

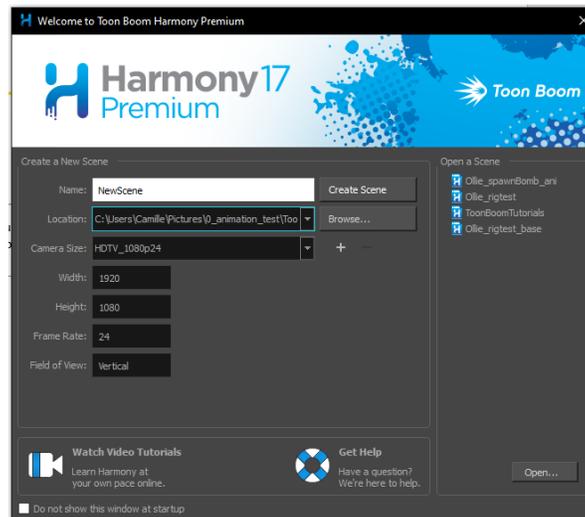


By Camille Morales

This comprehensive guide will give you the rundown on what I learned in Toon Boom. This can help you get familiar with some the features that Toon Boom has to offer.

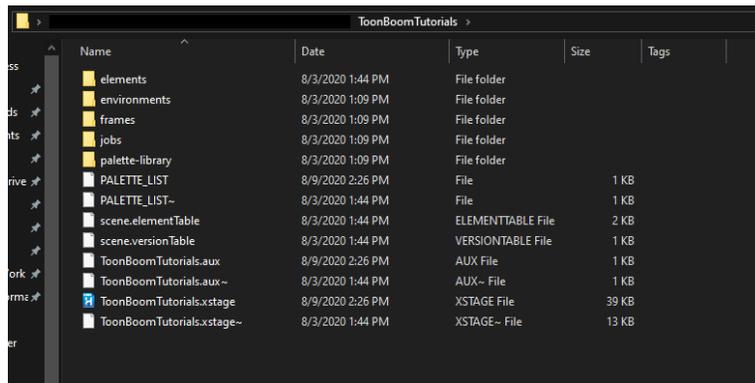
NOTE: This was made using Toon Boom Harmony 17 Premium (the one I used when given a home copy) so some things might be different in future versions.

Start Up & Interface



Once you open the program, you will be greeted with this window. You can create new scenes and set up the scene's Frames per Second and Screen Resolution before starting on your project. Other projects you have worked on will be displayed on the side for quick access. You will need to set your location since it will create a folder structure where it will store all the data and frames you make in the project.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Toon Boom folder structure will not allow spaces. You will need to use either underscores (_) or dashes (-).



Name	Date	Type	Size	Tags
elements	8/3/2020 1:44 PM	File folder		
environments	8/3/2020 1:09 PM	File folder		
frames	8/3/2020 1:09 PM	File folder		
jobs	8/3/2020 1:09 PM	File folder		
palette-library	8/3/2020 1:09 PM	File folder		
PALETTE_LIST	8/9/2020 2:26 PM	File	1 KB	
PALETTE_LIST~	8/3/2020 1:44 PM	File	1 KB	
scene.elementTable	8/3/2020 1:44 PM	ELEMENTTABLE File	2 KB	
scene.versionTable	8/3/2020 1:44 PM	VERSIONTABLE File	1 KB	
ToonBoomTutorials.aux	8/9/2020 2:26 PM	AUX File	1 KB	
ToonBoomTutorials.aux~	8/3/2020 1:44 PM	AUX~ File	1 KB	
ToonBoomTutorials.xstage	8/9/2020 2:26 PM	XSTAGE File	39 KB	
ToonBoomTutorials.xstage~	8/3/2020 1:44 PM	XSTAGE~ File	13 KB	

Once you save your scene, it will create a set of folders and files in a complex folder structure rather than one complete project file. The “project” file is the main component of your project (in the form of an XSTAGE file) which contains all the information, any drawings/frames/pallets/etc. you make within the program will be stored in these various folders.

Important folders:

elements – This folder contains all the drawings/frames you make, each stored within its own folder which are named similarly to the layer they are on. Imported files will also be stored in these folders. Renaming the layer will rename the folder and files inside of it and deleting the files from here will also completely remove the layer in the program.

i.e. A layer named “o_head” creates a folder named “o_head” with each drawing (named o_head-1, o_head-2, etc.) in that folder in the form of an .tvg file.

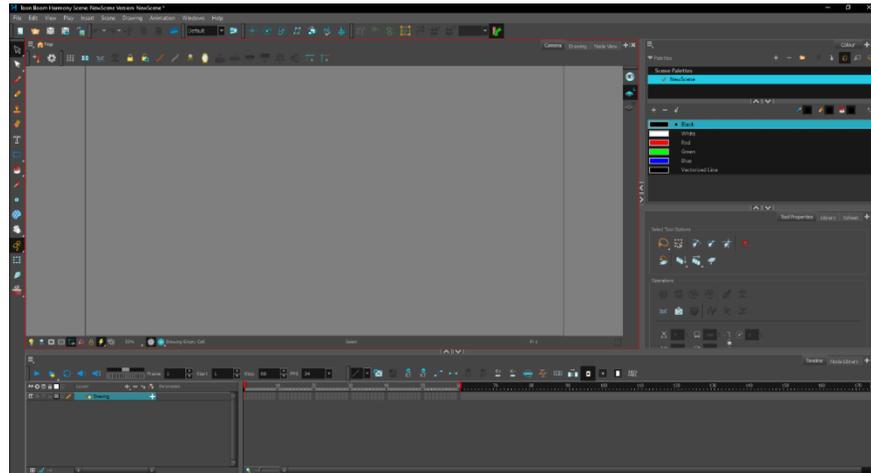
palette-library – This folder contains any saved palettes you make in the program.

Before starting, be sure that you set your preferences, most notably:

General > Setting > Levels of Undo

- Increase the amount of from 50 to a higher number like 100 or 200, the higher the number the more memory it uses.

UI, Views, Toolbars, and Workspace



When you create a new scene, you will open the main program where you will see the main User Interface where there are different toolbars and workspaces at your disposal. You can rearrange/add any tabs to your liking.

Note: While working around the program, a red box highlights the current panel you are working on. Keyboard shortcuts will only work in your current highlighted panel.

Camera

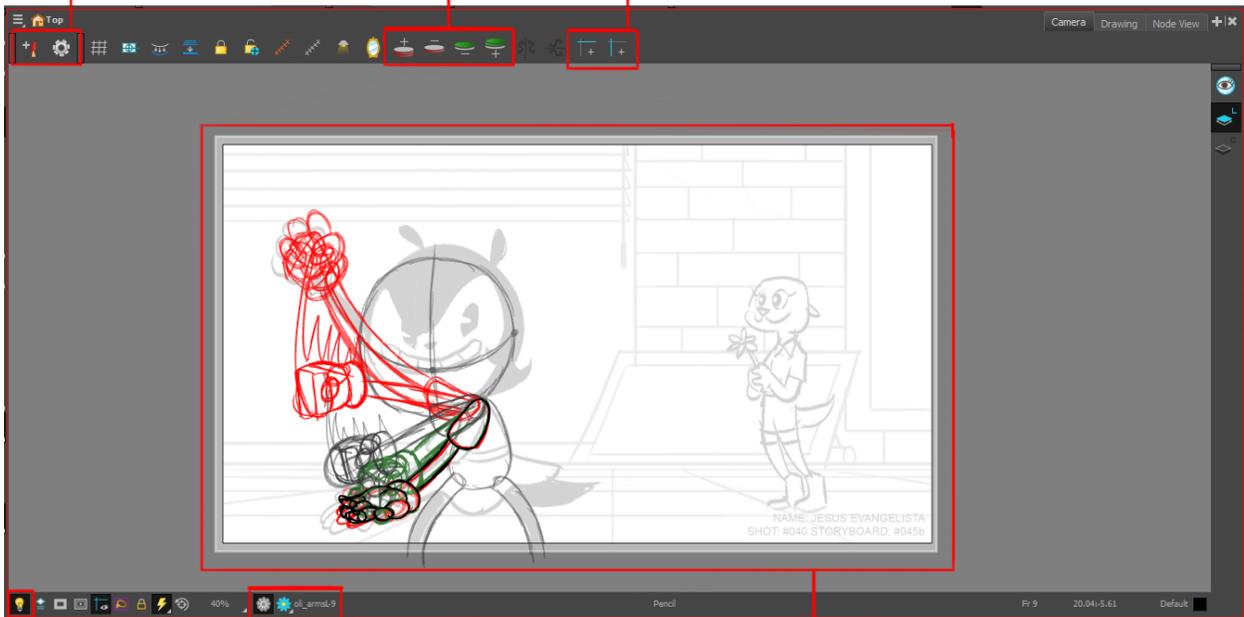
This is your main view of the scene/stage. You will be making your drawings here and anything drawn here are in the form of Vector drawings. The outer boundaries of the scene can be seen in this view and drawings can exist outside the boundaries.

Here are the more notable tools I've used:

Brush
Settings/Presets

Onion Skin
Add/Remove Frames

Guides



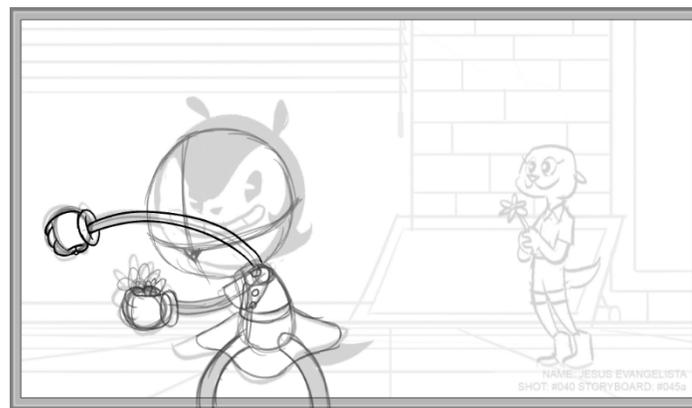
Light Table

Render Views

Workspace

Light Table

This is a handy tool when using multiple layers. When activating this, it will fade all other layers you are not working on and keeps your currently selected layer untouched.



Add/Remove Onion Skin One Previous/Next Drawings

I found these buttons to be useful to use when you want to extend and/or reduce the number of frames for the Onion Skinning feature rather than trying to edit the slider in the timeline.

Note: These buttons are not available when Onion Skinning is turned off on your current layer.



Onion Skin Add One Previous Drawing

“Display one extra previous drawing to current drawing in onion skins”

This basically extends the number of previous frames that is shown by the Onion Skin. These onion skins appear a bright red and become more transparent the farther way your current frame is and the closest appear bolder in color.



Onion Skin Reduce One Previous Drawing

“Display one less previous drawing to current drawing in onion skins”

Basically, what it says, it reduces the amount of previous frames shown in the onion skin in one easy button.



Onion Skin Reduce One Next Drawing

“Display one less following drawing to current drawing in onion skins”

Basically, what it says, it reduces the amount of following frames shown in the onion skin in one easy button. These onion skins appear a dark green and become more transparent the farther way your current frame is and the closest appear bolder in color.

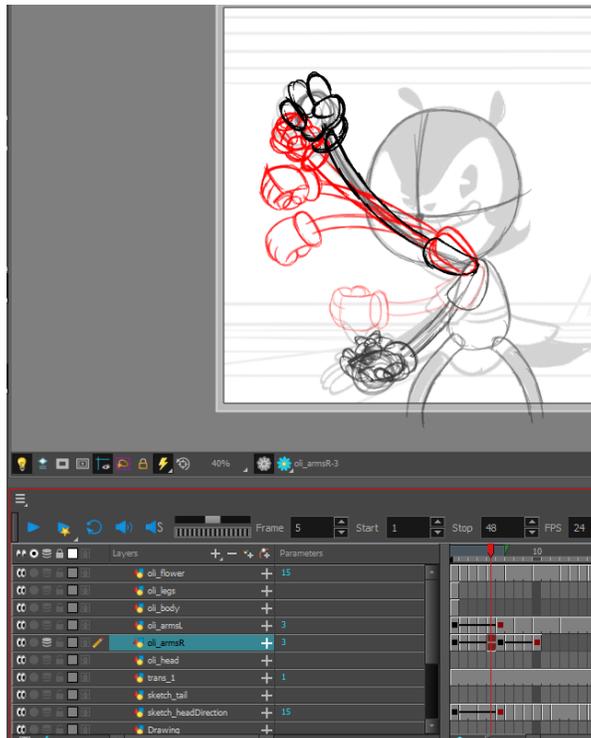


Onion Skin Add One Next Drawing

“Display one extra following drawing to current drawing in onion skins”

This basically extends the number of following frames that is shown by the Onion Skin.

To keep in mind, the buttons go as **Add Previous > Reduce Previous > Reduce Following > Add Following** making the “Following” add/reduce the opposite so removing frames are the middle buttons and the addition buttons on the outside. Was confused at first but this is how the program lays it out and will have to get used to it.



Onion Skins can be active in the layer you want which can be very useful

Render Views/Modes

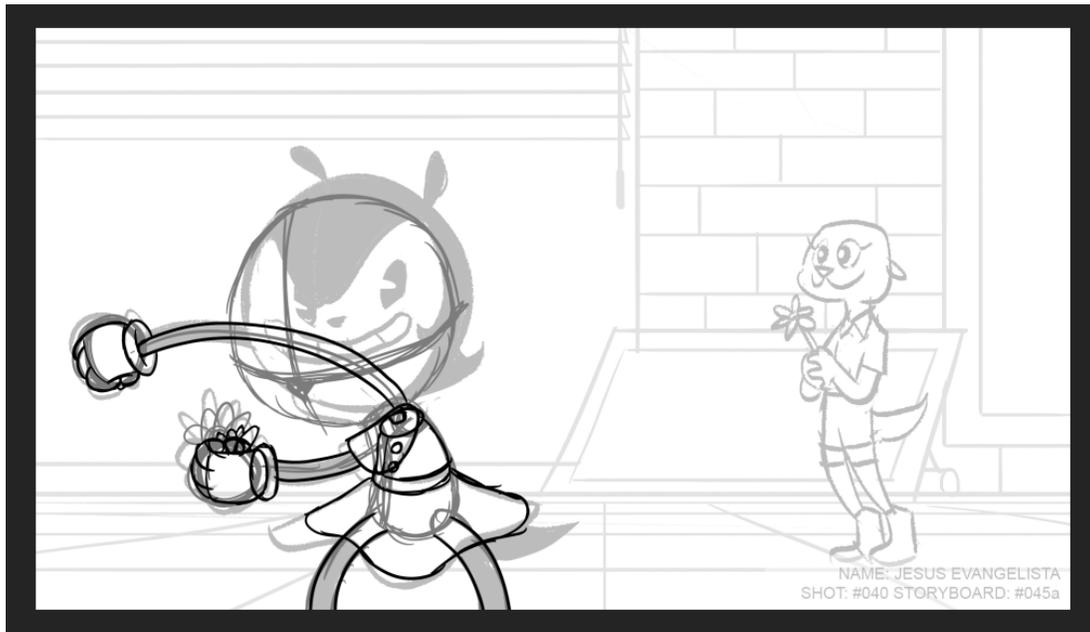
There are two modes that the program renders the scene, OpenGL View and Render View.

OpenGL View

Mode for displaying scene with a fast response, not in final output quality ... can playback animation or make changes and see results instantly.

Render View

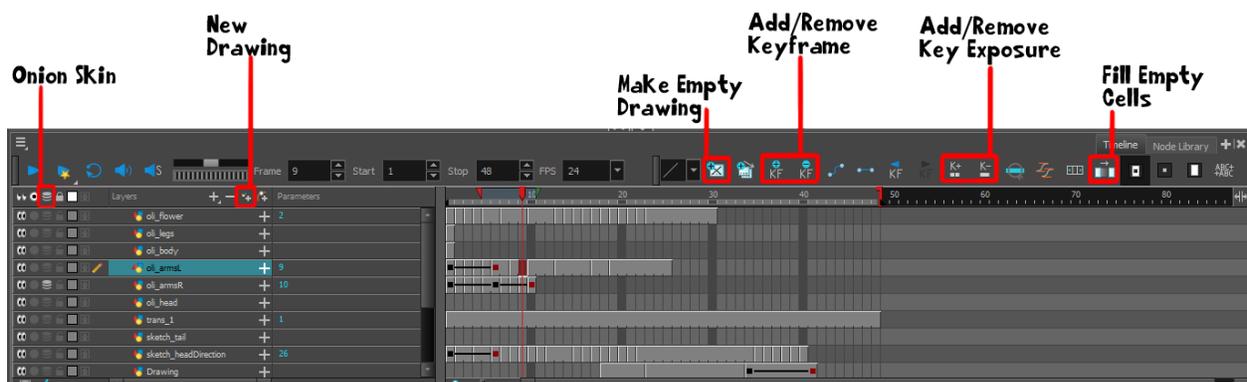
Mode for displaying scene in the final output quality with all effects.



Render View ON: anything outside the boundary box will not show.

Timeline

Here in the timeline you have a variety of useful tools:



Create Empty Drawing

“Create a new drawing at current frame, even if another drawing exists there. Replaces current exposed drawing with a new empty drawing.”

This basically helps make empty frames for you to make new drawings to add to the timeline. If you have an exposed drawing, this tool helps with splitting the exposed frame and adding an empty new frame for you to draw on.

Insert Keyframe

“Creates a key position, rotation, scale or skew value in the Timeline. Can also create a key value in other parameters.”

Key frames are useful for drawings that are extended for multiple frames. You can set a keyframe at the start of a drawing and a drawing a few frames ahead. If you modify the drawing in the second keyframe, drawings in between the first and second, the computer will calculate movement in the between frames, making the drawing move without having to manipulate or redraw the frames yourself.

Delete Keyframes

“Deletes all values in all the parameters of selected keyframes.”

Removes any translations, scales, blurs, etc. on the frames affected and converts the drawing back to a more stationary entity.

Add Key Exposure

“Set current cell with a key exposure of current drawing. Key exposures ensure that the drawing will act as an independent entity, even if it has the same drawing number as the preceding one, and be unaffected by drawing substitutions on preceding key exposures.”

Exposure is just how many frames the drawing is held for. This will extend the frame forward by one frame (you can also use the keyboard shortcut of **Shift + “+”** while in the timeline). This can be combined with adding Keyframes to the exposed drawing to allow easy manipulation of the drawing such as squash and stretch, translation, blur, etc. without having to duplicate frames.

Remove Key Exposure

“Removes key exposure of all selected drawings. Unifies the entire range to use the first drawing of the selection.”

This basically reduces the amount of frames the drawing is held in one easy button (you can also use the keyboard shortcut of **“-”** while in the timeline).