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Flip Boom

Spring 2008 Software

Ages: 5 & Up

Producer: [Toon Boom Studios](#)

Home Use Price: \$39.99

School Use Price: \$39.99

Platform: Windows/MAC

Review:

As animation programs go, it doesn't get much simpler than this--which is why Flip Boom is the perfect little draw-and-animate software for kids who'd like to see their doodling come alive. Designed for beginners, it includes mostly the basic tools that all draw-and-paint programs have--the brush for creating images (brush size is changeable), paint bucket for coloring in spaces, a seven-color palette, an eraser, plus editing commands such as cut, copy, paste and undo. Add to that a few necessary animation tools--a frame sequencer and playback, speed selector and looping controls--and you got all that's needed to create the simplest animations.

Flip Boom adds a couple of advanced animation tools as well. The onion-skin feature lets young animators work easily by viewing one frame to the next as if through tracing paper, enabling them to see in faint color the previous frames with the current one. And the Behind mode lets them draw and paint almost in layers.

Only downsides are that the palette is a bit limited, and it would be nice to be able to import other images on the computer or Internet. But, nonetheless, in that hey-kids-let's-put-on-a-show spirit, Flip Boom is so intuitive and easy that kids will figure it out in minutes and have their first animated shorts up and running the first day.

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A former writer and consumer columnist at The Washington Post for 22 years, Don Oldenburg is a freelance writer, editorial consultant and coauthor of "The Washington DC-Baltimore Dog Lovers Companion" (Avalon Travel). The father of three sons, he lives with them and wife, Ann, a writer at USA Today, in McLean, VA.

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<http://www.toonboom.com>