



From The Ground Up User Manual

Updated for version: 50 (ALPHA)

Written by: TazzMann



Special Thanks To:
Quaxi, Emily, Echo

INTRODUCTION TO SIMPE	3
What is SimPE?	3
Getting to know the SimPE	4
Docking 101	4
The SimPE Interface	9
Configuring and Customizing SimPE	19

Introduction to SimPE

What is SimPE?

SimPE = **S**ims 2 **P**ackage **E**ditor

SimPE is a powerful Sims 2 package viewer/editor. It can perform any task to alter the composition of files within a package; it can even create new package files from scratch.

Using the SimPE add-ons (plugins) you are able to modify many aspects of the game including:

- Open and view entire neighborhoods
- Modify many attributes of Sims, objects, and clothing
- Clone Sims
- Create wall hangings
- Recolor clothing and game objects
- And much, much more

SimPE is developed in C# for the .NET Framework, so anyone who can produce managed code can create add-ons for SimPE; they can even reuse the engine within their own applications as long as they follow the guidelines outlined for GPL licensed applications.

What Do I Need To Run SimPE?

Microsoft .NET Framework Version 1.1 – You can find it by clicking on the following link.
<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=262d25e3-f589-4842-8157-034d1e7cf3a3&displaylang=en>

What Files Are Needed To Run SimPE?

SimPE Installer – Believe it or not there are those that wouldn't think of this.

PhotoStudio Templates – Not required but, needed to complete this tutorial.

Colour Options Enabler – Not required but, needed to complete this tutorial.

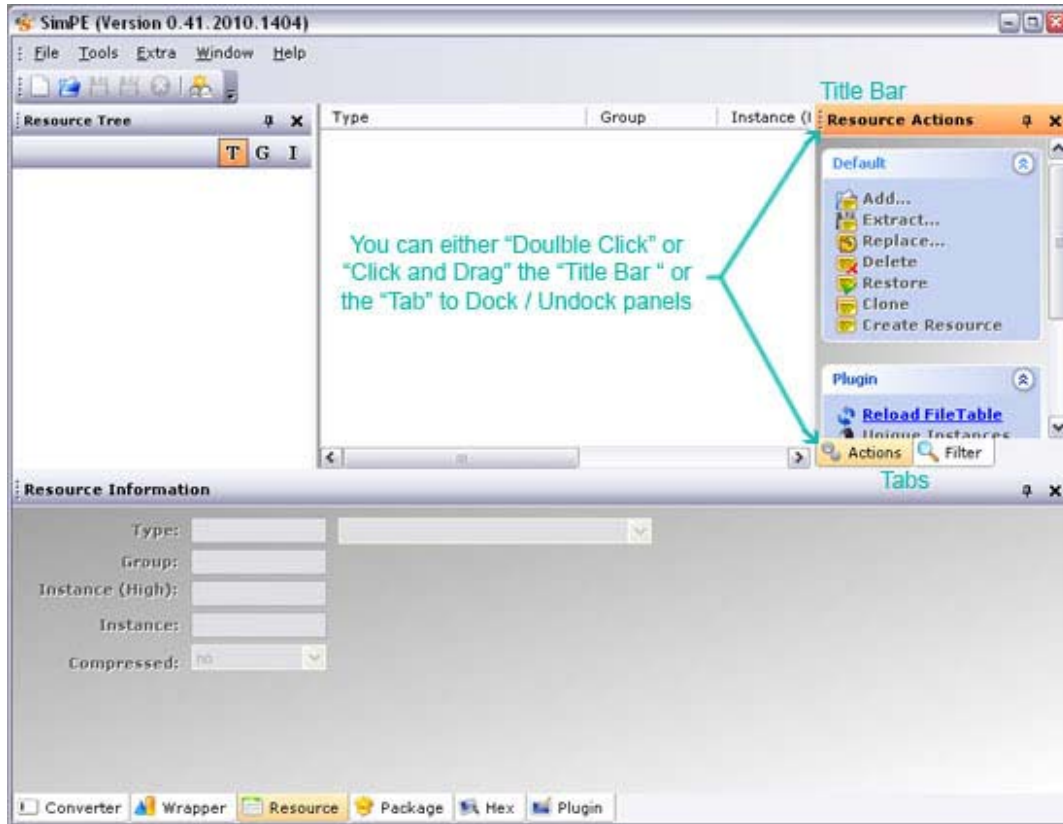
You can download all 3 of the above listed by clicking on the following link.
<http://sims.ambertation.de/download.shtml>

Nvidia DDS Tool – Not required, but recommended
http://developer.nvidia.com/object/nv_texture_tools.html (**DDS Utilities**)

Getting to know the SimPE

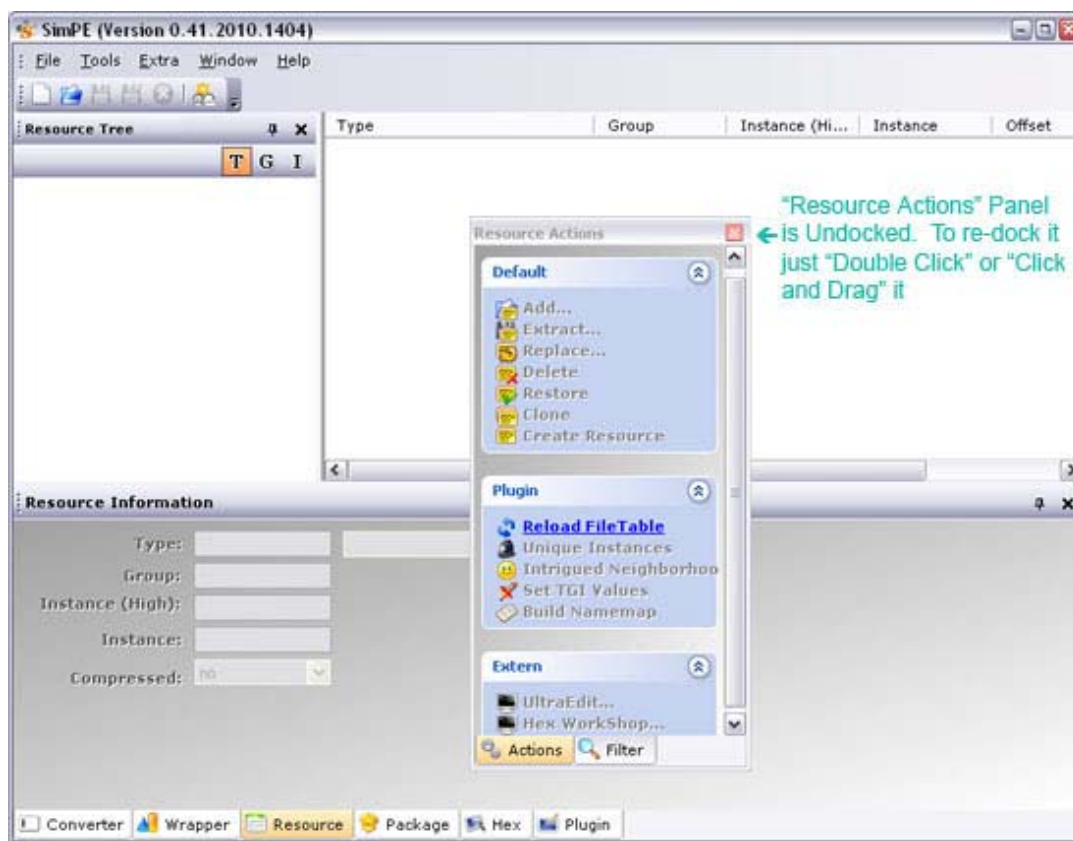
Docking 101

One of the many features in SimPE is the ability to Dock and undock panels. The docking of panels allows you to fully customize the look and feel of SimPE. When you first start SimPE you will get a window similar to the one below.

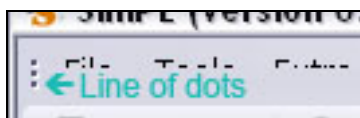


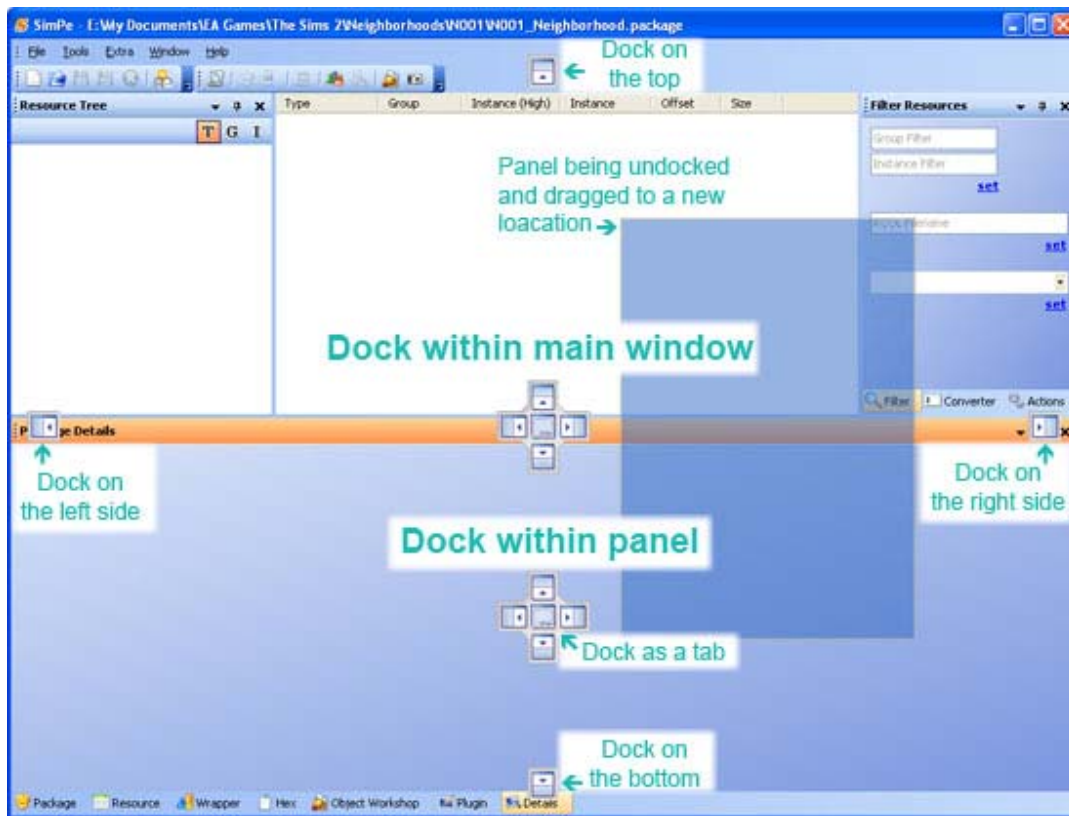
This is the basic layout of SimPE. There are two ways to Dock and Undock panels in SimPE (Actually there are probably more but I am happy with teaching you just two).

1. Double Click on the “Title Bar” or the “Tab”. This will instantly dock or undock a panel. If you are undocking it will undock to the center (more or less) of the GUI window. If you are docking it will dock the panel to its default location from where it was undocked. (see image below)

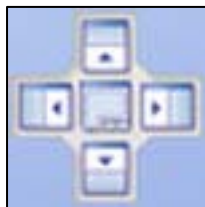


2. Single Click (and hold) on “Title Bar”, “Tab” or *line of dots* (see image below) and Drag to desired location.

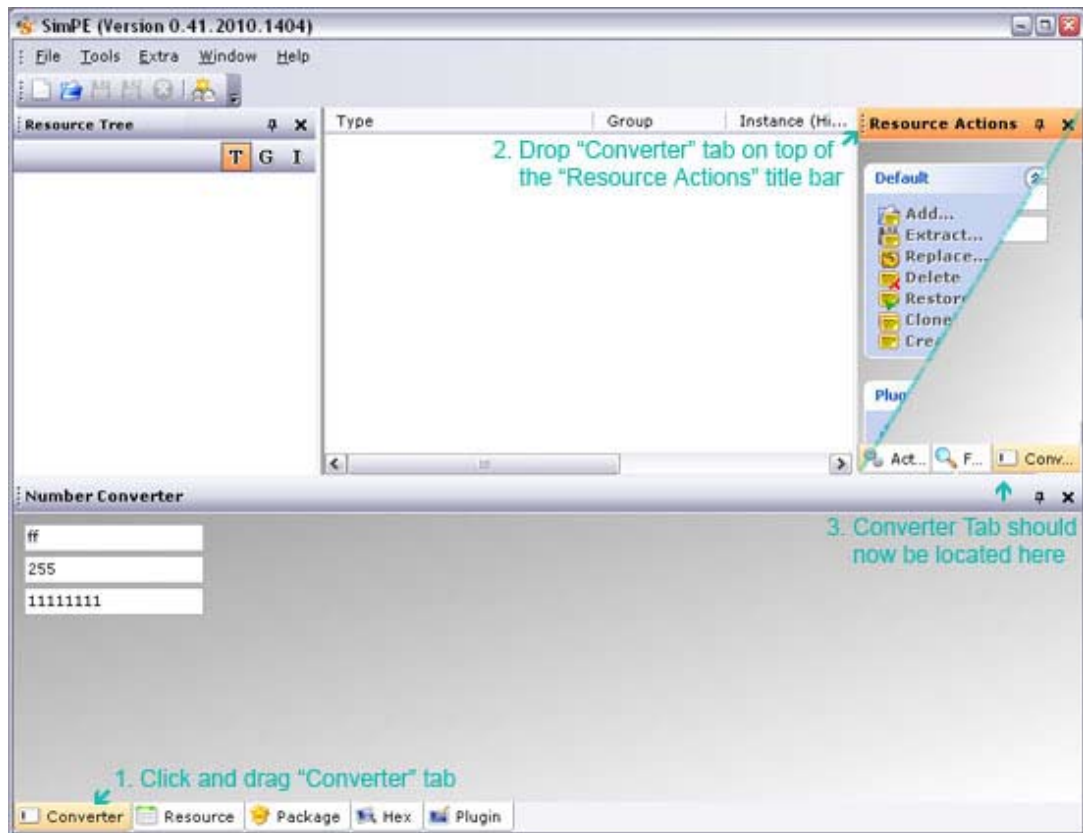




- If you drag via the “Title Bar” or “Tab”; you might notice various icons appearing throughout the SimPE GUI; the image above gives a small description of each of the icons. If you drag the undocked panel over one of the icons and let go of the mouse button the panel will be docked in that location.
- Below is a closer image of the window / panel docker control.

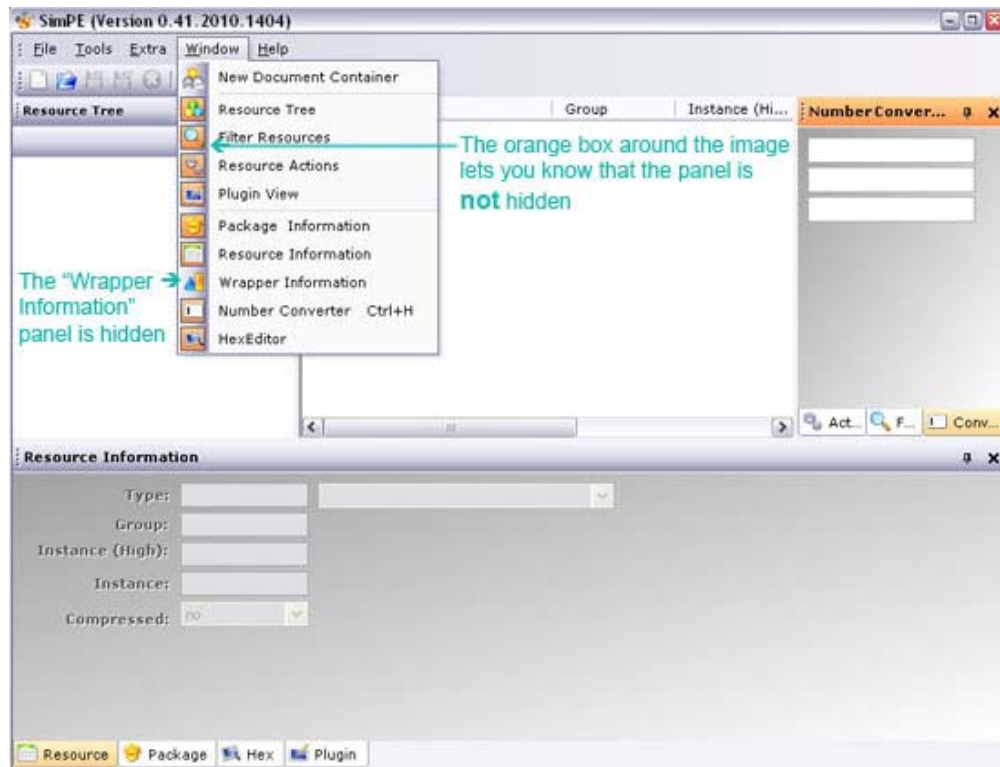


The next lesson in docking is moving tabs from one panel to another. We will be moving the “Converter” tab from the bottom panel to the panel that contains the “Actions” tab. To do this you must: (see image below)



1. Single Click (and hold) on the “Converter” tab
2. Drag “Converter” tab over the “Resource Actions” title bar
3. Release the mouse button to drop the tab to its new location

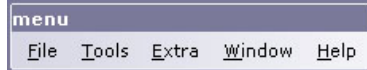
The final lesson that I am going to teach you is showing and hiding panels. You do this by selecting “Windows” in the menu bar and click on the panel name you want shown or hidden. Panels that are not hidden have an orange-ish colored box around the little icon. (see image below)



The SimPE Interface

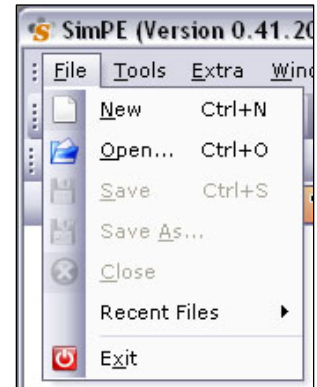
Now that you understand a little more about docking we can move on to the SimPE interface itself. Most of the screen shots in this section will be taken while the panel is undocked. I do this for clarity and not for functionality.

First area that we will look at is the menu bar. It consists of the following menu items. (see image below)



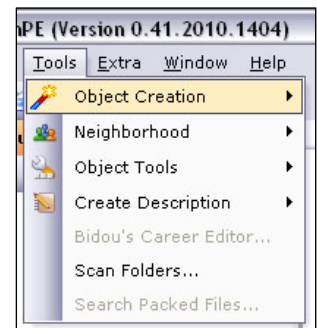
File – The File menu item consists of the following sub-items. (see image below)

- **N**ew – For creating new package files
- **O**pen – For opening existing package files
- **S**ave – For saving package files
- **S**ave **A**s... – For saving a package file under a different name or location
- **C**lose – For closing package file currently open in SimPE
- **R**ecent Files ▶ – List of recent files that were opened by SimPE
- **E**xit – For closing and exiting SimPE



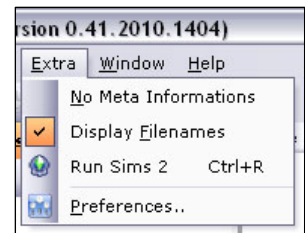
Tools – The location of utilities and plugins for SimPE. It consists of the following sub-items. (see image below)

- **O**bject Creation ▶ – Utilities used for object creation such as:
 - Object Workshop – Utility for cloning and re-coloring objects
 - Skin Workshop – Utility for modifying skins
 - Photo Studio – Utility for making new wall hangings
- **N**eighborhood ▶ – Utilities for modifying in-game Sims such as:
 - Fix Neighborhood UID's – Fixes Neighborhood UID's
 - Neighborhood Browser... – Utility for opening an entire neighborhood
 - Sim Browser... – Utility for opening a single Sim for editing
 - Sim Surgery... – Utility for cloning DNA or exporting a single Sim
- **O**bject Tools ▶ – Utilities building and modifying objects such as:
 - Import Semi Globals -- Imports SimAntic Files for a specific SemiGlobal Group
 - Scenographer... – Displays the Scenagraph of a loaded Object (Used to find malfunctioning Links in a Object/Recolor)
 - Hash Generator... – Generates a hash for the files
 - Fix Integrity -- This can be used to correct some Errors in the Scenagraph (also used to make Packages EP-Ready)
- **C**reate Description ▶ – Utilities for creating a text lists such as:
 - From Package... – Creates a text list from a package file
 - From Selection... – Creates a text list from a selected file
- **B**idou's Career Editor... – A plugin used to modify and create careers
- **S**can Folders... – Utility for scanning folders and checking integrity of package files
- **S**earch Packed Files... – Utility for searching within a package file



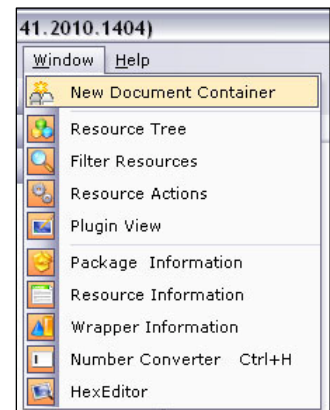
Extra – SimPE setting and options can be found here. (see image below)

- No Meta Informations – Prevents SimPE from checking for special information (If checked Sims show up as “Unknown Unknown”.
- Display Filenames – Displays additional info about package files
- Run Sims 2 Ctrl+R – Starts the game
- Preferences... – Setup options for customizing SimPE



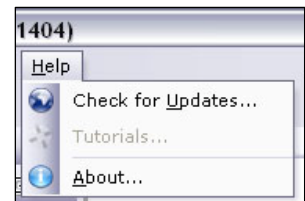
Window – Where you can find all available panels and there status Hidden or Not Hidden. See “Docking 101” in this document for more information. (see image below)

- Resource Tree
- Filter Resources
- Resource Actions
- Plugin View
- Package Information
- Resource Information
- Wrapper Information
- Number Converter Ctrl+H
- Hex Editor
- Object Workshop
- Resource Finder
- Package Details

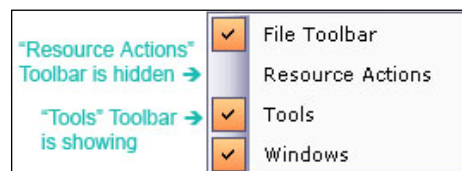


Help – Where you will find additional support utilities and information. (see image below)

- Check for Udates... – Connects to internet server and checks for any updates that might be available
- Tutorials... – Home for this user manual and other tutorials
- About... – Additional information that Quaxi wanted to make available to you



Directly below the menu bar is the Default Toolbars Area. Here you can find the File, Resource Actions, Tools, and Windows toolbars. You can show or hide toolbars by right clicking on an unoccupied part of the toolbar area. (I would suggest on the right side of Help menu item) After right clicking on the unoccupied area the following window will pop up. (see image below)



The orange box with the check in it signifies that the toolbar is visible.

Now we will go over what toolbar are available and their functions.

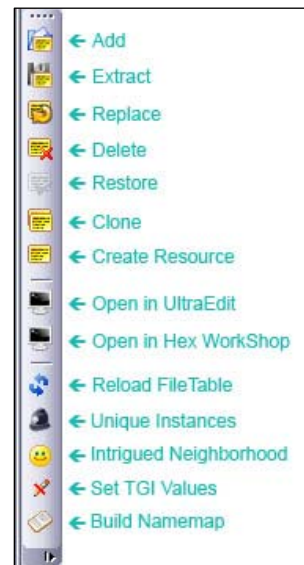
The File toolbar contains most of the components found in the file menu item described earlier. (see image below)

- New Package Button
- Open Package Button
- Save Package Button
- Save Package As Button
- Close Package Button
- Create New Panel Tab Button – This is used for making additional panels / tabs



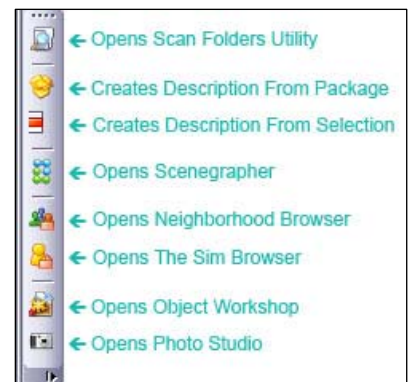
The Resource Actions toolbar contains shortcuts to the items found in the Resource Actions panel, described a little later in this document. Below is a brief description of the buttons and their buttons.

- Add... – Adds a new packed file to the package
- Extract... – Copies selected packed file(s) out of the package
- Replace... – Replaces a packed file with an external file
- Delete – Deletes selected packed file(s) from the package
- Restore – Restores a deleted item if done before a save
- Clone – Creates a duplicate of a packed file inside the package
- Create Resource – Creates a new resource inside of the package
- Reload File Table – Reloads the file table
- Unique Instances – Selected file resource get a new value for the instance field
- Intrigued Neighborhood – This will set the interests of all Sims in a selected neighborhood to the maximum.
- Set TGI Values – Fixes the TGI Values of RCOL related resources
- Build Namemap – Creates a namemap resource for the selected RCOL files
- Ultra Edit – A very powerful text editor / HEX editor (<http://www.ultraedit.com>)
- Hex Workshop – Powerful HEX editor (<http://www.hexworkshop.com>)



The Tools toolbar contains shortcut to the more frequently used items found in the Tools menu item such as:

- Scan Folders – Utility for scanning folders and checking integrity of package files
- From Package – Creates a text list from a package file
- From Selection – Creates a text list from a selected file
- Scenographer – Displays the Scenegraph of a loaded Object (Used to find malfunctioning Links in a Object/Recolor)
- Neighborhood Browser – Utility for opening an entire neighborhood
- Sim Browser – Utility for opening a single Sim for editing
- Object Workshop – Utility for cloning and re-coloring objects
- Photo Studio – Utility for making new wall hangings



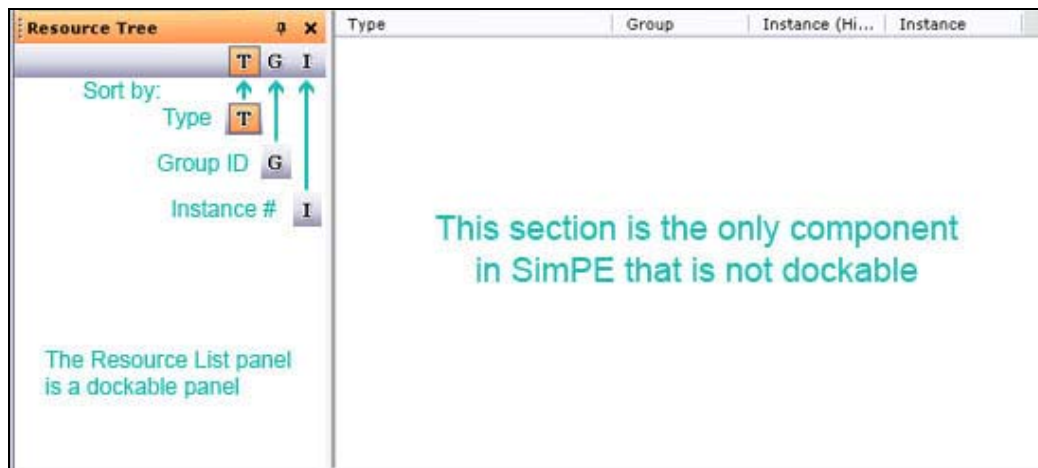
The Windows toolbar contains shortcut to the Show / Hide items found in the Windows menu item such as:

- Resource Tree
- Filter Resources
- Resource Actions
- Plugin View
- Package Information
- Resource Information
- Wrapper Information
- Number Converter Ctrl+H
- Hex Editor
- Object Workshop
- Resource Finder
- Package Details



Under the Default Toolbar area you will find the Resource Tree panel. When you open a package file all the contained resources are grouped and displayed here. You will notice that there are 3 buttons labeled “T”, “G”, and “I”. Clicking on these will change the sort order. (see image below)

- T → Sort by Type
- G → Sort by Group ID
- I → Sort by Instance Number



To the right of the Resource Tree panel is the only non-dockable component in the SimPE interface. It is where the individual packed files will be displayed. For the remainder of this tutorial we will refer to it as “Resource List”. The resource list consists of four columns. (see image above)

- Type – This is the resource type of the packed file
- Group – This is the group id of the packed file
- Instance (High) – In the old interface it was called SubType
- Instance – This is the instance number of the packed file

It is also good to note that by single clicking any of the resource list column headers; it will toggle the sort order of the list from ascending to descending and vice versa, and that you can drag a package from an external location and drop it on the resource list window and it will open the file for you.

To the right of the Packed Files List you will find the first tabbed panel. It consists of the Filter Resources, Resource Actions and (If you did the Docking 101 tutorial) Number Converter panels. (see below images)

The first is the Filter Resource panel. By typing in a group id, instance number, or a RCOL filename, or clicking the dropdown and selecting a resource type then clicking the set link, you can filter what is displayed in the resource list window.



Next we have the Resource Actions Panel. It is separated into 3 sub panels; the little circle with the two up arrows toggles the show / hide state of the sub panel; the 3 sub panels are labeled:

Default – This sub panel contains options that are also available by right clicking in the resource list window such as:

- Add... – Adds a new packed file to the package
- Extract... – Copies selected packed file(s) out of the package
- Replace... – Replaces a packed file with an external file
- Delete – Deletes selected packed file(s) from the package
- Restore – Restores a deleted item if done before a save
- Clone – Creates a duplicate of a packed file inside the package
- Create Resource – Creates a new resource inside of the package



Plugin – This sub panel contains small plugin utilities for changing content, or performing specific tasks within the package file such as:

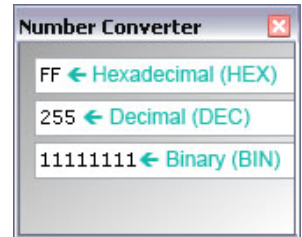
- Reload File Table – Reloads the file table
- Unique Instances – Selected file resource get a new value for the instance field
- Intrigued Neighborhood – This will set the interests of all Sims in a selected neighborhood to the maximum.
- Set TGI Values – Fixes the TGI Values of RCOL related resources
- Build Namemap – Creates a namemap resource for the selected RCOL files

Extern – This sub panel will list external applications that you have set up using SimPE Preferences. These external apps are also available by right clicking in the resource list window. The two apps that I have are very handy and I suggest that you think about getting them; they are:

- Ultra Edit – A very powerful text editor / HEX editor (<http://www.ultraedit.com>)
- Hex Workshop – Powerful HEX editor (<http://www.hexworkshop.com>)

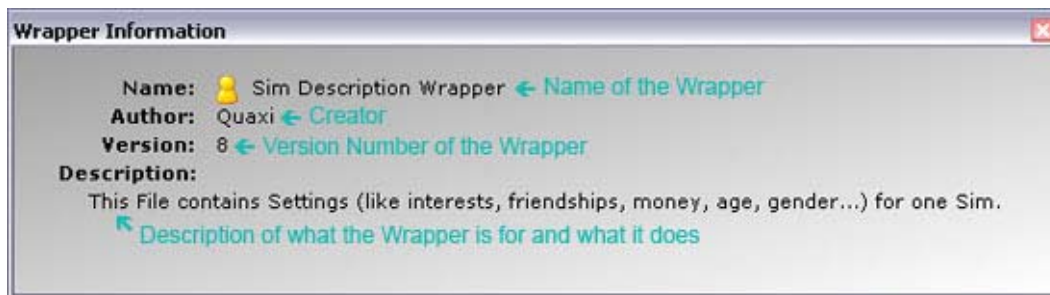
Finally, if you followed the tutorial in the Docking 101 section we will have the Number Converter panel.

You simply enter a value into the appropriate field and it automatically converts and displays it in the two remaining fields.



Under the Resource Tree panel you will find the second tabbed panel, it stretches all the way across the bottom of the GUI. It consists of the Wrapper Information, Package Information, Resource Information, Hex Editor, and Plugin View panels. Let's take some time now and get more familiar with these panels.

The first panel that I will be talking about is the Wrapper Information panel. When you open a resource file within a package, SimPE needs to know how to understand that information. This is where wrappers come in to play, wrappers give SimPE the ability to understand how to read and display the various resource types found in a package file. (see image below)



There are four parts to the Wrapper Information panel, they are:

- Name – This is the descriptive name of the wrapper the SimPE is currently using
- Author – This is the name or handle of the creator(s) of the wrapper
- Version – This is the version of the selected wrapper
- Description – This is the description of what the wrapper is used for and what it does

Next we have the Package Information panel. This panel contains information about the currently loaded package file.

Identifier	DBPF
IndexType	ptShortFileIndex
MajorVersion	1
MinorVersion	1
Version	4294967297

Offset	Size
0x001AC87A	0x00035CFA
0x001E258C	0x00000040
0x001E25D4	0x00000018

- Identifier – Type of package
- IndexType – Packages can be saved with a short Index (meaning Instance (High) get's discarded and is always 0) or a long Index (including Instance (High)). Whenever you have a Object with RCOI Files in it, you need to save in LongIndex Format (which is the Default for Sims 2).
- MajorVersion/ MinorVersion – The Version Number of the format that is used to store the package. In Sims 2 (so far) this is allways 1.1 (major.minor). Some creations made with the Bodyshop that was available before the game was release have Version 1.0 an get reported as "old Version" in "Scan Folders"
- Version – Version of package
- Offset – Location(s) of files within the package
- Size – Size(s) of files within the package

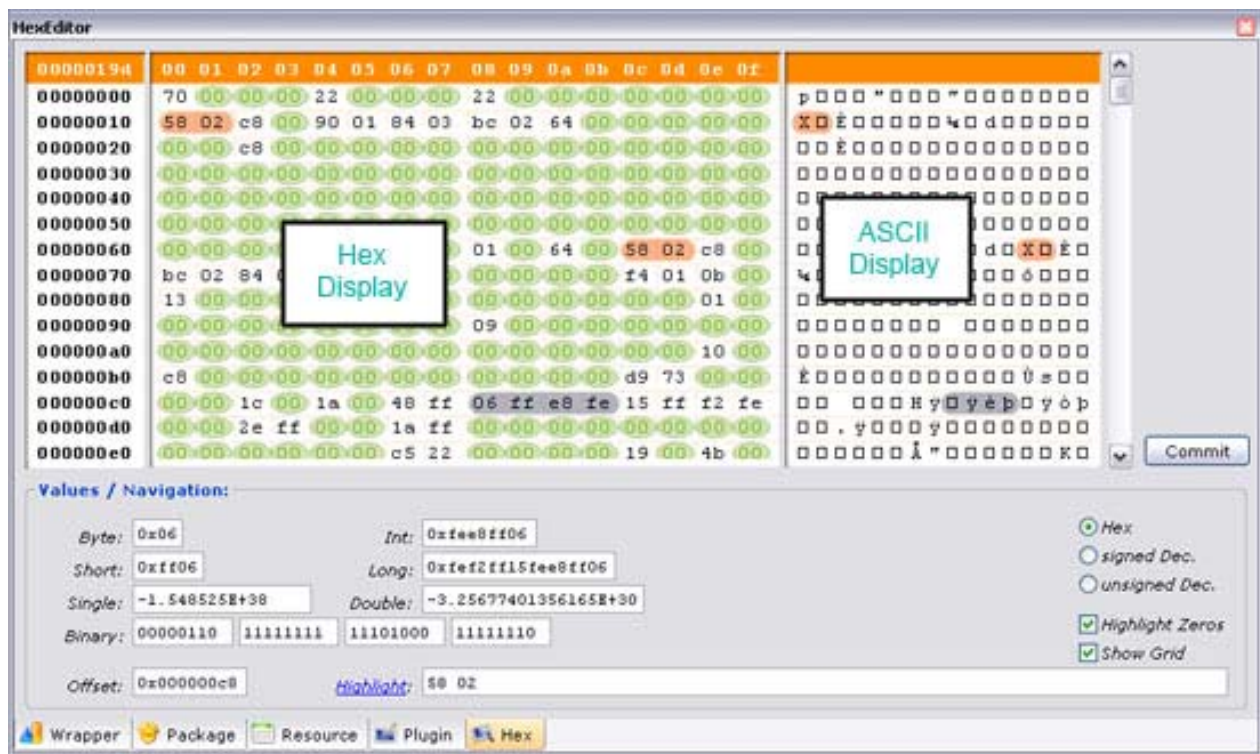
Now we have Resource Information panel. It contains the information of the currently selected resource in the resource list.

Type: 0xAACE2EFB | **Sim Description:** [dropdown]
Group: 0xFFFFFFFF
Instance (High): 0x00000000
Instance: 0x00000001
Compressed: yes [dropdown]

force [commit](#)

- Type – This is the resource type of the packed file (Dropdown box is for easy selection)
- Group – This is the group id of the packed file
- Instance (High) – In the old interface it was called SubType
- Instance – This is the instance number of the packed file
- Compressed – Is the packed file compressed

Next we have the Hex Editor panel. This panel is neither for the weak of heart nor the technically challenged! Changing values here could seriously mess up your game.



The top portion is like any other hex editor, with the hex display on the left and the ASCII display on the right. You will however notice from the image above various colored ovals. The orang-ish highlights are from the “Highlight” feature. The greenish highlights are from the “Highlight Zeros” feature. And the grey highlights are from the “select” and the “drag selection” feature. (All explained a little later)

In the “Values / Navigation” area there are many items that you can manipulate, and lucky you we get to go through them.

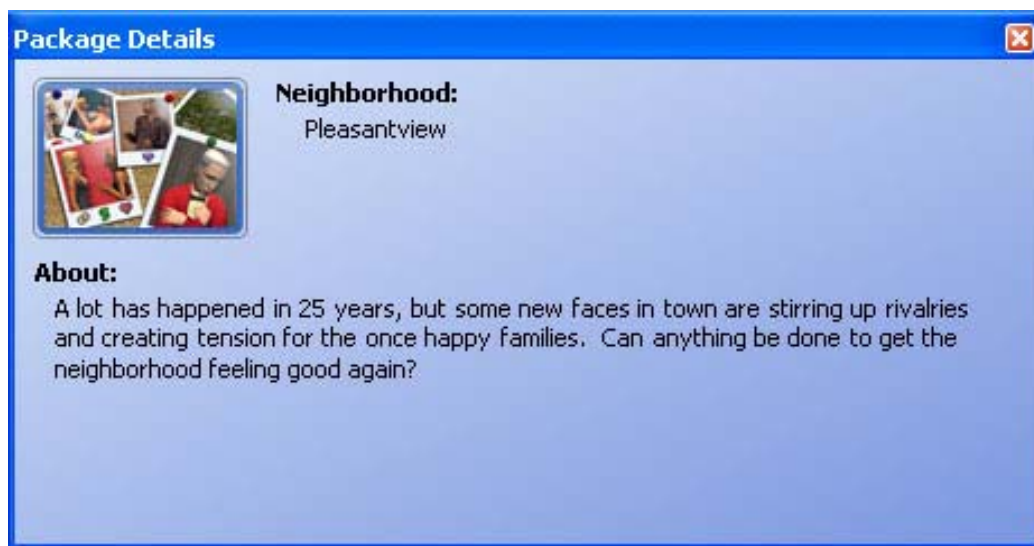
- Byte – consists of 8 bits (a bit is either a 1 or a 0) it is represented in hex as two characters spanning from 00 to FF.
- Short – 2 bytes
- Int – 2 shorts
- Long – 2 ints
- Single & Double – I am not going to get into these, so if you are interested in them do some research
- Binary – Base 2 numbering system used by computers everything is a 1 or a 0
- Offset – This is your current location in the editor
- Highlight – You can type in a hex value(s) and click on highlight, this will highlight your sequence in an orangish colored oval
- The next three items are view settings for the hex display area
 - Hex – View as hex
 - Signed Dec. – View as signed decimal
 - Unsigned Dec. – View as unsigned decimal
- Highlight Zeros – Highlights all zeros in hex display area with greenish ovals
- Show Grid – Draws boxes to help visually separate hex values

Next we have the Plugin View panel. This is the panel where you will spend most of your time in SimPE and the most boring screen shot I have taken so far. (see image below)

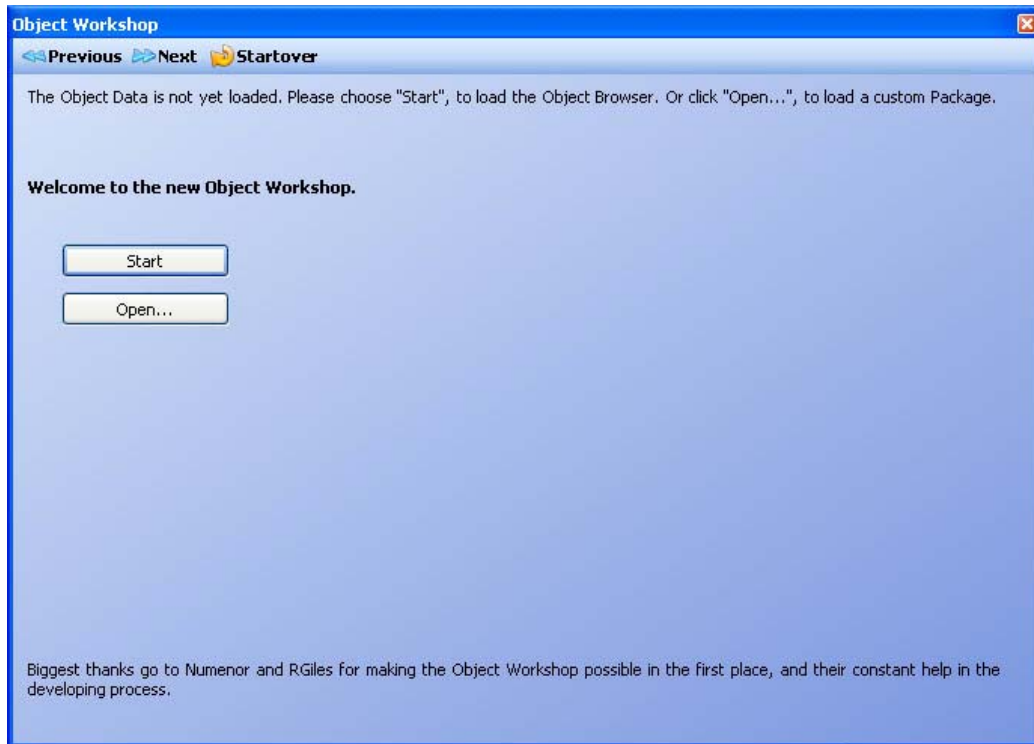


Don't get me wrong when a plugin is loaded this panel is awesome, but for the purpose of this manual we are just introducing the various components of SimPE.

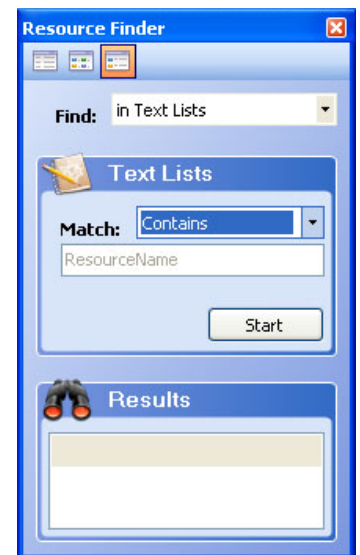
Following we have the Package Details plugin, this plugin will give you greater detail (if available) about the package that is loaded. For example if the Pleasantview Neighborhood is loaded it will look like this: (see image below)



After that we come to the Object WorkShop panel, we will not go into detail on this panel because it is beyond the scope of this document, but I will try to get in “SimPE – From The Ground Up (Tutorial).



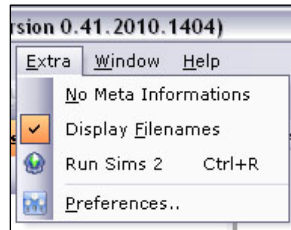
Finally we come to the Resource Finder panel, this is an excellent tool for finding specific information inside of a package file.



Well now you know of the various components of SimPE and have a better idea of their purpose(s), so now it is time to move to the next section of this tutorial “Configuring and Customizing SimPE” and it starts on the next page.

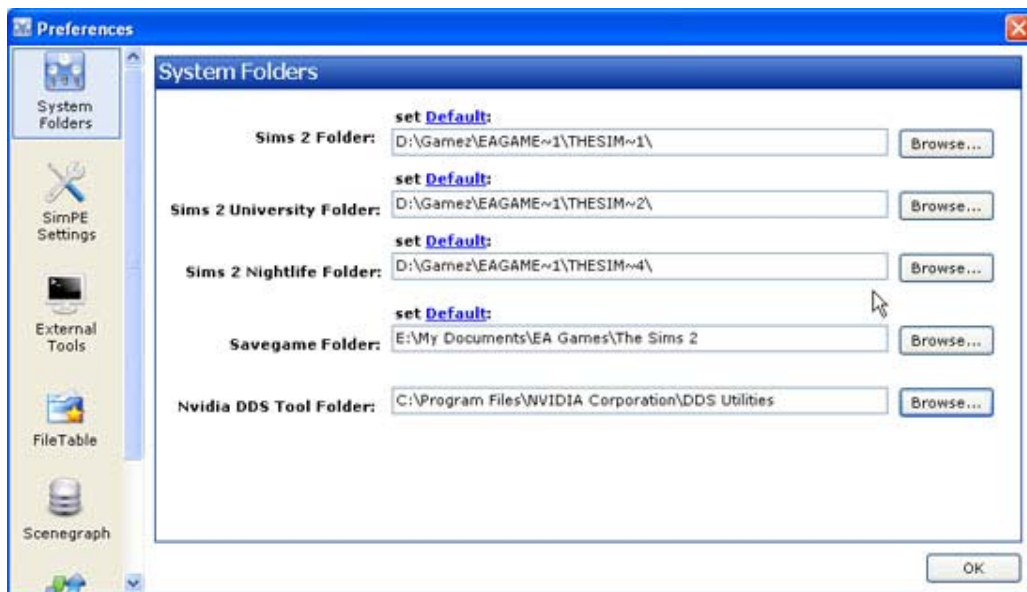
Configuring and Customizing SimPE

In this section we will be learning how to configure and customize SimPE. First off I need you to verify something for me. Below is an image of the Extra menu item, please verify that yours look like the one below.



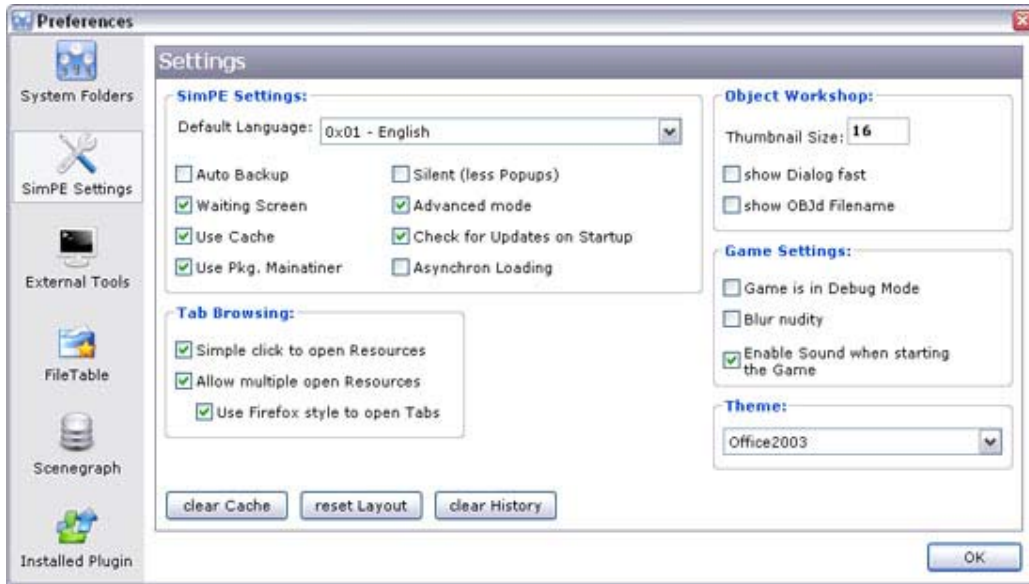
Now that you have verified that “Display Filenames” is checked and “No Meta Informations” is not checked we can proceed. Click on “Preferences...” this will open a new window that is used for configuring and customizing SimPE. You will first notice the button bar on the left side, this is how you get to the various preference screens.

The top button is the “System Folders” this contains the locations of the various directories that SimPE needs to know about. (see image below)



- Sims 2 Folder – Location of the game files
- Sims 2 University Folder – Location of the University Expansion game files
- Sims 2 Nightlife Folder – Location of the Nightlife Expansion game files
- Savegame Folder – Location of custom / save game files
- Nvidia DDS Tool Folder – Location for the DDS utilities

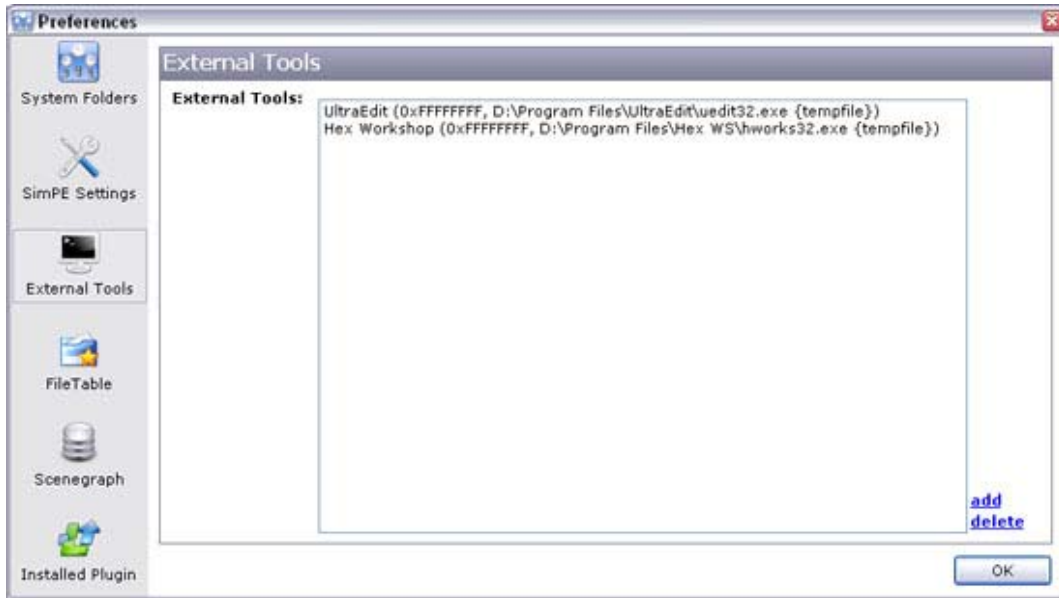
Below the System Folders button is the “SimPE Settings” button. This is where you can customize SimPE’s behavior. (see image below)



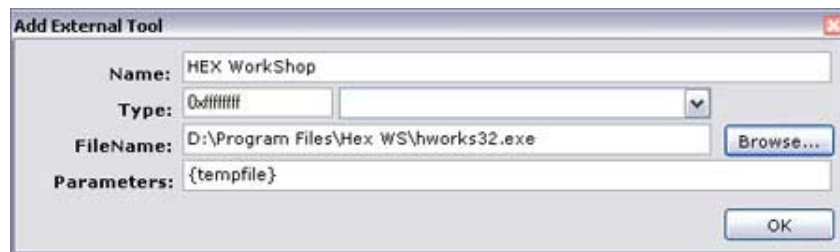
This window is divided into 5 frames, they are:

- SimPE Settings
 - Default Language – This is the language that the interface will display to you.
 - Auto Backup – If checked, every time you save SimPE will create a backup of the original package
 - Waiting Screen – Little window that pops up to let you know that SimPE is processing
 - Use Pkg. Maintainer – Reduces Error messages due to inconsistent entries in the FileTable. This should always be checked!
 - Silent – SimPE won't ask if a package/resource should be saved due to changes, it will simply discard them.
 - Advanced mode – Enables some additional features in SimPE
 - Check for Updates on Startup – Automatically checks the SimPE site for latest version
 - Asynchron Loading – Allows loading to take place in the background (This can cause what seems like loading issues when in reality it is just a refresh that is needed)
- Tab Browsing
 - Single click to open Resources – Only single click is required to open resource files
 - Allow multiple open Resources – When this is NOT checked, you can only View one Resource at a time in the Plugin View (like in the classic GUI)
 - Use Firefox style to open Tabs – When activate, a single (double) click will open the selected Resource in the currently active Plugin View tab. a middle (or [alt] left) click, will open a new Tab
- Object Workshop
 - Thumbnail Size – The default size of thumbnails in ObjectWorkshop
 - Show Dialog fast – Will start OW on the "Load Package" tab. This means it will not load the List of available Objects when started. The list only get's loaded when the user is activating one of the listing Tabs in OW
 - Show OBJd filenames – Display the FileName stored in the OBJd of an Object instead of the ObjectName that was read from the Catalog Description
- Game Settings
 - Game in Debug Mode – Set Sims 2 to Debug Mode
 - Blur nudity – Toggles on/off the censor grid
 - Enable Sound when starting the game – Toggles sound in the game
- Theme – Allows you to change the default appearance of SimPE
- Buttons
 - Clear Cache – Clears SimPE's cache
 - Reset Layout – Resets SimPE's Layout to installation defaults
 - Clear History – Clears SimPE's History

Next we have the “External Tools” button. This is where you can add 3rd party applications to SimPE such as Ultra Edit, and Hex WorkShop. (see image below)

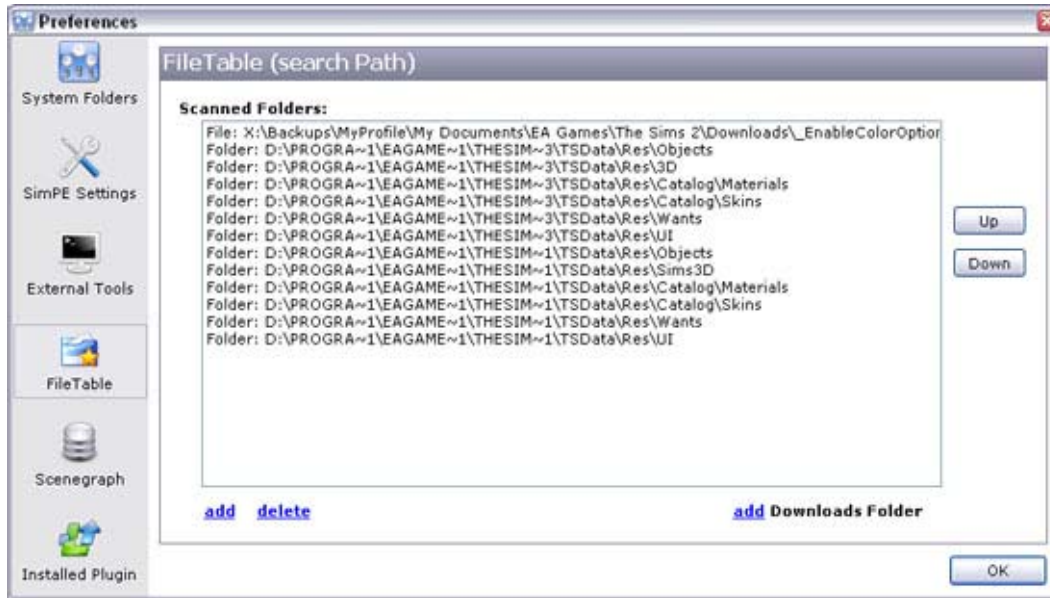


To delete a 3rd party tool link click on the “[delete](#)” link, to add a new app click on the “[add](#)” link and the following window will pop up. (see image below)



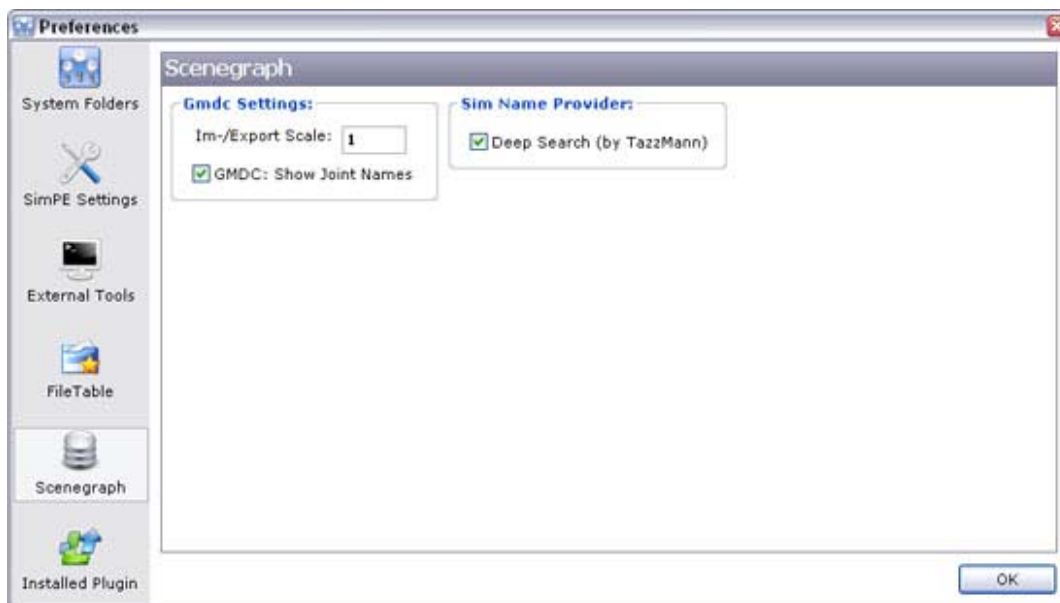
The only items you need to worry about setting is the “Name” and the “FileName”. (Path) In the “Name” textbox you can type whatever name you want to give your program. In the “FileName” textbox you need to type the path to your application or click the “Browse...” button and find your app. When finished click on “OK”.

Below that we have the “File Table” button, this is generally automatically populated by SimPE, but you might have additional folders you would like to add. (see image below)



To delete an item from the list, click on the “[delete](#)” link. To add a new item, click on the “[add](#)” link. Clicking on the “[add Downloads Folder](#)” will create an item pointing to your Sims 2 download folder. You can move the placement of selected item on the list by clicking the “Up” and “Down” buttons.

After the “File Table” button is the “Scenograph” button. This is where you can set some settings that affect the Scenographer Plugin such as: (see image below)



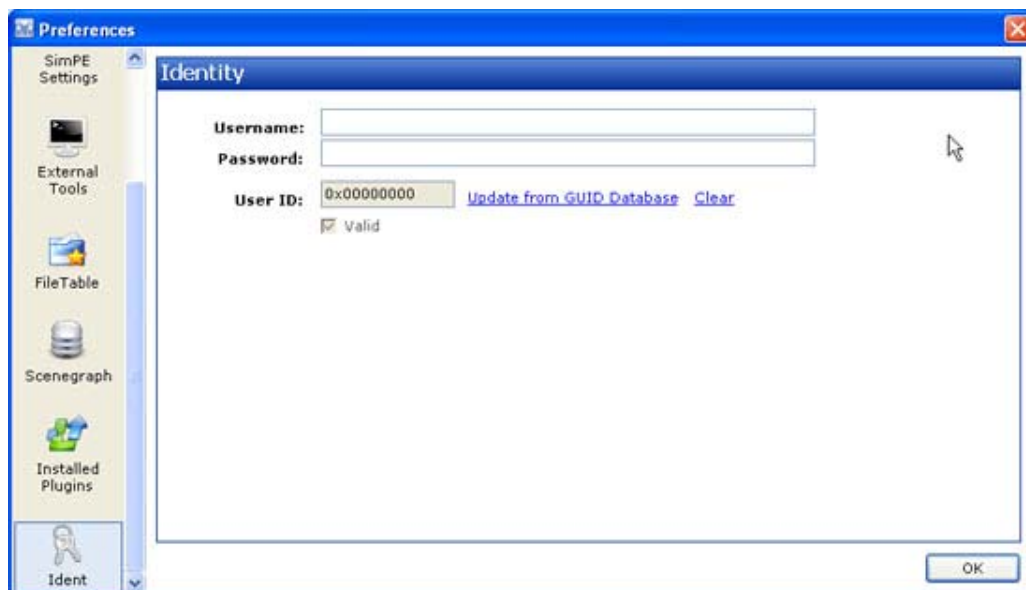
- Im-/Export Scale – When im/exporting a Mesh using the internal Exporter/importer, SimPE is automatically scaling the Meshes by this factor
- GMDC: Show Joint Names – When opening the GMDC Wrapper, SimPe will display the actual Joint names on the Joint Tab, instead of generic names (like Joint 0, Joint 1). however this takes some time to load
- Deep Search – Resolves some of the unknowns like the Grim Reaper (Very Time Consuming)

Next we come to the “Installed Plugin” button here you can find what plugins are installed, weather they are currently running, If they can run multiple instances, and a small description of each plugin. (see image below)



- Yellow Circle (Sun) – Allows multiple instances of the plugin to run
- Green Circle (Runner) – Plugin is currently running
- Red Octagon (X) – Plugin is **NOT** running
- Blue Double Down Arrows – Show details about the plugin
- Blue Double Up Arrows – Hide details about the plugin
- Up Arrow – Move the selected plugin up the list
- Down Arrow – Move the selected down the list

Finally we have the “Ident (Identity)” button this is linked to the GUID database and if you are a registered user and fill in the information here SimPE will be able to access the database.



Wow, you have finally reached the end of this User Manual. Congratulation you are now SimPE Certified... well not really but you should feel pretty good about yourself. Now you are ready to tackle the many tutorials found on web including my:

SimPE – From The Ground Up Tutorial

You can find it along with many other excellent tutorials on the SimPE web site.

<http://ambertation.de/simpeforum/viewforum.php?f=9>

I would like to take a moment and thank Quaxi for all his hard work and the time and efforts he put into creating such a powerful tool that makes Sim Editing possible, and most of all keeping it FREE!

Thanks Quaxi