
Subject: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Thu, 03 Jul 2014 05:35:13 GMT

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I reinstalled renegade recently because of the new scripts. However, after a few days I started to notice every now and then my game would stutter. Its half a second or less, but its as if the game stops responding for a split second and FPS drops significantly. It got bad after a while (a day or so later after noticing it) where it was happening every 1-2 minutes and it would stutter/freeze for half a second or so.

So, I reinstalled the game fresh and reinstalled scripts. The first few games were absolutely fine, no stutter issue. I didn't turn shaders on this time because I thought that was causing it. Sure enough though, after exiting the game and coming back a few hours later, that stutter came back. Its not near as bad as the first time, it seems less aggressive and happens less often. Less aggressive meaning it seems "softer", less often, and FPS only drops to like 80-150 usually instead of 10. Also seems shorter, even though im not sure if I'd be able to tell the difference between .25 seconds and .4 seconds.

So, I reinstalled the game for a third time since it seemed to fix the issue the first time. However, I figured it might of been an issue with my SSD possibly, so I installed it to my second SSD. Mind you, I've played renegade on this computer for months on end a couple years ago with no issues. Same hardware in it that was in it then. Well, its on my second SSD, and the stutter wasn't there. After some matches and game restarts later, its back, same as the second time and not aggressive like the first.

I did notice something though, it seems to only happen during the beginning of a new game. When I walk out of a building for the first time, it stutters. Then as I get closer to the enemy base, it stutters. An explosion happens for the first time, it stutters. A new vehicle is made for the first time, it stutters. It seems like the stuttering only happens when new models are loaded in the game, and after maybe half a dozen of stutters, I don't get them for the rest of the match.

It's not a game breaking issue, but would be nice to be rid of it. I believe it has something to do with scripts 4 and the way it loads models, or possibly has to do with some replacement models in scripts 4. Never had this issue in scripts 3.4.4.

Edit: forgot to mention I have tested everything else I can think of. I disabled basically everything on my computer that was running. Antivirus, temp monitoring programs, and ANYTHING else that was running. Nothing was running except for renegade, and the stutter still occurred. I don't have anything like this issue in any other game either, which leads me to believe its scripts.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [danpaul88](#) on Thu, 03 Jul 2014 08:56:06 GMT

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The game generally stutters when its loading in files from the disk for the first time on a given map, which is what the long loading times are meant to prevent (by pre-loading dependencies on the loading screen instead of stuttering constantly during the match trying to load things).

Are you by any chance playing on non-stock maps? If so its likely they don't have their dependencies setup properly which would cause stuttering issues.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPIRX](#) on Thu, 03 Jul 2014 12:46:35 GMT

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Nope, this happens on any map. I also don't notice "long" loading times. It seems to take the same amount as it used to take when I played a few years ago, maybe a second or two longer. If by "long" you mean a couple seconds longer. You would think running it off an SSD would prevent those loading stutters, I never had stutter issues when running off SSD before with scripts 3.4.4.

I just find it odd that with a completely fresh install and scripts 4.1 installed, the first few rounds there is absolutely no stutter. It's not until after a several matches have been played and the game has been restarted once or twice that the stutter comes back. Could this be because of downloaded files causing said stutter? I thought this the other day and deleted all the downloaded files in the roaming folder, but didn't fix it.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [danpaul88](#) on Thu, 03 Jul 2014 14:49:41 GMT

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When its freshly installed there is a good chance a lot of the files are still resident in the RAM standby cache, especially if you have a lot of RAM in your system that isn't being used for anything else.

Whilst an SSD might be fast its still many orders of magnitude slower than RAM and even after reading the file it needs to unpack it into a game data structure, which requires CPU and/or GPU time depending on the type of file. Textures in particular will typically cause micro-stutters since they have to be loaded before they can be rendered.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [Ethenal](#) on Thu, 03 Jul 2014 14:53:38 GMT

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Renegade was made long (I think) before SSDs were a thing, so I wouldn't be surprised if the disk reading code was poorly optimized for that type of drive. However, I'm not an expert on that, and it very well could be irrelevant.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [iRANian](#) on Thu, 03 Jul 2014 14:56:52 GMT

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Try deleting the TTFS folder, it's where 4.0 keeps downloaded resources (maps etc) downloaded from servers.

The folder is located at:

C:\Users\<<username>\AppData\Roaming\Renegade\Client\ttfs

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels
Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Thu, 03 Jul 2014 16:14:56 GMT

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Even if its not optimized for SSD, it should still load faster than a HDD. The point I'm trying to make is that I never had this issue before with scripts 3.4.4. I did not have this problem while using the same SSD in 2010, or even when it was on a HDD. I do have this problem now with scripts 4.1. Which makes me believe it has nothing to do with my hardware, ssd included, and more to do with how scripts 4.1 loads textures compared to 3.4.

@iRANian - I have tried that already.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels
Posted by [StealthEye](#) on Thu, 03 Jul 2014 20:58:01 GMT

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I often noticed the same thing, although I think I had it in 3.4.4 too. Can you try to use 3.4.4 for a few games and see if there really is a difference? I think 4.x is supposed to reduce this issue, actually, although I never really noticed much of a difference.

There could also be a background process, virus scanner, or something like that interfering. Especially virus scanners may slow down the loading of files significantly.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels
Posted by [saberhawk](#) on Fri, 04 Jul 2014 09:19:25 GMT

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It really has nothing to do with textures (which are loaded asynchronously in the background) but models and sounds. It's as good as it's going to get in the 4.x series.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels
Posted by [Jerad2142](#) on Fri, 04 Jul 2014 19:11:05 GMT

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saberhawk wrote on Fri, 04 July 2014 03:19It really has nothing to do with textures (which are loaded asynchronously in the background) but models and sounds. It's as good as it's going to get in the 4.x series.

Is there a way to forcibly pre-cache a model? I only ask because I have a building that is 5.63MB on my Bear Island map, it has LOD, and when it switches to the Highest LOD most clients lock up for a good 1-2 seconds (which beings we usually are driving up to the building in a car going about 80~mph you almost always end up flying into the water that's near the building. So if there is any trick that allows a building to be cached in the video memory so the hard drive isn't the bottle neck that'd be great.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPIRX](#) on Fri, 04 Jul 2014 20:06:45 GMT

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I will test with scripts 3.4 tomorrow probably. Is there a way to remove scripts 4.1 and replacing with 3.4 without having to reinstall? I think I saw a backup folder that 4.1 creates, do I just remove the scripts files and restore those backups, then install 3.4?

@saberhawk - Yeah, you're right. I paid attention to exactly what happens when I stutter. The door opening sound right when I join a game, the first "unit ready", and the sound of the first explosion. Those are the three main ones that I've noticed. Probably some building models as I get closer to the enemy base. After those 3-5 stutters, I don't get any more after that.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [danpaul88](#) on Fri, 04 Jul 2014 20:10:35 GMT

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Jerad Gray wrote on Fri, 04 July 2014 20:11saberhawk wrote on Fri, 04 July 2014 03:19It really has nothing to do with textures (which are loaded asynchronously in the background) but models and sounds. It's as good as it's going to get in the 4.x series.

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Add all the files it uses to the dependencies tab for a preset which is pre-placed on the map and it will be loaded during the loading screen.

Although, saying that, if the model itself is pre-placed on the map it should automatically be considered a dependency...

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 04:06:34 GMT

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I did some further testing...

- Scripts 3.4.4 did not cause me stutter issues, as soon as I installed scripts 4, the stutter came back.

- Installed to a HDD to test if it was SSD issue, the stutter became longer (1 second vs .25 seconds). Was stutter free the first few game launches like usual.

- Restarted computer right after fresh install to wipe the memory. This was to test to see if game being in memory after the install kept the first few game launches stutter free. The game was still stutter free after the restart, which proves its not to do with game being in memory after installing as danpaul88 suggested.

Also, I was wrong about it only being at the beginning of the match. I played a 2hr+ game yesterday and I had stuttering throughout the match. Even stuff that stuttered before, such as the door opening sound, it stuttered again later on. I closed every other running program when I tested all of this. There was no obvious disk or cpu usage spikes during the stutters either.

I just don't understand why after a fresh install its stutter free for a while. Its obvious to me that scripts 4 is causing the issue, but i cant figure out why it doesn't happen right away after a fresh install.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [saberhawk](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 04:51:29 GMT

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XPiRX wrote on Sat, 05 July 2014 21:06

I just don't understand why after a fresh install its stutter free for a while. Its obvious to me that scripts 4 is causing the issue, but i cant figure out why it doesn't happen right away after a fresh install.

Most stutters are currently caused by the game trying to load a file on demand. Some files need to be loaded immediately so the game does nothing else while waiting for Windows to read them (which causes the stutter). Other files can be loaded asynchronously in the background (like textures). Those won't stutter but may cause immediate loads to wait longer.

The reason a "fresh install" seems stutter-free is because Windows uses free RAM to cache file contents. Task Manager shows this as the cached amount.

Disks are still significantly slower than RAM so if all the game files are cached everything loads much faster.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 04:59:29 GMT

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saberhawk wrote on Sat, 05 July 2014 21:51XPiRX wrote on Sat, 05 July 2014 21:06

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Disks are still significantly slower than RAM so if all the game files are cached everything loads much faster.

I just said in my previous post that I restarted after a fresh install, therefore clearing all of the "cached file contents" from RAM. Also, I have no shortage of RAM (16GB), I have 10-12GB free on average when playing renegade.

Again, scripts 3.4 caused no such stutter issues, neither does a virgin renegade install. With scripts 4 however, I get the fucking stutters. I have come to the conclusion that there is some memory issue/leak with scripts 4 that after having loading renegade a few times it starts to cause stuttering. I'm waiting for my newest reinstall to start stuttering, I will restart and see if that fixes the stuttering. If so, that means its most likely a memory leak issue within scripts 4.

I'm fully aware that disks are slower than RAM. Restarting after a fresh install clears everything that is cached in RAM... and yet there is NO stuttering. After a a few games(opening and closing of renegade, not matches) the stutter appears to point to some type of memory issue within scripts 4. Again, scripts 3.4 DID NOT CAUSE THIS ISSUE, its only within scripts 4. I'm just waiting for the stuttering to reappear and then I will restart my system (I don't restart often at all) and see if the stutter disappears.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [Ethenal](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 05:42:36 GMT

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XPiRX wrote on Sat, 05 July 2014 23:59I have come to the conclusion that there is some memory issue/leak with scripts 4

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memory_leak

Specifically,

Quote: In object-oriented programming, a memory leak may happen when an object is stored in

memory but cannot be accessed by the running code.

A memory leak is essentially when a programmer decides to ask for some memory from the computer, does something with it, then throws away his reference to the memory without telling the computer that he's done with it - therefore, the computer thinks the memory is still in use and the program no longer has an address to the memory, so the memory is "leaked" and cannot be reclaimed until the program is exited.

I do not see how this could have anything to do with your stuttering issue.

EDIT: By the way, I might as well mention that I run Renegade with always.dep (0kb) in my data folder, as not recommended by the TT team, and I get pretty significant stuttering immediately after I join due to my client loading the files/textures needed on demand, instead of loading most of them at the loading screen. In my experience the stuttering goes away once (in my estimation) everything in the game is loaded, and I don't experience the problem for the rest of my playing time.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 05:54:54 GMT

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Ethetal wrote on Sat, 05 July 2014 22:42XPiRX wrote on Sat, 05 July 2014 23:59I have come to the conclusion that there is some memory issue/leak with scripts 4
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Possibly I used the wrong term. But wouldn't loaded memory that's leftover/addressed wrong cause issues later on when the program calls for the same objects? This could explain why a fresh install with brand new objects that are loaded, without conflicting issues from previous loads, doesn't cause issues.

I may not be an expert on coding but I'm not a noob when it comes to computers. All I can say is that I only have this issue with scripts 4. It has something to do with scripts 4, that I am certain of. And comparing your stuttering, mine doesn't go away once its loaded. It happens again after X amount of time. I thought it was just during the first part of the level loading, but after playing long games the same model/sounds that were loaded previously that caused stutter, they cause stutter again. Its driving me insane and I can't seem to fix it.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels
Posted by [EvilWhiteDragon](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 13:32:52 GMT
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XPIRX wrote on Sun, 06 July 2014 06:06I did some further testing...

- Scripts 3.4.4 did not cause me stutter issues, as soon as I installed scripts 4, the stutter came back.

- Installed to a HDD to test if it was SSD issue, the stutter became longer (1 second vs .25 seconds). Was stutter free the first few game launches like usual.

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Also, I was wrong about it only being at the beginning of the match. I played a 2hr+ game yesterday and I had stuttering throughout the match. Even stuff that stuttered before, such as the door opening sound, it stuttered again later on. I closed every other running program when I tested all of this. There was no obvious disk or cpu usage spikes during the stutters either.

I just don't understand why after a fresh install its stutter free for a while. Its obvious to me that scripts 4 is causing the issue, but i cant figure out why it doesn't happen right away after a fresh install.

Could it be that your computer slightly overheats due to a higher room temperature (summer time) or dust in the fans? This would effect other (graphics) programs as well after a while of running.

Additionally TT might be slightly heavier on the GFX card due to AA and some other things than 3.4.4/stock.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels
Posted by [StealthEye](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 14:11:39 GMT
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I just tried this on 3.4.4 and 4.1 r6440, and I can confirm that 3.4.4 loads smoother (even though I think it had dependency loading disabled?). The issue is not due to RAM caching or something like that. I don't know how a reinstall could fix it. Perhaps some file builds up, making it slower

(thumbs db?).

FYI, you can clear the system disk cache without restarting using Sysinternals RAMMap (<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/sysinternals/ff700229.aspx>).

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 17:54:13 GMT

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@EvilWhiteDragon - No, my system does not overheat. Neither heatsink on the GPU or CPU is stock, they are both after market. I monitor temps always. I used to play renegade on this machine a few years ago, hardware has not changed. GPU is not being taxed heavily either, the highest usage I've seen is 30% playing renegade. I've also disabled shaders, AA, post processing, and put graphics to the lowest setting possible - stutter still exists.

@StealthEye - Yeah, I've used RAMMap, I just restarted to make sure everything was cleared. I don't know why a fresh install fixes it either. I tried making a backup of a fresh install directory, then when stutter started I deleted the install and copied over the fresh install backup. Stutter was still there.

Is there a way to load all the sounds/models for that map to be loaded into RAM without having to wait for it to be loaded on demand? I have no shortage of RAM and should be able to do that, that should remove the stutter according to some people who have posted here. Still doesn't explain why it doesn't occur after a fresh install.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [StealthEye](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 19:31:45 GMT

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XPiRX wrote on Sun, 06 July 2014 19:54@StealthEye - Yeah, I've used RAMMap, I just restarted to make sure everything was cleared. I don't know why a fresh install fixes it either. I tried making a backup of a fresh install directory, then when stutter started I deleted the install and copied over the fresh install backup. Stutter was still there.

Did you try the same thing for My Documents/Renegade?

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Sun, 06 Jul 2014 23:23:32 GMT

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StealthEye wrote on Sun, 06 July 2014 12:31XPiRX wrote on Sun, 06 July 2014 19:54@StealthEye - Yeah, I've used RAMMap, I just restarted to make sure everything was cleared. I don't know why a fresh install fixes it either. I tried making a backup of a fresh install directory, then when stutter started I deleted the install and copied over the fresh install backup.

Stutter was still there.

Did you try the same thing for My Documents/Renegade?

I totally forgot about that folder as well as the appdata/roaming one.

Edit: looks the roaming folder is only for downloaded files from the server. I'll delete it when I replace the other folders after stutter comes back again.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Wed, 16 Jul 2014 00:50:44 GMT

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After the stuttering came back, seemed to take longer than normal, I then deleted and replaced all folders with the backups. Stuttering remained. It seems to occur less now since I deleted the folder in documents. I didn't realize 4.1 created a folder there. Ever since I deleted that, the stuttering occurs less(at least it appears that way) and took longer to appear again. It still comes back though after a reinstall.

There are no weird hidden files that get created in any of the folders. I even checked files sizes and everything, the only files that changed were within Documents\Renegade\Client. After deleting and replacing said files it doesn't fix the stutter, only a fresh install does.

Since it appears to occur less often now and took longer to appear ever since that initial deletion of the documents folder, I would imagine it could have something to do with that folder. Deleting and replacing the folder doesn't fix it though, which is extremely odd. There are no large files, garbage files, hidden files, etc. in the folder. I even tried to delete all the chat logs and .thu files that get created and nothing changed.

I noticed an assest error log file within that folder. I monitored it and every time I got a stutter, something failed to load.

```
Failed to load 'e_tk_sld_Itmt'  
Failed to load hierarchy 'ShatterPlanes1'  
Failed to load texture 'multisplash01.tga'  
Failed to load texture "  
Failed to load animation 'NULL.NULL'
```

Those are the most common ones (probably 80-90%) that occur right when a stutter happens. There are probably some others that occur right as a stutter happens, but those are the ones that I remember noticing a lot. There are a lot of other errors but they occur not during stutters as well. These errors might occur without a stutter happening, but they happen exactly when a stutter happens as well, the null.null and " have only occurred when a stutter happens so far.

Seems to be either the stutter is causing a load failure, or a texture failing to load causes the stutter, I would assume the latter.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [Ethenal](#) on Wed, 16 Jul 2014 12:05:18 GMT

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Ever tried procmon.exe from Sysinternals? It's a very useful application for this kind of thing, you filter out which programs you want to see (I usually just make a rule that says "if process name IS NOT brenbot.exe, then EXCLUDE") and then it gives you pretty much every important system call that the program uses. Very indispensable for troubleshooting hard-to-catch errors like this.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [StealthEye](#) on Wed, 16 Jul 2014 19:29:38 GMT

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Perhaps it even stutters purely due to writing the log messages to disk (inefficiently, synchronously, one write per character, or something like that). Or it tries some other way of finding the file. Perhaps filesystem-related? A clean install somehow being more efficient because the file table is less fragmented or something like that. I don't think anything like this should normally be noticeable though.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Thu, 17 Jul 2014 00:47:07 GMT

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@StealthEye - Don't know why after deleting said files it wouldn't stop stuttering, it's also on an SSD which should have minimal access/write time.

Does scripts 3.4 write log files? I don't recall seeing any and I had no stuttering while testing with that version. Doesn't really make sense that accessing/writing to a log file would cause such an issue though. When I tested on a HDD, the stuttering got worse(longer), and the log files would of still been on the SSD since they're in documents folder on the SSD. Leads me to believe it doesn't have to do with accessing the log files itself and more to do with loading of data from the install directory.

@Ethenal Yes I have used it before, I didn't even think about that program until you mentioned it, I will give that a go.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [StealthEye](#) on Thu, 17 Jul 2014 01:32:03 GMT

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Bad file writing can be incredibly slow if it uses unbuffered synchronous I/O and does not chunk the data right. I used applications before that took seconds to write only a few 100 lines to a log file (without any processing other than the formatting). Of course, this could be implemented much more efficiently, but that probably goes for whatever is causing the stutters too. Stutters are at

several 10ms resolution, bad disk access patterns may not be too far from that. I'm just saying it shouldn't be excluded completely, I'm not saying it is most likely the cause.

I think 3.4 writes the same log file. And if you say it happens more when the install dir is on the HDD and the log file is still on the SSD, then I guess it's not that.

Procmon sounds like a good idea.

I do wonder though, does it display ShatterPlanes1 every time? That's from ShatterSystem afaik, and afaik that's only used for window shattering; which I would not expect to be something that happens all the time?

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels
Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Thu, 17 Jul 2014 02:03:23 GMT

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No it does not. It's just one of the errors I see pop up frequently when I get a stutter, it pops up other times when a stutter does not happen though, same with the other errors. It may be unrelated because there are often other errors that come with the ShatterPlanes1 error usually. Those errors are just the most common I see occur when a stutter occurs. The null and blank " errors I get are only when a stutter occurs, I have yet to see them get logged without a stutter happening.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels
Posted by [danpaul88](#) on Thu, 17 Jul 2014 08:23:20 GMT

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I think null is what it tries to load as a fallback model when it fails to load a real model, but that only exists in LE from what I recall. It could be that, upon failing to load a real model it compounds the problem by trying to load the null model, which also doesn't exist.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels
Posted by [XPiRX](#) on Fri, 25 Jul 2014 22:50:40 GMT

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Figured out a solution to the problem. Delete the \Documents\Renegade\Client folder and re-install scripts 4. Deleting the client folder without re-installing didn't fix the issue, neither does just re-installing scripts. Doing both however does seem to fix the stuttering for a while until it comes back, then I just repeat those steps and its gone.

This method has worked twice now, hopefully it keeps working.

Subject: Re: FPS Drop/Game Stutter at beginning of new levels

Posted by [StealthEye](#) on Wed, 06 Aug 2014 13:12:57 GMT

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Perhaps try backing up your Client folder after a clean install. Then, when you get the issue, backup the bad Client folder too. Then put back the "clean" folder, and see if the problem disappears. Put back the "bad" folder and see if the problem reappears. If that's the case, try mixing the folders to find the file(s) that are really causing the issue.
