

CamStudio Instructions

1. CamStudio is a “screen-capture” software

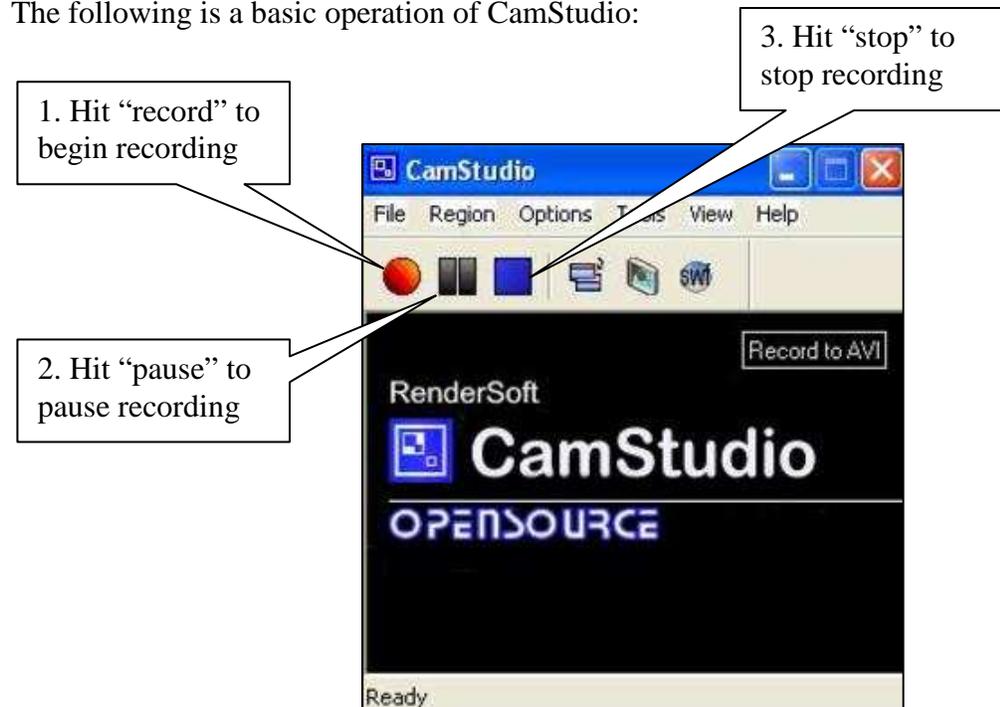
- a. It records whatever is on your computer screen
- b. It is absolutely FREE
- c. It is very easy to use, requires very little of your time
- d. It can record audio from a microphone or from your speakers
- e. Applications include:
 - i. Give a lecture from your desk
 - ii. Demonstrate how to use applications, websites
 - iii. Record videos you see on internet
 - iv. Whatever else you can think of ...

2. Download CamStudio

- a. Navigate to <http://camstudio.org>
 - i. Or, Google “camstudio”
- b. Click on “CamStudio20.exe”
- c. “Save” or “Run” the .exe file
- d. Install on computer
 - i. Installs in less than 2 minutes

3. Open Program

The following is a basic operation of CamStudio:



That's the basics of the program. Of course, you will want to make some adjustments, so read on to learn how to change some important settings.

4. Setting your screen “region”

The [Region] tab allows you to set what part of your screen you wish to record. There are three basic settings:

- a. Region – Allows you to set the size of the recorded area
- b. Fixed Region – Allows you to preset the size of the recorded area
- c. Full Screen – Captures the whole screen

In general, larger screen sizes decrease the resolution and “viewability” so choose the screen size that suits your needs

5. Setting “Autopan”

If you set a region that does not show the full screen, you can still show the full screen by having the region follow your mouse cursor. This is called “autopanning.” To enable this, under the [Options] tab, click on [Enable Autopan]. You can change the speed of the autopan by clicking on [Autopan Speed]. I find that the default setting of 20 works well, but you can speed it up or slow it down, based on your needs.

6. Recording audio

CamStudio allows you to record audio from two sources. Under the [Options] tab:

- a. Do not record audio – Makes silent animations, useful if you don’t like listening to your voice
- b. Record audio from microphone – Records sound using a microphone, useful if you want to narrate your animation
- c. Record audio from speakers – Records audio that is coming from your computer speakers, useful if you want to record an online video to your computer (eg, a YouTube video)

The [Audio Options] function allows you to choose the microphone to record from, volume settings, recording format, etc ... Except for choosing your microphone, I find that the default audio settings are sufficient.

7. Highlighting your cursor

You can make your cursor more visible during playback by highlighting it, changing its shape, or changing its size. If you choose, you can even remove the cursor completely. Keep in mind that these changes are visible only during the playback, not during the recording. Under the [Options] tab, click on [Cursor Options]. You can:

- a. Hide cursor – Make your cursor invisible during playback
- b. Use actual versus a custom cursor – Allows you to use the normal “arrow” cursor, or change it to a custom shaped cursor if you have a file for it
- c. Highlight cursor – Highlights your cursor to make it more visible
 - i. A “Size” slider bar allows you to change the size of the highlight
 - ii. A “Shape” drop down menu allows you to change the shape of the highlight
 - iii. A “Color” button allows you to change the color of the highlight

A preview box shows you what the cursor will look like during playback.

8. Hiding CamStudio during recording and setting keyboard shortcuts

It is often desired to minimize CamStudio during recording so it is not visible. You can set CamStudio to do this automatically. Under the [Options] tab, move your cursor over [Program Options], then click on [Minimize program on start recording]. A check mark will indicate that this option is selected. Now, when you start recording, the program will minimize automatically.

One problem that arises if you minimize the program is stopping the recording. You can click on the icon in the task bar to maximize the program to stop recording by pressing the red button, or you can use your keyboard. Under the [Options] tab, click on [Keyboard Shortcuts] to view the current keyboard shortcuts. Here are the default settings:

F8 = Record/Pause
F9 = Stop
F10 = Cancel Recording

You have the option of changing the shortcuts to any key you desire. Simply click on the drop down menu of the desired function, and scroll down to the desired key.

9. AVI vs SWF

CamStudio allows you to record to 2 video formats: AVI, a Windows video format, and SWF, a Flash based video format. The format you choose is up to you. There are many technical differences between the two files, only the practical aspects will be discussed here.

The default video setting is to record to AVI. AVI formats allow you to scroll forward and back while viewing the video. A white text box that reads ‘Record to AVI’ located below the [View] and [Help] tabs indicates that the video produced will be an AVI file. AVI files can be large, and some computers may not be able to view them, depending on their video plug-ins/settings. To make your video universal, you can publish the video via YouTube. The service is free, but you are limited to 10 minutes of video. YouTube also allows you to edit, annotate (add text boxes), change the audio, and add subtitles to your video.

SWF files are smaller than AVI files, and they can be viewed on virtually any computer using any web browser. So, if you plan to directly share your animations with your students, then it may be better to record to SWF. You can do this by clicking on the blue circle with the letters “SWF” that is located just under the [Tools] tab. A box with the words “Record to SWF” will appear in the black box. You can switch back to AVI recording by clicking on the same button.

If you are unsure of what format is best for you, record to AVI. Once finished, you can convert an AVI to SWF by going to the [Tools] tab and clicking on [SWF Producer (converts AVI to Flash)]. A separate application will open, “SWF Producer.” Open your AVI file in this program, and under the [File] tab, click on [Convert to SWF].

And that’s all there is to it. You are now ready to create your very own animated mini-tutorials. The major limitation of CamStudio is your imagination.