

Documentation on smoothing

Draft

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1 Introduction

The crossfire graphical interface and internal map handling relies on a map made of square. No object can lies between squares. A typical square has the size of a standing player or other humanoid sized creature (Goblins, Orcs, Gnolls, Dwarvens, Elves,...). This lead to an awfull interface concerning terrains transitions (Sea shores, road borders, mountains, a.s.o)

There are 2 ways to get rid of this problem:

- Suppress the square by square behaviour of map handling. This means rework half of crossfire code and redraw all maps
- Use some magic illusion.

2 What is smoothing

Large discussions in the cf-devel mailing list was around a document on terrain transitions available on <http://www.gamedev.net/reference/articles/article934.asp>. It explains a way of handling terrain transition in cases like the one of crossfire.

Consider the smoothing in crossfire as the ability for an object to draw itself partially above the surrounding squares. For example, grass could overlap just a bit the road next to it, a moutain would'nt end abruptly but instead would have some hills above the neighbor sand.

3 How to smooth?

Next of this document is divided in 2 parts. Drawers should be interrested only in first part while developpers may be interrested in both parts.

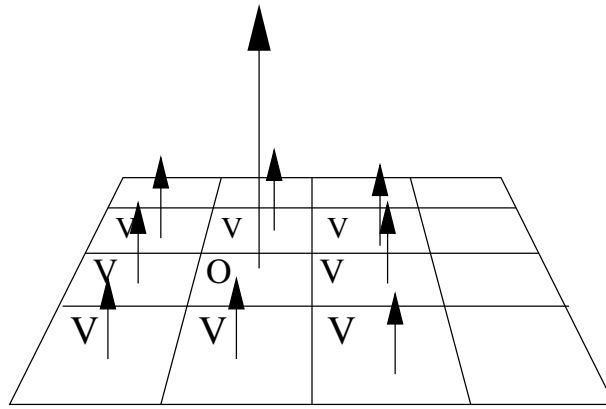
3.1 Basic smoothing

Basically, there need to be some order for smoothing. If everything draws itself above every surrounding square, we would end up with some awful bunch of crappy disgusting mixture of color (a Picasso or alike).

So, we come to the

First Rule

An object O may draw itself above a neighbor object V if, and only if, O as a «smoothlevel» higher than V. See the things like that:



O in the example picture has a higher priority than V so O will overlap V a bit but V will not overlap O.

The smoothlevel is an integer value ranging from 0 (overlap nothing) to 255 (overlap above everything except other objects having also smoothlevel of 255). This is important to consider when you are going to give the smoothing ability to new objects. Let's say, for example, you want to add this ability to mountains. Let's imagine has a smoothlevel of 10 and trees have a smoothlevel 100 (just imagine, at time writing this doc, nothing fixed yet). Now let's say you want the mountains above the grass but, for graphical reasons, you want the trees above the mountains. You choose a value between 10 and 100, not included. But mountains is a thing that goes above a lot of thing (grass, hills, swamps, brush, rocks, desert,...). So to keep the place for adding new elements in the future, you rather choose a high value for mountains (90 seems a good value according to these conditions).

So now you have chosen the smoothlevel for the mountain. What on hell are you supposed to draw? You know what overlap what is decided by smoothlevel. But the graphics used during the smoothing is the

Second Rule

The picture used to draw a given object depend on the face of the object. All objects using the grass face, for example, if they have a smoothlevel higher than 0, will be smooth using the same pictures. So you will bind with the picture grass.¹¹¹ a set of pictures telling the client what to draw when smoothing an object having the face grass.¹¹¹. Take a look at the canvas below:



Each square have a size of 32x32, which is the size used by the current image sets. This canvas handles all cases of corner, borders, L shaped, U shaped and O shaped transitions. The picture is made of 16 elements by 2. The first line is all broder related transition. The second line is corner related transitions. Here is an example picture for grass (yeah really need someone to rework it):



The picture is named sgrass.base.111.png and located in the ground/smooth/ directory of archetype. Ok, now you have a picture for smoothing grass, you have a smoothlevel for grass. There is only one last thing to do:

Final Rule

In the archetype of the grass, you need to add a line

```
smoothface grass.111 sgrass.111
```

The first is the picture you want to smooth (here it is grass.111¹) the second is the 512x64 picture drawn at rule 2 and used when smoothing.

The entry default_smoothed.111 is used when the server can not find an appropriate entry for an object. This correspond to the black canvas above so mapmakers or drawers can see immediatly there is a problem.

Now, drawers know everything. Coders might want to read following part.

3.2 Smoothing in the code

Guess what...

TODO

¹Please note we suppressed the .png and the .base. elements of grass.base.111.png filename. Since what the server needs is the internal names. Take care of this. If the new picture you drawn didn't appear on the GUI, this is perhaps due to error in this file. And don't forget to run make do-collect and make install from the lib directory.