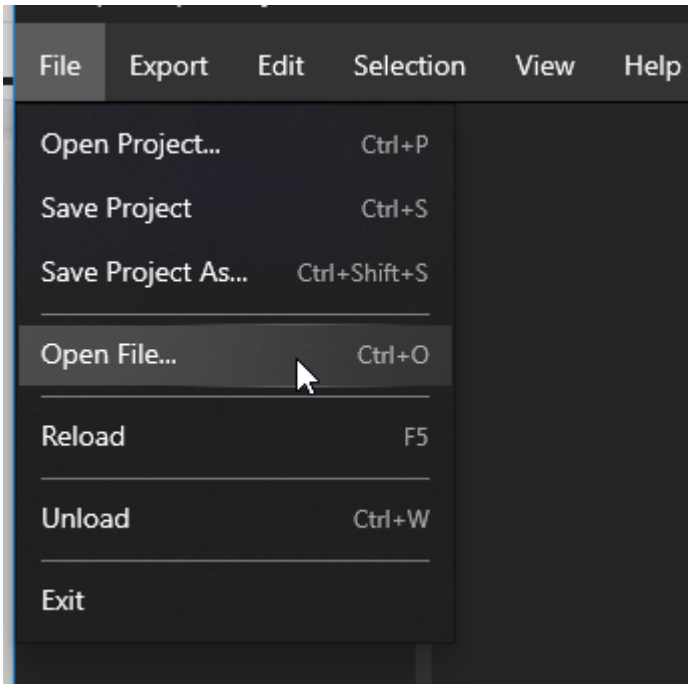
User Guide

(jump to a topic by using the menu on the left)

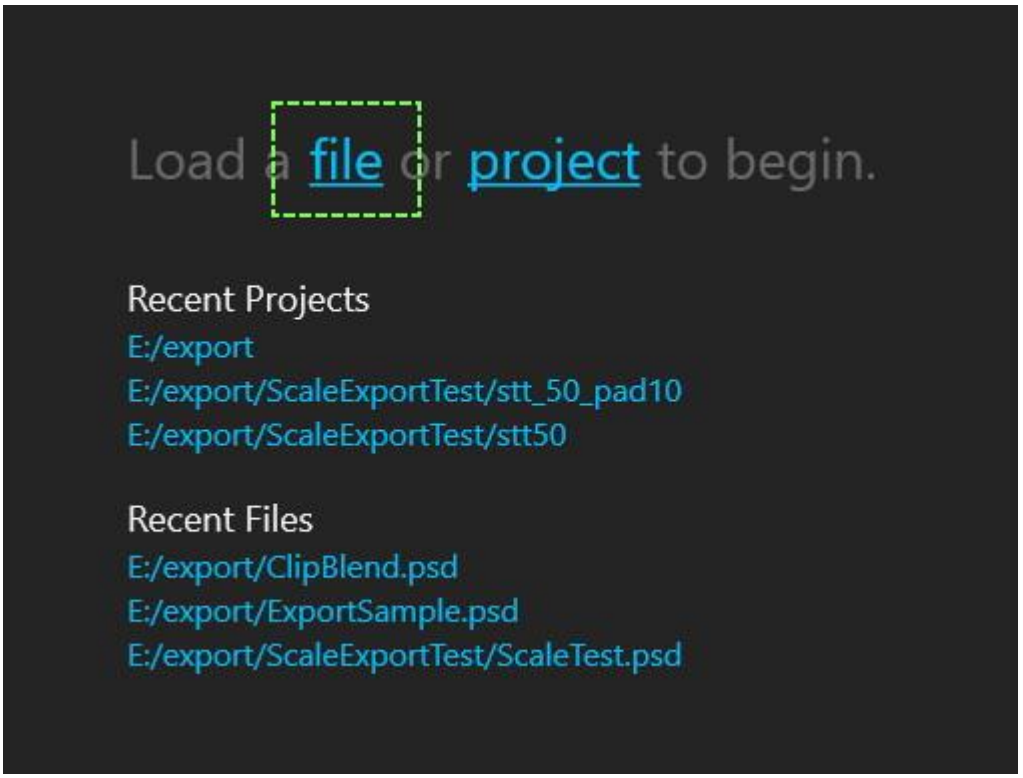
General workflow

1. Load a PSD file or project
2. (optional) change any project / layer setting.
3. Export the layers into sprite and data file.
4. (optional) save changes to new or the existing project.

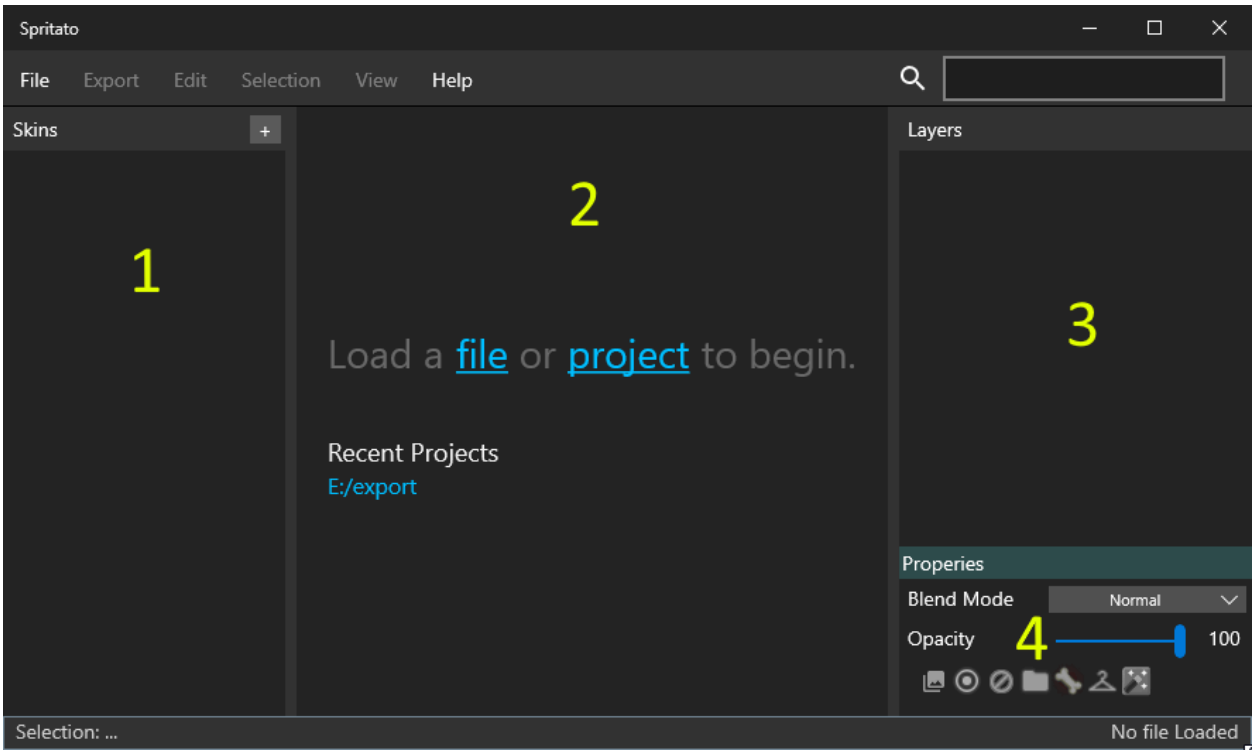
Open a file



You can load a PSD file by using the application menu [File] - [Open File] **OR** by clicking on the blue [file] link button on the home screen.



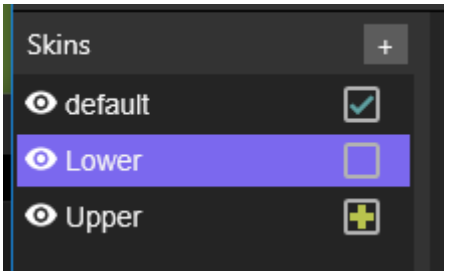
The User Interface



The user interface consist of four main parts:

1. **Skin Panel (for Spine Export)**

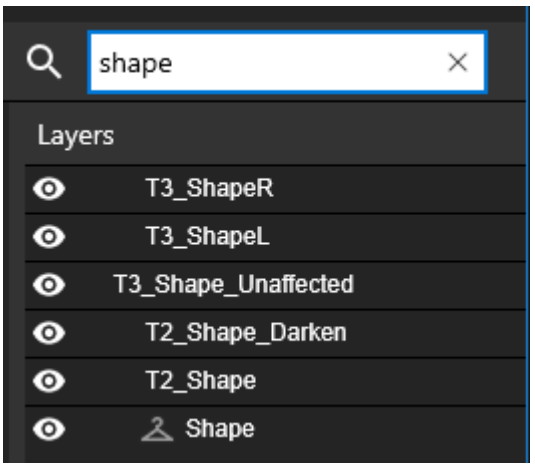
   Here you can see all the skins used in the project. You can also change skin assignment and toggle skin visibility with this panel.



2. **Main Canvas / Home Screen**

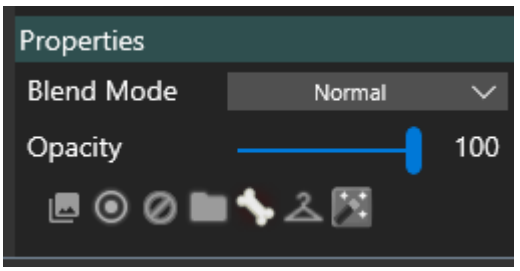
   If no image file is loaded, it shows a home screen for quickly opening a file or project. When a file or project is loaded, it shows the canvas.

3. **Layers Panel**



When a file or project is loaded, you will see the image layers here. A search filter above the layers panel is also available for quick layer searching and filtering.

4. **Properties Panel**



Allow you to view and change settings of a selected layer.

Note: Although you could change the opacity and blend mode here. It is for quick testing only. Spritato does not modify your PSD for the whole workflow. If you want to change the layer opacity or blend mode, you should do so to the PSD file outside Spritato and reload it here by pressing F5.

Difference between working with and without a project

While you can get the export done without ever saving a project, using a Spritato project gives you the following advantages.

- Project changes are saved in a project file.

  No change or export setting is needed to be embedded in the PSD file, particularly the layer name. This helps keep the layer names clean and easy to read.

  You can use both layer name and project file to store layer export settings.

- Spritato is a UWP application provided under Microsoft Store. Some security related restrictions are applied to protect the user. One of these is that every file or folder access needs to be authorized by the end user. By using a project folder approach, users gain access to the project folder once and for all so that when exporting images, the app doesn't need to ask for permission again for subfolder access (or the sibling folder of the PSD file)

To create a project for a PSD, after a PSD is loaded, use the menu [File] [Save Project as] to save a project.

When saving a project, you should select the folder that contains the PSD file to be the project folder. A project json file (spritato_project.json) will be saved under that project folder.

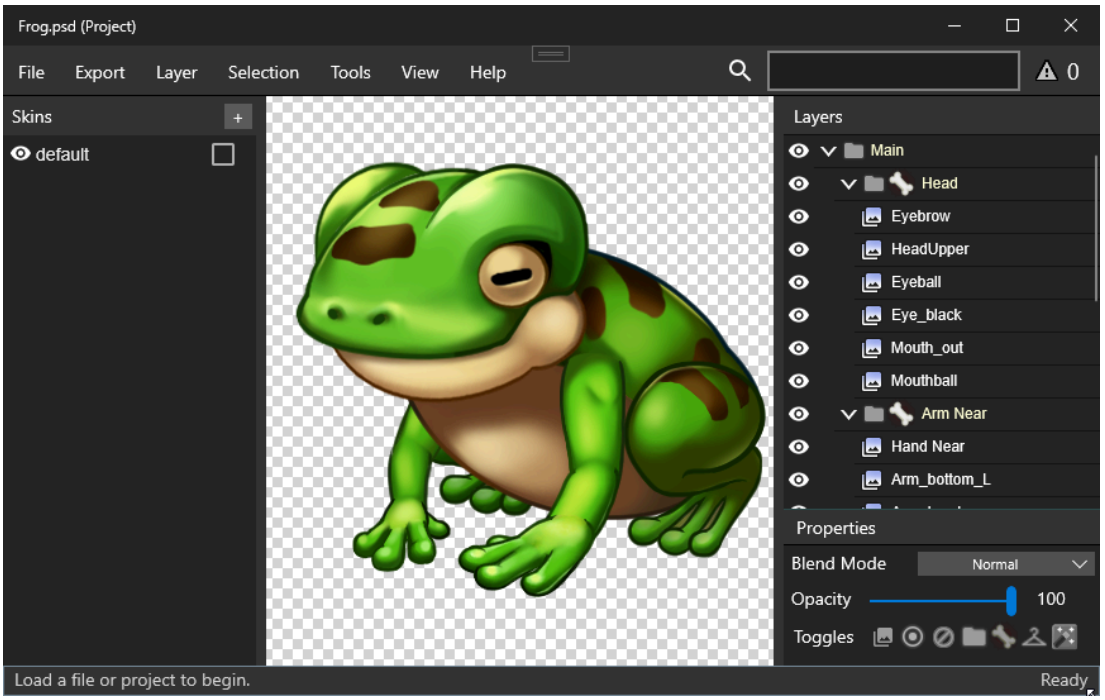
Folder Structure of a Spritato Project

<Project Folder>
----spritato_project.json **(the Spritato project file)**
----<Your PSD file>
----Images **(output folder for the exported sprites)**
----<spine_json> **(an optional data file exported for Spine)**

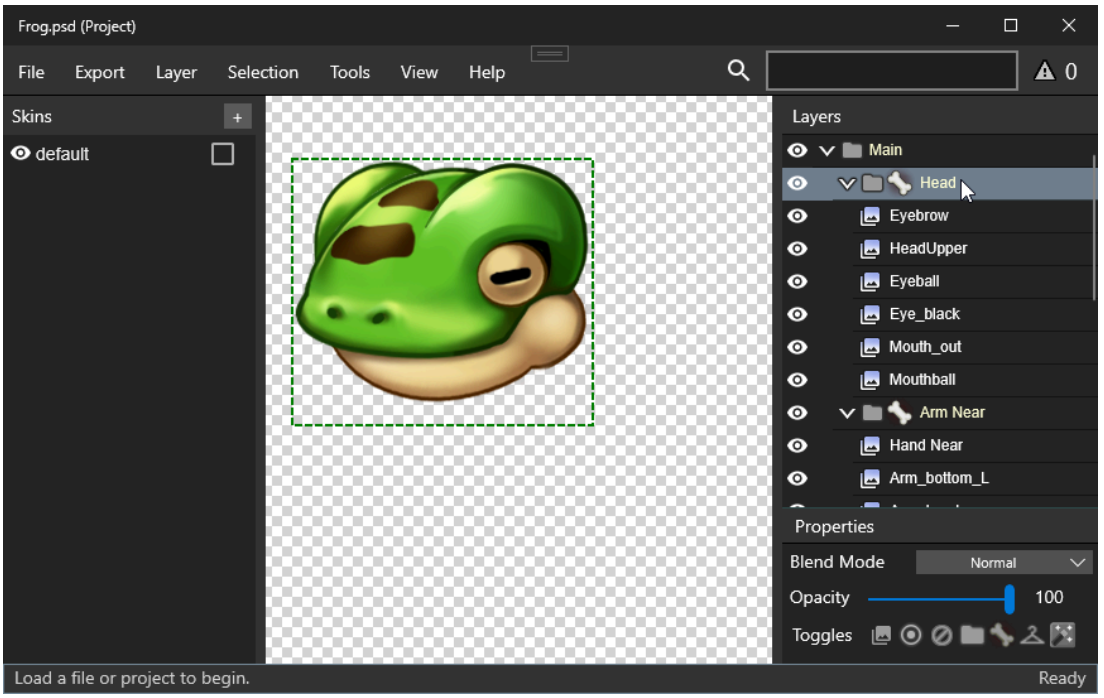
It is recommended to put only one single PSD file under a dedicated project folder for easy management.

Quick peek into a layer

You can hold down the CTRL key and mouse over a layer on the layers panel to only show the selection in canvas. This feature helps inspect each layer and preview the combined result of a folder.



Normally everything is shown based on the visibility setting of each layer.



When you hold down the [Ctrl] key, only mouse overing layers in the Layers panel will be shown.

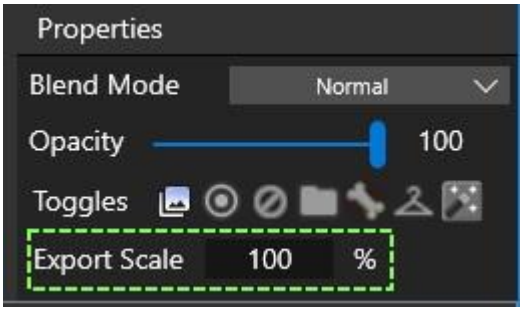
Note that there could be a small delay when you try to preview a layer group that contains a lot of other layers inside.

Layer icons and export settings

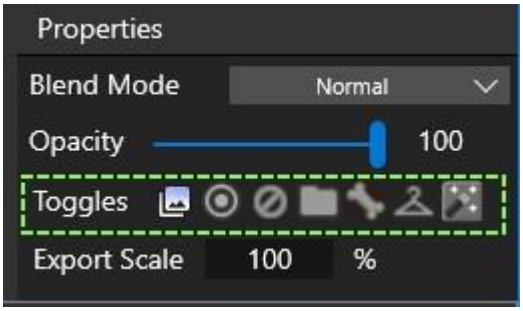
Besides embedding layer export settings in layer names, you can change them within Spritato.
Here is a table of available settings with its icon.

Icon	Description	Layer Tag / Short Form Prefix
	Ignore / Skip Export the layer.	[ignore]
	Merge the folder into a single sprite for export.	[merge]
	Save layers under this group into a sub-folder.	[folder]
	Treat this normal layer as pixel-adjustment layer.	[adjust]
	(Spine) add sprites under this group under a Spine bone.	[bone]
	(Spine) This layer and its children will export to a skin	[skin]
	(Spine) This layer and its children will be excluded from a skin	
	(Spine) A slot will be created using the name of this layer. All layers under this layer will share this slot.	[slot]
	This is not a setting but a warning. It means there are issues with this layer. You can tap on this icon for more detail.	

You can change the export size of the individual layer from the properties panel. This setting does not have an icon associated with it.

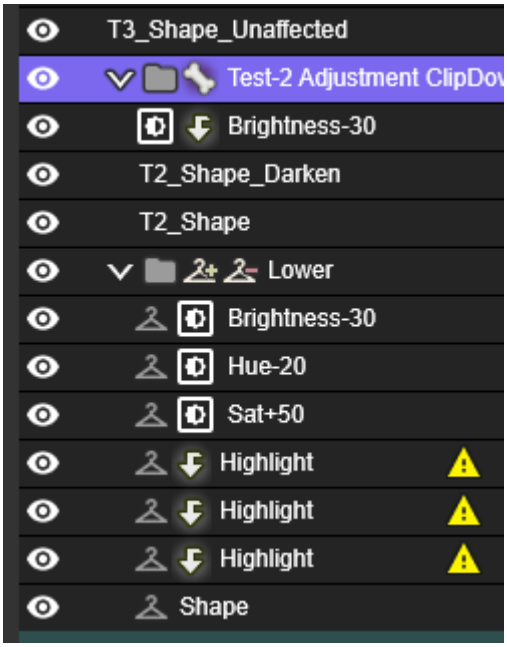


To toggle these settings from the UI, click on the icons in the properties panel.
Some of them are also changeable by clicking on the icon in the layers panel. E.g. the folder icon.



You can also toggle them using **keyboard shortcuts**, which is the recommended way of updating the setting because of efficiency. Check out the shortcut mapping by accessing the [Layer] menu group.

The icons will also be visible in the layer panel.



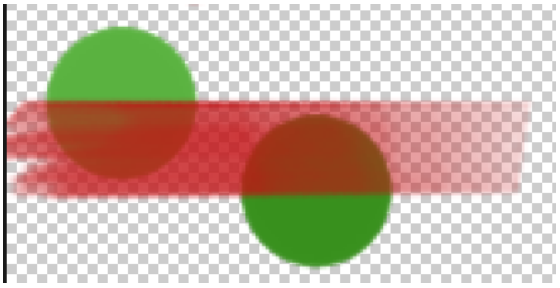
Using normal layer like adjustment layer (Spritato Exclusive Feature)

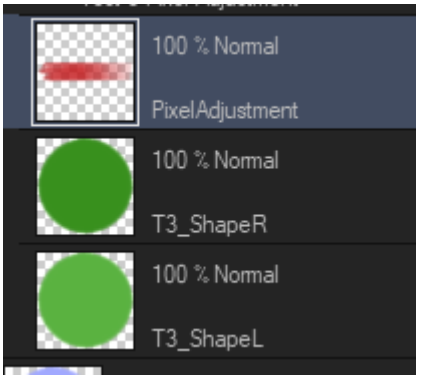
You can use a **normal pixel-based layer** like an **adjustment layer** and have them cast its pixels down to the layers beneath them.

To mark a layer as adjustment, toggle  inside the property panel **OR** prefix the layer name with **[adjust]**.

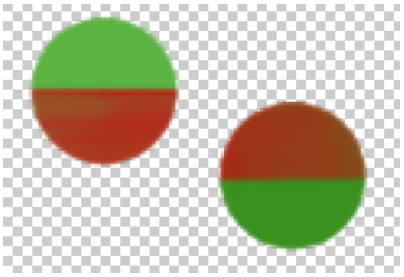
Example:

In this example, we have three layers placed like this:





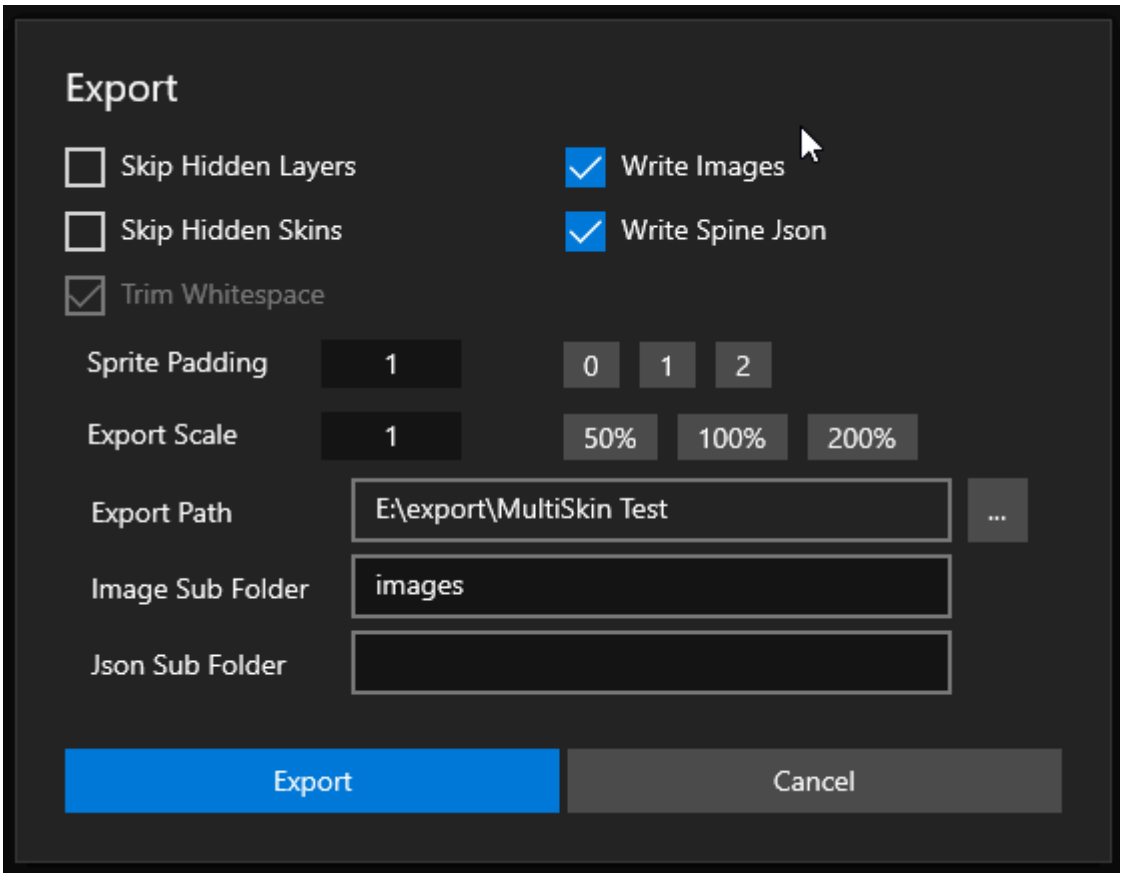
If you mark the stroke layer as pixel adjustment by either using [adjust] tag or toggling it from Spritato, that layer itself won't export but will be casted down to the layer below it. The end result will look like this. Only non-adjustment layers will be exported.



It is very useful when the illustrator uses a single layer to modify on top of multiple objects in the artwork. Without this feature, the original solution would be to manually apply that layer to each affected export item.

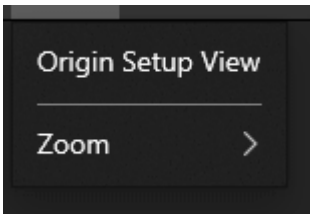
The Export Dialog

After setting up the layers for export, you can bring out the export dialog via main menu [Export] [Export All] or pressing shortcut Ctrl + E.



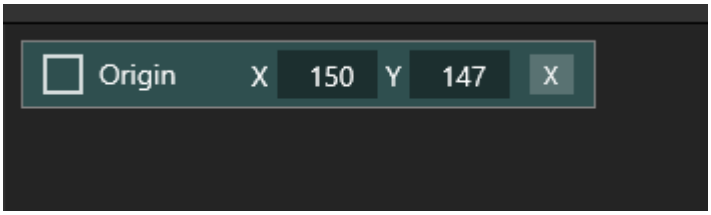
Skip Hidden Layers	If checked, hidden layers inside the layers panel will be skipped for the export.
Skip Hidden Skins	If checked, hidden skins inside the skin panel will be skipped for the export.
White Images	If unchecked, sprite will not be exported.
White Spine Json	If unchecked, spine json will not be exported.
Sprite Padding	Amount of empty pixel around the final image
Export Scale	Global Scale to the final export. (0.5 = 50%, 1 = 100%, 2=200%)
Export Path	Export Folder
Image Sub Folder	Sub folder to store the output image files
Json Sub Folder	Sub folder to store the output json file. (default is empty)

Setting up export origin (Spine)



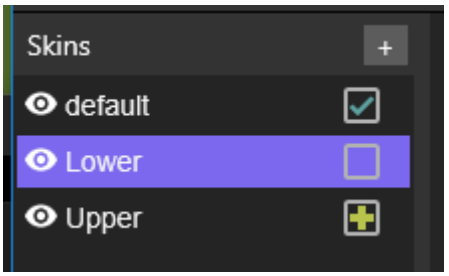
To set up the origin for Spine, you need to use the origin setup UI.
It can be opened by accessing the [View] [Origin Setup View]

The UI will appear at the top left corner of the canvas.



The default value is (0,0,). To change origin, check the check box of the origin UI and click on the canvas where you want the new origin to be.

The Skins Panel (Spine)



The skin panel on the left shows you what skins are available and which skins are active for the current selected layer.

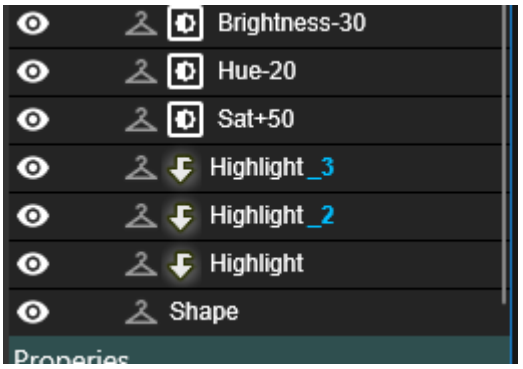
The visibility eye icon on the left allows you to filter what you see on the canvas. A layer would only be visible if both skin and layer are set to visible. The visibility setting here can also affect the export result if you have “Skip Hidden Skins” enabled on the export dialog.

*Tip: You can **Ctrl + Click** on the visibility icon of the skin row to quickly show only a certain skin*

The checkbox on the right side of each skin row shows the status of the skin for the selected layer.

	Current skin will not export for the selected layer
	Current skin is inherited from parent
	Current skin is turned on starting from this layer (will inherit to children)
	Current skin is turned off starting from this layer (remove inheritence from parent)

About auto fixing duplicated layer name



Spritato has an auto-rename function for sprites that would export to the same file path. When enabled, an auto generated layer name suffix will be shown in a different color. If you don't want to use the suggested name and want to solve it yourself, you should rename the layer from the original PSD file. If the file is already loaded in Spritato, you can press F5 to reload the file quickly or have the auto-reload setting turned on.

Important

Note that you should only depend on this feature to fix duplicated name issues ONLY WHEN the file is unlikely to change in the future. Otherwise, when you inject new layers with duplicated names in the middle, the suffix of other auto fixed layers will be shifted.

For example

Let's say you have the following layers

--**Apple**
----Shadow
--**Banana**
----Shadow

After auto rename, you get

--**Apple**
----Shadow**_1** (shadow of Apple)
--**Banana**
----Shadow**_2** (shadow of **Banana**)

However, if you inject some layers in between like the sample below, the layer name Shadow_2 becomes the shadow of Grape instead of the shadow of Banana. This name shift could cause issues if you are not exporting for a new project but for updating an existing project.

--**Apple**
----Shadow**_1** (shadow of Apple)
--**Grape**
----Shadow**_2** (shadow of **Grap**)
--**Banana**
----Shadow**_3** (shadow of Banana)

Thus, use this feature with caution!
It is safe if you are just using this for auto renaming clones of layers.

Compatibilities

Clipping Support

Both Layer mask and clip-to-layer-below works in Spritato.

Supported Blend Mode

All blend modes are supported in Spritato. You can use them inside a “merge” group.

However, for the final output sprites, they are *still limited by the next software* that you are going to use.

For example, if you are exporting for the **Spine** animation tool. You are still limited to the following blend modes: **normal, add, screen, multiply**.

*One thing about **multiply** blending for adding shadow. In many drawing software,* when part of a “multiply” layer is over a transparent background, it would draw the blending layer’s original color. This I believe by design is a mechanism to warn the user that it is not blending on anything. In Spritato, when there is no color pixel (transparent) below a multiply layer, that pixel will keep being transparent. It just doesn’t make sense to show the blending layer’s original color in any case.

Supported Adjustment Layer

Only the following adjustment layers are supported.

Brightness and Contrast	**OK**
Hue, Saturation and Value	**Support only Non-Colorize mode** **(It’s also the behaviour of Clip Studio Paint HSV adjustment)**

How to work around unsupported PSD features

If you have some unsupported Photoshop features used in the PSD file, you need to first eliminate them before loading the PSD into Spritato. For example, you may encapsulate them into Smart Object or pre-merge those layers and apply/convert effects to normal layers.

About the future of adding unsupported features

** Spritato will never be able to support all Photoshop features and export sprite completely identical to how Photoshop does. It is because most of the algorithms used by Photoshop are not known to the public. The time and effort to implement any psd feature is unpredictable due to the difficulty. Please do not expect Spritato to have any unsupported feature to be supported in the future. When it's done, it's done. There is also a possibility that the feature you hope for could never get implemented.*

About Trial Version

Paid or Free Trial	After the trial ends (restricted mode)
No restriction	~~You can continue to use the software but with restrictions.~~ ~~1. Save Project function is disabled. (i)~~ ~~2. Can only export PSD with maximum of 15 layers~~ ~~3. Layer validation function is disabled.(ii)~~

~~(i) You can still use tags in layer names to store layer export settings in the PSD.~~

~~(ii) Layer validation helps you identify issues early such as duplicated names or using unsupported features like certain blend modes or certain adjustment layers.~~

Update: Sorry to let you know that after the trial ended, there is actually a forced lock by Microsoft Store to prevent any usage after the trial period. While my code logic is to check if the trial period is over and only lock certain features, the lock from Microsoft store actually prevents any further execution of the app and I could not find any way to workaround it. Thus the trial version is a time limited trial.