



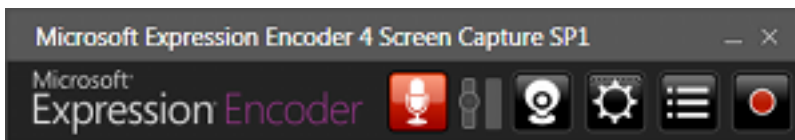
Screencasting with Microsoft Expression Encoder 4

Screencasting refers to the process of recording what you see on your computer screen (combined with audio from your microphone). This is a guide to using Microsoft Expression Encoder 4 to record a screencast of a Greenfoot scenario.

You can download the free edition of Expression Encoder 4 from Microsoft using the following web address: <http://www.microsoft.com/download/en/details.aspx?id=24601> — it works on XP, Vista and Windows 7. You do *not* need the Pro edition for short screencasts.

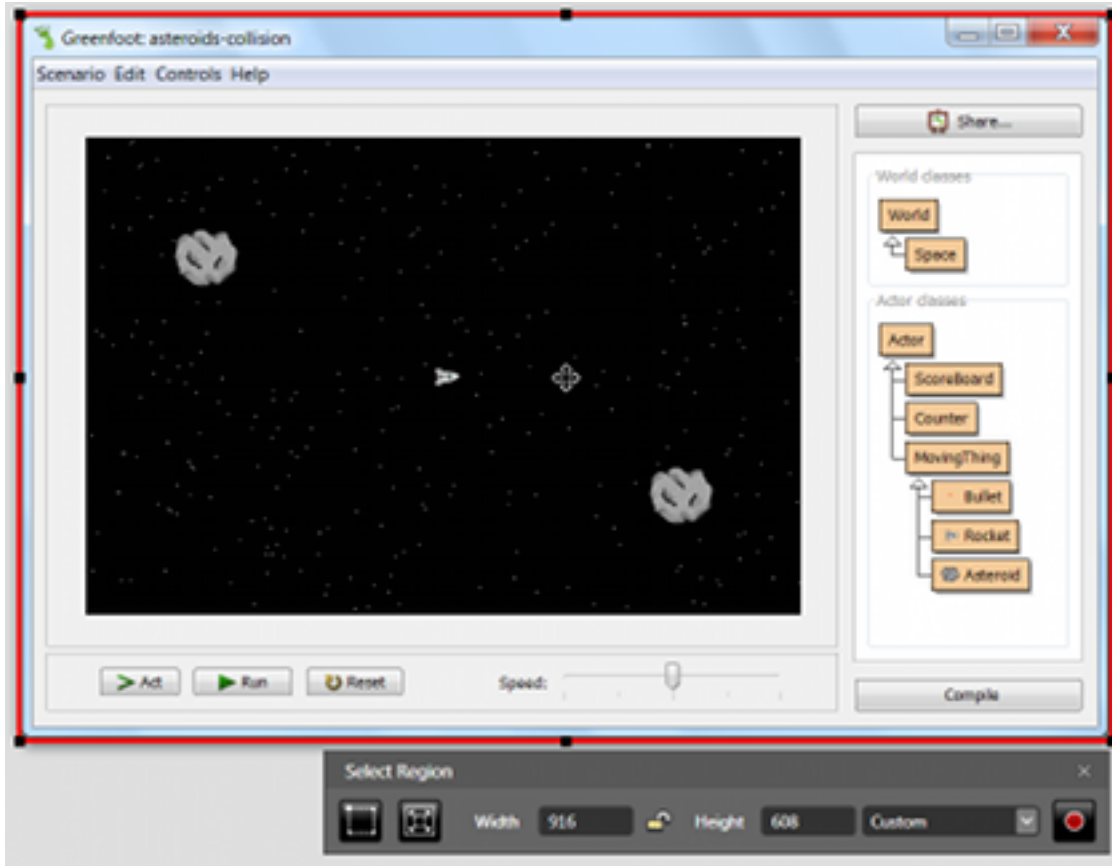
1 Recording

Once you have installed Expression Encoder, you should have an entry in your programs menu called “Microsoft Expression”. One of the programs in this group should be “Microsoft Expression Encoder 4 Screen Capture” — this is the program that you can use to record your screen. If you load this, you should see a small thin window like this:



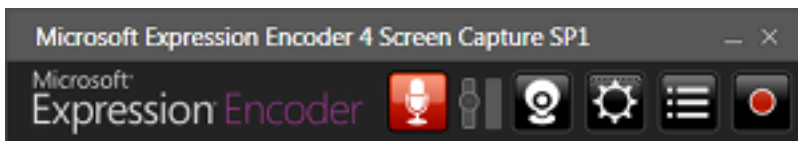
Make sure that the audio is turned on (red), and the webcam is turned off (black), as above. You can adjust more options by clicking the cog, but the default options should be what you need: by default, it will record your screen, sounds from your microphone (i.e. you, speaking), and sounds that are coming through your speaker (i.e. sounds from your scenario).

Once you click the record button, you will be given a chance to set the recording area for the video. Make sure Greenfoot is showing (even though the screen is greyed during this process, you can interact with other programs normally) then click on the leftmost button (the dashed rectangle) on the “Select Region” window. If you hover over the Greenfoot window, the red rectangle should automatically snap to be around the Greenfoot window — left click to select this as the recording region:



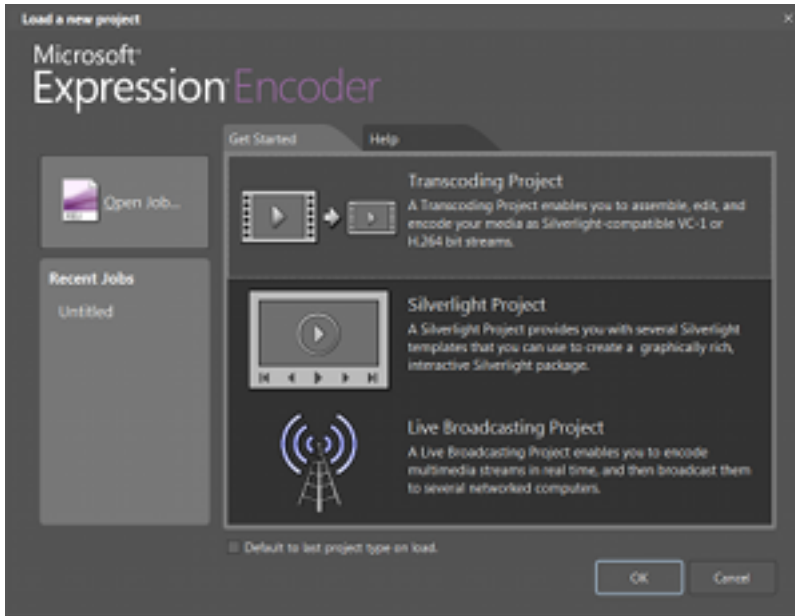
Make sure not to move or resize the Greenfoot window during recording, as this recording area is fixed for the duration of the recording. You can click the record button (the rightmost button) to start recording. You should get a countdown on screen, after which the recording is taking place. By default, you press Ctrl, Shift and F12 together to stop recording, and this will also save the output file.

Once the recording is finished, the program automatically puts the file in a directory "ExpressionEncoderCapture Output" in your "My Documents" folder. You can see the clips and exact directory by clicking the Capture Manager button (second from the right) on the original Expression Capture window:



2 Processing

To convert the screen capture file into a proper video format (with a smaller file size), and perform any necessary edits, you can use Expression Encoder itself. It is in the "Microsoft Expression" program group, called "Microsoft Expression Encoder 4". When it loads up, it will ask which project you want:



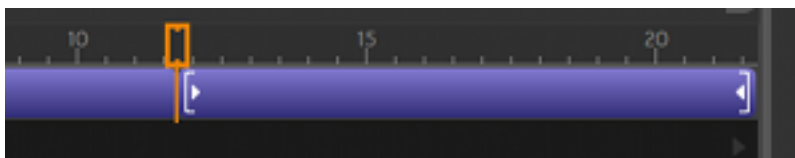
Select the top item, Transcoding Project. Then when Expression Encoder loads, select File, Import, and then find your Screen Capture Output directory (described at the end of last section) and import your screen capture recording.

2.1 Editing

Microsoft have a video available which begins by demonstrating how to perform simple edits in Expression Encoder: <http://tinyurl.com/3odwjo2> — the way to edit is to move the video “playhead” (the big orange rectangle hovering above the purple video bar beneath the video) to where you want to cut, then clicking the “Insert Edit at Playhead” button:



Alternatively, you can right-click on the playhead and select “Add Edit” to achieve the same effect. This will split the video into two clips, which you can see when you hover over the purple bar: the white brackets show where the clip extends from, and to:



You can then right-click on any clip in the purple bar, and select “Remove Clip” to get rid of that portion of the video. So you can use this to remove any unwanted parts of the video at the start and end of the clip, in order to

trim down to 1 minute. You make an edit at the start and end of the part you want to keep, then remove the two clips (at the beginning and end) that you don't want to keep, leaving the middle clip.

2.2 Joining

You may want to join parts of two screencasts into one. This may be because you did not get a perfect recording, but often it's because you want to show different parts of your scenario, and need to play it several times to show the different features — and you don't want to take up your 1 minute of video showing the transition. The easiest way to join is to first import one screencast, then right-click on the purple bar and select one of “Add Source at Start”/“Add Source at End”/“Add Source at Playhead”. Then you can select another screencast and add it in. After this you will probably want to edit the clip using the process described in the previous section.

2.3 Saving

Once your video is down to under a minute, and you are happy with it, you will need to perform one last step to save it into the right format. The video will be saved into a directory shown in the Output tab on the right-hand side (if you've closed this, select the Window menu and then select Output). To actually create the video, select the File menu and then select Encode.

Make sure to watch your video all the way through after you have created it. If you find that it is low quality (with odd messy rectangles appearing), you may want to increase the quality settings in the “Video” part of the “Encode” settings on the right (again, Window menu and then select Encode). One setting that seems to produce a decent video with small file size is changing the mode to “VBR Quality”, with Quality set to 100. You can also try other settings, but remember to keep the file size within the competition limits.

3 Final Notes

Do not worry about adding any special effects or title screens and so on. The competition is about your Greenfoot scenario, not your video editing skills. Create a video that shows the most interesting features of your Greenfoot scenario so that the judges can get a good idea of what you've done.