

GCS Win95 Engine Direct 3D Help

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Choosing a Direct 3D Device

Direct 3D gives you a choice of drivers to use for your 3D graphics. Some are slow and reliable, others may not work perfectly but give a fast frame rate. You may select the Direct 3D device which works best for your computer. When the Direct 3D Device Select dialog box comes up, the recommended device is preselected in the listbox. This is only a suggestion, since the best way to find the optimum driver is to try a few. The most common drivers are listed below.

The Ramp Emulation Driver

The MMX Emulation Driver

The RGB Emulation Driver

The Hardware Accelerated Driver

The Ramp Emulation Driver

The Ramp Emulation Driver should be present on all computers upon which Direct X is installed. It is probably the most reliable choice since it probably varies little from machine to machine. It is an emulation driver, which means that you aren't using any of your Hardware Acceleration on your video card. Use this driver if neither the Hardware Accelerated driver, nor the MMX driver works reliably.

The MMX Emulation Driver

The MMX Emulation Driver is only present on computers with CPU chips that have Intel's MMX technology. This can provide superior performance to the Ramp driver, but sometimes colors can be wrong. If the Hardware Accelerated driver isn't there, or doesn't work well on your system, you can compare the performance of the Ramp vs. the MMX driver, and use whichever you like better.

The RGB Emulation Driver

The RGB Emulation driver is only used for fancy color lighting of still 3D scenes, which the GCSWE will not use. This driver is very slow. The Ramp driver is a much better choice than this one for this application.

The Hardware Accelerated Driver

If your video card has 3D acceleration a driver may appear with the letters 'HAL' in it. With this driver, Direct 3D will attempt to use the accelerator on your video to speed up the 3D graphics. In order for this to work, most video cards will require all the artwork data to be loaded into the memory on your video card. For this reason, if your video card does not have at least 4 Megabytes of on-board memory, then it may not be possible to use this driver. In addition, the acceleration hardware on some cards do not have the right capabilities to handle the 3D graphics used in this application. In this case, the computer may crash, or the 3D scenes may not look right. If you suspect something is not operating correctly, try the Ramp driver instead.

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