6.0 The Drop-down Menus

The Drop-down menus provide you with instant access to the many powerful features of the Klik & Play system. They're available from the Level Editor, Event Editor, and Storyboard Editors. Items from the menus will sometimes be greyed out. This is because they are not valid for the editor you are working in. For example, there is no need to be grabbing objects when you're in the Storyboard Editor.

Here's a full breakdown of the various options:

File Menu

The FILE menu lets you load and save your Klik & Play games from the disk.

New game

Removes the current game from memory, and allows you to start again from scratch. If you've made any changes, you'll be given the option to save your game before it gets erased.

Load game

Loads an existing game from the disk.

Save game

Saves your game onto your disk. If it's a new game a file selector will appear so you can enter the name.

Save game as...

Saves your game under a different name.

Save stand alone game

This special command allows you to save any games you make as standard Windows ".EXE" files or Macintosh "Applications". This means that your games can be launched and run independently of the Klik & Play editor. Before you can save your game in this format, a license dialogue will appear. This explains the conditions under which your games can be distributed – see the Licensing Agreement at the beginning of the Klik & Play manual

After clicking OK from the license dialogue you'll be taken to a special file selector. From here, your game can be saved in one of two forms:

1. A normal application file which can be run direct from the Desktop. If you save using this system, Klik & Play will create these files:

- game.exe   Double click on this to run your game from
  Windows(no".EXE" for Mac users).
- game.gam   The main game file.
- game.img   All images from your game
- game.snd   Any sound samples you've used. If no samples were
  used, then this file will not be created.
- game.mus   Any music's used within your game. If no music is used
  this will not be created.

Saving a game in this format is great when you want to run games on your own hard disk. If you want to provide copies of your games to your friends you should use the second way of saving:

2. Save with installer. Your game will be saved out as an installable version. The files Klik & Play create are:

- setup.exe   The installer program.
- setup.bin   Data file for the installer
- game.dat   Compressed game data

So you would save these files onto a floppy disk and then give the disk to your friends. They can then install your game by running "setup.exe". The installer will allow your friend to select the directory into which your game will be installed and then it will create all the files and an icon.

Before you save your game in this format, make sure you've given the game a title (see the Game Set-up option from the Edit menu). This is because the installer uses the name of your game.

Quit

> Closes Klik & Play down, and returns you to the Windows/Macintosh Desktop. If you've made any changes to your game, you'll be given the option to save them before you leave.

Mac users also have the option to import PC games in this menu

Edit Menu

When used from the Storyboard, the Edit menu gives you a simple way of copying whole frames of your game from one place to another. The Level Editor deals with objects, and lets you "Clone" your objects several times on the screen.

Cut

> Grabs the selected object(s) or frame(s) from the screen, and stores them in the Klik & Play clipboard. After they've been grabbed, they'll be removed from their old position.

Copy

> Makes a copy of the highlighted object(s) or level(s), and saves them onto the Klik & Play clipboard. The originals remain untouched.

Paste

> Moves the contents of the Klik & Play clipboard into your game. You can paste as many copies as you like.

Delete

> Erases any selected object(s) or level(s) from the game.

Unselect:

> If you've highlighted some items by mistake, this option will abort the selection.

Select All

Highlights every object or level in the game. Any locked objects will be ignored.

Preferences

Preferences lets you fine tune the Klik & Play system to your own needs. Each Editor has it's own unique customisation features.

Storyboard/Level Editor Preferences

General Options

These affect the entire Klik & Play system.

Show handy hints

Displays a helpful message whenever you move the mouse over a screen icon. After a while you'll become familiar with the Klik & Play system, so you may wish to turn this feature off.

Boot-up straight into the Storyboard Editor

Calls the Storyboard Editor whenever you load Klik & Play, avoiding the normal start-up screen.

Boot-up straight into the Level Editor

Calls the Level Editor whenever Klik & Play is run, bypassing the start-up screen.

Sounds   Controls Klik & Play's sound system.

Play Music

Tick this option to allow music to be played in your game. Click it off to silence the music completely.

Play Samples

If this option is selected, any sampled sound effects in your game will be played through your speakers (if connected). If you turn it off, any sound actions will be ignored.

Graphics mode

Klik & Play lets you get the absolute maximum out of your computer. If your video card is up to it, you can use any Windows/Macintosh graphic mode from 16 to 16 million colours.

You can choose between the graphic "drivers" which operate all the objects within

Klik & Play – something you will have done when you installed the system. The optimised routines which were specially written for Klik & Play give you super fast action from Windows/Macintosh, we recommend you use this all the time, unless you own one of the few video cards that aren't compatible with these fast drivers. If this is the case you must use the slightly slower Standard Windows/Macintosh mode.

Level Editor Preferences

These options alter the way your objects will be displayed by the Level Editor, and allow you to position them using a grid.

Lock objects

Locks selected objects into their existing positions, this stops you from selecting them and dragging them out of place.

Quick Backdrop

When you're editing one of your games, you can easily grab one of the backdrops by mistake. This option allows you to lock all quick backdrop objects into their current position. So no matter how hard you try, you can't move them accidentally.

Backdrop

Sticks all current backdrop objects in their existing location. You can free them up by turning this option off.

Active   Locks the starting positions of all active objects on the play area, and stops you from selecting them from the Level Editor.

Game   Stops the selection of game objects like scores, lives and counters.

You can use any combination of these options to lock selected areas of your game into place. This speeds up the editing process enormously, as it reduces the risk of time consuming mistakes.

Animate active objects

Animates an active object whenever it's selected with the mouse. You may find that active objects become hard to select when they keep animating, so simply turn this option off to keep them stable.

Create automatic icons

Normally, whenever you edit an object, Klik & Play will change its icon to reflect the new shape. Sometimes the results can be rather disappointing,

so you can deactivate this feature, and draw the icon yourself.

Show co-ordinates

This continuously tracks the mouse pointer as it moves across the play area. The co-ordinates will be displayed in a small box on the status line. When you select the pop-up menu of an object, the coordinates give you the hot-spot co-ordinate of that object.

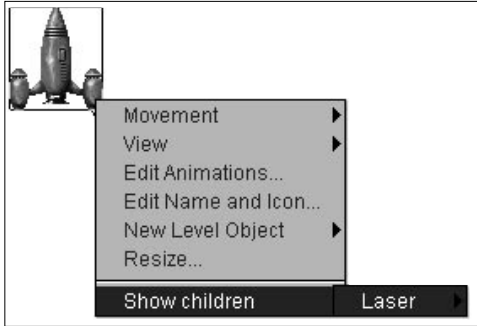**Show objects created within a game**

During a game new objects can be created. For example, bullets from a gun, explosions in a space game, random bonuses - all of these situations call for new objects during the course of a game. So these types of objects which are created during the game and not from the level editor when the game was initially laid out and designed, have to be editable in some way. When you select this option, any objects created during a game will become accessible within the level editor. They can be accessed in two ways (depending on how they were created in the first place):

Actual X,Y co-ordinates: Any objects created at specific X,Y co-ordinates will become visible in the level editor at exactly the place they were selected during the game's set-up.

Relative to another object: When objects like bullets are shot from a relative position of another object, they become linked to that object. Imagine a ship shooting lasers, the ship is the "parent" object and the lasers are the "children" objects. When the "Show objects created within a game" is selected, any "parent" objects will be displayed with a small arrow in their bottom right hand corner, like this:

To access the "child" objects you must select the pop-up menu of the parent object, at the bottom of the menu will appear a new menu option "Show Children":

Click on this and a list of children objects will be displayed in a sub-menu. Click on the child object you want to edit and then a list of situations will appear - these describe at what point during the game the objects will be created. Select the one you want and the child object will appear on screen, ready for editing. Now you can resize, change the animation and movements of the child object, and when you've made your changes select "Hide" from the child's pop-up menu to remove it from the display.

Note: If you move a child object from the position it appears, the child will take this new position as the place to appear during the game.

Grid   Lets you position your objects using a grid.

Grid

The grid provides a controlled way of moving objects around the play area. When it's activated, you'll only be able to position your objects in units of a single cell. If you try to move them somewhere else, they'll automatically jump back to the nearest grid line. Each cell is indicated by a single dot in the grid.
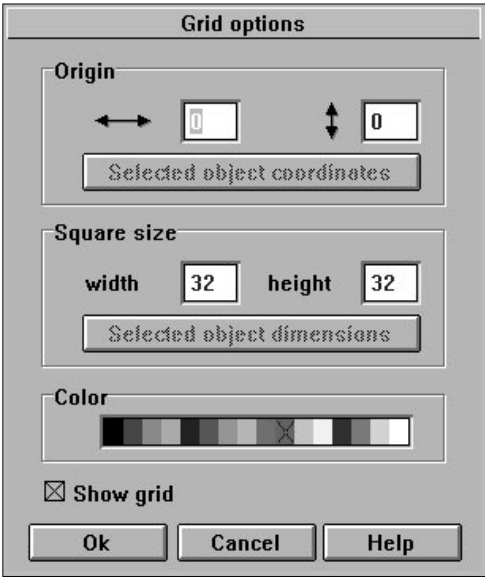
Before using these grids, you may find it helpful to set the hot-spot of your images to the top left corner of your objects. If you're positioning many types of objects, all with different hot-spots, things can start to get complicated. See Setting the Hot Spot of an object for more information.

Snap to
Tick this box to activate the grid.

Show grid
When this option is ticked the grid will be visible. If it's off, the grid will disappear.

Set-up
Sets the size, colour and origin of the grid.

Origin

Defines the starting point for all the coordinates used by the grid. It's normally set to the top left corner of the play area. Here's a simple diagram of the co-ordinate system:

If you want to start your grid from a specific position, it's easy to change the origin. Supposing you wished to place some blocks two pixels in from the left of the play area. You could do this by moving the origin to 2,0.

Selected object coordinates

If you've selected an object on the play area, you can click on this button to centre the origin on its current coordinates.

Square size

The grid is divided into small rectangular units called cells. As a default, each cell is exactly 32 points wide by 32 points high. You can change

these dimensions by typing in new values for the width and height, or by using the following option:

Selected object dimensions
The dimensions of the grid cell will be automatically generated from the selected object.

Colour
If you're having difficulty actually seeing the grid, you can change to a colour which will show up on the play area. Just click on a new colour from the palette selector, and the grid will change in front of your eyes.

More...
Jumps straight to the Preferences which are described earlier in the chapter (Storyboard / Level Editor Preferences)
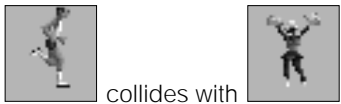
Event Editor Preferences

These Display options set up the Event Editor screen.

Display horizontal Icons
Displays the control icons as a horizontal strip, just below the events. If it's turned off, the icons will be shown as a vertical bar to the left.

Display object's Icon
The events will list any objects described in a condition with an icon, e.g.:

 collides with

Display object's name
The name of your objects will be used when displaying the events. You can even have a mixture of these two options, but at least one must be selected.

This slider allow you to control the size of the icons and boxes within the event editor. If you set a low density, the boxes will be large in size and much clearer. If they are bigger only a limited amount of row and columns will be viewable on screen. A high density setting gives you a great overview of all your events, but it makes it a little difficult to select and view icons.

Events   **Display empty events from Step Through Editor**
Shows any event, even if you haven't assigned any actions to them.

Alphabetically sort events
If this is ticked the events will be listed A-Z. The first letter of the first condition is used to sort the events. But be careful, if you've ordered events manually this option will lose you this order.

Create Default Events for new Objects:
Klik & Play automatically generates standard events for each object in your game. So a ball object will be set-up to bounce against your walls, and a spaceship will be tested to see if it's reached the edge of the screen. Although you can change these from the Event Editor, it's sometimes easier to start from scratch. You can therefore turn this feature off.

Game Run

Display Stop Button
Produces a stop icon when testing your games. This can be selected with the mouse to stop your game in its tracks. If it's not ticked you can stop your game by pressing 'Esc' or Alt+F4 (⌘ **Q** for Mac users).

Game Setup

Adds some credits to your game, and determines how it will be played on the screen.

Title   This title will be shown along the top of the window when your game is played. It will also be displayed by the "About" option from the game's Help menu.

Author   If you've written a terrific game, why not brag about it. Type in your name, and it will be displayed automatically as part of the credit screen. Note that Klik & Play will also add the word "By" before your name.

Window Maximised on boot-up
When your game is booted up, the window it's displayed in will open up to the full width and height of the screen. Use this if you want your game to take control of the display.

Heading when maximised
Displays your program's title along the top of the Window. If it's omitted, a maximised game will use the entire screen for the display.

Game to include menu bar
Includes a menu bar along with your game. This bar allows you to select options directly with the mouse. If you turn it off, you'll still be able to access these features using the keyboard short-cuts. So you can press F2 to restart the game, or Alt-F4 to quit.

Menu displayed on boot-up
Displays the menu bar when the game is started, and lets the user select an option before playing. If the menu is not displayed on boot-up, it can be brought into view by pressing F8.

Border Colour
Changes the colour of the border area around your game. This option will only take effect when the game is played. It won't change the appearance of the editing screen at all.

Multi-samples

If multi-samples is ticked Klik & Play can mix samples together during a game, as opposed to the normal single sample playing which is standard for Windows/Macintosh. When Klik & Play mixes samples it has to do the mixing first before it plays the newly merged sound, this can take a small amount of time, so some games will benefit from this system and others will be better left as single sample games.

Panic key

Hit this key to hide the game's display, great for looking busy when your boss walks in!

Players   From the dialogue that can be called up with this button, you can define how each player in your game is allowed to control their on-screen characters. These "defaults" can be changed by the users during the game using a similar dialogue. You can also define the default score and number of lives for all players.

Create Game Instructions

Lets you type in some instructions which will be displayed from your game's help menu. When it's called up, you'll get the following dialogue box:

Create Game Instructions
Type
No Instructions Edit...
View...
OK   Cancel   Help

Click on the selector bar to choose the type of file you want to create.

"Text (.TXT)"

will create and display your instructions from Windows Notepad. Mac users can also create a similar text document

"Write Document"

will call Windows Write, and allow you to generate fancy documentation for your game.

"Helpfile (.HLP)"

will let you use a standard Windows helpfile for your games. These can't be created directly from Klik & Play. You'll need a separate third party program to do this.

Change Icon

Changes the icon used to represent your game. If you've saved your game as a stand-alone program, this icon can be displayed on the Windows/Macintosh desktop.Selecting this button will bring up a cut down version of the standard Klik & Play Picture Editor.

The options are exactly the same as those we've previously explained in Section 1.2. But since the icon is destined for Windows/Macintosh use, you can only include a maximum of sixteen colours in your icon. So the palette window reflects this.

Level Setup option

The Storyboard editor makes it easy to create vast multi-level games. Each level can have its own title, background music, password and play area. These controls allow you to customise your games still further.

Selecting Level Set-up brings up the following screen:

Title   Here you can enter a title for the current level. The title will appear in the top line of the window when your game is run.

Password

Each level can have its own individual password. So when the player finally reaches level 99 of your space adventure, he can jot down the password and jump straight in at level 100!

Play area size

The size of the play area doesn't need to be 640 by 480 pixels. It can be anything you like! You can adjust the size by typing in a new width and height for your play area. It's easiest to do this before starting the design of the level, especially if you're intending to reduce the size.

Objects Menu (Level Editor Only)

Affects all the objects in your game, and changes the way they will be saved, loaded, and displayed by the Level Editor.

Show objects

In a Moveable Window

Displays the Objects in a standard window, which can be moved around, and re-sized as required.
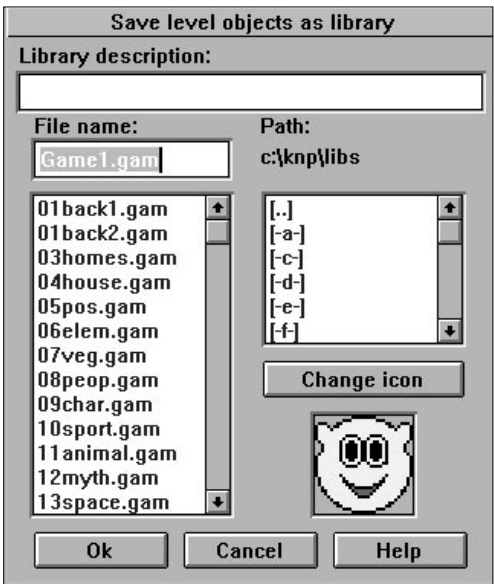
In a Fixed Window

Creates a window for your objects near the top of the Level Editor. You can scroll through the objects using the arrow icons to the right.

Pick objects from a game

You may have come across games which use new objects that aren't in your standard libraries. This option allows you to grab these objects into you own games. When it's selected, the chosen game objects will be loaded into the Object Shelf, ready for use.

Save game as a library

If you've created your own objects, you can save them into a new library with this option. They'll now be at your fingertips, whenever you load Klik & Play. Here's the save library dialogue you'll see when you select this option:

Library description

Any text entered here will appear as handy hints when you move over the new library in the editor. It's important to make this as clear as possible so that other users will understand what your new library is about.

Filename

The filename the new the library should be saved under. Use standard eight characters with a ".GAM" extension. Without this extension Klik & Play will fail to recognise the library.

Path Shows the directory where your library will be stored.

Change Icon

Changes the image that appears in the library list. So if you've created a bunch of flower objects, you can draw a nice bowl of Petunias for your icon. (See Editing an Object's Icon about how to use the various drawing options.)

Game Menu

Let's you call up the various parts of Klik & Play and run your games. Depending on your current location, some options may be greyed out, and therefore cannot be used.

Storyboard
> Jumps to the Storyboard Editor

Level Editor
> Calls up the Level Editor

Step Through Editor
> Runs the Step Through Editor

Event Editor
> Goes to the Event Editor

Jump to Level
> Loads the chosen level into the Level Editor (only selectable from the Level Editor)

Play Game as finished
> Plays the entire game from the start (only selectable from the Storyboard Editor)

Play Level as finished
> Plays an entire level. (Only selectable from the Storyboard and Level Editors. You must highlight the level you want to play as finished when you access this option from the Storyboard Editor)