# 6     Importing and Exporting Files

Many types of file formats can be imported into WebAnimator, including the most common file types, WebAnimator objects, and animated PICS objects. You can export WebAnimator scenes as QuickTime movies and you can also export animated GIFs..

This chapter covers:

- Importing Sprite objects
- Importing graphic objects
- Setting QuickTime movie preferences (Macintosh only)
- Exporting a WebAnimator scene as a QuickTime movie
- Exporting animated GIFs.

## Importing objects

Objects can be imported into the Template Studio, Animation, and Storyboard views. You can import bitmap PICT objects from almost any kind of paint or drawing program, WebAnimator objects (animated or static), and PICS animations.

All imported graphics should be created using the 256-color system palette, unless you know your final scene will be played back in thousands or more color. Beware of importing large bitmap files. This can dramatically increase the size of your final scene and, therefore, the time it takes the user to download your Web site.

The imported object appears on top of everything else in the keyframe. That is, the object overlaps any text, animation, etc. in the keyframe. If you wish to import the object into the background of the keyframe, you must change the viewing plane in the view before you import the object. If an animated object is imported into the background, it loses its animation capabilities and its position within the keyframe cannot be changed.

WebAnimator can import graphics of the following types:

| Macintosh | Windows |
| --- | --- |

```
Animated Object (PICS)
WebAnimator Object

BMP – MS Windows Bitmap
DIB – MS Windows Bitmap
EPS – Adobe PostScript (bitmap only)
GIF – Compuserve Graphics Image
JPEG – JPEG Image
PCD – Kodak Photo CD
PCH – PC Paintbrush
PDF – Portable Document Format
PICT – Apple QuickDraw PICT
PNG – Portable Network Graphics
TGA – Truevision Image
TIFF – Tagged Image File Format

Show All Graphic Types
```

```
Windows Bitmap Files (*.BMP)
Windows Bitmap Files (*.DIB)
Compuserve Graphic Image (*.GIF)
JPEG Image (*.JPG)
True Vision Image (*.TGA)
Tagged Image File Format (*.TIF)
PC Paintbrush (*.PCX)
Kodak Photo CD (*.PCD)
Portable Network Graphic (*.PNG)
All Files (*.*)
```

| To learn more about | refer to |
| --- | --- |
| Changing the viewing plane | "Using viewing planes," on page 5-6 |

## Importing Sprite objects

Previously-created animated objects (or non-animated) can be imported into the current scene. An animated object consists of several different images which are displayed one after the other, giving the illusion of movement. Non-animated objects can also be imported as graphics. WebAnimator objects can consist of one (static) or more (animated) cels.

### To import a Sprite object:

1. **Depending on the view you are in, select or display the keyframes in which you want the Sprite object to be placed.**

    Each Sprite object is self-contained. You can switch to the Cel view to display the individual cels.
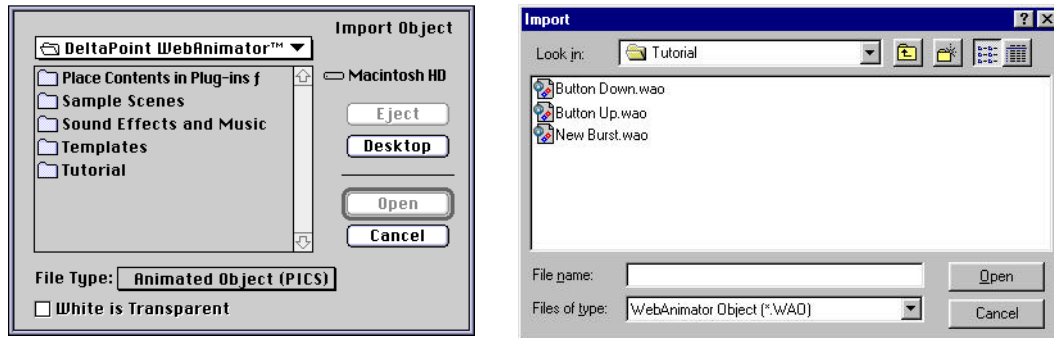
2. **Display the desired viewing plane on which you want the graphic to be placed.**

    In the Animation and Storyboard views, you can use the Fore, Back, and Hidden buttons in the tool palette to switch between viewing planes. In the Template Studio view, you can click on the Foreground or Background buttons at the bottom of the window.

**3.** **Choose "Import" from the File menu and select "Animated Object (PICS)" from the cascading menu or press the Import Animation button from within the Template Studio view's Command palette.**

The following dialog appears:

**4.** **Select a file name to import from the list box.**

Only PICS file types are displayed in the list box. You can navigate through other folders as needed.

**5.** **(Optional, *not* recommended) Select "Use Object's Palette" to import the Sprite object's color palette as well.**

If this option is selected, WebAnimator switches to the color palette used when the imported object was created. If this option is not selected, WebAnimator continues using its current color palette. If WebAnimator's color palette is different from the Sprite object's palette, the object's coloring may be different from the coloring it had when created. This is why we recommend always creating graphics using the system palette.

**6.** **(Optional) Select "White is Transparent" to convert all white areas of the imported object to transparent.**

If this option is not selected, all white areas appear as white.

**7.** **Click "Open" to import the selected file.**

To exit the dialog without importing a file, click "Cancel." The graphic appears in the current view. You can drag the PICS graphic to any location in the keyframes.

| To learn more about | refer to |
| --- | --- |
| Creating sprite objects | "Creating Sprite objects," on page 7-25 |

## Importing graphic objects

WebAnimator allows you to import many types of files and place them in any selected keyframe(s), including WebAnimator objects.

### To import a graphic object:

1. **Depending on the view you are in, select or display the keyframes in which you want the object to be placed.**

   You can also select multiple keyframes from within the Storyboard view. If you want the graphic to appear in all keyframes of the scene, click the All Slides button at the bottom of the Template Studio window, or choose "Select All" from the Edit menu if you are in the Storyboard or Animation views.
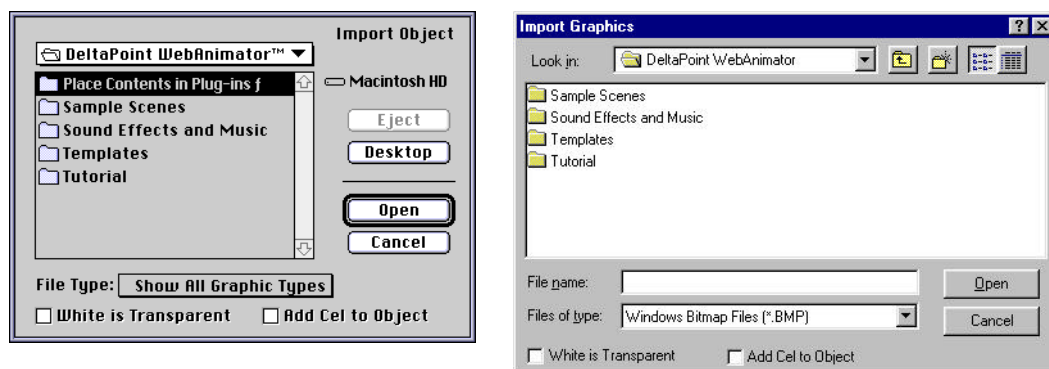
2. **Display the desired viewing plane on which you want the graphic to be placed.**

   In the Animation and Storyboard views, you can use the Fore, Back, and Hidden buttons in the tool palette to switch between viewing planes. In the Template Studio view, you can click on the Foreground or Background buttons at the bottom of the window.

3. **Choose "Import" from the File menu and select "Graphics..." from the cascading menu or press the Import Graphic button from within the Template Studio view's Command palette.**

   The following dialog appears:



4. **Select the type of file to display in the list box from the "File Types" pop-up menu.**

   "Show All Graphic Types" displays all file types available for import into WebAnimator.

5.  **Select a file name to import from the list box.**

    Only PICT file types are displayed in the list box. You can navigate through other folders as needed.

6.  **(Optional) Select "Add Cel to Object" to add an animation cel to the selected object.**

    This option is not available if you do not have any objects selected before choosing "Import" from the File menu. This option allows you to create a Sprite object by importing each animation cel from a separate graphics file. For instance, you might have eight frames of a walking man, with each frame saved as a separate TIF file. WebAnimator lets you create a sprite out of these separate TIF files by using the "Add Cel to Object" option.

7.  **(Optional) Select "White is Transparent" to convert all white areas of the imported object to transparent.**

    If this option is not selected, all white areas appear as white.

8.  **Click "Open" to import the selected file.**

    To exit the dialog without importing a file, click "Cancel." The graphic appears in the current view. You can drag the PICT graphic to any location in the keyframe.

# Exporting QuickTime movies (Macintosh only)

Once you have created your scene, you can export it as a QuickTime movie. This can be useful for creating stand-alone scenes, but any interaction you have built into your scene will be lost in the movie.

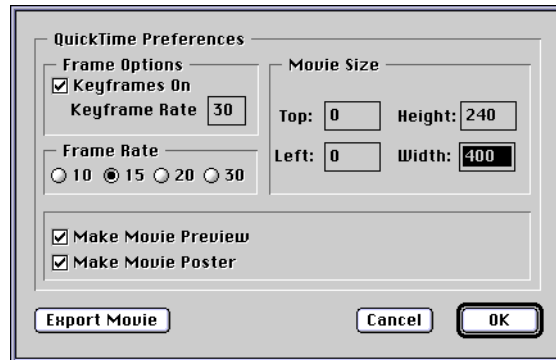## Setting QuickTime movie preferences

Before you output or save a scene out to a QuickTime movie, you may want to change the default preferences for creating the file. These preferences include the dimensions of the movie, speed, number of keyframes used, as well as other options.

### To set QuickTime movie preferences:

1.  **Choose "QuickTime Options" from the Animation menu and select "Preferences..." from the cascading menu or press the Save Movie button from the Command palette.**

    The following dialog appears:

2. **Make your selections and enter data as needed.**

You have the following options:

**Frame Options**　Controls and improves the playback quality of your QuickTime movie. If a QuickTime player cannot play frames fast enough then frames are skipped. In animated movies this causes portions of the animation to remain on the screen and look blemished. When a keyframe is played, it draws a proper looking frame. These options improve the playback quality.

The "Keyframe Rate" option indicates how often a keyframe is embedded in the QuickTime movie. The default value of 30 indicates that a keyframe is included once in every 30 frames. This should be adequate. Using keyframes in a movie causes the movie file size to be larger. The more frequent the keyframes (the lower the number value for "Keyframe Rate"), the larger the file.

**Movie Size**　Determines the top and left offsets and size of the movie.

**Frame Rate**　Determines how many frames per second are contained in the QuickTime movie. The higher the frame rate the smoother the animation. (WebAnimator "Smoothed Animation" command plays at 30 frames per second). However, the higher the frame rate the larger the movie file.

**Make Movie Preview**　Includes a much smaller movie clip in the movie file which can be viewed in a standard "Open" dialog. Selection of the keyframe to be used for the preview is accomplished by selecting the keyframe in Storyboard view, then selecting "Preview Frames" from the QuickTime cascading menu. Having a preview image does not make the movie file larger.

**Make Movie Poster**　Includes an image in the movie file which represents the movie in an application. Selection of the keyframe to be used for the poster is accomplished by selecting the keyframe in Storyboard view, then selecting

"Poster Frames" from the QuickTime cascading menu. Having a poster image does not make the movie file larger.

3. **Click "OK."**

   Your preferences are saved and you are returned to the previous scene. Clicking "Export Movie" automatically displays the export dialog. To exit the dialog without making changes, click "Cancel."

## Exporting a QuickTime movie

Exported QuickTime movies may be played in other applications which support QuickTime. The movie is time accurate. Sound synchronization, including synchronization to sound is preserved. Branching and scripting, however, are not preserved.

When exporting a QuickTime movie, please note that only an area of 512 by 384 is made into a movie. It is recommended that you use less than a full screen when making a QuickTime movie. If your scene is larger than this, the sides, top and bottom of your WebAnimator scene are trimmed.

QuickTime movie preferences must be set before exporting your scene as a QuickTime movie.

### To export scene as QuickTime movie:

1. **(Optional) Depending on the view you are in, select or display a keyframe to be used as a preview frame.**

   A preview frame is used to represent the movie in an "Open" dialog. Preview frames do not take up any more memory.

2. **(Optional) Choose "QuickTime Options" from the Animation menu and select "Preview Frame" from the cascading menu.**

3. **(Optional) Depending on the view you are in, select or display a keyframe to be used as a poster frame.**

   A poster frame is used to represent the movie when it is imported into an application. Poster frames do not take up any more memory.

4. **(Optional) Choose "QuickTime Options" from the Animation menu and select "Poster Frame" from the cascading menu.**

5. **Depending on the view you are in, select or display the first keyframe in the scene to be exported.**
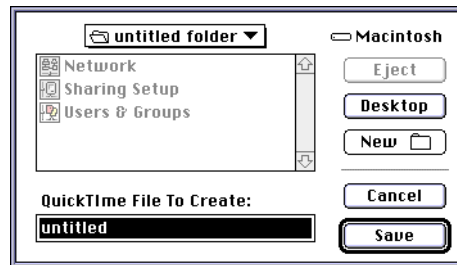
   A QuickTime movie file of the scene is created beginning at the current keyframe and proceeding to the end of the scene. So if you want the whole

scene made into a movie, make sure the first keyframe in the scene is selected before exporting your scene.

You can also select a portion of the current scene from within the Storyboard view and create a QuickTime movie of only selected keyframes.

**6.   Choose "Export QuickTime..." from the Animation menu.**

The following dialog appears:



**7.   Specify the name and location for the movie file to be created and click "Save."**

The scene plays in slow motion while the movie file is created. To exit the dialog without saving the file, click "Cancel."

# Saving WebAnimator objects

WebAnimator objects can consist of one (static) or more (animated) cels.

## To save a WebAnimator object:

**1.   Create or import your Sprite object in the Draw view.**

Use the View Bar buttons on the right side of the window to switch to the Draw view. The Sprite object can be a single cel or multiple cels.
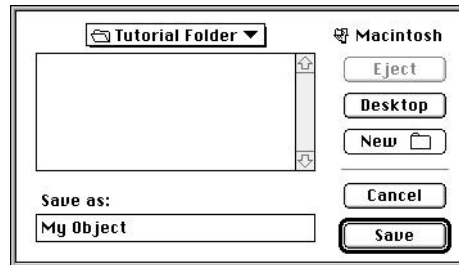
**2.   Select the object and switch to the Cel view.**

Use the View Bar buttons on the right side of the window to switch to the Cel view.

**3.   Choose "Save Object As" from the File menu.**

The following dialog appears:

4.  **Enter a name for the Sprite object and click "Save."**

    Once saved, the object can be imported into other WebAnimator files for reuse.
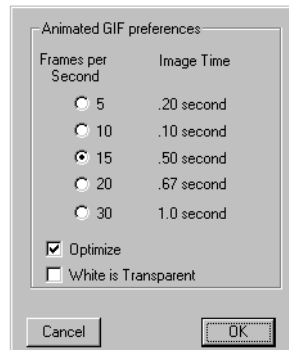
# Exporting animated GIF files

WebAnimator can now export animated GIF files. Once exported, animated GIF files may be incorporated into Web sites and played in other applications, such as Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Explorer, which support the GIF89a format.

- WebAnimator 1.1 exports animated GIFS directly from templates. Users creating their own templates should not use looping in the templates as this will dramatically increase the size of the GIF.

- Animated GIF export supports all Transitions except for Diagonal and Dissolve.

- GIF animations are not multimedia and therefore cannot have any sound or interactions (buttons, etc.). For multimedia needs, animations should be saved as .wan compressed WebAnimator files.

### To export a WebAnimator scene as an animated GIF file

1.  **Create your animated WebAnimator scene.**

2.  **Choose "Export" from the File menu and select "Animated GIF..." from the cascading menu.**

The following dialog appears:

```
┌─ Animated GIF preferences ──────────────┐
│                                          │
│  Frames per        Image Time            │
│  Second                                  │
│                                          │
│      ○ 5           .20 second            │
│      ○ 10          .10 second            │
│      ⦿ 15          .50 second            │
│      ○ 20          .67 second            │
│      ○ 30          1.0 second            │
│                                          │
│  ☑ Optimize                              │
│  ☐ White is Transparent                  │
│                                          │
│  ┌────────┐         ┌────────────┐       │
│  │ Cancel │         │     OK     │       │
│  └────────┘         └────────────┘       │
└──────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

3. **Make your selections as needed.**

**Frames per Second:** Determines the number of frames saved in the GIF file. WebAnimator plays frames at 30 frames per second. If you choose a lower number of frames per second, frames are skipped when the GIF file is saved. The more frames selected, the larger the GIF file.

**Optimization:** Determines whether or not the GIF file is optimized when exported. WebAnimator optimizes two ways. The first type of optimization creates images only of moving objects. In the second type, if no motion occurs, no images are created. This allows the creation only of needed images without redundancy.

Optimization can reduce the access time for users to your Web site.

**Transparency:** Determines if white objects are exported as transparent objects in the animated GIF file.

4. **Click "OK."**

The standard "Save" dialog appears.

5. **Name the file and click Save (Windows) or OK (Macintosh).**

WebAnimator exports the file as an animated GIF.