

SCRATCHES

Troubleshooting Guide

Revision 1.0

1.1 Getting started

Please, before consulting the following guide, make sure that all your device drivers are properly updated! This might sound very annoying but an important number of problems reported can be always solved with a proper update of drivers. Most specifically, your video card and sound card should be always using the latest driver provided by the manufacturer.

Note: While it is rare, there have been a small number of cases when actually switching to a previous set of drivers can solve a problem. We have only detected this with video cards and especially of the nVidia brand. If you happen to be running the latest set of drivers, and the game refuses to load or you are experiencing some severe graphical glitches, switching to a previous generation of drivers may be a good solution.

1.2 Game is not loading!

This can be caused by a number of reasons but the most common problem is failure to detect the sound card. Next we will explain how to override the sound device to bypass the detection process.

Go to the folder where *Scratches* have been installed and open the file *scream.cfg* with any text editor. There should be a line such as the following near the end of the file^(*):

```
AUDIO_DEVICE      0
```

You can try the following settings – simply edit the number and save the file:

```
AUDIO_DEVICE      1
```

or

```
AUDIO_DEVICE      2
```

For further advanced options please consult the section **1.4** (*Sound card problems*)

^(*) The first German edition of *Scratches* does not support this option and needs to be patched.

1.3 Game still refuses to load!

There are a number of things that can be tried and test the source of the problem. In all the following suggestions you have to go to the folder where *Scratches* have been installed and open the file *scream.cfg* with any text editor.

1.1.1 Override the bit depth

Scratches will automatically try to choose the best bit depth (number of colors) available. While this is very unlikely, overriding it may still bring a potential solution. Lookup the line:

```
DEPTH      0
```

And try:

```
DEPTH      -1
```

This should use the exact same depth being currently used by your desktop. Values 16, 24 and 32 may be also tried if the problem persists.

1.1.2 Override the refresh rate

Similarly as above, *Scratches* will automatically try to choose the best refresh rate (screen update period) available for your monitor. While this is very unlikely, overriding it may still bring a potential solution. Lookup the line:

```
RATE       0
```

And try the lowest possible one:

```
RATE       60
```

Warning: do not try anything higher unless you are certain that your monitor supports it!

1.1.3 Disable vertical sync

Vertical sync is enabled by default. This could cause problems with some video cards. Lookup the line:

```
VSYNC      1
```

And try:

```
VSYNC      0
```

1.1.4 Disable full screen

The last thing we can try while this is not the recommended way to play the game. Note that changing this option will render all of the above obsolete. Lookup the line:

```
FULLSCREEN      1
```

And change it to:

```
FULLSCREEN      0
```

1.4 Sound card problems

In section **1.2** we discussed a way of overriding the audio device to be used by the game. Note that by “audio device” we are referring to internal devices of your sound card. You may have only one sound card present in your system and still need to change this option. To have a look at the list of available devices present in your system, edit the *scream.cfg* file and lookup the following option:

```
LOG             0
```

And change it to:

```
LOG             1
```

Now try starting the game and a file named *scream.log* will be produced. Edit it with any text editor and near the very beginning you should see something like this:

```
[Wed Feb 8 17:03:24 2006]---> [AUDIO] Enumerating devices...
[Wed Feb 8 17:03:24 2006]---> [AUDIO] 0. NULL
[Wed Feb 8 17:03:24 2006]---> [AUDIO] 1. Generic Hardware
[Wed Feb 8 17:03:24 2006]---> [AUDIO] 2. Generic Software
[Wed Feb 8 17:03:24 2006]---> [AUDIO] Opening device Generic Hardware...
[Wed Feb 8 17:03:24 2006]---> [AUDIO] Creating context...
[Wed Feb 8 17:03:24 2006]---> [AUDIO] Setting context...
[Wed Feb 8 17:03:25 2006]---> [AUDIO] Done!
```

This usually happens in the 8th. line of the file. Note the devices being enumerated – they can be all tried by changing the AUDIO_DEVICE parameter of the *scream.cfg* file. At least three devices are always shown:

```
AUDIO_DEVICE    0
```

This will try to auto-detect the best device.

```
AUDIO_DEVICE    1
```

This will try load the hardware device, meaning that it will try to provide hardware acceleration to all sounds. Note that this setting may be necessary to properly enjoy surround sound. This setting has been known to be incompatible with some systems.

```
AUDIO_DEVICE    2
```

This will try to load the software device. If all else fails, this should be the most compatible setting.

You may have many more devices depending on your system. Please, consult the section **1.6** (*No sound*) for further options.

1.5 Sound glitches

If the audio while playing the game sounds garbled or the music suddenly stops, you may try to change some settings. Edit the *scream.cfg* file and look up the following items:

```
BUFFER_SIZE      32768
NUM_BUFFERS     4
```

You can first try changing `BUFFER_SIZE` to a higher or lesser value. We suggest to always add or subtract a value of 8192. Example: $32768 + 8192 = 40960$, so you should change the line to:

```
BUFFER_SIZE      40960
```

There is no way to come up with a suitable setting for your system if you are experiencing these issues other than trying to calibrate it. You should not ever need to go lower than 8192 or higher than 65536.

Changing the `NUM_BUFFERS` setting is less recommended. The admitted values are on the range of 2 and 7. Trying any other value will result in failure to load.

1.6 No sound during the game

Please refer to section **1.2** if you are having this problem. If you have two sound cards present in your system, you may need to disable one of them.

As a last resort, you may try changing the audio drivers being used by the game. This has been known to solve some rare problems. To do this, you have to download the following file from the Nucleosys server:

<http://www.nucleosys.com/files/OAL-1.1-beta.zip>

Go to your *Scratches* folder and rename the following files:

```
OpenAL32.dll      —>  OpenAL32.bak
wrap_oal.dll      —>  wrap_oal.bak
```

And then unzip the contents of *OAL-1.1-beta.zip* inside the folder.

To roll back the changes, either reinstall the game or delete both `OpenAL32.dll` and `wrap_oal.dll` and then rename the `*.bak` ones to `*.dll`.

1.7 Scratches on Hyperthreaded systems

There have been occasional crashes reported when the game is running on Intel CPUs with Hyperthread technology. There is sadly no good solution to this as of date other than trying to disable the Hyperthread option via the computer BIOS, although this is not recommended as it will result in an overall slower performance. We are currently working on a clean solution to this problem.