

Gigas

ENGINE

Pirotics Gigas-Engine Editing Guide
(With the help of Enslaved)

Version 0.7.1, Draft 1
(That means its rubbish, but will get better)

INTRODUCTION

My memory isn't what it used to be, so when I write a feature I tend to document it straight away, so that if I come back to that function a month down the line, I can remember how it (was supposed to) work.

This guide is extremely rough, but seeing a Gigas changes so much with each release I don't want to spend too much time making a perfect guide, only for it to be out of date in a few weeks time.

Hopefully it'll answer your questions, and let you get started on your games.

- Pirotic

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Necessary Files

For this guide I'm going to assume you're making a new game from scratch, as that way you'll understand everything and not have to resort to simply editing my demo unless you want to take that route.

While Gigas will happily format your brand new game, it won't make the graphics for you, so before you can create a new game in Gigas you have to have all the graphic files in place, you can use the blank templates to begin with – and then add to them as time goes on.

In the editing kit folder, you'll find a subfolder called 'BLANK' and a subfolder called "SOURCE", all the files generated in the blank folder are created using the contents of the SOURCE folder which are as follows:

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|------------------|------------------|
| pal.act | 1 KB | ACT Project | 06/05/2004 23:18 |
| bmp2bin.exe | 34 KB | Application | 01/08/2002 03:49 |
| Attack_Animations.bmp | 767 KB | Bitmap Image | 09/05/2004 16:22 |
| Entity_Graphics.bmp | 1,308 KB | Bitmap Image | 09/05/2004 16:26 |
| Spot_Effects.bmp | 24 KB | Bitmap Image | 09/05/2004 16:27 |
| Cutscene_Image_0.bmp | 77 KB | Bitmap Image | 22/05/2004 17:01 |
| Game_Logo.bmp | 16 KB | Bitmap Image | 02/06/2004 18:59 |
| Screen_Effects.bmp | 1,352 KB | Bitmap Image | 09/05/2004 16:27 |
| Tile_Graphics_0.bmp | 482 KB | Bitmap Image | 09/05/2004 16:20 |
| Clean up the RAW files.bat | 1 KB | MS-DOS Batch ... | 30/04/2004 21:12 |
| Convert Attack_Animations.bat | 1 KB | MS-DOS Batch ... | 02/06/2004 19:02 |
| Convert Entity_Graphics.bat | 1 KB | MS-DOS Batch ... | 02/06/2004 19:02 |
| Convert Spot_Effects.bat | 1 KB | MS-DOS Batch ... | 02/06/2004 19:02 |
| Convert Cutscene_Image_0.bat | 1 KB | MS-DOS Batch ... | 02/06/2004 19:02 |
| Convert Game_Logo.bat | 1 KB | MS-DOS Batch ... | 02/06/2004 19:04 |
| Convert Screen_Effects.bat | 1 KB | MS-DOS Batch ... | 02/06/2004 19:04 |
| Convert Tile_Graphics_0.bat | 1 KB | MS-DOS Batch ... | 02/06/2004 19:04 |
| atk.raw | 765 KB | RAW File | 02/06/2004 19:05 |
| chars.raw | 1,291 KB | RAW File | 02/06/2004 19:05 |
| fx.raw | 23 KB | RAW File | 02/06/2004 19:05 |
| IMG0.RAW | 75 KB | RAW File | 02/06/2004 19:05 |
| logo.raw | 15 KB | RAW File | 02/06/2004 19:05 |
| scfx.raw | 1,350 KB | RAW File | 02/06/2004 19:05 |
| tile0.raw | 480 KB | RAW File | 02/06/2004 19:05 |

So let's begin by explaining what each of these files is, how to edit them, and then finally how to compile them into a format Gigas will be happy with.

Pal.act – this is a palette file, you can use this with graphic editing software such as Photoshop or Paint Shop Pro to make sure the colours used in your art-work are changed to the nearest compatible colour.

If your graphics are appearing, but are all psychedelic – try changing the palette to this file and it should fix your problem.

All the .bmp files (which we're about to talk about) are already set up to use that palette, so if your simply creating your own graphics by editing these files you don't have to worry about the palette.

Bmp2Bin.exe – This is a tool developed by Dark Fader which converts .bmp graphic files into .raw files, until I add BMP support into Gigas you'll have to use this to convert the graphics, I've created batch files to make the conversion process easier, if you want to see how to run bmp2bin for yourself just edit it and then you can replicate the code to make new .bat files to process other files (such as more tilesets, or cutscene images)

Attack_Animations.bmp - contains the attack graphics.

Entity_Graphics.bmp – contains the graphics for the entitys (the people)

Spot_Effects.bmp – contains spot effect graphics, the top line is always used for the level up graphic which appears above a character when he levels up, the other lines can be used how you wish and attached to attacks so forth, in my demo I made one a 'slice' animation which I then attached to an entitys attack setting.

Cutscene_Image_0.bmp – This is a blank cutscene image template, and is used in the game as a full screen picture which can be shown during a cutscene, Gigas supports an infinite number of these files, simply give each one a unique number at the end.

Game_Logo.bmp – Your games logo which will appear at the title screen.

Screen_Effects.bmp – This file contains the screen effect graphics, you can use this for creating full screen effects such as rain or snow.

Tile_Graphics_0.bmp – This contains the tileset for your map, Gigas supports an infinite number of these files, simply give each one a unique number at the end.

NOTE: If your unsure how to put your artwork into the a .bmp file, take a look at the source files for my DEMO, there are lots of examples in there.

***.BAT** – I'm sure you know about Batch files, each batch file will convert one of the bitmap files into a .raw file ready to be used with Gigas, while the .raw file wont have an identical name to the bmp file (GP32 has a file size limit) you can normally figure out what the .raw file is.

***.RAW** – These are created by the batch files, ^ read above

So now you know what each file does – go ahead and start making your own artwork by editing the bitmap files.

When you're done editing your bitmap files run all the .BAT files, which will convert them all into .RAW files ready to be used with Gigas. Now comes the important part, the Gigas file structure.

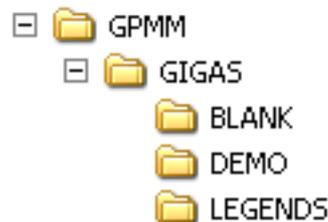


I'm assuming you've already installed Gigas, so your SMC file structure should look a little something like this.

The Gigas.fxe goes into the GPMM folder, and then you have the Gigas subfolder – now each game has to go in its own subfolder, so here you can see I have two games installed, one named 'BLANK' and the other named 'DEMO'. (If you've installed the demo you won't have the blank folder)

All you need to do to create your own game is to make a new subfolder in the GIGAS folder, and give it a short name which is relative to your game.

So for example, if I was making a game called "Legends" I'd make a new folder for it, as so:



I'm sure this is pretty patronising for most of you, but you'd be surprised by how many questions I get about basic stuff like the folder arrangement, so I'm covering everything I can so I can tell them to go read the guide.

Now what about the .RAW files with all our graphics we compiled a minute ago?

Just copy them into your game folder, and you're ready to go – you don't have any game data in the folder yet, just the graphics. But when you first try to load or edit that game Gigas will detect it doesn't have any game data and format a brand spanking new game for you.

So, now onto making your game...

Chapter 1

Your First Game

Introduction

For this example, I'll be assuming you're starting a new game from scratch – but if you feel your not ready to begin from scratch yet, try fiddling with my demo game and editing it, until you become familiar with the functions.

I'll also be using my demo graphics, so if you wish to follow this guide exactly just make a new game folder, dump all the .raw files from my demo into it and voilla – when you load it you'll get a new game identical to what I'm using for this example.

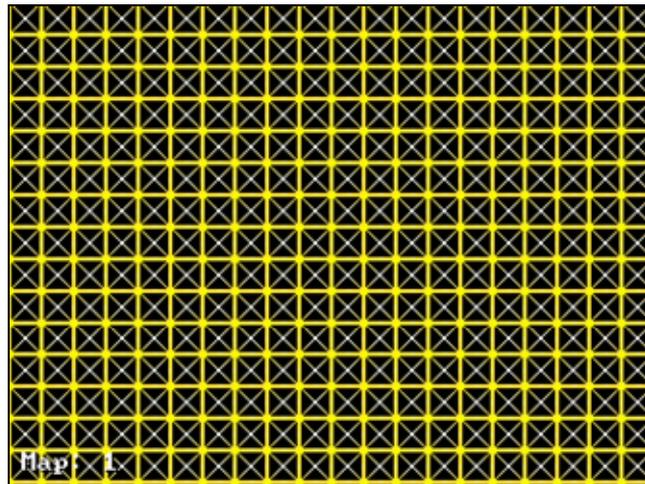
If its moaning about files missing, you've decided to skip the first section *slap* go back and read it, don't pass go, and don't collect \$200 ☺

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Part 1: Maps

The game world is the most important aspect of any RPG, and it's also the best place to start when creating your own game.

Gigas uses tiles; these tiles are squares (16x16 pixels in area) which are then placed onto a grid to create the gameworld, much like a mosaic or a jigsaw. The map size is defined in tiles, so for example – the default map size is “100x100 tiles” in size.



^ Here is a blank map; you can clearly see it's made out of 16x16 tiles

When you first create a new game, it'll take you to map 1 – which will be empty and look like the above picture (with the mouse cursor).

Press 'START' and the editing menu will pop up, but we don't want to use that yet so just press B to dismiss it – but if ever I refer to the editing menu you know how to get it now.

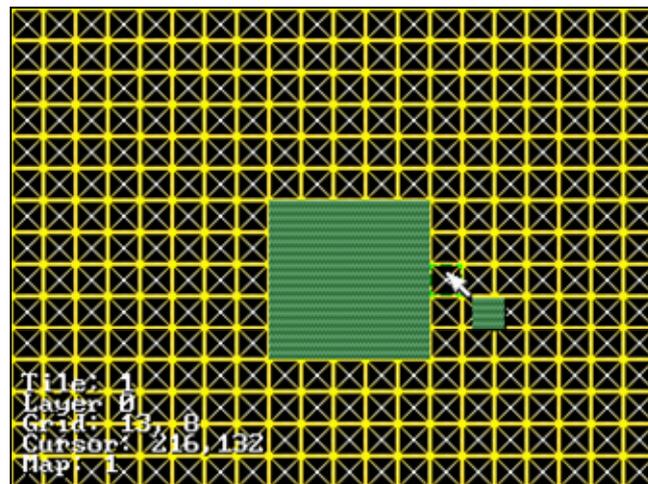
Attached to your cursor will be the first tile in your tileset, this happens to be a 'mowed' grass tile on my demo tileset, by wiggling your cursor about you'll notice that the tile follows it about, it's basically showing you what tile is currently selected.

You'll should also notice the 'tile' you're hovering over with the cursor is surrounded by a green outline (instead of the normal yellow outline), this is the “hovered” tile.

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Pressing the A button lays the selected tile into the hovered tile; B button will clear the hovered tile.

So hold the A button and draw a little square area as shown below.



Now hold B and delete what you've just drawn so we're blank again.

In order to change what tile you put down, you can either use the L and R buttons to cycle through them all, or if you press L&R at the same time the "tile picker" will appear, this will let you view your current tileset and select the tile manually with the A button. (You can also reach the "tile picker" by picking "TILE" from the editing menu).

Pressing SELECT will bring up the "submenu" – most of the editing features have a submenu, which just gives you a few advanced options or shortcuts to help that function.



^ The tile editing submenu

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Copy will make your ‘selected’ tile identical to the tile your hovering over, so if you want to replicate a tile just hover over it and pick ‘COPY’ and it’ll save you having to find it again in the tile picker.

Replace is pretty self explanatory, if you select tile ‘a’ and hover the mouse over tile ‘b’, selecting replace will change every occurrence of tile ‘b’ into tile ‘a’ instead.

Flip Map will rotate the map 90 degree’s, pretty useless when making a map but if your importing a map from “Mappy for windows” then you’ll need to flip it otherwise it’ll import sideways.

Brush will put down the currently selected Brush; this is covered in the advanced section.

So that’s the basics covered, but now is where it gets a little more complicated as before making your proper map, you’re going to have to understand the three different layers and what they are used for.

In the bottom left corner you get some ugly text, Tile shows you the number of the tile you have selected, Grid is what tile your hovering over with the cursor, Cursor is where the cursor is (in pixels) on the map, and Map is... well, your not that stupid.

Each map isn’t just one grid of tiles, but 3 which are on top of one another. The bottom layer is “Layer 0”, then “Layer 1” and the topmost layer is “Layer 2” – layer 1 and 2 support transparencies so you can see ‘thru’ them onto the layers below.

The reason it supports layers is that it allows for a greater variety in the graphics, but it also allows you to give your map ‘depth’.



^ How the layers work

Chapter 1 Your First Game

Layer 0 is ideal for the basic ground of your map, the grass, the sand etc – it's always best to start by creating this layer and then working up.

Layer 1 is ideal for things which go on top of the ground, for example, rocks and tree stumps – if however the item isn't transparent at all (uses the whole 16x16 tile) it may be better to put it on layer 0 and leave layer 1 blank.

Layer 2 is different in that it's 'above' the entities, and therefore entities cannot crash into them and instead walk 'under them' – Layer 2 is ideal for house roofs, or the top of tree's – as it allows the player to walk behind them and therefore gives the impression of depth. Don't however put clouds or rain on layer 2 – as I have included a whole separate feature to allow you to put weather effects in the game which is a lot easier ☺



For example, look at this map – the grass is on layer 0, the leaves and the base of the tree's are on layer 1, and the tops of the trees are on layer 2.

To change what layer you're editing, just press **START**, and select "Map Edit" – you'll then get a list of layers (Layer 0, Layer 1 and Layer 2) – just select which one you wish to edit with **A** and you're done.

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Part 2: Entities

So now you've made yourself a little map, you need to populate it with people, which is where Entities are used.

So let's switch to the Entity editing mode (Press START and select Entities).



You'll notice that instead of a tile following your cursor around, you now have the first character from the character graphic sheet (in my case, that's Chrono).

Much like tile editing, A will place the entity and B will delete it so go ahead and press A and plonk your character down somewhere.

You can only change an entity setting once it's placed, so rather than setting up how you want the entity to act and THEN placing him, you'll need to place the default entity and then edit him into what you want.

(You can change the 'animation' setting for the default entity using the L and R buttons, but this isn't really required)

In order to edit the entity, move the cursor so it's over him then bring up the "Mini Menu" (by pressing SELECT)

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^ The Entity mini-menu

Edit will allow you to change the settings for the entity the cursor is over.

Delete will delete the entity the cursor is over (or you can press B).

Copy will change the “default” entity (the one attached to the cursor) to an exact replica of the entity you’ve selected, so if you want to place more of the same entity , you would move the cursor over him, select copy, and then pressing A would place a clones of him.

Set Player will setup the selected entity so he is controlled by the player; you should never just change the “AI” to player manually as that won’t work properly.

Lets assume we want this entity to the be the player, so select ‘SET PLAYER’

Let’s try it out! bring up the editing menu (START) and select ‘PLAY’ – you should now be controlling the entity you just placed, Now press START and select ‘EDIT’ to return back to editing mode.

Let’s just quickly make an NPC, so press A to place another entity near the player – and move the cursor over him, bring up the mini menu (Select) and pick “EDIT”.

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^ Entity editing menu

Once in the entity editing menu you can do all sorts, press up and down to the cursor, and press left and right to change the value (on certain values you can use the L and R buttons to increase/decrease them by 15, making setting values a lot faster).

AI – which AI the entity will have (self explanatory).

Animation – Which animation the entity has normally (standing/walking etc...).

State – what the entity is currently doing.

Team – what team the entity is on, if it's a fighter, it'll attack its enemy.

HP (base) – How much health the entity has before it gains any levels.

MP (base) – How much mana the entity has before it gains any levels.

ATK (base) – How much attack points the entity has before it gains any levels.

DEF (base) - How much defence points the entity has before it gains any levels.

EXP - This can mean two things, if it's a playable character (the player) this will mean the amount of experience he has, if however it isn't a playable character (an enemy) it's the amount of EXP which is given to the player when he's killed.

EXP Grown Chart – this only effects playable entities (the player), it refers to which EXP growth chart the entity uses for calculating what level he's at and how his stats will be increased per level (the growth chart editor isn't done yet, so leave it at zero)

Attack Recharge – How fast their attack 'power' recharges

Attack Animation – The attack animation this character uses when it performs an attack.

Move Speed – How fast the entity moves.

Say Text – When spoken to, what 'text' should be displayed (-1 means you cannot speak to them).

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You'll also get a preview of the standard and attack animations so you can pick the right ones.

So anyway, for an NPC we don't really need to change anything other than maybe the 'animation' – so select another animation (if you've made one) and then press B to exit.



Here I changed the second entity's animation to '2' – which is the frog character from Chrono Trigger.

That's the basics covered, the more in depth features (EXP growth charts, Talking) are covered in other sections of this guide.

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Your First Game

Part 3: Hotspots

While parts 1 and 2 are probably common sense to people who've done this sort of thing before, I can't blame you for wondering what on earth "Hotspots" are as its something I've come up with as an alternative to scripting.

Scripting is used to create custom events, but requires learning of a coding language and some typing – I don't really want to force people to learn code, and I don't want people to kill themselves trying to type code on the Virtual Keyboard so hotspots are a "pick and mix" way of making events occur.

Bring up the editing menu (START) and select HOTSPOT to enter the hotspot editing mode.

The most common use of hotspots is to trigger events, such as changing map or starting a cutscene – so in this example I'll teach both.



Here I've drawn a couple of squares onto my map, just to help this example along – now what I'm going to do is create it so that when my character steps in the left area, he'll get teleported to the right area.

The first thing I need to do is create the hotspot itself, which is an rectangle 'area' – in this example I want the hotspot to be over the left hand patch of grass I created.

So press A, and select 'Create' – you then select the top left area for the hotspot, and then the bottom right area. And then the settings menu will pop up for the hotspot we just created...

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Here I can configure what the hotspot does manually, but as teleports can be difficult to do manually (having to write all the cords down etc) I've made it easier, so press B to exit the hotspot settings, and select the hotspot you just made (it'll fill with colour when selected).

Once selected bring up the Mini-Menu (Select)



The Hotspot mini menu

Notice the bottom two options – Setup Teleport and Setup Switch, these are 'Wizards' which will help you turn that hotspot into a teleport or a switch easier. So pick 'Setup Teleport'

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^ Teleport Wizard

Here we see how easy it is to create a teleport using the Wizard, if you want to teleport to another map use the L and R buttons to change map – but in this case we just want to teleport to that patch of grass on the right, so I move the cursor into the middle of it and press the A button.



Like when we first created the Hotspot, the settings window will now pop up – as you can see the Teleport settings have not been set for us – so we can just leave again by pressing B.

And it's that simple, now when you walk in the left square – you get teleported to the right one (try it out by switching to PLAY TEST mode if you want).

ONE IMPORTANT NOTE

When making a teleport which transports the player to a new map, remember to set that hotspot to also be a 'Save Point', else the map which you're leaving won't be saved! (see 'Editing and Save Games' in the advanced section).

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So that's how to do teleports, lets just take another look at the Hotspot Settings page so I can explain what all the options are for when you make your own:



Activation –

This allows you to specify how this hotspot is activated,

Walk Over – triggered as soon as the player walks over it

Action Over – trigger as soon as the player presses the action button over it

Teleport settings- (not really required, as using the wizard is much easier)

Active – if set to no it won't teleport

X – The cords it teleports to

Y – The cords it teleports to

To Map – the map it teleports to

Switch Settings- (again, the wizard is much easier than setting it manually)

Active – If set to no, it wont switch any tiles

Tile X: The x cord of the tile you wish to change on the map

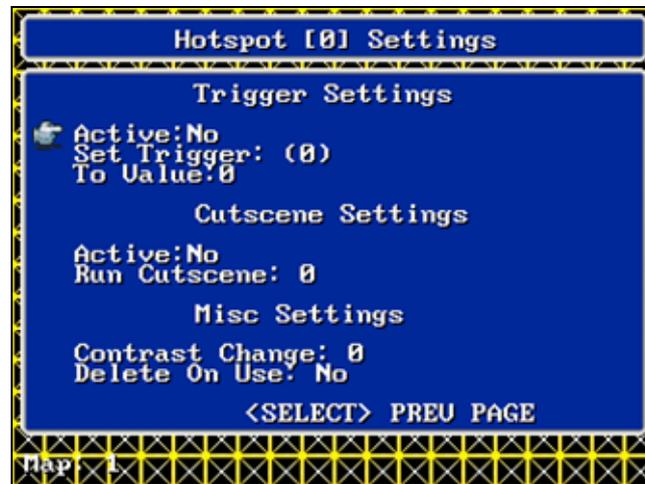
Tile Y: The y cord of the tile you wish to change on the map

Change to: What you want to change that tile to

Layer: The layer in which the tile you want to switch is on.

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Pressing Select brings up even more options in the Hotspot Settings...



Second settings page (ignore the background, GeePee32 crashed)

Trigger Settings-

Active – Set to no to ignore this function

Set Trigger – what trigger it should change

To Value – what to change the triggers value to

Cutscene Settings-

Active – Set to no to ignore this feature

Run Cutscene – What cutscene to begin

Misc Settings-

Contrast Change - Changes the contrast of the graphics

Delete on Use - Hotspot will delete itself from the map after it has been triggered, if you want this change to be permanent remember to save the map using a savepoint before leaving, or ideally just set the hotspot to be as save point too (see below)

Save Point - If set to yes, the game will save the current map and the players position when he steps onto this hotspot.

And that's it; I'll be adding a lot more functionality to the hotspots as Gigas progresses.

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Part 4: Collisions

So now that you've made your map, you'll need to stop the characters from walking over things they shouldn't be, unless they're Jesus and you want them walking over water.

Each tile graphic has a collision value, which decides if entities are allowed to walk over it or if they bump into it.

To setup the collisions, press *START* and select 'Collisions'. if any red marks appear don't worry.

When editing collisions you must bear in mind a character can only bump into something on the first two layers (0 and 1), as your character can walk under anything which is on layer 2.



^ Collision Editing Mode

Any tile which has a collision set will now have a red square bordering it, if the red square contains the number 0 - it means the tile on Layer 0 has a collision turned on, if it says 1 it means its on layer 1, and if it says both 1/0 it simply means both the tile on layer 0 and layer 1 both have collisions turned on.

You can toggle the setting for any tile on Layer 0 with the A button, and the B button toggles any tiles on layer 1.

Now for some notes:-

A collision setting is the same for every instance of that tile, so if you use the rock graphic 20 times on one map, and change the collision to 'off' on one of them, the other 19 will get turned off to,

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Also collision settings are consistent and affect every map, so if you use a rock graphic on multiple maps, changing its collision setting on one map will also change its collision setting on the other maps.

Part 5: Tile Animation

Tile animation allows you to give a bit more life to your maps, it's a bit limited because you cannot do custom speeds or a custom amount of frames (yet) – but its easy to use and well worth trying.

from the Editing Menu (START) and then select 'Graphics', and then select 'Tile Animations'.



Tile Animation Window

Here we are creating Tile animation number 0, to toggle to another animation use the L and R buttons.

All you do here is setup what is shown on each frame – the first frame should be the tile which you place on your map (so in this case I'd place tile number 7 on the map for water), then the other numbers are which tiles it'll cycle thru,

So this animation will make tile 7 into an animation of 7,8,37 then 38 and loop continuously. If you cannot remember the number for a tile you want, just press SELECT to bring up the tile picker.

If you've made a tile animation and want to get rid of it (ie – you don't want to use it) just change the Frame1 value to zero.

That's it!

Part 6: Dialog

Hurrah, finally onto the new features of Gigas-Engine 0.7.0!

While dialog isn't a feature in itself, it's something which ties into almost every other feature of Gigas. Allowing for dialog during cutscenes and allowing entities to talk.

Go into the Editing Menu (START) and select 'Dialog', you should then be confronted with the Dialog Settings dialog (below)



The way dialog's works in Gigas may seem a little strange at first, as instead of just specifying what people say directly – you create a 'Dialog' which is then assigned to that individual. (Set the 'Say' setting in an entity to the dialog number to assign it to him)

Each 'Dialog' can have 10 possible sentences of text, and each sentence of dialog has its own "if trigger" setting, which basically allows what is said to change depending on what the triggers have been set to (via actions such as hotspots)

To change the 'Text' setting just select text and press RIGHT on the d-pad and you'll be taken to the virtual keyboard (you always have to press right to change a text value, as A is often used for saving etc)

Read up on triggers and this will probably make a lot more sense ☺

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Part 7: Triggers

Triggers are a way to allow you to store values which are important to your game such as:

Has a boss been killed?
Has the player used a certain hotspot yet?
Has the player spoken to so-and-so?

Each trigger has two values, its name (which is there to make editing easy for you) and its value (which you can set in a number of ways).

Let me just throw a couple of quick examples at you, which will hopefully teach you how and why they are used (read “Part 6: Dialog” if you haven’t already).

Example:

Lets say we have a hotspot, which switches a tile so a boulder disappears and you can continue your journey – and what we want, is an entity who when spoken to, says something different depending on if you’ve removed the boulder or not.

So first of all we create a new trigger which will store the information on if the boulders gone or not.

Go into the editing menu (START) and select ‘Trigger’ to bring up the trigger settings, by default you’ll be editing Trigger 0.

You should always leave Trigger 0 blank, as trigger 0 is always assumed to be zero in default conversations... in other words, just press R so that we’re editing Trigger 1.



Trigger Settings Menu

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Select 'Name' then press RIGHT to enter the virtual keyboard, and then name it to something which will help you remember what it's used for, I'll call it "Boulder Gone?"

The 'Current Setting' should be left as zero, as I plan on zero meaning the boulder hasn't gone (which is what will have by default), and 1 meaning it's gone.



^ Setup trigger 1

So now we've setup "Trigger 1" to tell us if the boulders gone, we need to make sure that the value gets changed to '1' when the boulder gets removed,.

So find the hotspot which triggers the boulder to vanish, and on page two of the 'Hotspot settings' you'll find a "Trigger Settings" option, set active to yes – and select "Boulder Gone?" for the trigger it'll change, and we want to change it to value 1.



So basically what we have now, is a trigger called 'Boulder Gone' (trigger number 1) which starts off as zero, but once they've stepped on that hotspot which removes the boulder the value gets changed to '1'

Next we need to create a new 'Dialog' which will decide what the entity says based on the "Boulder gone?" trigger.

So, as explained in the "Dialog" section we just make a new dialog (Dialog [1]) which has the following two possibilities.

Possibility: 0

Text: "Maybe if you flick the switch, the boulder will vanish?"

If Trigger (1) "Boulder Gone?"

Value is 0

^ This is what he'll say if the boulder hasn't gone yet.

Possibility: 1

Text: "Hey, the boulder is gone! Thanks."

If Trigger (1) "Boulder Gone"

Value is 1

^ But if the boulder gone trigger has been set to 1, he'll know the boulders gone and say something different.

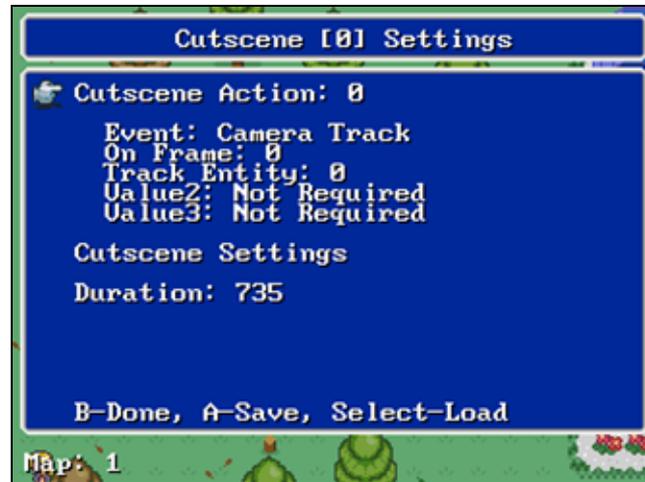
Now I'd just go into the settings for the entity I want to talk, and I'll change his "Say Text" value from -1 (the default 'don't say anything') to the dialog we just made (dialog number 1)

And that's it.

It sounds far more complicated than it actually is, but hopefully after enough rewrites it'll start to make sense 😊

Part 8: Cutsscenes

To get into the cutscene editor, bring up the editing menu (START) and select “Cuts”.



^ In blue peter fashion, here is one I made earlier

The Cut scene editor is extremely simple; basically each cutscene is made up of ‘actions’ which you create.

Each action has an event, which basically lets you pick what action you want from a pre-set list (such as Walk Entity Left, Show Image) and then you can specify what frame of the cutscene that action happens on.

Below you get three values, these change names depending what event is selected to ask for required information – if for example you want to move an entity, it’ll ask you what entity you want to move.

Finally you get a duration – this is how long the cut scene lasts for in total before the cut scene ends, if your duration is 20, but you have an event which happens on 25 – you’ll miss the event on 25, so make sure all your events happen within the duration.

And that’s about it, the context sensitive menus means I don’t have to explain what values you need for each event. But I better just explain the “Show Image” one a little more. Remember the Cutscene_Image_0.bmp graphic? Well we compiled that to a file called IMG0.RAW, basically if you want to show an image you just set the image value to the number of that image, so in this case ‘0’, but if you’ve created a second one called, IMG1.RAW then you’d set the value to ‘1’ to show that one.

Remember to press A to save what you’ve done before loading another cutscene else it’ll lose your changes.

Once you’ve created a cut scene you’ll probably want to attach it to a hotspot as so:



^ Hotspot settings window

Simply set the cut scene active option to 'Yes', and then set the "Run Cut scene" number to the cut scene you created, so for the first cut scene (Cut scene [0]) set the value to zero.

When a cutscene begins, the AI for all entities who have a 'part' in the cutscene will be turned off, this way they won't wander off and mess up the whole cutscene.

If however an entity doesn't have a part in the cutscene, they'll carry on doing whatever they were doing – you can use the "Disable AI" and the "Enable AI" to disable the AI of the non-actors.

Part 1: Brushes

When map editing you'll often find it rather frustrating that you can only put down one tile at a time.

For instance, what if you have a section in your tile map which is a graphic made up of multiple tiles? You'd have to go thru each tile one by one.

Brushes let you put down a pattern of tiles, allowing you to quickly replicate graphics which take up more than one tile.

In the tile picker hold down select – then drag so you have an 'area' of tiles selected. Once you release the select button that 'area' of tiles will become the assigned brush. .

To put the brush down, go into the Map Editor and then press Select to bring up the Sub Menu and select 'Brush', the brush will then be copied down onto the current map layer, with the currently selected tile on the map becoming the top left tile of the brush.

In future editions you'll be able to save brush's to the clipboard, and copy brushes off the map.

Part 2: Editing and Save Games

Autosaving

When you save a game, it saves two things – the current map the player is on, and also where the player is, so that when you continue the save game it knows on what map to start on,

To avoid confusion later on, whenever the player teleports to a new map – it automatically saves the player data, so if you turn the machine off and back on again the player will start on the map he's just teleported to, even if he hasn't stepped on a save point since teleporting to that map.

The map data isn't automatically saved when you change map, as in some circumstances you may not want the changes made to that map to be recorded.

Map data is only saved when the player walks over a hotspot which has been configured to be a 'savepoint'.

If you want to teleport the player to a new map, and you want to save the existing map – you should make the setup the hotspot which teleports, to also be a savepoint. Then it'll save the map data, and then teleport the character and autosave the player details.

General

If you select 'Play' from the main menu, you will no longer be able to switch to editing mode during the game, as the 'Play' mode allows you to create and continue playing on save games, which are stored separately to the original game which you can edit.

If your creating/testing your game, ALWAYS use the edit option to begin with. It's almost identical to the 'Play' mode but all save points will be disabled so you don't have to worry about your game being overwritten/unwanted changes being saved.

In order to save some SMC space, the save games work in a rather unusual fashion. But so long as you remember that Play is for people to play your game with, and that Edit is used to creating/testing your game, you won't run into any problems.

Basically savegames just copy any data which has changed into a subfolder, but when it first needs to load some data it'll still get it from the original source if needs be.

For instance, lets say your save game is trying to load map2,

It'll first check to see if an updated version of map2 exists in the savegame folder, if it doesn't then it'll just load the original map2 instead. When existing/saving the map it'll save it into the savegame folder, so next time it needs to load it it'll be the same as how it was left.

It'll always load the graphics/effects and animation data from the original source.

So in otherwords, if you change a map in editing mode which has yet to be loaded in the savegame, the savegame will get the updated map. And also if you change the graphics/effects/animation settings – it'll effect all the savegames to!

But like I said before, the 'Play' mode isn't for you – its for people to play your game with, so if your creating a game you shouldn't really be faffing about with savegames anyway (well, not until your game is finished)