

Chapter 9- Animation Basics

Viewing Your Animation:

There is a simple way to view your animation without having to render out a movie. Take the **current frame number** to the place where you want to start viewing the animation. Place your cursor in the 3D window you wish to view your animation and press the **"Alt" and "A"** keys together. The animation will play. Blender will attempt to display the movie at the correct *frames-per-second*, but may be unable to do so due to scene complexity, computer speed, or image settings (solid or wireframe -Z key).

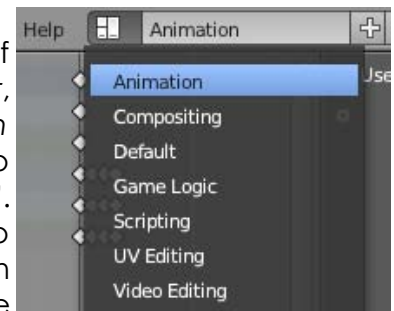
You can also see your animation by pressing the "play" button in the Timeline window. You can also play backwards.



Movement may not be exactly how you planned it. Blender automatically defaults to trying to create a smooth flow through the keys you've place. This can be changed and will be discussed later.

Working with the Graph Editor and Dope Sheet

Animation is difficult to do without some basic knowledge of the **Graph Editor and Dope Sheet**. As mentioned earlier, these used to be called the *IPO (interpolation)* and *Action Editor* windows. The best way to access these windows is to change your screen layout from **"Default"** to **"Animation"**. You will see the 2 windows on the left and it may help to make those windows larger. All objects that have animation



keys on them will be displayed in the windows and their data displayed to the right as diamonds (*Dope Sheet*) and curves (*Graph Editor*). You can zoom in/out and pan in this window with the center mouse wheel. Like actual objects, the curves can be edited in an edit and object mode. Older versions of Blender would only show you the curves of a selected object, but 2.6 can display all objects in the scene. At first glance, it can be rather confusing! To simplify your view, you can check/uncheck objects to hide/show their curves. By opening a triangle under an object, you can select individual curves for that object and edit them.

The image shows two side-by-side screenshots of Blender's animation windows. The left screenshot is labeled 'Dope Sheet Window' and shows a list of objects (Plane, Cube) with their animation channels (LocRotScale) listed as diamonds. The right screenshot is labeled 'Graph Editor Window' and shows the same objects with their animation channels plotted as curves. A black circle highlights the 'LocRotScale' channel for the 'Cube' object in both windows, with an arrow pointing from the Dope Sheet window to the Graph Editor window to show the transition between the two views.