



Version 0.60 and above

Installation Manual

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Preface

Since there are some prerequisites to the usage of SimPE besides the installation of the actual program and often users are a little overwhelmed by the installation process, with this document I try to provide a manual to ease things up a little.

I not only give hints for the setup of SimPE itself, but also of other nessecary components.

I will **not write** about secondary software you need - for example to create new objects (3D-modeller, UV-mappers or the like) - since those are covered elsewhere in detail. This manual focuses on the installation of SimPE and direct related tools only.

We are talking Windows here, folks, so if you are a Mac OS user I fear you have to look for information elsewhere. Sorry.

Please excuse my grammar, since english is not my native language, but I think information is of more weight here than orthography. :o)

A Word About Prerequisites

There are some prerequisites that have to be matched for SimPE to work. Some of them are optional - depending on what you want to do with the program - and others are not. In some cases it is a little difficult to decide if a component is optional or not. E.g.: If you only want to edit family links you do not need additional tools for object creation. You should be prepared to post-install additional resources if at some time you want to do more or other things with SimPE than you initial thought.

You should read this manual thouroughly to get a grasp, after that reread it and download all the components you think you will need if pointed to do so. After you have got anything, install the components one after the other. At the end you hopefully get a working installation of SimPE that suits your needs.

Administrator Status

You possibly have to have administrator status for some of the resources to install correct or at all. So make sure that you log on to the computer as an administrator before installing anything.

After the installations are finished you can (and should - for security reasons) switch back to a normal user account.

So Tell Me What I Need, Already!

SimPE Itself

The SimPE installation file itself, of course. you can get it on the download-page of <http://sims.ambertation.de>. There are two different versions to download:

SimPE Full (about 6.4 MB)

If you don't know what you need, this is the right one for you. Included are some debugging tools you probably need if something does not work as expected and additionally some german and english documentation.

SimPE Light (about 3.2 MB)

A somewhat smaller download, left out are the debug tools and the documentation. I would suggest to always download the full version, even if you are on a smallband connection, it is well worth the wait.

Important: Try to always use the newest version of SimPE and always download it from <http://sims.ambertation.de>. There are two main reasons for this:

1. Newer versions always include not only new features but also countless bugfixes and there is quite some possibility that a problem you may have has already been taken care of.
2. Other pages providing downloadlinks for SimPE may offer outdated versions of the software.

Download the version of your choice to a working folder you provide for this and all the other components we will talk about later.

The Microsoft .NET Framework

The one and only **basic requirement** you also have to provide is the

Microsoft .NET Framework 2.0 (about 22.4 MB)

This is a compilation of classes that is used as a kind of toolbox to code software for MS Windows™. SimPE relies on this framework to be present to **function at all**. There are more versions out there than only 2.0 (1.0, 1.1 or 3.0 for example), but you need to provide **exactly 2.0**. If you have an earlier version installed (as is likely if you used earlier versions of SimPE), there is no need for concern, since multiple versions of the Framework can coexist on one machine.

Where can I get it?

All over the web, if you use the term .NET Framework 2.0 for example in Google, but a direct link to the download at Microsofts webpage is always provided on the SimPE-download-page on <http://sims.ambertation.de>. Download the package to your working directory. If you are on smallband this will take quite a while (approx. 60 minutes or more on 56k), so you should maybe have a look on some computer-magazines that provide cover-CDs, as fairly often the framework is included on such media.

Additional Downloads

The additional components rely heavily on what you want to do with SimPE. It is a complex tool that enables you to change lots of different things in "The Sims 2", from changing family links to clone Sims and from recoloring objects to creating totally new ones and many possibilities more.

According to your use of SimPE you need different additional software.

Microsoft Managed Dirext X 9.0c

This is not to be mistaken with Microsoft Direct X 9.0c, even if the names are very alike, these are two different things. To keep this easy: Direct X are tools that your operating system needs to display graphics and provide sound. If you are running "The Sims 2", Direct X 9.0c is already installed on your system, since you get it at the latest when installing "The Sims 2".

Managed Direct X is a set of tools to help coders to create software with (for example) three-dimensional graphics or sound. **If you want to create new objects with SimPE and if you want a preview of said objects, you definitely need**

Managed Direct X (about 3.6 MB)

You can get it on the download-page of <http://sims.ambertation.de>. As an alternative it can be found on the first installation CD of "The Sims 2", look for the file

mdxredist.msi

Download to your workdirectory (or copy to that directory from the CD).

Nvidia DDS- Utilities

If you want to include new textures into objects you have two choices: First you could use SimPEs import-routines, but that can provide unsatisfactory results. The better way is to import those textures via tools provided by the graphiccard-vendor **Nvidia**. Those tools are called

Nvidia DDS Utilities (about 7.5 MB)

You can get them via a web search or on Nvidias webpage

http://developer.nvidia.com/object/dds_utilities.html

Download to your working directory.

The Color Enabler Package (CEP)

In order to use and create object recolors you need to get the

Color Enabler Package (CEP, about 420 kB in version 5)

This package enables the recoloration of objects that are usually not recolorable and has some more functions that we will not discuss in detail here. If you want to create object recolors or clones that are recolorable you have to install the CEP. Always get the **newest version** from

<http://cep.modthesims2.com>

or the CEP page on

<http://sims.ambertation.de>

Download and save to your chosen folder.

Photostudio Templates

There is a tool in SimPE called **PhotoStudio** which enables you to create paintings you can buy ingame and hang them onto the walls of your sim's homes. To use this plugin you have to install some templates that Photostudio depends upon.

SimPE Photostudio Templates (about 2.3 MB)

Get them from the downloadpage on <http://sims.ambertation.de> and save them to your workdirectory.

SimPE Base Careers

If you want to create new careers you need this base careers as a starting point.

SimPE Base Careers (about 790 kB)

As usual: Download from the SimPE-downloadpage and save to your work folder.

That's It!

Those are the basic ingredients you will need to work with SimPE. According to what you want to do with the Package Editor, you will maybe need more software, but those are standalone applications and not covered in this tutorial.

A Clean Installation

Since we need to get on even ground, we will perform a so called "Clean Install", meaning a somewhat "virgin installation" of SimPE. That way, we can be sure that no leftover parts of older SimPE-installations will interfere with our new one.

If you never before had any installations of SimPE you can simply skip this step.

The process to do a clean installation is quite easy!

- uninstall SimPe from the "Software"-tab in your **Control Panel**
- open the Windows Explorer and switch to the SimPE installation folder
- delete the complete SimPE folder (if you cannot delete the folder, restart Windows and try again)

If there is no SimPE-entry in your Control-Panel-Software-tab, you probably never installed it, but used a compressed version that just had to be uncompressed to a folder of your choice. In that case just delete the directory SimPE resides in.

All Installations Big And Small

Now we will install all the applications, tools and addons we downloaded earlier. If you do not need a specific resource for your needs - according to my explanations in the chapter before last - just skip that part of this tutorial.

Get Framed - Microsoft .NET Framework 2.0

Simply doubleclick on the file **dotnetfx.exe** to start the installation process and follow the instructions given. Most should be self-explanatory.

If there are problems please refer to Microsofts help and hints on the download-page of the framework.

There can be problems with the installation of the framework if overeager virus-protection or personal firewall software is active; so, if problems arise, disconnect your computer from the internet, deactivate antivirus-software and personal firewall and install the .NET framework. After the installation, restart antivirus and firewall.

The Object Of Desire: SimPE

Doubleclick on the file SimPE-Setup-0.xx.exe, xx being the version number.

You get a window asking you to choose the installation language, you have the choice between german or english. Make your selection. In this manual we will only cover the english language version.

The next window welcomes you to the installation wizard. Just click "next" to continue.

You will be shown the license-agreement. Read it, understand it and then click on the checkbox "I accept the agreement", then click on "Next".

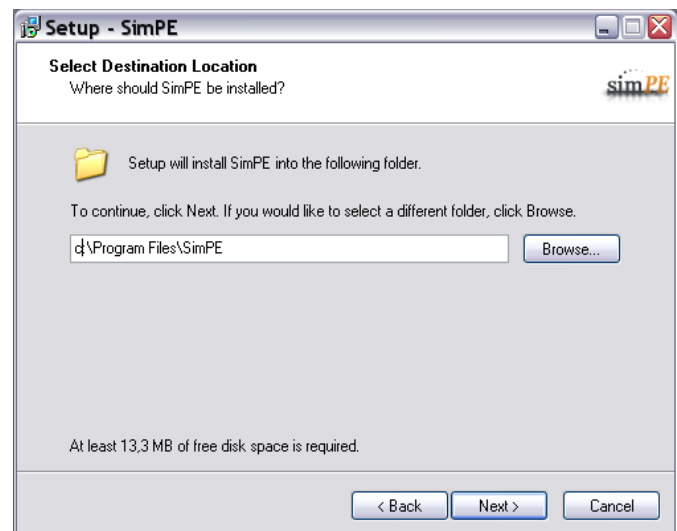
In the next window there are some more informations, this is probably the cause for it's name "Information". :o) Read and understand the content and then click "Next".



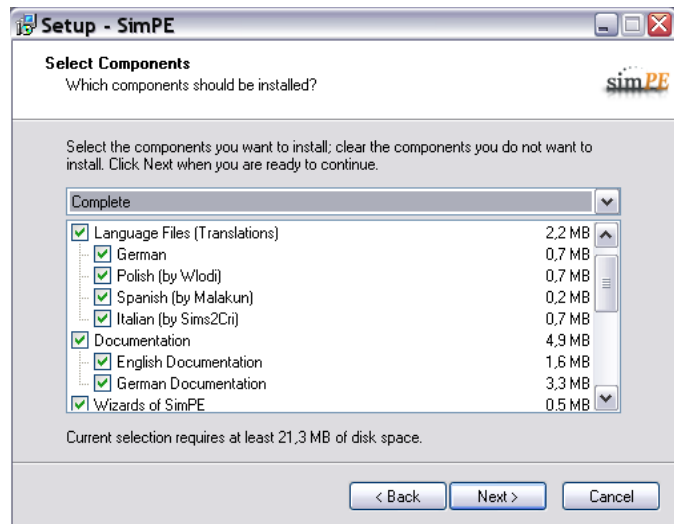
Next you will get the "Select Destination Window", here you can choose where to install SimPE. Usually you can go on with the suggestion

C:\Program Files\SimPE

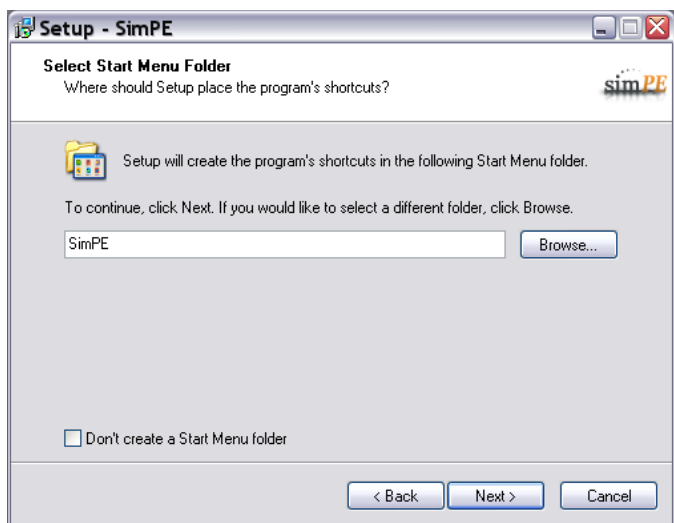
but you also can select another folder by your discretion. Be sure to memorize the location of the folder you choose, though, it may be necessary in the future to delete it manually or remove files from it (or add some) - for example if SimPE does not work as expected. Set your desired folder and click "Next".



Next you will be shown the "Select Component"-window. If you are unsure what to select here, just keep the setting "Complete" and install everything. Compared with other software the size of the installed files is quite small and will not bring your harddisk to the brink of collapse. :o)
 If you are adventurous you can deselect languages or documentations you do not need by clicking on the corresponding checkmark, but leave the other entries as they are!



Now you are given the opportunity to select where in the Startmenu the SimPE-entry will be put. You can just leave the textbox as shown and SimPE will appear in the main "Programs"-folder of the Startmenu.

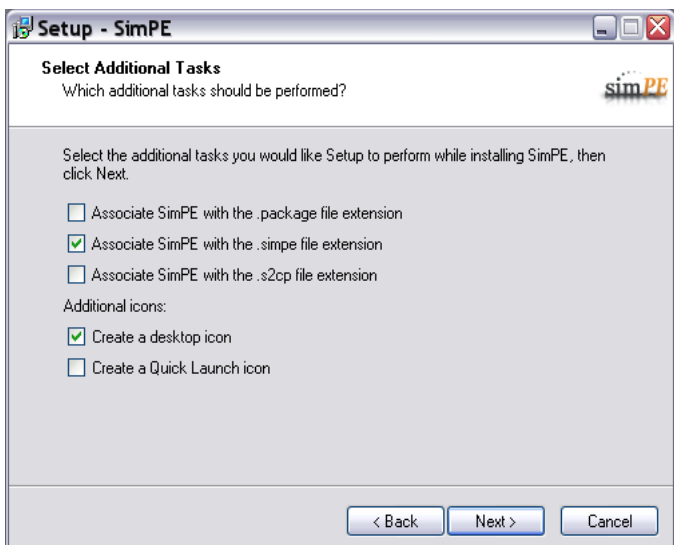


Alternative you for example could set **games\SimPE**
 or **tools\SimPE**
 which will place the SimPE-folder in a Startmenu-**subfolder** called games or tools.

If you do not want to get a SimPE-entry in the Startmenu, just set the checkbox beside the text "Don't create a Start Menu Folder".

However you decided, after you finished here, just click on "Next".

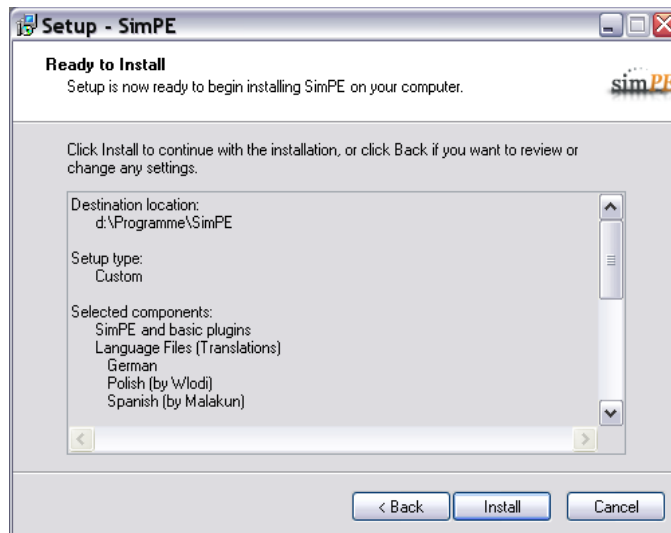
This is an important part of the installation, for it can cause irritations later. Here you are able to choose which files will be **associated with SimPE**, which means, that SimPE will automatically be started and opens a file when you doubleclick said file. That also means that the associated files will get the SimPE-icon! If you are unsure, what to do, remove all the upper three checkmarks.



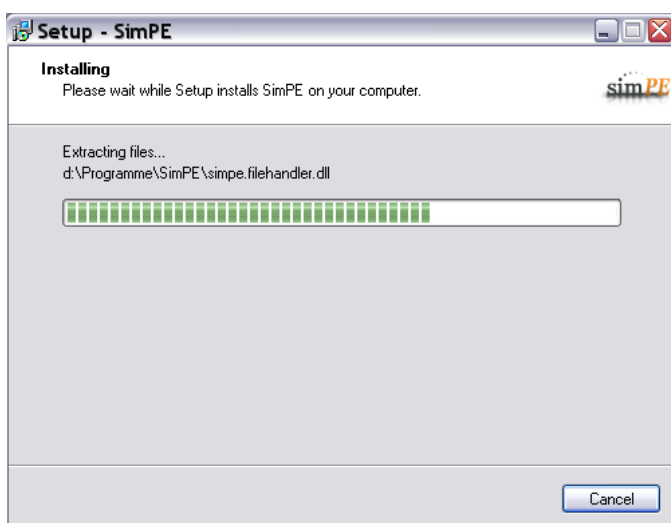
The lower two checkboxes set the **creation of icons**. If you want icons on the desktop and in the quickstart part of the taskbar (in most cases right beside the Start-button), set both checkmarks, else leave them.

You now get a synopsis of the installation options, you should review what you selected and maybe do changes by choosing the "Back"-button, but usually you will click "Install" to start the real installation process.

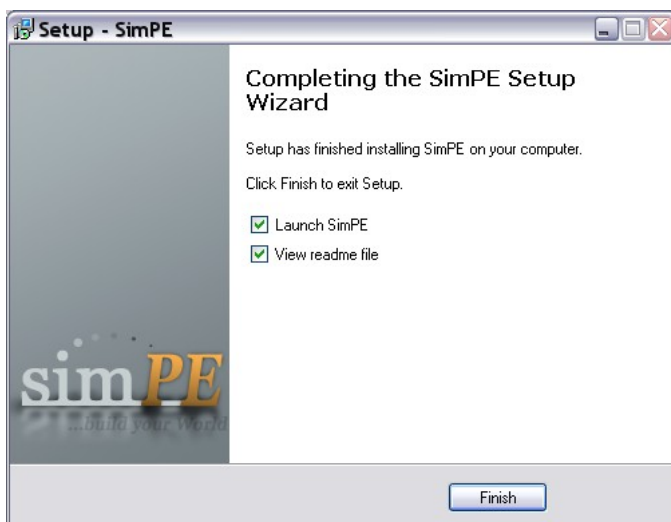
If you had an earlier installation of SimPE and did no "Clean Install" according to the hints in the chapter "A Clean Installation" (you didn't listen, did you? ;o), your old version now will be deinstalled.



After that the real installation of SimPE takes place.



That's it, your installation of SimPE is finished. If you leave the two checkboxes checked and click on "Finish", SimPE will be launched and the readme-file will be shown. You should read that file thoroughly, since it may contain hints about the latest version.



The installation may be complete, but you are far from finished yet.

Now we will talk about some additional resources.

Say Hello To The Manager - Managed Direct X 9

No problem here, just start the installation process via a doubleclick on **mdxredist.exe** and follow the instructions given, which are short.

If the installer asks if you want to **remove** Managed Direct X 9, it is already on your computer and you can abort the installation process.

Maybe you are prompted to reboot your computer after the installation is finished, if so, do so.

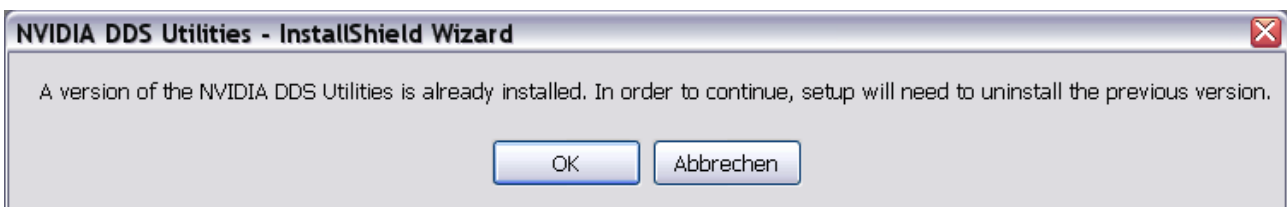
Magic With MipMaps - Nvidia DDS Utilities

To start the installation of the Nvidia DDS Tools, just doubleclick on the installation-exe. It will be named something like

DDS_Utilities_8.31.1128.1130.exe

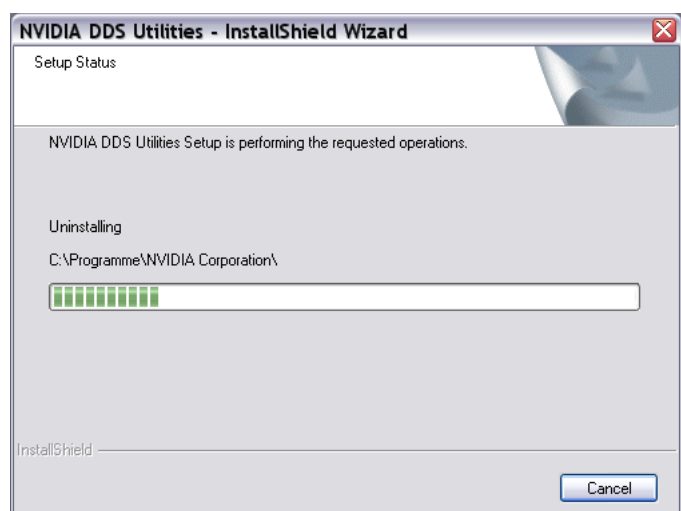
the numbers being version-indicators, but important is the beginning of the filename which clearly states "DDS-Utilities".

If there is a version of the utilities already present on your computer, you will get the following requester:



Click on "OK" to deinstall the previous version.

You will see a progress bar, indicating the uninstallation process of the previous version.

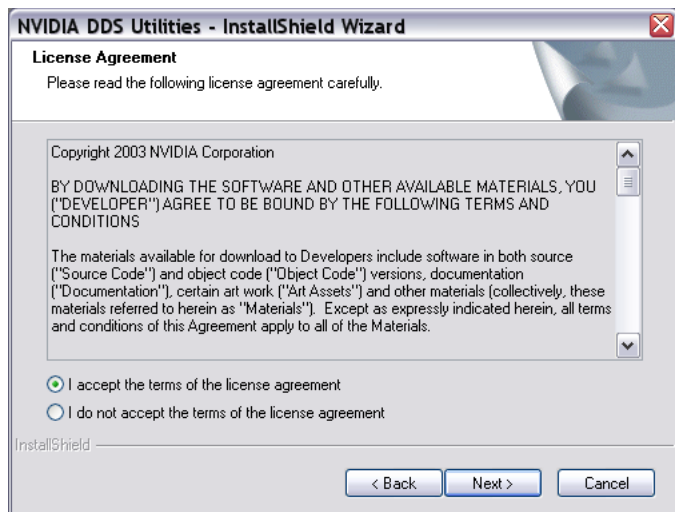


You now get the initial installation prompt of the InstallShield Wizard used to get the tools on your system.

This is the first window you will see if there were no previous versions installed on your system.



You will next be shown the license-agreement, read it if you like, then mark the radiobutton beside "I accept" and click the "Next"-button.

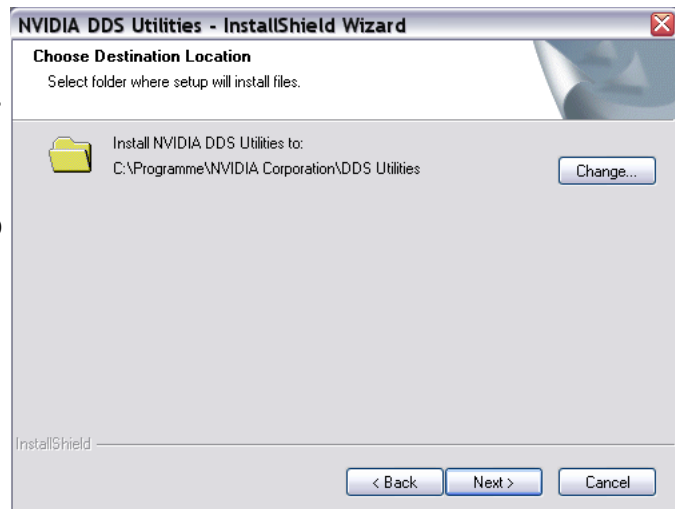


You can now choose the installation folder, just use the one suggested by the installer or click "Browse" to select another one.

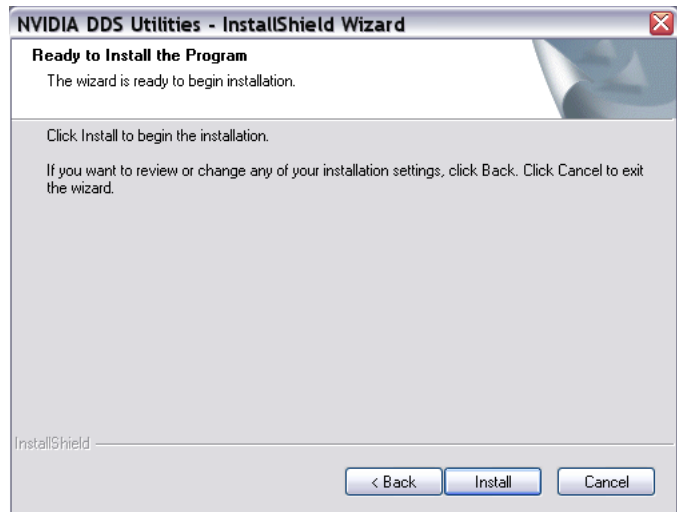
It may be smart to leave the path as it is, since sometimes programs are only able to find the tools if they are in

c:\Program Files\NVIDIA Corporation\DDS Utilities

or a similar folder according to the language of your operating system.



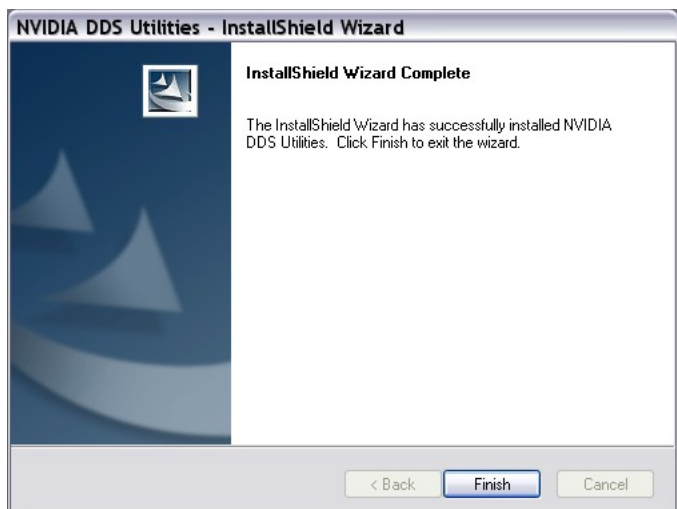
You are now ready to install, just click on "Install"



A progress bar keeps you entertained whilst the installation. :o)



...and you will be shown this window as a confirmation that the installation was a success.

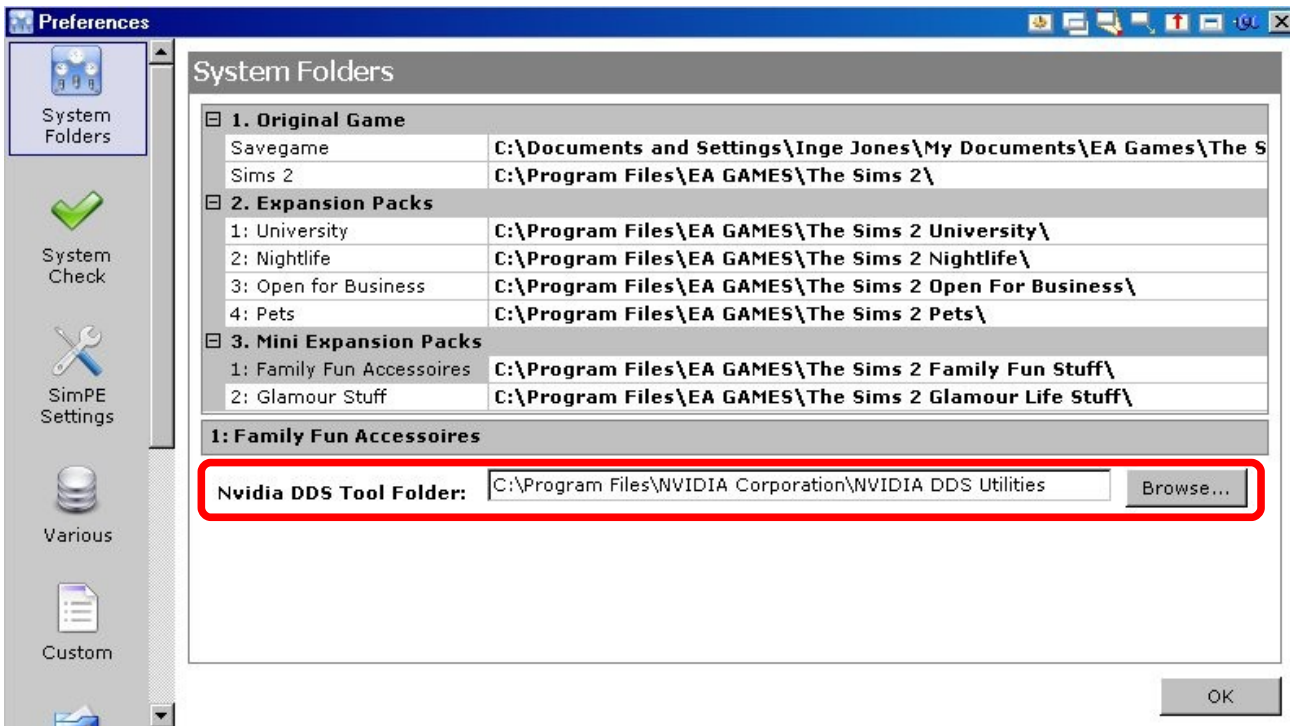


Now the DDS-Utilities are installed, but we have to tell SimPE where to find them.

Start SIMPE and go to the menu, choose

Extras -> Preferences

The Preferences-window will pop up...



There may or may not be a path visible in the textbox "Nvidia DDS Tools Folder". Better safe than sorry, so in any case use the "Browse"-button to browse to the folder you just installed the DDS-Tools to. Click Okay and all is set.

That's it for the DDS-Tools, let's go on with...

Recolor Me, Baby - The Color Enabler Package

This one is also quite easy, as Numenor and RGiles were so kind to provide an installer for this SimPE-addon.

Just doubleclick on the file with the name

ColourOptionsSetup_5.0_Setup.nolink.exe

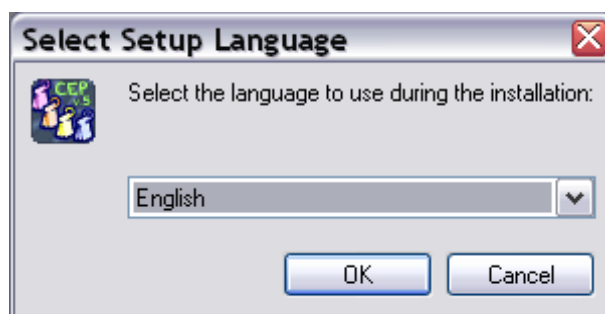
if you downloaded it from <http://sims.ambertation.de> or

CEP_Setup.exe

if you got the file from <http://cep.modthesims2.com>

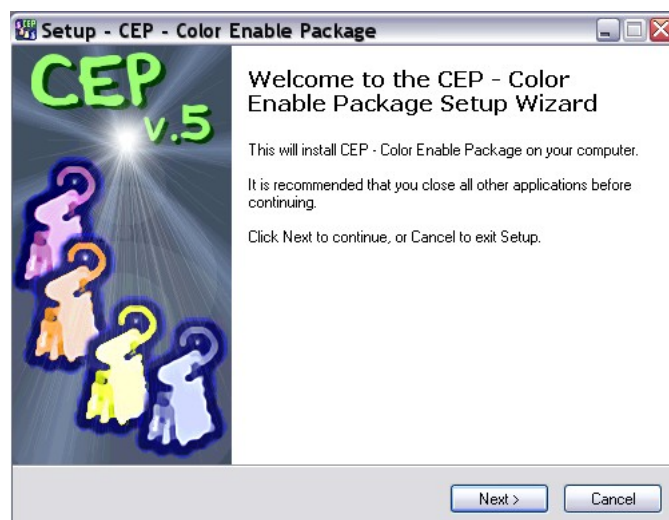
In the first case the filename may differ with later versions, here - also - the beginning of the filename indicates the correct installation file.

You get the language select dialogue, just choose the one you want, in this tutorial we will use the english version.



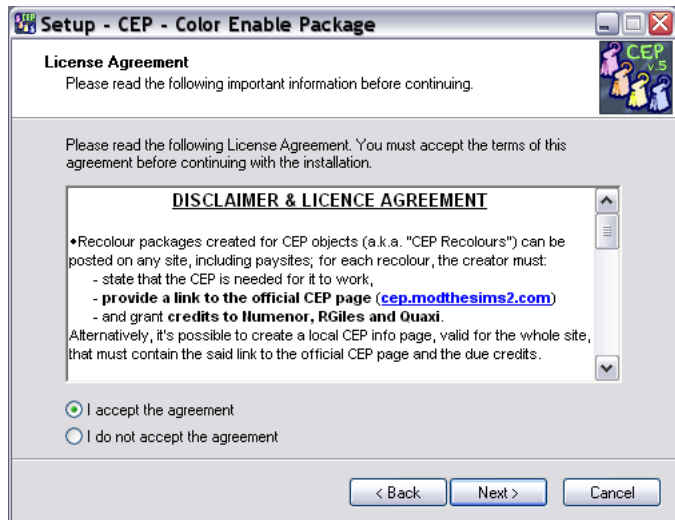
If there is an earlier version of the CEP installed, it will be deinstalled. I had no chance to take a screenshot, so you just have to believe me. :o)

You get the start-screen of the CEP-installation process.



Read the licence - and I mean it! There are some hints about copyrights you should definitely know about if you plan to create recolors and share them with others via the internet.

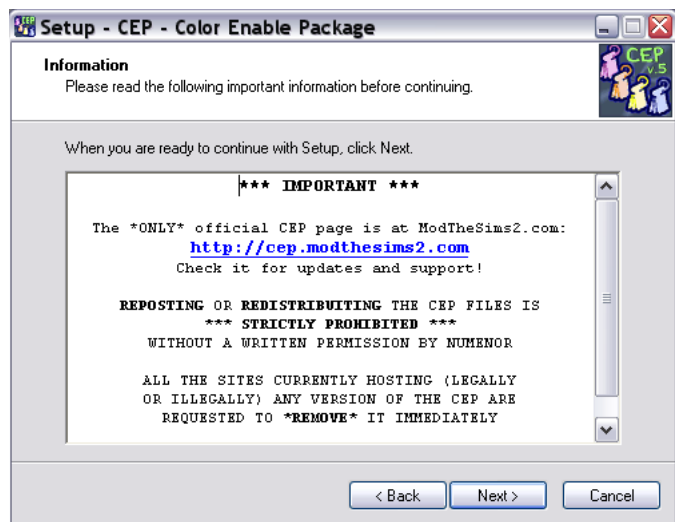
After reading, mark the radiobutton beside "I accept" and click "Next".



Another information window is shown.

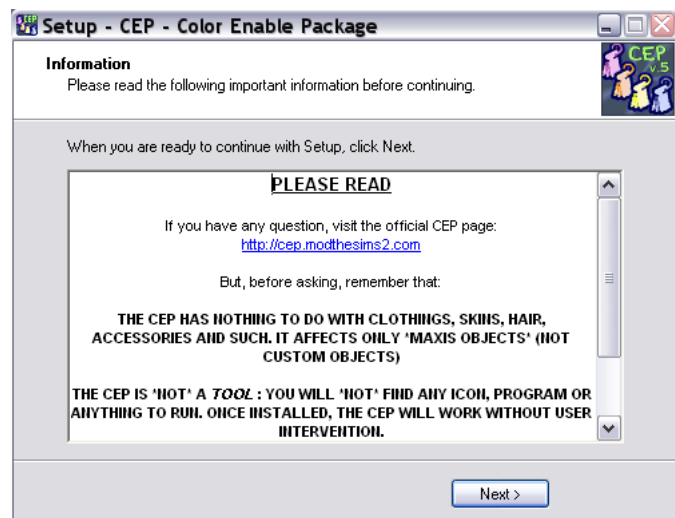
Read it and understand it!

After that, click on "Next".

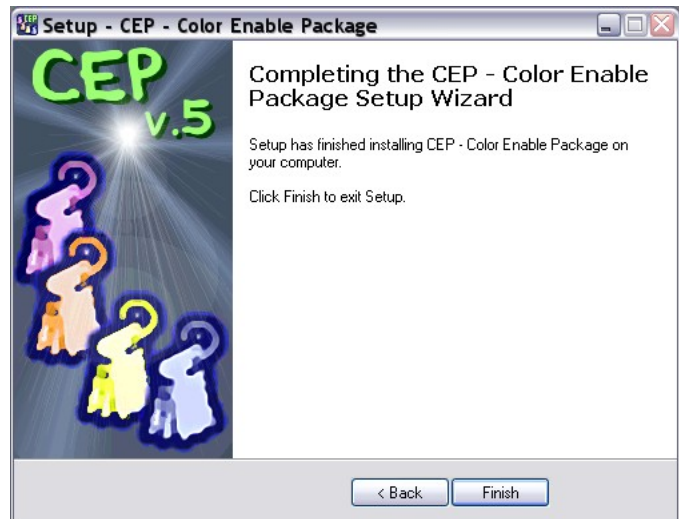


You will be shown a progress bar whilst the CEP is installed, this time it is not for entertainment, since it is shown only a very short time (so short, in fact, that I had no chance to make a screenshot). :o)

Another information window appears, be sure to **read and understand** this also, those info-windows are there for a reason and by reading them you will get informations that you will not have to ask later in forums or elsewhere.



You have now finished the installation of the CEP.



Say Cheeeese - The Photostudio Templates

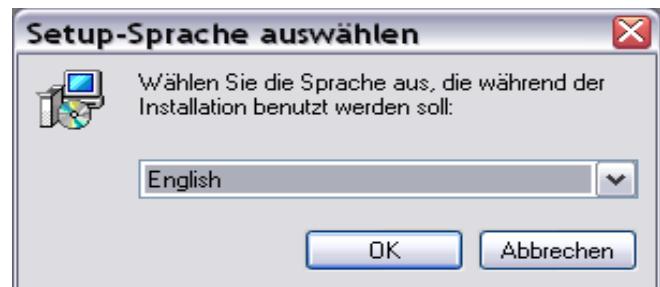
Here - again - an installer is provided for your comfort. Doubleclick on

SimPE-Templates-Setup.exe

to start the installation.

You get another language-selection-dialogue (in my case the requester itself is in german, but don't be befuddled by that, just select german or english).

Click "OK".



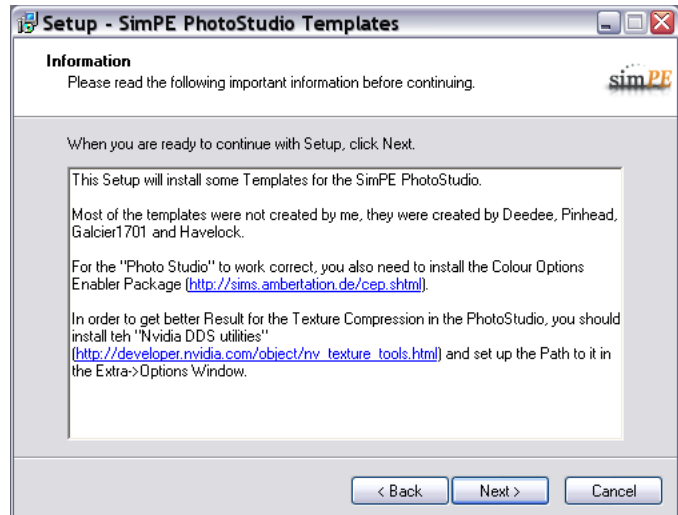
You get the initial dialogue, just click on "Next".



You are shown another window with some information, read them and click on "Next".

In the next windows "Select Components" you don't have something to select, really, so just click on "Next".

The same goes for the "Ready To Install" window, just click on "Install", you get a progress bar and after a very short time the "Installation Finished" requester. Just click on "Finish" and you're done.



A Rapid Ascend - The Base Careers

The base careers are an compressed file using the rar-compression. You have to uncompress the, before you are able to use them. You can uncompress rar-files for example with Winzip, Winrar or 7Zip, you most probably have some unarchiving tool already on your computer. If you don't, try **7zip** from <http://www.7zip.org>, it's freeware, here a short look on it's capabilities:

Packing / unpacking: 7z, ZIP, GZIP, BZIP2 and TAR

Unpacking only: RAR, CAB, ISO, ARJ, LZH, CHM, Z, CPIO, RPM, DEB and NSIS

In the archive you will find the two files

base.career and **ep1base.career**

Copy those two files to the **data** folder of your **SimPE-installation-directory**.

Finished Already? Yes, That's It!

You have finished the installation of SimPE and all the needed basic resources by now. Congratulations! Get yourself a drink of your choice and look for someone to pat your shoulder! :o)

Now What Can I Do With This Nifty Stuff?

In short: A lot!

If you are looking for help and tutorials regarding the modding of Sims 2 you definitely should have a look at <http://www.modthesims2.com>, there you can get hints and complete tutorials on many topics, from clothing to hair to objects, from creating careers to recoloring and a lot more. Yes, it is overwhelming, try something easy first to get a grasp.

If you have problems with SimPE itself or maybe found a bug, visit the SimPE-forum at <http://sims.ambertation.de> and look if it was possibly already adressed there ("use the search, Luke!") and, if not, start a new thread.

However, have lots of fun using this great software and don't get too frustrated if something does not work at once. You will learn it!

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thanks to Quaxi (always), Numenor (proofreading & hints) and Inge Jones (proofreading and screenshot)