

Setting Up Gmax

Setting Up Gmax – Initial Settings

Introduction

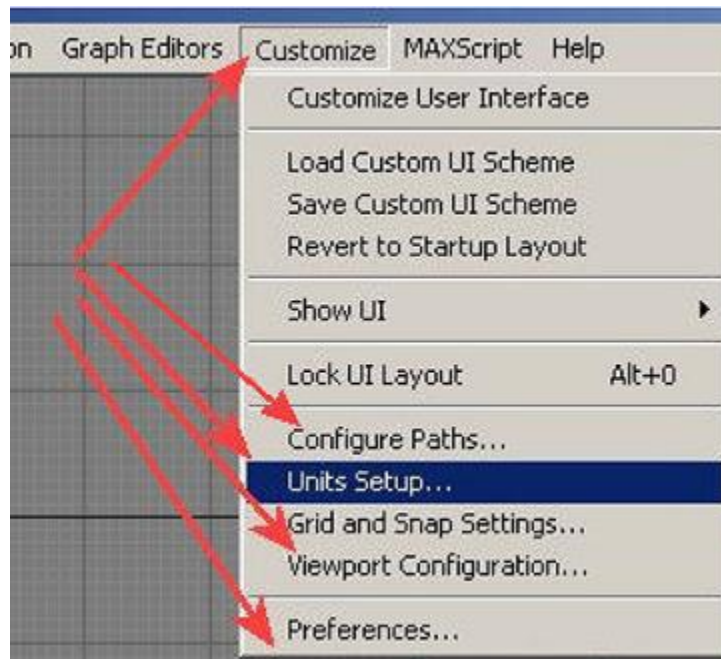
It is important to set up gmax correctly before making a model. Once you have all the settings correct, save the blank file as gmaxstart.gmax – when gmax starts it looks for this file and if found, will load the settings for you. Alternatively, load a previous model, delete this model and start making a new one. This way, all the settings are retained and you do not have to go through the setting up procedure again.

Unit Settings

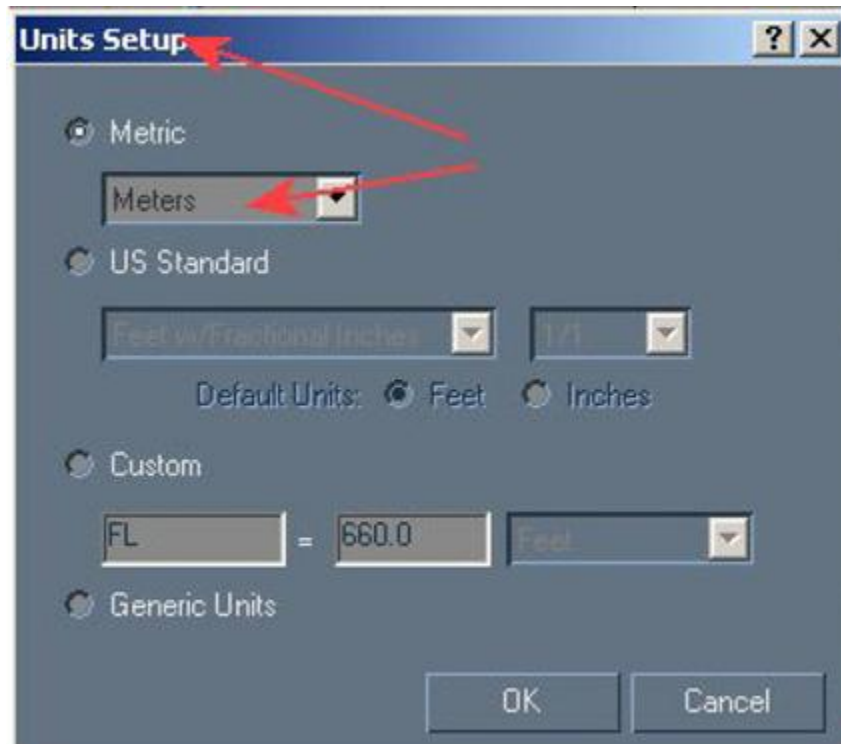
We should set:

- the units to Metric;
- the grid to a fine scale, say 0.01 metres;
- Auto increment to on, and
- Auto backup to three files, and every 5 minutes.

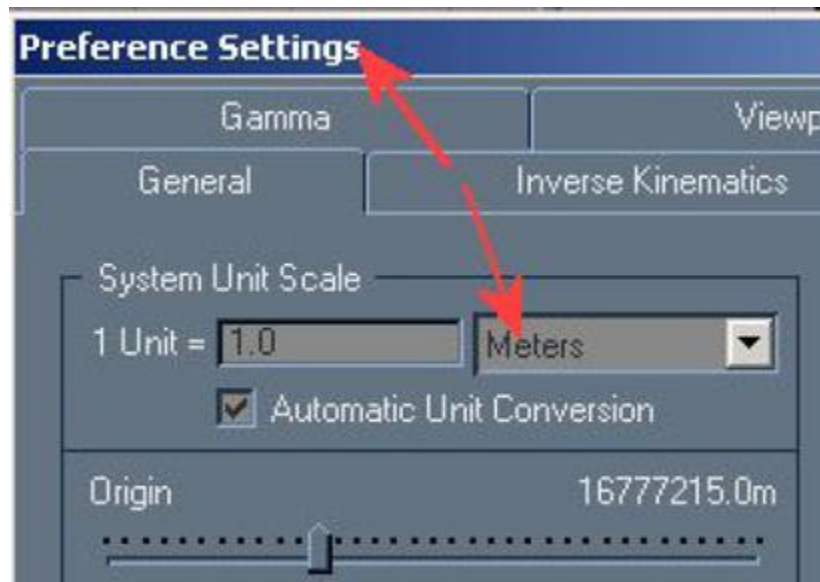
Use the Customise Menu and open each highlighted sub menu in turn.



From the Units Setup, set the units to metres. If you want animation to work correctly, this **MUST** be set to metric.



From the Preferences Settings, also set the units to Metres. This is the units setting for actually making the model. You can of course use Imperial units here if you wish, it is much easier to use metric, you need to know dimensions in metres to enter in the config file.

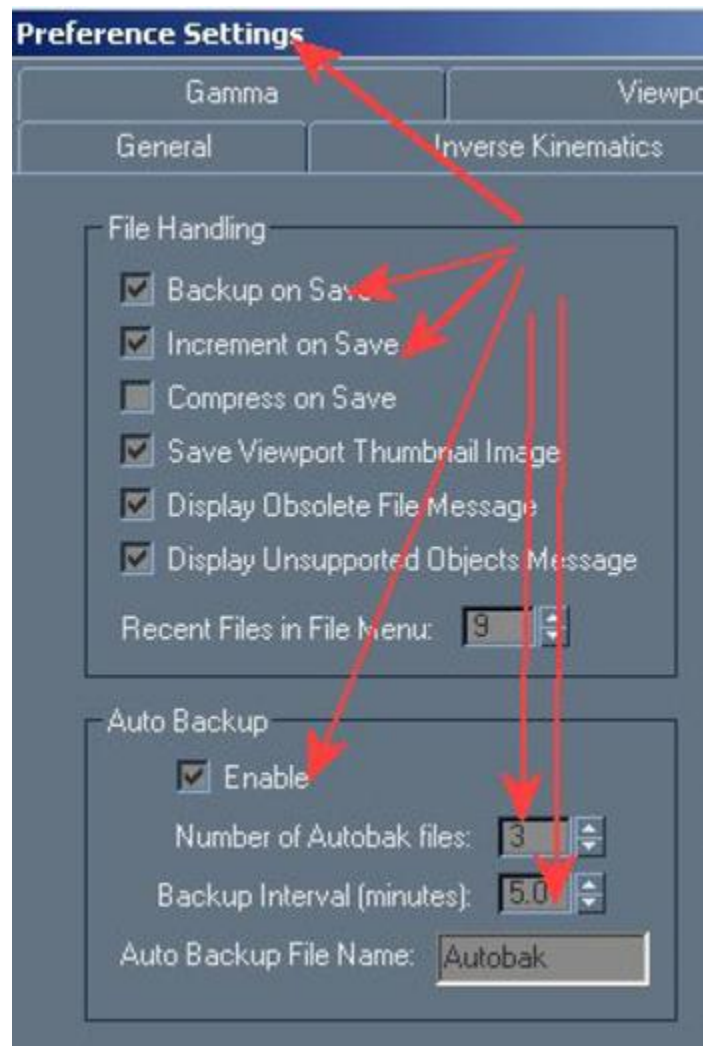


File Settings

From the Preferences Settings, tick all of the boxes below. This will make incremental saves, giving you a progressive number of files, so if you have a problem, you can go back a file or two.

The backup on Save also makes a backup file if you wish, but the Auto Backup saves every 5 minutes instead, in case Gmax crashes. You do not lose more than 5 minutes of work.

You find these backup files in the Autobak directory, as Autobak1, 2, 3. You can look at the time stamp for each file to determine the most recent. You may need to turn on “all File” when trying to load the file into Gmax, so you can actually see the files in the list, as they do not have the usual .gmax extension.

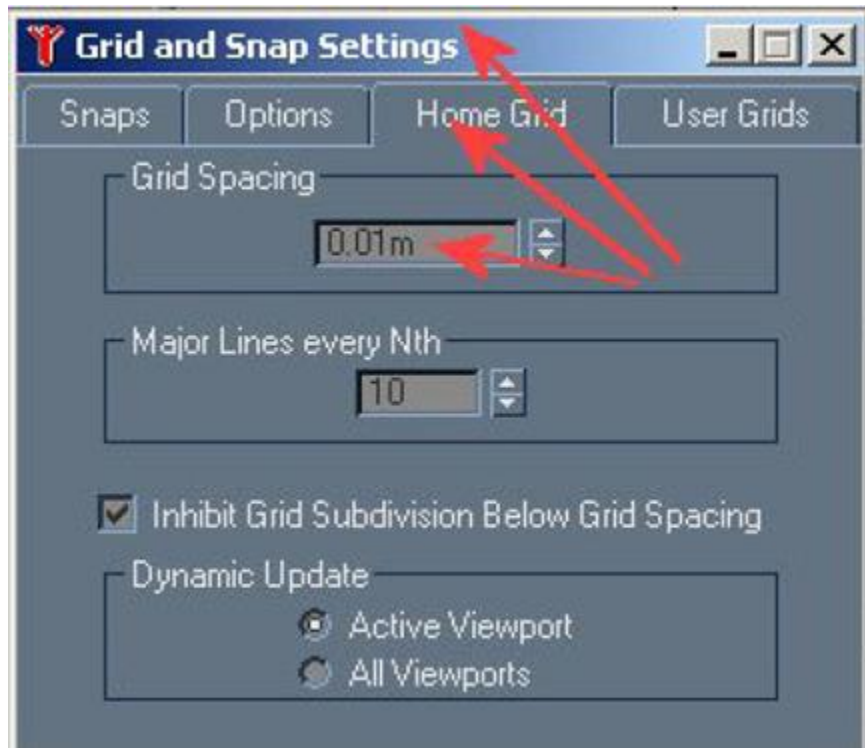


Remember after loading a file from The Autobak directory, when you resave it, make sure it is saved to your model directory, not back into the Autobak directory, or you may have trouble finding it next time.

Grid Settings

Next is to set the grid settings. These should be set to a small value say 0.01 metres, so you can see a fine grid as you zoom in. Set this in the Grid and Snap Settings – Home Grid.

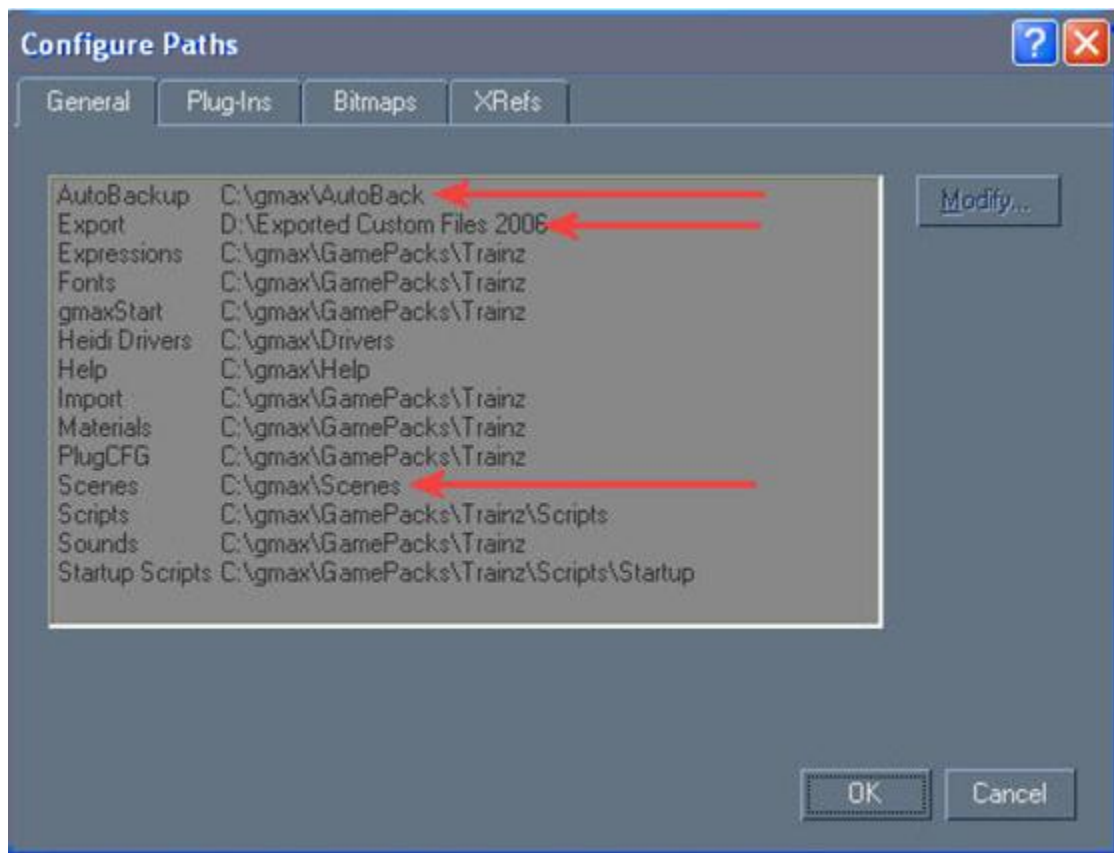
As you zoom in, the fine grid will display and help you with working out placement or sizes, and also provide a fine grid to snap to when drawing lines. As you zoom out, the small grid vanishes, and never intrudes on the workspace. You will find in User view, the grid viewed at a shallow angle fills the screen with lines and it is easier to turn the grid off in the viewport, to see the model better.



Path Settings

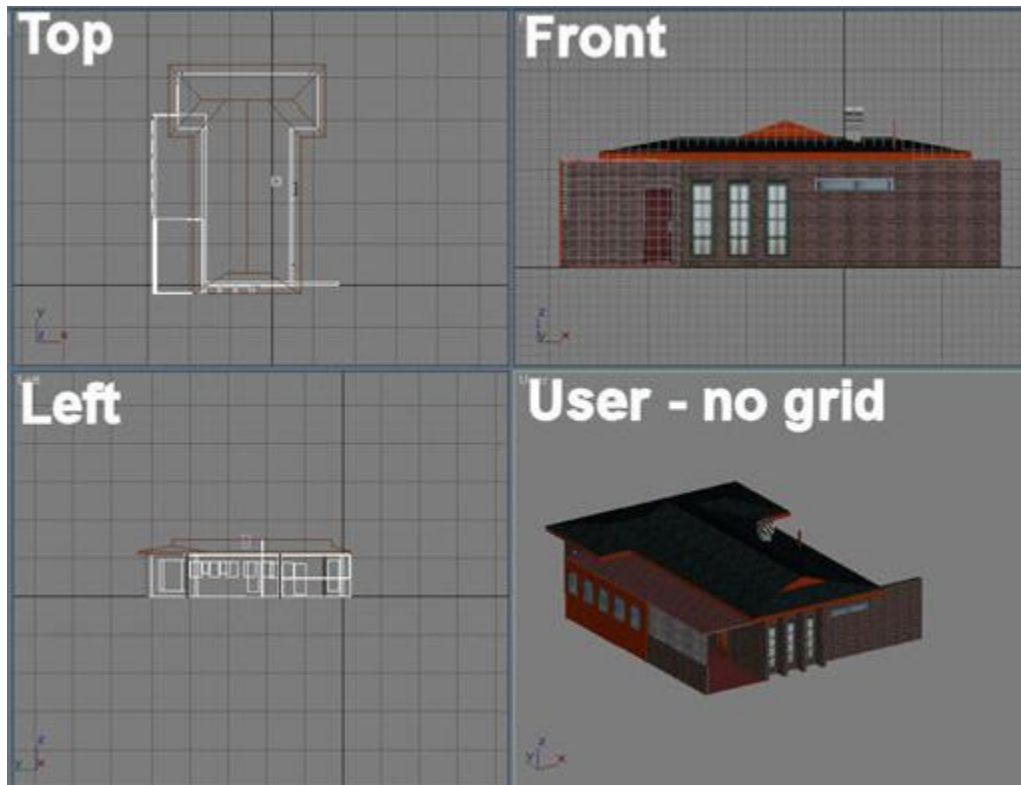
You should set the paths to your file locations. I keep my model files in the Scenes directory, and export to an export directory on my D drive. While it was convenient to export directly to the Custom directory in early versions of Trainz, with TRS2006 or later versions, it is easiest to make a special export directory, and place a link on your desktop. When the model is exported, it is easy to find it in that directory, and drag it into the Content Manager (CMP) window of Trainz and commit it.

The following diagram shows the most useful settings. Note I prefer to use the gmax main directory, not the Gamepack directory set up in the Trainz Asset Creation Studio installation, the path is too long.



Viewports

Finally, I set my viewports as in the following diagram. The User view is most useful, if you choose a part of the model, you can rotate about that part to view the model from different directions. The default Perspective view wants to rotate about the origin, and is not very useful for large models.



Ian Manion (Vulcan) April 2008

Amendment Notes and Comments

27/04/08 Initial issue.

26 September 2011 revised