

Gerri Broman's
Simple Guide to
Creating Symbol Catalogs from .png Images
For CC3.

Thanks to Ralf for his explanations on setting file paths.
Some portions of this Guide are taken directly from the
CC3 Help files and are the property of Pro Fantasy.

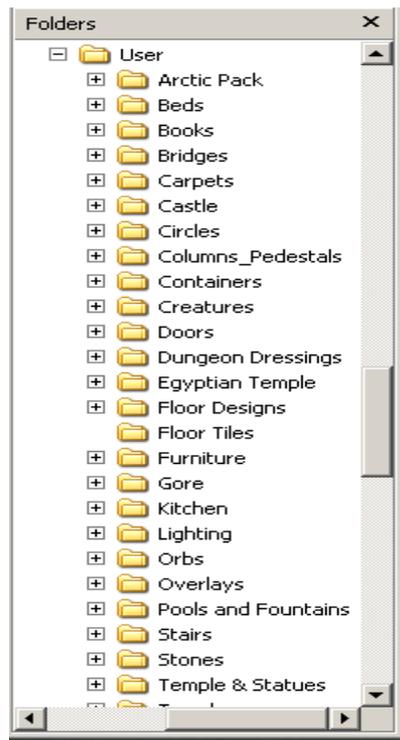
STEP 1: Setting up for File Storage

The first step in creating your own Symbol Catalogs is to decide where you want to store them on your hard drive and then creating the directory structure needed to keep things organized.

Remember:

- You must store both the Catalog file as well as the .png files.
- You will want to keep the Catalog Drawing File for future additions to the catalog.
- The png files will have to stay where they were located when the catalog was created.

I suggest creating Folders under CC3>Symbols>User, one for each Catalog Category that you will be creating. The pngs would then go into these folders. So you might have a directory structure that looks like this:

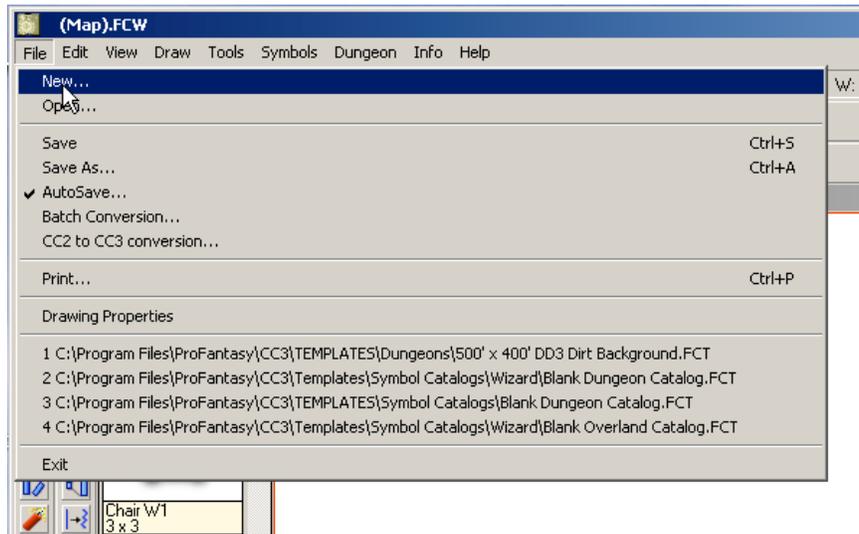


Make as many Category folders as you would like. The more categories you have set up to store your pngs, and the more descriptive the Folder Names are, the easier it will be to remember which catalog your symbols are in. You can always expand your Folders, but when you find a good .png while surfing the web, it is quite handy to have a folder already set up to just save it into. These folders are also where you will save your catalog file and your Catalog Drawing file. This way, all files for that symbol catalog (.png, .fsc, .fcw) will be stored in the same folder.

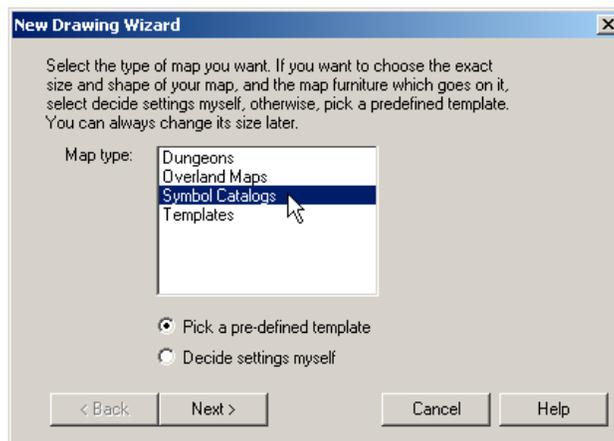
Once you have the .pngs sorted into their folders, you are ready to turn them into CC3 catalogs.

Step 2: Creating the Catalog Drawing File

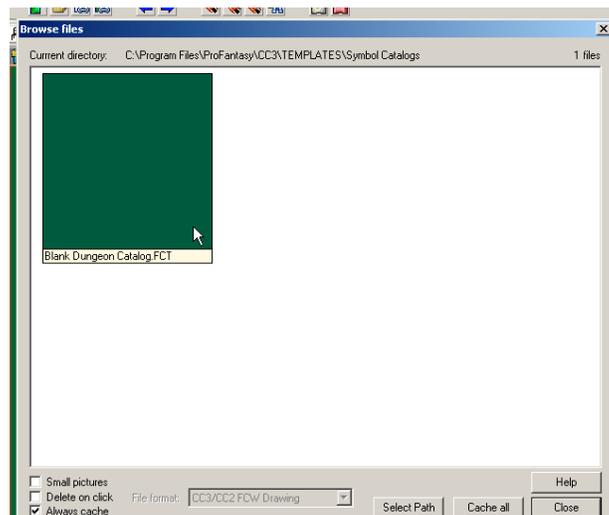
Begin by starting a new drawing in CC3.



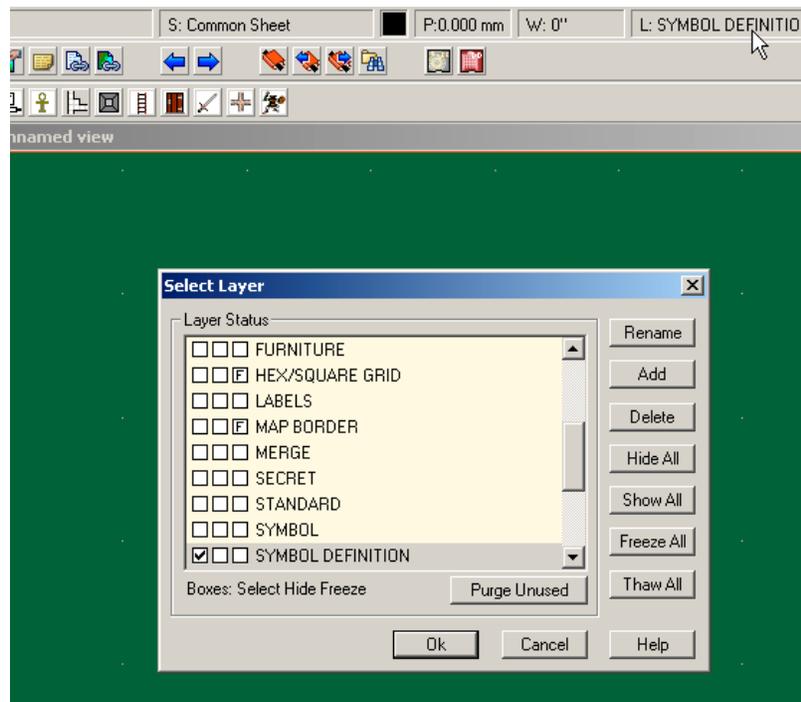
Choose Symbol Catalogs for your Map type and Pick a pre-defined template.



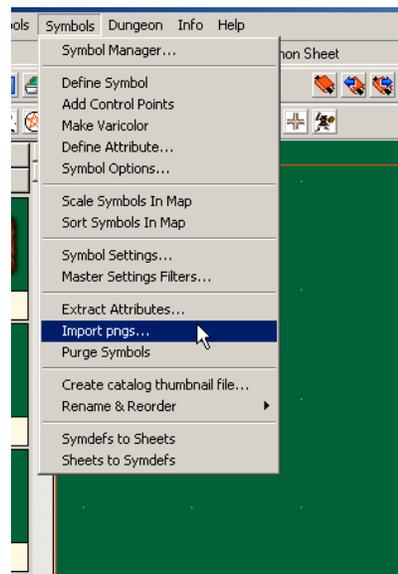
Select either the Blank Dungeon Catalog template or the Blank Overland Catalog template. You may have to browse to the Wizard folder to find them.



While importing the pngs, you will be able to determine on which Layer and Sheet the symbol will be placed when used. Now is when you want to create the new Layers that you might want. We'll worry about the Sheets later.

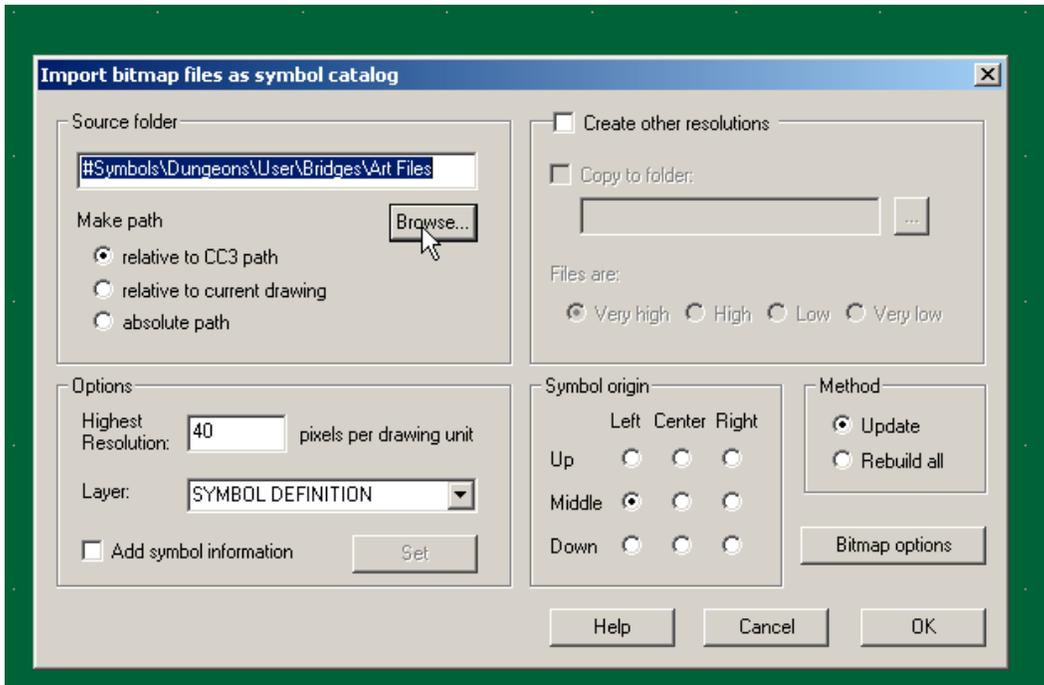


Once you have added any new Layers, you will want to import the pngs. Click Symbols on the top menu bar and choose Import pngs... This will open the Import dialogue box.



Step 3: Importing the pngs

Lets take the Import Dialogue Box one item at a time.



Source Folder:

1. Browse to the folder where you have the pngs that you wish to import.
2. Select the path that CC3 will use to find the png files.

This means the method in which CC3 stores the file path information.

Absolute Path: CC3 stores the exact path on your computer to the bitmaps. This is easiest for yourself if you want to find the file at a later time, but is inconvenient, if you want to distribute the bitmaps to other people, as they might be putting them in another place. They'd get the dreaded "Red X" for missing bitmap files. This is not a recommended method.

Example: C:\My Bitmap Files\BitmapsXXX\

Relative to drawing: CC3 calculates the path from the position the map is currently in. The bitmaps must be in a folder below the map (or in the same one) for this to work. This is best if you create bitmaps specific for one map and want to distribute the map together with the bitmaps files.

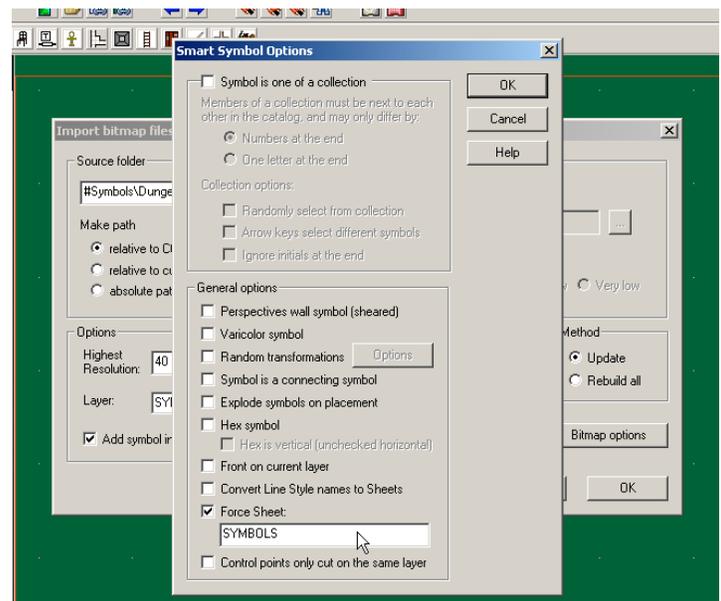
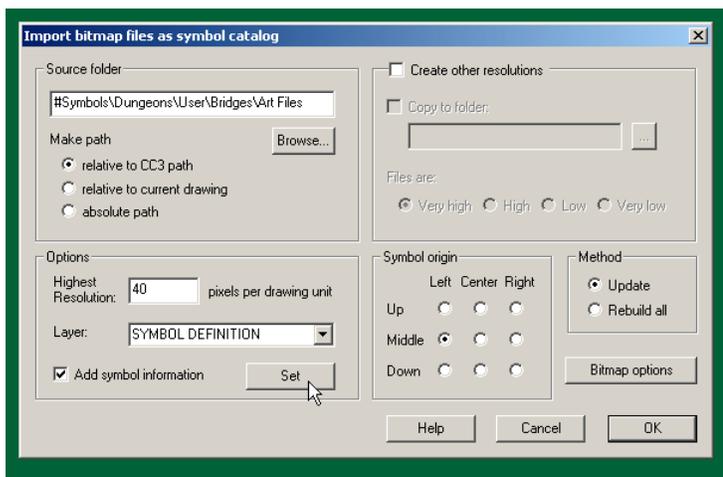
Example: [Path to the Map]\Bitmaps\

Relative to CC3: CC3 stores the path relative to the location CC3 is installed in (often "C:\Program Files\CC3\"). This is best to use if you're creating bitmaps that you want to use in a variety of maps, as you could distribute them to other CC3 users and they'd all be in the same relative location, no matter where they have installed CC3. Logically it has to be a subfolder of CC3.

Example: [Path to CC3]\Bitmaps\Tiles\MyTiles\

Options:

1. Highest Resolution – For floorplan art, work out the the number of pixel per unit by opening the art in a paint and dividing the width in pixels by the real word width. For Dundjinni art usually the figure is 40 pixels per unit. For overland symbols at the same scale as the ProFantasy ones, use 20.
2. Layer: Select the Layer that you want the symbol to be placed on when used. (CC3 will not add this Layer to your map automatically, so if you chose a non-standard Layer you will have to add it to your map yourself.)
3. Select Add Symbol Information and then check Force Sheet. Type in the name of the Sheet that you want the symbol to be placed on when used. (CC3 will automatically add this Sheet to your map when you place the symbol if it does not already exist.)



Create other resolutions:

I do not use this option when creating symbols. However, if you are interested in doing so, I recommend reading the CC3 help files on this.

Symbol Origin:

Choose a symbol origin. This is the point that the cursor sits during placement and will be used if Snap to Grid is turned on. For overland, it's usually center down, for floorplan, middle left.

Method:

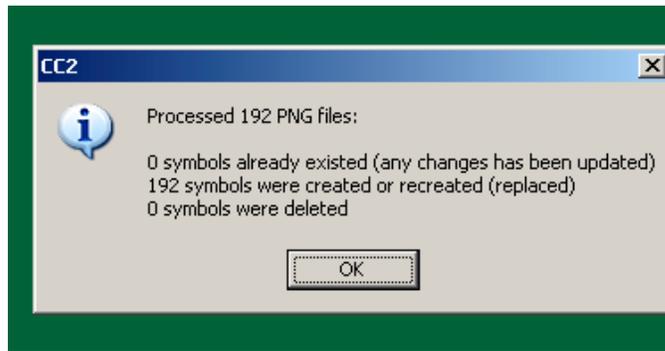
If you want to totally rebuild a catalog or this is a new catalog, choose Rebuild all.

If you are adding updates to the catalog, choose Update. This will keep the current symbols and their settings intact, and add any new pngs.

Bitmap Options:

Most symbols have transparent areas so make sure that Alpha Transparency is checked.

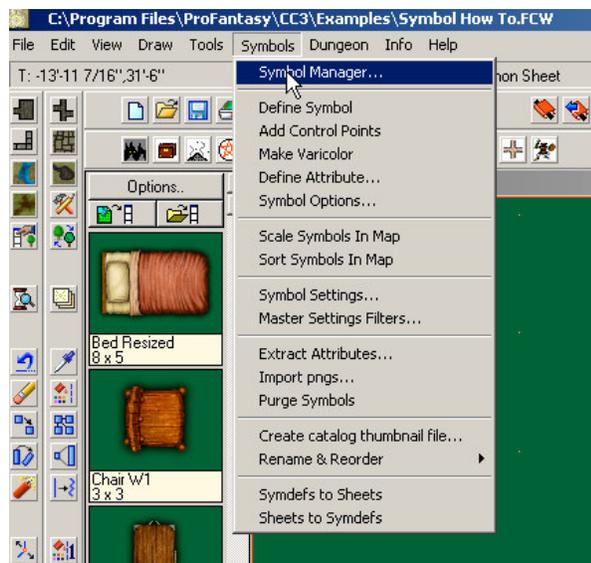
Click OK then wait for CC3 to import the png files.
You will receive a message on how many pngs were imported into the drawing.



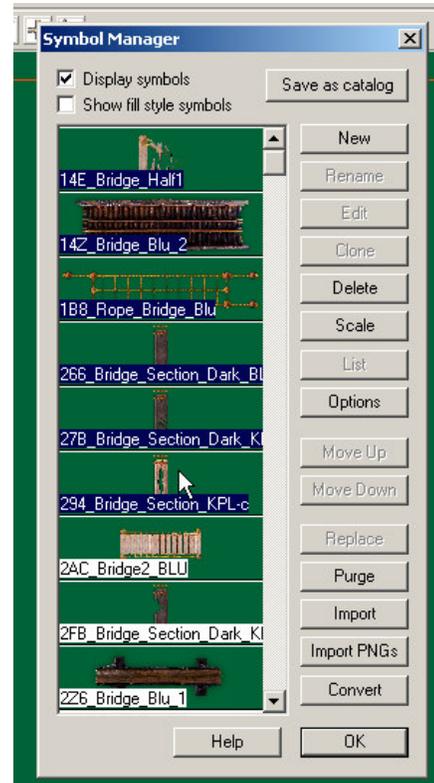
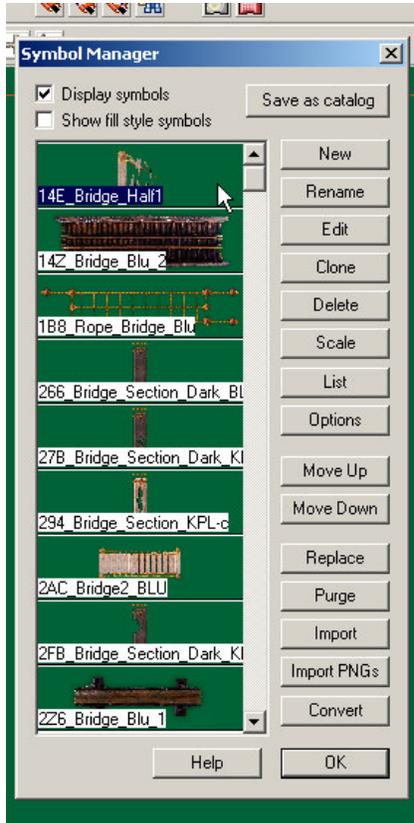
Click OK and save this drawing file in the Folder with the pngs, using the name that you want the Symbol Catalog to have. The file will have the standard .FCW extension. At this point this file is just another map file with the pngs stored in the symbol manager.

Step 4: Creating the Symbol Catalog File

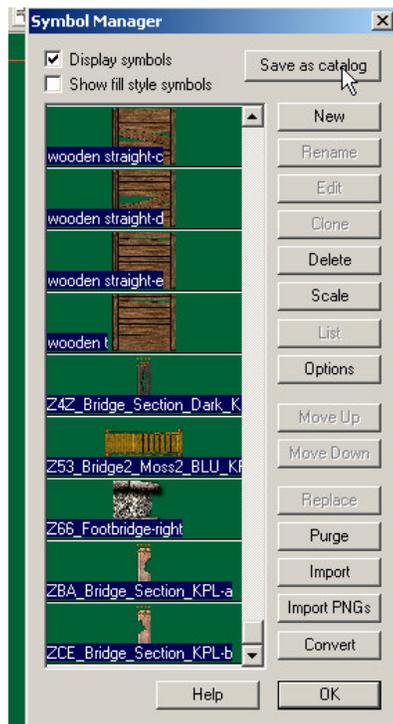
Open the symbol manager by selecting Symbols from the top menu and clicking Symbol Manager.



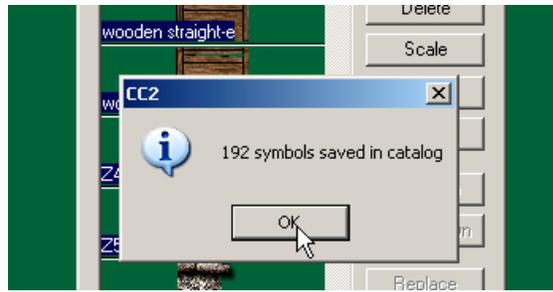
A window like this will open. Click on one of the symbols to highlight it. You will see all of the menu buttons become available. This is where you can rename, rearrange, select options individually, or eliminate unwanted symbols. When first opened, the symbols are arranged alphabetically. I like to use Move Up and Move Down to group similar symbols together. Basically, here is where you get to decide how your Symbol catalog will look and function. You can also use CTRL or CTRL-SHIFT to select multiple symbols, but the available buttons will be fewer because you cannot perform some of the functions on multiple files at once.



Once you have made all of the modifications that you want to the symbols, select all of the symbols by clicking the first symbol, scrolling to the bottom and CTRL-SHIFT clicking the last symbol. Click the Save as Catalog Button.



Save this catalog file in the same directory as the pngs. It will have the FSC extension, which means that it is a symbol catalog. CC3 will show how many symbols were created in the new catalog.



Close out the symbol manager and save the drawing file.

Saving the drawing file at this point also saves the changes you made to the symbols and their order in the Symbol Manager. This way, if you want to add more symbols to this catalog at a later date, you will only have to open this drawing file, import the pngs using the Update option under Method on the Import PNG screen, and resaving all of the Symbols in Symbol manager as a catalog.

That's it. Your symbol catalog should now be available for use. But **REMEMBER**, keep your pngs exactly where they were at the time of catalog creation. If you don't all that you'll see are a bunch of red x's.