

# Running Phoenix FD from an Arbitrary Location

This page provides information on setting up Phoenix so that it can run from a location different from the default.

## Overview

Installing Phoenix for Maya from an unpacked installation provides several advantages over the regular installer:

- The unpacked installation allows for setting a custom environment when starting each Maya instance. In comparison, running the regular installation multiple times overwrites the Phoenix environment variables.
- The unpacked installation can be used to run Phoenix for Maya from any location or even a network drive. That way, multiple users can start Maya along with Phoenix using just a script that sets up the environment variables without the need to run local installations.
- Upgrading an unpacked installation is a lot easier too, as you don't need to run the installer on every user's computer.
- The unpacked installation allows for quick switching between different Phoenix versions without reinstalling it.

When using an unpacked installation of Phoenix, the EULA needs to be accepted to start a simulation. A pop-up window appears when the simulation begins.

## Required steps to run Phoenix

Here is an overview of the steps required to run an unpacked installation:

1. [Unpack the installer file to a location of your choice.](#)
2. [Set up the environment variables needed to run Phoenix for Maya.](#)
3. Set up your license. For more information on licensing check [this page](#).
4. Run Maya.

It is highly recommended to only use Phoenix from an unpacked installation or from a regular installation, but never both at the same time. If you plan on using the unpacked installation, make sure to uninstall Phoenix beforehand.

## Unpacking the installer file

In order to extract the contents of the installer file into a suitable folder you need to unpack them first.

You can unpack the installation files in two ways - using the GUI installer or through the command line.

## Setting up the installation files using the GUI installer

Running Phoenix for Maya from a network location has two parts to it. First, you must run the installation to extract the necessary files and store them on the network. Next, you must configure your local machine to use these files to run Phoenix for Maya, or to run V-Ray Standalone with Phoenix support.

Phoenix **does not** require a V-Ray for Maya installation to load and work correctly inside Maya.

Run the Phoenix for Maya installation and specify suitable folders for the files. For example, you could create a network shared path named `/phoenix_builds/my_version`, where you could change `my_version` to the Phoenix version you are using in order to allow multiple different versions. Then in the Phoenix installer's **Advanced** step, you could direct the installation to the following paths:

**Maya root folder:** `/phoenix_builds/my_version/maya_root`

**Maya plugins destination folder:** `/phoenix_builds/my_version/maya_phoenix`

**Chaos Phoenix additional files:** `/phoenix_builds/my_version/phoenix`

## Setting up the installation Files using the command line

Windows/Linux:

1. Navigate to the installer in a Command prompt/Terminal.
2. Add the argument **-unpackInstall=<directory\_to\_unpack>** (the location of the folder you want your install to be unpacked in).

**Example:**

```
"D:/Downloads/phoenixFD_adv_50000_maya2023_vray6_x64.exe" -unpackInstall="D:/unpacked_installation"
```

**macOS:**

1. Download the installer and extract the .app from the .dmg.
2. In the Terminal navigate inside the .app to `/Contents/MacOS/run_installer`.
3. Add the argument **-unpackInstall=<directory\_to\_unpack>** (the location of the folder you want your install to be unpacked in).

You can also do the following for all OS:

1. In a Command Prompt/Terminal change the directory to the folder where you want to unpack the installation.
2. Navigate to the installer and add the argument **-unpackInstall**.

**Example:**

```
"/Desktop/phoenixFD_adv_50000_maya2023_vray6_x64.app/Contents/MacOS/run_installer" -unpackInstall=/phoenix_builds/phoenixFD_adv_50000_maya2023_vray6_x64
```

## Setting up Environment variables

---

Before you run Maya, you need to set the following environmental variables on the local machine.

**Notes:**

**1** - Alternatively if you are rendering with **V-Ray Standalone 6** or newer (meaning you render vrscenes or render using V-Ray GPU), you can copy all files inside the **/phoenix\_builds/my\_version/phoenix/vray6plugins** folder to the folder that the **VRAY\_FOR\_MAYA\_NNNN\_PLUGINS** environment variable points to (specified during the **V-Ray for Maya** installation). This would affect only this specific **V-Ray Standalone version**

or

append the **/phoenix\_builds/my\_version/phoenix/vray6plugins** path to the **VRAY\_PLUGINS** environment variable. Note that this would affect **all installed V-Ray versions**.

For V-Ray versions older than **V-Ray 6** copy all files from **/phoenix\_builds/my\_version/phoenix/vray5plugins** folder to the folder that the **VRAY\_FOR\_MAYA\_NNNN\_PLUGINS** environment variable points to (specified during the **V-Ray for Maya** installation). This would affect only this specific **V-Ray Standalone version**

or

append the **/phoenix\_builds/my\_version/phoenix/vray5plugins** path to the **VRAY\_PLUGINS** environment variable. Note that this would affect **all installed V-Ray versions**.

## Updating the installation to a newer version of Phoenix

---

You need an unpacked installation of Phoenix which you would extract directly into the network shared folder. E.g. if your network path is named **/phoenix\_builds/my\_version**, you should extract the Phoenix unpacked install in that folder and allow it to overwrite all files. This is all that is needed to update the Phoenix network shared installation.