



Stop Motion Animation using Stykz

Tech Resort Mini-Makers Session #1110

In this session we will create our own cartoon using stop motion animation

Skills involved: Digital Skills ✓

Art ✓

Suitable for ages: 7-11 (6+ with adult supervision)

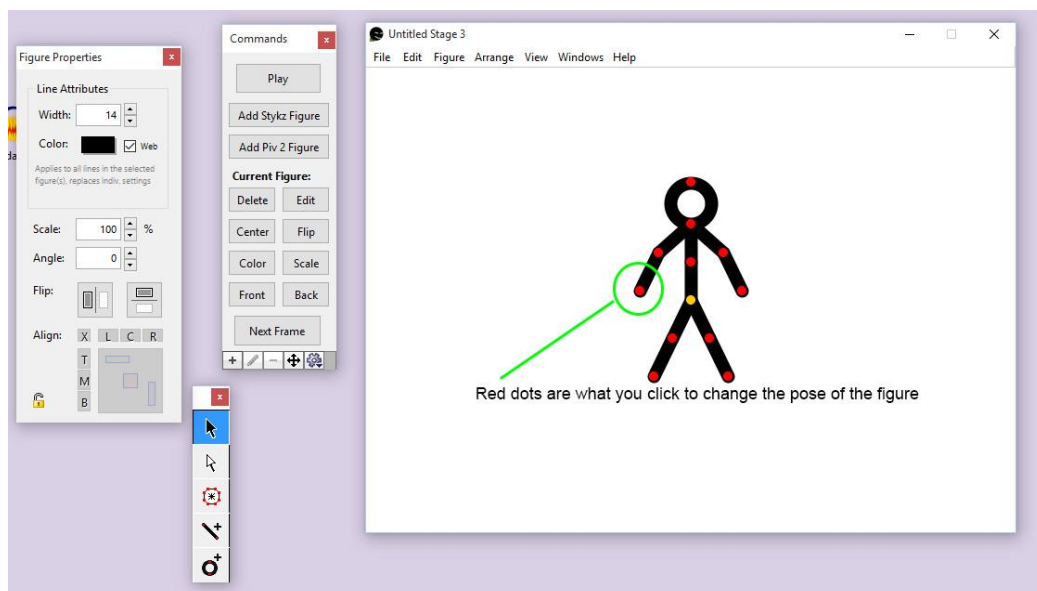
You will need: A lap top PC with the 'Stykz' animation program installed

Introduction

Animation is where we create a cartoon film by drawing one picture at a time. We then show all our pictures quickly one after the other to create the illusion that things are moving. Your PC has a program called Stykz which makes it easy to do this and create our very own animated story.

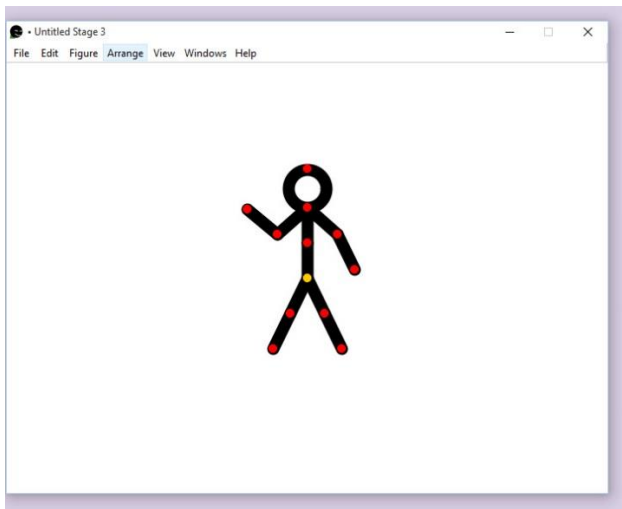
How Stykz Works

- Your Stykz screen should look like this when you start

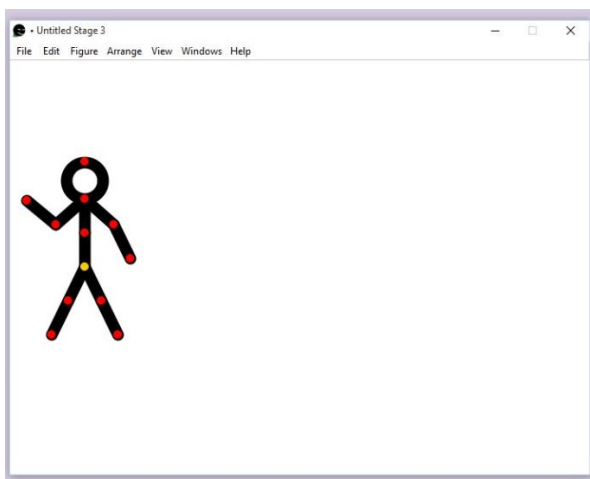


- The red dots are the points you click and drag to pose the figure – dots like this are called *“nodes”*.

- Try clicking and dragging one of the figure’s “hands” and moving it upwards like this:



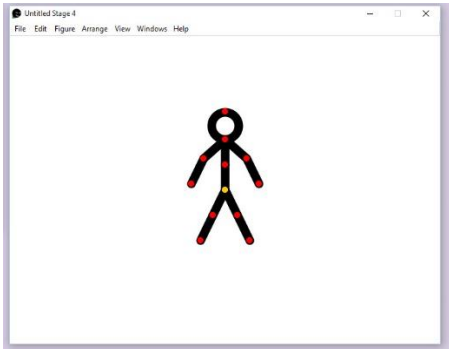
- To move the whole figure either click and hold the yellow node or click and hold the black lines of the figure. Move your figure to the far left of the screen...



- Stop motion animation relies on lots of still pictures, or “frames” with small changes between them being shown one after the other at quite high speed. This makes it look like the pictures are moving.
- Stykz allows you to create frames very simply by clicking the “next frame” button in the commands window and then moving the frame.

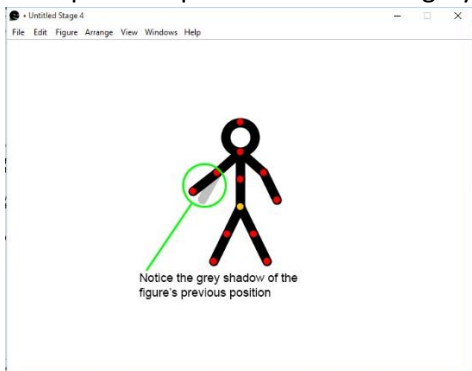
Creating your first animation

- Start again with a new “stage” (from the File Menu, choose “New”).

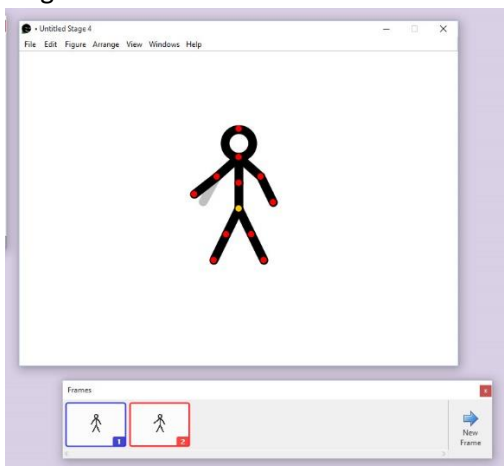


- This will be your first frame.

Now click “next frame” and move your stick figure’s hand a tiny bit. Notice how the outline of its previous position is shown in grey to let you know how much it has changed.



- Notice also that there are now two frames shown in the “Frames” window underneath the stage



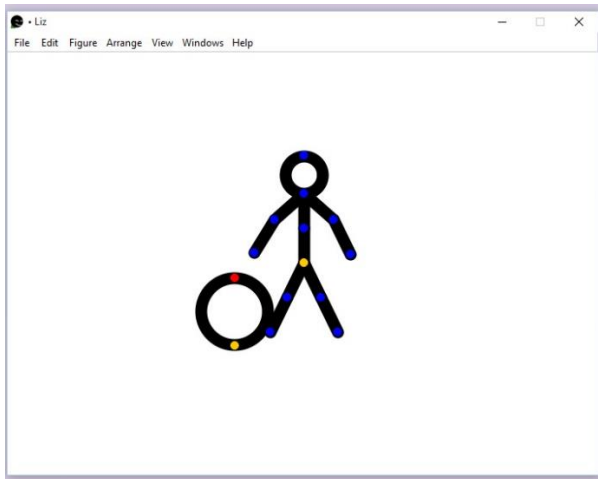
- Now create 18 more frames (so you have 20 in total) making your stick figure wave

- Save your animation (File, Save) and call the file by your first name.
- Now check out how your animation looks...

Click “play” in the command window.

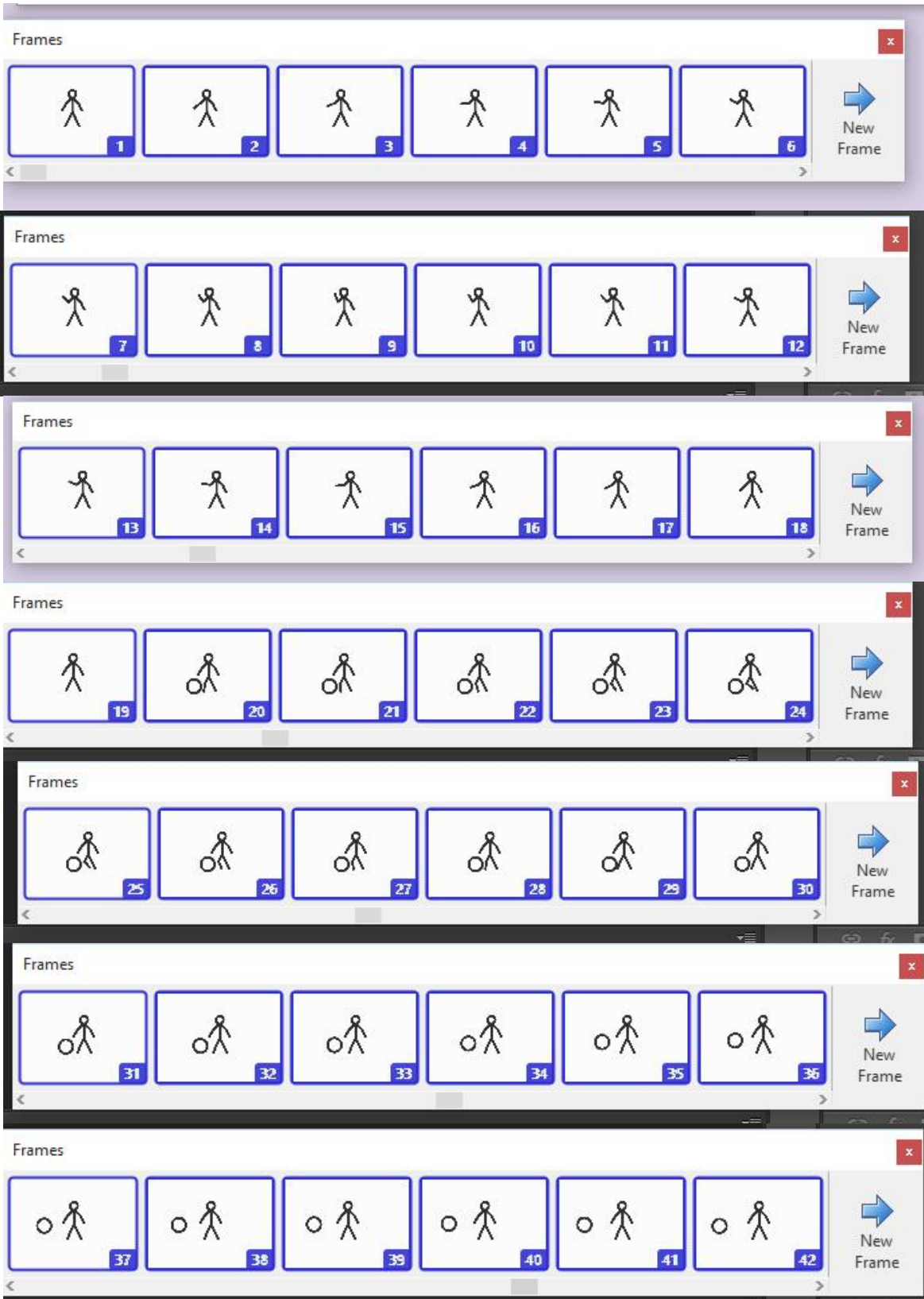
- The animation plays back at 10 frames per second so with 20 frames in your animation it will last just 2 seconds.
- Now let’s add another figure to animate...

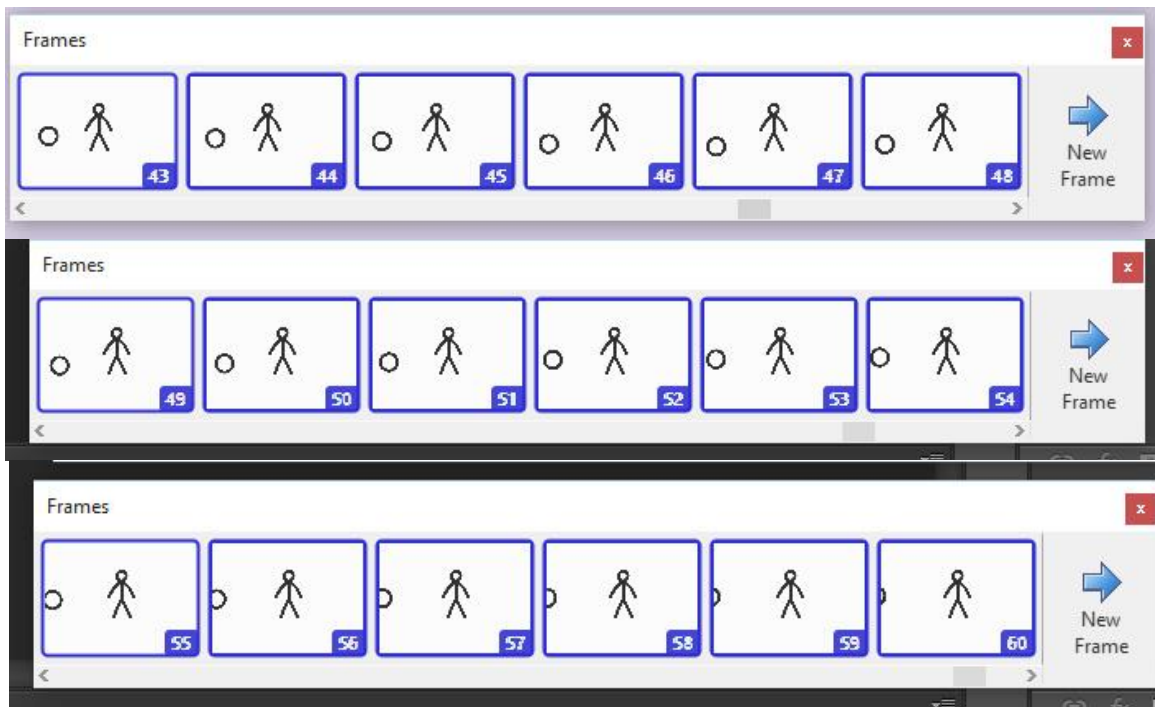
From the “Figures” menu choose circle and a new circle will appear in front of your stick figure. Click on it and drag it to the side next to the figure’s foot.



- Note that the figure you’re moving has red nodes and the other figure has blue. To select the other figure click once on one of its lines
- Now add about 40 more frames making the stick figure kick the ball
- (don’t forget to save from time to time)

Here’s my storyboard of the ball kicking...





Now Experiment with Your Own Story.

Make a 20 second animation (that means 200 frames) which tells a short story/

It can be any story you like but here are some suggestions

- Two stick figures playing catch
- Two stick figures running a race
- One stick figure juggling (successfully or unsuccessfully)
- A stick figure doing gymnastics
- Figures dancing

Extra Features You Might Want in Your Animation

- You can make a shape grow or shrink by selecting it (when the nodes are red) and typing a bigger number (to grow) or a smaller number (to shrink) in the "Scale" box in "Figure Properties" window
- You can change the colour of the shape or the width of the line by changing the "Line Attribute" settings in the Figure properties.

You can download and use this software at home – it's free of charge:

<http://www.stykz.net/>