Flowify Saver Pro Documentation

Version: 0.9.0
Author: BERG
Blender Version: 4.3.0 and above
Category: System
License: GPL-2.0-or-later
Tagline: Streamline your Blender workflow with automated saves and easy file management.

Flowify Saver Pro is a powerful add-on designed to enhance your Blender workflow by providing robust auto-save, backup, and file management tools. With a sleek interface accessible via the 3D View header and N-panel, it offers versioned or timestamped backups, recent file access, and customizable save options. This documentation guides you through installation, usage, and troubleshooting to ensure a seamless experience.

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Installation

Requirements

- *Blender 4.3.0 or higher.*
- *Windows, macOS, or Linux.*
- *Write permissions for the Blender user scripts directory (e.g.,* `C:\Users\<YourUser>\AppData\Roaming\Blender Foundation\Blender\4.3\scripts\addons` *on Windows).*

Steps

1. ***Download the Add-on***:

   - *Obtain* `flowify_saver_pro.zip` *from the official distribution source.*
2. ***Install in Blender***:

- ○ *Open Blender 4.3.*
- ○ *Go to **Edit > Preferences > Extensions**.*
- ○ *Click **Install**, navigate to `flowify_saver_pro.zip`, and select it.*
- ○ *Click **Install Extension**.*
- ○ *Find "System: Flowify Saver Pro" in the Extensions list and check the box to enable it.*
3. ***Verify Installation**:*

- ○ *Confirm the add-on appears in the Extensions list with:*
  - ■ *Name: Flowify Saver Pro*
  - ■ *Version: 0.9.0*
  - ■ *Maintainer: BERG*
  - ■ *Permissions: Files*
- ○ *Look for the Flowify icon (●/○) in the 3D View header (top of the viewport).*

Notes

- *Ensure no older versions of Flowify Saver Pro are installed. Remove them via **Edit > Preferences > Extensions** before installing.*
- *The add-on creates a database (`flowify_versions.db`) and logs (`flowify_pro_logs/`) in the Blender scripts directory for backup tracking and debugging.*

Features

Flowify Saver Pro offers the following features to streamline file management:

- ***Auto-Save**: Automatically save your project at configurable intervals, either overwriting the current file or creating versioned/timestamped backups. Auto-save is disabled by default and must be enabled manually. Versioned backups replace the existing version number (e.g., `project_v009.blend` auto-saves as `project_v010.blend`). Timestamped backups replace the existing timestamp (e.g., `project_backup_04052025_11-10-32.blend` auto-saves as `project_backup_04052025_11-11-15.blend`).*
- ***Manual Backup**: Create instant backups with versioned (`_v001`) or timestamped (`_backup_DDMMYYYY_HH-MM-SS`) suffixes.*
- ***Save As**: Save your project to a new location with a file picker. The filename automatically receives a `.blend` extension if omitted or incorrect (e.g., `project` or `project.txt` becomes `project.blend`).*
- ***Open Project**: Open any `.blend` file with a file picker.*
- ***Open Recent**: Quickly access up to 10 recent `.blend` files from Blender's `recent-files.txt`.*
- ***Open Backup Folder**: Open the directory of the current project or a default folder in your system's file explorer.*

- **Customizable Settings**: *Configure auto-save intervals, modes (Overwrite or Suffix), and backup patterns (Versioned or Timestamped).*
- **Intuitive UI**: *Access all features via a header icon dropdown or the N-panel in the 3D View.*
- **Professional Notifications**: *Receive sleek, non-intrusive notifications in the 3D View for saves, backups, errors, and warnings. Notifications appear in the top-right corner with a modern design (rounded corners, semi-transparent dark background, color-coded icons) and fade in/out automatically after 3 seconds.*

User Interface

Flowify Saver Pro integrates seamlessly into Blender's 3D View with two primary interfaces:
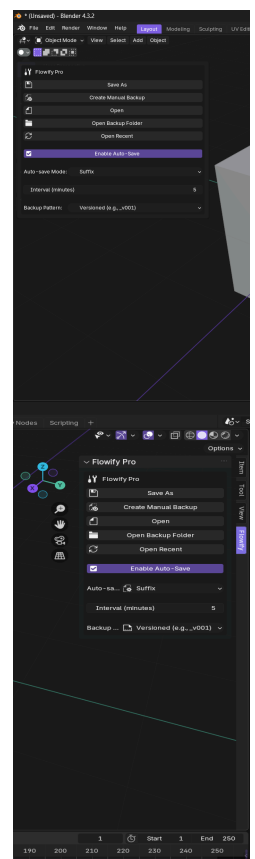
Header Icon and Popover Panel

- **Location**: *3D View header (top of the viewport).*
- **Appearance**: *A circular icon (● when auto-save is enabled, ○ when disabled).*
- **Function**: *Click the icon to open a popover panel with all controls and settings.*
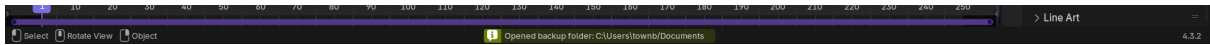- **Screenshot**: *See* `screenshots/header_dropdown.png`.

N-Panel

- **Location**: *3D View > N-panel (sidebar) > "Flowify Pro" tab.*
- **Appearance**: *A dedicated tab with a* `TOOL_SETTINGS` *icon, mirroring the popover panel's controls.*
- **Function**: *Provides an alternative access point for all features, ideal for docked workflows.*
- **Screenshot**: *See* `screenshots/n_panel.png`.

Notifications

- **Location**: *Top-right corner of the 3D View.*
- **Appearance**: *A modern, static notification with:*
  - *Semi-transparent dark background and rounded corners.*
  - *White text for title (e.g., "Flowify Saver Pro") and message (e.g., "Auto-saved in 'project_backup_04052025_11-11-15.blend'").*
  - *Color-coded icon (blue for* `INFO`, *yellow for* `WARNING`, *red for* `ERROR`).
  - *Smooth fade-in/fade-out animation, auto-dismissing after 3 seconds.*
- **Function**: *Displays feedback for auto-saves, manual backups, file operations, and errors without following the cursor or blocking interaction.*

- **Screenshot**: See `screenshots/notification.png` (TODO: Capture a screenshot of the notification in Blender and place it in `screenshots/notification.png`).

Both interfaces offer identical functionality, including buttons for Save As, Create Manual Backup, Open, Open Recent, Open Backup Folder, and settings for auto-save.

Usage Instructions

Follow these steps to use Flowify Saver Pro effectively:

1. Save As

- **Purpose**: Save your project to a new file.
- **Steps**:
    1. Click the Flowify icon (●/○) in the 3D View header or open the N-panel > Flowify Pro.
    2. Click **Save As** (`FILE_TICK` icon).
    3. In the file picker, choose a directory and enter a filename (e.g., `project`, `project.blend`, or `project.txt`).
    4. Click **Save As**.
- **Result**: The project is saved with a `.blend` extension (e.g., `project.blend`), and a notification appears in the 3D View (e.g., "Project saved: project.blend"). If no extension or a non-`.blend` extension is provided, `.blend` is automatically appended.
- **Note**: Invalid filenames (e.g., containing `<>:"/\|?*`) or directories without write permissions trigger an error notification.

2. Create Manual Backup

- **Purpose**: Create a backup of the current project with a versioned or timestamped suffix.
- **Steps**:
    1. Ensure the project is saved (has a filepath).
    2. Click **Create Manual Backup** (`FILE_BACKUP` icon) in the popover or N-panel.
- **Result**: A backup is created (e.g., `project_v001.blend` or `project_backup_04052025_11-10-32.blend`), and a notification confirms.
- **Note**: If the file is unsaved, a warning notification appears.

3. Auto-Save

- **Purpose**: Automatically save the project at set intervals.
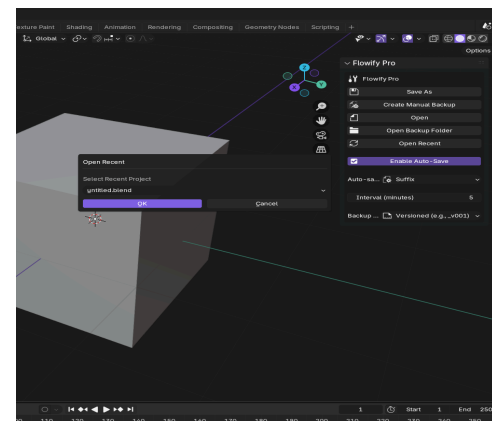- **Steps**:

1. In the popover or N-panel, enable **Auto-Save** (toggle from `CHECKBOX_DEHLT` to `CHECKBOX_HLT`).
2. Set **Interval (minutes)** (e.g., 5).
3. Choose **Auto-save Mode**:
   - **Overwrite**: Overwrites the current file.
   - **Suffix**: Creates a new file with a suffix (default).
4. Select **Backup Pattern** (for Suffix mode):
   - **Versioned**: Adds `_v001`, `_v002`, etc., replacing the current file's version if applicable (e.g., `project_v009.blend` becomes `project_v010.blend`).
   - **Timestamped**: Adds `_backup_DDMMYYYY_HH-MM-SS`, replacing the current file's timestamp if applicable (e.g., `project_backup_04052025_11-10-32.blend` becomes `project_backup_04052025_11-11-15.blend`).

- **Result**: After enabling, auto-saves occur at each interval, and a notification confirms in the 3D View (e.g., "Auto-saved in 'project_v010.blend'" or "Auto-saved in 'project_backup_04052025_11-11-15.blend'").
- **Note**: Auto-save is disabled by default. Enable it manually to start auto-saving. Auto-save skips unsaved files, showing a warning notification.

4. Open Project

- **Purpose**: Open a `.blend` file.
- **Steps**:
  1. Click **Open** (`FILE` icon) in the popover or N-panel.
  2. Select a `.blend` file in the file picker.
  3. Click **Open**.
- **Result**: The file opens, and a notification confirms (e.g., "Opened: project.blend").
- **Note**: Non-`.blend` files or nonexistent files trigger an error notification.

5. Open Recent

- **Purpose**: Open a recently used `.blend` file.
- **Steps**:
  1. Click **Open Recent** (`FILE_REFRESH` icon).
  2. In the dialog, select a file from the list (up to 10 recent files).
  3. Click **OK**.
- **Result**: The file opens, and a notification confirms.
- **Note**: If no recent files exist, a warning notification appears. See `screenshots/open_recent.png`.

6. Open Backup Folder

- **Purpose**: Open the directory of the current project or a default folder.
- **Steps**:
    1. Click **Open Backup Folder** (`FILE_FOLDER` icon).
- **Result**: The folder opens in your system's file explorer (e.g., File Explorer on Windows), and a notification confirms.
- **Note**: For unsaved files, it opens `~/Documents`.

Configuration Options

Customize Flowify Saver Pro via the popover or N-panel:

- **Auto-Save** (`CHECKBOX_HLT`/`CHECKBOX_DEHLT`):
    - Enable or disable auto-saving. Disabled by default.
- **Interval (minutes)** (`TIME` icon):
    - Set the auto-save frequency (1–60 minutes, default: 5).
- **Auto-save Mode** (`FILE_CACHE` icon):
    - **Overwrite**: Saves over the current file.
    - **Suffix**: Creates a new file with a suffix (default).
- **Backup Pattern** (`OUTLINER_DATA_GP_LAYER` icon):
    - **Versioned**: Uses incrementing numbers (e.g., `_v001`), replacing the current file's version if applicable.
    - **Timestamped**: Uses date/time (e.g., `_backup_04052025_11-10-32`), replacing the current file's timestamp if applicable.

Changes are applied instantly and persist across Blender sessions.

Troubleshooting

Common issues and solutions:

Add-on Not Loading

- **Symptom**: "Flowify Saver Pro" doesn't appear in Extensions or the 3D View header.
- **Solution**:
    - Ensure Blender is version 4.3.0 or higher.
    - Reinstall `flowify_saver_pro.zip` via **Edit > Preferences > Extensions**.
    - Delete residual files:
        - `C:\Users\<YourUser>\AppData\Roaming\Blender Foundation\Blender\4.3\extensions\user_default\flowify_saver_pro`
        - `C:\Users\<YourUser>\AppData\Roaming\Blender Foundation\Blender\4.3\scripts\addons\flowify_versions.db`

- `C:\Users\<YourUser>\AppData\Roaming\Blender Foundation\Blender\4.3\scripts\addons\flowify_pro_logs`
    - Check the System Console (Window > Toggle System Console) for errors.

Notifications Not Appearing

- **Symptom**: No notifications appear in the 3D View for saves or backups.
- **Solution**:
    - Ensure the add-on is enabled in **Edit > Preferences > Extensions**.
    - Check `flowify_pro.log` in `C:\Users\<YourUser>\AppData\Roaming\Blender Foundation\Blender\4.3\scripts\addons\flowify_pro_logs` for errors (e.g., "Failed to draw notification").
    - Verify you're in the 3D View when triggering actions (e.g., manual backup).
    - Restart Blender.
    - Test with a manual backup, as auto-save is now disabled by default.

Auto-Save Not Working

- **Symptom**: No auto-saves occur, even after enabling.
- **Solution**:
    - Ensure **Auto-Save** is enabled (`CHECKBOX_HLT`) in the popover or N-panel.
    - Verify the project is saved (has a filepath).
    - Check write permissions for the project directory.
    - Set **Interval (minutes)** to a low value (e.g., 1) for testing.
    - Disable Blender's default auto-save (**Edit > Preferences > Save & Load > Auto Save Timer = 0**).

Save As Saves Without .blend Extension

- **Symptom**: Saving a project with **Save As** results in a file without `.blend` (e.g., `project` instead of `project.blend`).
- **Solution**:
    - Ensure you're using the latest add-on version (0.9.0).
    - The add-on now automatically appends `.blend` to filenames. If the issue persists, reinstall the add-on.
    - Check `flowify_pro.log` for errors related to filename handling.
    - Test with a simple filename (e.g., `project`) in a local directory.

Backup Creation Failed

- **Symptom**: Error "Backup creation failed" when using Timestamped pattern.
- **Solution**:
    - Ensure the project is saved to a local directory (not OneDrive).

- Check `flowify_pro.log` for detailed error messages (e.g., invalid file name or regex failure).
- Verify the file name doesn't contain invalid characters.
- Reinstall the add-on with the latest version.
- Test with a simple file name (e.g., `project.blend`) in a local directory.

Incorrect Version or Timestamp Increments

- **Symptom**: Auto-save creates files like `project_v009_v001.blend` or `project_backup_04052025_11-10-32_001.blend` incorrectly.
- **Solution**:
  - Ensure you're using the latest add-on version (0.9.0).
  - Verify **Backup Pattern** is set correctly (Versioned or Timestamped).
  - Reinstall the add-on if the issue persists.
  - Check `flowify_pro.log` for errors related to suffix generation.

Recent Files Not Showing

- **Symptom**: "Open Recent" shows "No recent files".
- **Solution**:
  - Ensure **Edit > Preferences > Save & Load > Recent Files** is greater than 0.
  - Save a `.blend` file to populate `recent-files.txt`.

OneDrive Issues

- **Symptom**: Errors when saving to OneDrive folders (e.g., `C:\Users\<YourUser>\OneDrive`).
- **Solution**:
  - Pause OneDrive sync during Blender sessions.
  - Save projects to a local directory (e.g., `C:\Users\<YourUser>\Desktop`).

Support

For questions, bug reports, or feature requests:

- **Contact**: BERG (replace with your preferred contact method, e.g., email or website).
- **Logs**: Include `flowify_pro.log` from `C:\Users\<YourUser>\AppData\Roaming\Blender Foundation\Blender\4.3\scripts\addons\flowify_pro_logs` when reporting issues.
- **System Info**: Provide your Blender version, OS, and a description of the issue.

Thank you for using Flowify Saver Pro! Streamline your workflow and keep your projects safe with confidence.