



THANK YOU!

My name is Joel Daniels. I want to thank you for purchasing Onion Skin Tools! I genuinely appreciate your support. My hope is that your experience with this addon is a fun and creatively energizing one. I have worked to eliminate errors and unpredictable behavior from the addon before making it available on the Blender Market. However, if you experience any issues, or if you have questions not answered in this documentation, please contact me only through the Onion Skin Tools product support forum on Blender Market. I will make every effort to respond quickly and thoroughly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel Daniels".

YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE

I would love to hear your feedback. Whether you have feature requests, enhancement ideas, constructive criticism, or even if you're just enjoying the addon, please let me know. User feedback is essential in furthering the development of the addon in useful and interesting ways! And of course I always enjoy hearing that something I've created is bringing someone joy. As above, contact me on the Blender Market product support forum for Onion Skin Tools. I look forward to hearing from you!



CHANGELOG

NEW IN v0.2.1

Update to Blender 2.8!

- v2.1.2 brings compatibility with the new Blender 2.8 version, including support for onion skinning visualization in EEVEE.
- A few bugs were addressed, including some unpredictable transparency and range behavior when switching between transparent and opaque visualization. Settings should now be matched when switching transparency and the visibility range on / off.
- Onion skinning is now supported in Cycles viewport rendering. Note that transparency depth must be set fairly high to remove rendering artifacts.

Note: As you know, there are a ton of great new features and workflow enhancements in Blender 2.8. Unfortunately, many of these changes break backward compatibility with Blender 2.7x. This means that backward compatibility with 2.7x is not retained in this version of Onion Skin Tools. If you would like to continue using Blender 2.7x, please use the earlier version 0.1.6 of Onion Skin Tools, which is available on the Onion Skin Tools Blender Market product downloads page.



GETTING STARTED

INSTALLATION

You can install the addon one of two ways.

- 1) **Preferred:** Extract the onion_skin_tools folder from the .zip file and move or copy the folder directly to your <blender installation>/2.8x/scripts/addons directory.
- 2) From the User Preferences window, navigate to the Addons tab, and select the Animation filter.
- 3) Click the checkbox next to “Animation: Onion Skin Tools” to enable the addon.
- 4) Click “Save User Settings.”



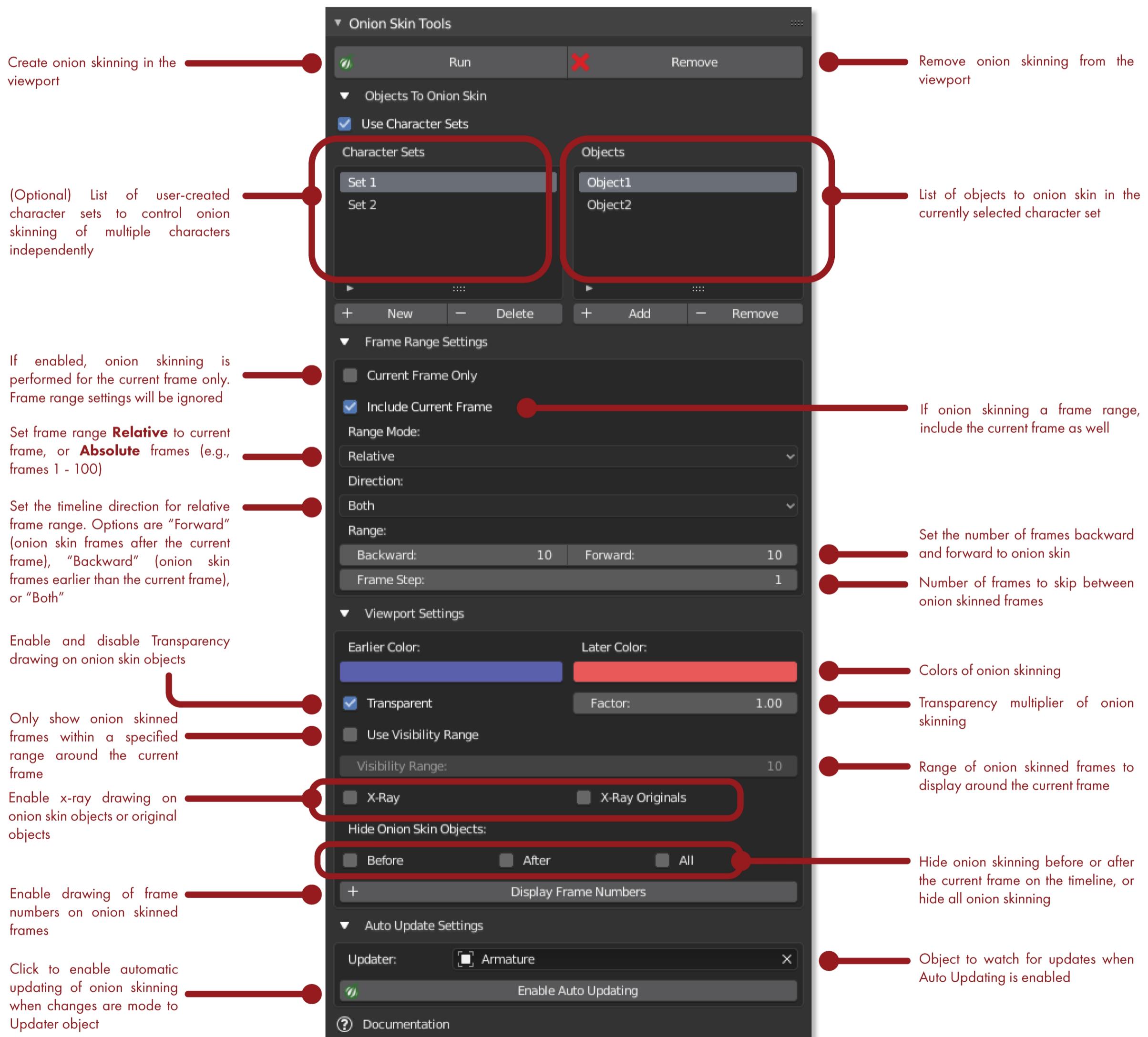
Well that was easy.

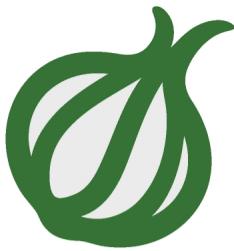


FEATURES & SETTINGS

This is the addon panel. After enabling the addon, you will find this panel in the 3D View > Tools Panel. Familiarize yourself with the following settings.

A quick note: In this documentation, we'll be verbing the phrase "onion skin" for the sake of convenience. Hope you're okay with that.





GOING FURTHER

USAGE

THE BASICS

Generating onion skinning for objects should be fairly straightforward. Simply:

- 1) Add objects to the onion skinning list **OR** create a new character set and add objects to its unique onion skinning list.
- 2) Set the frame range settings.
- 3) Click **Run** to generate onion skinning.

ADDING CHARACTER SETS

To create a character set:

- 1) Enable character sets Use Character Sets
- 2) Click the **New** button to add a new character set.
- 3) If any objects are selected, they will automatically be added to the character set's objects list. If the selected object is an Armature, any mesh objects parented or deformed by the Armature will be added to the list. This way, you can quickly add a whole rigged character to the list for onion skinning.

ADDING OBJECTS

To add objects to the list for onion skinning:

- 1) Select one or more mesh objects.
- 2) Click the **Add** button to add the selected objects to the list.
- 3) If the selected object is an Armature, any mesh objects parented or deformed by the Armature will be added to the list.
- 4) To add a character linked as a group from another .blend file, *select the group Empty rather than the armature*. Then click the **Add** button to add the linked objects to the list.

REMOVING OBJECTS

Click the **Remove** button to remove the selected list item.

REMOVING CHARACTER SETS

Click the **Delete** button to remove the selected character set. This will also remove its objects list and any onion skinning previously generated for the character set.



ADJUSTING SETTINGS

<input type="checkbox"/> Current Frame Only
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include Current Frame

Enable **Current Frame Only** to run onion skinning on only the current frame. Enabling this will disable several items in the user interface (specifically, the **Include Current Frame**, **Range Mode**, **Direction**, range **Backward & Forward / Start & End** settings).

Keep **Current Frame Only** disabled to run onion skinning on a range of frames.

Enable **Include Current Frame** to include the current frame in the onion skinning.

Select the frame range mode you will use.

If **Relative** mode is selected, the frame range is set relative to the current frame by **Backward** and **Forward** sliders.

Set the frame range direction (if using **Relative** mode). **Backward** will only include frames earlier than the current frame. **Forward** will only include frames later than the current frame. **Both** will include frames earlier and frames later than the current frame.

If **Absolute** mode is selected, the frame range is set according to specific **Start** and **End** frames.

The **Frame Step** slider sets the number of frames to progress between onion skinned frames. A value of 1 will onion skin every frame. A value of 2 will onion skin every other frame, etc.

Now you can run the onion skinning process by clicking





SETTINGS THAT UPDATE IN THE VIEWPORT

The following settings will update the onion skinning objects in the viewport. Therefore it is not essential to set these before running the onion skinning operator.

As of version 0.1.3, viewport settings are unique to the currently selected character set (or the legacy objects list if character sets are disabled).



The **Earlier Color** and **Later Color** properties determine the color of onion skinning objects earlier and later than the current frame.



The **Transparent** checkbox enables and disables transparency drawing altogether on onion skinning objects. The **Factor** slider is a multiplier for onion skinning transparency.

Note: After running onion skinning, changing the current frame on the timeline will update the color and transparency of onion skinned frames relative to the new current frame. For example, frames earlier than the current frame will turn blue (or your custom color) and become more transparent as you move forward on the timeline.

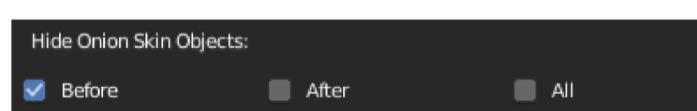


Enabling or disabling **X-Ray** will enable or disable x-ray drawing on onion skinning objects.

Editorial note: X-Ray behavior differs in Blender 2.8 from that in Blender 2.7x. The author finds that it was more coherent and predictable in Blender 2.7, and the "X-Ray Originals" option doesn't seem to do much in most circumstances in Blender 2.8.



Enabling **Use Visibility Range** will limit the display of onion skinning around the current frame, to frames that are within the range set by the **Visibility Range** slider. For example, a **Visibility Range** value of 5 will display onion skinning on the previous 5 frames as well as the next 5 frames.



To hide onion skinning objects before the current frame on the timeline, enable **Before**. As the timeline cursor progresses forward, any onion skinned frames prior to the current frame will disappear from view. Likewise, to hide onion skinning objects after the current frame on the timeline, enable **After**.



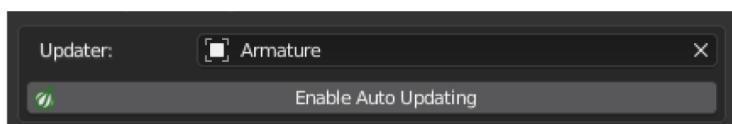
VIEWPORT SETTINGS CONT'D



Clicking the **Display Frame Numbers** button will enable drawing of frame numbers above onion skinning objects. This is useful when onion skinning arbitrary frames, as a reminder of which frame numbers were onion skinned. Click it again to disable frame number drawing.



The **Frame Number Size** slider is effectively a font size control for frame number drawing. It is displayed only when **Display Frame Numbers** is enabled. The **Height** slider moves frames up or down.



To start automatic updating of onion skinning, click **Enable Auto Updating**. The **Updater** object is the object to watch for changes (e.g., this could be a character rig). When transform changes are made to this object, onion skinning will automatically update with the changes. You must set the **Updater** object before starting auto update.

Note: **Currently, only hotkeys used in the 3D viewport are supported with auto update** (i.e., default or custom hotkeys for translate, rotate, and scale). **Use of 3D manipulators for transforms is not currently supported.** Other currently supported hotkey commands in Armature Pose mode include 'breakdown' and clearing of translation / rotation / scale.

REMOVING ONION SKINNING

To remove the onion skinning from the viewport, click the **Remove** button. If character sets are enabled, this will only remove onion skinning for the currently selected character set.

To remove onion skinning only on the current frame, check **Current Frame Only** and click **Remove**.



TIPS

You can onion skin a single frame, then progress forward a few frames on the timeline, and onion skin another frame. Using the **Current Frame Only** setting, you can onion skin an arbitrary number of frames individually to maintain control over what you would like to see in the viewport while you animate.

HAVE FUN!

