera views and angles with easy-to-use graphical views



from most any direction you wish. Slide the bar and your camera moves with it. Adjust the angle and watch your scene change right before your very eyes!

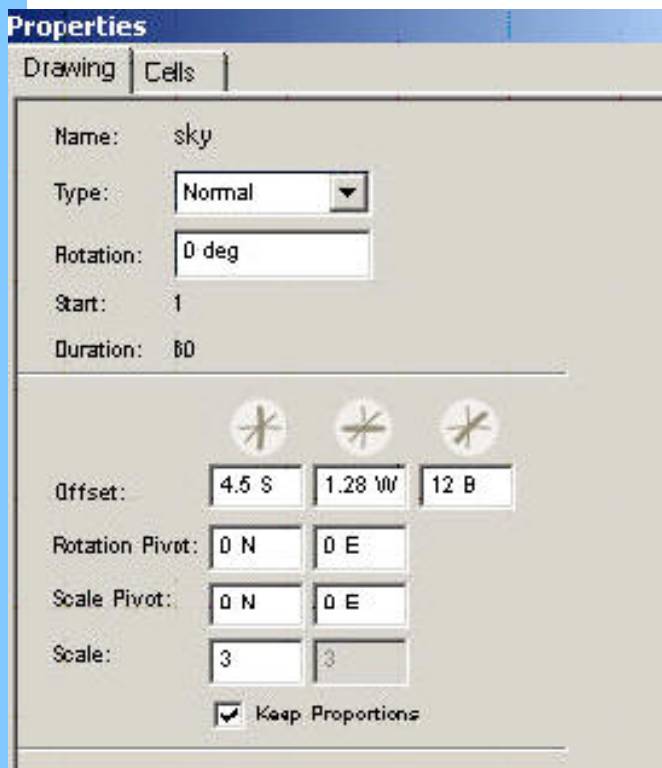
All from a few clicks of the mouse you have the ease of arranging and rearranging your views. Look at it from different angles, adjust the field of view, and rotate the camera and/or angles until it's just the way you want it.

You have the power to create a 2D animation that really comes alive! Have you had the urge to make a cartoon? Go ahead and try your hand at it. With the Express version you can delve right into and see how well it fits into your own personal style of creativity.

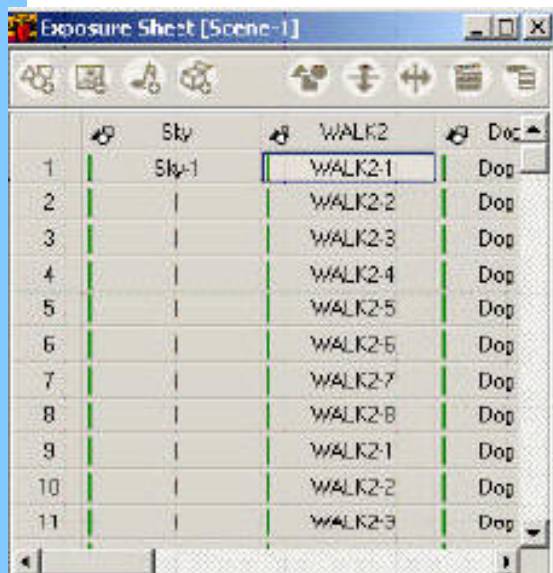
Use the Properties dialog to fine-tune your drawing and each cell of every individual scene. As you can see, this is where you can adjust your scene and cells to the "nth" degree.

By switching to the Cells Tab you can click through the entire scene with a thumbnail shot of each cell. This also allows you to see at a glance any other changes that may need to be made rather quickly. These are just a few of the useful features but take a look at some of the others:

1. Change the color of elements over time with color tweening



## THE EXPOSURE SHEET

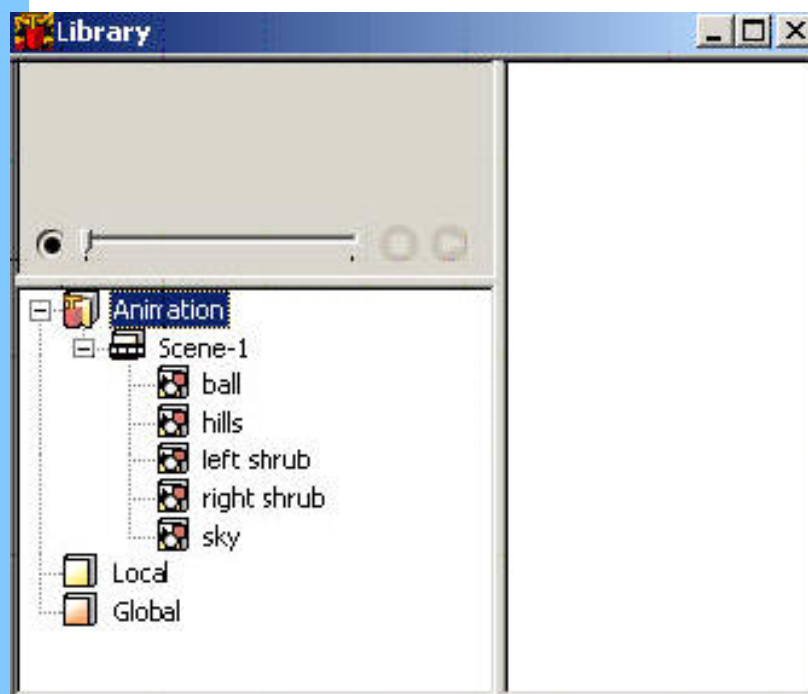


## LIBRARIES AND SCENE PROPERTIES

2. Create a mask that changes over time with the use of pegs
3. Import and vectorize bitmap file formats
4. Flip and rotate your drawings
5. Change your rotation pivot point
6. Close gaps as you paint and set your tolerance level
7. Use bitmap images as paint fills for your drawing objects
8. Timeline and Exposure Sheets
9. Sceneplanning
10. And more!

We know that we can create just about any 2D animation using Toon Boom Studio Express but how easy is it to add elements into a scene? The Exposure Sheet is traditionally a sheet of paper to track the elements of an animation. Elements such as characters, the length and time of each drawing, etc. By using the Exposure Sheet in Toon Boom Studio Express you add elements much the same way except here we use an "electronic" version of an exposure sheet.

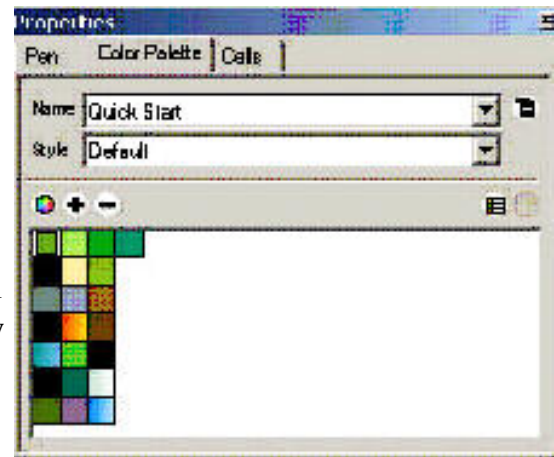
You can see how neat and tidy the sheet is. You have each frame clearly in sight along with all elements and each element can be added at the click of a button! Add a Drawing, Image, Sound or Media Element and you're on the way to creating some great animations in a very short time.



You can see how Toon Boom Studio Express is a time saver. To further emphasize that idea and utilizing the Libraries feature you can create Templates of your work to be used at some other time. You create "Local" libraries whereby all the artwork and elements will be saved along with your project or you can create "Global" libraries that can be brought into any scene at any time. This allows you to open your project and start developing right away from any point, complete with all your art that you want to use over again. This is great if you develop a cartoon strip. This allows you to draw your characters only once and then use them over and over again without losing any of their original character. Open a scene from the libraries and watch a mini (Thumbnail) view of your project. Name each element to fit your needs and you see how nice this often-overlooked feature really becomes.

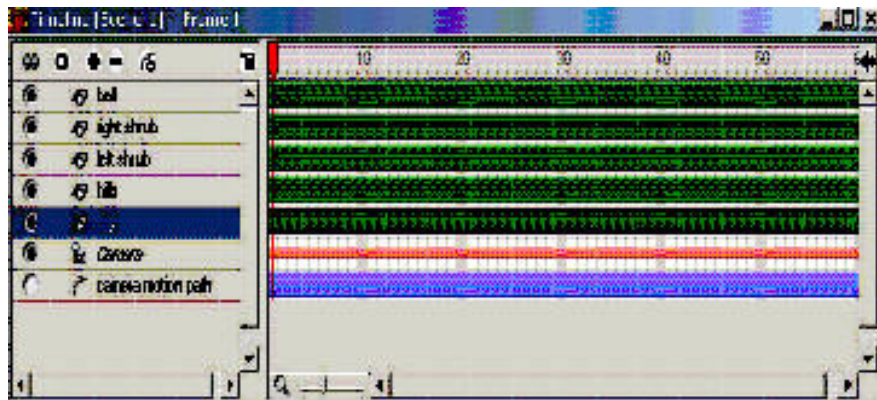
The same can be said for creating your own style of Pens and Palettes by using the features in its Properties dialogs.

Here you create your pens and color palettes that fit your own personal style of drawing and needs. Name them accordingly in a way that makes sense to your style. So much for the pencil sharpener and easel! Make them once and use them over and over again with their original style, format and colors.



**THE TIME IS NOW**

When you're ready to start animating pop open the Timeline and design away! Here you see each element in your scene that you can adjust in sequence to your overall project details and needs. Watch in real-time as you tweak the scene exactly the way you want it. If there's an element that seems to be in your way, hide it for the time being at the click of a button so you can concentrate on the object you are working with. Unhide it when you are finished and watch your scene unfold in perfect arrangement!



Okay. Now you're ready to finalize and produce your 2D animation. Preview it first to make sure you have everything the way you want it from within and when you are sure your scene is just the way you like it, export it to a Flash file. This format allows you to deliver your final movie in a small enough file that most users can watch on a Web page or small enough to put on a medium of your choice.

If you are a talented artist (or one on a limited budget) Toon Boom Studio Express may be what you need to keep your creative juices flowing. It allows you to try it out by using many of the rich features (which are many) and when you find it meets your needs you can step up to Toon Boom Studio. Limitations in Toon Boom Studio Express allow only two pegs, one camera, 1000 frames, one scene, and no export to the Quick Time format and no advanced lip sync. Other than that you still have enough power to see, play and have fun developing!

**Performance** ★★★★★  
**User Friendly** ★★★★★  
**Cost** ★★★★★  
**Ease of Installation** ★★★★★  
**Support** ★★★★★  
**Reviewed by Robert Hall**

Purchases can be made [online from their Web site](#) with Educational discounts available.

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