

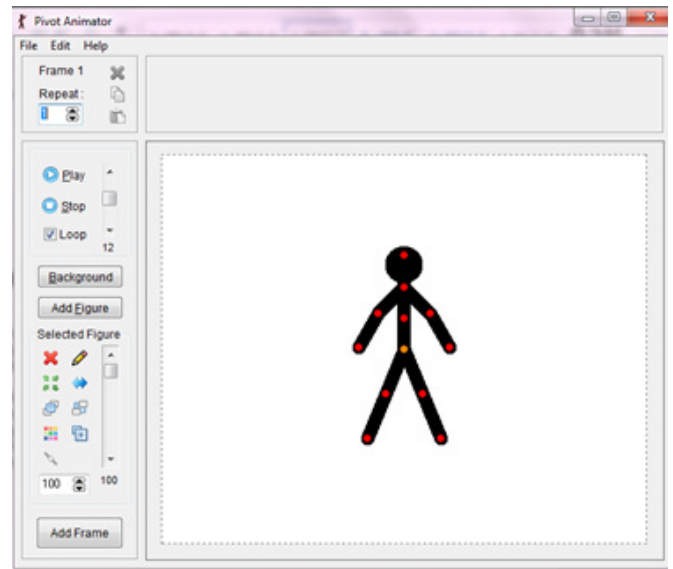
Animation: Lesson 2

Introduction to Pivot Animator

Pivot Animator is a free software package that can be used for creating short animation sequence of a stick figure. It is a great introduction to animation and follows on well from children being given the opportunity to draw a stick-figure flip book (see lesson 1).

As there are many different ways to achieve computer animation solutions, this unit takes the approach of using 3 different software packages (all freely available) which give a variety of insights and techniques. This lesson can be delivered as a one-off lesson or extended to make further use of the particular software. In the context of the unit, this lesson is a single lesson which introduces and covers a summary of the Pivot Animator software. However, the activities can easily be extended to cover 2 lessons if children are encouraged to experiment and create more advanced animations after becoming familiar with the software.

This software should be downloaded and installed in advance of being used.



Getting Started With Pivot Animator

To begin using the software, position the stick figure in a starting position. This could be left as it is, or edited by dragging any of the red pivot points.

When a desired starting position has been chosen, click 'Add Frame'. This will create a thumbnail of the first frame in the animation sequence at the top of the screen.

The stick figure can then be moved slightly. As this is being done, a 'shadow' layer of the previous frame remains visible in order to see how much of a change is being made. This process is known as 'onion skinning'. Once again, when the desired changes have been made, click 'Add Frame' to add a second frame then continue to repeat the process, making slight changes each time.



When the number of desired frames are complete, save the file.

To view the animation, click Play. This can be set to Loop by ticking the checkbox or play once through by unticking.

Advanced Features

For more advanced features and a guide to the toolbar, see the [Guide to Pivot Animator Activity Sheet](#).

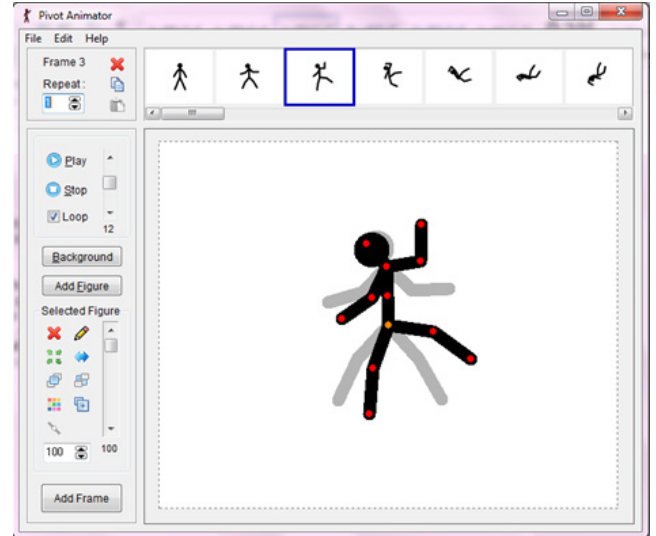
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Add Figure

By clicking the Add Figure button, a new figure will be added that looks the same as the first, in the same place. If at first, it appears that nothing has happened, it may be that the new figure is exactly over the top of the first figure and just needs to be dragged to a new position to make both visible.

Additional Figure Types

By clicking on the File menu and selecting Load Figure Type, a new figure can be added from a range of pre-existing designs (including a cowboy, a horse and an elephant).



Background

Any image can be loaded as a background, or an image created in paint software. This should be done first and saved as a file, then selected from the saved file location by clicking on File and Load Background.