STRAT-O-MATIC FOOTBALL 2026 RELEASE NOTES

INSTALLATION – STEP 1

- Please read the information on *Authorization System* **before installing** the game to your hard drive.
- In order to install the game and any patches your user sign-on must have Administrator privileges. This will allow the DLLs to be registered properly.
- When installing you might see an "Unknown Publisher" warning message. If so you should click "Run" to proceed.
- **If you have a CD-ROM:**
  - **IMPORTANT**: Note that in lieu of Product Registration Code Cards your Product Registration Codes may be printed on your invoice instead. You may also access your Product Registration Codes by logging into your account page at www.strat-o-matic.com
  - Place the Strat-O-Matic Football CD-ROM in your CD drive.
  - The installation program should run automatically. If it does not then follow these directions:
    - Click on the Start button and then choose Run.
    - Type **D:\ FB2026-SETUP.EXE** for Pro Football or **D:\ CF2026-SETUP.EXE** for College Football**,** then click OK. (If your CD-ROM drive is a different letter, please substitute the appropriate letter)
- **If you downloaded the installer:**
  - The Setup program (**FB2026-SETUP.EXE** for Pro Football or **CF2026-SETUP.EXE** for College Football**)** includes all files necessary to install. Product Registration Codes for your game and any options that you purchased should be delivered via email. You may also access your Product Registration Codes and download links by logging into your account page at www.strat-o-matic.com.
  - Double-click the Setup program (**FB2026-SETUP.EXE** for Pro Football or **CF2026-SETUP.EXE** for College Football**)** to start the installation process.
- After the initial entry screens you are prompted to select a Destination Directory.
  - Select the directory where you wish to install the game.
  - The default directory is **C:\ Strat-O-Matic Football for Pro Football** or **C:\ Strat-O-Matic Football for College Football.**
  - **Important Note: DO NOT INSTALL THE GAME TO THE "PROGRAM FILES" FOLDER!**
  - If upgrading from a prior version of the game then select the directory where your prior version of the game was installed.
  - Our games are not compatible with cloud storage services such as Google Drive, Dropbox, iCloud, etc. The game will not operate if installed to anything other than a fixed physical hard drive. Installation on removable devices such as an external hard drive may work in some cases, however this is not officially supported. We cannot offer any technical support for external devices as compatibility is highly dependent upon the specific hardware and device drivers being utilized.
- You will be prompted with a few more dialogs that are self-explanatory, and then the game will be installed.
- You should not install a particular season roster unless you own a Product Registration Code for that season.
- **IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE RUNNING THE INSTALLER:**
  - Locate your Setup.exe program (either in the location where you downloaded it or on the CD-ROM that you purchased) then follow these directions:
  - Right-click the Setup program
  - Select "Properties"
  - Select the Compatibility tab
  - Check "Run this program in compatibility mode for" and select "Windows 8"
  - At the bottom of the screen check "Run this program as an administrator"
  - Click Okay and then retry installing the program
- **USER-EDITED FILES**
  - The installer automatically backs up certain files to the game's Support\Backup folder. These are the files that most often are edited by our users. However, even though we backup some files to this location it is still highly recommended that you backup any files you have edited to another disk drive or to the cloud.
  - After installation you may need to copy files from Support\Backup to the appropriate game sub-folder.

INSTALLATION – STEP 2

- This game requires the Microsoft Visual C++ Redistributable to run. If it is not installed on your system then the installer will attempt to add it during Step 1. However, if that fails for any reason then follow these steps to manually install it:
  - After the game has been installed, open the "Tech Support" folder (found within the folder where you installed the game).
  - Double-click the "vcredist_x86.exe" file to run an install it (this adds Microsoft redistributable support). Click 'Yes" to the Unknown Publisher warning. If the installer exists without comment then you should be good. If it instructs you to reboot your system then do so.
- Open the main Game Folder
- Prepare LeagueMgr.exe:
  - Right-click the **LeagMgr.exe** (**LeagColMgr.exe** for college game) in your game's install folder
  - Select "Properties"
  - Select the Compatibility tab
  - At the bottom of the screen check "Run this program as an administrator"
  - Click Apply and then click Okay.
  - Right-Click the **LeagMgr.exe** again and click "Troubleshoot compatibility" - follow the on-screen prompts and after testing the program save the changes for future runs.
  - **NOTE ABOUT ARM PROCESSORS**: Emulation to support x86 apps is a new feature created for Windows on ARM64. If your machine uses ARM64 then follow Microsoft's instructions at this link to allow our games to run: https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/uwp/porting/apps-on-arm-program-compat-troubleshooter
- Prepare **SomFB.exe** (**SomColFB.exe** for college game) using the exact same steps you just took for LeagueMgr.exe
- If you run Norton or any other anti-malware software refer to its documentation and make an exception to the entire football game folder and its sub-folders.
- **If you are new to the game** please see the **Quick Start Guide** PDF that is accessible from *Start/Programs/Strat-O-Matic Football* after installing the game.

AUTHORIZATION SYSTEM

The authorization system employed by the game is a state-of-the art Internet based system that allows a game or season roster to be active on one machine. The first time you start up a game you will be prompted to enter in your Product Registration Code. When you purchased the game you should have received your Product Registration Code with your order. This code uniquely identifies your ownership of the product. IMPORTANT: Do not let anyone else know what your Product Registration Code is! It is your private "key" to open up your ownership of a game or season rosters. **Also do not lose your Product Registration Codes -- you will need them in the future to uninstall or reinstall your games or rosters.**

INSTALLING GAME AUTHORIZATION

Before installing the authorization you must first connect to the Internet. If the machine cannot be connected to the Internet then you must follow the Manual method described in the help file. After your Internet connection is established start the game and enter in your Product Registration Code. Then click OK. The authorization to run the game will be transferred from the Strat-O-Matic server to your machine's hard drive. You will now be able to run the game. You only need to do this once -- subsequent runs of the game will start without prompting you for your code. Note that you can only do this transfer one time. If you want to install on another machine you must follow the procedures found below to remove the authorization from your machine. IMPORTANT: If you are running Norton Internet Security or other similar products (such as firewalls) then you might receive a warning message when you click OK. It is safe to ignore this warning message. If you cannot get around your firewall then you will need to use the Manual method described in the help file.

REMOVING GAME AUTHORIZATION

IMPORTANT NOTE: **Before removing game authorization** from your machine **first** remove any season authorizations you have installed. If you want to remove the authorization (for example, to move the game to another machine) then connect to the Internet and select the *League / Remove Game Authorization* menu and enter in your Product Registration Code. The authorization will be moved from your hard drive back to the Strat-O-Matic server. You can then install the software on another machine and transfer the authorization to that machine.

AUTHORIZATION SYSTEM FOR SEASONS

Authorization for seasons works just like the game. You get a Product Registration Code for each season you purchase. The first time you access the season the game will prompt you to enter in your Product Registration Code and the authorization for it is transferred from the Strat-O-Matic server to your machine. To move the authorization back to the server select the *File / Remove Season Authorization* menu item and enter in your product code.

PRO GAME NOTES

- If you purchase the All-Time Franchise Rosters you will need to be aware that the internal "year" for the AFL is 3000 and for the NFL it is 3001. As an example, if you wish to transfer the authorization for the All-Time Franchise AFL Rosters back to the server from your hard-drive you will need to enter in "3000" as the year.
- The **Season Notes** folder contains information that has been donated by a consortium of testers. The notes consist of historical information and/or replay suggestions. Not every season is available.

COLLEGE GAME NOTES

- Please see the Help File category "College/Pro Game Differences" for a complete list of differences between the pro and college versions of the game.
- If you have purchased the **College Great Teams Rosters** you need to be aware that we use "3000" as the internal year for these rosters. When you install the College Great Teams data and you want to create a league you will need to be aware of this as "3000" will appear in the list of years when you go to create a new league. Also, when transferring the authorization back to the server you will need to use "3000" as well.
- ***PLAYER NAMES*** If you have purchased either the 2004, 2005 or 2006 college seasons the player names need to be imported after you create your league. Use the League / Import Player Names function. Be sure to import the appropriate "PlayerNames200?MK.csv" file for the season you are working with.

IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS WITH THE GAME…

- **DEBUGGING** - A debugging feature has been added to help us better resolve any game play bugs that you experience. If you notice a bug during game play (such as animation, questionable computer manager decision, incorrect handling of rules, etc.) then IMMEDIATELY use the "Help / Create Debug File" function. This function will create a file in the Debug folder. E-Mail that file to us with a complete description of the problem. With your help this new feature will enable us to offer you the best game possible! NOTE: You must enable the "Autosave after Each Play" feature to use this debugging feature.
- **DPI SETTINGS** – While it may work, we do not officially support higher than standard (96 DPI) settings for the Font Size (accessed via the start/control panel/appearance and themes/display/settings/advanced dialog).
- If you are experiencing trouble with screen artifacts or other weird screen display problems try turning off skinning. This can be done as follows:
  - Launch the League Manager and select the League / League Manager Options menu item.
  - On the dialog select "NONE"as the skin setting, then click OK. Click OK a second time to the informational message.
  - Exit the program and then start it back up.
- **HELP FILE** - We include two versions of the Help File. One is compatible with newer operating systems like Windows 10, the other with older OS's. You can launch either from the within the game or it can be accessed via "Start / Programs / Strat-O-Matic Football".
- **SECURITY SOFTWARE** is constantly evolving to fight the malware threat. Unfortunately this sometimes results in flagging programs with false positives. If you are running security software (including with NETPLAY) and experiencing trouble with our game then define an exception within that software for the football game's EXEs and DLLs. The easiest approach would be to make an exception for our entire game folder (if your security software supports that). Please see your security software documentation for further details.
- If you receive a message stating "**Invalid Dynalink in the .DLL specified in the title bar**" then reboot your system and try running the program again. If this message still occurs after booting then check your DirectX using the DxDiag.exe program.
- **DirectX 9.0 (which includes DirectDraw, DirectSound and DirectPlay)** or higher is required. The installer will automatically determine if DirectX is installed and it will install it if necessary. Note there are newer version of DirectX available both in the Tech Support folder and on Microsoft's website. If you are experiencing trouble with game graphics you can install a newer version to see if that clears up the problem.
- **NETPLAY CHAT** - If you cannot see the chat area (lower right hand corner of the screen) then it is probably hidden by the Windows Taskbar. You can tell Windows to automatically hide the taskbar by selecting the following checkbox: Click on **Start/Settings/Taskbar and Start Menu/Autohide.**
- If you are experiencing problems getting into the **Game Lobby** then run Windows Update and make sure you have the latest version of the .NET Framework installed.
- **GRAPHICS PROBLEMS -** Some video cards sometimes exhibit slow animation graphics or other glitches. Here are a few potential solutions to the problem:
  - Possible solution #1:
    - Make sure you have installed the latest device drivers for your video card (download them from the manufacturer's website).
  - Possible solution #2:
    - Go the control panel and follow these steps:
    - 1-Control Panel
    - 2-Display
    - 3-Setting
    - 4-Advanced
    - 5-Troubleshoot - on this dialog set hardware acceleration to none.
  - Possible solution#3:
    - 1-Click Start on Windows taskbar
    - 2-Select "Run..."
    - 3-Type "dxdiag" then click okay
    - 4-Select the display tab
    - 5-If DirectDraw Acceleration is disabled then enable it
  - Possible solution #4
    - nVidia's "nView Desktop Manager" can cause the football game to crash or to hang. nVidia says that this utility may cause some applications to stop responding (which can be the case with our football game). To fix this, open the nVidia nView Desktop Manager control panel by choosing:
      - Start Menu -> Settings -> Control Panel -> nVidia nView Desktop Manager.
      - Then uncheck the "Enable Desktop Manager" button and click OK. If you do not
      - see the nVidia nView Desktop Manager applet then you do not have it installed.
- **GAME CRASHES WHEN STARTING A GAME** - If, after updating your video card device driver, you still experience a crash when clicking the Launch button in SomFB, then you need to make this change:
  - Edit the somfb.ini file (found in your main install folder) and change
  - NoCoinToss to 1 instead of 0.
  - Save somfb.ini and launch the game. No coin toss will be shown but everything else should work.
- **Windows7™** and **Windows8™** NOTE: If you are receiving Error 0 or Error 317 when resizing the game you need to turn off the Windows8™ Aero Snap feature:
  - Go to Control Panel.
  - Click on Ease of Access link or Ease of Access Center icon.
  - Select Change how your mouse works or Make the mouse easier to use option.

- Tick the check box for Prevent Windows from being automatically arranged when moved to the edge of the screen with the mouse under "Make it easier to manage windows" section.
- Click OK or Apply to make the change effective.

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY

The Social Media features included with our games are not provided by our company. We simply provide access to them via an API which is created by Social Media sites. These APIs allow programs like ours to connect to them. We use these APIs to access such services as blogger.com (a Google service). Social Media sites tend to change their APIs very often to try and fend off cyber attacks and to provide better security or enhanced functionality for their users. When an API is changed it often will break the programs in the field that use it. When this occurs we cannot guarantee when we will be able to restore that functionality, if at all. A lot depends on the nature of the changes (a tweak vs. a complete rewrite of the API). There may be cases where we simply will not be able to restore that functionality to the program due to other requirements. Please take this uncertainty of ongoing support into account as you make plans to publish your league information (especially with blogger.com, since that can be used to publish league reports). We recommend that you use our **Send Report To Cloud** feature to share reports with your friends and league members.

CLOUD HOSTING ACCESSIBILITY

Since Internet Services like this free cloud hosting service are sometimes not available we have designed this feature so that you can still process your league files the original way if the service is down or becomes unavailable. Note that while we will do everything possible to keep the service free and available we cannot guarantee this as we purchase this service from other providers.

SCHEDULE GENERATOR

The scheduler generator will not work well with large leagues. It was designed as a quickie to help generate schedules, but it definitely has its limitations -- especially if you have a large number of teams. If the schedule generator is having trouble creating your schedule you should try different combinations of games in-division, in-conference and outside conference. For a 32-team league (16 teams per conference and 4 teams per division) the following might work:

- 2 games per division opponent, 8 conference games, 6 division games and
- 2 out of conference games (total of 16 games).

The generator must often try many times before it is able to slot the games into the schedule. Please allow it to run to completion as it attempts to make your schedule. If the schedule generator is not able to generate a schedule for your league you can use the Import Schedule function to import a manually created schedule.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

First check the Support FAQ section of our website **www.strat-o-matic.com** as that is the quickest way to resolve most problems. The best way to reach technical support is via email – **techsupport@strat-o-matic.com.** Pay Per Call phone support is available for $1.99 per minute from 9AM-12PM EST Monday through Friday. Please Call 888-613-6198.