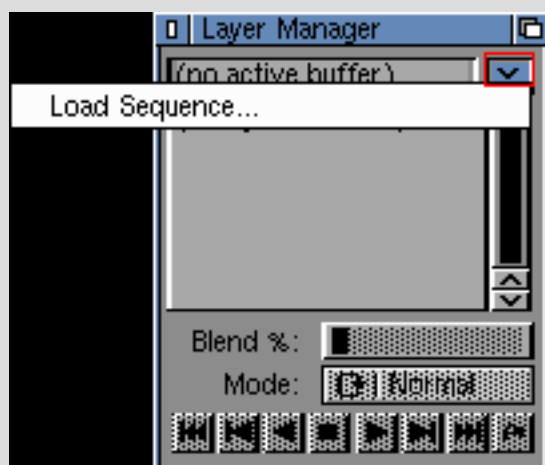


How to use the Key Frame Manager in ImageFX4.5

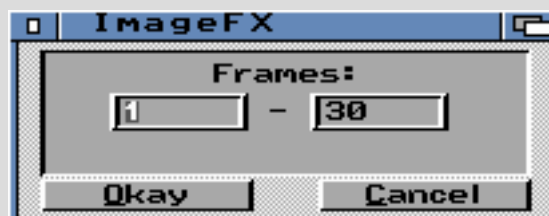
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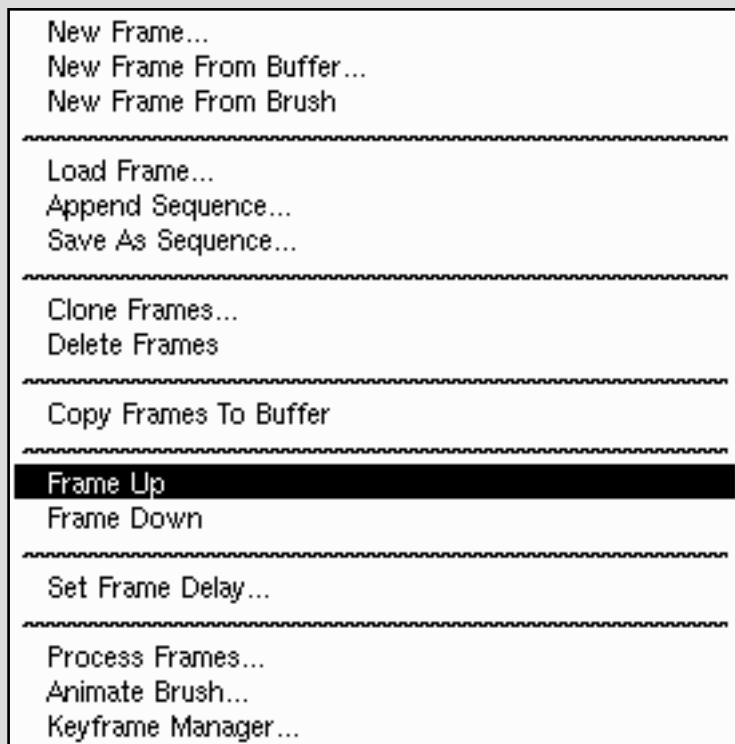
The KeyFrame Manager is one of the new functions in ImageFX 4.5 and it lets us manipulate the movement of brushes over an animation. We can make key frames anywhere we need to. That is, we can place the exact location of a brush in an image at *any* specific frame in the animation. Ok, but I'm going to take it slow and do this one step at a time. Before we get to making keyframes, we have to have an animation.



There are a number of different ways to make or load an anim or series of frames. One is to Load one picture and then from the **Layer Manager**, **Create Frames**. This lets you duplicate the image in the buffer as many times as you like. When the requester comes up remember that the number you type in is ADDING to the one you already have there. So, if you have one frame, and you type in "9", the total number of frames will be "10". You can also **Append Sequence...** This adds an existing sequence to your frame(s).

If you just booted up IFX and have not yet loaded any images in a buffer, you can click the **menu** in the **Layer Manager** and **Load Sequence...** As you can see from the picture to the left! Once you select **Load Sequence...**, the requester you see to the right pops up! It lets you load all or some of the files.



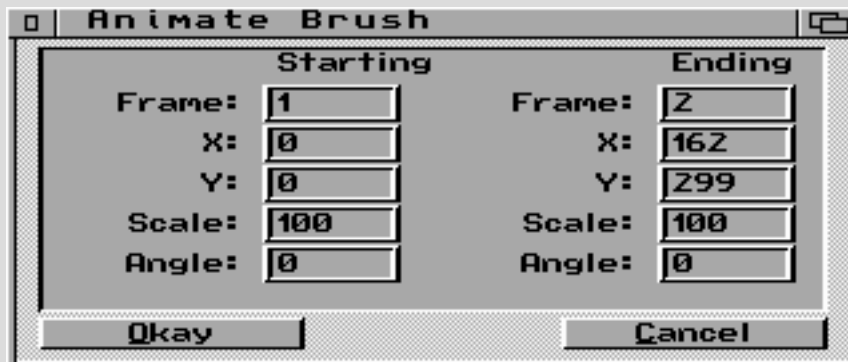


Once you have a sequence loaded you can now access the menu from the **Layer Manager** (shown at the left. Make a note that the menu for the Layer Manager changes depending on the type of files in the buffer. Layers in a single image is NOT the same thing as a series of frames in an anim).

New Frame creates a blank (black) frame and adds it to the end of the sequence. I wish it added it where ever I have the frame selected, but well, ya can't have everything! **New Frame From Buffer** or **Brush** lets you add a frame from those sources. Once these new frames have been added you have to move them where you want them -

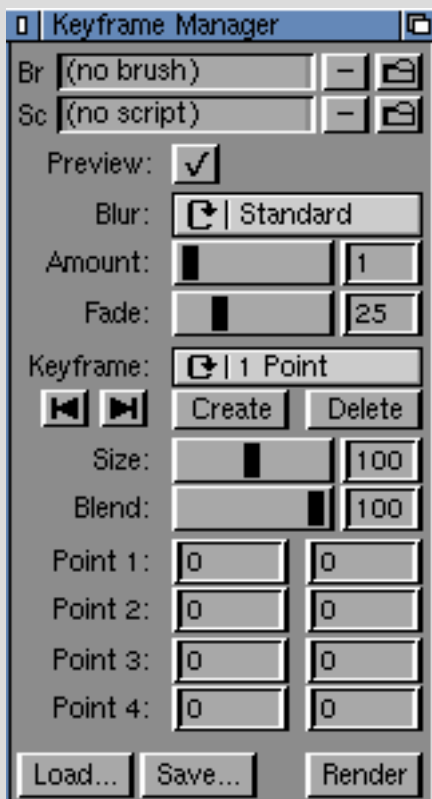
unless, of course, you want them at the end! select the frame you want to move and use **Frame Up** and **Frame Down** to get them in the right position. Again, I wish there was a less clumsy way to do this, like selecting a frame and "pushing" it up or down the list with the mouse. But, what the heck. **Load Frame...** from your Hard Drive, or **Append Sequence...** to your existing sequence. If you are done, you can **Save As Sequence...** instead of saving the anim As an anim. I mean, if the idea was to eventually make a Gif anim, you would convert to CMAP and then save the gif. But if you are still working on this and need it to stay RGB but have to break for dinner, just save the sequence to be loaded later! You can also save it as an INGF.

Set Frame Delay controls the speed of the anim. This probably works best with a fast Amiga, emulation and MorphOS. Each frame can have a different number and some anims benefit from that kind of control. That is, a really big number on one frame (say, "100") will hold the anim on that frame but after that it will move quickly through the other frames if they have a rate of "5". **Process Frames...** lets you load an AutoFX Arexx script and process the sequence. If you have enough memory to load your entire anim, then this method is quicker and easier than using AutoFX or IMP hooks. Note that there is no undo once you do this. So save your work frames first - in case you don't like what you see! Once the sequence has been processed and looks just the way you want it, then save it. And you can save it as frames or as an entire anim. Whatever you need!

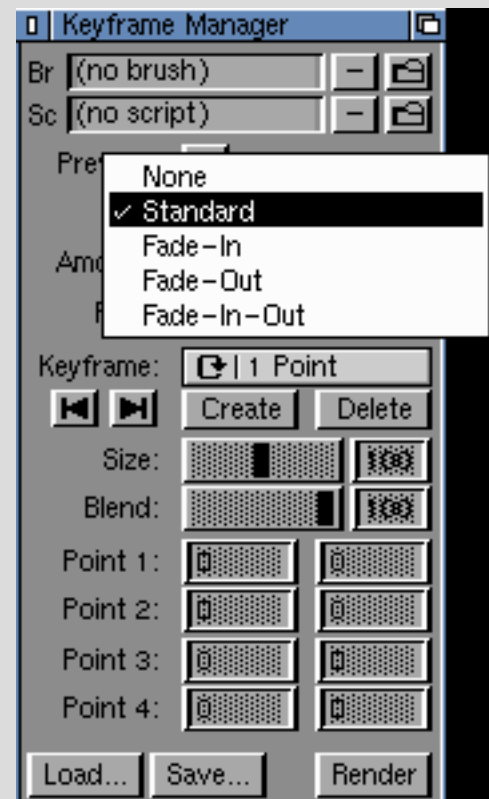


We are now going to take a short detour. **Animate Brush** is the next command in the Menu. I can no longer recall when this was put in, but I think it was basically the precursor to the KeyFrame Manager. If you haven't already loaded a brush, it will remind you to do so. You

have to figure out the coordinates (X and Y) for where the brush gets stamped down. And you can indicate which frames all this happens in. **Starting** could be at, say, frame 5, and **Ending** could be at frame 68! As you can see, however, it's not very intuitive. Which is one of the main reasons I don't use it.



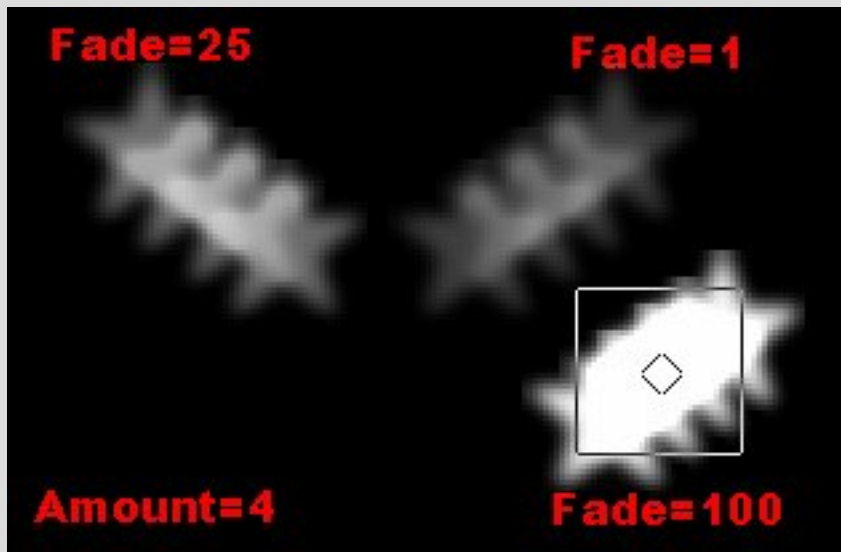
Well, we now (finally!) come to the **KeyFrame Manager**. Whew! At the very top you see you can load a brush. This can be a simple brush or an animated brush. The ImageFX Studio CD comes with a directory full of animated brushes. When a brush is loaded it's name appears in the box. and if you wish to remove the brush, hit that "-" (negative) symbol. Right under that you can also load a special script. The program comes with two and if I ever have the



time to look at them closely, maybe I'll figure out how to make more.

If the **Preview** is checked it shows an outline of the brush area in the buffer. It's basically a "box" of the brush size. I really wish it was possible to show the brush itself, but that will require programming that I know nothing about. The **Blur** function let's you control how the brush gets blurred over the course of the animation. It does this by stamping the brush a certain number of times on each frame. The end effect, as the brush moves from Here to There is to appear kinda, sorta blurry. As you can see from the **Blur Menu** shown to the right, you can have **None**: no blurring at all, **Standard**: stamps down the brush on each frame

as many times as you indicate in the Slider labeled **Amount**. The default is "1" (once). The slider moves up to 25. If you have the slider at "4", the brush will be stamped "4" times each frame. And it stamps it from the center of the brush outward on both sides.

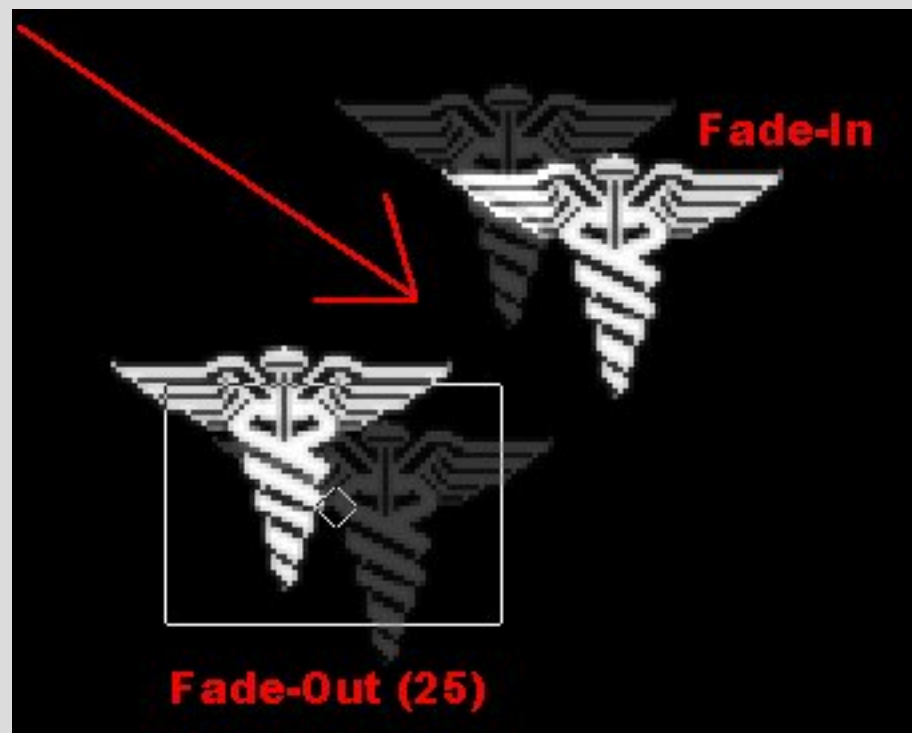


From the picture on the left you can see the Star brush (it's the one that comes with the program) has three examples of the **Fade** function. The **Blur Amount** for all 3 examples is "4". That is: the star has been stamped 4 times on each frame. Notice the far left bunch of stars are at the default **Fade** of "25". The top right Stars has a **Fade** of "1", the bottom set has a **Fade** of "100". In other words "fade" means

"transparent". None at "100", the most transparent at "1". I suppose "transparent" is way too long a word to place in that small spot on the GUI (Tee Hee). Ergo, **Fade**.

Notice the bottom right set of stars have the brush **Preview** over it. See how the Blur amount (4) has expanded from the center of the brush? The brush animation in this case (Fade=100) was traveling from upper right corner to lower left corner.

So what the heck is this **Fade-In** and **Fade-out** stuff? Well, on the image to the right we have a frame of an anim in which the movement of both brushes went from upper left to lower right - as seen by the **arrow**. The **Amount** of the blur is "2" for both. And the **Fade** is the default "25". Which means the second stamp of the brush will be 75% transparent. Or 25% Opaque. (Depending on how you look at it). The only thing that is different is that the top right brush has been stamped with a **Fade-In**. See how the **Blur** follows the main brush? With the brush that has had **Fade-**

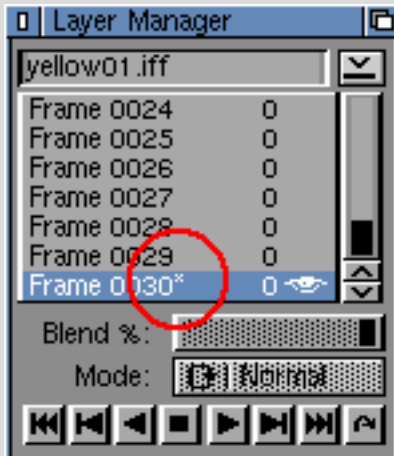


Out, the Blurred part is in front of the solid brush. And see the position of the brush **Preview**: right in the middle between the two stamped parts?

Another point you should notice is that the space between the stamped brushes decreases with each increase in the **Amount** of Blur. See how the (4) stars in the above picture are alot closer to each other than the (2) medical brushes to the right. -->

See how increasing the **Amount** increases the **Blur**? Huh? Well?

So what about **Fade-In-Out**? Well, that justs places the stamped blurred brushes before AND after the Main brush. I suggest doing experiments with your selected brush before making a final anim. Each brush is slightly different in how it handles these attributes.




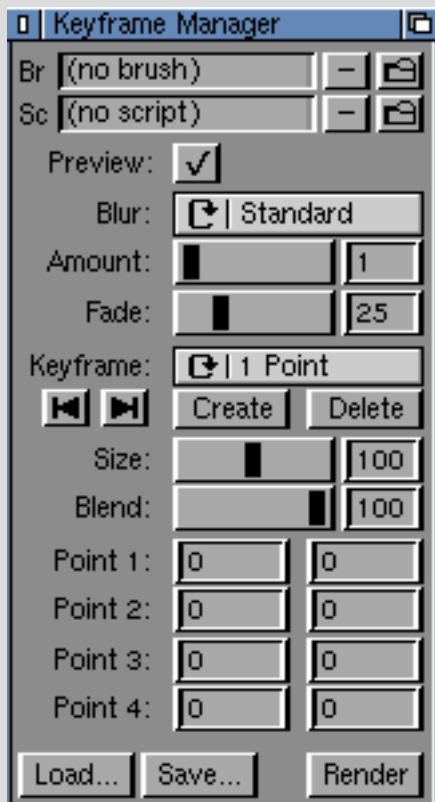
Well, now we come to creating keyframes. In the KeyFrame Manager are gadgets for **Creating** and **Deleting** keyframes. To create a keyframe, first select a frame in the **Layer Manager** (see left). In this picture frame 30 has been selected. Then in the Key Frame Manager hit the **Create** gadget. When you do that there appears right next to the frame number (**Frame 0030**) a WEE TINY ".". See it?? It really is mighty small. Anyway, make sure the keyframe has been created before going on to the next step.

Now you can grab the brush by it's Preview Box and move it where you want it in the frame. Select another frame in the

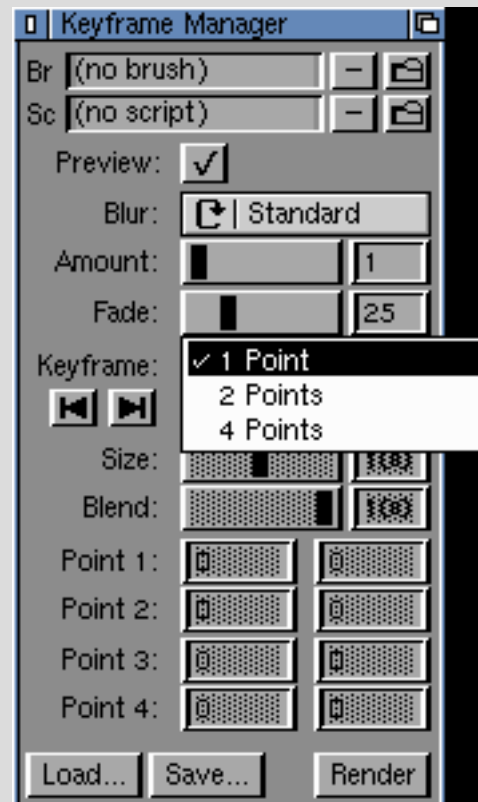
Layer Manager and hit the **Create** gadget in the KeyFrame Manager. The brush Preview Box will be found where you last placed it. So move it somewhere else.

If you don't like a keyframe, **Delete** it. If you have a frame selected that doesn't have a keyframe for it, and then click the **Delete** gadget, you will be asked if you want to delete all the keyframes. This is useful if you want to clear the whole mess at once!

Once you have KeyFrames, you can navigate them using  in the KeyFrame Manager so you can jump to each Key directly.



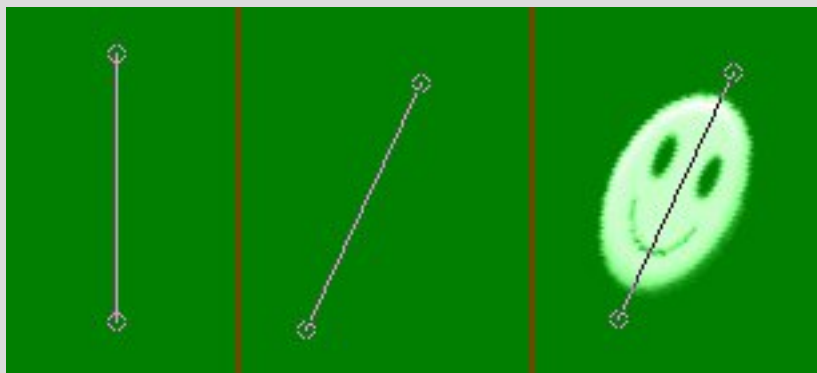
Up until now, we have explored this keyframing with the brush defined with "**One Point**". This is just the normal brush. And using **Size** and **Blend** you can increase and/or decrease the size of a brush at each keyframe. It defaults to 100 %, of course. **Blend** defaults to 100% and you can lower that value at any keyframe.



But, as you can see from the picture on the right, the menu lets you choose

from one, two or four points in which to manipulate a brush. At the top of the KeyFrame Manager load a brush from the Disk button. and now you can move a brush as a unit (one point), stretch it out from two points, or twist it horribly with four points.

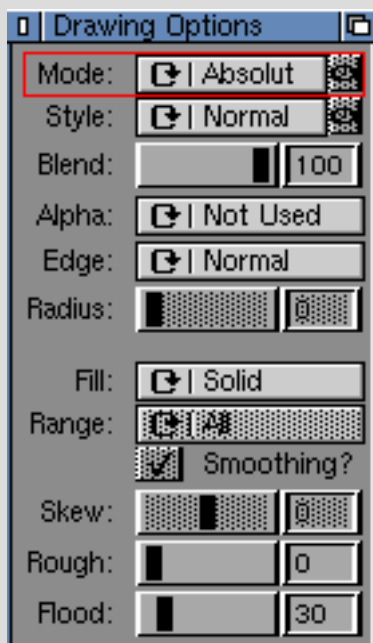
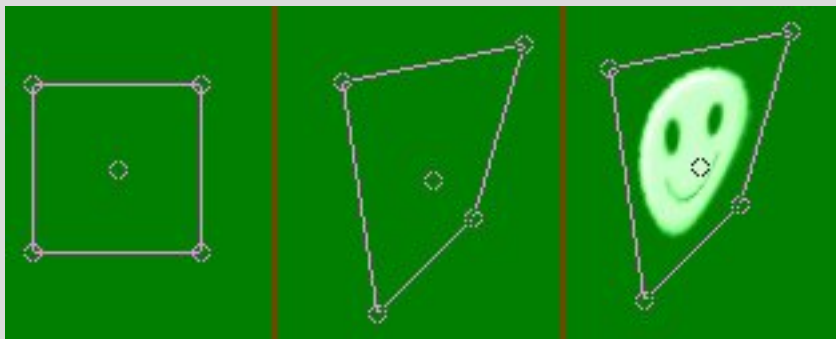
Let's move along and see what this looks like, shall we?



When you select **2 Points** this is represented by a line with two end points - see the picture at the left. By default this is pointing North and South (the first third of this triptick). As you can see in the middle box I moved each point askew by clicking and holding down first one point and moving it,

then holding and moving the other point. The third box shows how the brush looks when it has been rendered in this position. I used the smiley brush which comes with the program. Ain't he cute?

When you select **4 Points** (pictured on the right) you are presented with four end points and they can be moved individually. This lets you distort and stretch the brush in all directions. The default look - shown at the left - is obviously a square with a tiny center circle for moving the entire brush at once. In the middle I have moved all four points separately and you can see how the same smiley brush looks rendered when the poor fellow has been pulled this way and that! But he's still smiling!



Now, when you load one of the standard brushes that comes with ImageFX you can use any of the **Drawing Modes**. In the above examples I used **Absolute Add**. This is because these brushes don't have an alpha channel and you'll end up with a nasty black box stamped down with your brush if you don't do this. You can use other **Drawing Modes**, of course. It all depends on the look you want. Obviously, this requires a bit of experimentation before you make your completed animation. And, in case I didn't already say this, Once you **Render** your anim, there is NO undo. So, experiment, save often and don't hit that button without thinking first. Right next to the **Render** button is the **Load and Save** Buttons. Guess what they are for? That's right! For loading and saving anim projects. It doesn't save the images, just the location of keyframes and the details, fading, size, point numbers, etc. You can actually reuse projects - as long as the resolution of the animation is exactly the same, and the brushes are at least a similar size. That's because what is saved is the exact "x" and "y" data.

What does that mean???

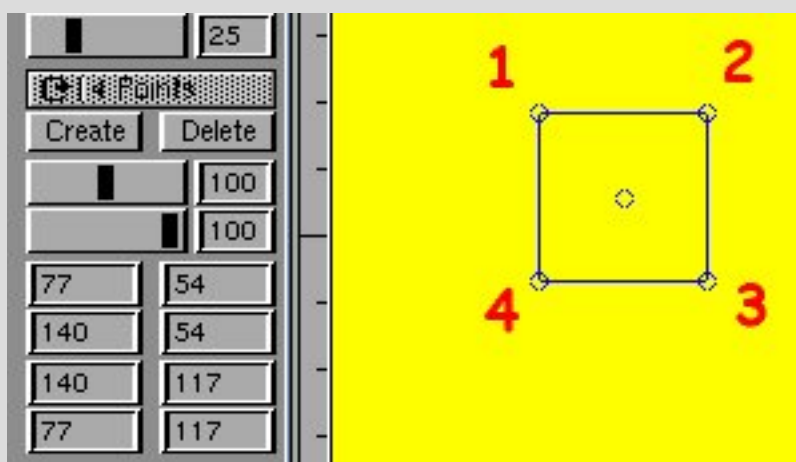
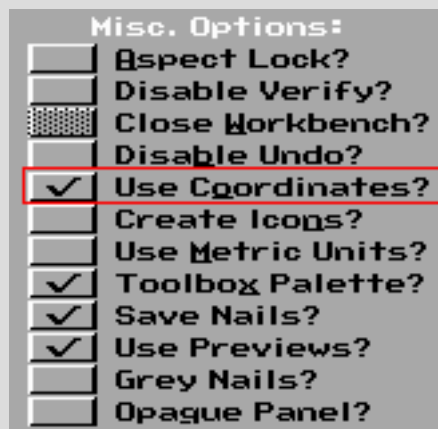
In the ImageFX Prefs you can turn on **Use Coordinates**.

After you do this look on the Workbench title bar at the top of the screen and you will see the "X" and "Y" location of your mouse as you move it around the buffer.

Workbench Screen (160,13)

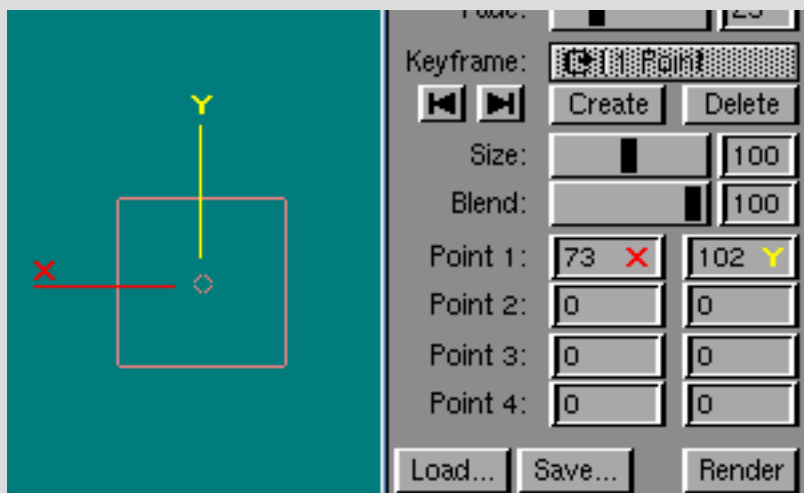
This is

useful for exact placement of brushes and layers. You don't NEED to do this to use the KeyFrame Manager, but if you get used to using the Coordinates, you will have more feedback to use in your work.

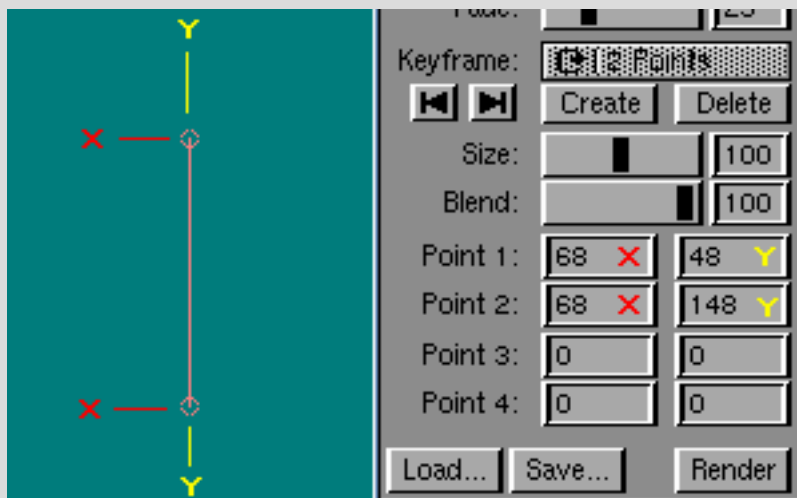


In the KeyFrame Manager this same info is used for the points of the brush you are using. To the left you see what the point locations are for a **4 Point** brush. The points are read clockwise as I've indicated. Point one is X=77, Y=54. Point two is X=140, Y=54. Get it? While the program doesn't let you see the brush as you are moving it about you do get at least *some* help in figuring out

where it is and which parts are where.



On the left is what the coordinates look like when using a one point brush. As there is only one point, you only have the **"X"** location and the **"Y"** location which is derived from the center of the brush. Notice that the fields for Point 2, 3, and 4 are empty ("0"). OK, I state the obvious. But, hey, I have to fill up this space with something, right?



It should come as no surprise that with a two point brush we will have TWO different "X" and "Y" locations. The top point being "1" and the bottom point is Point "2". If you pay attention to the "Y" values you will have an idea of the default height of this brush and as you move it about during the animation you can control how much it gets distorted.

Well, ok, boys and girls, this is the basic "101" of the KeyFrame Manager and next time (Oi!) we'll talk about how to use the darn thing!
