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## Introduction

Welcome to the eePanels tutorial! This tutorial will hopefully help some people learn how to use the eePanels mod developed by Evil Elvis from WoWace.com eePanels is essentially a texture and art modification, allowing you to render textures in your user interface. eePanels is very diverse, insofar as it allows the creation of “standard” frames from the blizzard textures (i.e. tool tip borders with a solid background) while also allowing you to import your custom textures. I’ve provided links to three tutorials which provide in-depth discussion on the creation of Warcraft-ready textures using Adobe Photoshop©.

### *What is a Texture*

A texture is essentially an art-element developed in the .tga format which can be imported into World of Warcraft either by the client or by AddOns. Blizzard has put very specific requirements on how a texture must be formatted in order for it to be compatible with WoW, so make sure that you know those restrictions before trying to set up a texture.

### *How to use this Tutorial*

The first section is primarily devoted to identifying the different menu options in eePanels with brief descriptions of how each one is used. The second portion of this tutorial will go over techniques to create panels, and develop an effective user interface using eePanels.

### *Some Useful Resources*

<http://www.edowner.net/Texture-Tutorial/>

futrtrubl’s Texture tutorial details the manipulation and development of a texture ready to be imported into World of Warcraft. This tutorial is probably the most complete of the three provided.

<http://clanok.com/darktide/tutorial/simpletexture.avi>

<http://www.clanok.com/darktide/tutorial/DUnitFrames.zip>

Darktide’s texture tutorials from discordmods.com. These tutorials go through some techniques in photoshop for creating textures, not necessarily getting them game ready.

<http://files.filefront.com/BouviTextureTutorialpdf/6121596/;fileinfo.html>

Bouvi’s texture tutorial also from discordmods.com

<http://wowace.com/wiki/EePanels>

The wiki for eePanels. Evil Elvis gives excellent explanations there.

<http://www.wowace.com/forums/index.php?topic=3141.0>

The official eePanels thread on the WoWAce.com forums!

## Section One: Getting to Know eePanels

### Menus

Becoming familiar with the menus in eePanels is the first step in learning to use the mod. Like many other mods, eePanels' menu can either be accessed via a minimap icon or as a plug-in to ckknight's Fubar. **Right clicking on this icon will open the menu.**

### *Main Menu*

**Lock Panels:** Disabling this option allows panels to be moved by dragging, and allows them to be resized using the handle on the bottom-right corner of the frame.

**Advanced Mode:** Enabling this option gives several advanced options in the Panel Settings menu for customizing your frames.

**New Panel:** There are two methods of creating panels in eePanels  
--*From Default Settings* creates a black frame in the center of your screen  
--*From Global Settings* creates a frame defined by Global Settings

**Global Settings:** This menu allows you to define the characteristics of the frames created from the *From Global Settings* option in **New Panel**.

**Panel Settings:** This menu allows you to define the characteristics of individual panels you have created.

**Reset:** This option resets all panels, essentially undoing all of your work.

**Attach to minimap:** Enabling this option puts the eePanels menu button on your minimap as opposed to Fubar.

**Profile:** This menu allows you to select and copy profiles from your various characters.



## Global Settings Menu

The global settings menu defines the characteristics of the panels created via the *From Global Settings* option under the **New Panel** menu. Global Settings are best used when you want to create multiple panels with the same characteristics.

*\*\*Note: When you modify global settings, some settings may apply to every panel you have created. It is best to define your global settings BEFORE you work on panels that will not share those characteristics.*

**Background Texture:** This option allows you to select from several preset background textures or define your own background texture.

**Border Color:** This option opens a color wheel and allows you to set the color of the border texture.

**Border Texture:** This option allows you to select from several preset border textures or define your own border texture.

**Background Color Style:** This allows you to switch between a solid background and a gradient.

**Background Color:** This option opens a color wheel and allows you to set the color of your background.

**Background Gradient Color:** This option opens a color wheel and allows you to set the second color of your background gradient.

**Background Gradient Orientation:** This option allows you to switch between horizontal and vertical background gradient orientations.

**Background Blend:** This option allows you to adjust the blend mode of your background

**Level:** Defines the level within the strata on which your texture will render.

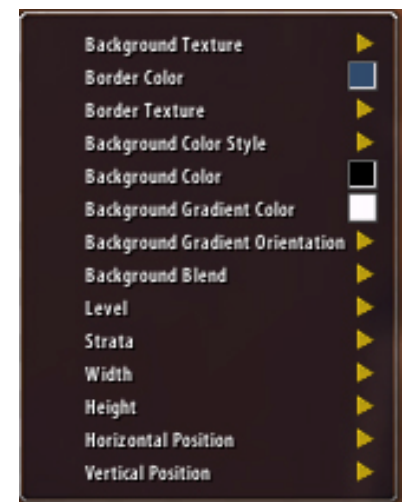
**Strata:** Define the strata of your texture

**Width:** Defines the width of your frame

**Height:** Defines the height of your frame.

**Horizontal Position:** Defines the horizontal position of your frame

**Vertical Position:** Defines the vertical position of your frame.



## Panel Settings Menu – Basic Settings

The panel settings menu allows you to define the characteristics of individual panels that you have created, without altering other panels as Global Settings would.

**Name:** Allows you to define the name of your panel.

**Border Color:** This option opens a color wheel and allows you to set the color of the border texture.

**Background Color Style:** This allows you to switch between a solid background and a gradient.

**Background Color:** This option opens a color wheel and allows you to set the color of your background.

**Background Gradient Color:** This option opens a color wheel and allows you to set the second color of your background gradient.

**Background Gradient Orientation:** This option allows you to switch between horizontal and vertical background gradient orientations.

**Level:** Defines the level within the strata on which your texture will render.

**Width:** Defines the width of your frame

**Height:** Defines the height of your frame.

**Horizontal Position:** Defines the horizontal position of your frame

**Vertical Position:** Defines the vertical position of your frame.

**Remove Panel:** This option removes the frame.



## Panel Settings Menu – Advanced Settings

The panel settings menu allows you to define the characteristics of individual panels that you have created, without altering other panels as Global Settings would.

**Border Texture:** This option allows you to select from several preset border textures or define your own border texture.

**Border Edge Size:** This option allows you to change the width of the border around your frame.

**Background Texture:** This option allows you to select from several preset background textures or define your own background texture.

**Background Blend:** This option allows you to adjust the blend mode of your background

**Background Inset Size:** This option allows you to adjust the background inset on your frame.

**Background Texture Tiling:** This option allows you to tile a custom texture within the frame.

**Background Tile Size:** This option allows you to define the tile size for any texture you have set to tile

**Strata:** Define the strata of your texture

**Parent:** This option allows you to define a parent for the frame.

**Intercept mouse clicks:** Enabling this options will prevent you from interacting with the world that is covered by the frame.

**Remove Panel:** This option removes the frame.



## Section Two: Using eePanels

This section of the tutorial will go through some basic technique in developing frames with eePanels, while giving some insight into the more complicated aspects of the addon. Please keep in mind that it is impossible to show screenshots for all of the steps indicated here, and for some screenshots aren't necessary. When in doubt, print out the section of the tutorial that is giving you trouble and try to follow the directions it gives in game using the addon!

I will not be covering most of the basic elements of eePanels (i.e. background color) as most of those options are self-explanatory. Rather, I will spend time discussing how someone would create certain effects using eePanels, along with design tips for using art in your UI.

### **Anchoring and Placement**

This is probably one of the most important sections in this tutorial, as it deals with eePanels biggest limitation. Evil Elvis doesn't play the game anymore and it is unlikely that we will ever see better anchoring options, unless someone with coding talent equal to his wants to write anchoring code for the mod.

Anchoring is the ability to "tie" one part of a frame to another frame. By default, all of these frames are anchored to the UIParent, which means your screen. There are always two points involved in anchoring: the point on the frame that will serve as the anchor, and the point on the anchor frame which will serve as anchor.

### ***Making Your Frame Visible***

In eePanels, the top left corner of your panel is anchored to the bottom left corner of the screen. This means that if your horizontal and vertical positions were set to zero, your panel would not be visible on the screen. So, it is always best to remember the following:

**For your frame to be visible on the screen, your Vertical Position must be at least equal to the height of your frame!**

If your vertical position is less than your height, your frame will be cut off, and if your vertical position is set to zero, your frame will not be visible.

### ***Finding the Center***

Because there are no anchoring options, it can be fairly difficult to find the center of your UI to get your elements lined up correctly. There are several ways to combat this problem:

#### **Method One: The Whole Bottom!**

Making your frames occupy the whole bottom of your screen allows you to not worry about the center – per se. To make one giant frame extend the width of the bottom, set your horizontal position to zero and start expanding your frame in width until it hits the other side!

**Method Two: Math Geeks**

This method relies on the previous method. Make a frame that extends the width of your entire screen (setting horizontal position to zero and expanding the width). Once you are satisfied with the width, take the number in the width and divide it by two. This is the “center” of your UI as eePanels finds it.

**Method Three: Ez Mode**

Download the addon ALIGN from wowinterface.com Type /align to get a grid brought up on your screen. The giant red lines mark the center.

**\*\*NOTE:** Remember that since your frame anchor is the top left, and if you set the horizontal position to the same as your center that it will NOT be centered. You have to divide your frame in half and subtract the difference from the center frame in order for it to be centered. For example:

Frame Width: 100u  
UI Width: 1000u  
Center: 500u

Placing the horizontal position at 500 would make the frame occupy 500-600. This would put the LEFT HAND SIDE of the frame at the center. Since your frame is 100u, you want to divide that by half (50u) and subtract that from your center value. Having the frame occupy 450-550 puts the CENTER of the frame on the center line of the UI.

## Gradients

### *What is a Gradient?*

Strictly speaking, (i.e. the definition) of a gradient is a transition between one color and another, or one shade of a color and another, or one density of a color and another.

In either case, a gradient produces an effect similar to this:



This particular gradient combines the transition between densities. The far right of this gradient is a more opaque (more dense) version of the left side of the gradient.

The goal of any gradient is to produce a smooth transition between the two predetermined colors/densities/shades. Gradients can be strung together, for example going from red to blue to white.

### *Gradients in eePanels*

There are essentially four options you need to worry about with gradients in eePanels, all can be found in the default panel settings menu or the global settings menu:

**Background Color Style:** This menu option lets you choose between the standard “solid” fill and a gradient fill. Obviously the gradient fill is the option you’d choose.



**Background Color:** The background color will ALWAYS be the color on the LEFT or BOTTOM of the frame depending on your gradient orientation.

**Background Gradient Color:** The background gradient color will ALWAYS be the color to the RIGHT or the TOP of the frame, depending on your gradient orientation.

**Background Gradient Orientation:** This menu allows to choose between a horizontal orientation and vertical orientation. The screenshot above shows a horizontal orientation.

### *Orientations*

\*\*Note: For all of these orientations, your background color/background gradient color will need to be the same. You’ll adjust the gradient through transparencies on each panel.

Right → Left: Set your Background Color to a high transparency. Set your Background Color Gradient to a low transparency, ideally zero.

Left → Right: Set your Background Color to a low transparency, ideally zero. Set your Background Color Gradient to a high transparency.

## *Gradient Borders*

There are two ways to make gradient borders like the ones shown in the screenshot on the previous page.

**Method One – Lame Sauce:** This is the method used to create the previous screenshot. Essentially, to make a panel with a top and bottom border you'll need -3- total panels. Create your main gradient background panel. The remaining two panels will be your top and bottom gradient border. First you'll need to make the background panel their parent (for more on this, read the Parent section of this tutorial) then set the height to be relatively small (I've found 12 works well at 1680x1050, .64 UI scale). Then set one as the top and one as the bottom. Make sure their width stays at 100%, and move them accordingly.

**Method Two – Lamer Sauce:** Create the texture in Photoshop and import it. If you are capable of doing this you don't need me to explain it.

## *Some Limitations*

There are several limitations in using gradients with eePanels, and I'll try to go through them with the greatest detail. In each I'll try to provide some methods for overcoming them, but in some cases it just isn't possible.

**Uneven Fill:** The gradients have uneven fill, and this is pretty easy to tell. I'm not sure exactly how the gradient coding works, but essentially the background color will dominate the background gradient color. This makes it very difficult to have two meeting gradients with different colors (white > blue < white). To overcome it, make your horizontal meeting gradients based on a single color with the other gradient element to be transparent. ( clear > blue < clear).

**Black Dominates:** If you are trying to set a gradient between black and another color, and want the panel to be completely opaque then you'll notice that the panel appears entirely black. There isn't really a way to fix this, unfortunately.

## Parenting

### *What is Parenting?*

Parenting is essentially a method of attaching one thing to another, and having it inherit its traits (much like you inherited your genetics from your biological parents). There is some useful rhetoric in dealing with parents:

**Parent:** This is the frame which will act as the “base” for the eePanel. The parent frame gives traits to its children, including alpha settings, location, size, etc

**Child:** This is the eePanel. It will inherit the traits from the parent.

**Orphan:** A child frame without a parent. If eePanels tries to create a Child when the Parent frame doesn't exist, it will become an orphan.

### *How do I Parent?*

Obvious sex-ed responses aside, assigning a parent frame is relatively easy:

1. Put the following into a macro `/print GetMouseFocus():GetName()`
2. Put the macro on your action bars in a slot associated with a particular key bind
3. Mouse over a frame and hit your macro. The name of the frame will appear in green letters in your chat frame.
4. Enter that name EXACTLY as you see it (including caps) into the Parent menu under Advanced Options.
5. Hit enter.

That will set that eePanel's parent to be whatever you want it to be.

*Protip: eePanels are named eePanel#, where # is the panel number, i.e. eePanel1, eePanel2 If you'd like to verify this for yourself, set one panel to intercept mouse-clicks and use the macro while mousing over it.*

### *Anchoring with Parents*

When you anchor with eePanels, the top left of the child frame (the eePanel) is anchored to the top left of the parent frame.

### *Parenting and Panel Size*

When you anchor your eePanel, you have a new sizing option. You can set the width and height to be a % of the size of the parent frame. It will be 100% by default, and you can change it to pixels again by taking off the % sign.