

🔪 Red Pen for Blender

User manual - a bug tracker for your scene, in the 3D Viewport sidebar.

Version 0.4.0 · August 2026 · by Lincoln Tracy · redpen.tools

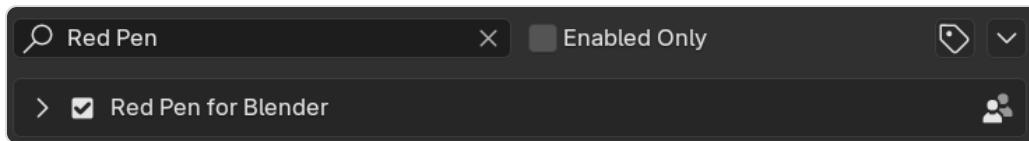
What it does

While you work on a .blend, you file typed notes with a real status lifecycle - "left shoulder needs rigging before shot 12" as a Problem, "try a warmer key light" as an Idea - in a panel that lives in the viewport sidebar. Notes are saved next to your .blend file, never inside it, and one click sends them to the Red Pen Hub, where they sit on the same board as your web and music project notes.

Free and GPL. No accounts, nothing leaves your machine.

Install

1. Blender 4.2 or newer: **Edit > Preferences > Get Extensions > Install from Disk.**
2. Pick the `red_pen-0.4.0.zip` file.
3. Enable **Red Pen for Blender.**

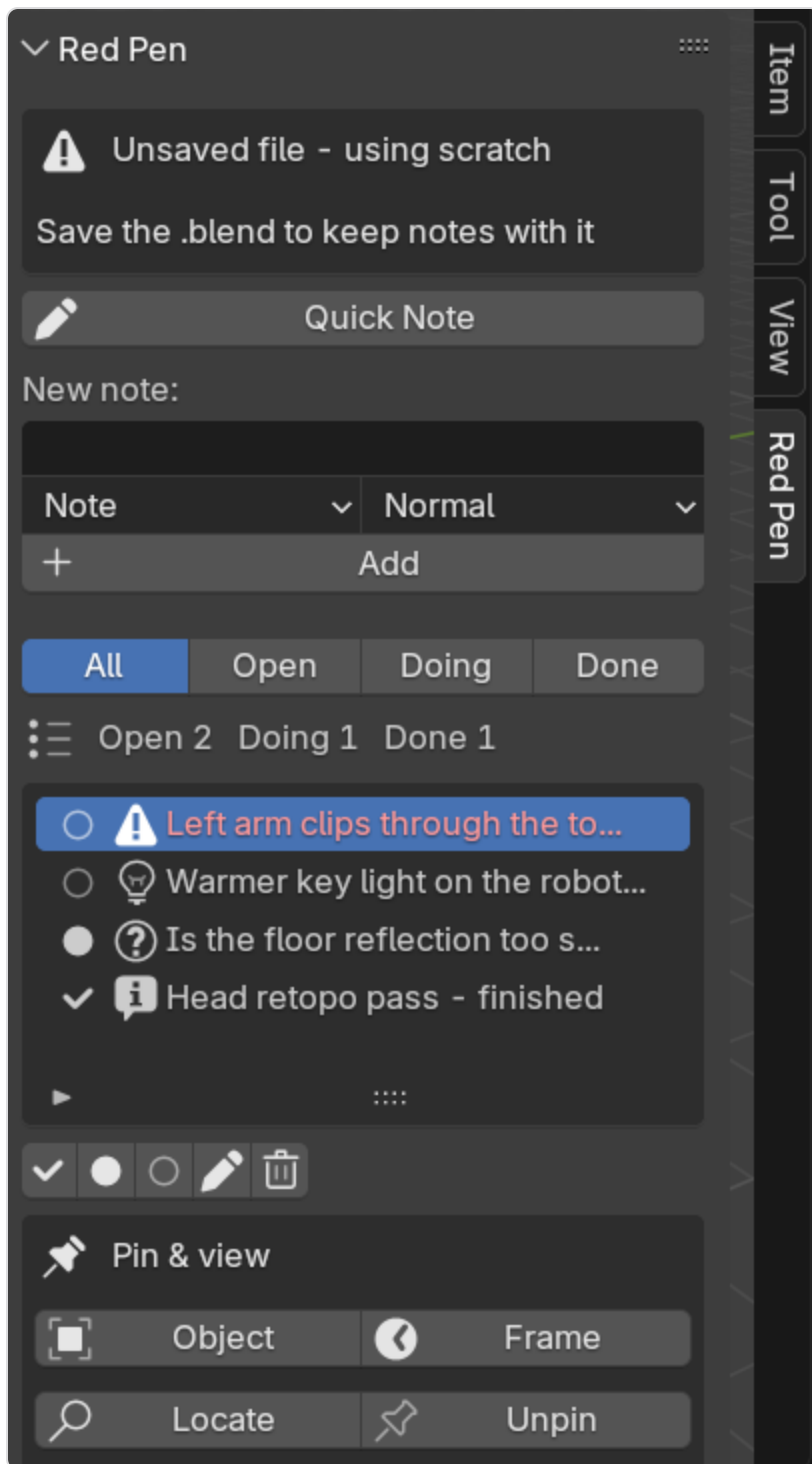


The extension enabled in Preferences.

Using it

Press **N** in the 3D Viewport and open the **Red Pen** tab. Write the note, pick a type - Note, Problem, Idea, Question - and a priority (Low / Normal / High), then add it. Notes list in the panel with their status and a colour cue for high priority. Move a note through **open, in progress, and resolved**, edit its text and type after the fact, and filter the list by status with live Open / Doing / Done counts.

Pin a note in the scene. With a note selected, **Pin > Object** anchors it to the active object and drops a clickable marker in the 3D view at that object - click the marker to jump straight back to the note. **Pin > Frame** anchors it to the current timeline frame instead. **Locate** selects and frames the pinned object, or moves the playhead to the pinned frame. Markers follow the object if it moves and hide once the note is resolved; turn them off in the add-on preferences.



The Red Pen panel in the viewport sidebar.

Where your notes live

In a sidecar file next to your project: `<project folder>/redpen/notes.json` - plain JSON, and **never inside the .blend**, so your scene file stays untouched. If the .blend hasn't been saved yet, notes go to a scratch store in your home folder (`~/.red-pen-blender/scratch.json`) so nothing is lost before the first save. When you save the .blend, any scratch notes move into the project sidecar automatically.

One folder, one `notes.json` - but each note belongs to a single .blend, so two files in the same folder keep separate lists. If you rename or delete a .blend, its notes stay in the file and the panel reports them as stranded, with a button to

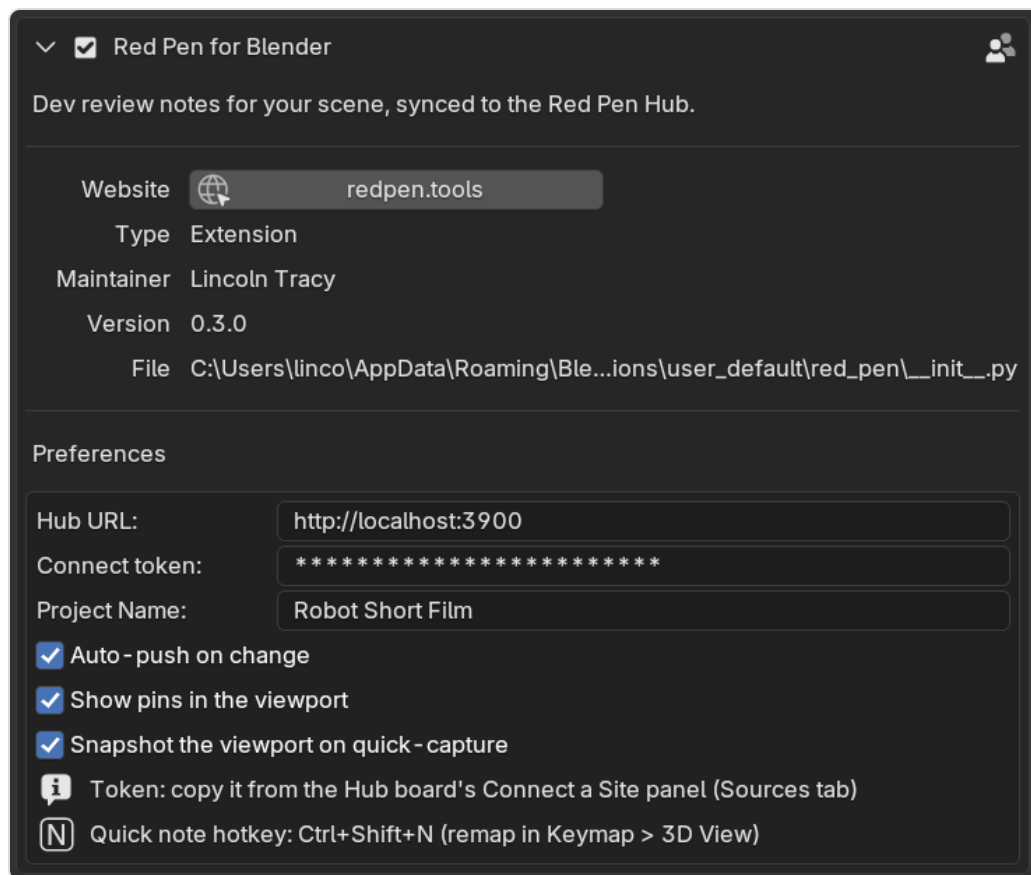
move them onto the file you have open.

Connect to the Red Pen Hub (optional)

If you run the free Hub, your scene notes can join the shared board:

1. Start the Hub and open its connect info for the URL and token.
2. In **Edit > Preferences > Add-ons > Red Pen for Blender**, paste the Hub URL and connect token, and optionally a project name.
3. In the panel, **Push to Hub** sends every note; **Pull from Hub** brings status changes back, so a note you resolve on the board reflects in Blender.

Pull before you push if you've resolved notes on the board - pushing stale local state first would overwrite them.



Hub connection in the add-on preferences.



Red Pen Hub

combined project board

7

OPEN

2

IN PROGRESS

2

RESOLVED

11

ALL

5

PROJECTS

5

SOURCES

Refresh

Export MD

Export CSV

⚙️

?

Search notes...

All projects

All surfaces

All types

All priorities

Saved views...

Save view

PROJECT	SURFACE	TYPE	PRIORITY ▼	STATUS	NOTE	LOCATION	CREATED	RESOLVED
Aurora Bakery	wordpress	bug	high	open	Hero photo is soft on retina screens - export at 2x	Front page	2026-07-10 10:00	Start Resolve
Landing Page	static	bug	high	open	CTA contrast fails on the gradient - darken the band	#signup	2026-07-10 10:00	Start Resolve
Neon Tape EP	ableton	note	high	open	Kick clashes with the bass through the drop	Clip: Kick Stack (Drums) @ ...	2026-07-10 10:00	Start Resolve
Aurora Bakery	wordpress	suggestion	normal	open	Menu page: mark the seasonal items	Menu	2026-07-10 10:00	Start Resolve
Portfolio API	express	note	normal	open	Document the pagination params	/api/projects	2026-07-10 10:00	Start Resolve
Robot Short Film	blender	bug	normal	open	Rig the left shoulder before animating shot 12	robot_rig.blend / Armature	2026-07-10 10:00	Start Resolve
Landing Page	static	suggestion	low	open	Try the testimonial above the fold	#testimonials	2026-07-10 10:00	Start Resolve

Aggregated 11 notes from 5 sources - 2026-07-13T19:09:44.531Z

Scene notes on the Hub board, next to web and music projects - the "Robot Short Film" rows are Blender notes.

From Hub 0.9.1 the board shows each note's viewport snapshot, so a scene note is recognisable on the board without opening Blender.

The rest of the family

Red Pen also runs on WordPress, Express apps, static sites and Ableton Live. Each surface is its own port of one shared model, so they do not all have the same features at the same time. The **Surface matrix** at `docs.redpen.tools/matrix.html` is the per-feature answer for which surface has what today.

What's new, and what's coming

This 0.4.0 release scopes notes to one .blend instead of the whole folder, moves snapshots along with their notes on the first save, draws pins at the exact point you clicked rather than the object origin, offers to carry notes forward on a Save As, lets the quick-note hotkey set a type and priority instead of filing everything as a normal Note, and surfaces notes stranded on a .blend that has been renamed or deleted so they can be moved onto the open file. 0.3.0 brought the quick-note hotkey (`Ctrl+Shift+N`, remappable) that drops a note where you point, snapshots the viewport and remembers the camera angle; a Bookmark View action so Locate restores your exact view; and anchor-loss detection. 0.2.0 brought viewport pins (object and frame anchors), priority, an in-progress status, editing, and a filtered list. Still planned: finer-grained pinning to individual mesh faces and shader nodes, and threaded replies.

If something breaks

Symptom	Likely cause and fix
No Red Pen tab in the sidebar	The extension isn't enabled (check Preferences > Get Extensions), or you're on Blender older than 4.2.
Notes missing after moving the project	The <code>.redpen</code> folder didn't travel with the .blend. Keep it next to the file - it is the notes.
Notes missing after renaming the .blend	They are filed under the old name. The panel shows a stranded count - click Show them and move them onto this file.
Push to Hub fails	The Hub isn't running or the token is wrong. Check the URL and token in the add-on preferences.
A Hub-side resolve didn't appear in Blender	Click Pull from Hub - the pull is what brings board changes back.

Red Pen for Blender 0.4.0 - built by Lincoln Tracy. GPL-3.0-or-later. Part of the Red Pen family: WordPress, Express, static sites, Blender, Ableton Live, and the Red Pen Hub. redpen.tools