

IGM Tutorial II: Exporting To XNA

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The first thing you should know is that when you export to XNA and test your games on the Xbox 360 some things will work and behave differently than they do when testing in IG Maker. I highly recommend testing your game often to make sure everything translates correctly from your PC to the console.

Also, while the programs below are completely free, testing games on an Xbox 360 or selling games on the Xbox Live Indie Games Marketplace currently requires an App Hub membership, which will cost \$99 per year. You can read more about that on their faq - http://create.msdn.com/en-US/home/faq

Before attempting to make a game for the Xbox 360, make sure you've updated IG Maker to work with XNA 4.0. The update and instructions are available here: http://www.rpgmakerweb.com/support/update

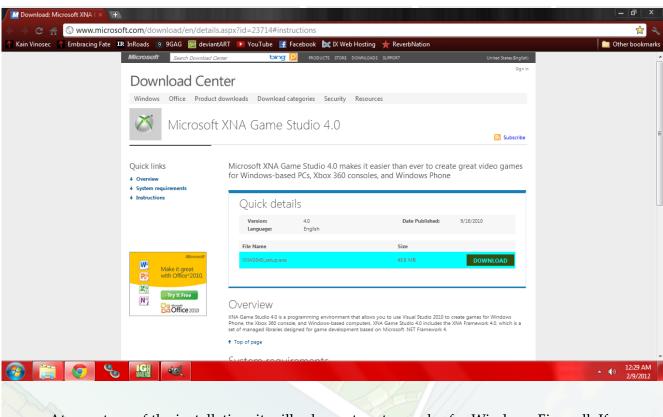
IG Maker can export to XNA from by default, but if you want to put that to good use and get your games playable on an Xbox 360, you're going to need a few things. You need to start off by installing Visual C# 2010 Express. This is a very easy, very quick installation. Just click the blue "Install Now" button and run the program when it finishes downloading. The program will walk you through the simple steps needed to complete the install. Here's the link -http://www.microsoft.com/visualstudio/en-us/products/2010-editions/visual-csharp-express - and a screenshot!





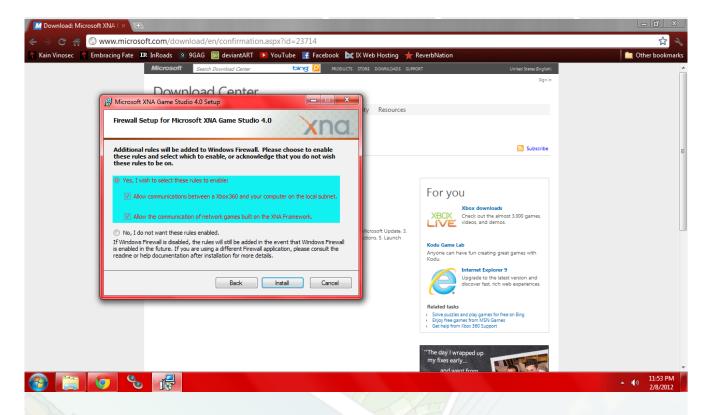
Once that install is finished, it is time to install XNA Game Studio 4.0, which functions more like an add-on for Visual C# 2010 Express than an independent program. This is another simple installer that you only need to download, run, and follow the program's instructions. Here's the link for the download - http://www.microsoft.com/download/en/details.aspx?id=23714 - and another screenshot.





At one stage of the installation, it will ask you to set up rules for Windows Firewall. If you use Windows Firewall, I recommend enabling the rules if you plan to export your games from XNA to an Xbox 360. Here's a screenshot of what I'm talking about.



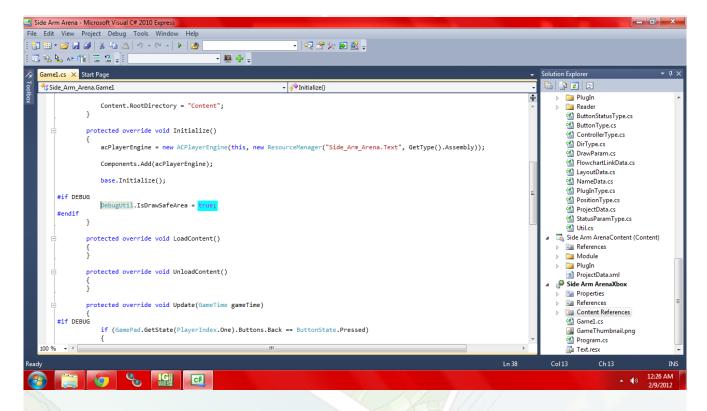


When you export a game from IG Maker into XNA format, you can open Microsoft Visual C# 2010 Express (in your start menu this will be in a folder called Microsoft Visual Studio 2010 Express), then go to File and Open Project, find the folder you created when you exported your game from IG Maker, and select the .sln file.

If you plan to export your game from XNA to the Xbox 360 you should check out this tutorial - http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bb975643.aspx - as it will walk you through everything you need to get your game playable on an Xbox 360. When you finish a game and want to submit it to the Xbox Live Indie Games Marketplace, you only have to log into your App Hub account and follow their directions for submitting a game.

A common problem people have is that when they test a game on the Xbox 360, there will be colored bars around the screen. This is called the "Safe Area". It's a requirement for submitting your games to App Hub that nothing important be placed inside these bars, otherwise some televisions may cut it off.

Removing this any time you want to test your game without the overlay is very simple. Start by getting your .sln file loaded into Visual C# 2010 Express. On the right side of the screen should be a list with a lot of files and various materials in it. Towards the bottom of this list you will see something called Game1.cs. If you open that up and scroll down just a bit you'll find a line of code that says – DebugUtil.IsDrawSafeArea = true. All you have to do is change "true" to "false" and the bars will go away. Here is a screenshot that might help.



That's pretty much it for XNA exporting. In the coming tutorials we'll be going over the basics of IG Maker and I'll be showing you how to make a simple game step-by-step. If you have any problems with this process, ask your questions in the forums.

Ready to get started with Indie Game Maker? Use the coupon code "igmakerohyeah" at check out to get 10% off your purchase of IGM.

