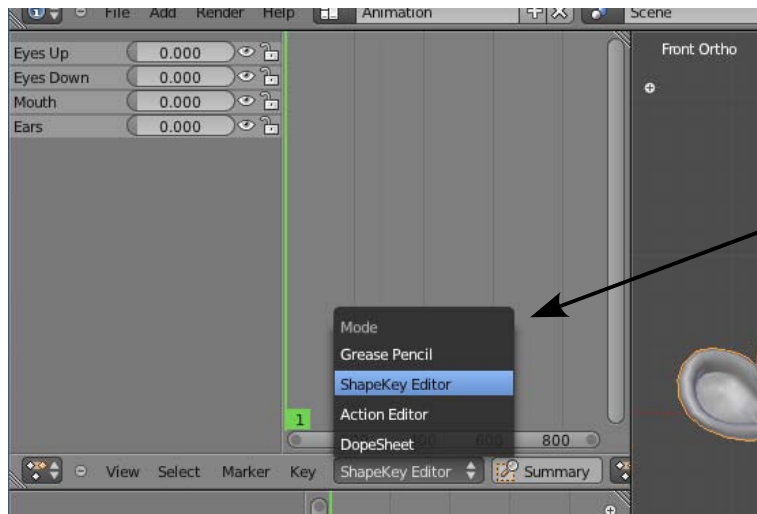
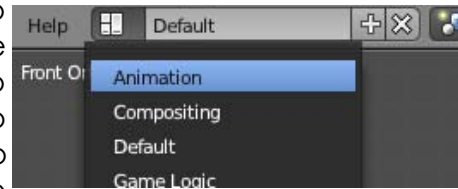


Chapter 17- Mesh Shape Keys

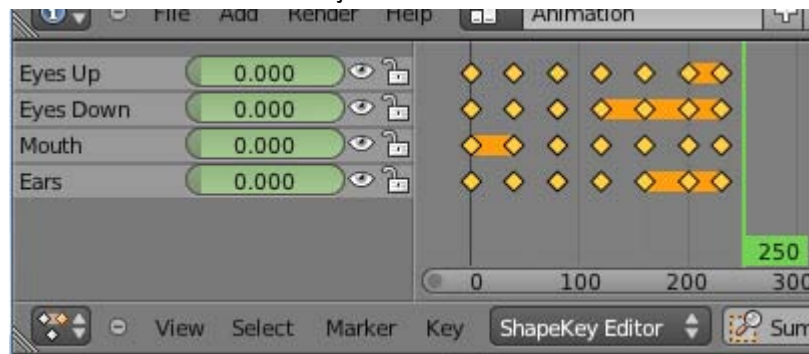
Animating Shape Keys

Now that you have created the sliders, it's now time to look at an easy way to animate them. If you review the animation chapter, you'll see a description on how to work in the *Dope Sheet* window. First thing we need to do is change our screen layout from "*Default*" to "*Animation*". Your screen configuration will change to



show a *Dope Sheet* window, a *Graph Editor* window, 3D window and *Buttons*. We're interested in the *Dope Sheet* Window. In order to see your shape keys, we need to switch the view from *Dope Sheet* to *ShapeKey Editor* at the bottom of the window. You will now be able to see all your shape key sliders in the window. You may need to adjust the size of the window so you can see everything.

Animation is as easy as moving a slider. As you move a slider, a small diamond will display on the time line to the right of the key. This diamond is an animation key at the current frame. After you set all sliders on the current frame, move up in time to your next desired frame and adjust the sliders. You are now animated over time. With a little



practice, you will be able to animate easily using this technique. After you have placed some keys along the time line, go back to frame 1 and press "Alt-A" to see the animation (or press the play button in the time line controls).

As you animate, you can select keys (selected keys are yellow) and copy, move and scale them using standard Blender commands for other spots along the time line. A key that doesn't change over time is shown by a bar between keys. Keys can also be selected and deleted easily.



RoboDude Asks: Why are shapes changing when I haven't inserted keys?

Remember that features change over time and begin changing from one key to the next. If a slider shouldn't change for, say, the first 50 frames, then change from frame 50-70, you will need to set a key at frame 50 and not just at frame 1.