

Flash 8 Basics Class Part 2

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2006

This is part two of the Flash Basics class. Attendees should know how to use the Flash art tools and how the timeline works. You must also understand how layers work, the differences between frames and keyframes, plus how symbols and instances interact.



What You Will Learn in Part Two

Part two of the Flash Basics course will build upon what you've learned so far in Flash Basics Part One. During this class you will learn how to animate text, change the transparency and size of objects in movies, create optical illusions, and you will get your first taste of the advanced capabilities of Flash Actionscript. By the end of this two part class you should have a pretty good idea of the creative capabilities of Flash.

Text Animation

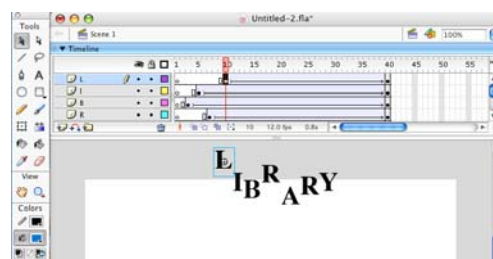
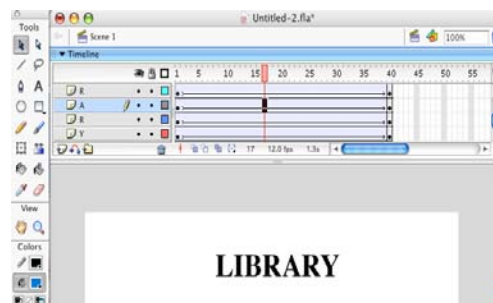
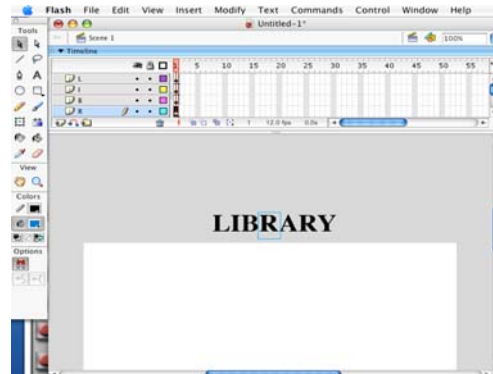
1 Falling Text and Layers

Open a new Flash document and type LIBRARY. Change the font size to 40, click on the Selection tool and drag the text box to the upper left corner.

Choose Modify-Break Apart from the menu. Next, Choose Modify-Timeline-Distribute to Layers. Get rid of Layer 1 by dragging it to the trash.

Position the Selection Tool in row 40 of the Y layer and drag up so that all the layers are shaded on 40. Right click and choose Insert Keyframe. With row 40 still highlighted, select all the layers by using Apple-A. Move the LIBRARY text down to the middle of the stage. Again, position the arrow in the Y layer and drag up, then right click and select Create Motion Tween. Now test your movie.

You can stagger how the letters come down by dragging the frames in the 1st row a random number of spaces in the timeline. You could also create a bouncing effect by adding more keyframes and motion tweens at the end of the movie.



Three Kinds of Text

There are three kinds of text in Flash. **Static** text is just what it means, the text is used for titles or captions. **Input Text** is used to interact with your Flash document, such as entering a name or address in a form. Finally, there is **Dynamic Text**, which changes depending upon certain criteria in your Flash document.

Why The Focus on Text?

Most Flash sites, splash pages, or interfaces will use some form of text. Unlike word processing, Flash text can be made to change sizes, move to different locations, or provide interactive elements for your web site or movie. By learning how to manipulate and animate text in a variety of ways, you can expand your design capability to have text do more than just be a static display on a web site.

Alpha & Image Changes

Each instance of a symbol used on the Stage can have its Alpha, or transparency, changed by using keyframes. You can also change the brightness and tint of the instance while it's playing in a movie. There is also an advanced setting where you can change the RGB values of the instance during the movie. Every time a keyframe is inserted you can change the instance in a variety of ways.

Movie in a Movie

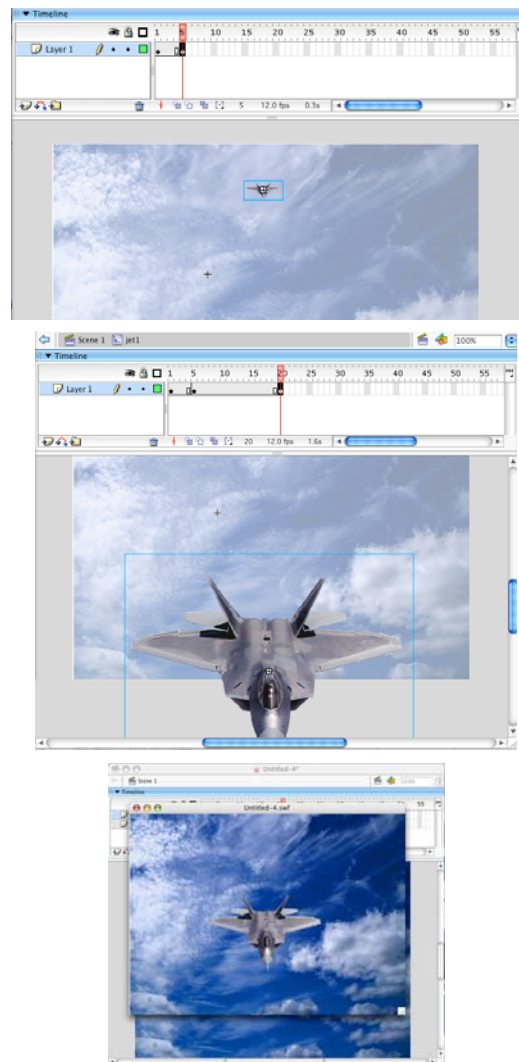
In the exercise on the right, you are actually creating a movie inside of a movie. This is a fairly common practice when creating longer and more complex projects. By converting separate symbols into movies, you will be keeping your Flash timeline much cleaner and better organized. When using Flash Actionscript you will actually be able to tell movies when to load, play, and how they can be controlled.

Adding Sound

You can add sound to your Flash movies by simply adding another layer, then importing the sound file either into the Library or onto the Stage. Once the file is on a layer it can be edited through the Property Inspector. Sounds can be used more than once in a movie and you can use multiple sounds by adding additional layers.

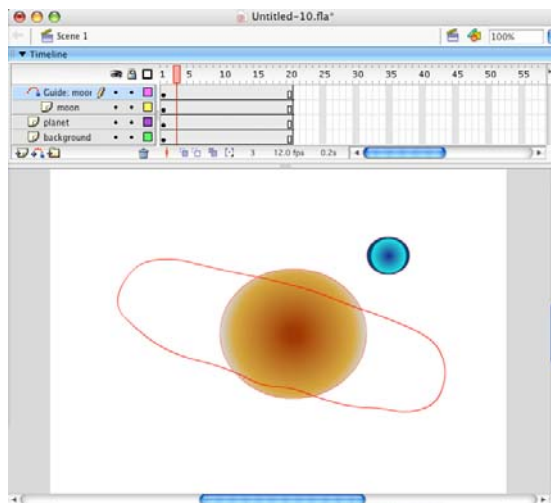
Alpha & Size Tweening

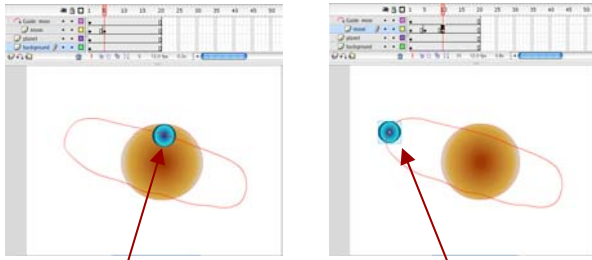
- 1 Open a new Flash document and choose File-Import to Stage, then choose the sky.jpg. Convert it into a graphic symbol called **sky**, then rename layer 1 to **sky**. Insert a frame at 36.
- 2 Create a second layer called **Jet**, then import to the stage the f22b.png file. Convert it to a movie clip called **jet1**. Right click and chose Edit in Place, then convert the image into a graphic symbol called **jet2**. Change the size to 50x25, then position it near the top of the screen. Click in the 1st frame of the jet layer, then choose Alpha from the property inspector and set it to 0%. Insert a keyframe in 5, then set the Alpha to 100%.
- 3 Insert a keyframe at 20, move the jet to the bottom of the screen, then restore it to its original size. Enter another keyframe at 25, then change the Alpha to 0%. Finally, add motion tweens between all of the keyframes and then chose File-Edit Document. Now, test your movie.



3D Motion Illusion

- 1 Open a new Flash document. Change the name of the 1st layer to **Background**. Save your file to the desktop. Add a layer called **planet** and a second layer called moon.
- 2 Choose the Oval Tool and draw a large circle in the **planet** layer. Use the Gradient tool to change the colors to make the object look like a smooth sphere. Following the same steps, draw and color a smaller circle in the **moon** layer. Convert the smaller circle to a graphic symbol.





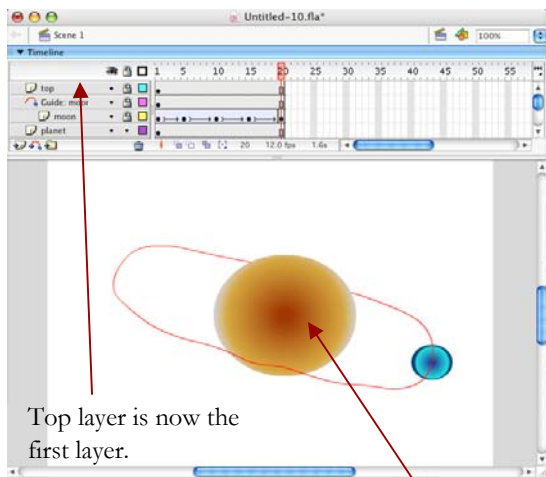
Keyframe 5

Keyframe 10



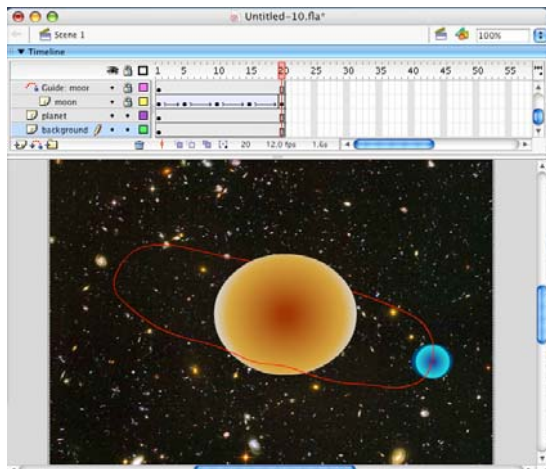
Keyframe 15

Keyframe 20



Top layer is now the first layer.

Line has been removed



3 On the moon layer, choose Insert-Timeline-Motion Guide. Using the Pencil Tool, draw an ellipse around the planet for the moon's orbit. Use a color that can be seen over the planet. Insert Frames at 20 on the timeline for all layers.

4 Insert a Keyframe at 5 of the moon layer, then drag the moon to the center of the ellipse. Repeat the sequence and add Keyframes at 10, 15, and 20, each time moving the moon to the ends or middle of the ellipse. Make sure that the crosshairs align on the guide. Now add motion tweens to each five frame section and test your movie.

5 Select the Line Tool and draw a line on the planet layer across the upper half or third of the planet so that it includes the part of the motion guide on the planet. Draw an angle if necessary to give the moon room to avoid the area where the line crosses. Using the Selection tool, click on the upper half of the planet. Then, right click and choose Cut.

6 Add a new layer called **top** and paste the top part of the planet to make a whole circle again. Move the **top** layer to the very top row of the timeline. Lock the top three layers, then select the line and delete it. Finally, on the background layer, use Import to Stage and choose the **space.jpg** image. Now test your movie.

7 You could easily do several variations of this project, such as a slower orbit by extending the frames down to 60. You could also create a moving space background or turn the planet and moon into movie clips, then have them rotate as the moon orbits the planet. Also, the art program could be used to create realistic looking planets, then have them change from day into night.

Flash & Video

Can video be used in Flash? The answer is yes. You can import a video file on to the stage, where the program will then display a video import wizard. The import wizard will ask you if you wish to edit the video(very basic edits) and give you several options for displaying it. The video can then be used with other Flash elements for your project.

Components

Flash has a built-in set of what are called **Components**. These are pre-built movie clips that can be used in your Flash project. They include things like media controllers, radio buttons, or other items that will enable you to build complex Flash movies.

Flash Web Sites

It is possible to build an entire web site from Flash, without using any other commercial web creation software. Using Flash, you can create very dynamic and interactive web sites. You can build all of the navigational menus, buttons, pre-loaders, and other components using Flash. To get some ideas about how to build web sites using Flash, visit this site:

MacromediaShowcase/Site of the Day:
www.macromedia.com/cfusion/showcase/index.cfm

Further Tutorials

Many of the ideas for these tutorials have come from these sites and are worth checking for additional ideas:

Kirupa.com

www.kirupa.com

Tutorial Outpost

www.tutorialoutpost.com

Flash Tutorials US

www.flashtutorials.us

Don't forget to check out the many sites that sell pre-made Flash designs and web templates. They are a treasure trove for ideas and to show you what is possible with Flash. Another good source of ideas and creativity is to visit many of the new movie sites, many of which are designed in Flash. The sites for X-Men 2 and 3 are great examples of the capabilities of Flash.

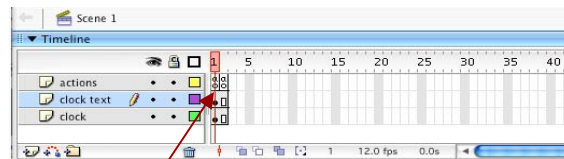
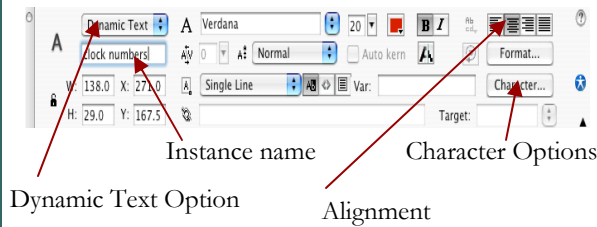
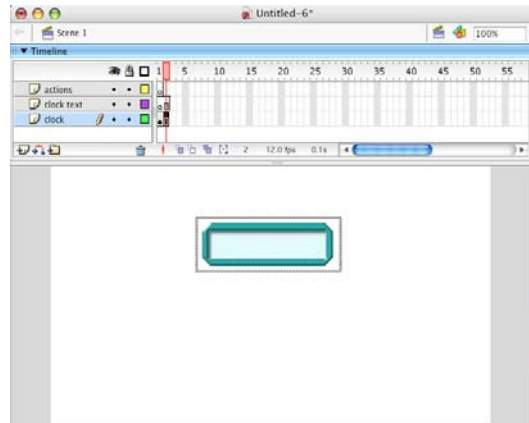
Macromedia

The web site from the creators of Flash has excellent tutorials, updates, developer's tools, and a forum.

www.macromedia.com

Marriott Library Student
Computing Labs

Basic Flash Actionscript: Digital Clock



Actions designated in both frames.



Flash Actionscript is a powerful tool that enables the user to essentially code actions for Flash elements. Actionscript is for advanced users, but these two short tutorials will give you an idea of how it can be used.

1 Rename the first layer to **clock**, then add a second layer called **clock text** and a third layer called **actions**. Click on the clock layer and import to the stage the **clock-face.png** file. Add a frame to frame 2 of the **clock** and **clock text** layers.

2 Insert a Dynamic Text Field into the clock face by using the Text Tool and drawing in frame 1 of the **clock text** layer. Enter **clock_txt** into the instance field. Select a font, font size, color, and align-center for the text. Click on the Selection Tool and center the text in the clock face. Make sure that the text box can hold 8 items.

3 Click on frame 1 of the **actions** layer and choose Window-Development Panels-Actions, then paste the code from the actionscripts Word document for the Digital Clock tutorial. In frame 2 of the **actions** layer, insert a keyframe, then enter into the Actions box this piece of code:

```
gotoAndPlay(1);
```

Now test your movie.

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