

Modding The Banner Saga

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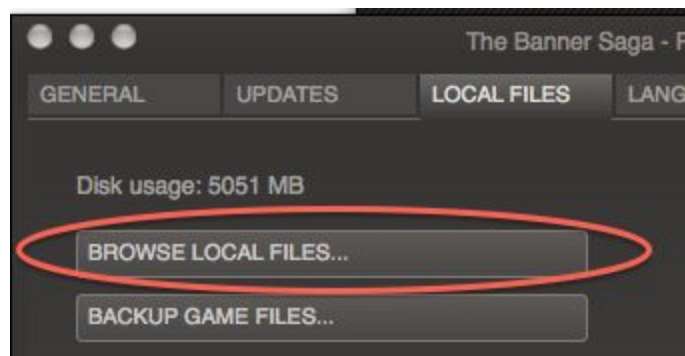
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Welcome to the early stages of modding The Banner Saga. Together, over time, we will enhance the features allowing you to create your own stories, battles, and anything you can imagine!

Definitions

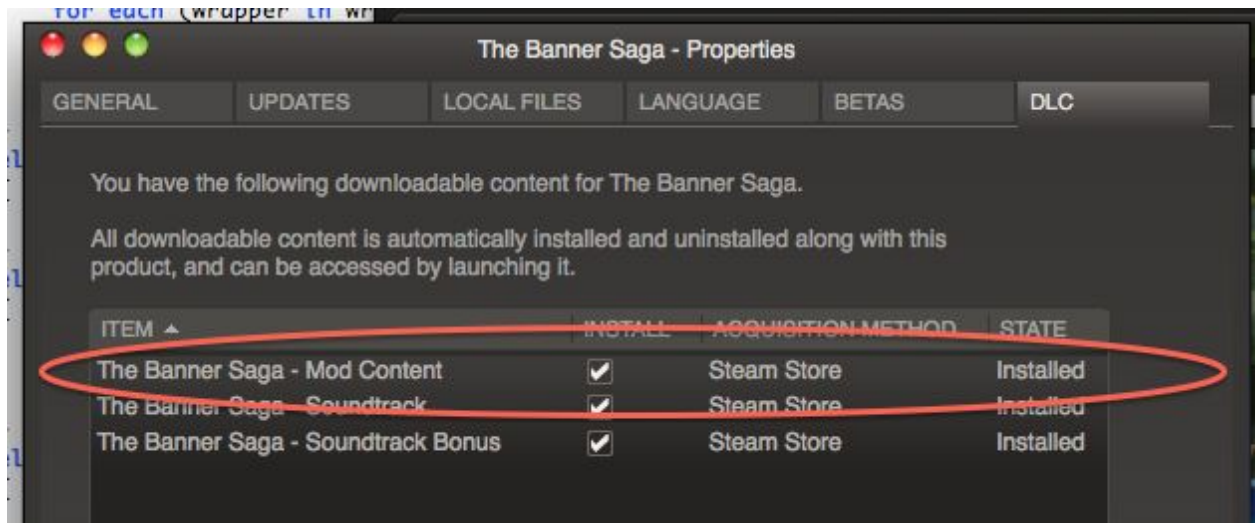
Installed Game, Unmodified Game

The Official copy of the game delivered by Stoic. You can find the location of your Installed Game via the Steam LIBRARY->Properties->LOCAL FILES->BROWSE LOCAL FILES... menu:



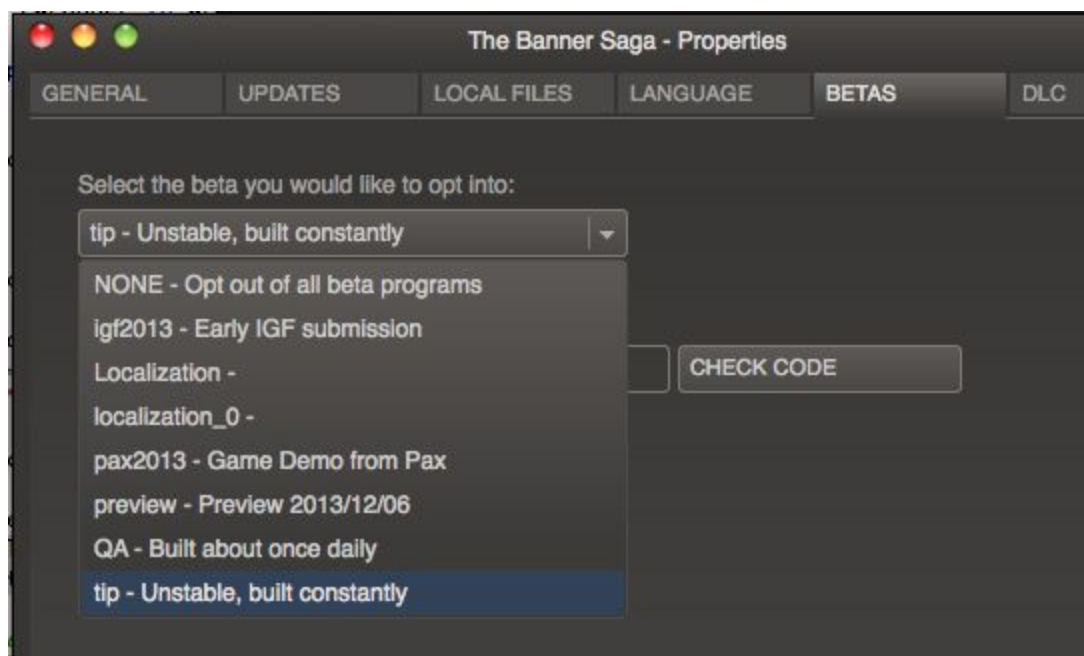
Assets Source, Assets-Src

The uncompiled source assets that are used to create the game. These include JSON files, PNG image files, FLA and SWF Flash animation files, and more. These are delivered via the “Mod Content” free DLC.



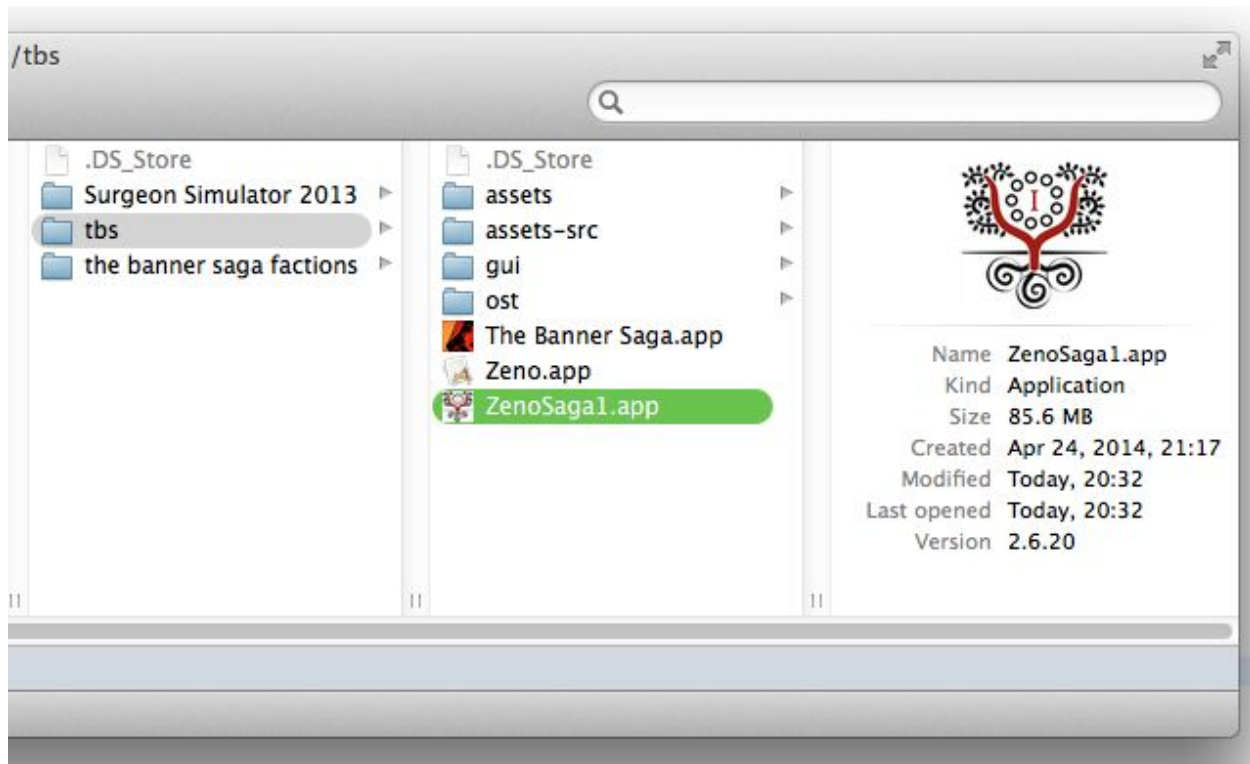
Beta Branches

The game is updated on several branches. New branches are created for public Beta tests such as the ‘localization’ beta. The ‘default’ or ‘NONE’ branch is the only branch that is always public. Other branches come and go. Internally, we build ‘tip’ constantly throughout every day. We build ‘qa’ when the time comes for formal QA testing. To change branches, see the ‘BETAS’ tab of the properties panel:



Zeno

The editor used by Stoic to create the game. It is delivered alongside the game via Steam. If you navigate to the “Installed Game” folder mentioned above, you will see it beside the game executable:



Getting Started

Install TBS

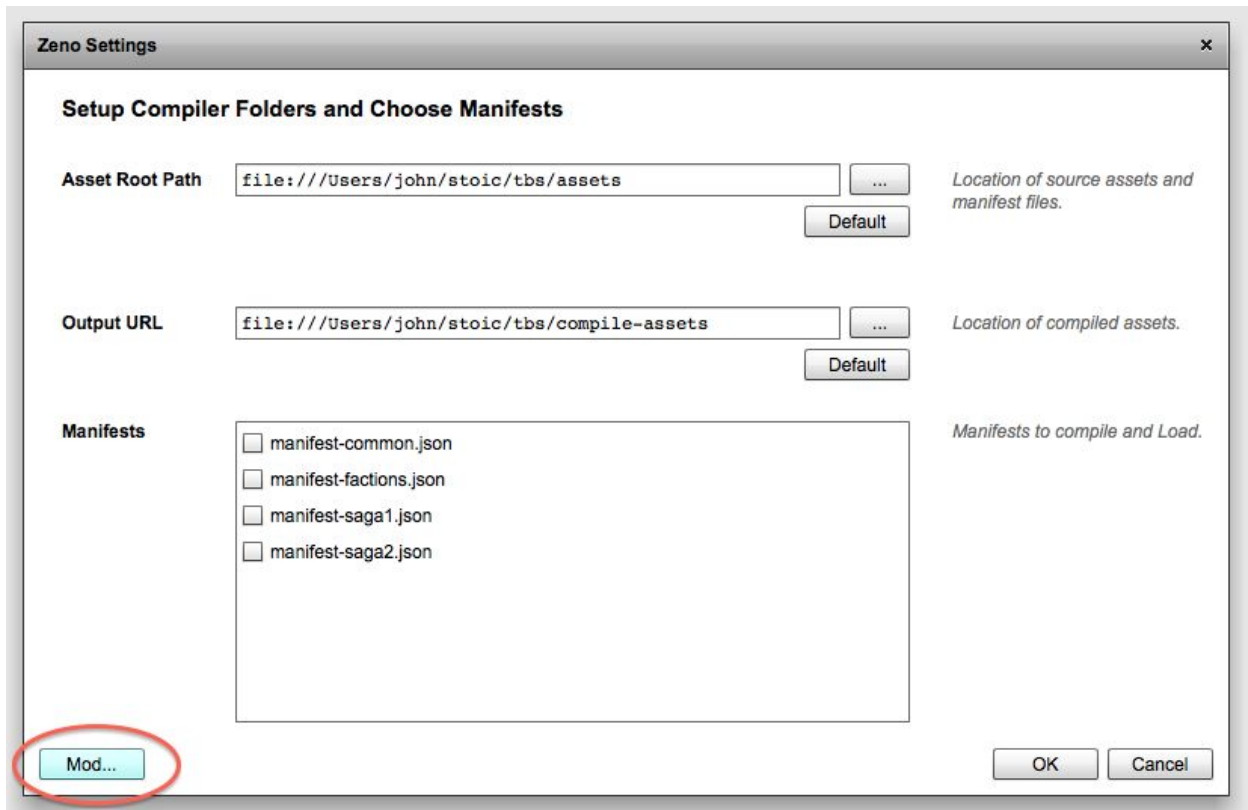
Set the game to any desired BETA branch, if applicable.

Install the TBS - Mod Content DLC

as described above.

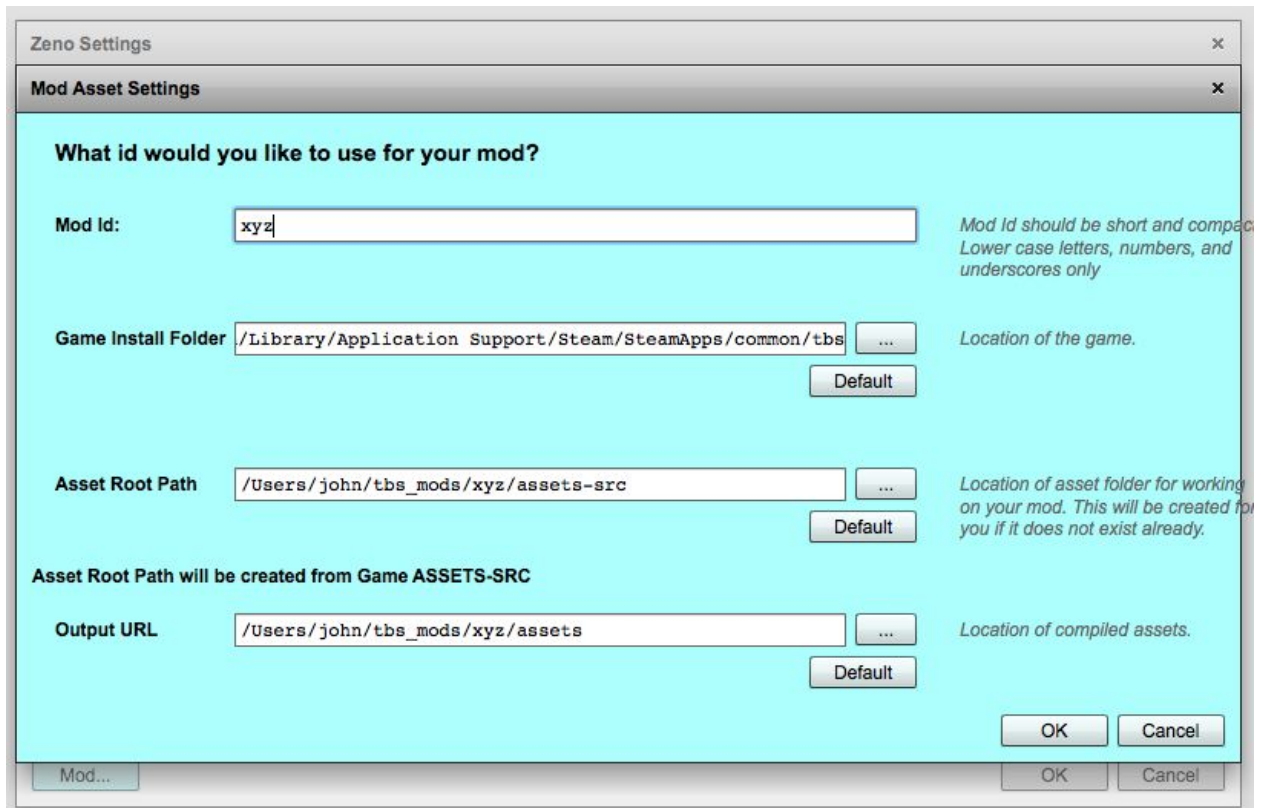
Run Zeno

When Zeno starts, it will prompt you for information about where the source assets reside, and where Zeno should compile the output for the game to load. Press the “Mod...” button.

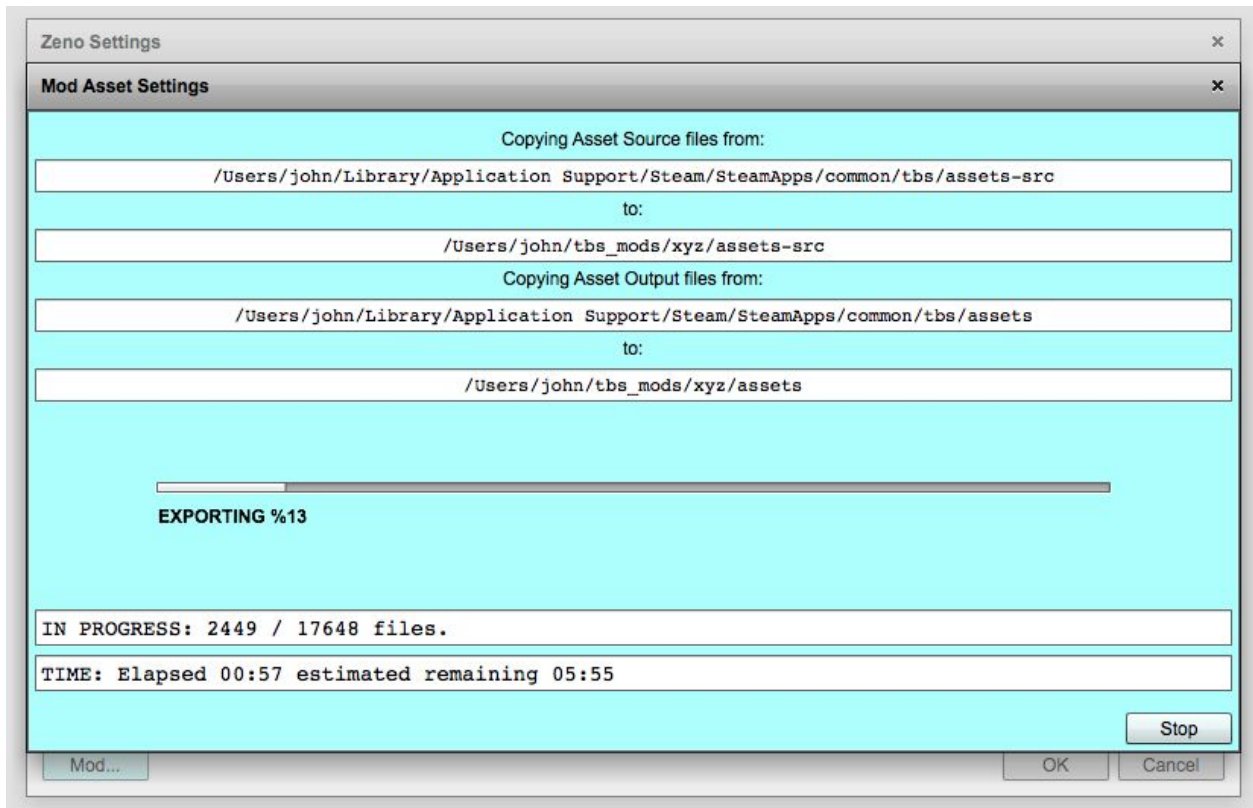


The Mod Asset Settings window appears. First, enter your 'Mod Id'. In the example below, the 'Mod Id' is "xyz". The window attempts to figure out where your unmodified game is installed, and fills that into the "Game Install Folder" for you. If it cannot, you can set it manually.

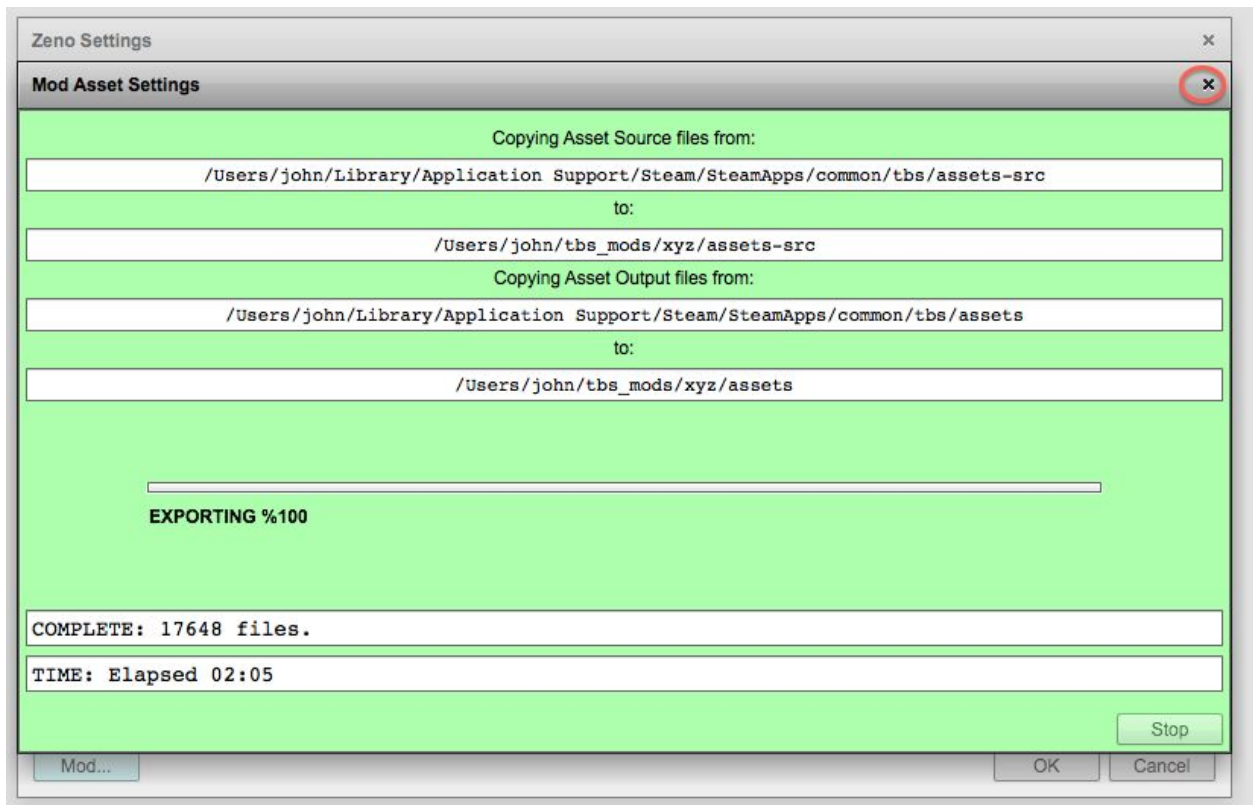
The window also automatically fills out your "Asset Root Path" and "Output URL" to something appropriate. You are free to change these, but encouraged to use the defaults.



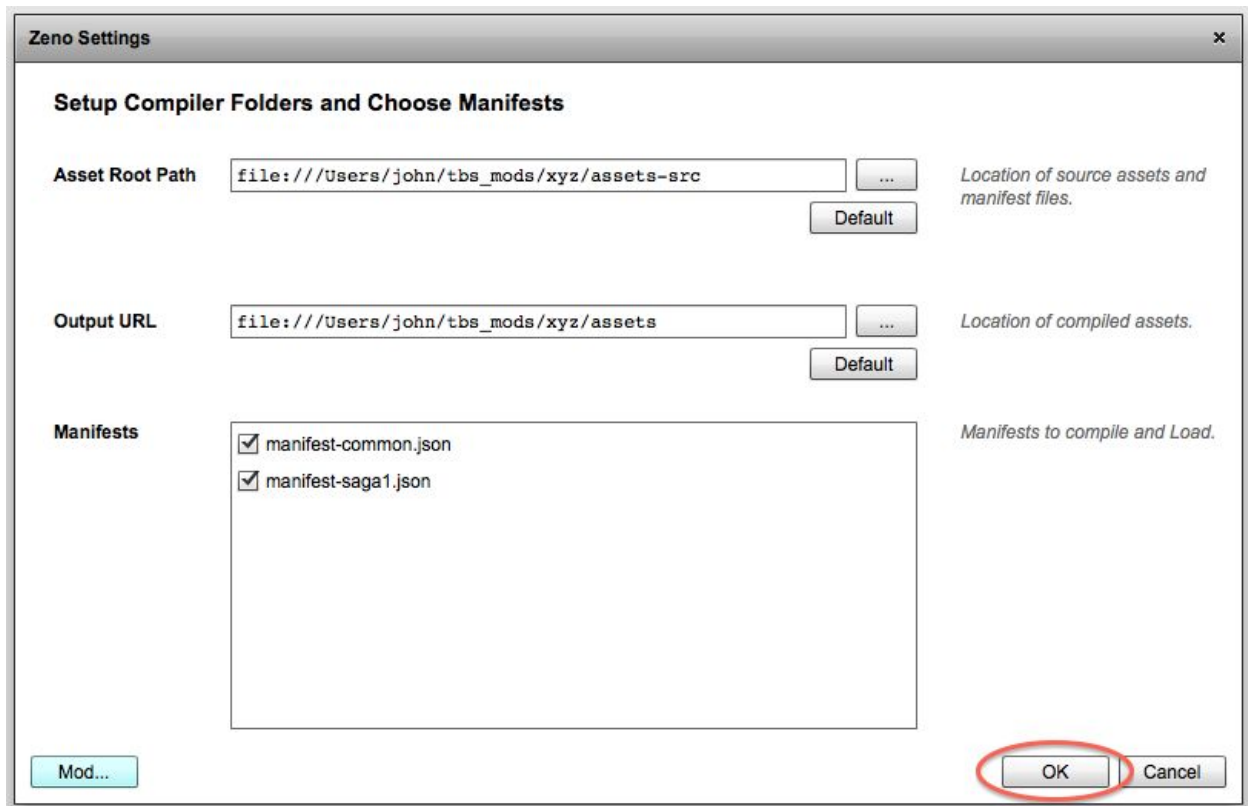
Once you hit the 'OK' button, a lengthy preparation process ensues. What this process is doing is copying the source and compiled assets to your local work area so that you can work without fear of game updates overwriting your local changes. This copy is also important later, when we compare your changes to the game assets so that your mod doesn't need to include the entire game with it when you share it with others.



When the preparation process completes, you will see a green screen as shown below. All the file paths used in the system are shown in the white text boxes. Click the 'x' button to continue.

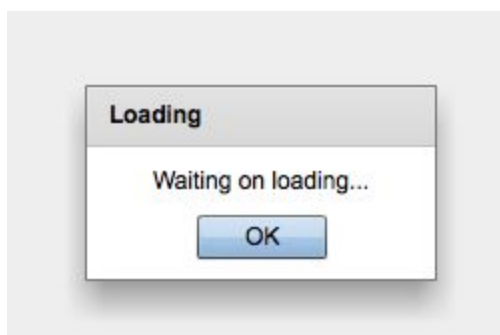


You should now see the "Zeno Settings" window with your local mod folders filled in for you:



Hit “OK”. Zeno now runs the compilation process on your “Asset Root Path”, delivering the compiled assets to the “Output URL”. It is smart enough to know what files actually need to be recompiled, so the process should be very quick.

NOTE: When the compiler runs, a “Loading” dialog appears for the duration. There is currently a bug that prevents the “Loading” dialog from vanishing. You can safely dismiss it:



Modify the Assets

Once you have compiled your assets, you can use Zeno to modify almost every aspect of the game. There some exceptions, such as Abilities. A detailed description of how to use Zeno resides elsewhere (TBD).

Run the Game

When you want to run the game to test your changes, you must tell it how to find your updated assets. This is done with the “-assets” command line option. The assets location is the same as the “Output URL” described in the “Zeno Settings”. In the example above, you would add the following to your command line options:

```
-assets file:///Users/john/tbs_mods/xyz/assets
```

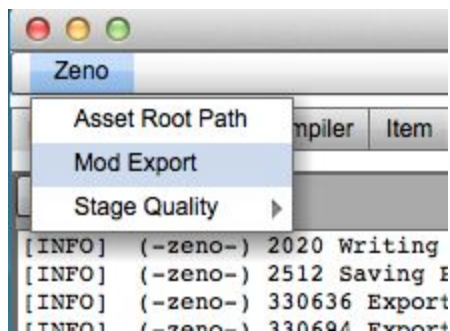
Details about how to work with the game command line, and developer mode, are here:

[TBS Developer Cheatsheet](#)

Export the Mod

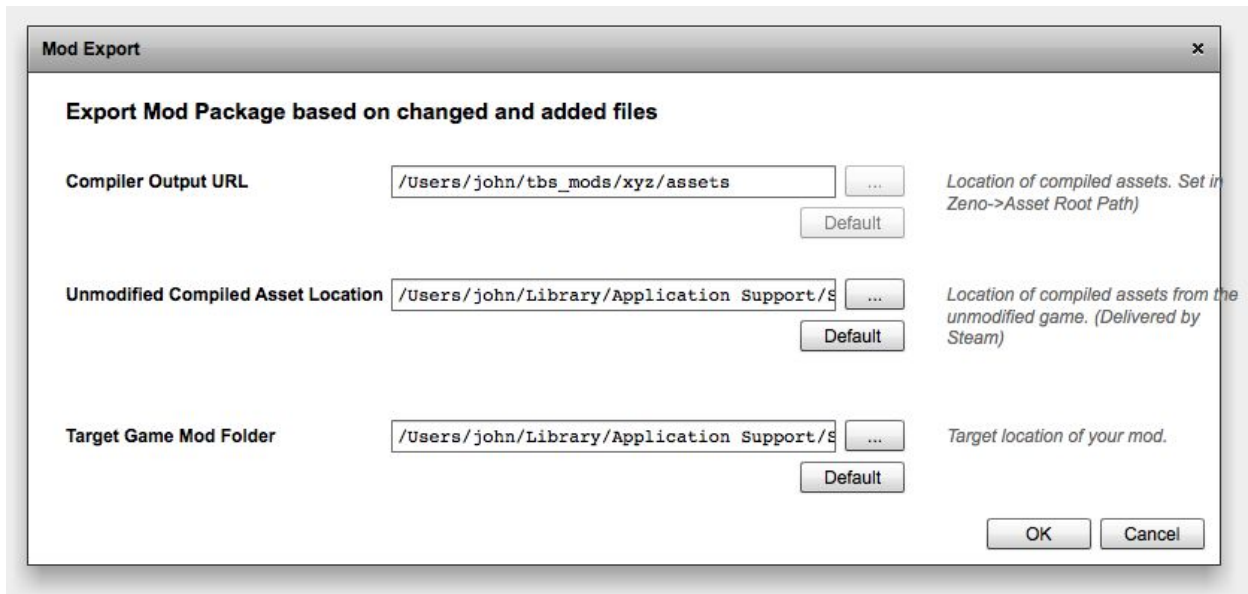
Once you are satisfied with your changes, and wish to export the mod for other people to consume, you use Zeno to create a minimal set of files necessary to represent your mod.

Open the Mod Export Menu



Use the “Mod Export” Window

The Mod Export Window should be filled with your current settings. Take special note of the “Target Game Mod Folder”. This is where the mod files will be exported:



By default, the game will look for its mods in the “Game Install” folder, in a subdirectory named “mod”.

Run the Mod

To use the mod, you need to tell the game from where to load it. This is done with the “-mods” command line option. By default, the game looks for a subfolder in the “Game Install Folder”, called “mods”, and then each mod has a named subfolder inside there.

In the example above, my “Target Game Mod Folder” was

```
/Users/john/Library/Application  
Support/Steam/SteamApps/common/tbs/mod/xyz
```

To run this mod, I simply add the following command line options:

```
-mods xyz
```

If the mod lived in some other location, I could also specify the location of the mods with “-mod_root” like so:

```
-mods xyz -mod_root  
/Users/john/Library/Application%20Support/Steam/SteamApps/common/tbs/  
mod/xyz
```

Note that I have replaced the space character with the URL encoding %20. Spaces in filenames are anathema to programs.

Share the Mod

To share your mod, simply zip up your mod folder, in the example above this would be:

```
/Users/john/Library/Application  
Support/Steam/SteamApps/common/tbs/mod/xyz
```

You can send the zip file to people, with instructions on how to unpack and use it.