

Visionaire Basics for beginners

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Setting up a game scene from scratch

In this section we will discuss all actions necessary to get your game up and running from within a blank project. We will cover all items that need to be created before you will have a fully functional executable scene.

Note that we do not go into detail into each part required but only look at the overview of what is needed. There are nine steps to setup scene (with minimal configuration) to have it be a runnable game.

Nine step summary

Step 1 – Scene

Setup a new scene with a background image.

This will serve as the background image where our character will move around in and interact with items. Included here is the requirement to setup a way system, pathfinding and the character size at different parts of the image.

Step 2 – Objects

Creating objects in the scene that your player character will interact with.

Here we create the different interactive object for our player to interact with. We need to set hotspot area, give the object an identifying name and set a position for our character to walk to when wishing to interact with it.

Step 3 – Font

Add in the font to be used as text is being displayed.

Here we need to define the font for our game. This includes importing our font and then setting various format settings like letter spacing etc.

Step 4 – Player Character

Create your player character that your user will control.

Here we create our character, add the images that represents that character and define the animation centres as needed. We also need to set properties like the start point for our avatar when the scene starts and the font to be used when text appears on screen.

Step 5 – Cursors

Create all cursor items to be used in our game.

We need to set all cursor items to be used in our scene. We need to create our cursors like 'Look', 'Use', 'Talk' etc. and then define images that represent these icons. We need to provide both an active and inactive version for each icon. We also need to set the animation centre for each accordingly.

Step 6 – Interfaces

Create your interfaces that uses the icons created in the previous step.

Here we need to create our interface that our player will use. We create individual commands in our interface that represents actions and which uses cursors as defined in Step 5. We need to set several button and command properties. The last step here is to assign an interface to our player character.

Step 7 – Game Properties

Setup basic game properties to enable proper functioning

We do have to spend time setting certain game properties. Examples of these is implementing a 'Quit' function, setting our first scene, our playable character and the resolution. We also need to set some interaction details related to how our mouse interacts with the scene.

Step 8 – Add Interaction

Add setup to enable interaction between our character, hotspots via our user interface.

Our last item is to set any interactions that we might want to have happen. This includes changing our interact icon when over a hotspot, setting player text, playing animation etc.

Step 9 – Save and run your game

At this step we are finished with our game and it's now ready to test.

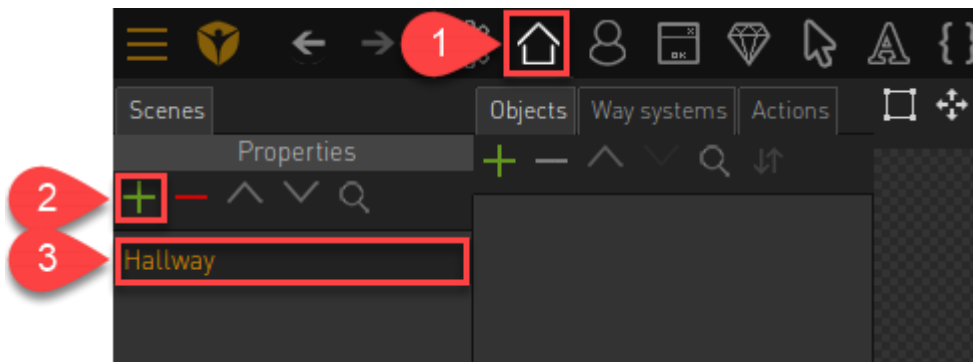
Step 1 – Scene

Setup a new scene with a background image.

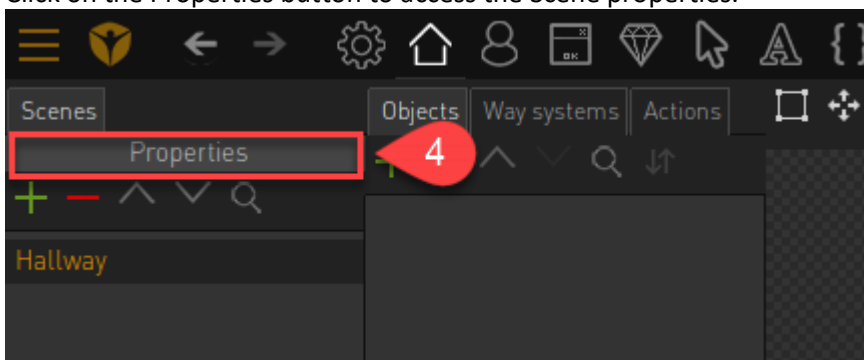
This will serve as the background image where our character will move around in and interact with items. Included here is the requirement to setup a way system, pathfinding and the character size at different parts of the image.

To setup a new scene do the following;

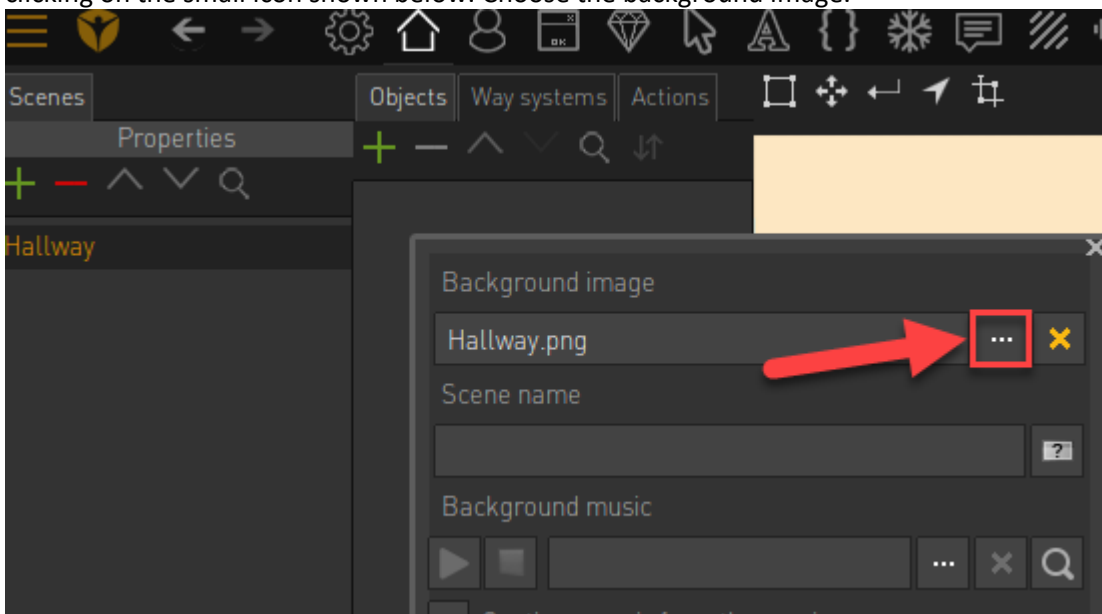
1. Click on the Scene button to access that area
2. Add a new scene via the green plus icon
3. Rename the default 'Scene0' to something more appropriate like 'Hallway'



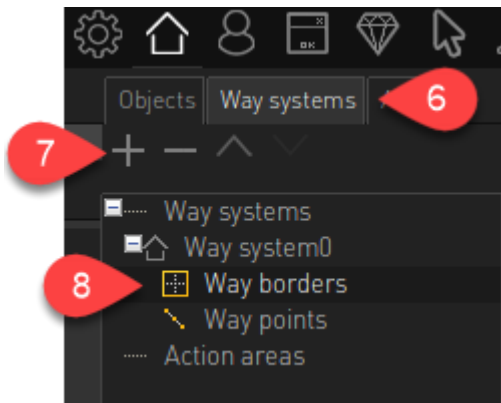
4. Click on the Properties button to access the Scene properties.



5. In this new popup window, we need to choose and allocate our background image for this scene. Do this by clicking on the small icon shown below. Choose the background image.



6. We now need to add a way point system with way borders. Click on the Way Systems button.
7. Click on the small plus icon to add a new waypoint system.
8. Ensure that Way Borders are selected.



- a. You'll note that your mouse turns into small green icon when you move over the background scene image.



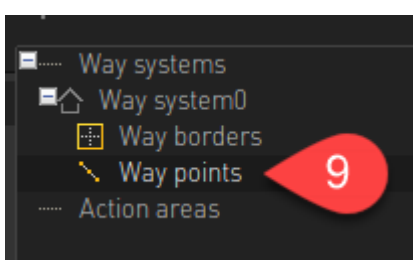
- b. This means you can now drag the walkable area that your character will be able to use. To do this click to place down a point and continue clicking to create a walkable border.



- c. To close your border be sure to move your mouse over the first place point. Your cursor should change into a checkmark noting that the border can be closed.



9. Now we need to set the Way Points which serve as pathfinding when our character moves. Ensure that the Way Point system is selected.



- a. You'll note that your mouse turns into small green icon when you move over the background scene image.



- b. Click and drag lines that signify the path that your character will use to move between different points. This might need some refinement as you playtest the scene.



Note! The waypoints must be connected to each other for the character to use this appropriately. Also if you wish to remove or disconnect a waypoint then select a node and right click on it.

10. We are now finished with scene setup!

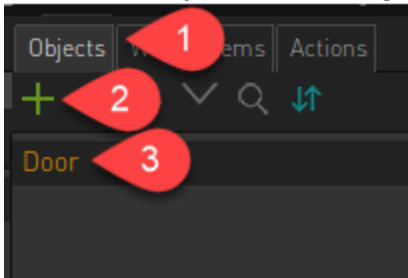
Step 2 – Object

Creating objects in the scene that your player character will interact with.

Here we create the different interactive object for our player to interact with. We need to set hotspot area, give the object an identifying name and set a position for our character to walk to when wishing to interact with it.

Let's now create an object that our character will interact with.

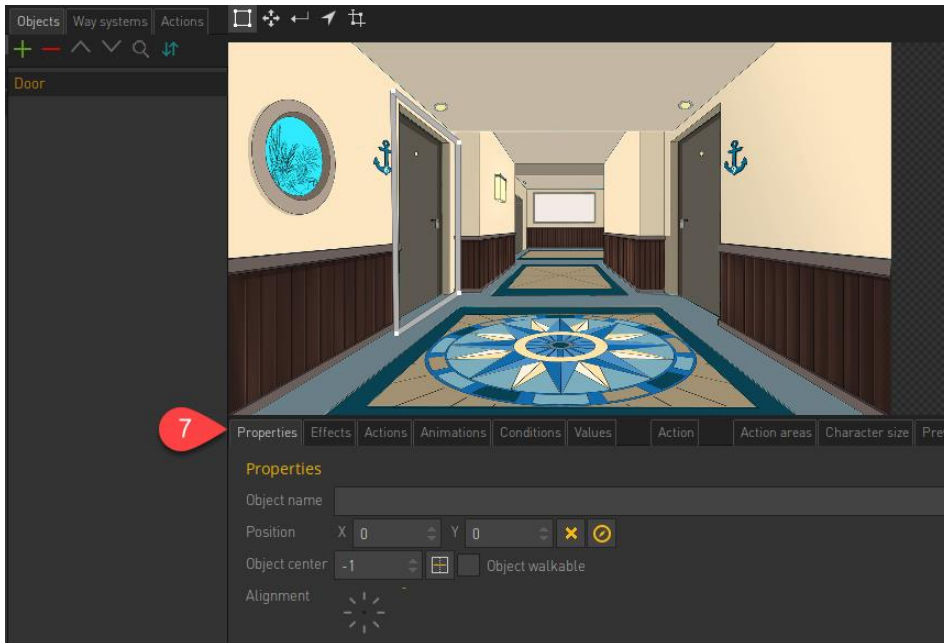
1. Access the object area
2. Click on the plus icon to add a new object to our scene list.
3. Rename the object to something more appropriate like 'Door'



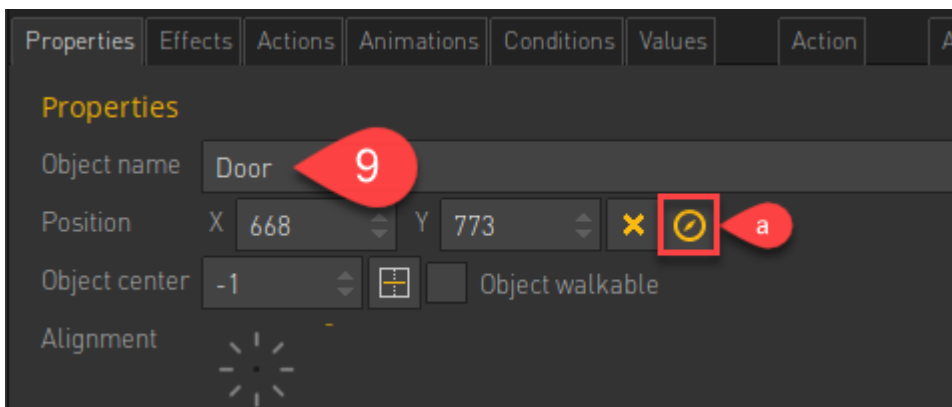
4. We now need to set our object border. This defines the hotspot space our mouse will be able to interact with.
5. Ensure your 'Door' object is selected and click on the 'Create and Edit object Area' button
6. Click and drag the border around your item and then close the border. Details on the process is found in the step 1 (see waypoint placement).



7. We now need to set a name for our object in the Object Properties area. Ensure that your 'Door' object is selected and click on the Properties button



8. We now need to give this object a name. Add this in the Object Name field.
9. The next step is to define the spot where our character will walk to when we need to interact with our object. This is set under the Position property.
 - a. To set this click on the icon shown below.
 - b. A new screen will appear where you can click to define the position. Do ensure that this spot is **within** your Way Border selection.
 - c. Click OK when you have selected a spot



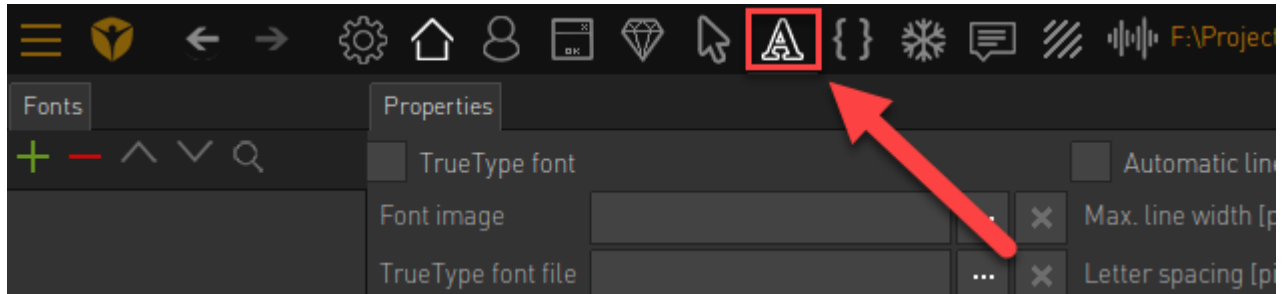
Step 3 – Font

Add in the font to be used as text is being displayed.

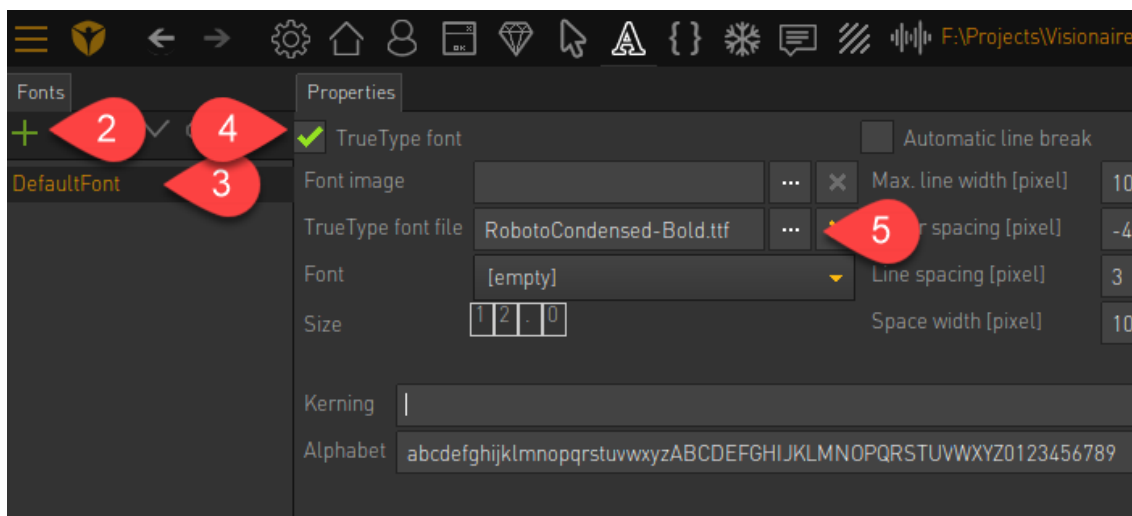
Here we need to define the font for our game. This includes importing our font and then setting various format settings like line spacing etc.

We now need to set the font our game will use.

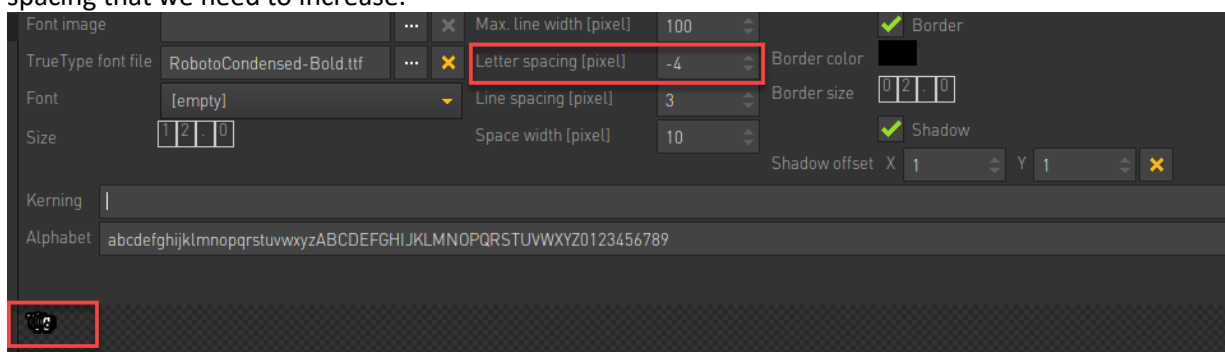
1. Access the Fonts area.



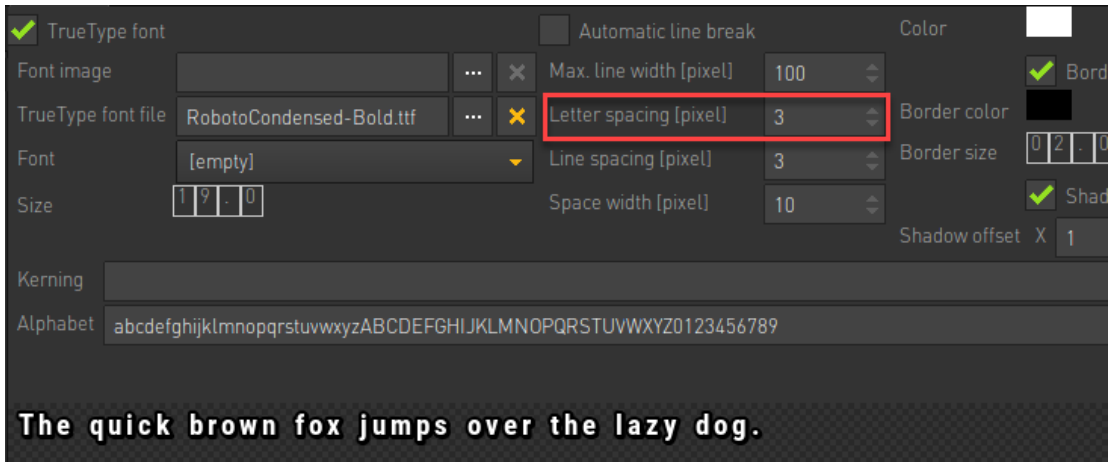
2. Click on the plus icon to add a new font.
3. Rename it to something more appropriate i.e. default font.
4. Tick the tick box TrueType font.
5. Next to the TrueType font file click on the browse button and then choose the font that you wish to use as the default value.



6. You'll note that we have a preview of the font. It's seems quite squashed right now. This is due to the letter spacing that we need to increase.



7. Set the letter spacing to an appropriate value. You'll note the preview updates to now show appropriately.

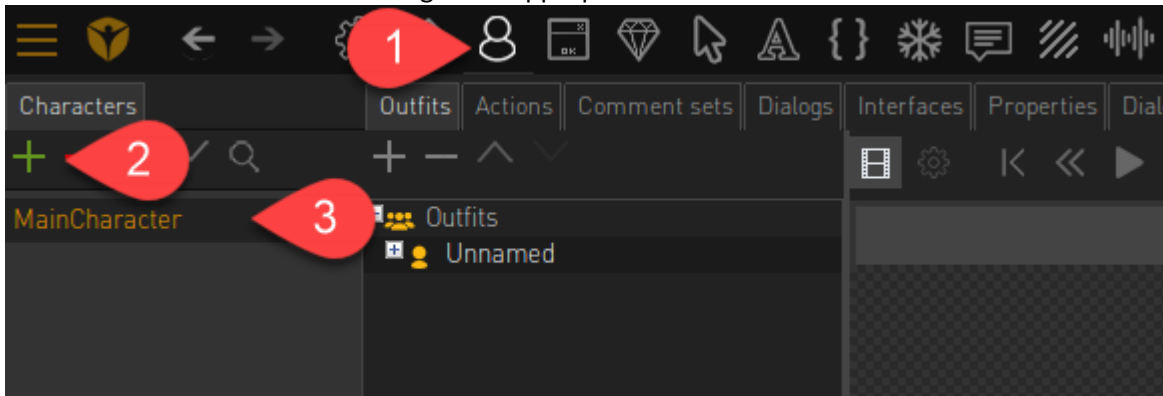


Step 4 – Player Character

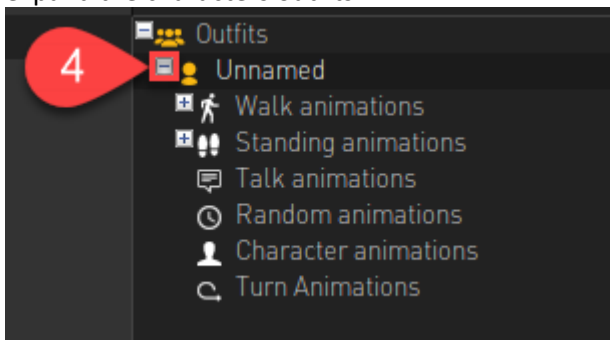
Create your player character that your user will control.

Here we create our character, add the images that represents that character and define the animation centres as needed. We also need to set properties like the start point for our avatar when the scene starts and the font to be used when text appears on screen.

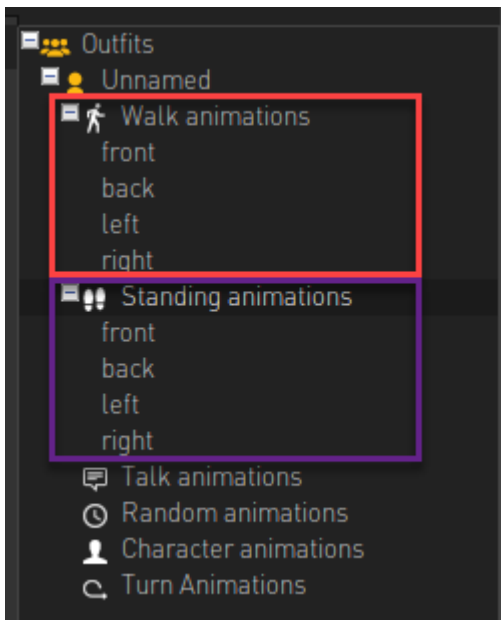
1. Access the Character creation area.
2. Click on the plus icon to add a new character
3. Rename the character to something more appropriate i.e. MainCharacter.



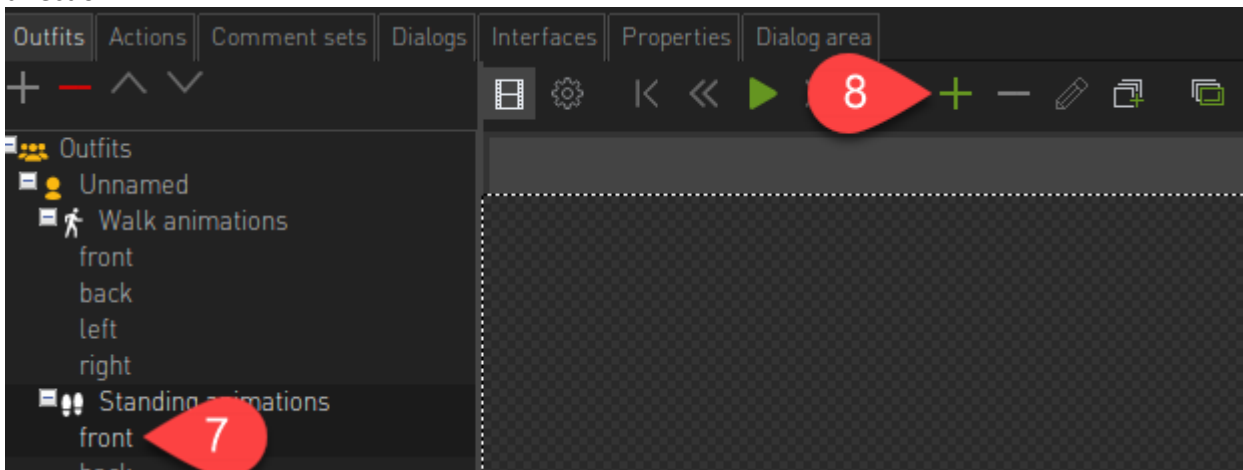
4. Now we need to add the images that define our character's appearance. Click on the Unnamed plus icon to expand the characters outfits.



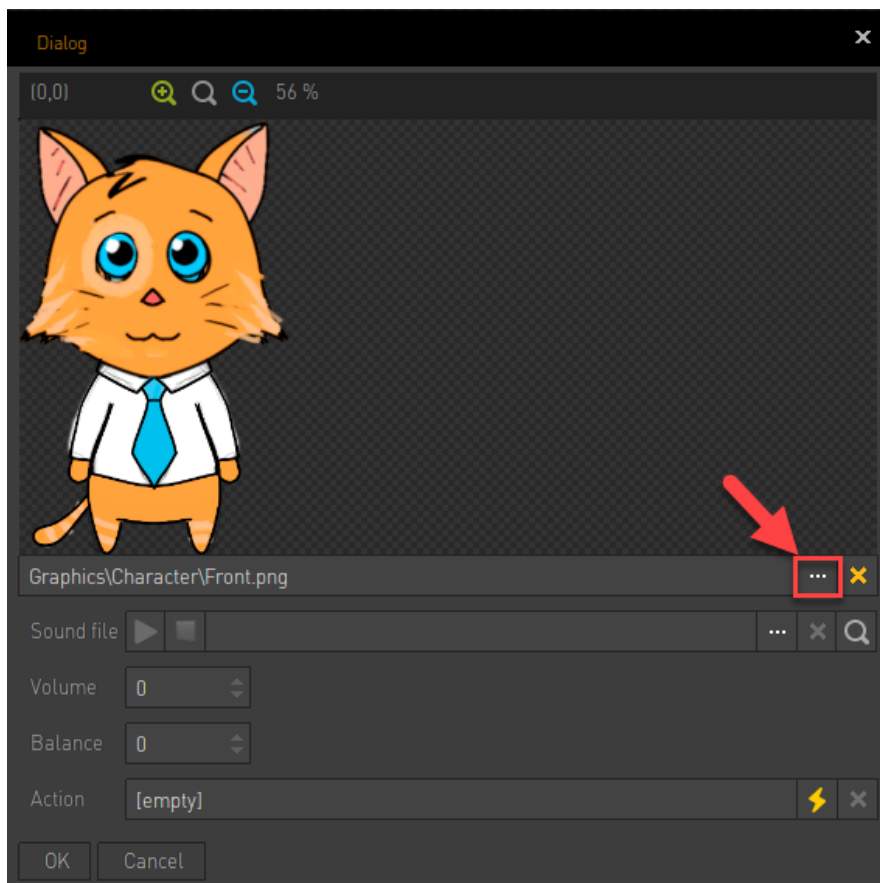
5. We have two nested items beneath our character outfit
 - a. Walk animations
There are animations that will play when a character is moving across our scene.
 - b. Standing animations
These animations will play when our character is standing (no movement) in our scene.
6. In each of these we have four directions that correspond with the directions that the character can walk. These are left, right, front and back. You need to assign images to each of these items.



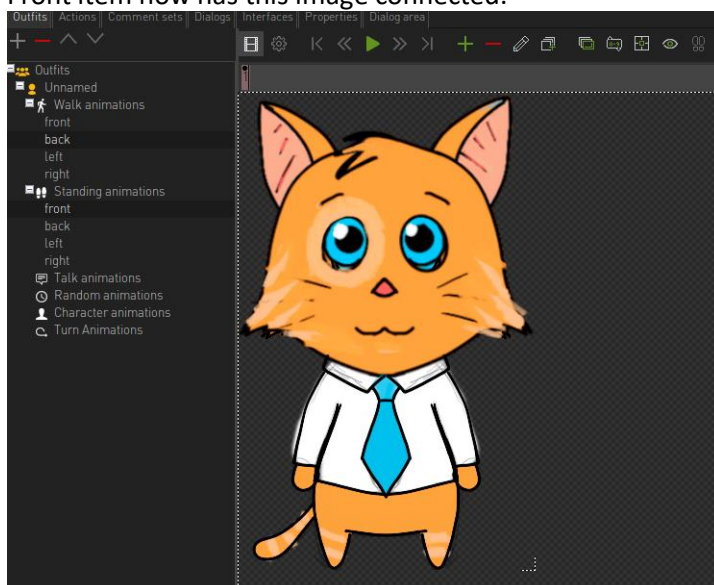
7. To add an image choose an animation item (i.e. example could be the **front** item under Standing animations)
8. Click on the plus icon and choose your image that represents the character standing / walking in that direction.



9. A new window will appear where you then select the image that represents the character direction. Click on the below icon to load the relevant image. Click OK to exit this screen.

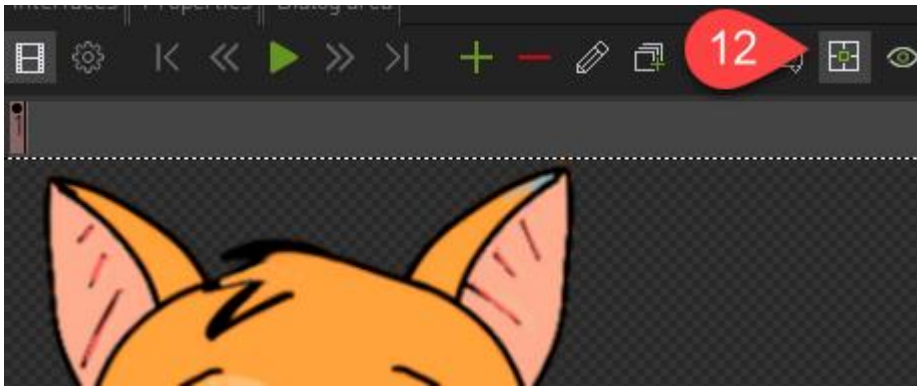


10. Your character will then be added to your animation item. In my example below the Standing Animation Front item now has this image connected.

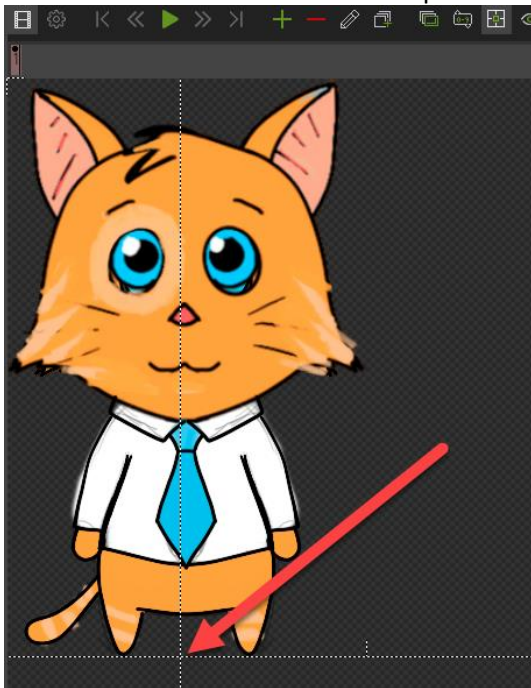


11. We always need to set the animation centre of our character. The animation centre allows us to align character images with each other. It also allows Visionaire to align the 'feet' of the character with our scene.

12. To add an animation centre click on the Animation Centre button as shown below.



13. Then click at the characters feet to place this as the animation centre.

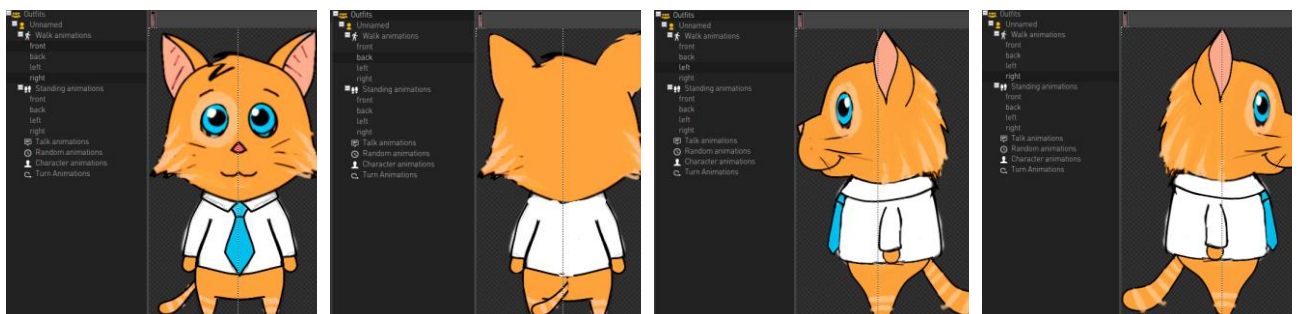


14. Now do this for each direction you have available to you. Also remember to set the animation centre for each image that you load.

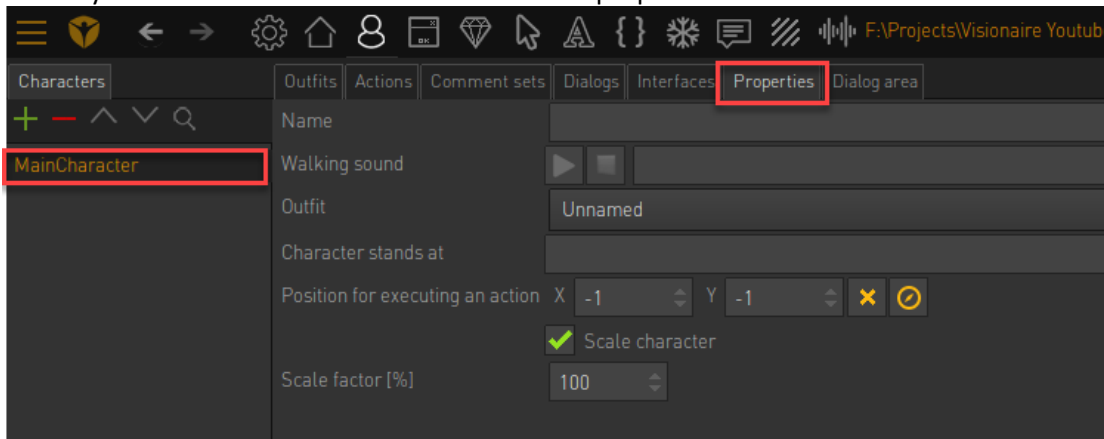
NOTE! If you find images do not show as expected, ensure that you haven't accidentally added images at different keyframes. Animations will be covered in a different section of the tutorial.



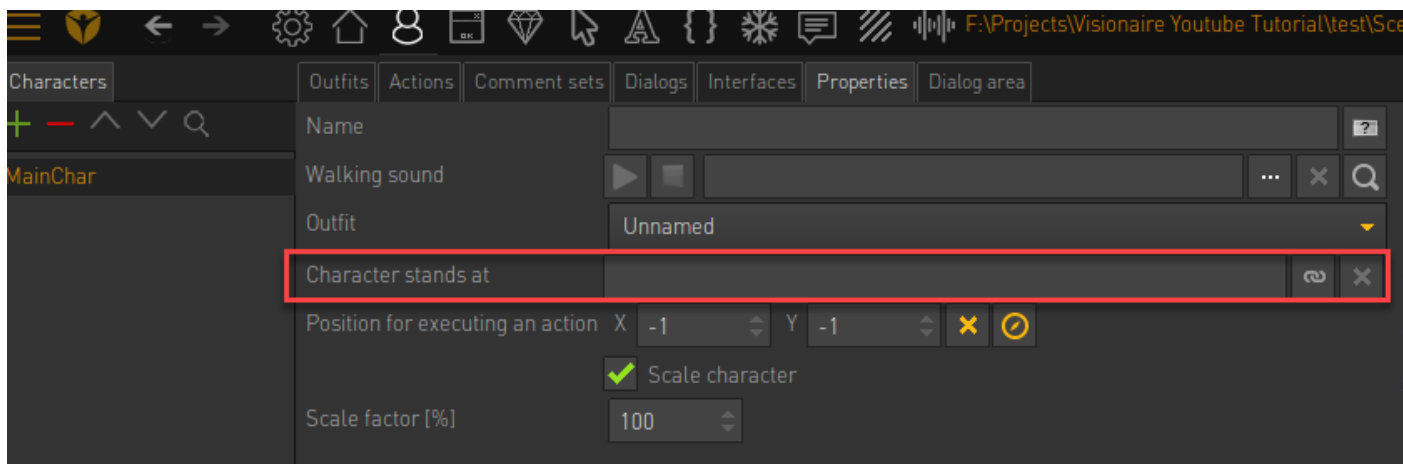
When you have completed all the actions you should have 8 images added in total. Remember to add images to BOTH the walking AND standing animations



15. We now need to set some properties on this character. The properties are found in the area shown below. Ensure your character is selected and click on the properties tab.

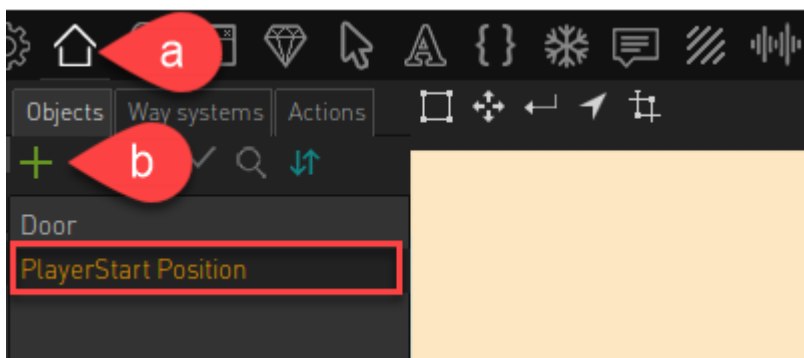


16. Here we have a property called 'Character stands at' and this determine where our character will stand when the scene loads.



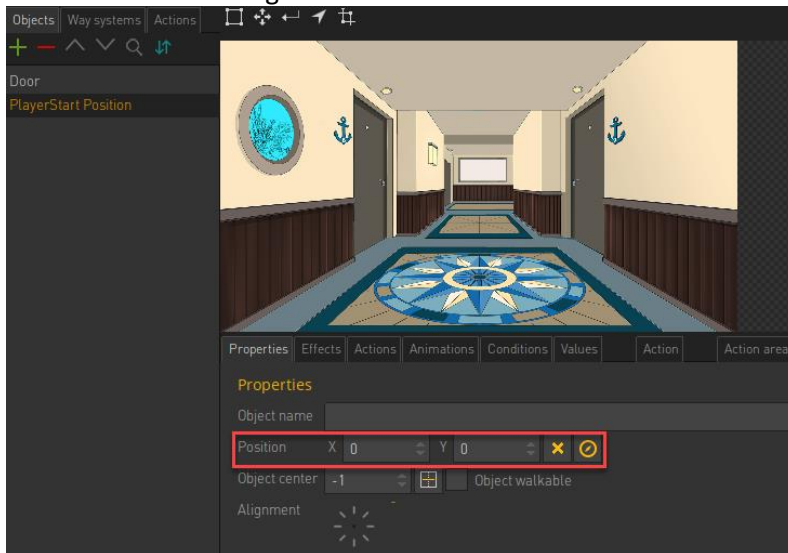
To set this we must create an 'object' in our scene that serves as the player start position. To do this do the following;

- a. Go to your Scene area
- b. Add a new object and call this object 'PlayerStart Position'.

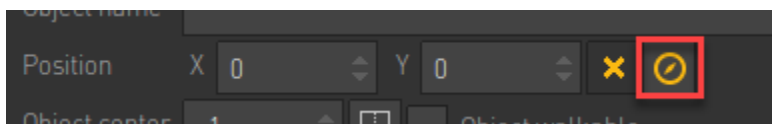


- c. This is not enough, we need to define the spot in the property area. Ensure your PlayerStart Position is selected and look at the object property area.

- d. Here we have a setting called 'Position'. It's here that we set the PlayerStart Position



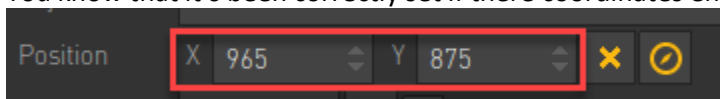
- e. Click on the small circle icon to get a new popup of your scene.



- f. Then click in the scene where you wish the character to be standing when the scene starts. Once you have clicked you will see a crosshair appear onscreen noting the position. Click OK when done.

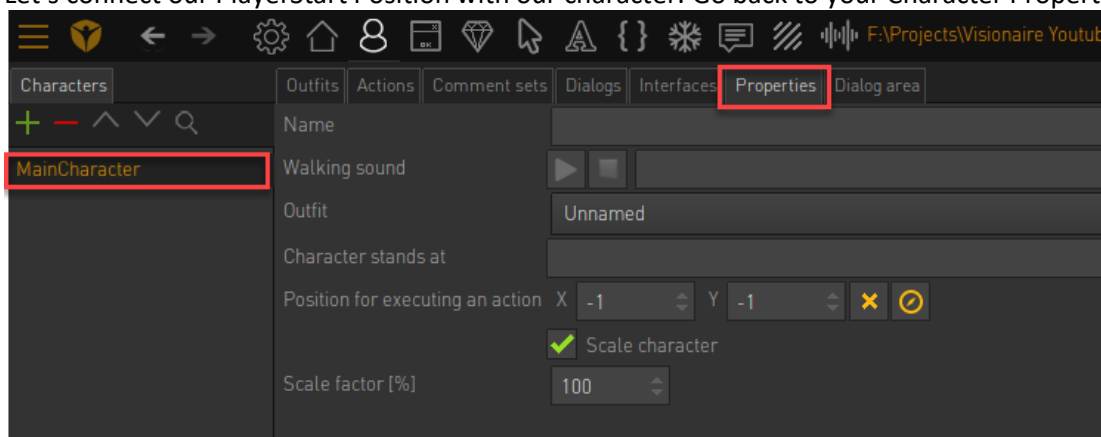


- g. You know that it's been correctly set if there coordinates entered in your Position value.

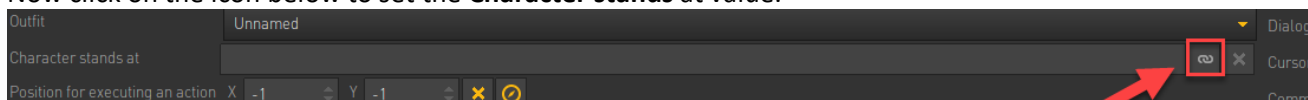


- h. Our player starting position has been set but we have not yet connected this to our character!

17. Let's connect our PlayerStart Position with our character. Go back to your Character Property area.



18. Now click on the icon below to set the **Character stands at** value.

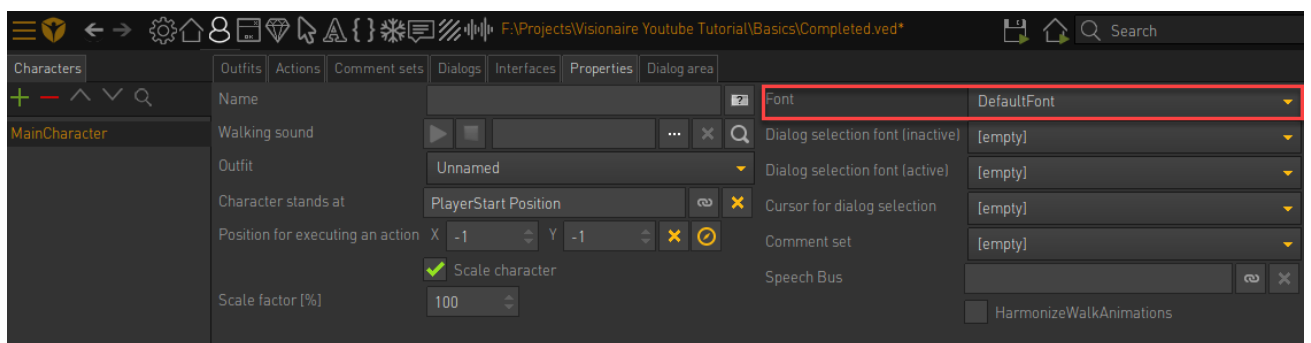


19. In the new window select your scene. This will then display a list of available objects in that scene. Choose your Player Start Position object.

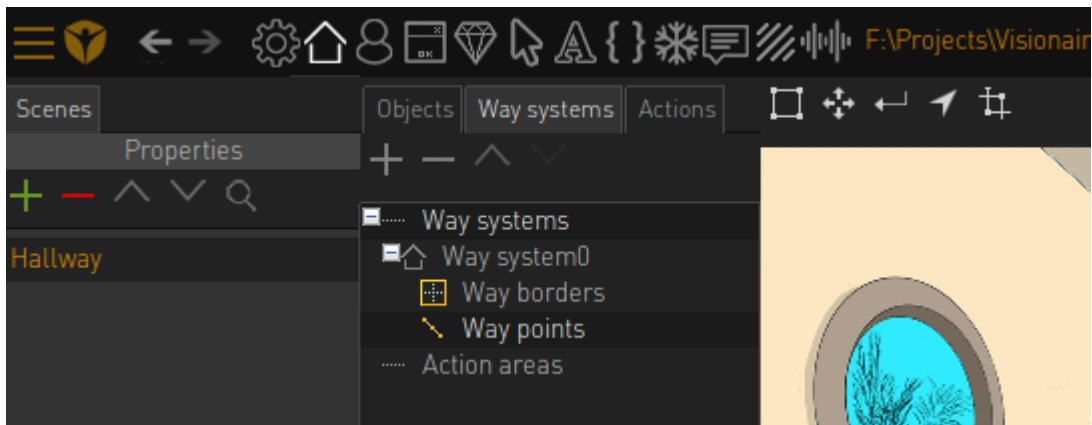


20. Your character will now stand at the object position when the scene starts.

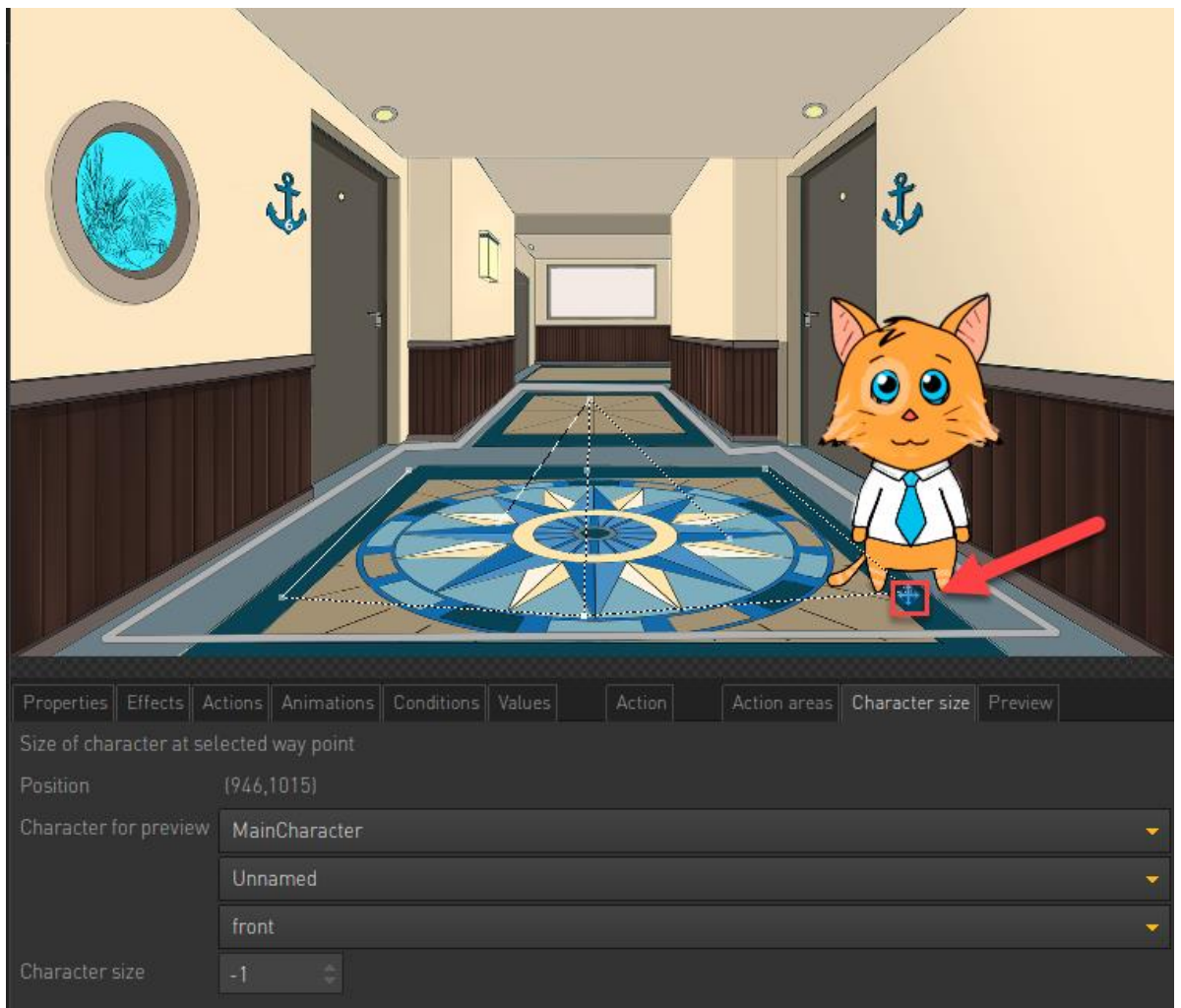
21. We also need to allocate our font that the character will use. This is set in the Properties area under FONT. Choose the font you created previously.



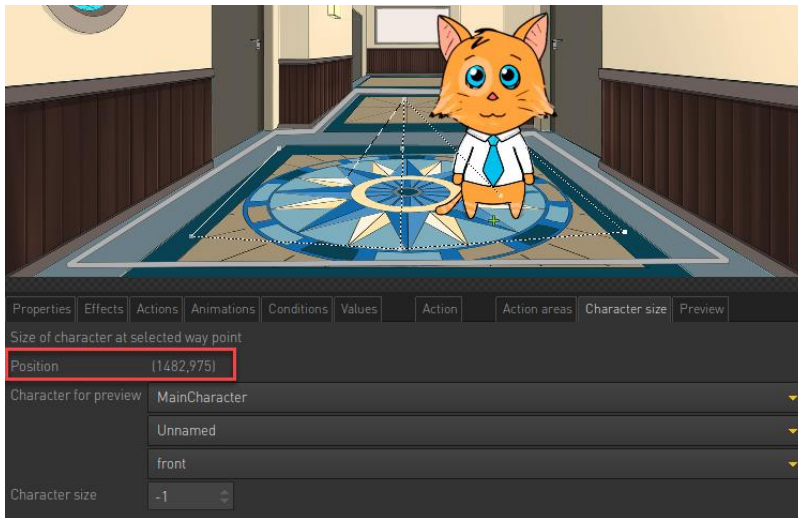
22. The last step is to define the size of our character at different points in the scene. If correctly implemented it creates the illusion that our character is getting smaller the further away from the camera that they are.
- To do this click on the Scene area -> Way System -> Way Points



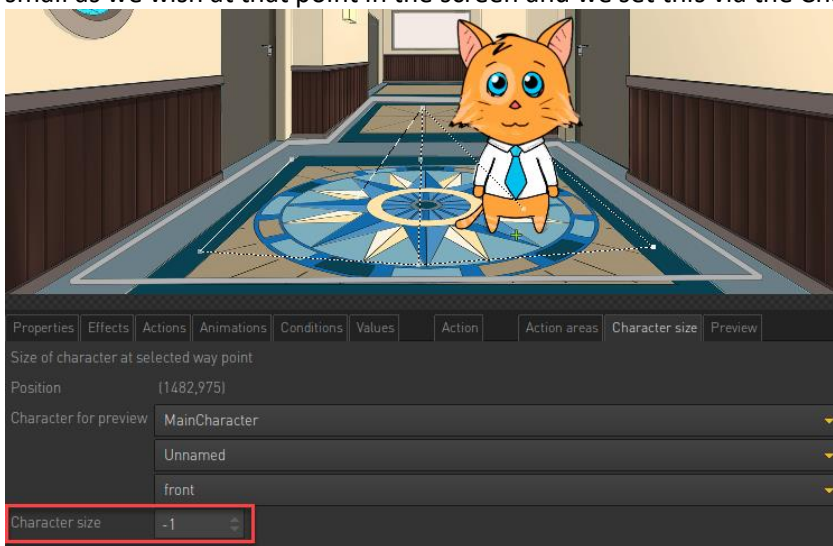
- b. Note that if you move your mouse over the scene your character will be displayed. This enables you to see the size of your character (as you make changes) at different points in the scene.
- c. To make a change select an existing way node point. Your cursor should change into a blue crosshair when you hover over a valid node point.



- d. Click once on the node to select it. You'll note that it's been selected by the Position values that are updated.

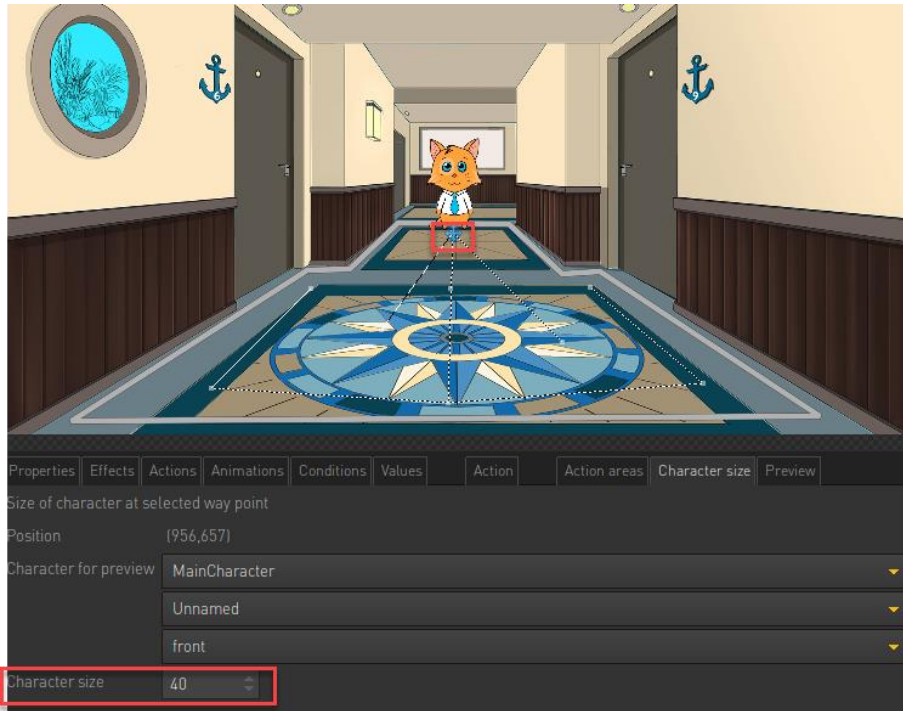


- e. Now for this selected node point we can define how big or how small our player character should be when it reaches the same horizontal level of our node. Simply put the character will be as big or small as we wish at that point in the screen and we set this via the Character Size value.



- f. The default value is -1 which means there is no change. Change this value to 120. Move your mouse again to check the size of your character, no major change but it does seem slightly larger.

- g. Let's do the same for a node at the back of the room. Select a node and set the character size to 40.



Move the mouse across the screen and note how the character size changes from 40 to 120 values as we move forward and backwards across the screen.

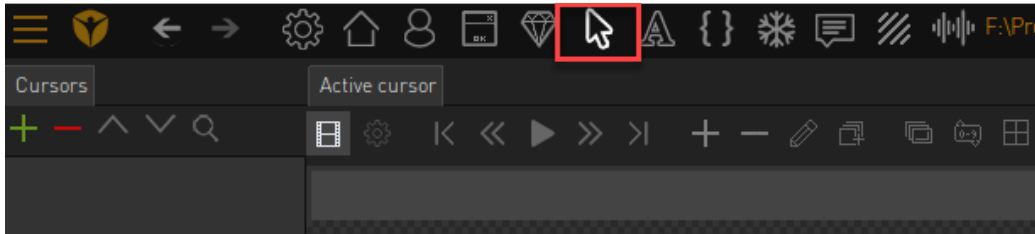
Step 5 – Cursors

Create all cursor items to be used in our game.

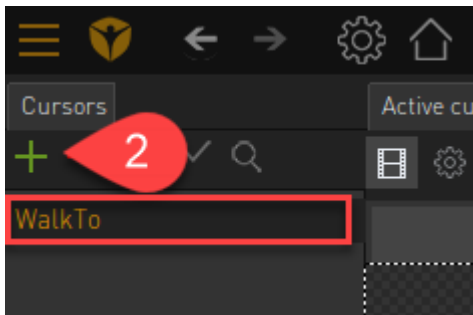
We need to set all cursor items to be used in our scene. We need to create our cursors like 'Look', 'Use', 'Talk' etc. and then define images that represent these icons. We need to provide both an active and inactive version for each icon. We also need to set the animation centre for each accordingly.

For our interface we need cursors. The interface will be dealt with in the next section as the first requirement is to create our cursors themselves.

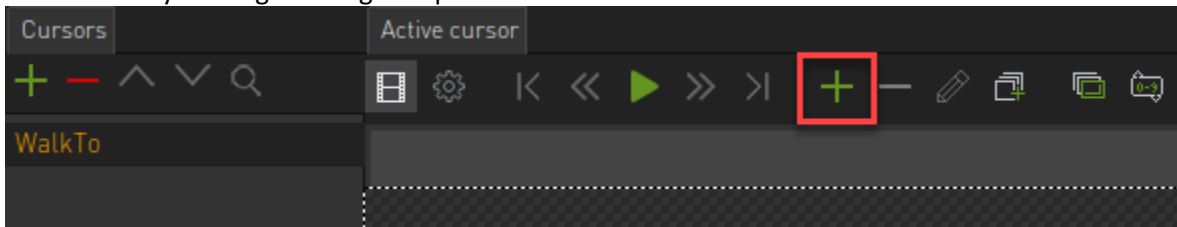
1. To do this click on the CURSORS area



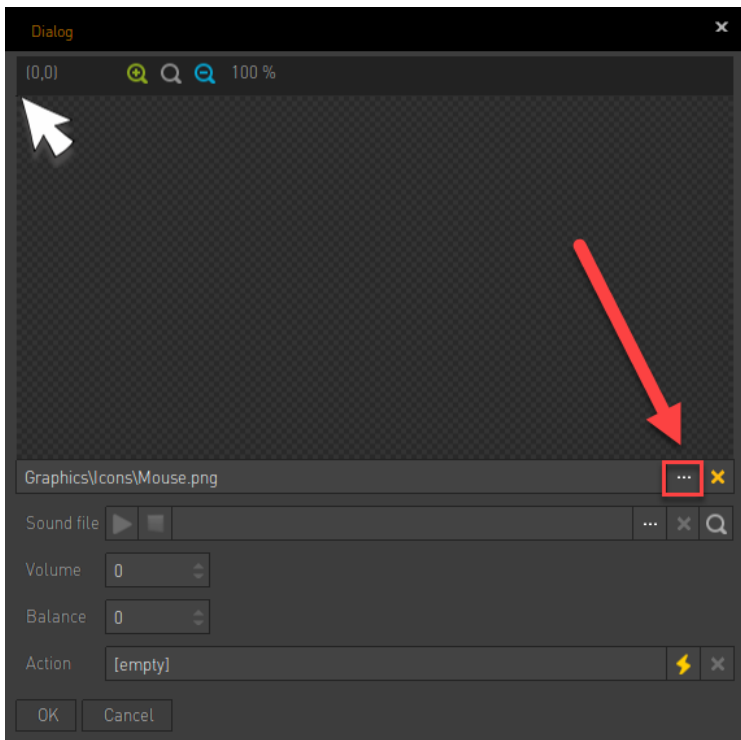
2. Create a new cursor and call it something appropriate (like 'WalkTo').



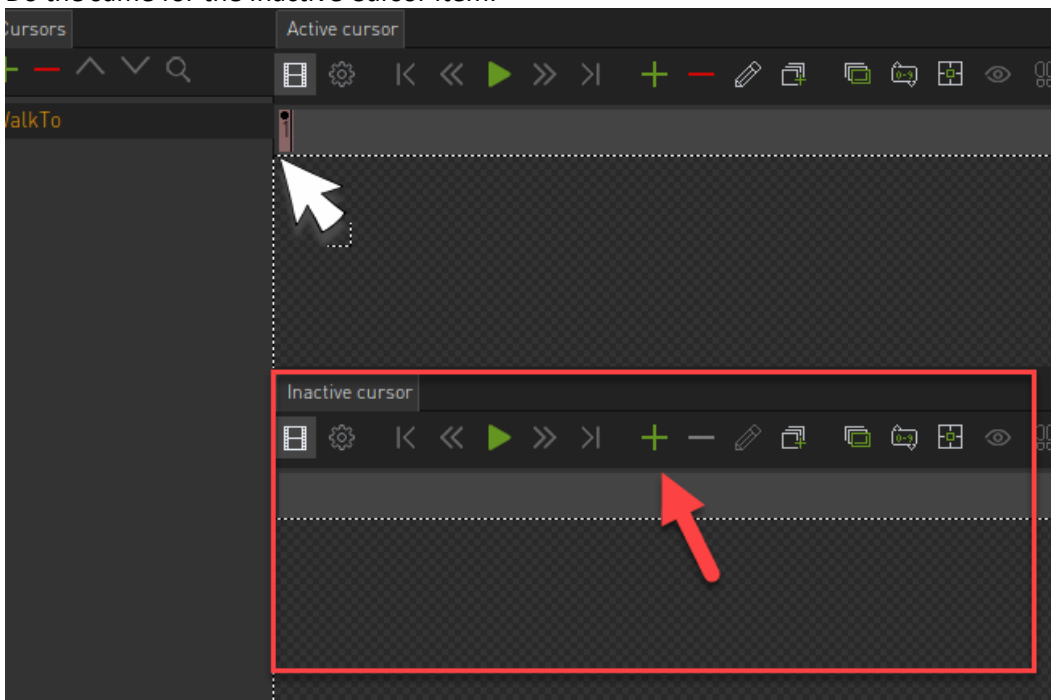
3. Then we need to choose the graphic for this cursor. You need to do this both in the Active and Inactive cursor area by clicking on the green plus icon.



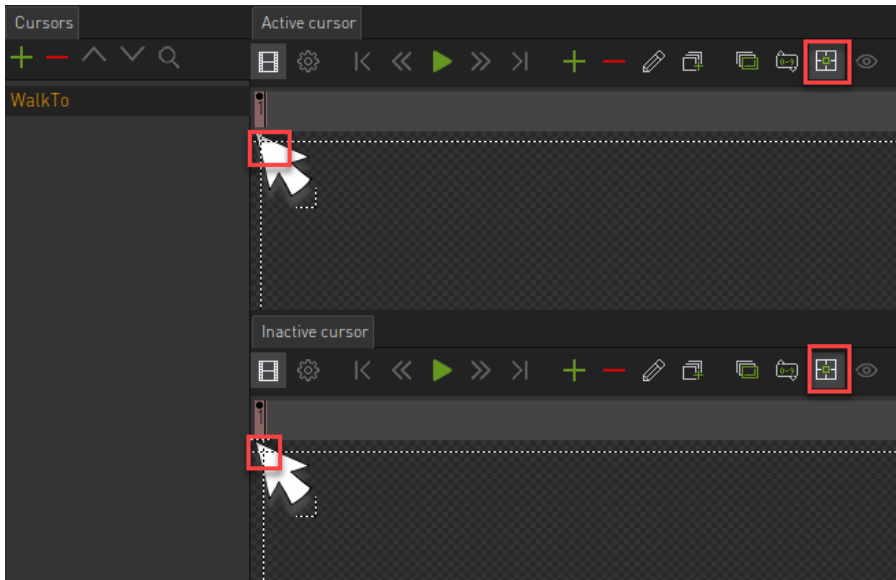
4. In the new window that appears click on the browser button and then choose the appropriate graphic.



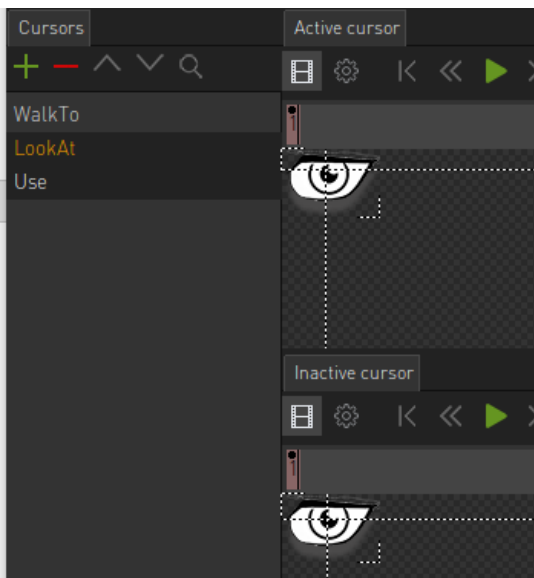
5. Click OK to return to the CURSORS area.
6. Do the same for the Inactive Cursor item.



7. You also need to set the animation centre for both your inactive and active cursor. Do this via the button shown below. Then click on the respective spot to set the centre.



- Repeat this for any additional cursors you might want to use. Some examples below. Note! Remember to set the animation centre.



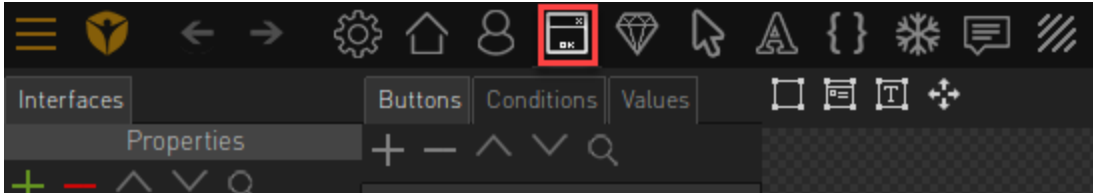
Step 6 – Interfaces

Create your interfaces that uses the icons created in the previous step.

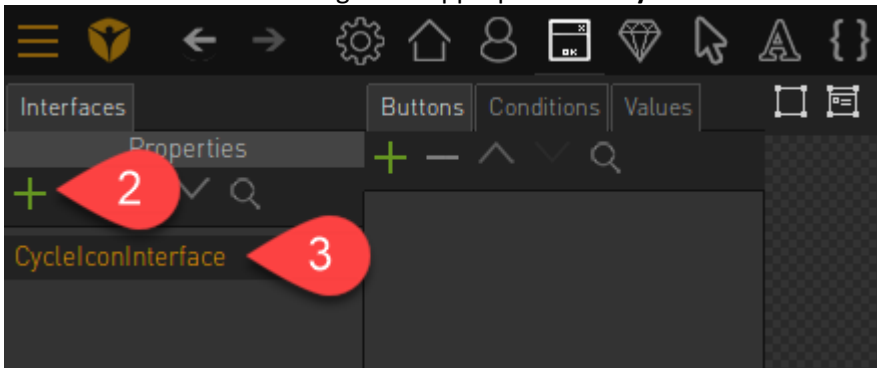
Here we need to create our interface that our player will use. We create individual commands in our interface that represents actions and which uses cursors as defined in Step 5. We need to set several button and command properties. The last step here is to assign an interface to our player character.

We will be using the classic Sam and Max cycle interface in this section.

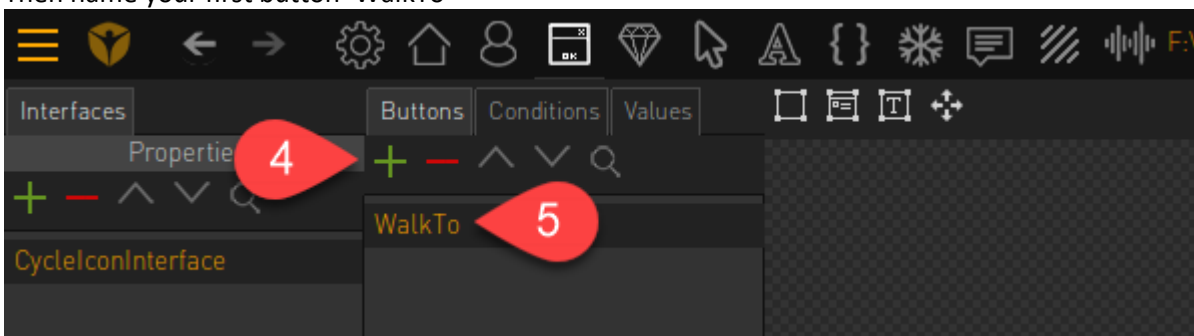
1. Set create an interface click on Interfaces button.



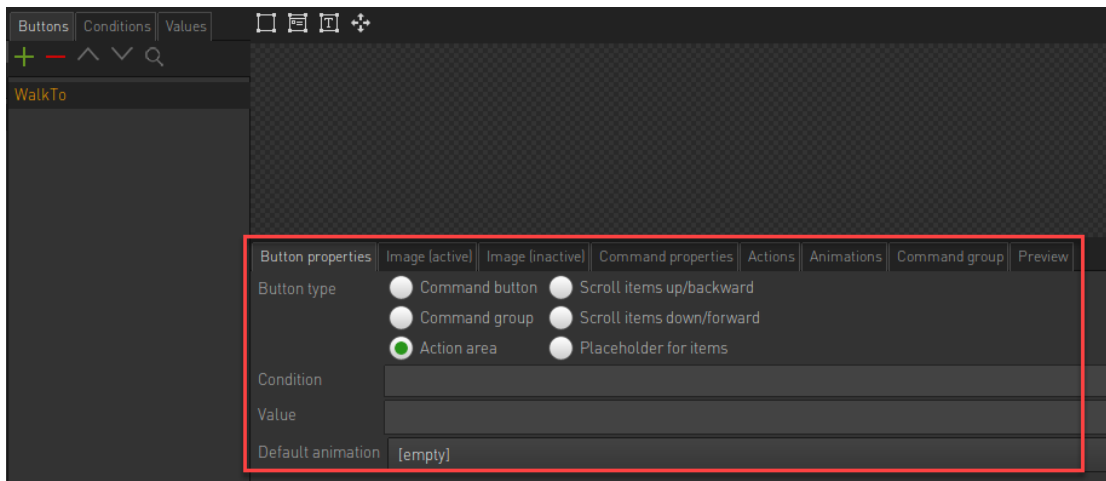
2. Click and add a new Interface using the green plus icon.
3. Then rename it to something more appropriate i.e. **CycleIconInterface**.



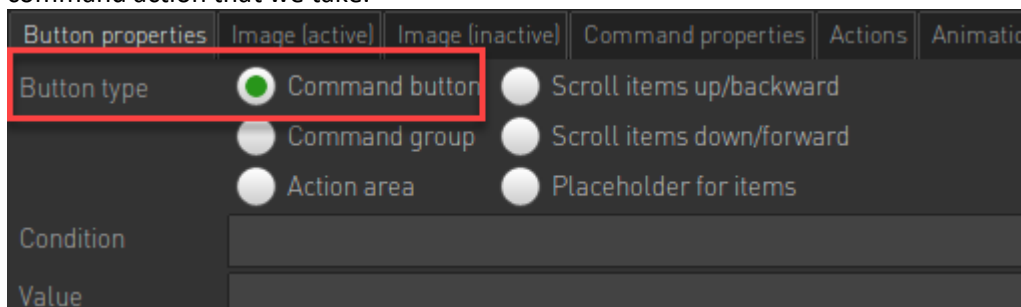
4. We will now create new buttons that represent each command that we will be using in this interface. Do this click on the green plus arrow.
5. Then name your first button 'WalkTo'



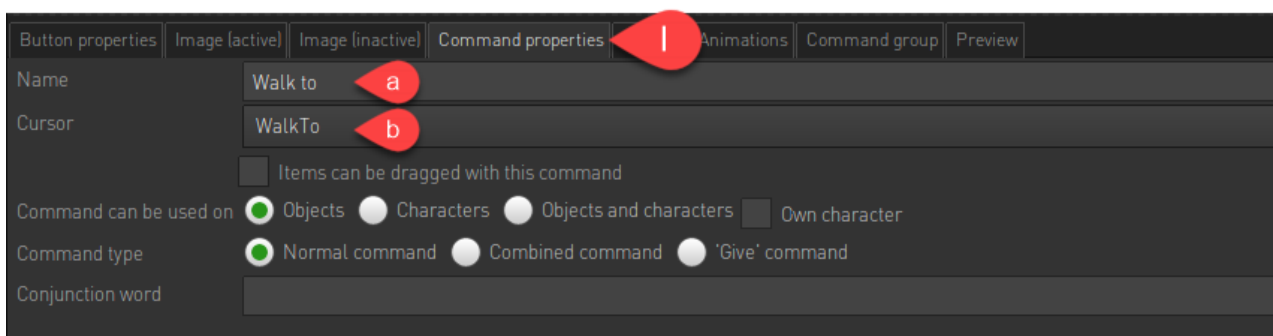
6. We now need to set two items for this to work
 - a. We need to set the Button Properties for our 'WalkTo' command
 - b. We also need to set the Command Properties for our 'WalkTo' command
 - c. This is all done in the property area.



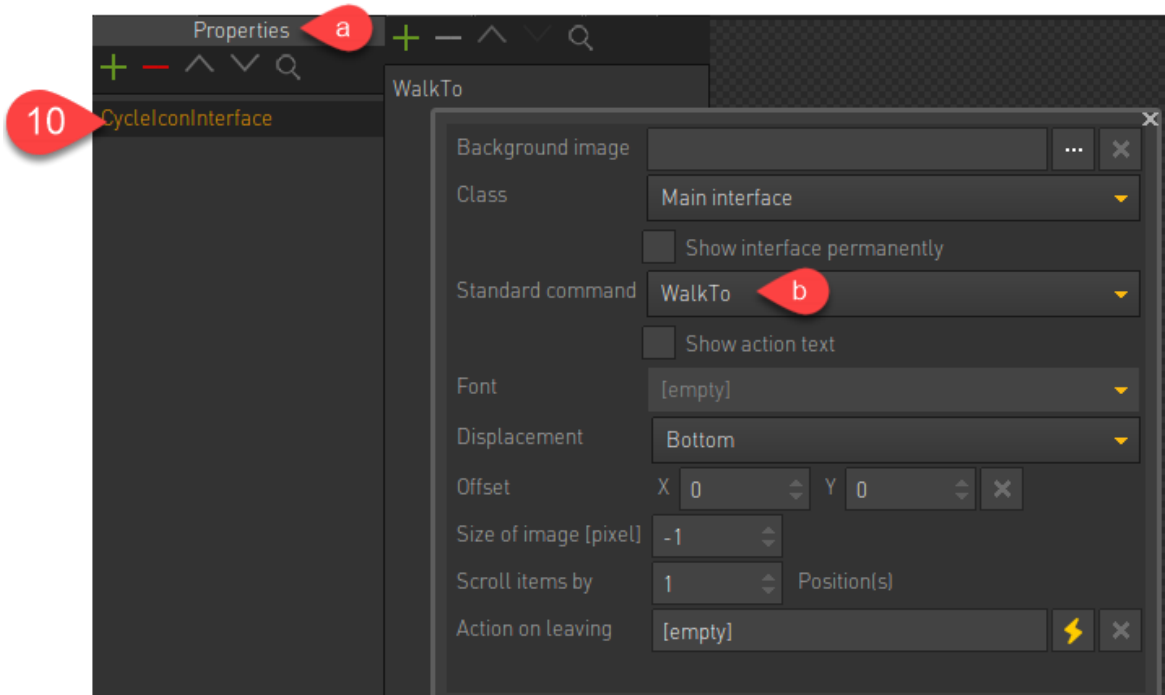
7. On Button Properties do the following. Set the Button Type to Command button as the WalkTo item is a command action that we take.



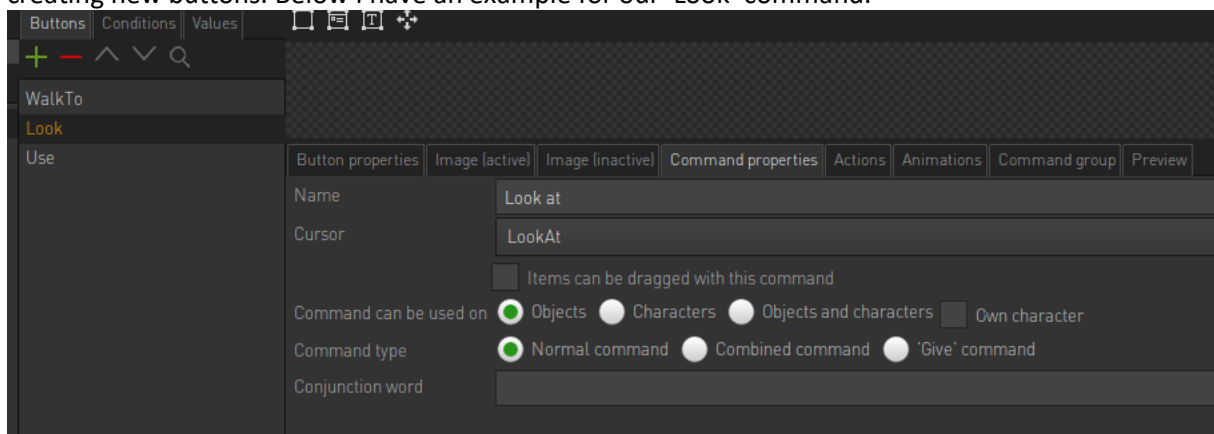
8. Now set the Command Properties. Click on Command Properties to access this area.
 - a. First enter a name for this interaction in the Name field.
 - b. Then choose the cursor to use in the Cursor dropdown area. Since we are creating a 'WalkTo' command I will use the 'WalkTo' cursor that I created in an earlier step.



9. We now need to set our Interface to use 'WalkTo' as the standard command. Do this by clicking on the properties button and then choose 'WalkTo' in the Standard Command dropdown (see image below). This we only need to do once for the standard command item.
 - a. Do this by selecting your interface and clicking on Properties.
 - b. In the new window that appears enter the WalkTo as your standard command.

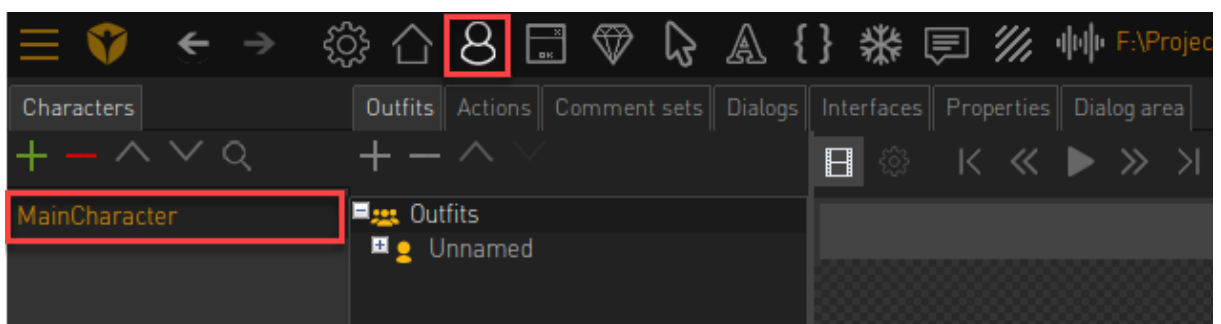


10. Now do the same process for all other command types you wish to use. **Note** that you do not need to set the Standard command for anything else (see above point). Also ensure to choose the appropriate Cursors when creating new buttons. Below I have an example for our 'Look' command.

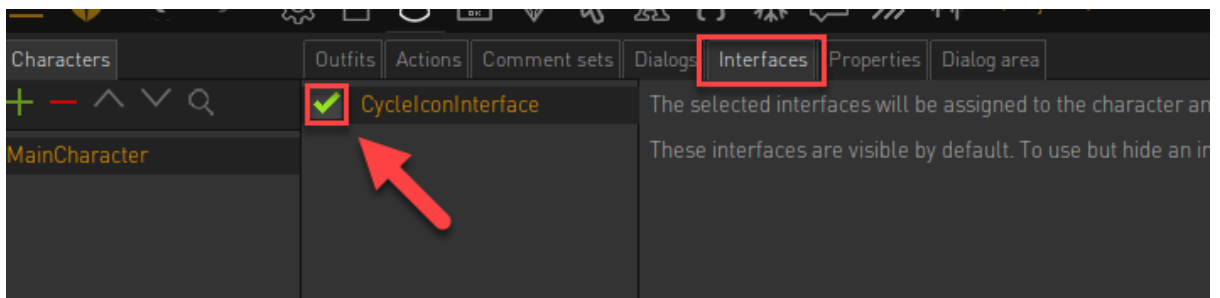


11. The last step is to assign our interface to our playable character.

a. Click on the character button to access that area and select your main character.



b. Then click on the interfaces tab and tick the interface you wish to assign.

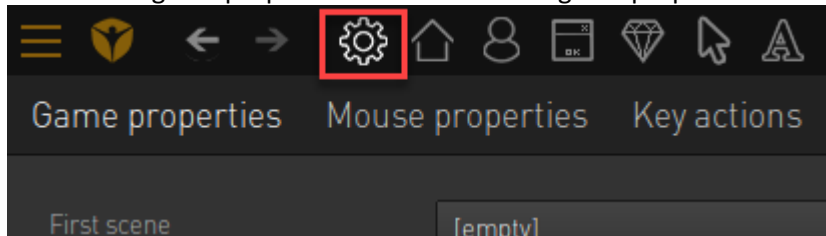


Step 7 – Game Properties

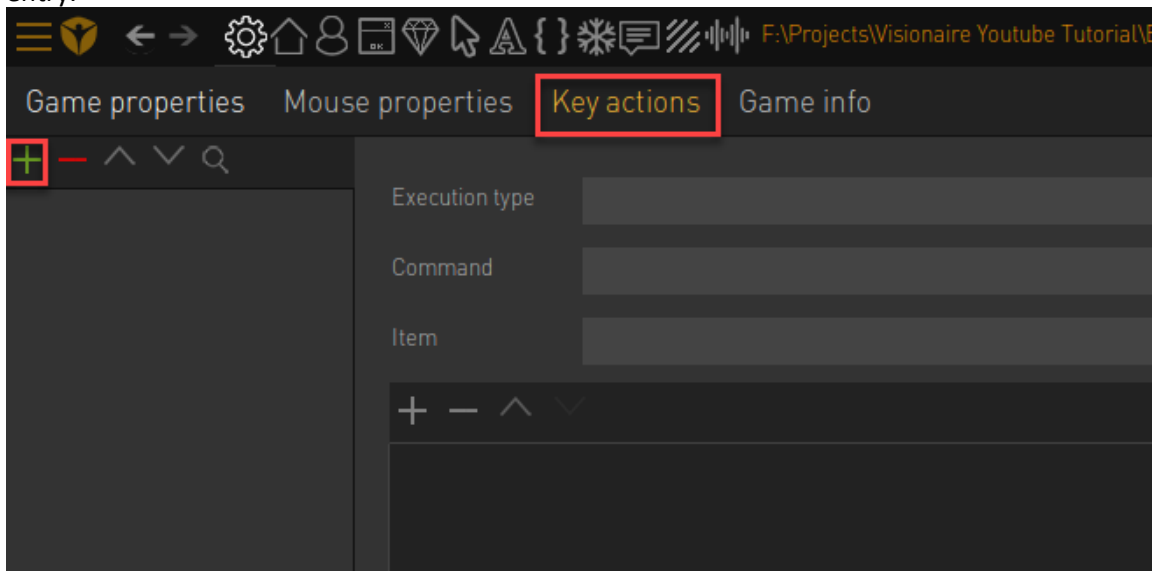
Setup basic game properties to enable proper functioning

We do have to spend time setting certain game properties. Examples of these is implementing a 'Quit' function, setting our first scene, our playable character and the resolution. We also need to set some interaction details related to how our mouse interacts with the scene.

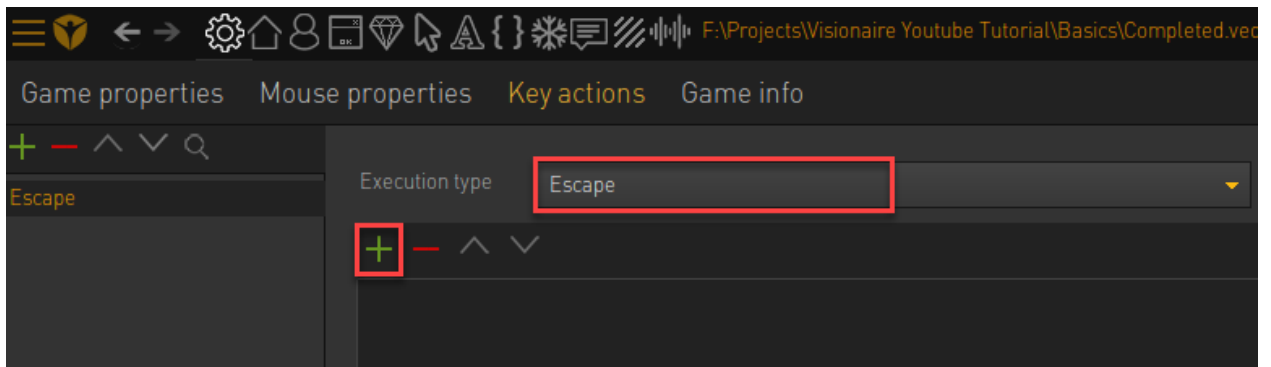
1. Click on the game properties button to access game properties.



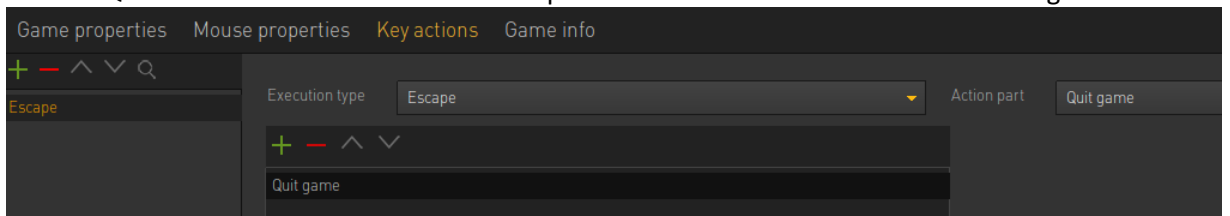
2. First we want to implement a Quit function. So when the user taps the ESC key the game will quit.
 - a. Do this by clicking on the Key Actions option and then click on the green plus icon to add a new entry.



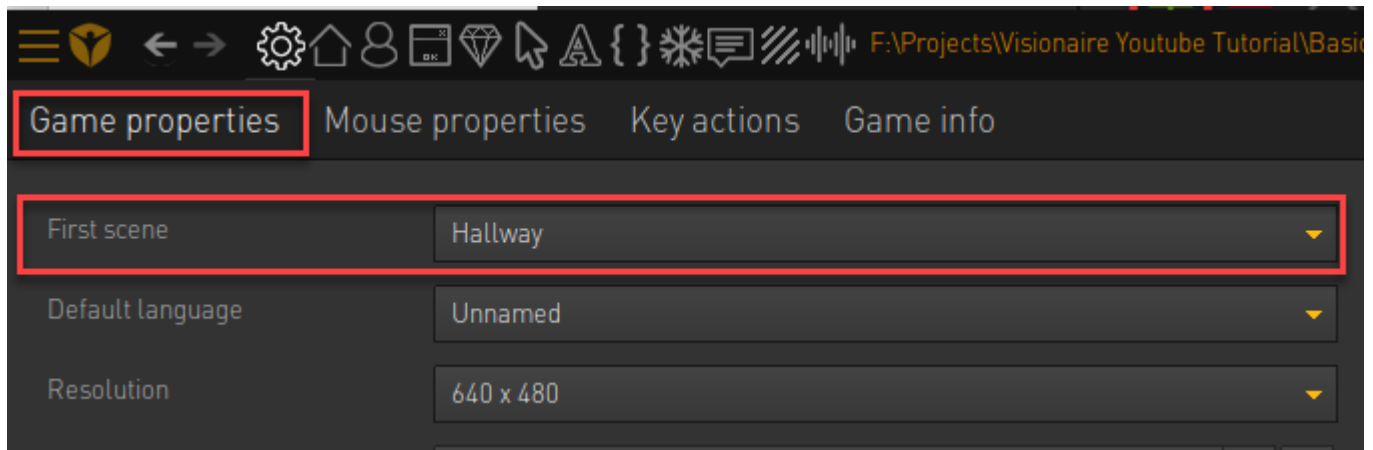
- b. In the new window that appears click on the Execution type dropdown and select Escape. Then click on the next green plus icon to set what happens when Escape is pressed.



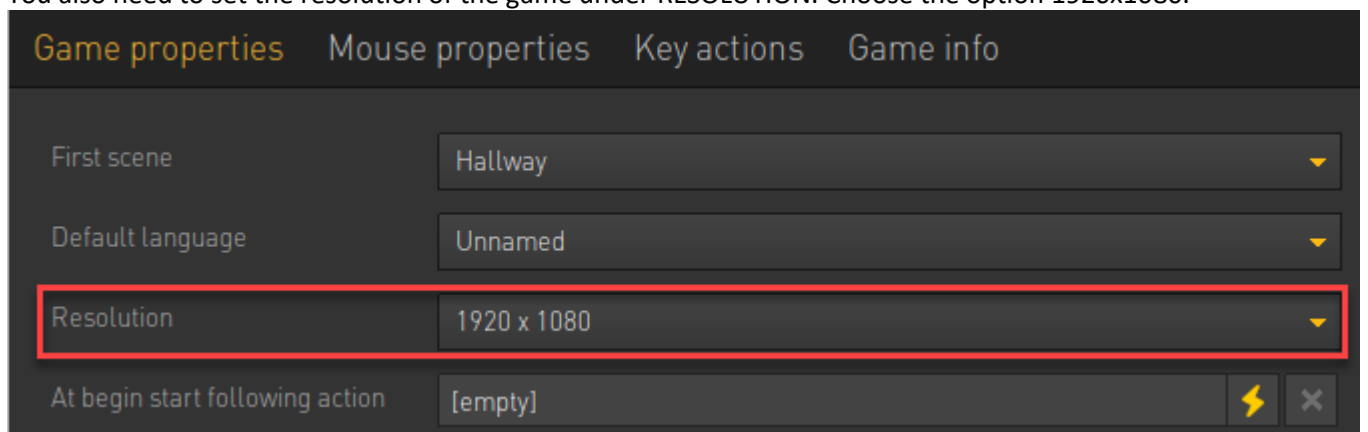
- c. Choose QUIT GAME in the **Miscellaneous** dropdown. Your screen should look something like this.



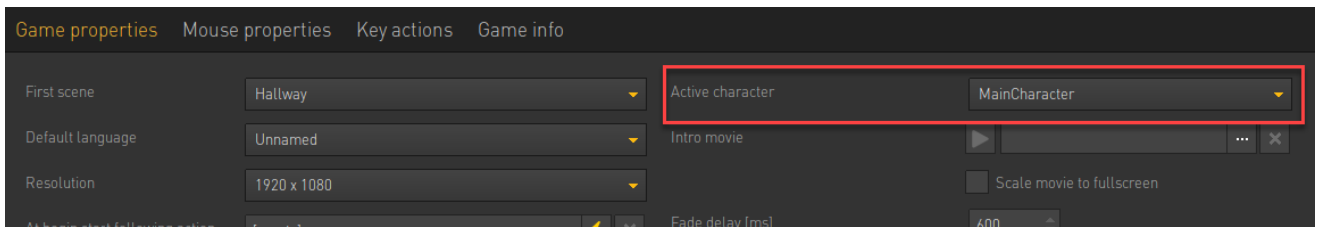
3. We also need to set the first scene that will load in our game. To do this click on Game Properties and choose the room in the First Scene dropdown.



4. You also need to set the resolution of the game under RESOLUTION. Choose the option 1920x1080.

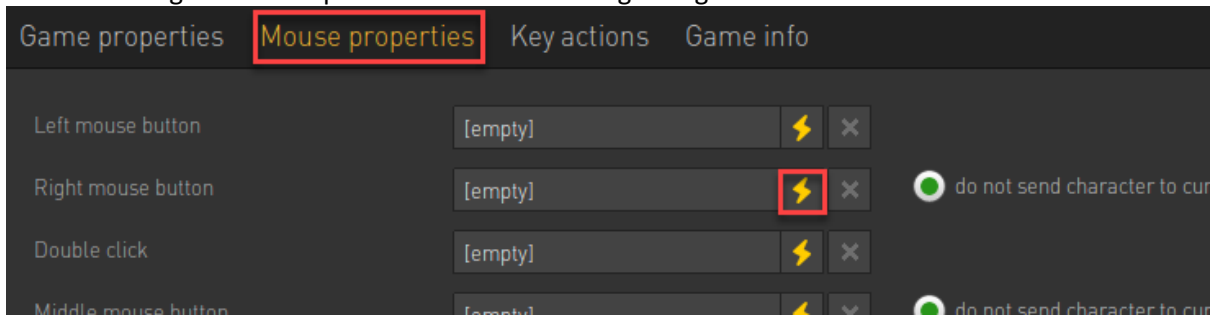


5. Next set the player character. Click on the Active Character dropdown and choose your character you created earlier.

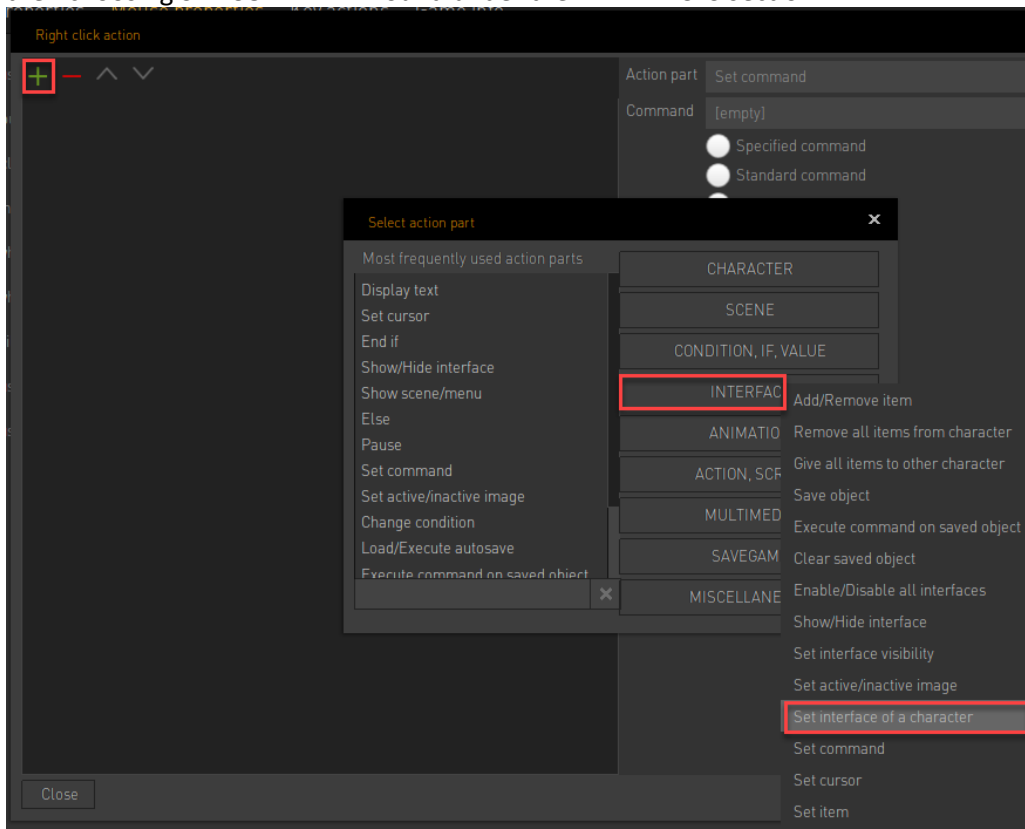


6. We do want to set one more item on the interface for that to work.

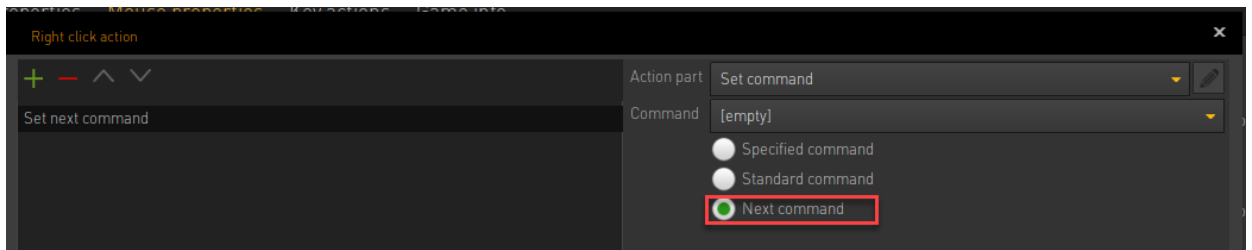
- a. Click on Mouse Properties
- b. Next to the Right Mouse Option click on the small lightning bolt icon.



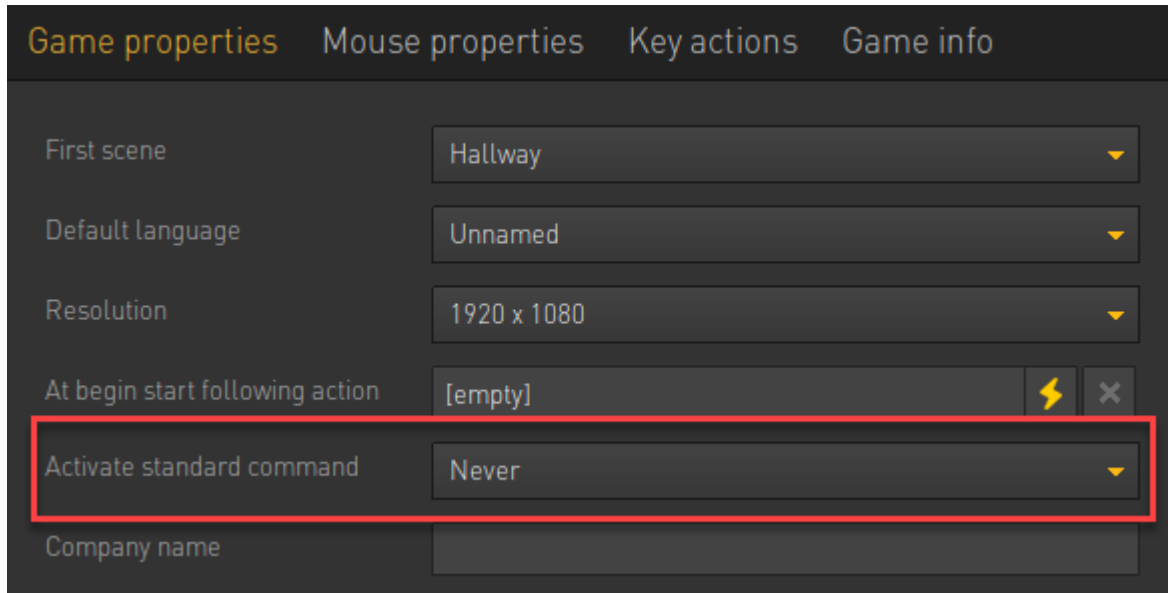
- c. In this new screen add a new SET COMMAND action part by clicking on the small green icon and then choosing SET COMMAND found under the INTERFACES section.



- d. Then in the command area choose NEXT COMMAND. This will then cycle through all the available commands (WalkTo, LookAt, Use).



- Note that if you want the cursor to not default back to the standard icon when an action has occurred, then ensure to choose NEVER in the ACTIVATE STANDARD COMMAND under the Game Properties option.

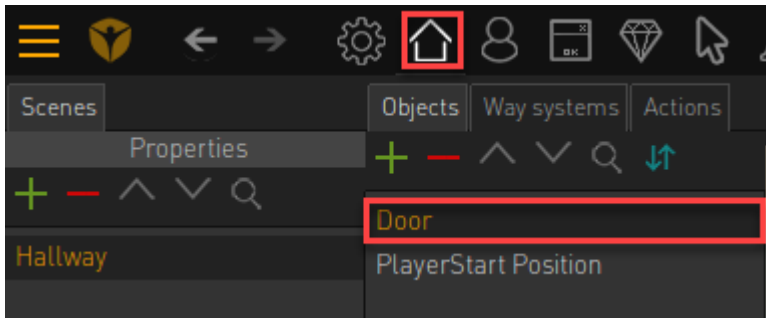


Step 8 – Add Interaction

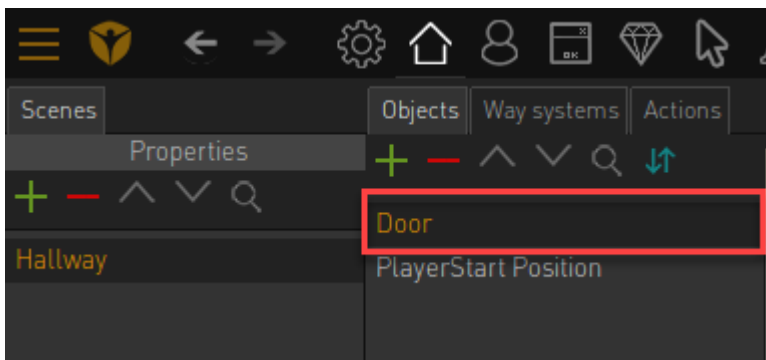
Add setup to enable interaction between our character, hotspots via our user interface.

Our last item is to set any interactions that we might want to have happen. This includes changing our interact icon when over a hotspot, setting player text, playing animation etc.

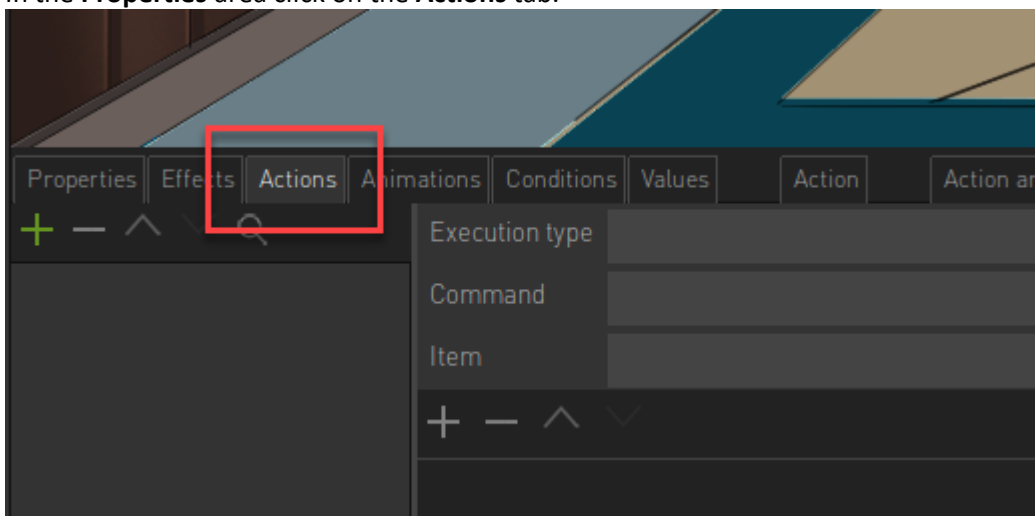
1. All interactions are setup in our scene area on objects that we create. Click on the SCENE area to access it. Here we already have a door object created in step 2 with our interaction border already created.



2. We now need to set how the icon will behave when our mouse moves over the door. Ensure to have the Door object selected.

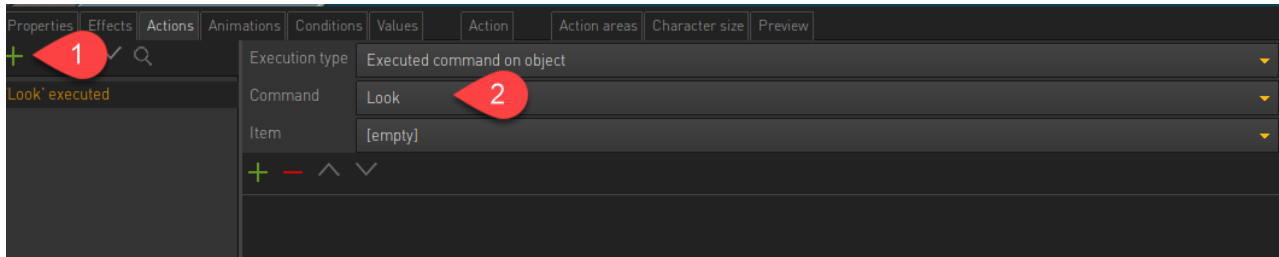


3. In the **Properties** area click on the **Actions** tab.

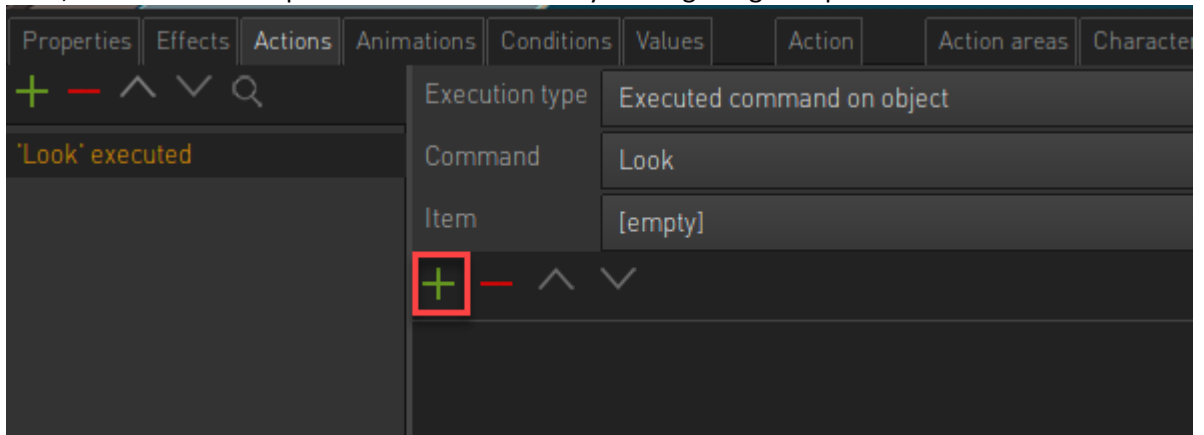


4. To add an interaction we need to define what happens when a certain command is run.
 - a. First add a new Action by clicking the green plus icon.

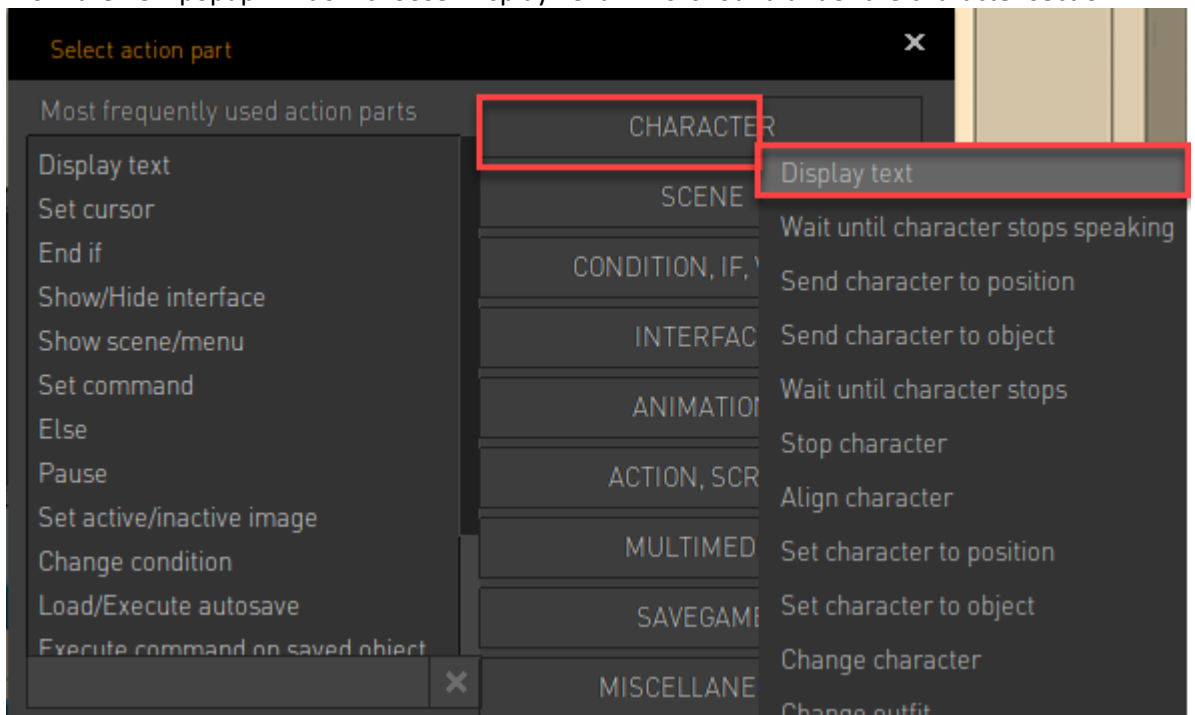
- b. Then set the Command to the command that is relevant. We will use 'LookAt' for now.



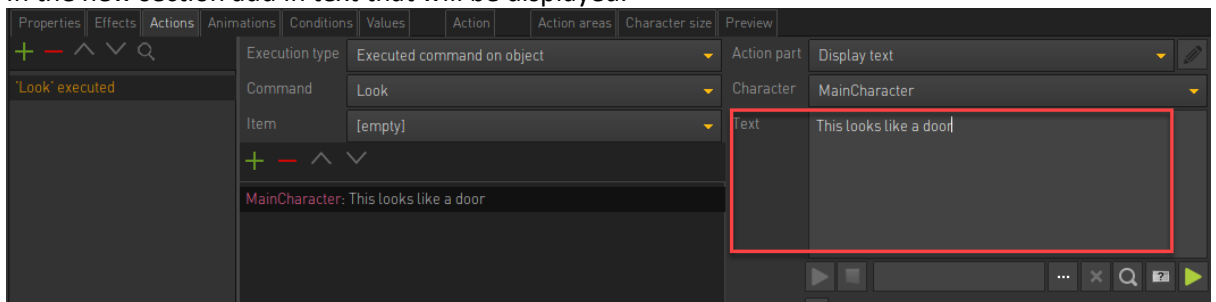
- c. Next, add a new action part in the bottom area by clicking the green plus icon.



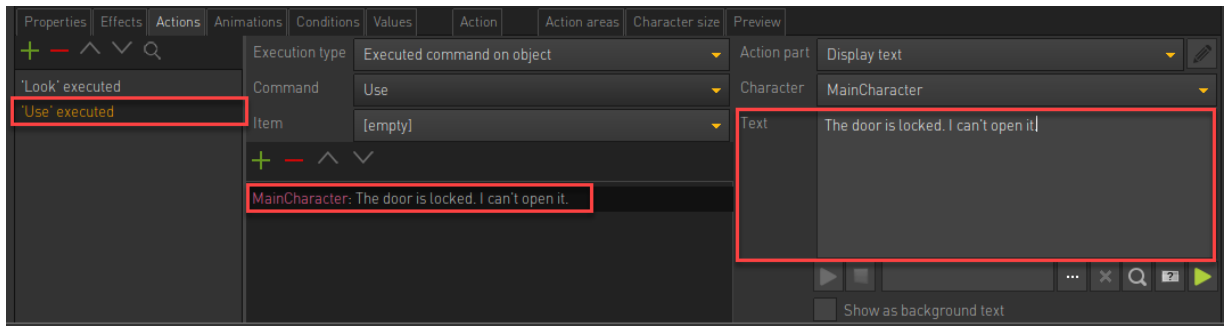
- d. From the new popup window choose 'Display Text'. This is found under the character section.



- e. In the new section add in text that will be displayed.



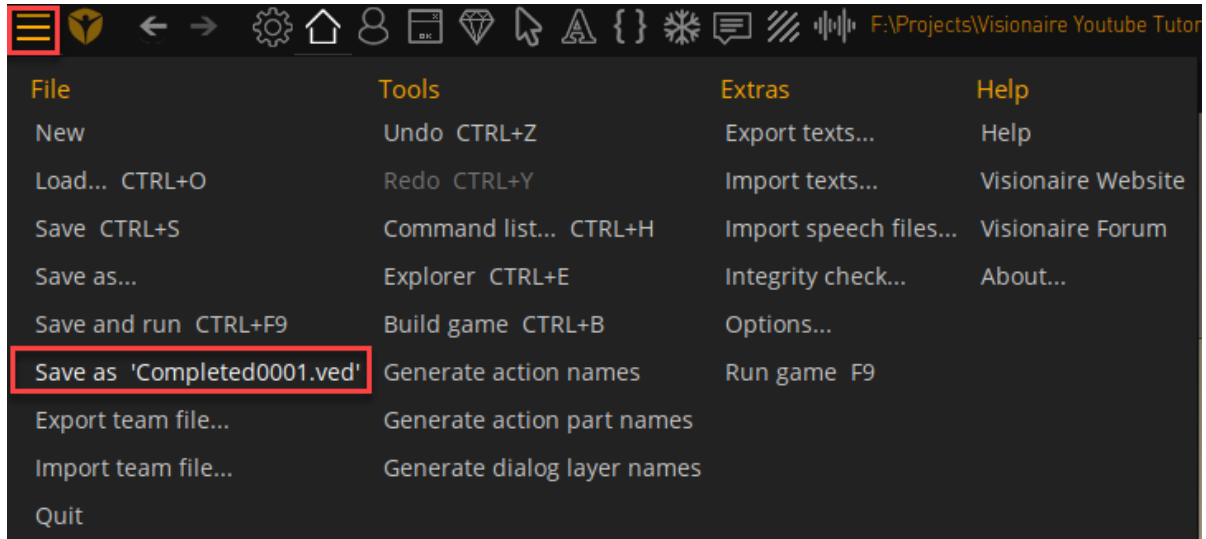
f. Do the same for any other commands that you wish to have. Example below for the USE command.



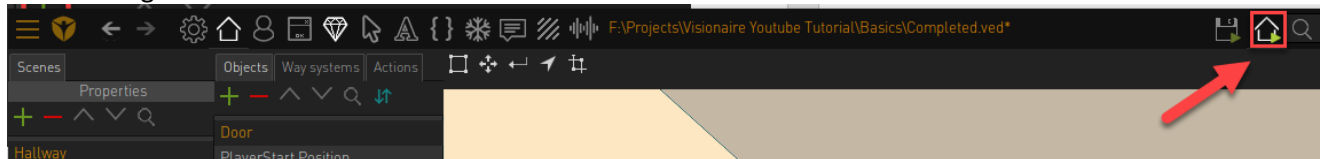
Step 9 – Save and run your game

At this step we are finished with our game and it's now ready to test.

1. The last step is to actually save and run your game.
2. Note that it's always a good idea to increment your saves. In the main menu dropdown there is an increment save option so always try and use this if possible.



3. To run this game click on the SAVE AND RUN button.



4. Your game should then run