# Minimal Test Bed

One of the best methods to quickly test perceived issues is to strip down to a very minimal load order. This has the advantage of making it easier to begin narrowing down problems, as well as not having to do conflict resolution (CR) or use a bash patch for the testing (since the load order is so small). If you use Creation Club content, see the notes at the end.

Note: the team mostly uses Mod Organizer so these steps are geared towards it, although the overall process in Vortex will be the same.

Profile Setup

First, it's time to make a copy of your profile for testing. Copy, **not New**, because copying retains the priority of the mods in the asset pane instead of re-prioritizing them in alphabetical order.
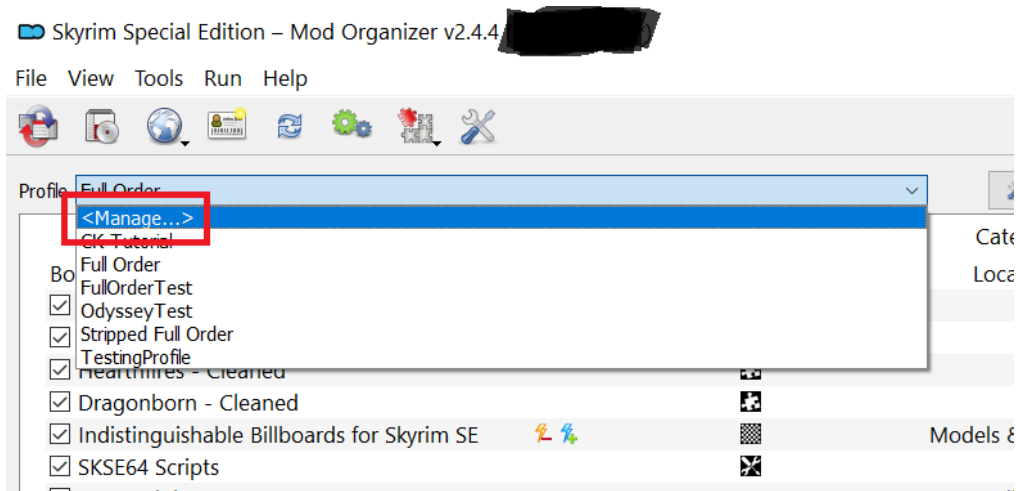
Make a copy of your full load order profile and rename it to something to differentiate it, such as TestingProfile. Click on the testing profile you just made, and choose Select to make it active. Close the Window.
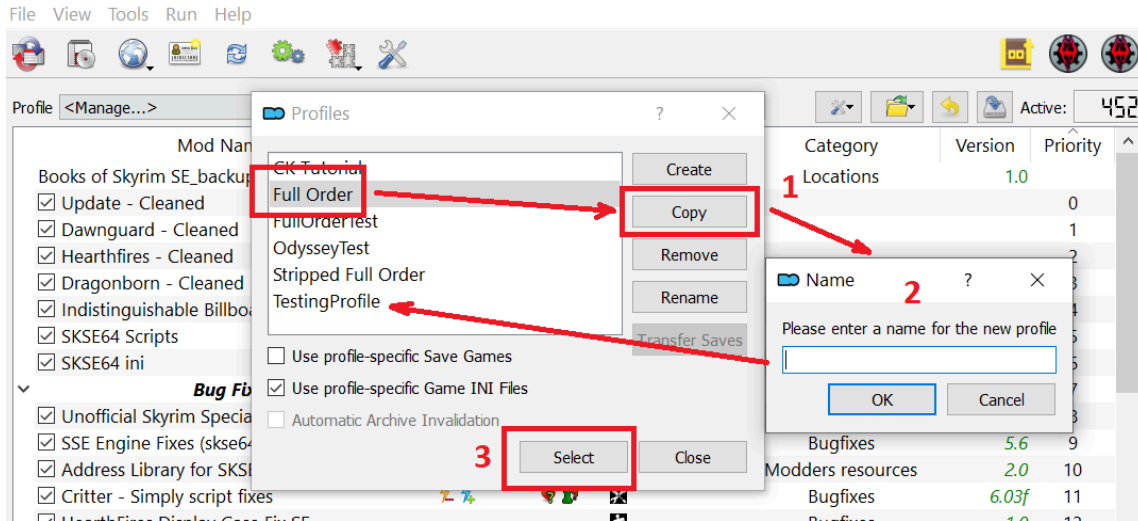
Right-click in the asset pane (left side), and go to All Mods/Disable All. This will deactivate everything from the profile so you can start clean, but leave the mod priority intact. <u>Very important!!</u>
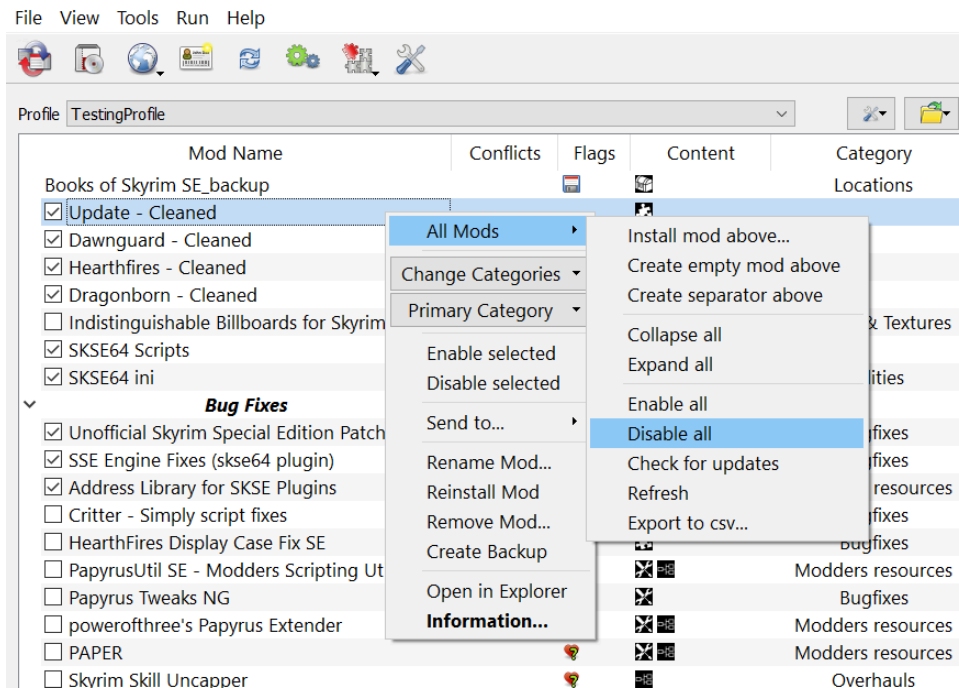

Add back in the barest minimum to build a test bed. Here is a good setup, which includes Legacy, that has been filtered to show only the active mods.

- SkyrimSE (of course)
- Update
- Dawnguard
- Hearthfires
- Dragonborn
- SKSE
- USSEP (Note: if testing without CCs and you have a newer USSEP, get an older version here and install it as a separate new mod.)
- SSE Engine Fixes
- Address Library for SKSE
- Legacy of the Dragonborn SE (leave out if doing baseline testing). If using the mod and this v6, make sure the esp is enabled as well as the esm.
- SkyUI
- Alternate Start - Live Another Life (also known as LAL)

Notes:
The SKSE components and Engine Fixes are not needed for just this test. However if you start adding things back to perform later testing, it would be good to make sure the underlying requirements are sound. So it's a good idea to put them in a base test setup.

Similarly, LAL isn't technically needed but is stable and won't affect testing. And it's not advised to mod Skyrim without an alternate start mod in any case.
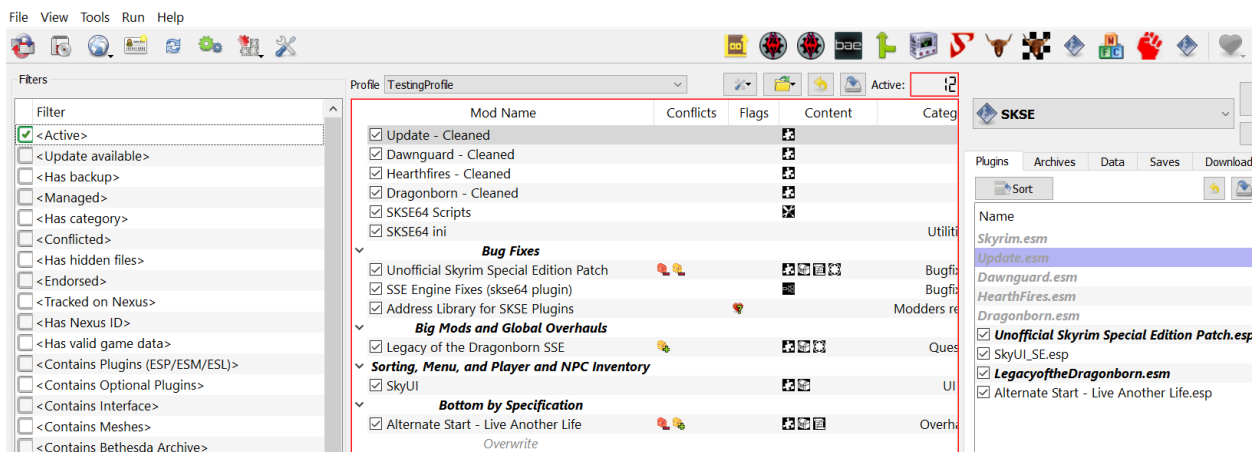
Note: v5 picture; in v6 the list would include Legacy's esp as well.

Verifying the Test Bed:
On all but a few very rare scenarios, this load order on a new game, in a properly installed and configured testbed, will work correctly without issue. So if it's properly functioning, it will allow you to quickly rule in (or out) Legacy, base game, or save game. So how to make sure it's properly functioning?

Test the problem you identified that made you try this minimal profile in the first place. If you are still having the issue, re-download the few mods first to rule out corruption. Make sure any version-specific things match the version of Skyrim you are running. Run new tests afterwards to see if the issue is still happening.

If you still have issues and you are sure your downloads are fine, you may need to erase the Skyrim game directory and Verify from Steam to reinstall it. Do not simply copy the contents elsewhere and then put them back in after Verifying. Also do not forget to reinstall SKSE and ENBs (if you use them). Retest and confirm the problem has gone away.

In the extremely unlikely event that you are still having problems, you may have found an issue with Legacy. However, be aware that in 99.99% of the problem cases, this minimalistic build will work without the issue. Be very thorough and don't cut corners in your testing.

Next Steps:
In almost all cases, since a new game in this clean testing setup will work correctly, it allows the user to rule out the base game, Legacy, and save game. At this point, further testing can be done on this solid base.

Note on Creation Club Content
It is highly recommended that you test without Creation Club (hereafter abbreviated to CC) content. An effective method for managing one's CC content is to "create" individual mods for each CC (even the 4 free ones that came with the basic update). Yes, it's up-front work, but it has distinct advantages.

First, the mod manager can now manage the CCs instead of them being loose in the game folder. So the user can be highly granular when building a new game

profile, choosing only the CCs they wish and disabling the rest. And second, the folders can be named more clearly, which makes them easier to read and easier to sort. Suggestion: start each folder name with your choice of unique and identifiable prefix, such as "CC-" (minus the quotes). So, cceejsse002-tower becomes "CC-Myrwatch". But however you choose to name them, take the time to make a system for them.

To create these CC "mods", navigate to the Mods directory in your Skyrim MO2 instance, and make and name new folders for each CC you own. Name them to whatever convention you are going to use. Move the plugins and any related BSAs out of the game or overwrite folder and into each appropriate new folder.