

Tutorial 2

“Fixing Sky Map Problems In Single Player or Multiplayer”

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Ever build the perfect level? You set the ambient lighting to the way you want it, get the perfect backdrop for your skymap to set the scene, place all the entities you want included in your level at the desired locations, test run the game and it looks absolutely amazing! I bet you want it to stay that way right? Right up until it becomes a standalone game?

Good so I am not the only person who wants this...however “testing” and “building” the game into a .EXE file seem to be two different things to me. One problem which happens frequently, I have noticed, is that when building in a multiplayer arena level, whatever skybox background you pick for the level, is never the skybox that is placed in the .EXE file that actually appears in the game. It is always some other skybox (**Figure 1.1**)

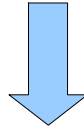
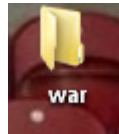
In this tutorial, I will show you how to very easily fix this little hiccup in FPSC if it happens to you and hopefully have those levels looking outstanding.

Figure 1.1: On the left is “Before” in test multiplayer game mode, on the right is “After” we build the game as an .EXE standalone multiplayer.



As you can see from the pictures your probably thinking “What the heck?” I did too for many months until it hit me when I started searching through the files contained inside my standalone .EXE and found I could tweak the settings.

- Step 1: Build the single player, or multiplayer level, and save it where you can get at it easily (Desktop is best). Then open the folder for your game as shown below, for my example game entitled “War”.



Name	Date modified	Type	Size
war	3/30/2008 10:07 PM	Application	16,436 KB
userdetails	6/4/2009 1:19 AM	Configuration Sett...	1 KB
manifest	6/4/2009 1:19 AM	Text Document	41 KB
Files	6/4/2009 1:19 AM	File Folder	

- Step 2: You will then see the above file structure. Double click the “**Files**” folder to see the files and folders that make up the game or level you have created.

Name	Date modified	Type	Size
audiobank File Folder		binfiles File Folder	
entitybank File Folder		gamecore File Folder	
languagebank File Folder		levelbank File Folder	
scriptbank File Folder		skybank File Folder	
videobank File Folder		setup Configuration Settings	2.93 KB
		effectbank File Folder	
		gamesaves File Folder	
		License File Folder	
		texturebank File Folder	

- Step 3: The entire folder structure to make everything work in your game then becomes visible. Now comes the part to change the wrongly allocated files, contained in the “**Skybank**” folder, to the ones we desire.

Step 4: Double click the “**Skybank**” folder to view the current selected skybox genre type, along with its associated files. You will probably find that the skybox genre that is selected to be in your game, whether you wanted it or not, is “**Scifi**”, and if you open the “**Scifi**” folder, you will see the associated files that make up the skybox.



Name	Date modified	Type	Size
Dst.x	9/30/2004 11:41 AM	X File	7 KB
Dst_B.dds	11/20/2004 6:17 PM	DDS File	129 KB
Dst_D.dds	11/20/2004 6:17 PM	DDS File	129 KB
Dst_F.dds	11/20/2004 6:17 PM	DDS File	129 KB
Dst_L.dds	11/20/2004 6:17 PM	DDS File	129 KB
Dst_R.dds	11/20/2004 6:17 PM	DDS File	129 KB
Dst_U.dds	11/20/2004 6:17 PM	DDS File	129 KB

Step 5: Here is where we will replace the whole “**Scifi**” folder with the correct skybank genre folder. The correct folder we want is in the FPSC program files, located on our C: drives, and is in the “Natural” file folder. The files we want are inside another folder called “Ngt” to achieve the night time skybox effect with the moon and stars etc in **figure 1.1**.

Navigate in windows explorer to:

C:\Program Files\The Game Creators\FPS Creator X10\Files\skybank\natural\

It will display the default skybox folders under the natural genre:

Name	Date modified	Type
Sns	5/26/2009 6:48 PM	File Folder
Rnf	5/26/2009 6:48 PM	File Folder
Puf	5/26/2009 6:48 PM	File Folder
Pln	5/26/2009 6:48 PM	File Folder
Ngt	6/4/2009 1:02 AM	File Folder

Right click on the “**Ngt**” folder, to copy the folder and its contents.

Step 6: Go to your game folder again (e.g. “war” folder on the desktop), open it, click “Files” folder, then click “Skybank” folder, click once on the “scifi” folder and rename it to “natural”. Then open the “natural” file folder, select the folder file in there and delete it, then right click, and hit paste to copy the “Ngt” folder into the “natural” folder. This will list the correct files for the night time skybox, which start with “ngt” not “dst” as before (Figure 1.2).

Name	Date modified	Type	Size
ngt.X	9/30/2004 11:38 AM	X File	7 KB
ngt_B.DDS	4/19/2007 2:13 PM	DDS File	2,049 KB
ngt_D.DDS	4/19/2007 2:13 PM	DDS File	2,049 KB
ngt_F.DDS	4/19/2007 2:13 PM	DDS File	2,049 KB
ngt_L.DDS	4/19/2007 2:13 PM	DDS File	2,049 KB
ngt_R.DDS	4/19/2007 2:13 PM	DDS File	2,049 KB
ngt_U.DDS	4/19/2007 2:13 PM	DDS File	2,049 KB

Figure 1.2: The amended files and folder have changed from “dst” to “ngt”.

And thats it really. Run the .EXE again and you will see that magically the night time sky box that we originally wanted is now in the background in our level.

How did I know what the night time sky box files and folder was called and how to find them? Easy! When in the editor, go up to the file menu, press “File”, then click “Build Game”. A menu with tabs across the top will appear, click the tab called “Level Settings” (Figure 1.3)

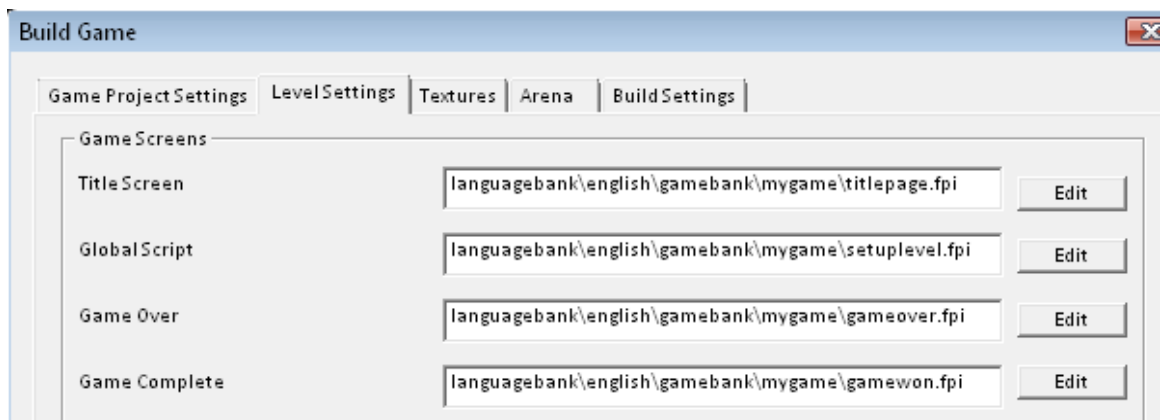


Figure 1.3: Finding the right folder and files for your skybox

In the “Global Script” line, hit the “Edit” button. You will then see the following window appear with details about the scripts that will be running in the game along with various other settings. We are only interested in the “Level Setup” - “Sky” section.

Setup Wizard [languagebank\english\gamebank\mygame\setuplevel.fpi]	
General	
Music	audiobank\music\common\eeriefeelmusic.ogg
Pointer	gamecore\huds\pointer.png
Level Setup	
Sky	skybank\natural\Ngt
Screen Overlays	
Fade Out Image	gamecore\huds\fader.png
Eye Damage Image	gamecore\huds\eyehud.png
Default Zoom Image	gamecore\huds\zoom.png
Status Panels	
Lives Image	languagebank\english\gamecore\huds\lives....
Lives Image X	5

This will give the genre for each section and the names of files and folders that you can just switch their names using the example above to get the right skybox for your game.

Thats all folks.