

SimGolf for Windows® 95

Last Minute Info- *November 4, 1996*

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I. Using WordPad to View this Document

To make this document easier to read, you can enlarge the size of the WordPad window. To do so, simply click the Maximize button in the upper-right corner of the WordPad window. Or open the Control menu in the upper-left corner of the WordPad window (press **ALT+SPACEBAR**), and then choose the Maximize command.

To move through the document, press **PAGE UP** or **PAGE DOWN**. Or click the arrows at the top and bottom of the scroll bar along the right side of the Write window.

To print the document, choose **Print** from the **File** menu.

For Help on using WordPad, press **F1**.

II. Technical Help

Requirements

SimGolf runs on a 486dx2-66 computer or higher.

For optimal performance, the program should be run on a Pentium-class computer.

SimGolf requires:

Windows 95

12MB RAM

50-75MB Hard Disk Space

Double-Speed or higher CD-ROM Drive

Microsoft Mouse or 100% Compatible

local bus SVGA Video Card with 512kb of Video Memory.

System Conflicts

Conflicts are rare but they can occur. If you are using other programs in Windows 95 that load on startup, you may want to disable those programs to prevent potential conflicts and free up additional memory and system resources. The most common potential conflicts come from screen savers. If you are using a screen saver other than the default Windows screen saver, you may wish to disable it to prevent conflicts. Some virus protection programs may also conflict with SimGolf. If you experience trouble running SimGolf for Windows 95, try disabling all virus protection programs before running the program.

Sound

SimGolf supports all sound cards that are compatible with Windows® 95.

If you do not have a sound card, you will not hear sound effects or music.

SimGolf plays with sound turned on by default; if you want to turn off sound in the program, simply go to the Options button on the main toolbar, and press the Sound button. This button toggles the sound on and off for SimGolf.

Video

SimGolf supports video resolutions of 640x480, 800x600, and 1024x768. The program needs at least 256 colors in order to run, but SimGolf can run under color depths of 16-bit color (65,000 colors) or 32-bit color (16.7 million colors).

If SimGolf runs slow at the default settings, then the dynamic scenery should be turned off and the detail level reduced.

Dynamic scenery is turned on by default; to turn off dynamic scenery, go to the Show... button on the main toolbar, and choose the dynamic scenery button. This button toggles dynamic scenery on and off .

To reduce the detail level, go to the Options button on the main toolbar, and press the Detail Level button. This brings up a control bar that can be adjusted for appropriate detail levels. Sliding the dial all the way to the Min setting reduces the detail level to the minimum.

Playing SimGolf at higher resolutions and greater color depths may slow down screen redraws, so if the game is redrawing slowly, then reduce the resolution and color depth to increase redraw rates. If your computer is running at the minimum system requirements, then we recommend running the game at 640x480 with 256 colors. To change your video resolution and color depth under Windows 95, right-click on your desktop background and select Properties. From the Properties window, select the Settings tab. In this window, you can change the color depth and resolution of your video card. If installed properly, Windows will limit you to the resolutions and depths that your video card supports.

Network Play Issues

SimGolf can be played with up to four players over the Internet or a Local Area Network, but only two players can play with a modem-to-modem connection.

To play over the Internet, SimGolf requires a TCP/IP Internet connection with a 14.4 kbs or higher modem. Internet play can be played in two ways: host or client. If you are playing as a host, then you must create the game by choosing the Play Golf button at the SimGolf Main Menu screen. If you are playing as a client, then you must join the existing game by choosing the Join Network Game button at the Main Menu screen.

To play over a Local Area Network, SimGolf requires IPX/SPX or TCP/IP protocols and a Windows 95-compatible network card. Starting a network game over a LAN is conceptually the same starting an Internet game- there is a host and client(s). If you are creating the game, then you must be the host; if you are joining an existing game, then you must be the client.

Different network protocols offer different levels of reliability. Some, such as TCP/IP (used for Internet play) guarantee data delivery, and others, such as IPX, do not. The most reliable protocol for SimGolf is Internet (TCP/IP). The least reliable is IPX for DirectPlay. Modem Connection for DirectPlay and TCP fall somewhere in between. We highly recommend the use of the Internet (TCP/IP) protocol.

To play a modem-to-modem connection, the person creating the game is the host, and he waits for the client to call to join the game. If you join a modem-to-modem game as the client, then a Windows 95 Direct Play dialing window will appear. Simply type in the telephone number of the host's modem and click OK. SimGolf makes the call for you. As soon as you are connected to the game, you must stand by for the host to make the final click to officially begin the game.

Uninstalling SimGolf

To remove SimGolf from your hard disk, use the Add/Remove Programs program found in the Control Panels folder. Uninstalling the program will remove everything that the SimGolf installer has put on your hard disk, including registry information, program files, and menu icons. However, if you have saved any new files, including saved games and courses, then those files will not be removed and the SimGolf program directory will not be erased.

III. How to reach Maxis Technical Support

What You Should Do Before You Call Technical Support

Before you call Technical Support, please be sure that you have read this Readme file, the manual and any other appropriate material.

When you are at your wit's end, scratching your head and grumbling, read on to find out what we would like you to have ready when you call. This way we can get you running as quickly as possible. It will save both you and our overworked technicians lots of time and aggravation!

What You Should Have With You When You Call

1. Have a print-out of your **WIN.INI** and **SYSTEM.INI** files as well as your **CONFIG.SYS** and **AUTOEXEC.BAT** files. You can easily print all of these files by first going to your Start button and then choosing the Run command. From the Run command line, type in **SYSEDIT** and press enter or OK. This runs the System Configuration Editor, which allows you to print out a report of your startup files on your system. If you do not have a printer and can't print out your system files, it isn't the end of the world as long as you are at your computer when you call! Make sure that your computer system meets or exceeds the requirements defined on the SimGolf system label. The system label is located in the lower-left portion on the front of the box.

2. If you are getting error messages or General Protection Faults (GPFs), write down exactly what the error message says. That will help us diagnose the problem.

3. Write down all of the steps you have taken to solve the problem. If we know what you've already done, we may be able to get you running faster.

4. Have your program disks, your manual, and your Addendum available and within easy reach.

Where You Should Be When You Call

Please call us from your computer! We need to have you at your computer to explore your system to identify what is causing your particular problem.

Let's Do the Numbers!

There are a number of different options that you can use to contact Customer Support. The best way to reach us is by e-mail, FAX, or telephone. If you decide that you would like to call and hear a friendly voice, you'll find the number for Customer Support listed on the Maxis Maxims sheet, included in the box your program came in. There's lots of other useful info there, so keep your Maxis Maxims somewhere handy.

In addition to our live Support team, we have established an automated Support service. Automated Support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. By calling our Customer Support technical line, you may select automated Support in lieu of live assistance. Calling during non-Support hours will automatically prompt you for automated Support. Automated Support allows us to help you find a solution quicker, and helps to reduce on-line waiting time.

We are present on all of the major on-line services and the Internet if you subscribe to any of these services. If you don't currently subscribe, many on-line services will give you a 30-day trial membership. Refer to the Maxis Maxims for more information.

If you have a modem, on-line support is often a better option for you. We maintain a BBS that is free-of-charge (excluding long distance charges from your phone company) to all registered users of Maxis products. The BBS number is (510) 254-3869 and it is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We support up to 14.4k bps and currently have four nodes. The settings are 8-N-1. You can also find the latest FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), hints and tips from other users and other good stuff.

Fill in That Card!

Make sure you register your software! We've included a handy little postcard for you to send in. This will entitle you to FREE Customer Support for the life of the product. If you have a modem then register automatically when you install the product. The product life ends when a new version is released or the product is discontinued.

IV. Introducing Maxis Technical Support...

And now what you've all been waiting for. Here's a little bit about the support staff: It just wouldn't be fair to give you all of this information without mentioning a little bit about the guys in Technical Support. No, they didn't make or write the code and no, they didn't write the manual, but they do provide support for the product which far outlasts jelly doughnuts (and other comestibles).

Customer Support Manager:

Roger Johnsen

The Troops:

Cosmo Bowden

Andrea Chellew

Michael Choi

Serdar Copur

Nolan Erck

Jeff Feil

James Huie

Kirk Lesser

Jamie Liggett

Scott Locke

Rick Marazzani

Mike Walch

Todd Wysuph

V. Tips for SimGolf and Course Architect (or the Quick and Dirty Guide to SimGolf)

SimGolf

"I can't hit the ball." -- Well it is tricky, but once you get the hang of it you should be able to hit accurately. One thing that some testers did was use the Mouse Swing for distance driving and the Power Graph for putting, the shadow that marks how hard you hit the ball on the Power Graph is really accurate for the Beginning and Amateur levels, it's less so for Pro, but it is consistent so once you see the pattern putting becomes easier. Another trick that was used with success was turning your mouse sensitivity all the up. This allowed just the most slightest of flicks to move the mouse back then forward for a good shot.

"My Golfer has his legs cut off!!!" -- Not really, what is happening is there is a small swell or terrain variation between the camera and the Golfer. The camera automatically moves to try to give you the best view, so it should never be so bad that you can't see the ball.

"My Golfer never points to the hole when putting?" -- Again this is the Camera adjusting to allow you the best view of the hole. We felt it was better to provide the best view of the hole, as most of the time you will be Mouse Aiming to get just the right angle on the hole.

"So if your Camera is giving me the best point of view, why does some views still look wacky?" -- Well we can't always tell what you want, but if you don't like the angle your at and want a quick fix just hit the "home" key and that will re-center you camera angle.

"My friend and I have a hard time saving a net game then restarting it." -- Net saving is very, very picky, but it can be done. Success will be achieved if the Golfers selected are the EXACT Golfers that it saved with, even a single club change can do odd things to the game, but if the game is resumed and all Golfers have the exact players, then all shall be good.

Course Architect

"Even after looking at the Tutorial and Help file I find that making golf courses is a long and hard task." -- To make a detailed golf course can consume a fair bit of time, but there is a way of just using a few tools and a few steps to make a good 9 Hole course in less than 30 minutes, just think Mass Production. Start with a fairly flat course, lay all your center lines and adjust them as you see fit. Then make your greens and fairways by marking off everything with the Polygon tool and when all areas of a certain terrain is marked off it will only take a single click with the fill tool to make all your greens, repeat with other desired terrain (like sand and fairways). Assuming you started with a mostly flat course it will only take a little tweaking to make everything playable.

"I sent an .FLO file to my buddy, but when he converted it to a .FLG file he couldn't see the course when I hosted a net game, but the course was there." -- To play a net game with a course your buddy made, you need to do the following steps; First create the course (start with the obvious), then save the course as a .FLO file. That is the file you send to your buddy. Now what you need to do is close your course and open the .FLO that was just saved and save that as a .FLG. That is the course you are going to use. Now send that first .FLO you made to your friend (either by disk, or Email, or FTP, or whatever), have your friend open the .FLO file in Course Architect and save it as a .FLG file. Now the two of you can play. The key is that *everyone* needs to convert the .FLO to the .FLG. Also, everyone will need the same object library, **DEFAULT.LEL**.

"**Default.lel**, what the heck is that?" -- Good question, the **Default.lel** is the Library that contains all the objects you can put in your course. This includes trees, rocks, golf carts, ball washers, and the like. Whenever you add a new bitmap to your course the object library is updated to include that object. When you add a new bitmap you will be asked if you want to "save **default.lel**". If you want to make this object a permanent addition to your library say "yes." So this means you have to be careful when you trade courses with your friends, because if they don't have the same **DEFAULT.LEL** as you, then your courses may not appear the same to them as it does to you.

"I'm trying to add really cool bitmaps to my course, but they keep turning out really weird colors, what's up with that?" -- SimGolf uses a special 256 color palette, so if you add a bitmap with a different palette, SimGolf will try, but not always succeed, in converting the bitmap to the correct colors. We do provide a sample bitmap, **Palette.bmp**, that contains all the colors of SimGolf. Using the **Palette.bmp** in a paint program, you can compare and alter the colors of your own bitmaps to be displayed properly in SimGolf. The **Palette.bmp** can be found in the directory where SimGolf was installed.

"I'm having trouble playing my cool course in SimGolf." -- Well it's not fair for me to judge what type of Golfer you are, but I'll assume this has nothing to do with your skill, but more with the Course Architect that you are using. The Course Architect is a very powerful

editor and is designed to let the user just go wild and create some extreme things, like all water courses or incredibly high mountains and all kinds of fun stuff. However, there is so much that you can use and abuse that some oddities might show up in golf, most of this will manifest itself in hard or impossible course to play. The fix is to be moderate in your design and create reasonable courses, but if you insist on being unreasonable then think about using such things as out of bounds placement and water to at least guide the players and prevent the ball from falling into 500ft deep gullies with no way out.

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