

Animation sets

The animation set consists of a web USB web camera, Mac laptop and tripod.



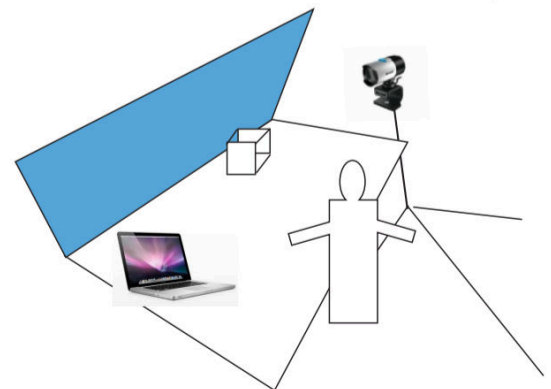
Equipment & tips on setting up

1. Web Camera - This is a simple web camera, plug in the USB connection. Make sure you do this before launching any software
2. Tripod - The height of this can be adjusted from several points in the leg and neck area
3. Mac Laptop - This will have the software you require to animate with.



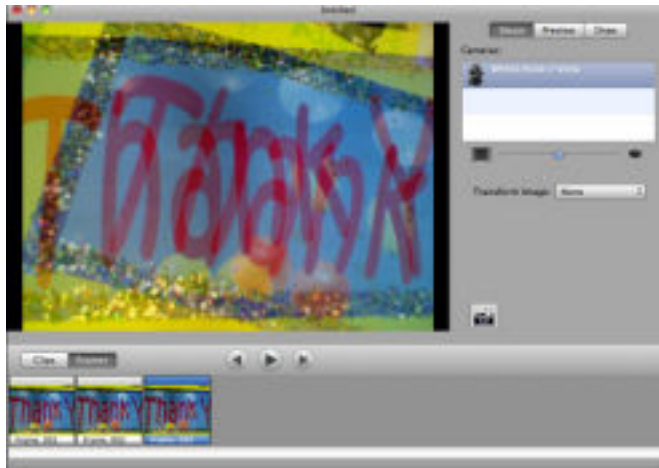
Setting up

1. **For flat work or 2D puppets** - Set up equipment / tripod as shown in the first diagram on the right. You can also use the floor or wall with this kind of flat work.
2. **For 3D work using upright objects** - Set up equipment / tripod as shown in second diagram on the right using a wall or flat surface to act as a backdrop. It is advised that no more than four people should be around a setup. Have enough room to move around freely and always secure the tripod to the floor using strong tape. Backdrops / backgrounds etc must be secured to the desk using blu-tack.



I Can Animate

I Can Animate is a stop-frame animation software, it works by taking pictures (frames) that are compressed and played back as moving images.

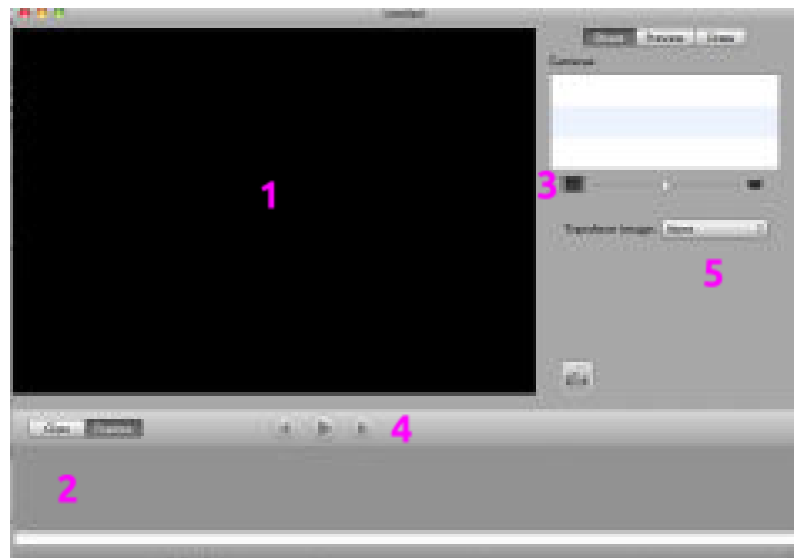


Getting started

1. Make sure your camera is set up and plugged in correctly.
2. Double click on the iCan Animate Logo to launch the application. This will be in your Start Menu (windows) or Applications folder (Mac).

The Interface

1. **Screen** - This will show you what your camera can see.
2. **Timeline** - This is where all your frames will sit.
3. **Transparency** - This shows you the last frame taken and the 5 camera image at the same time, resulting in a ghost like image. This helps you judge the movement of your characters whilst animating. Make sure the transparency slider is halfway between the two symbols.
4. **Control Buttons** - Press Play to view your animation as you animate.
5. **Transform** - Rotate your camera view, this depends where your camera is placed.



Animating

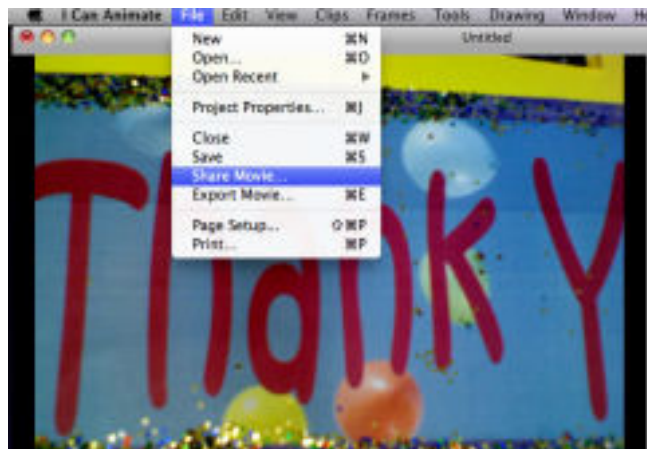
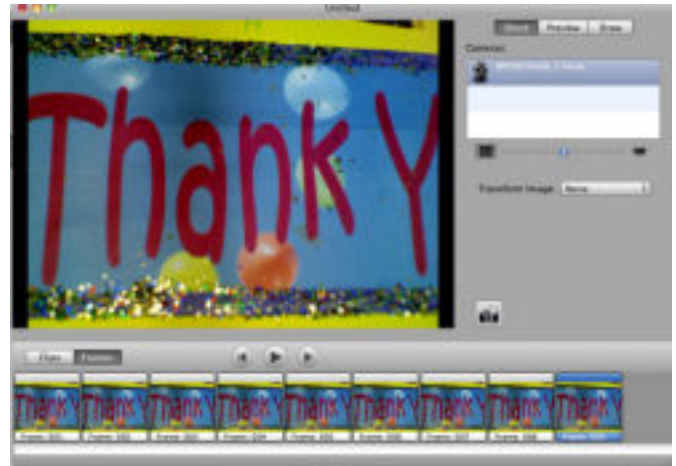
Click the camera symbol to take pictures. You can also use the number 3 button on your keyboard. Pressing '3' will take three frames, which allows for smoother and quicker

animating. Pressing '3' eight times will produce 1 second of animation (there are 24 frames in one second of film: $8 \times 3 = 24$).

Remember to save your work regularly.

You can also use 'I Can Animate' to do simple drawn animation by clicking the Drawing button.

You can also add your own background image.



Exporting & Saving

Once you have completed animating you need to compress the frames into a movie clip. To do this go to File, choose share or Export movie, choose the kind of file you require. The choices depend on the version of the software that is being used.

We advice you choose from the following files types: AVI, DV, PAL, Quicktime.

TIPS

- Make sure you camera is switched on before you animate.
- Make small movements to achieve smooth movement.
- Save your work regularly.
- Animate in small chunks, i.e. work on 15 seconds (you can see the duration on the timeline below the clips) then export and carry on to avoid crashing.
- Play your animation back as you go along to help you keep your place.
- Try not to have too many objects moving at the same time.
- Keep your backgrounds stuck down or firmly secure to a desk or wall.
- Make sure you have enough space to save your work before you animate as the exported files can be quite big.

In your classroom

Why not try:

- Re-telling of existing stories or adapting existing stories e.g. nursery rhymes, and have a school animation festival.
- Use cut-out letters or numbers to make simple animations that encourage spelling or maths. Do a different word or sum every day.
- Use 3D objects that are available (e.g toy farm animals) to quickly animate a short story.