IGM Tutorial XIX: Tips And Tricks - Part 2

by Kain Vinosec

Last time we uncovered some of the more unusual secrets of IG Maker. Today we're going to cover a couple more of those and one rather obvious secret – Auto Tiling! Load up your Action RPG or grab this GPD and we'll get started! Head to the "Action RPG" tab and the "Tiles" sub-tab.

You should have the tiles we've been using for this GPD already set up. Over to the right you'll notice a tab for "Auto Tiling". Click on that real quick and you'll see that we don't have any Auto Tiling presets. Hit the + button and create a new one called "Lit Path". Now you can double-click any of the sections of the Auto Tiling list to choose which tile will fit in that section. Luckily the ones we are using today all look exactly like the pictures provided so it should be pretty easy to match everything up.

For "Upper Left" for instance, just imagine that the light purple area is the dirt and the clear area is the grass and then match it up to the obvious tile. You can do the same for the rest of the tiles and you'll find that there are enough path tiles to do a lit or shadowed path. Once you've got your tiles all set up head over to the "Canvas" sub-tab.
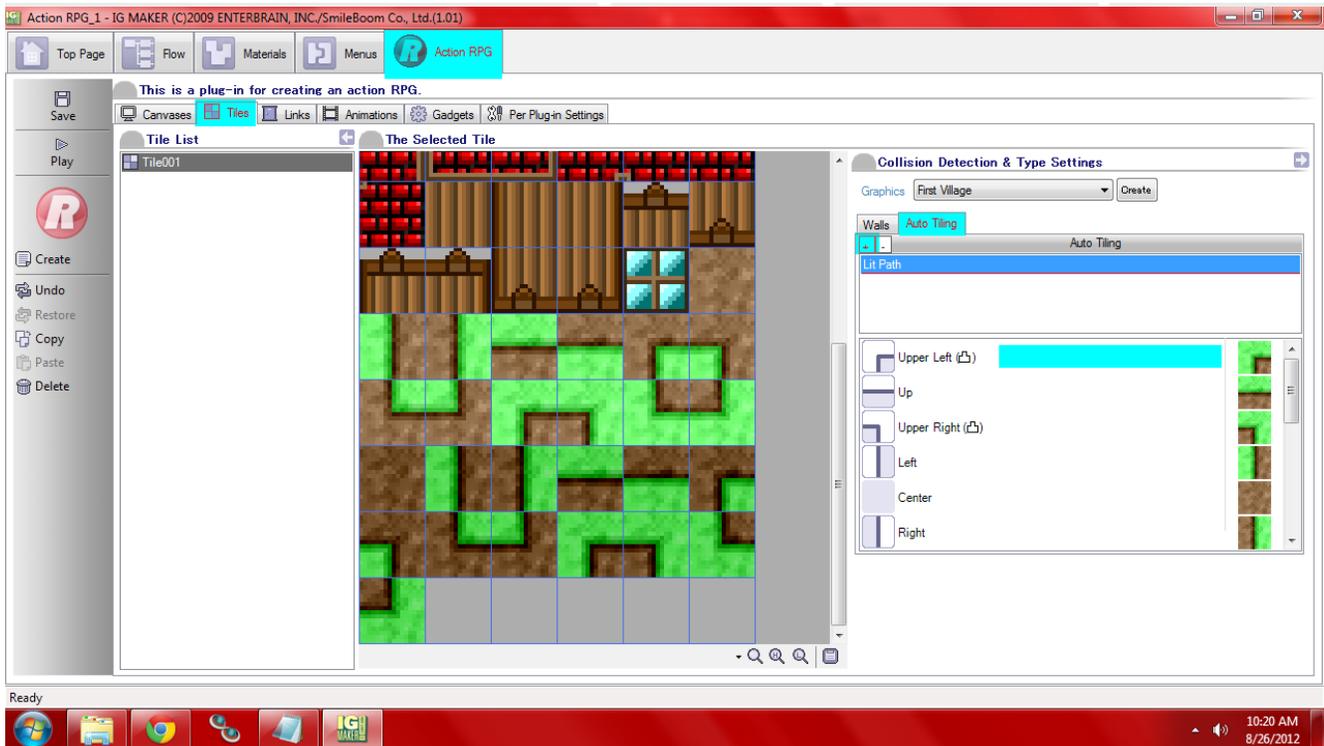
Let's create a new canvas to play around in. Don't forget to set it to use the same tile set as the other canvas on the "Per Canvas Settings" sub-sub-tab. Also don't forget to switch to the appropriate layer before you start placing tiles. Auto Tiling here works a little differently from what you might expect. It's really a way of saving time rather than having the program build custom maps for you, though with some tweaking that is entirely possible as well. Start by using the very first simple grass tile. Make a 4×4 square with it in the middle of your blank canvas.
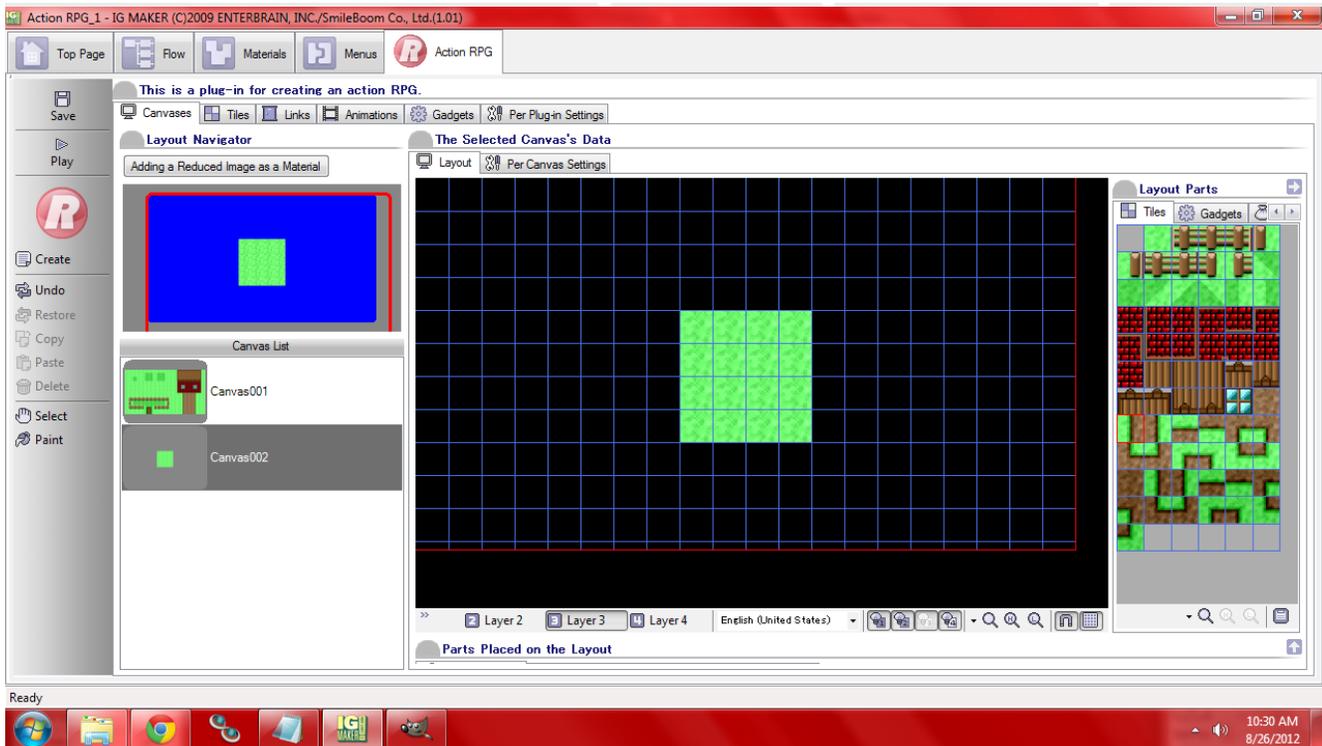
Now grab the tile that looks like the left side of the path that you set up in Auto Tiling. It should be the very first tile with the path AND the grass visible on it.

Now, in order for Auto Tiling to be seamless you need to start in a place where that tile would normally go. So on the RIGHT side of our grass in a blank spot immediately next to the grass, click and drag tiles all the way around our 4×4 square (making it a 5×5 square). Once you've went around it once, without letting go of your mouse, go ahead and go around it again (making it a 6×6 square). What you'll see when you're done is a path going around the grass we initially put down (if you mess up just erase those tiles and start again, or experiment and see how auto tiling reacts to whatever it is that you're doing).
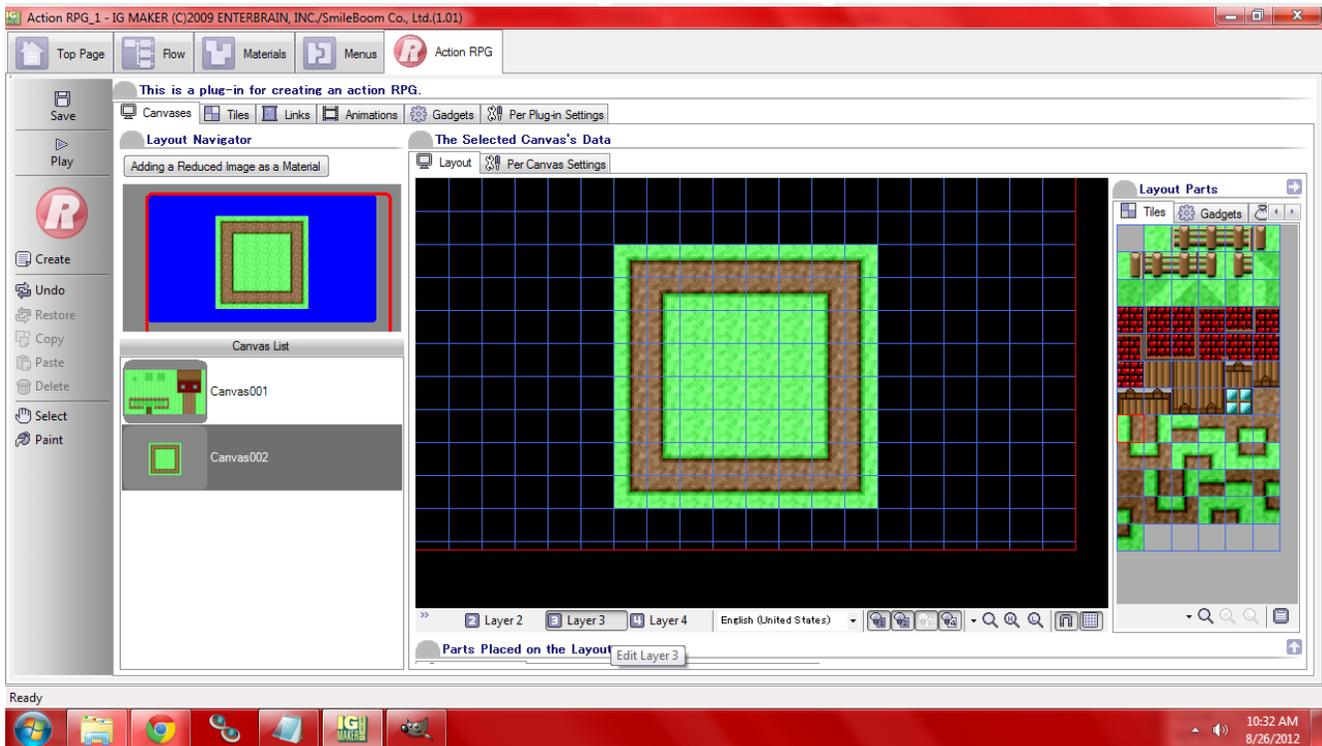
This will work with any shape, and if your mouse moves awkwardly it can certainly look a little jarring but can easily be fixed. The thing to keep in mind is that auto tiling works off of whatever tiles are next to you. For example if you select the all-dirt tile, and move it one to the right on a previously-blank canvas, the move to the right will become the right part of the path.

If you move it to the left under the same conditions, it'll become the left part of the path. Same with up and down. Moving it in unusual ways will create unusual patterns and that is really what you need to watch out for. There is an impossible number of ways that auto tiling can work and unfortunately I can't go into a lot of detail on it. Your best bet is to play around and see how the tiles react to certain things. For a bit of fun, see if you can recreate the map below (or something similar) by starting with the all-dirt tile and not letting off your mouse until the canvas is done.
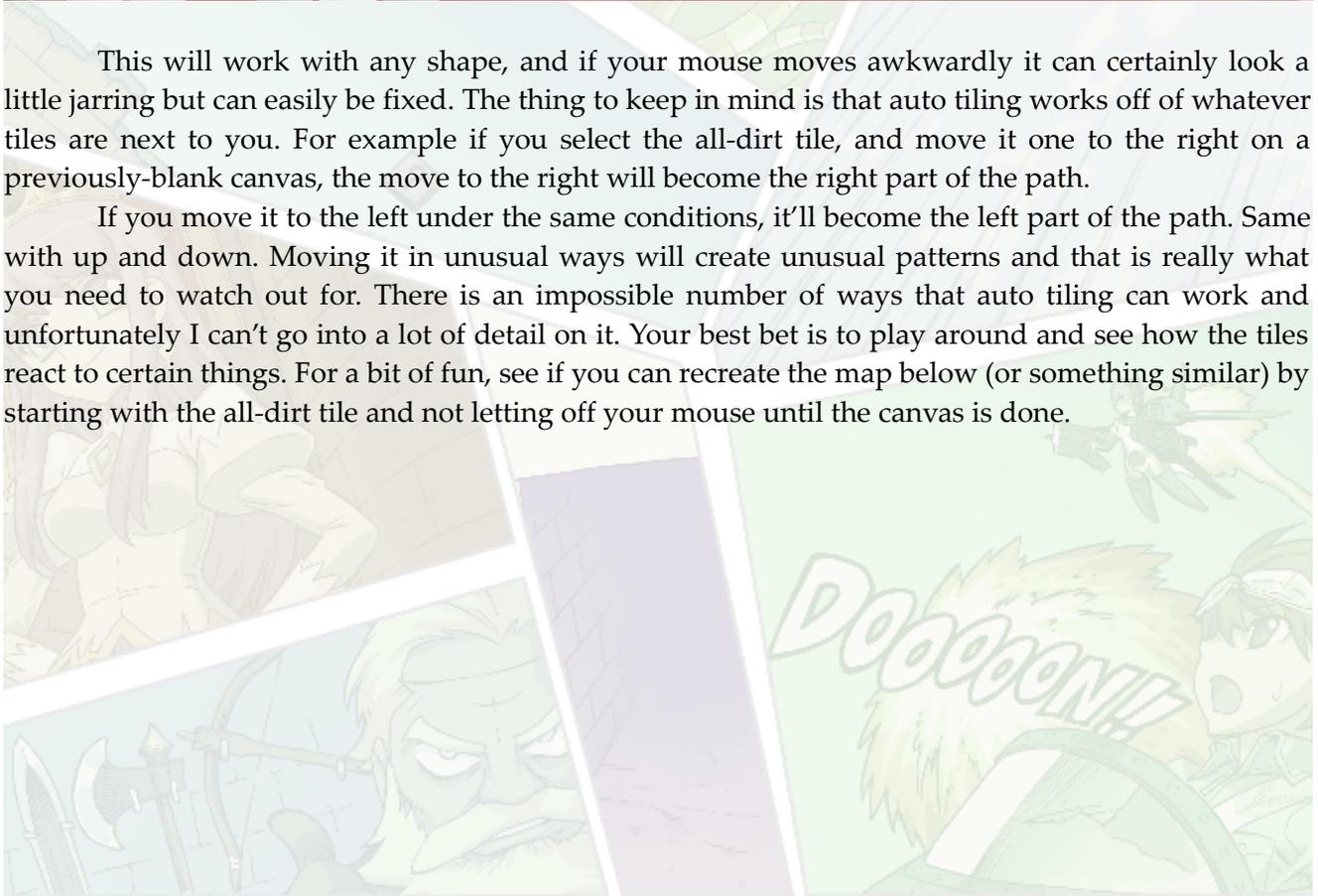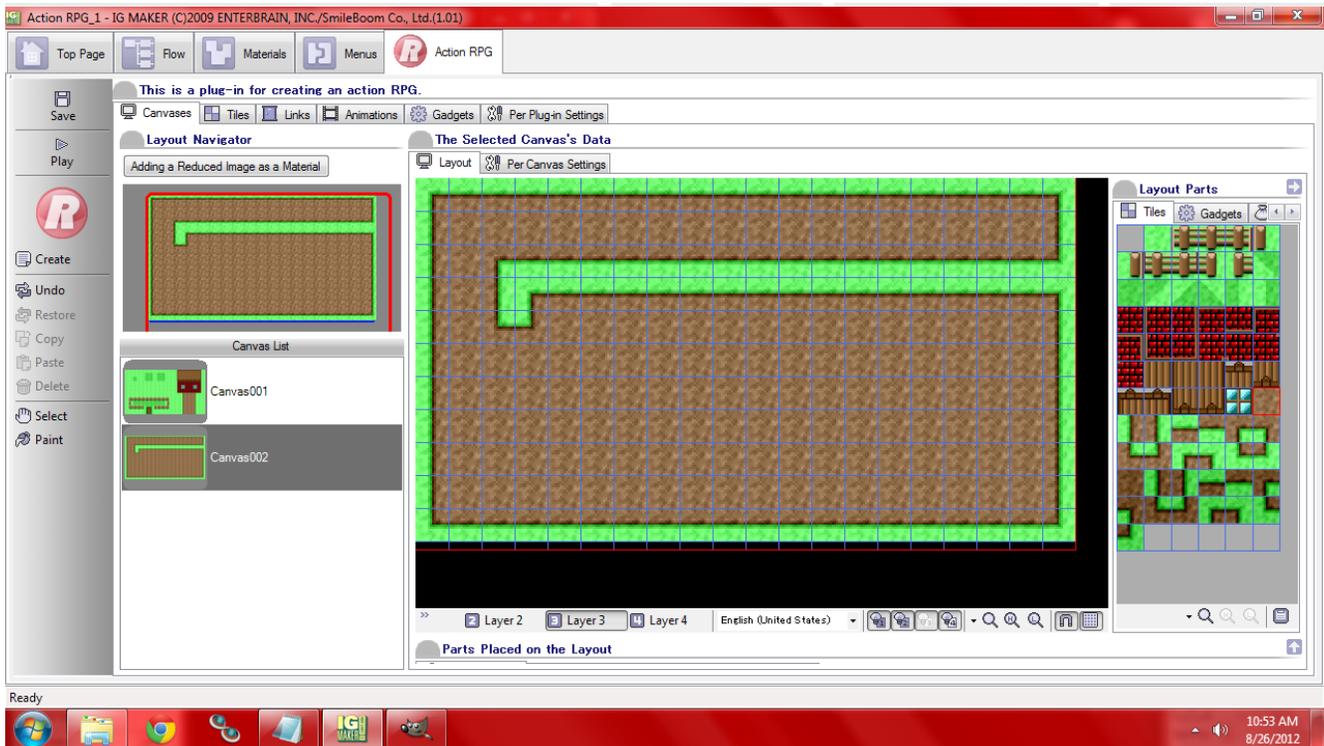
Next let's check out a neat little button hiding in the corner of our "Layout Parts" window under the "Tiles" sub-sub-tab. It looks like a very tiny clipboard and it's just below the tiles for any given canvas. When you click it, you have an on-hand reference to where all of your walls are set up and how they work. Very handy!

Next, let's go to the "Materials" tab and the "Text" sub-tab. Create a new text that says something like "I am awesome and IGM is too" or whatever you want it to say. Then head back to our canvases. Select the new auto-tiled canvas, and head to the "Gadgets" tab under "Layout Parts". Select the one that says "Text" and place it somewhere on the canvas. Assign our new text to it and whichever font you prefer. Make the size something large enough for the text to fit into, like 500×160 for instance. Put the Player Gadget on this canvas and have our Flow go directly to it and suddenly there is text on the canvas!
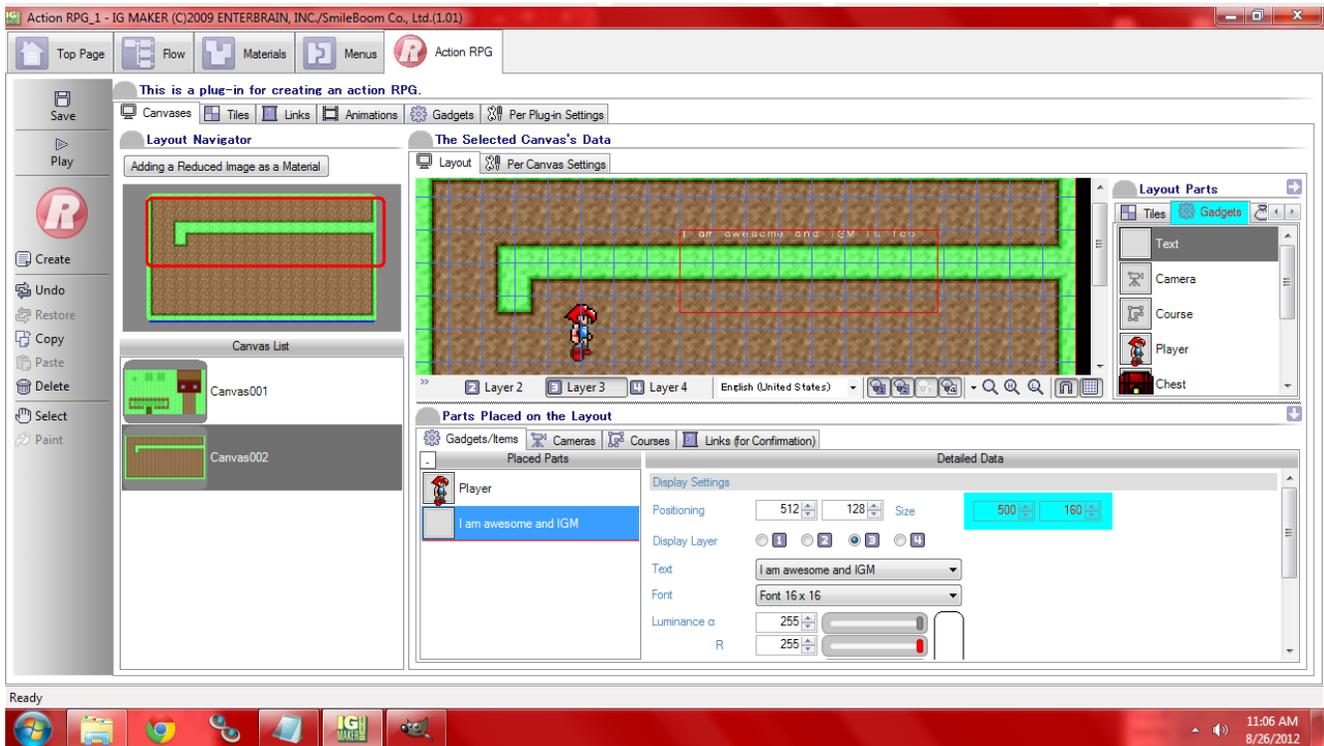
You might be wondering what this could be used for and that's a valid question, but when you think about it the answer is "a lot". You could use it for subtitles, title screens, scrolling text (you can assign this text to a course so that it moves around the screen), etc. You can do the same using menus or gadgets with more options on how to present your text, but this is a great tool if you know you just want some simple text on a canvas.

Ready to start your own game in IGM? Purchase IGM at a 10% discount using the coupon code "**igmakerohyeah**". Any questions, comments? Ask them in the forums.