After Effects Top 10 for Video Editors

with Ian Robinson

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A note from the author:

Hello! Thank you for checking out this course. I designed this PDF to be an additional resource for you to reference with the videos. The video gives the full process including some context for each of the different tools and techniques. In this PDF you will find notes which outline the steps required to complete each video. Think of this as at the key summary overview for each video in the course. If you find yourself ever wondering about what you saw in the videos please give this PDF a look for your reference. Once again, thank you so much for taking the time to explore this course.

Sincerely: Ian Robinson - ian@softboxmedia.com

1. Create and Animate Text Using Presets

Text presets are like the ultimate cheat code when animating type in After Effects. In this tutorial we go over how to apply and adjust text presets so you can create something engaging both quickly and with precision.
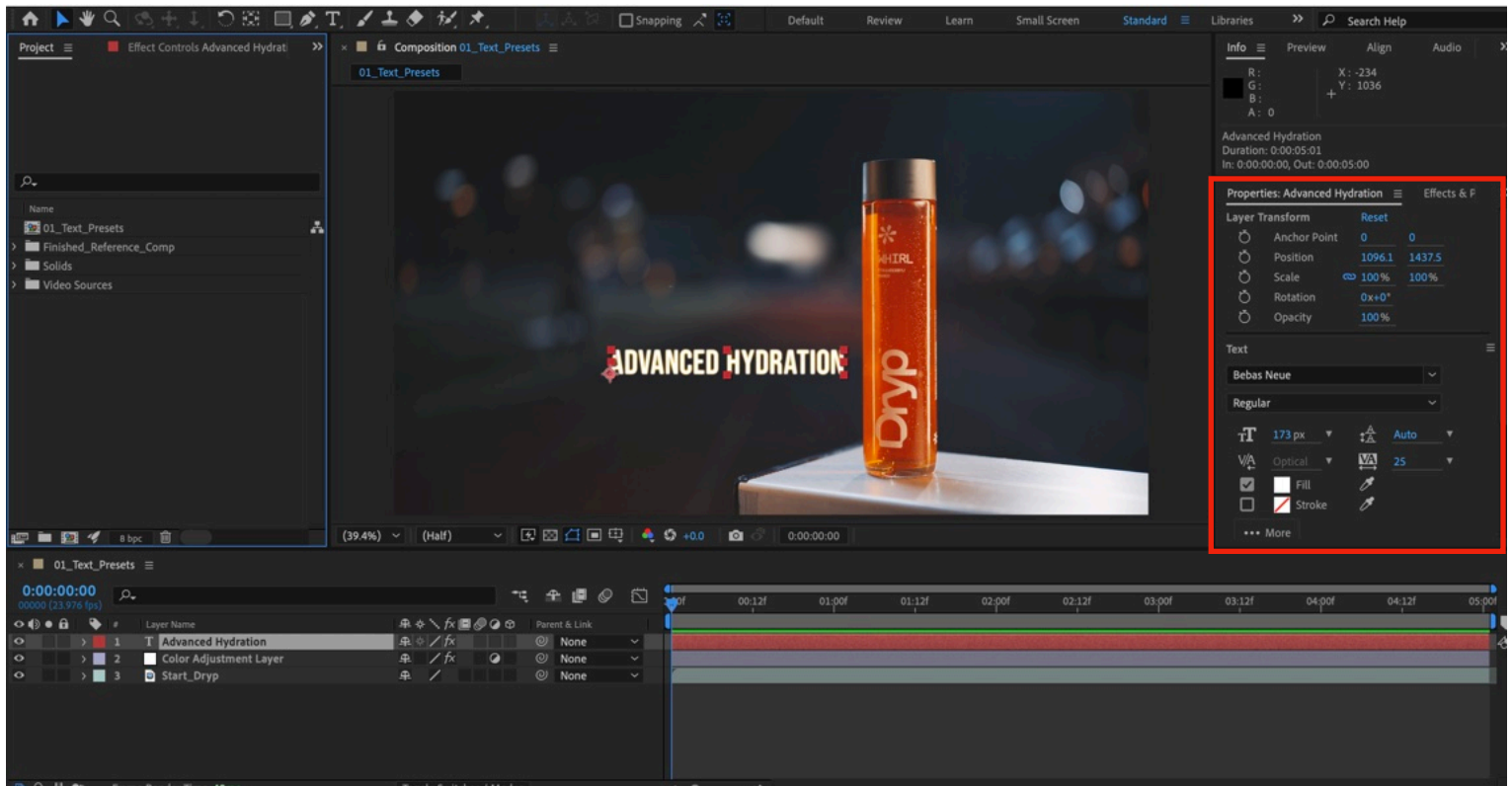
When you select a text layer in the timeline, you can pick a font and format the type using the Properties panel.

1. Bring the Effects and Presets panel to the front
2. Select the Text Layer and Position the Current Time Indicator on the frame where you'd like the animation to start
3. Drag and drop the preset onto the text layer either in the Timeline or Composition Panel, (you can also simply double click on the preset to apply it to the selected text layer
4. Press the Spacebar to preview the animation
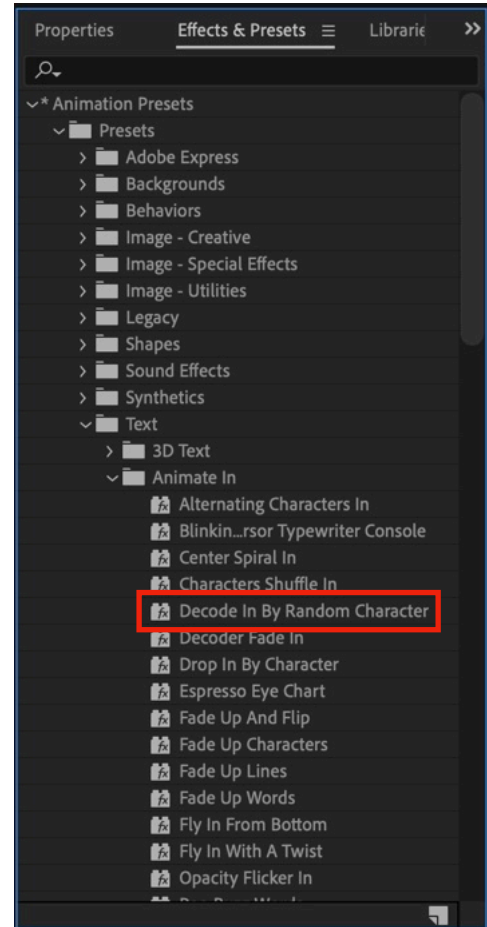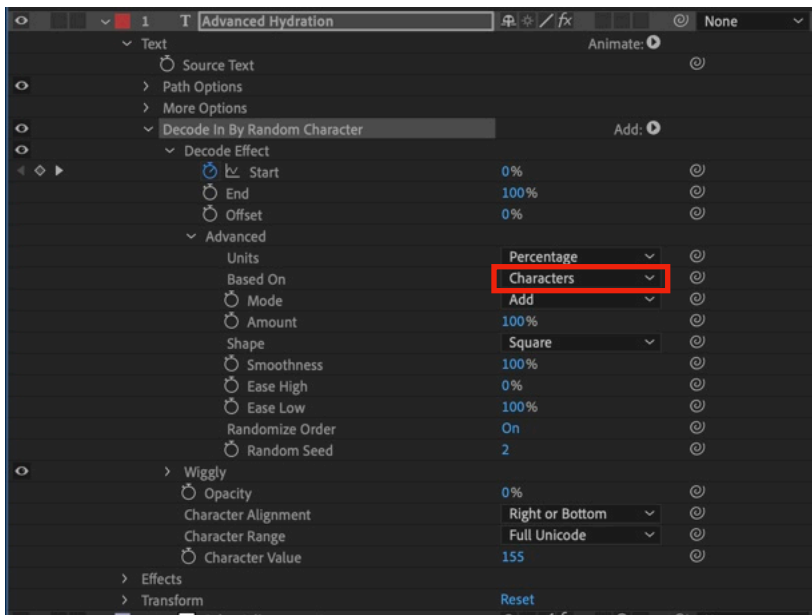
1. After applying the preset, open the text properties, and the preset properties to reveal the Advanced section
2. Use the Based On dropdown menu to change the animation from Characters to Words (so now the preset will animate word by word instead of letter by letter)

To create the text animating out of the scene, simply repeat the same process as above.

1. Move the Current Time Indicator down the timeline to where you want the animation to start, then double click the Preset you'd like to apply. *(In the tutorial we went to the Animate Out folder in the presets and applied the Decode Out by Random Character preset).*
2. Press the spacebar to preview the animation

*Make the text flicker more by applying another preset.*

3. Move the Current Time Indicator Down the timeline to just before the other preset you just applied and apply the *Opacity Flicker Out* preset
4. Press the space bar to preview the animation

2. Dynamic Titles

In this tutorial, we are going to create an animated title, using Text layers and Shape layers. Then we are going to create both a lower third and a generic infographic utilizing the same techniques, and reusing as many of the elements as possible... across each of the different graphics
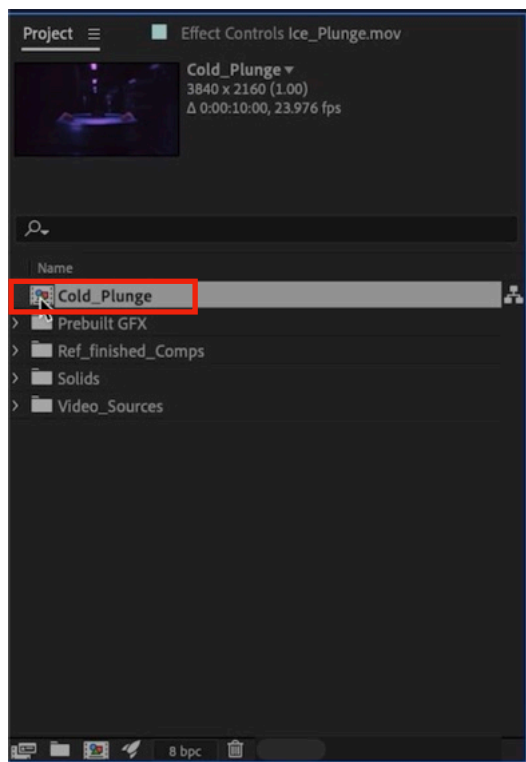

Duplicate the Cold Plunge comp 2 times to get three compositions total. Then rename them to match the image below.
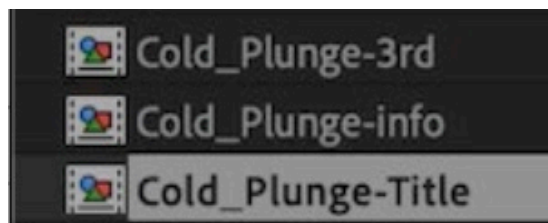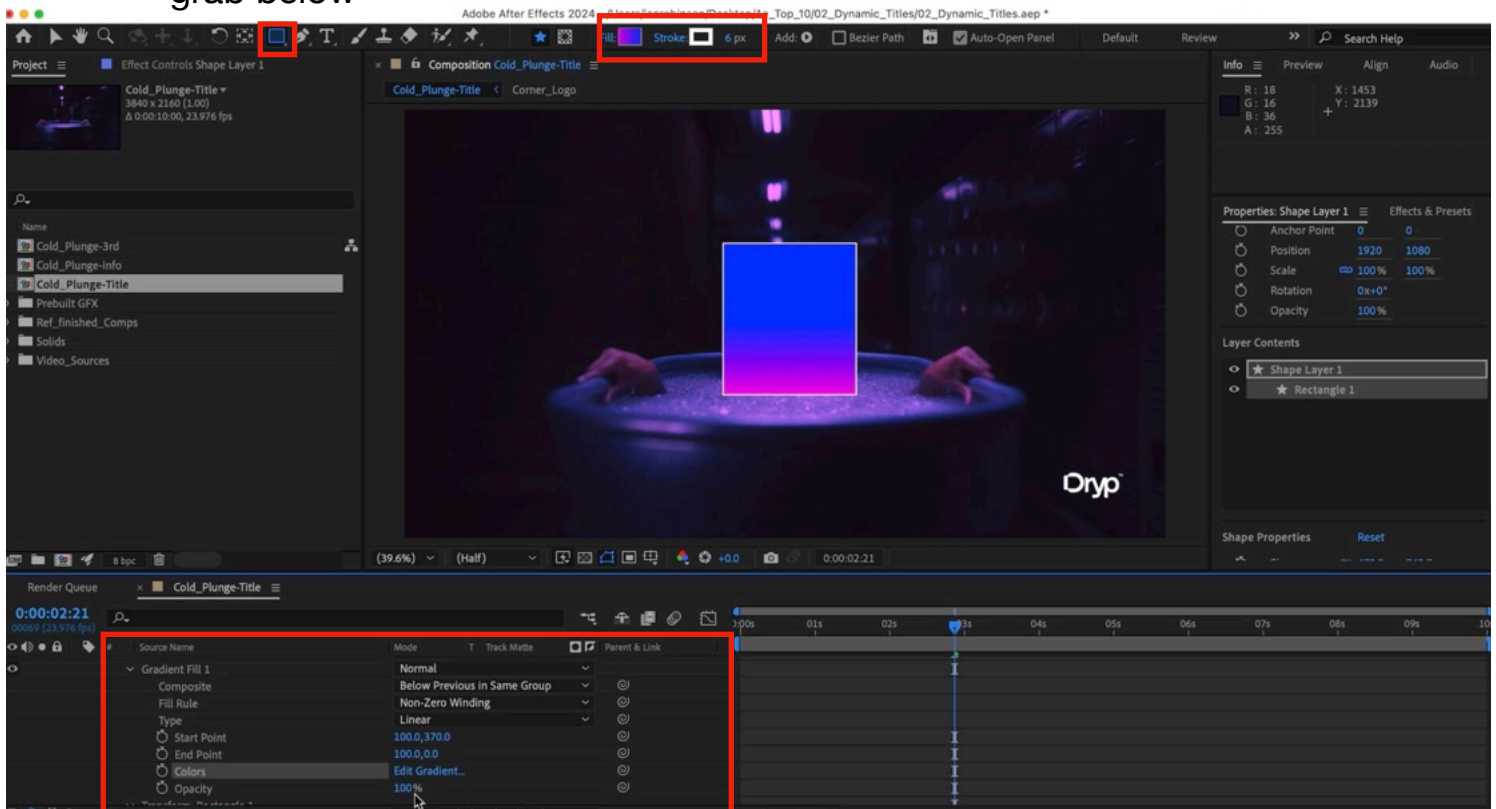
Dynamic Titles

1. Open the Cold_Plunge-Title Comp
2. Grab the Horizontal Type Tool from the tools panel
3. Type "Cold Plunge" with each word on it's own line in the center of the Composition panel
4. Resize the word Cold to match the width of the word Plunge using the text options in the Properties panel
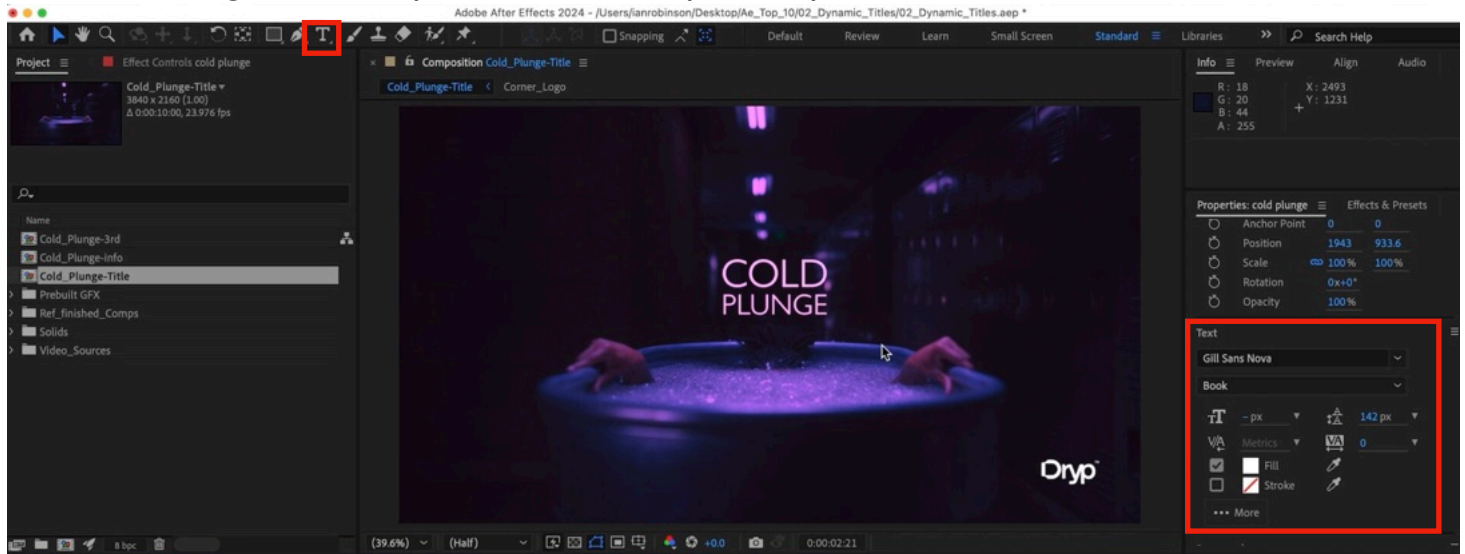

1. Select the Rectangle shape tool and draw a vertical rectangle over the type layer
2. Set the Fill to a Gradient Fill, and the stroke to white
3. Adjust the settings of the gradient and stroke to match the image grab below

1. Change the order of the layer stack so the Shape layer is below the type layer
2. Drag the snowflake Illustrator file from the project panel into the newly created shape layer to match the image below
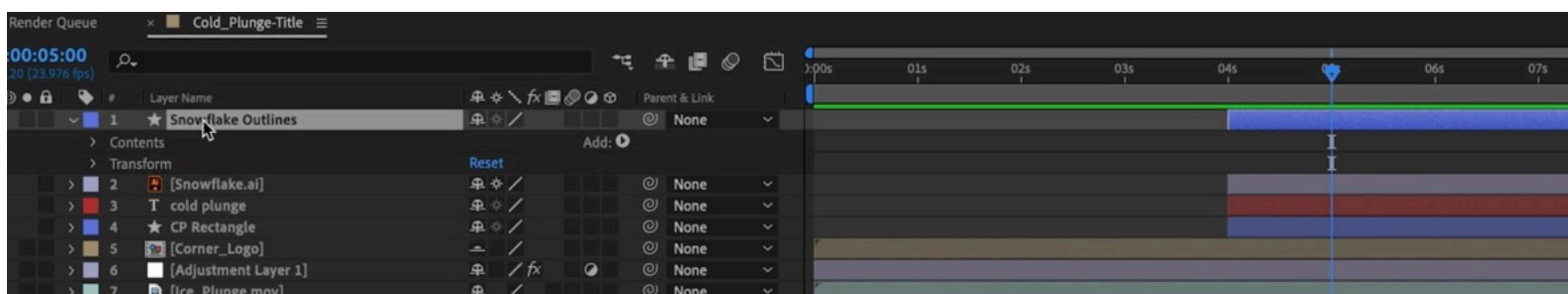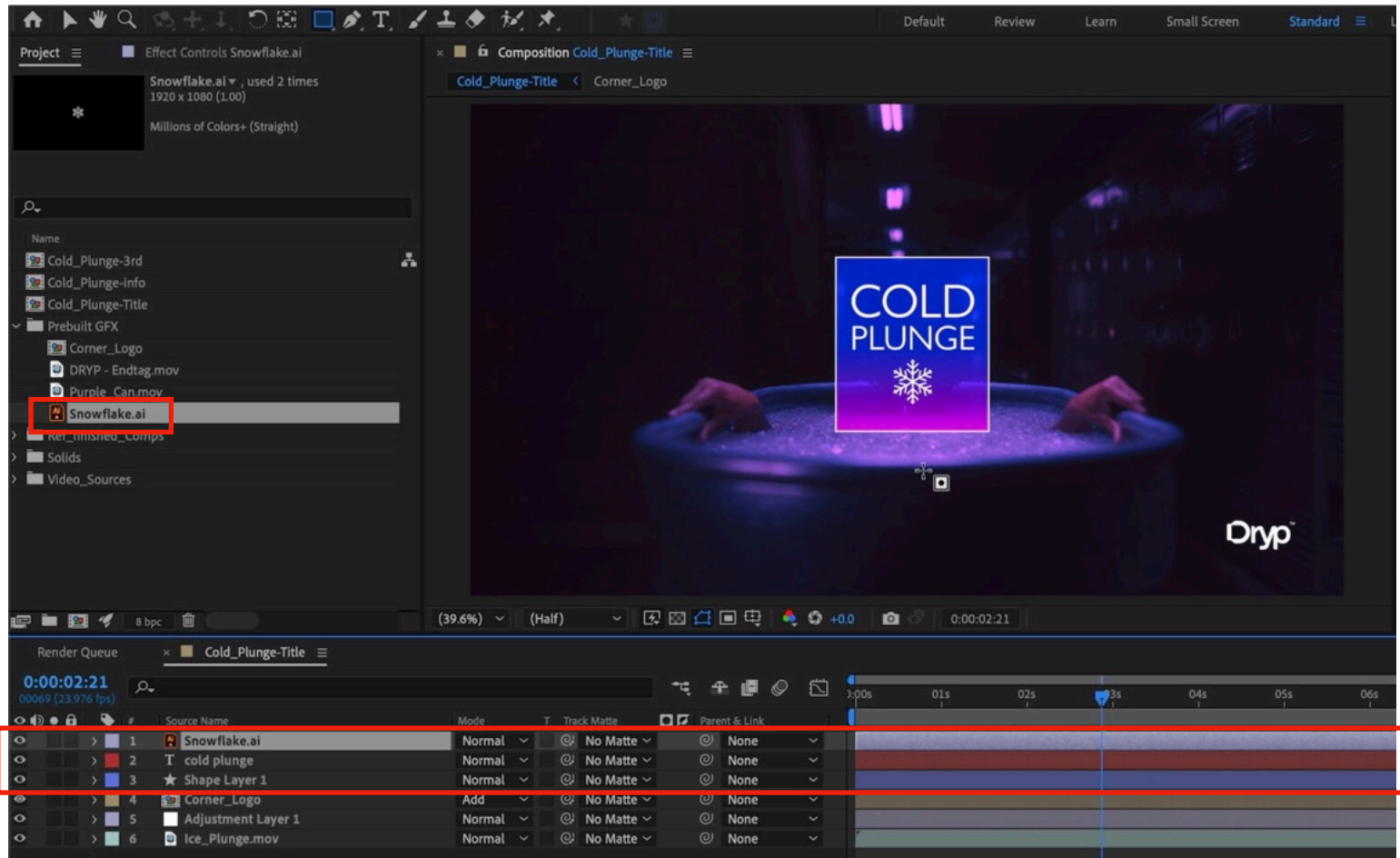

1. Select the top 3 layers (snowflake.ai, cold plunge, Shape Layer 1)
2. Trim the layers to start at 4 seconds
3. Select the Snowflake.ai layer and go to Layer > Create > Create shapes from Vector Layers

Dynamic Titles

Much like Text Layers have Text Animators, Shape Layers have animators under the Add button, which create a whole other level of animation possibilities. In this tutorial we will animate with a Repeater to make the snowflake look like it's falling as it animates into the scene
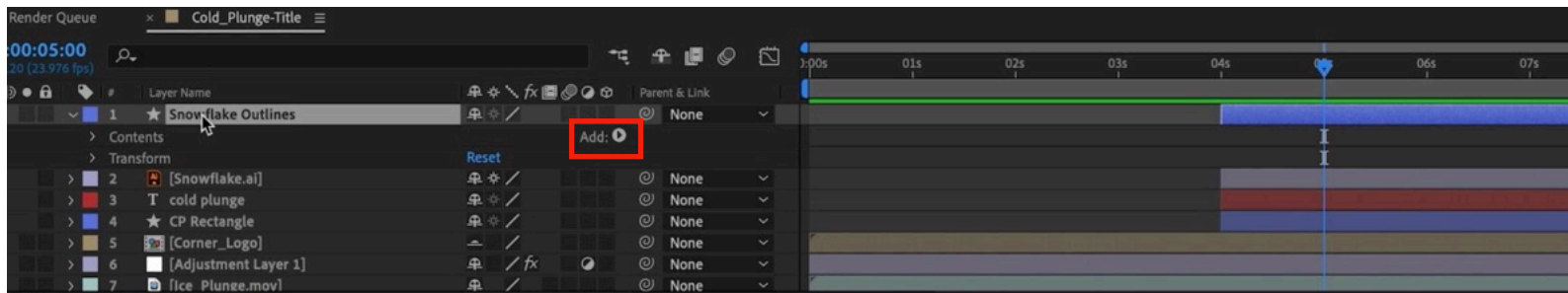
1. On the Snowflake Outline layer go to Add > Repeater
2. Open the settings for the Repeater 1 position and set them to 0.0,-233
3. Keyframe the Offset and Copies properties for Repeater one so the snowflake falls into the scene over one second… (starting at 4 seconds in the timeline)
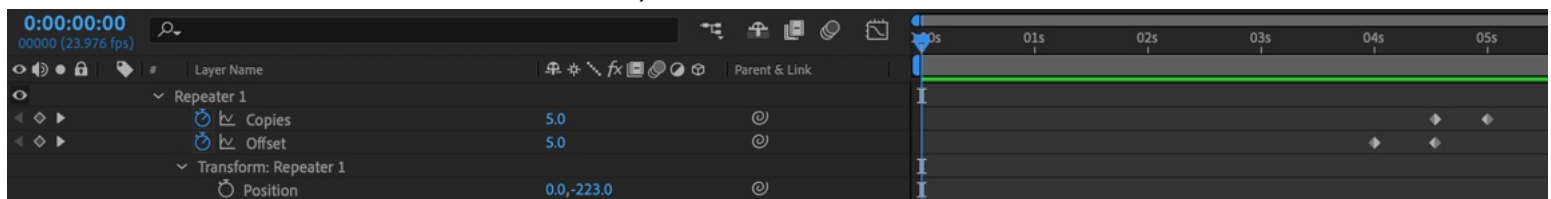
Now it's time to take what you learned from animating the snowflake shape layer and apply it to animating the CP Rectangle layer by adding a Trim Paths function to the layer, and keyframing the appearance of the stroke.
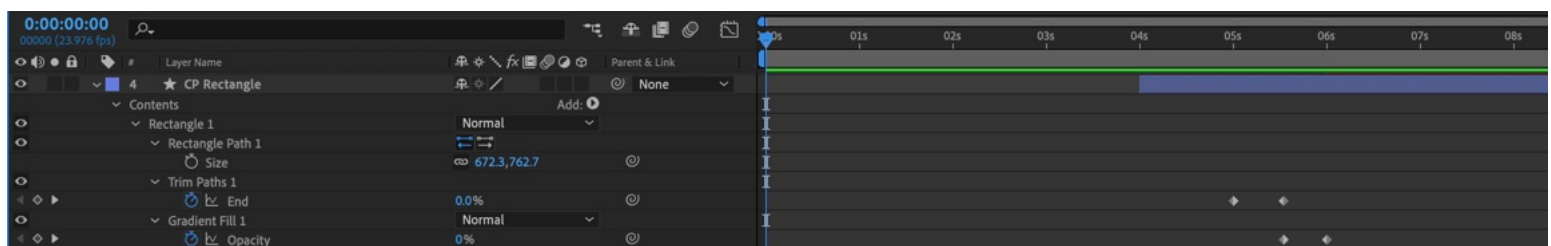
1. Animate the Trip Path End property from 0 to 100% at 5 seconds
2. Animate the Gradient Fill Opacity once the stroke animates into the scene

Since the animation finishes around six seconds, let's move the text layer to start after and apply a text preset using the techniques we learned in the previous video

1. Move the Current Time Indicator to at 0:00:06:13 and trim the start of the text layer to match
2. Apply the Slow Fade On text animation preset
3. Press Spacebar to preview the animation

Building the Lower 3rd with elements from the Title animation

When building new animated graphics from other animated compositions you must remember it is always easier to delete then create from scratch. We are going to start building our lower third by copying any layers we might need from the title animation.

1. Copy the top 4 Layers from the Cold_Plunge-Title Composition
2. Paste those layers into the Cold_Plunge-3rd Composition
3. Slide all the layers to start at the beginning of the composition as one group, (so the text layer still starts around 2 seconds
4. Remove any unwanted animation by deleting keyframes or layers
5. Delete the Snowflake shape layer and turn on the visibility of the Snowflake Illustrator layer
6. Enable Title and Action safe at the bottom of the Comp Panel
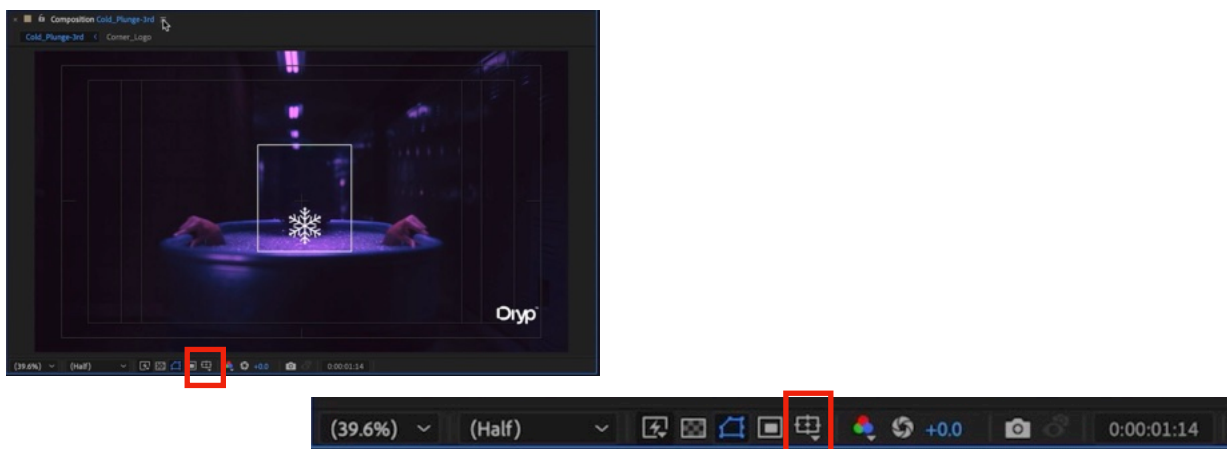
1. Select the CP Rectangle layer and press UU quickly on the keyboard to reveal any property that has changed from it's default state, (and any animated properties).

2. Change the size of the rectangle to span the composition panel almost the size of the outer-most safe line displayed by the Title and Action safe button.


3. Reposition and resize the layers over to the lower 3rd area at the bottom of the screen, roughly match the image below.
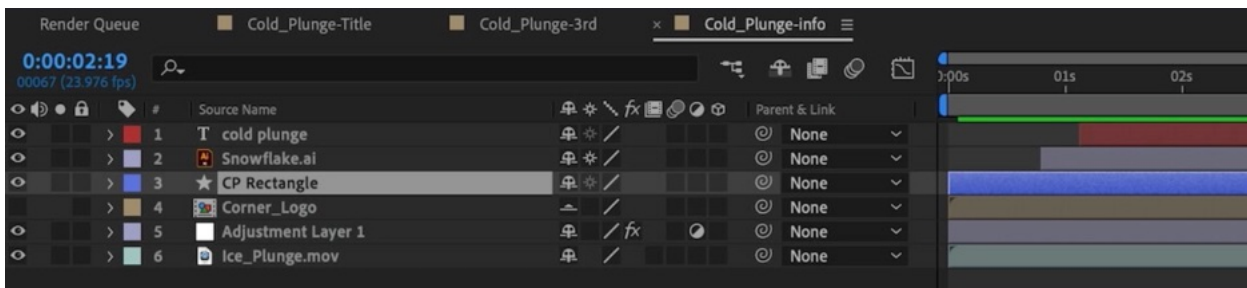
4. Select the CP Rectangle Layer and press U to reveal any animated properties
5. Slide those keyframes to start near the beginning of the composition
6. Trim and animate the Opacity of the Snowflake.ai layer to start just after the stroke of the box animates in
(roughly match image below)
7. *Press the spacebar to preview the animation*
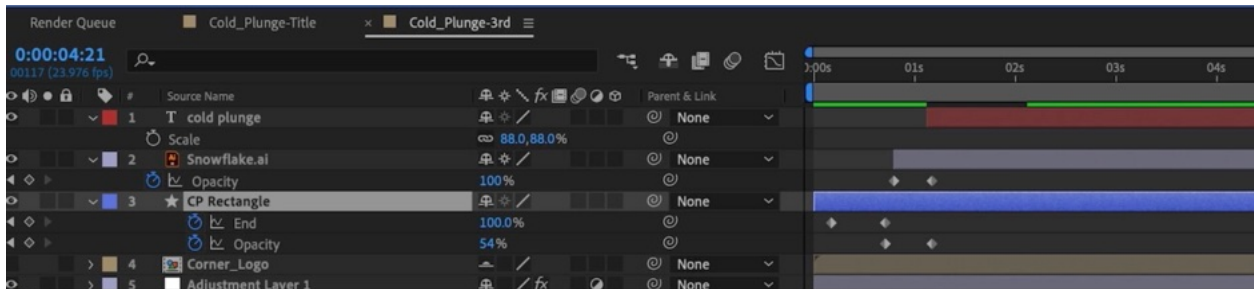
Now we have successfully animated the lower third using elements from the animated title. Now we can take these elements and create one last graphic, the generic full page infographic (which we can always customize later)

Building the full page info-graphic with elements from the Lower 3rd animation

1. Copy the top 3 layers from the Cold_Plunge-3rd comp
2. Paste those layers into the Cold_Plunge-Info comp
3. Make sure your layers are stacked properly so you can see everything *(see below)*
4. Turn off the visibility of the Corner_Logo layer

5. With the CP Rectangle layer selected, quickly press UU to reveal any animated properties
6. Resize the Rectangle Path size on that layer to the rough size of Title and Action safe

6. Reposition all the layers to match the image below
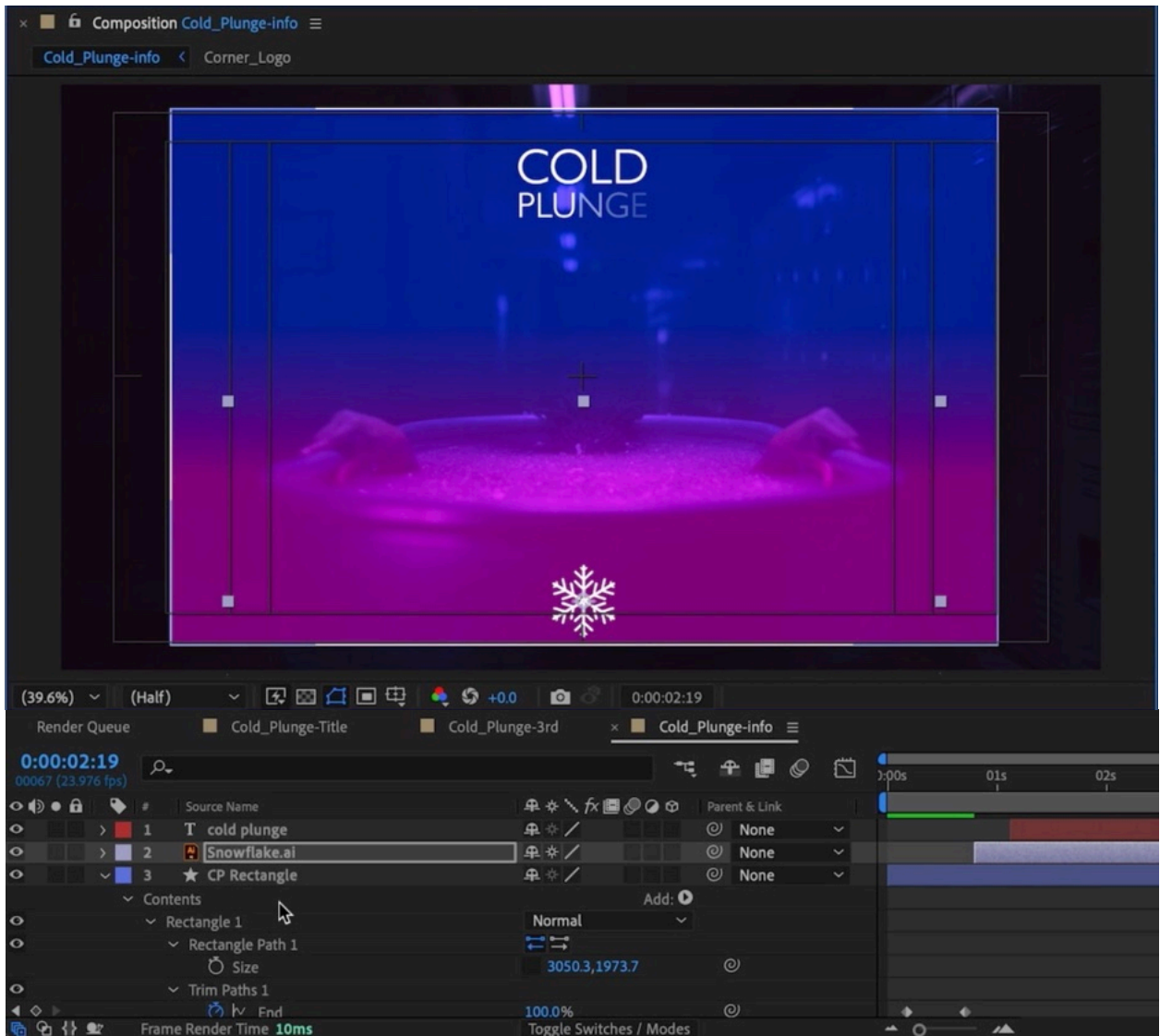
6. Select the Horizontal Type Tool and add another text layer to match the image below
7. Apply the "Straight In Multi-Line" Text animation preset to have the type animate into the composition line by line

6. Select the Ice_Plunge video layer at the bottom of the timeline
7. Right-Click or Control+Click and choose > Guide Layer

Guide Layers allow you to see the layer in your comp, but in edit or render, it will be transparent.

3. Working More Efficiently Between After Effects and Premiere Pro

Dynamic link, allows you to easily go back-and-forth between Premier Pro, and After Effects without having to render between applications. It continually sends creative changes back-and-forth between both applications. In this project, we are going to feature some of the most common reasons one might want to send a video back and forth between applications.

For the first part, we will be sending a video from Premiere Pro to After Effects so we can take advantage of the excellent tracking, masking, and generative fill tools available.

For the second part, we will be importing an After Effects composition into Premiere Pro so we can quickly create multiple versions of our graphic without having to render anything out of After Effects.
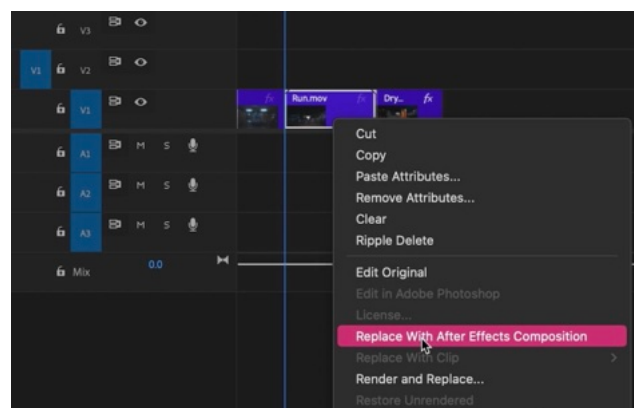
1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 03_Dynamic_Link folder
2. Open the 03_PrPro_Projects folder and open the Dryp_Edit.prproj file
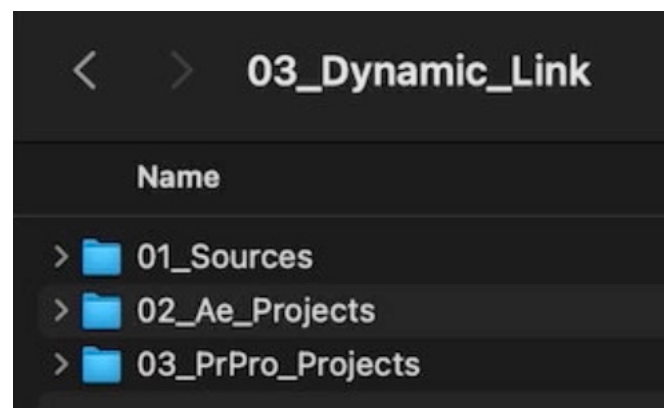
Take note of the folder structure. Whenever starting a new project, this is the general folder structure I use for everything in that project. Keeping files organized is most important when working with Dynamic Link.

3. In Premiere Pro, open the Dryp_Training sequence

Since we want to add graphics into our video footage, we need to use tools like the 3D Camera Tracker in After Effects to achieve that effect.

3. In Premiere Pro, open the Dryp_Training sequence

4. Right-Click or Control+Click on the second clip in the timeline and choose > Replace with After Effects Composition

5. Save the project in the Ae_Projects folder and call it Track_Track_PrPro.aep
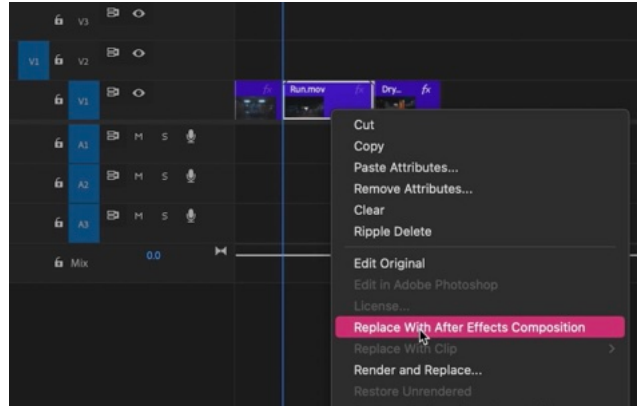
Since we will be covering how to use the 3D Camera Tracker in another lesson, we are going to just copy and paste the layers into the project so we can stay focused on the goal of this lesson… Dynamic Link.

1. Import the Placed_Text after effects Project

2. Copy the layers as shown in the image on the right

3. Paste those layers into the Dryp_Edit Linked Comp
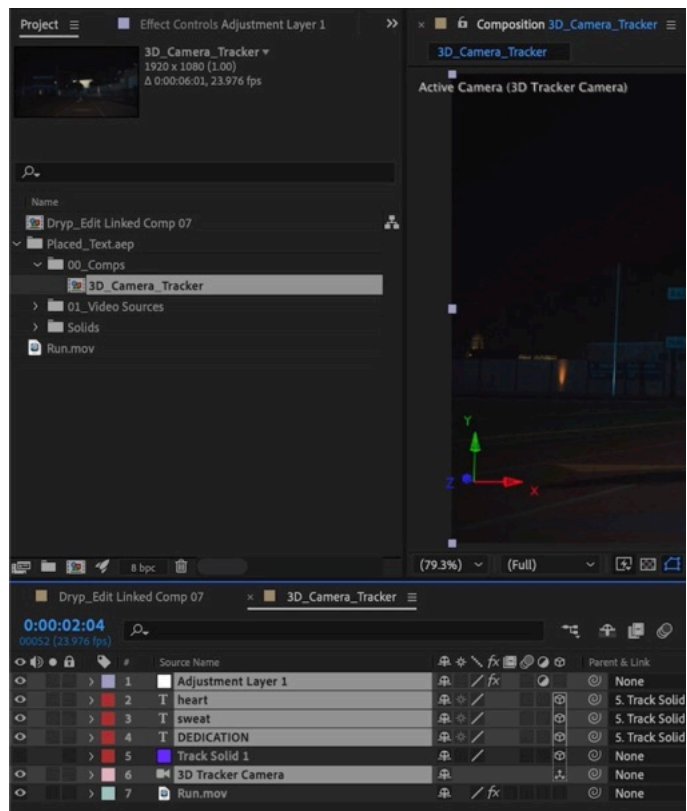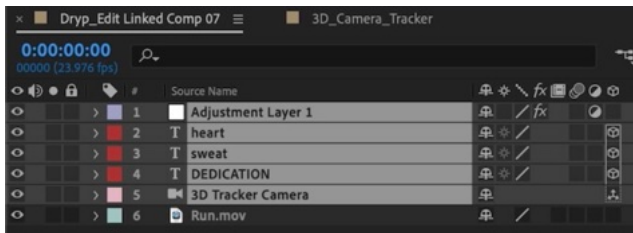
1. Scrub through the comp to see how the text moves through the scene
2. Go back to Premiere Pro to see how this now appears right in the timeline
3. Go back to After Effects and change any type layer
4. Go back to Premiere Pro to see the results

Notice how we did not have to save any project, the creative changes continually update between applications.

Now that we've seen how to send files from Premiere Pro to After Effects, let's look at how to link After Effects compositions directly into Premiere Pro.

1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 03_Dynamic_Link folder
2. Open the 02_Ae_Projects folder and open the Lower_3rd.aep project file
3. Open the Lower_3rd composition *(found in the project panel)*
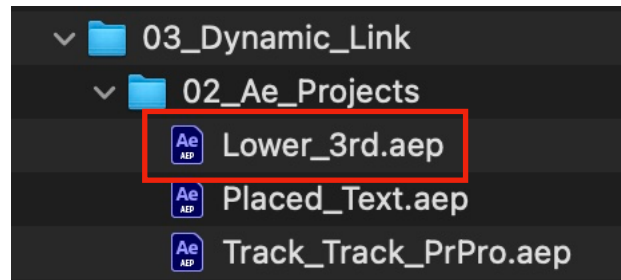
The lower 3rd graphic was designed as a general template. Looking at the bar, I can see it's too large for what we need in this instance.

1. Resize the bar by selecting the CP Rectangle layer and pressing UU to reveal any animated properties
2. Change the size of Rectangle Path 1 on the X property down so the bar is just a little bit larger than the text
3. Change the position of the Transform: Rectangle 1 property so the bar is back under the text
4. Right-click or Control+Click on the video layer Ice_Plunge.mp4 and go up to Guide Layer *(this will make the layer transparent when the composition is added onto a video track in Premiere Pro)*

We are now ready to import the Lower_3rd composition into Premiere Pro

1. Go back to Premiere Pro and double click in the Project panel to open the Import dialogue
2. Navigate to the Lower_3rd.aep file and double click to import
3. When prompted, choose the Lower_3rd comp and click OK
4. Drag the Lower_3rd comp into the timeline and place it on video track 2 right above the other video clips. *(Make sure the Lower 3rd starts right at frame 0)*
5. Trim the end of Lower 3rd video clip so that it ends at the same time as the first shot in the sequence

At this point, the lower 3rd text could be changed in Premiere Pro without going back to After Effects. But if we scrub the sequence in Premiere Pro, we'll see how the animation isn't even finished animating in before the clip ends. A timing change like this requires us to go back to After Effects to make changes. We can do that by right clicking on the Lower 3rd clip directly in the Timeline and choosing Edit Original, or if the project is already open in After Effects, we can just go back into After Effects and make any changes.

1. In the Lower 3rd comp in After Effects, select the text layer at the top of the layer stack in the timeline and press U to reveal any animated properties
2. Select the right keyframe in the timeline and drag it to just around 2 seconds in the timeline to speed up the text animation
3. Go back to Premiere Pro to check out the animation

If we wanted to use this graphic the way it currently stands, we would be finished at this point. However, the power of working with After Effects compositions in After Effects is the ability to change the type directly in Premiere Pro without having to go back to After Effects. Let's explore how to change the type in Premiere Pro.

1. In Premiere Pro, double-click on the Lower 3rd comp clip in the timeline
2. In the Effect Controls in the Source tab, change the word "plunge" to "power"

Notice how the size of the type changed to match the size of the upper word? In After Effects, you can select individual words or letters and change their sizes, (and have more than one size within one type layer). Premiere Pro really prefers to only have one size per one text layer. To fix this, we need to go back to After Effects and split the text layer into two separate layers.

1. Back in After Effects, in the Lower 3rd comp, duplicate the cold plunge text layer *(select the layer and press Command + D or Control + D)*
2. *Change the top type layer to "COLD" (font size 206)*
3. *Change the second type layer to "PLUNGE" (font size 150)*
4. *Go back to Premiere Pro and delete the comp from the timeline, and delete the linked comp from the Project panel*
5. *Import the Lower_3rd After Effects comp back into Premiere Pro*
6. *Add the newly imported composition back into the timeline on video track 2 and trim the end to match the duration of the first clip*
7. *Play back the sequence to view the animation*

Since both lines of type now animate on at the same time, we need to jump back into After Effects to make one last change.

1. In After Effects, slide the type layer "cold" to start at 1 second in the timeline
2. *Go back to Premiere Pro and watch the sequence*

Now that we have worked out the workflow for having two different font sizes in one graphic, we are ready to customize our graphic. Since the composition has been imported we can duplicate the comp for each version of the graphic needed. Let's create 2 different versions in the sequence.

1. Double-click on the Lower 3rd comp clip in the timeline
2. In the Effect Controls in the Source tab, change the word "plunge" to "power"
3. Hold down Option or Alt and drag the lower 3rd over the 3rd clip in the timeline to create another copy, (notice the duplicate of the comp in the Project panel as well as in the Timeline)
4. Double-click on the newly created Lower 3rd comp clip in the timeline
5. In the Effect Controls in the Source tab, change the word "power" to "energy"

4. Graphics in Video

In this tutorial we dive into a very popular visual effects technique where text is inserted into video, matching the movement of the elements in the scene. In this specific instance we will make the type appear as though it's sitting on the track to the side of our runner.

1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 04_Graphics_into_Video folder
2. Open the 04_GFX_in_Video.aep file
3. Open the Ref_Finished_Comps folder and open the Placed_Text_Reference composition
4. Scrub through to preview what we will be creating

Tip: You can reposition the target in the scene by hovering over the middle of the target until the move tool appears. You can resize the track point size and the target size in the Effect Controls panel.
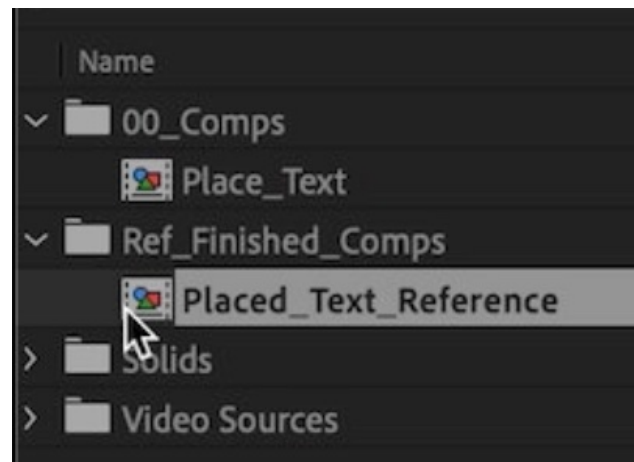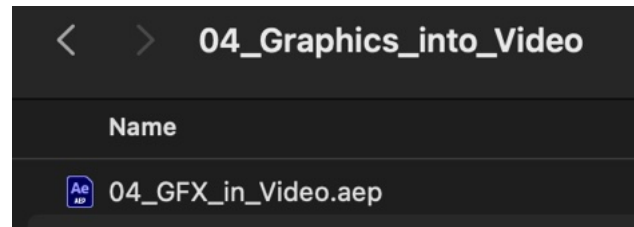
1. Open the Place_Text composition and select the video layer in the Timeline
2. Go to Animation > Track Camera
3. Move the Current Time Indicator to 0:00:02:14 in the timeline
4. Select the 3 track points on the track
5. Resize the target in the Effect Controls panel if needed

1. Hover over the middle of the target, Right-click, and choose Set Ground Plane and Origin
2. Hover over the middle of the target, Right-click, and choose Create Solid and Camera
3. Select Track Solid 1, check the position, and make sure it's at 0,0,0
4. Select the Horizontal Type tool from the Tools panel, click in the Composition panel and add the word "DEDICATION" in all caps
5. Enable 3D on the text layer in the Timeline
6. Change the Position data to 0,0,0
7. Use the Axis handles of the 3D Gizmo to reposition the type in the scene

Normally this would be a great place to stop. In this tutorial I'm sharing some of my favorite techniques to troubleshoot when the track is too perfect. In this instance as you scrub through the timeline you'll notice the type appears to jiggle in the scene a little bit. Let's check out how to fix this.

1. Select the Camera layer in the timeline and press U to reveal the keyframes
2. Scrub through the timeline to see where the word starts to shake in the scene
3. Delete the Position keyframes over that section, (I deleted from about frame 13 through about 2:15 in the timeline)

This technique worked well because there were still plenty of keyframes left to keep the same general camera movement. Also, since the type just needs to stay on the track, it's okay if it moves a little bit from its original placement on the track.
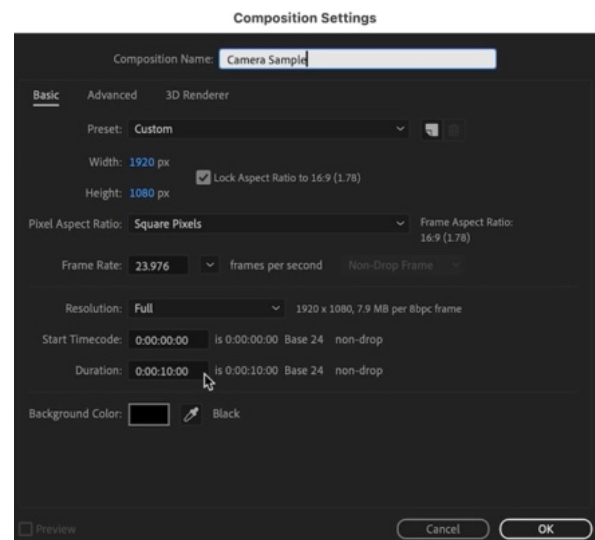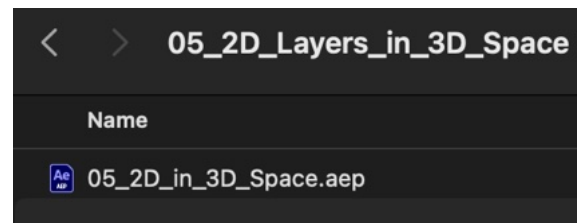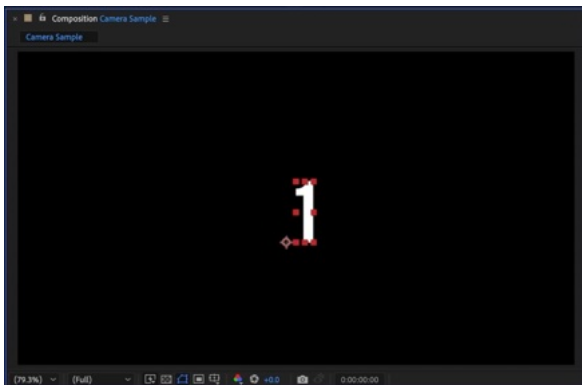
In order to add more realism and polish to the scene, let's make the type go in and out of focus as the camera moves past. We can do that by enabling and adjusting some of the Camera Options.

1. Select the Camera layer in the timeline
2. Go to the Properties panel on the right and enable Depth of Field in the Camera Options section
3. Shorten the Focus Distance setting to 450
4. Scrub the timeline or press the Spacebar to preview the animation

5. Get faster in 3D space with Cameras, Lights, and Material Options

This tutorial is divided into two sections. Section one, we cover the different kinds of Cameras available in After Effects. Section two, we add lights and shadows to our text placement animation as we get more familiar with how to work in 2D layers in 3D space.

1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 05_2D_Layers_in_3D_Space folder
2. Open the 05_2D_Layers_in_3D_Space.aep file
3. Create a new comp and match the comp settings here
4. Select the Horizontal Type Tool and type the number 1 into the scene
5. Position the number in the center of the composition panel

6. Enable 3D on that layer

7. Go to Layer > New > Camera to add a new camera to the composition

8. Choose Two Node Camera from the drop-down in the Type area of the Camera Options panel (then match the rest of the settings from the image then click OK)
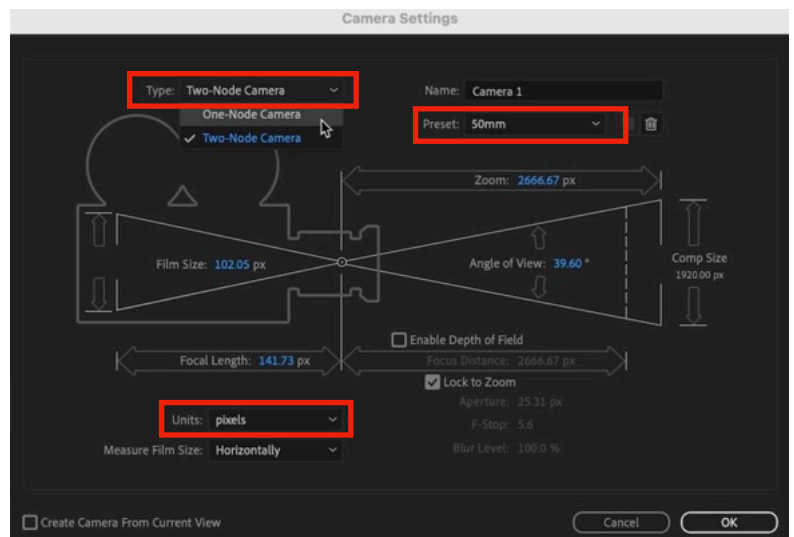

9. Expand the Composition panel to reveal all the options in the bottom of the panel
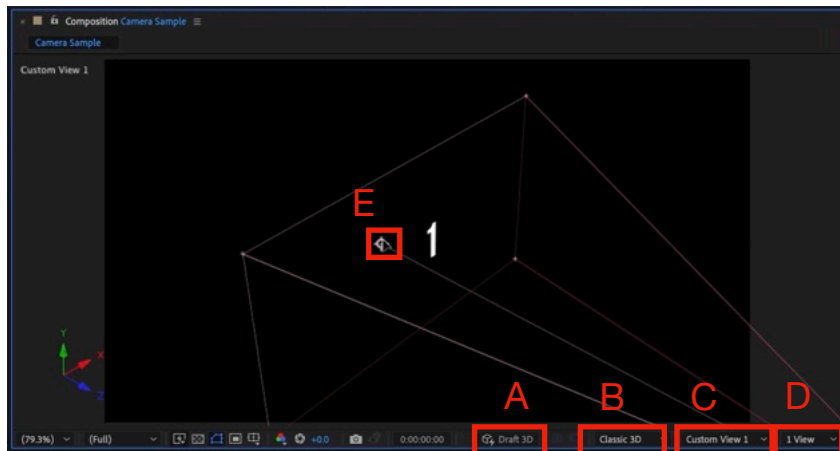
A. Draft 3D will disable things like shadows to speed up rendering in the comp panel when trying to work with a complex 3D scene. We didn't need it for this example since it was rather simple.

B. The Renderer drop-down will change how the comp is rendered. When working with 2D in 3D space, Classic 3D is the one to use. If we were using 3D Models, then the Advanced 3D Renderer would be the best.

C. Choose a view to view the scene from. Custom View 1 is like viewing a stage from one side while being up in the rafters. It's like having a birds eye view of the scene

D. Choose the number of viewports you want to open to be able to view the scene from multiple angles

E. The Point of Interest, *(A One-Node Camera does not have a Point of Interest).* A 2-Node Camera will always point at its Point of Interest.

Use 2 Views or 4 Views to view the scene from more than one angle. In this example, we are using 2 Views to see the scene from Custom View 1 on the right, and to see what the camera is looking at on the Left (Active Camera view)
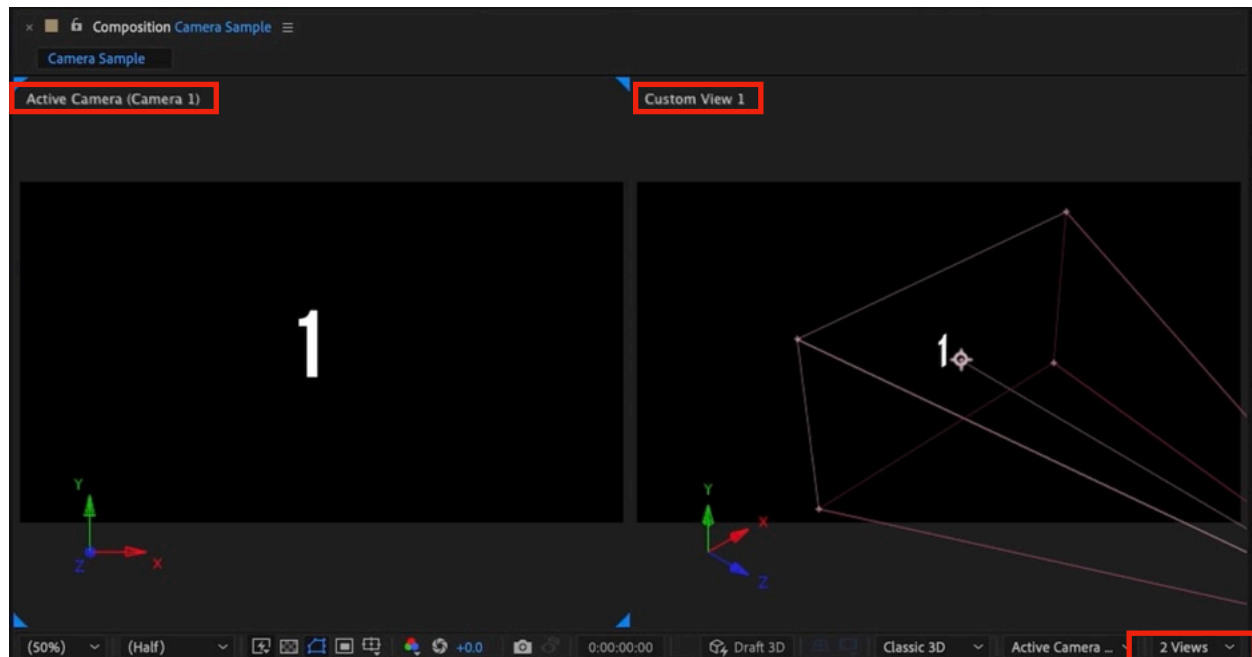
A Two-Node Camera has a point of interest setting, and this setting makes it very simple to control exactly what the camera is looking at. A One-Node Camera's view will change as the camera is moved. When moving it around, I like to think it functions just like how a camera would move if I were holding it in my hands.

Now that we have gone through how to better view a scene, and some of the differences between One-Node and Two-Node Cameras, we are ready to start working with Lights, Shadows, and Material Options.

1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 05_2D_Layers_in_3D_Space folder
2. Open the 05_2D_Layers_in_3D_Space.aep file
3. Open the 2D Layers in 3D Space composition
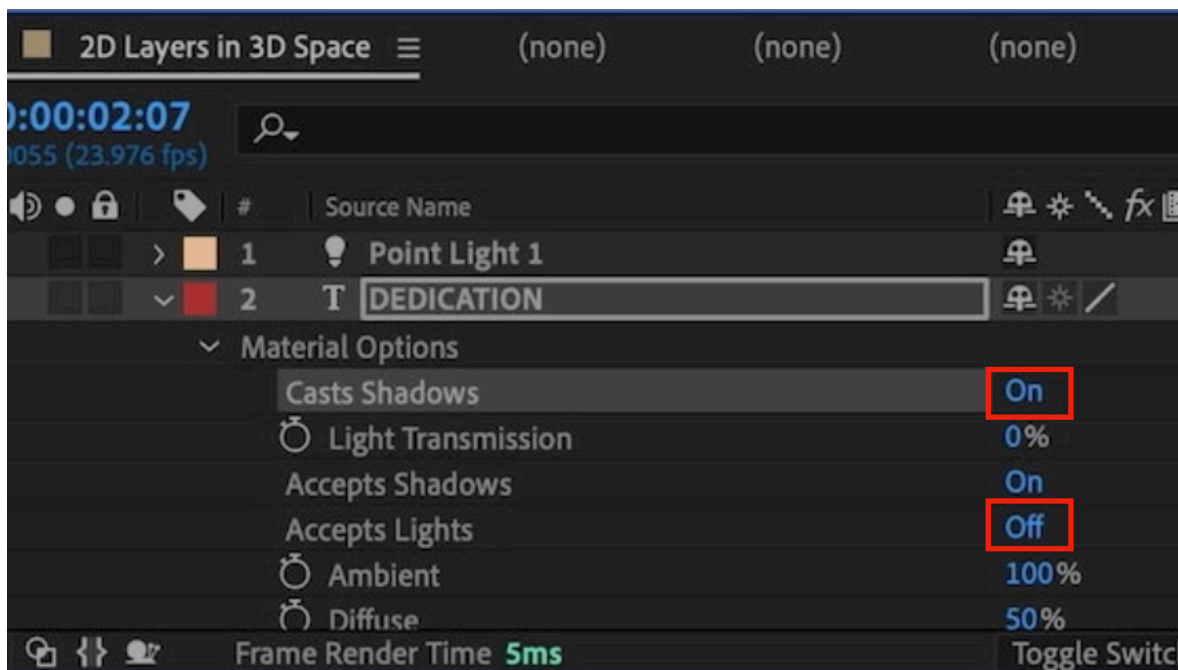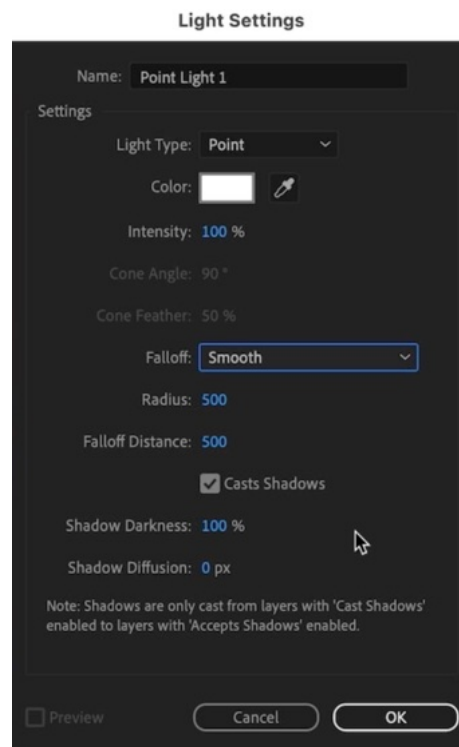4. Go to Layer > New > Light - And choose Point Light

I chose Point Light because it throws light in all directions, and can cast shadows.

Light Settings

1. Match the Light Settings from the image on the right, and press OK
2. Reposition the light in the scene by holding down shift and pointing the Pick Whip from the light layer to the Text layer
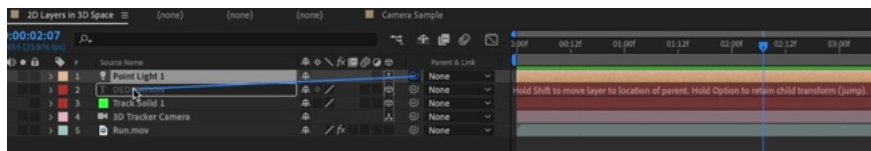

1. Match the lights settings and press OK
2. Reposition the light in the scene by holding down shift and pointing the Pick Whip from the light layer to the Text layer
3. Reposition the light slightly up and behind the text layer in the composition panel
4. Change the Material Options for the Dedication layer to match below

Name: Point Light 1

Settings

Light Type: Point

Color:

Intensity: 100 %

Cone Angle: 90 °

Cone Feather: 50 %

Falloff: Smooth

Radius: 500

Falloff Distance: 500

☑ Casts Shadows

Shadow Darkness: 100 %

Shadow Diffusion: 0 px

Note: Shadows are only cast from layers with 'Cast Shadows' enabled to layers with 'Accepts Shadows' enabled.

☐ Preview   Cancel   OK

5. Turn on the visibility for the Track Solid Layer and reveal it's material options
6. Change Accepts Shadows setting to only
7. Feel free to adjust to your liking, move the light or Track Solid Layer around
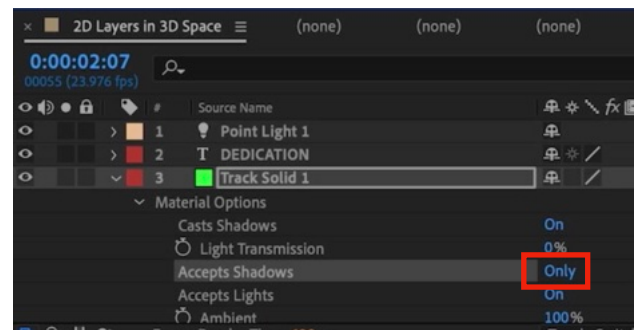
Now that we have one setup done for the track, we just need to add two additional words to the track. We can do this by using parenting, and duplicating the Solid, Text, and Light layers.
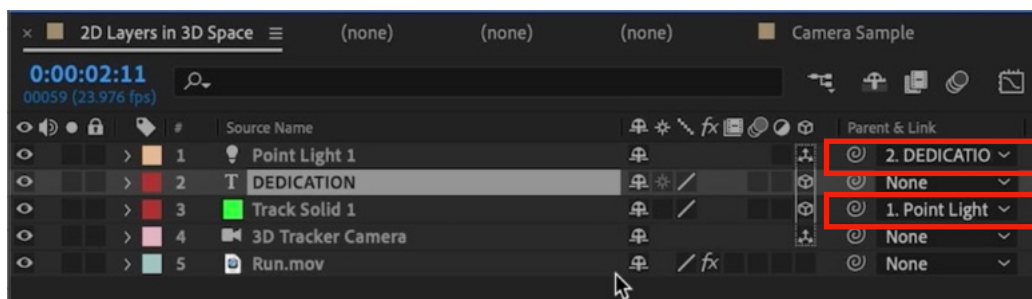
8. Using the Pick-whips, make the Point light follow the Dedication layer
9. Make the Track Solid follow the Dedication layer
10. Feel free to adjust to your liking, move the light or Track Solid Layer around
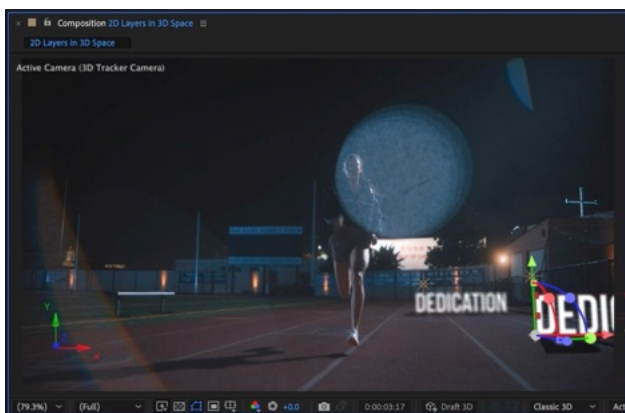
1. Duplicate the top 3 layers
2. Move the duplicated layers to the stop of the layer stack in the timeline panel
3. Use the 3D Gizmo to reposition the newly duplicated layers
4. Keep aware of the axis mode as you move layers around
5. Change the text of layer 2 to read "SWEAT"
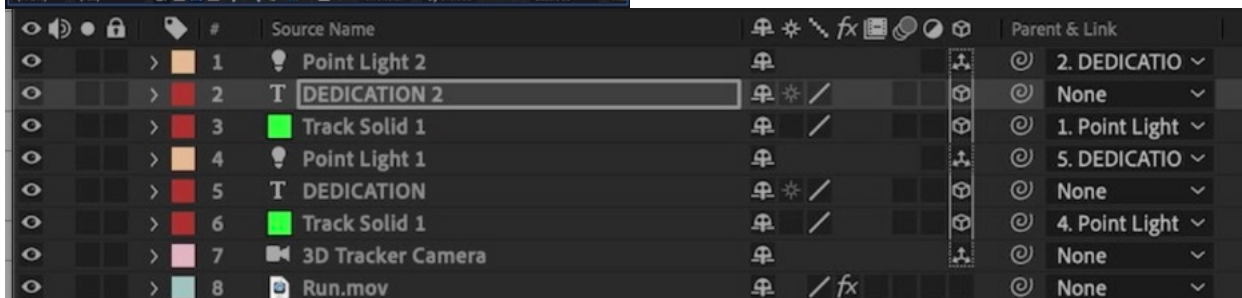
To finish the project, repeat the steps for duplicating and repositioning the new copies. Change the last text layer to read "HEART"

6. Masking Techniques, Blend Modes, and Track Mattes

This tutorial covers some of the most common reasons for using masks, track mattes and blend modes. First we will use masks and the rigid mask tracker to remove some distracting elements from a scene. Then we will use track mattes and blend modes to create a composite with graphics overtop of the scene.

1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 06_Masking_BlendModes_TrackMattes folder
2. Open the 06_Mask_Blend_Track.aep file
3. Open the comp in the 01_Finished_Ref_Comps if you want to check out what we will be creating
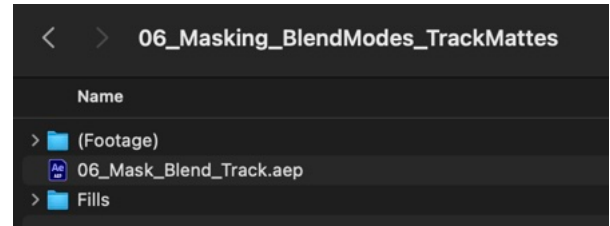
1. Open the Mask_Matte_Blend Modes comp
2. Select the Treadmill.mov layer in the timeline
3. Select the Rectangle Tool from the Tools panel
4. Draw three rectangles around the three distracting signs in the footage
5. Change their modes to None in timeline

TIP: as long as you have a layer selected in the Timeline panel, your cursor will have the Mask icon on the lower right of the cursor. If you see a star next to your cursor, you don't have a layer selected in the timeline and you will create a Shape Layer instead of a Mask on a layer.

1. Select all the masks in the Timeline, right-click and choose Track Mask
2. In the Tracker panel choose Position, Scale & Rotation
3. Use the Analyze buttons to activate the tracker, (stop the tracker and make adjustments to the masks if they appear to be going off course)
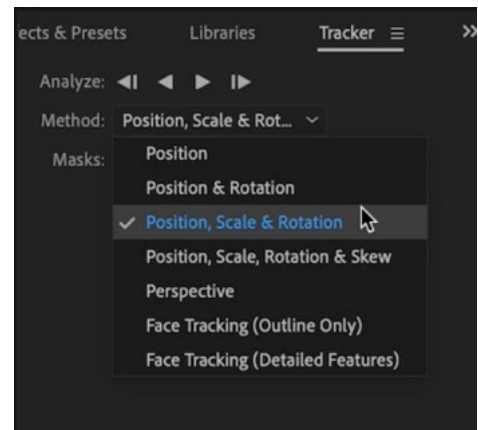

Now that we have the masks tracked over the signs and elements we'd like to remove, we can utilize Content-Aware Fill for video to fill in the areas where the signs were. In order to do that, we must first make sure the area inside the masks are transparent. Let's get to it!

1. Set all the Mask mode for all 3 Masks to Subtract
2. Go to Window > Content-Aware Fill to open the panel
3. Set the panel to match the still on the right, and press Generate Fill Layer
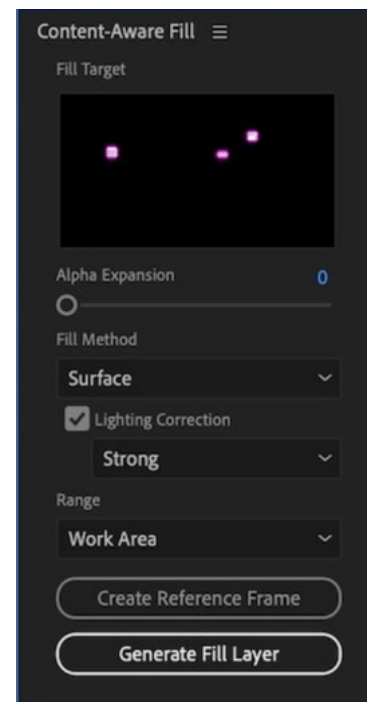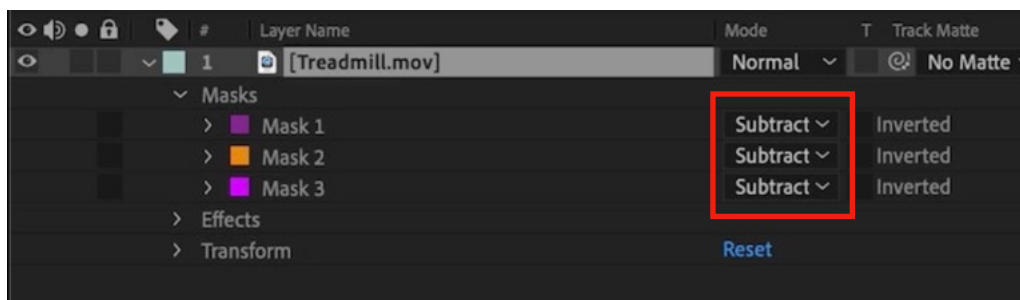
To recap, we used masks and the Rigid Mask Tracker to select objects in the scene we would like to remove. We have also removed those elements utilizing Content-Aware Fill for video. Now we can start adding graphics to the project, and using a track matte and blend modes to blend those graphics into the scene. We'll start by adding our logo into the corner.

1. Drag the DRYP - Tag.mov file from the Graphics folder in the Project panel into the timeline, (this graphic has no alpha channel so we need to use a track matte to create transparency from the black and white pixels)
2. Go to Layer > New Solid and add a white solid the size of the comp to the composition
3. Position the solid under the logo layer and use the Travel Matte Pick Whip to have the layer solid use the logo layer as the matte
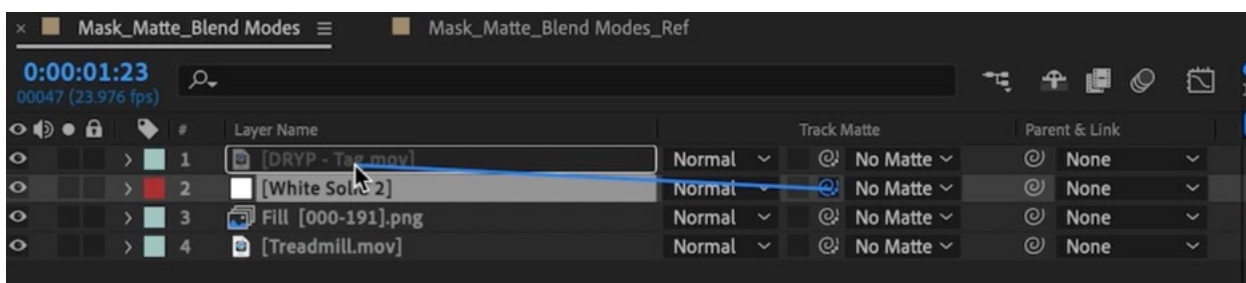

4. Change the matte type from Alpha matte to Luma Matte by clicking the icon on the right side of the track matte drop down
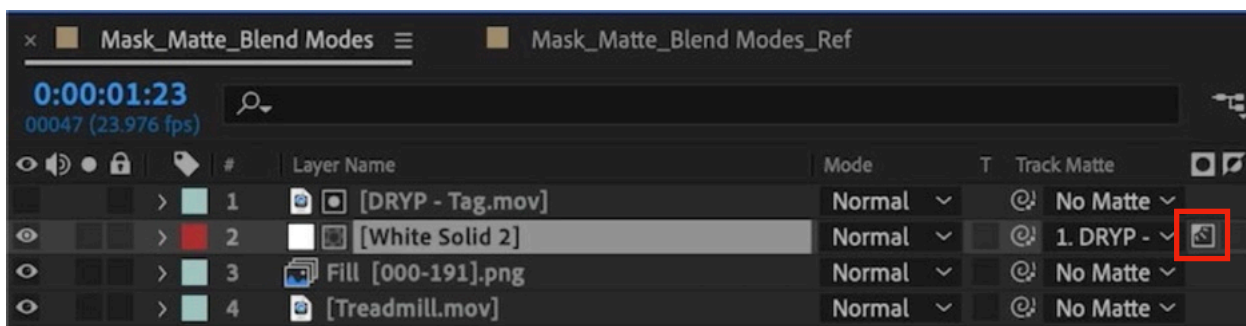
5. Reposition the Dryp - Tag.mov layer into the lower right corner of the composition panel, and adjust the scale down for a better fit

To recap, we just used a Track Matte to use the brightness of the pixels on one layer determine the transparency of another layer.
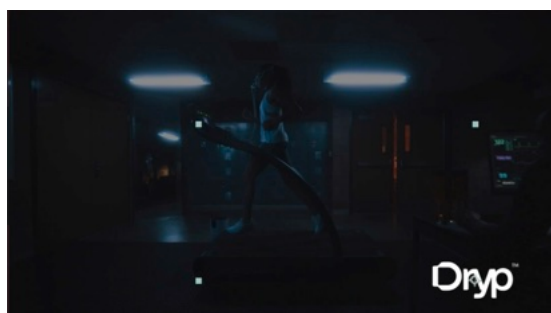
For the last bit of this tutorial, we are going to add some Dryp sports drink graphics over the scene. We will use Blend Modes to mix the layers together to create one dynamic cohesive look.

1. Drag the dryp_purple_spin.mov file from the Graphics folder in the Project panel into the composition panel, and position it on the left side
2. Change the Blend Mode for the layer to Add
3. Add a Glow effect onto the can to make it look a little more dreamy, (adjust the glow radius to magnify the look)
4. In the Effects & Presets panel search for "flicker" and apply the VHS Flicker Effect onto the dryp_purple_spin layer in the comp
5. Duplicate the dryp_purple_Spin layer in the timeline and scale up the duplicate to something around 800%
6. Change the transparency of the large layer down to something near 30%

As you can see in the composite; masks, mattes, and blend modes are a great way to tie all your layers together and create one cohesive look for your motion graphics.

7. Rotoscoping
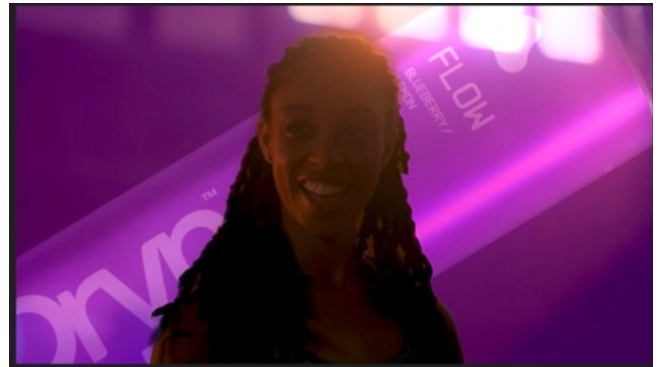
This tutorial covers how to remove a person from their background utilizing a tool custom made for rotoscoping in After Effects called the Roto Brush tool. Even with video that might not have a very strong contrast between the foreground and background, the Roto Brush Tool does a remarkable job and saves a ton a time.

1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 07_Roto Brush.aep file
2. In the 00_Comps folder, open the 07_Roto Brush comp
3. Double-click on layer one to load it into the Layers panel
4. Choose the Roto Brush tool from the tools panel
5. Click and drag inside the athlete to begin the process of selecting her
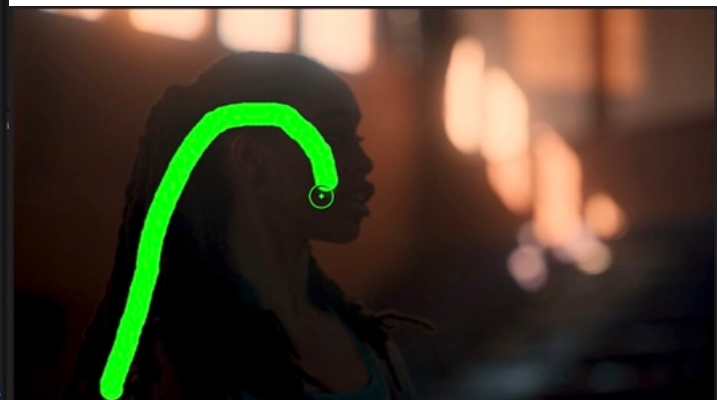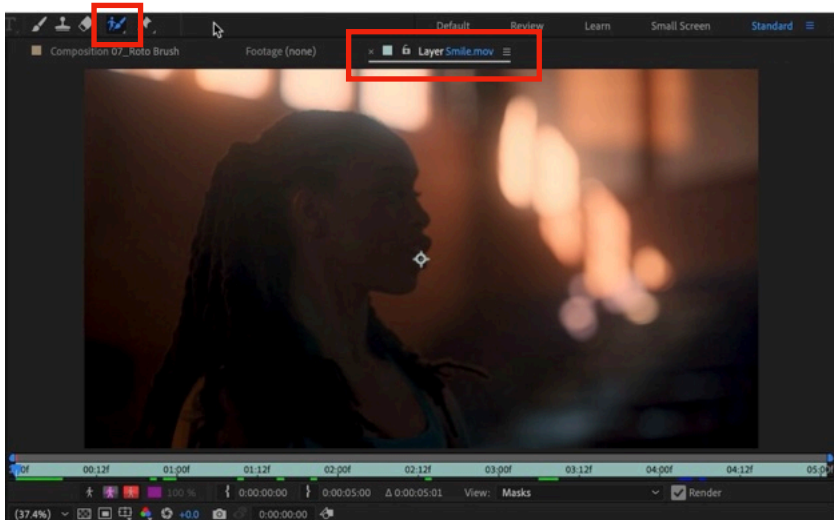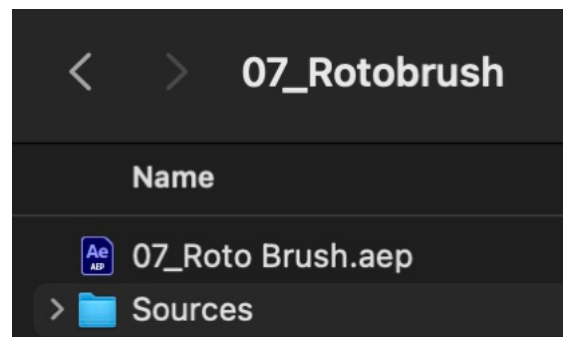
Rotoscoping

1. Hold down Option (or Alt) and begin to drag outside the area selected, and drag over into the area you'd like to deselect
2. You can also start inside the selection, and drag out to select more area
3. Once you have a selection you like, press the spacebar to have the selection continue isolating our athlete from the background over the rest of the video clip

Once the selection goes over all the frames in the timeline, you'll see that timeline turn green in the bottom of the layer panel

1. Grab the Refine Edge Tool
2. Move the Current Time Indicator back to the beginning of the timeline and slowly trace over the edges along her hair to create a more precise edge along that hair
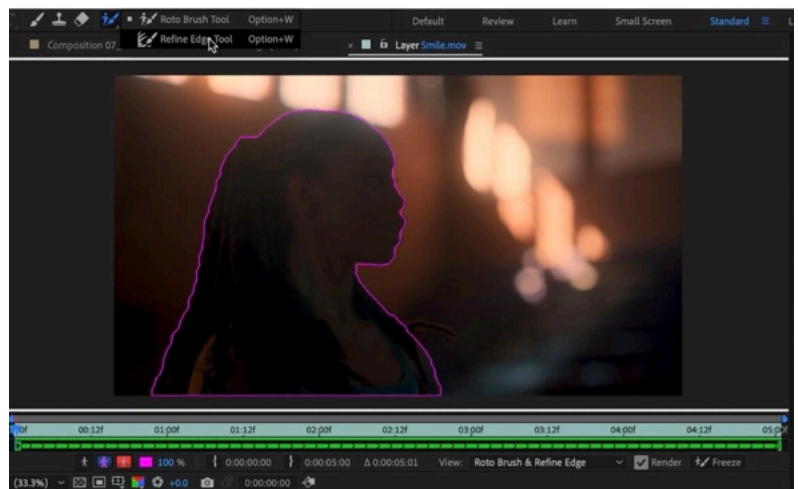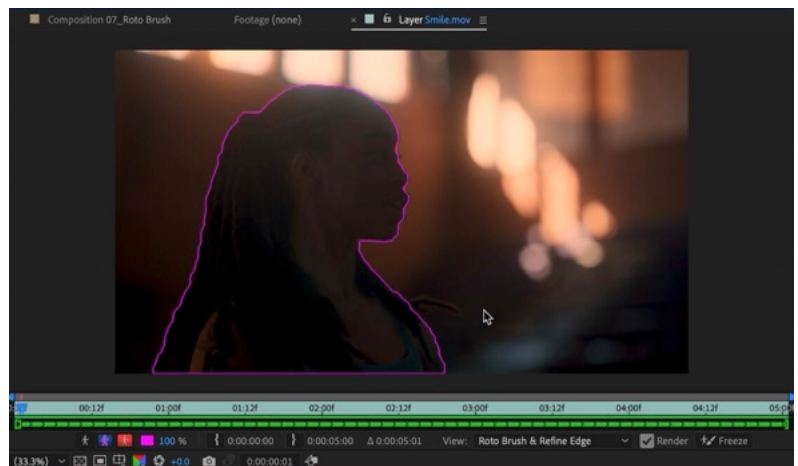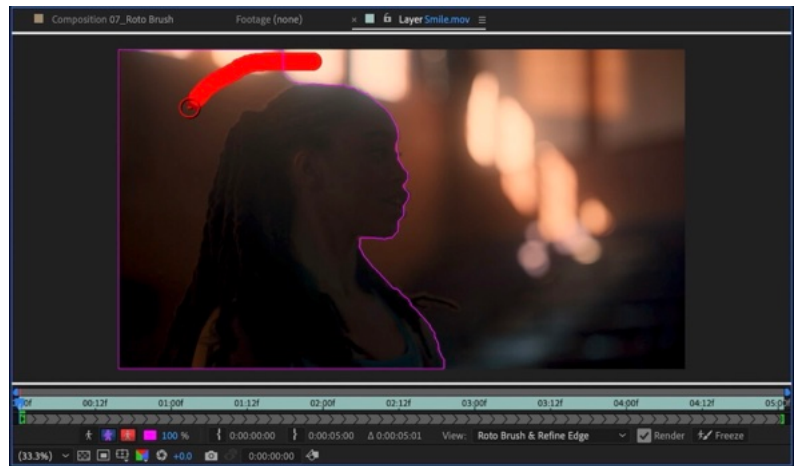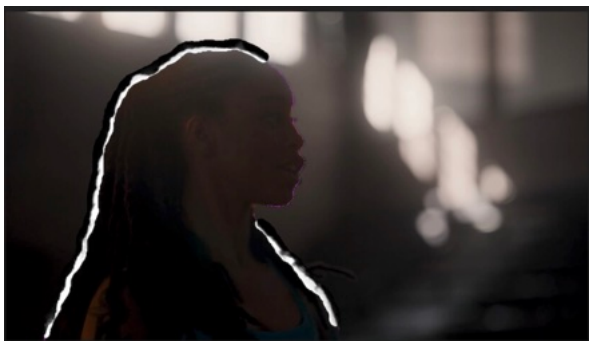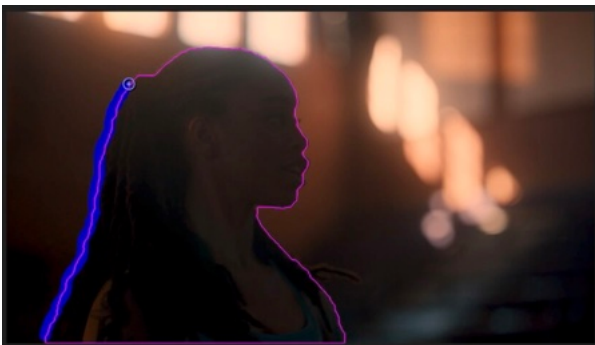
When you're finished, the selection will look something like this

3. Press the spacebar to propagate the refine edge down the rest of the timeline

4. As the frames continue to load down the timeline, you can stop playback at any time and add additional refine edge strokes if you so choose
5. Once you are satisfied with how the selection is looking, press the Freeze button in the lower right corner of the Layer panel, *(this will freeze the selections so as one plays the clip back, the Roto Brush won't re-analyze the frames again and make new selections)*
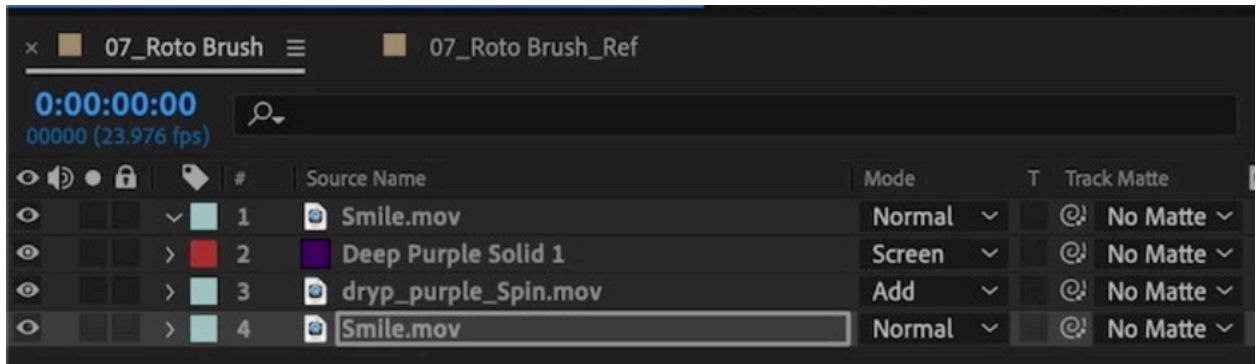

6. Copy the Deep Purple Solid 1 layer and the dryp_purple_Spin.mov layer from the 07_Roto Brush_Ref comp and paste them in the 07_Roto Brush composition below the newly rotoscoped layer
7. Drag a copy of the Smile.mov layer from the Project panel to the bottom of the layer stack.
8. Apply a Fast Box Blur to that lowest layer in the stack and crank up the Blur Radius to something around 24
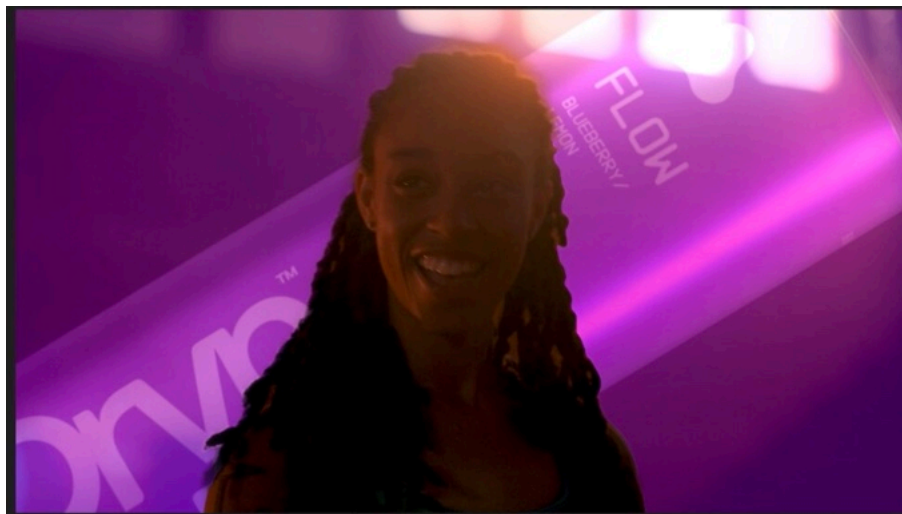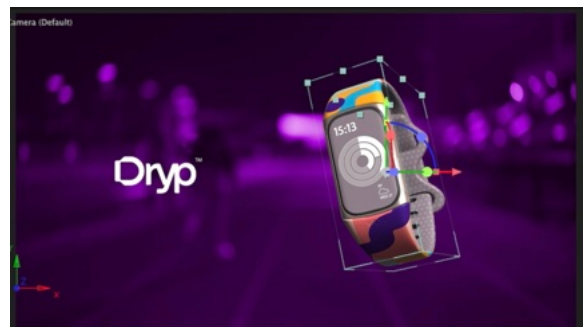
8. Working with 3D Models

This tutorial goes over the key settings and options to know about when adding 3D models directly to your After Effects Composition. The most important thing to remember is the fact that none of this would be possible without utilizing the Advanced 3D Renderer

1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 08_3D_Models.aep file
2. In the 00_Comps folder, open the 3D Models comp
3. Drag the Sportswatch_Closed.glb file into the timeline
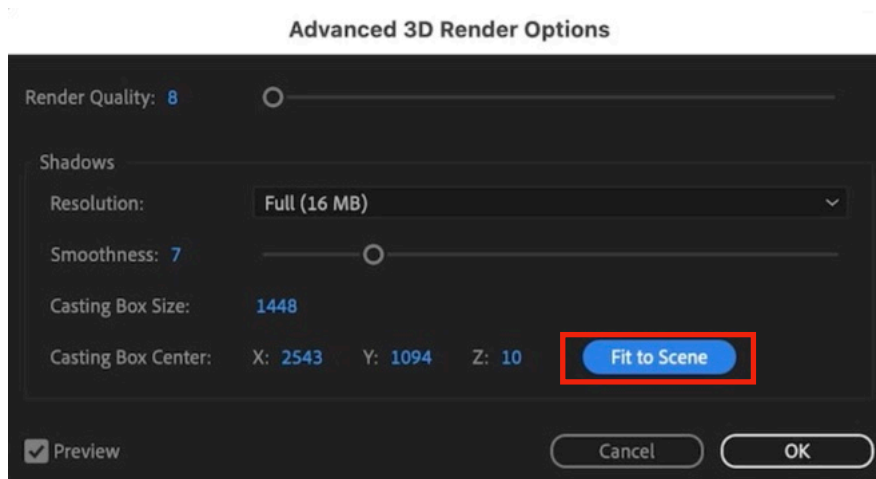4. Adjust the model settings dialogue box to match the image below and click OK
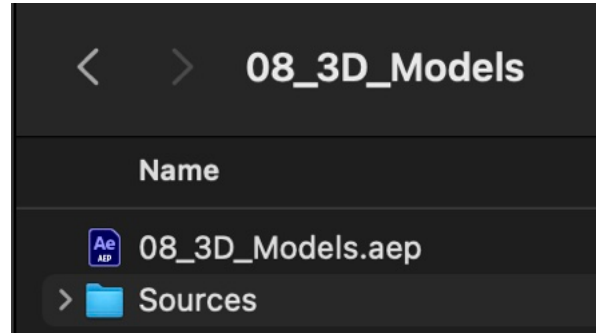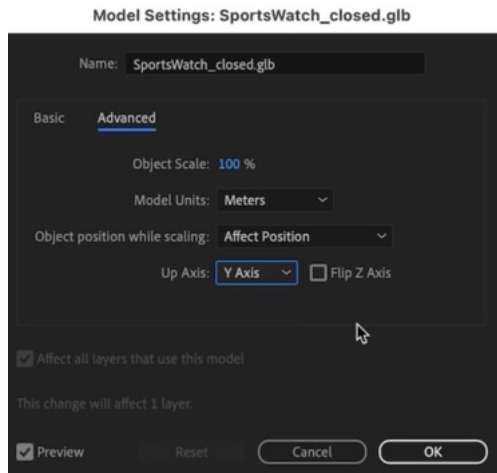
5. Open the Scale settings for the watch layer and change it to 50%
6. Use the 3D Gizmo to rotate the watch into position
7. Adjust the Scale setting as needed

If you ever decide you need to access the Model Settings dialogue box again, go to Layer > Model Settings to open them up.

5. In the Renderer drop-down menu in the lower right corner of the composition panel, choose Renderer Options
6. Set the options to match the image below and press the Fit to Scene button to get the shadows to better match the model

Advanced 3D Render Options

Render Quality: 8   O———————————————————————

Shadows
Resolution: Full (16 MB)   ⌄

Smoothness: 7   ————————O————————————————————

Casting Box Size: 1448

Casting Box Center: X: 2543   Y: 1094   Z: 10   [Fit to Scene]

☑ Preview   (Cancel)   (OK)

To make the model pop off the background we are going to add an Environment Light and a shadow catcher layer.

Light Settings

7. To add an Environment Light to the scene go to Layer > New > Light

Name: Environment Light 1

Settings

8. Choose the Environment Light from the Light Type drop down and adjust the settings to match the image to the right and press OK

Light Type: Environment ⌄
Color:
Intensity: 100 %
Cone Angle: 90 °
Cone Feather: 50 %
Falloff: Smooth
Radius: 500
Falloff Distance: 500
☑ Casts Shadows
Shadow Darkness: 100 %
Shadow Diffusion: 0 px

You may notice that things haven't changed much. That's due to the fact that an Environment Light needs a source layer to create the light from.

Note: Shadows are only cast from layers with 'Cast Shadows' enabled to layers with 'Accepts Shadows' enabled.

9. Open the HDRI folder in the Project panel and drag the Studio_Small_08_4k.hdr into the layer stack in the Timeline

☐ Preview   (Cancel)   (OK)

10. In the Light Options for the Environment Light Choose the Studio_Small_8_4k.hdr from the drop down
11. Toggle the Environment light layer on and off to see the difference in lighting on the mode.
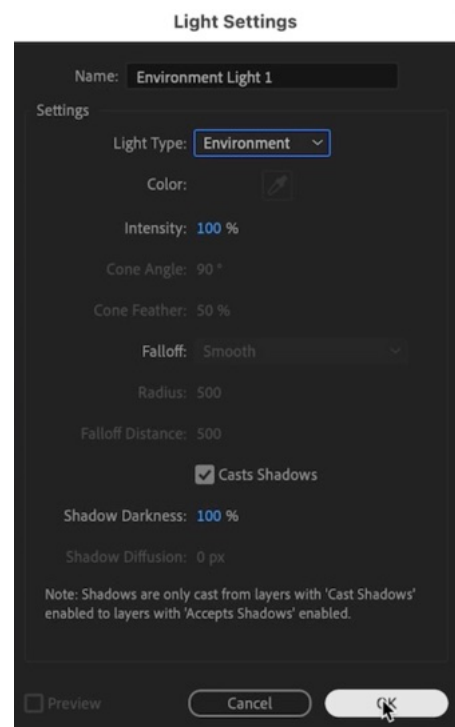
Since we have an Environment Light that casts shadows in our composition, we should add a shadow catcher layer

1. Go to Layer > New > Solid and make the solid whatever color you like and make sure it's a comp sized layer
2. Slide the layer back on the z so that it is behind the watch layer
3. Open the Layer Material Options and change the setting for Accept Shadows to Only
4. Play with the Rotation settings for the Environment Light to change how the lighting appears
5. Adjust the intensity light settings to adjust the brightness of the light settings

Layers made from 3D models cannot have effects applied to them, but there is a way around that by using the Calculations effect.

1. Go to Layer > New > Solid and make the solid white, and make it the size of the composition and move it to the top of the layer stack in the Timeline
2. Apply the Calculations effect and change the settings to match this image
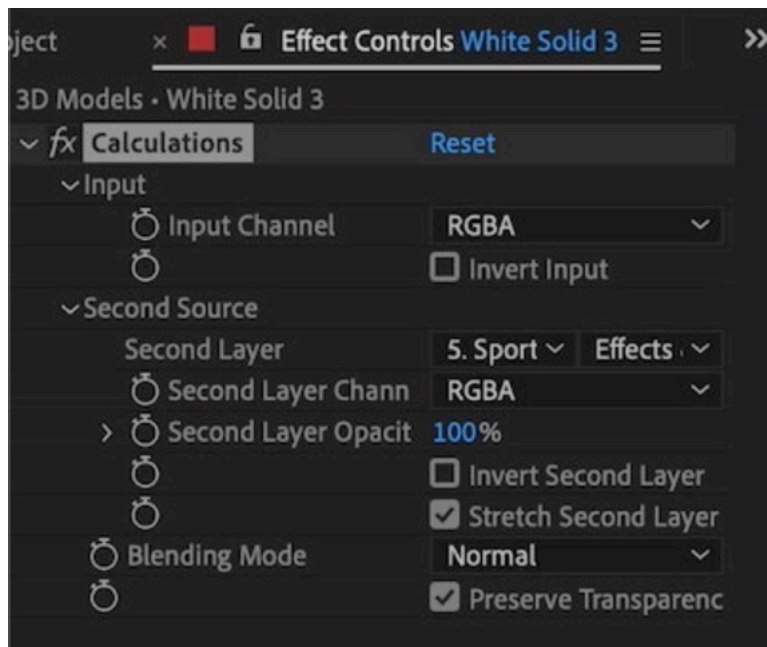
As you can see, the watch appears over the white solid instead of over everything else in the comp. To get the transparency back we need to apply another calculations effect on the same layer

1. Select the calculations effect in the effect controls and and press Command+D or Control+D to duplicate the effect
2. Change the settings to match this image

Now that we have the transparency back, we are all set to apply any effect to the layer and keep on working.

Just remember, if you want to change the position of the model, you have to adjust it on the model layer, not on the layer solid with the Calculations. The calculations layer is referencing the 3D layer.
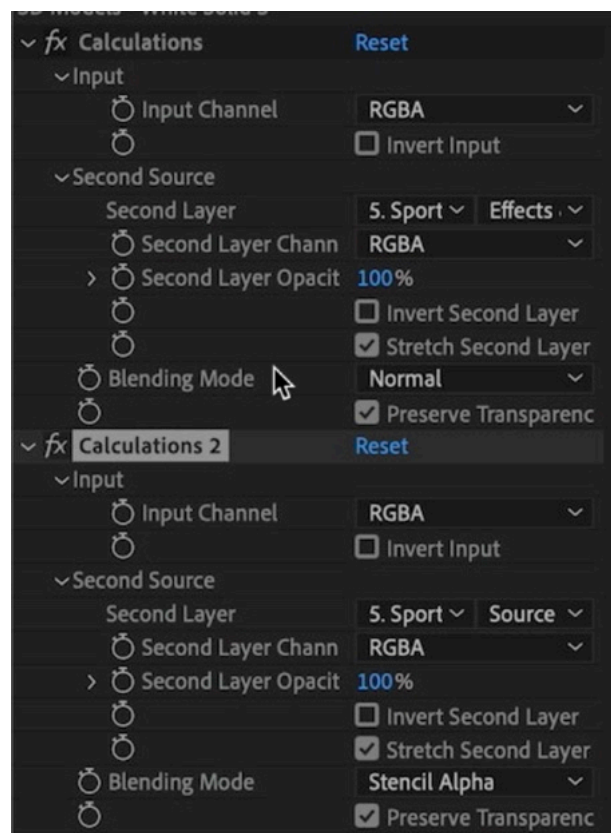
9. Interactive Animations

You might be wondering what an interactive animation is. They are simply animations where one layer causes another layer to move, or "interact" with another layer in some way. In this tutorial we are going to increase our efficiency working in After Effects by utilizing some of the more advanced features used to create interactive animations.

1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 09_Efficient_Layers.aep file
2. In the 00_Comps folder, open the 3D Models comp
3. Go to Layer > New > Null Object
4. Rename the Null "Rotation Control" and enable 3D on the layer
5. Position the Null on the left side of the composition panel
6. Use the Pick Whip for the Soccer Ball layer and point it to the Rotation Control Null layer in the Timeline
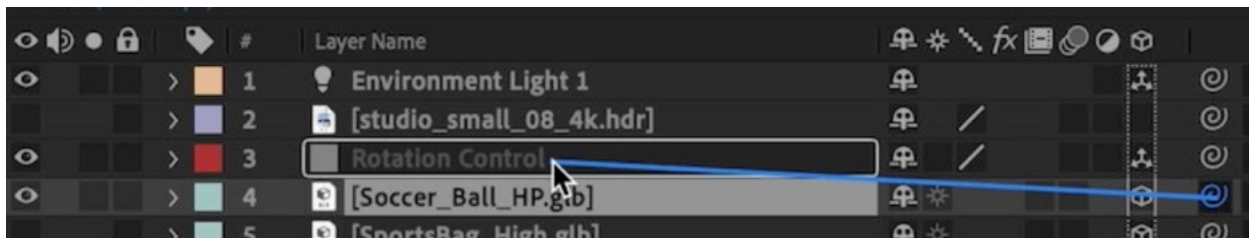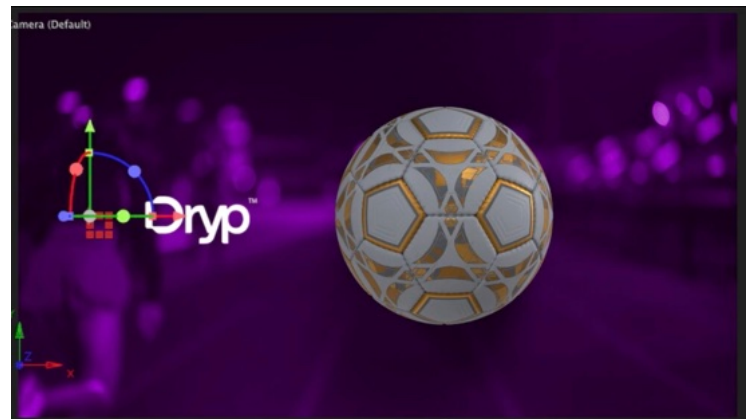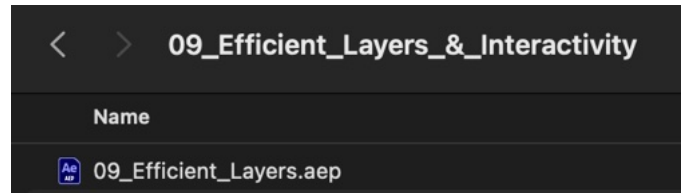
1. Add a keyframe for the Z Rotation at about 12 frames in the timeline
2. Move the Current Time Indicator to 1 second in the timeline and rotate the Z setting to 90
3. Turn on the visibility for the Sports watch and make it the child of the Rotation Control Null
4. Add a keyframe for the Z rotation of the Rotation Control Null
5. Move the Current Time Indicator down another 12 frames in the timeline
6. Rotate the Control Null another 90 degrees
7. Repeat this process of the sports bag
8. Scrub the timeline and add any additional keyframes you might want to make this animation as smooth as possible

Now that we have done some of the fundamentals like using parenting to control the rotation or position of another layer, now we will take things a step further and use the rotation of one layer determine the color of another layer.
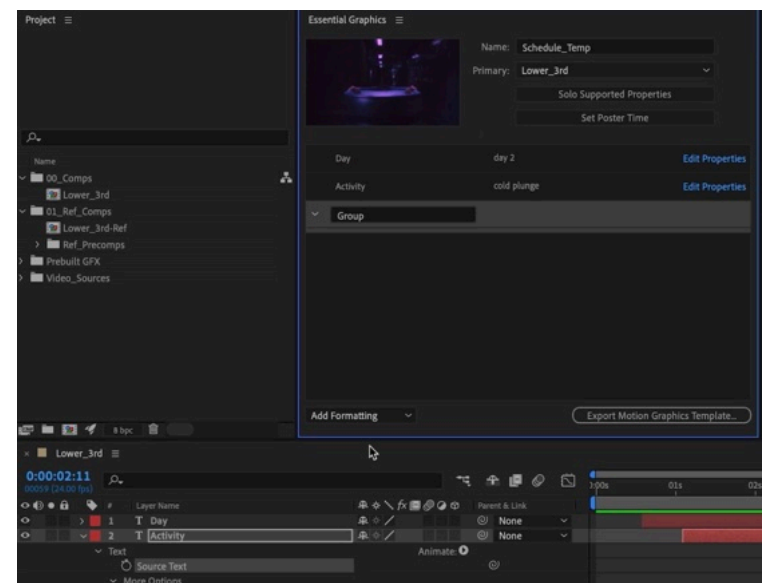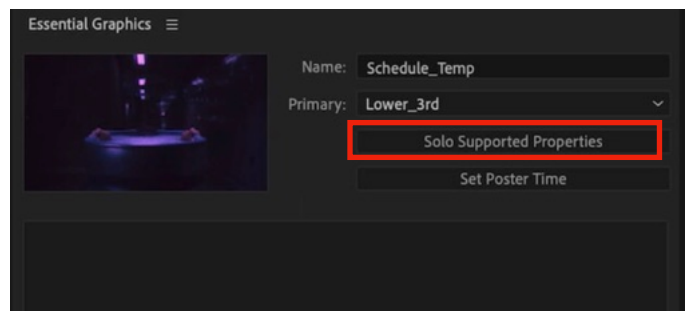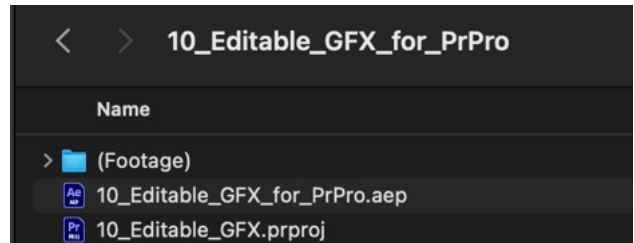
1. Select the bottom layer in the layer stack
2. Open the effects for that layer in the bottom of the Timeline
3. Open the settings for the Color Balance (HLS) effect so we can see the Hue setting
4. Use the Pick Whip for the Hue setting and point it at the Rotation setting of the Rotation Control Null
5. Press the Spacebar to preview the animation *(Enable Draft 3D so speed up the preview)*
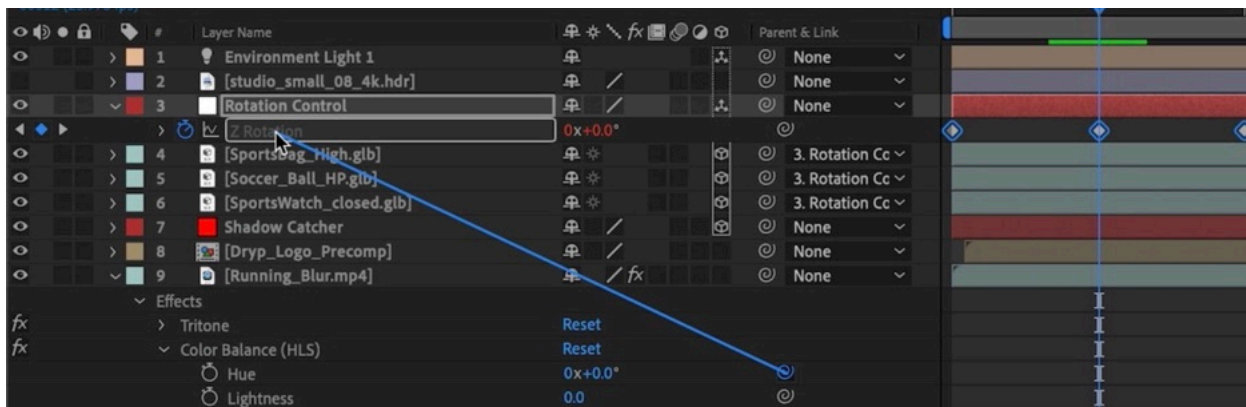
10. Working with Motion Graphics Templates

In this tutorial we will export a Motion Graphic template out of After Effects for use in Premiere Pro as a template.Using a Motion Graphics template enables editing in Premiere Pro faster because you do not have to go back to After Effects to make a simple change in a graphic.

1. In your Ae_10 folder, open the 10_Editable_GFX_for_PrPro.aep file
2. In the 00_Comps folder, open the Lower_3rd composition
3. Scrub through the project to preview the animation
4. Go to Window > Workspace > Essential Graphics to change to that workspace
5. In the Essential Graphics panel change the name to Schedule_Temp
6. Choose the Lower_3rd comp from the Primary drop down
7. Adjust the timing or settings of any of the animations or layers before beginning the process of creating the template
8. Use the Solo Supported Properties button to reveal anything that can be customized in in the Essential Graphics panel
9. Drag the Source Text property for the Day text layer up into the Essential graphics panel
10. Do the same for the Source Text property for the Activity text as well

1. In the lower left corner of the Effect Controls panel, go to Add Formatting and choose Add Group
2. Name the new group "Text" and drop the two text properties in it
3. Make another group and name it, "Bar Length"
4. Select the Medium Bar Shape layer and go to Layer > Pre-Compose
5. Name the new Precomp "Medium Bar"
6. Do the same thing with the Big Bar layer, making sure the bar is visible before putting it into the precomposition.
7. Apply the Checkbox Control effect to both the Medium Bar
8. Rename the control in the Effect Controls panel to "Medium Bar"
9. Do the same thing with the Big Bar layer, and rename that Checkbox Control "Big Bar"
10. Open the Opacity for the Big Bar precomp
11. Link the Opacity for Big Bar to the Checkbox control in the Effect Controls panel
12. Open the Expression and add *100 at the end and click outside the box to set it
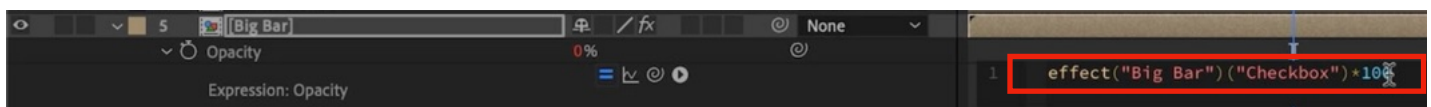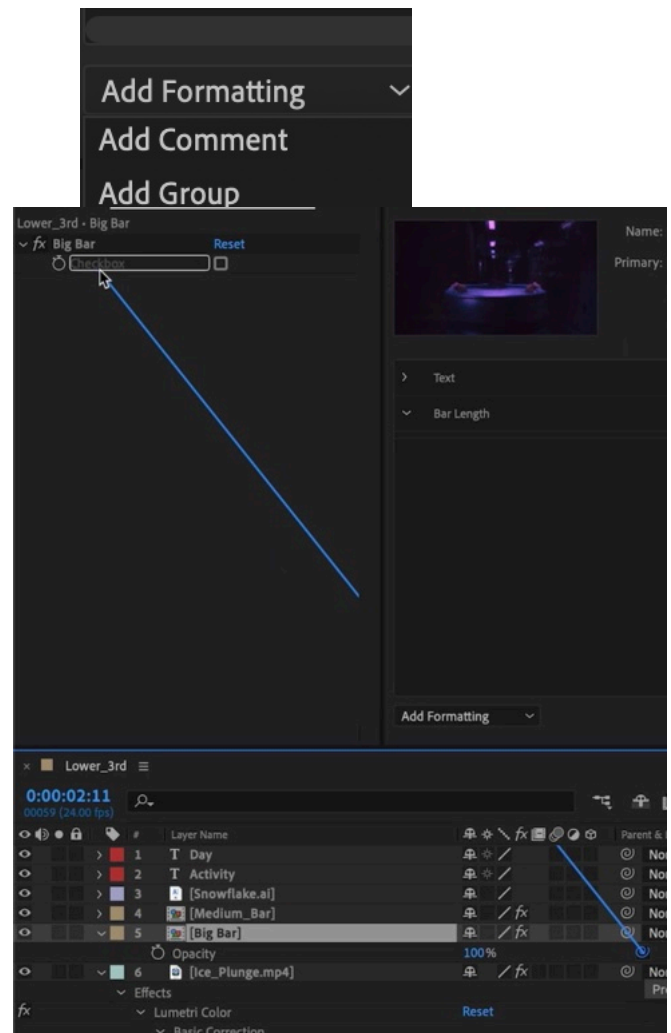
13. Open the effect in the timeline and drag the Checkbox property up into the Effect Controls panel
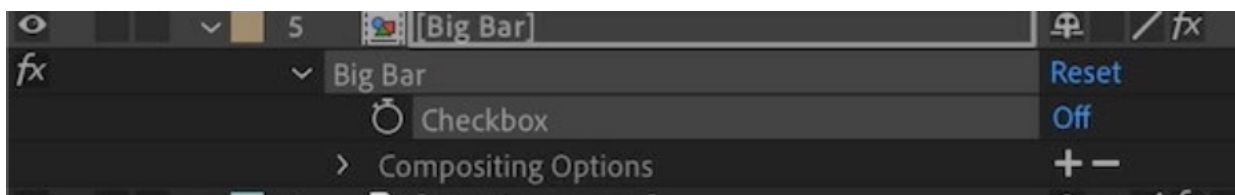
14. Make a group in the Essential
Graphics panel for the bars and
call it Bar Length

15. Repeat the same steps for control
of the Medium Bar, and add that
into the Effect Controls panel
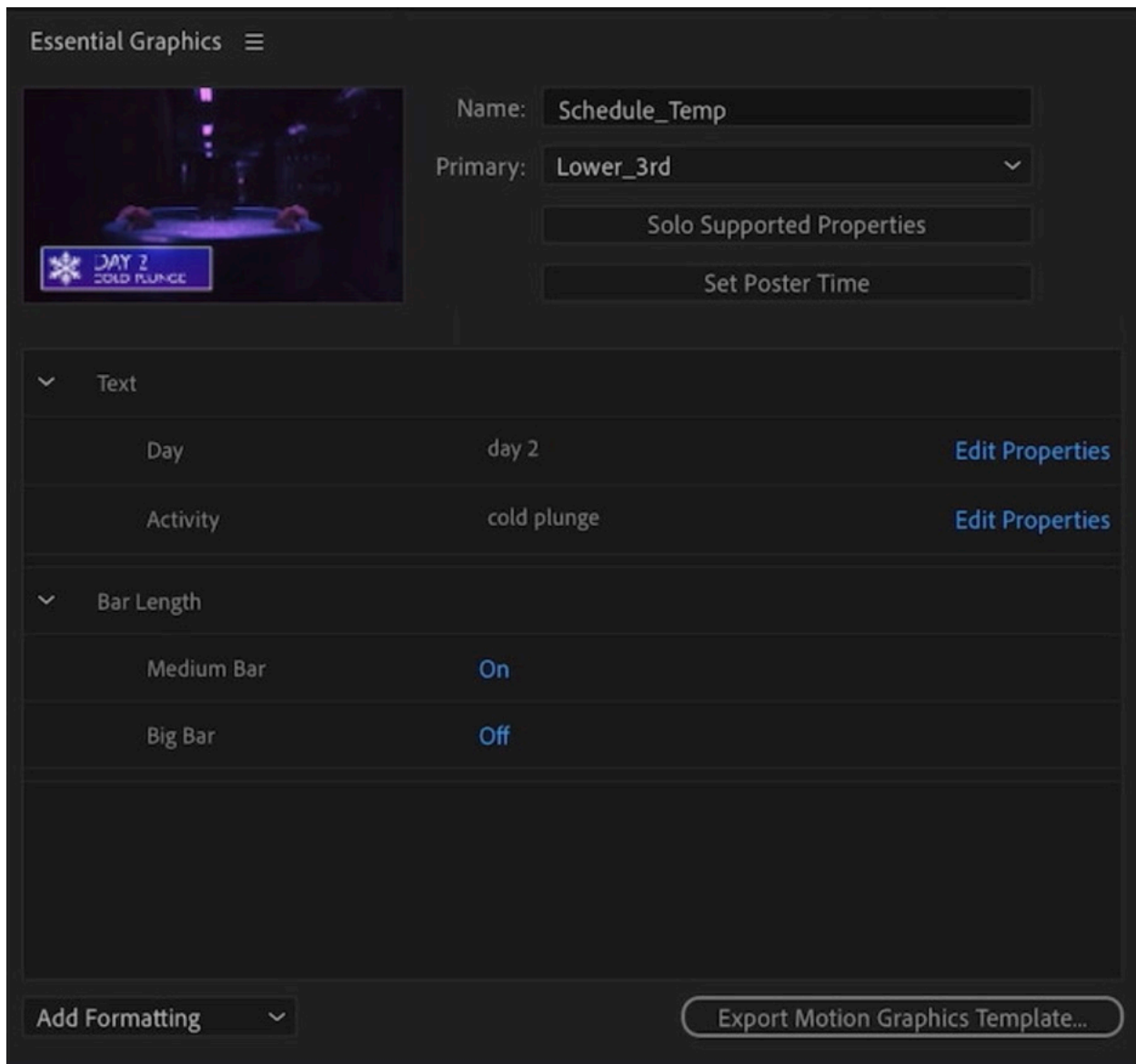
16. In order to change the color of text, we need to select the text layer and add an animator Animate > Fill Color > RGB

17. Drag that Fill color up to the Essential Graphics panel so it can also be customized in Premiere Pro
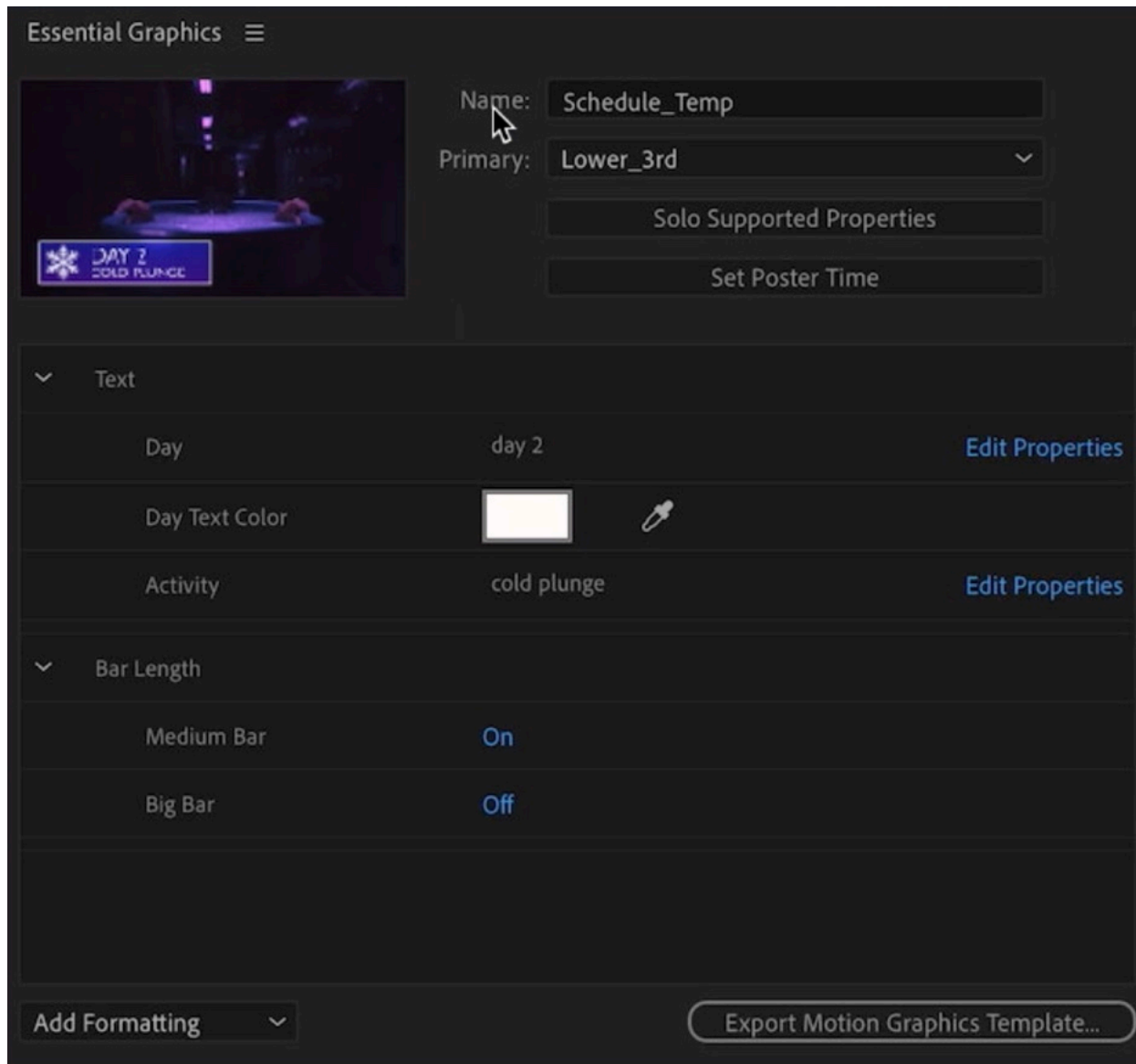
16. Selecting the bottom video layer and right-click, choose > Guide Layer to make sure this layer shows up as transparent when the template is created

17. Press the "Export Motion Graphics Template…" button and save it where you can find it easily

1. In Premiere Pro go to Window > Workspace > Captions and Graphics
2.   Press on the Install Motion Graphics Template button in the lower left corner of the Essential Graphics panel
3. Navigate to where you saved the file and import it
4. Drag the template into the timeline in Premiere Pro and Double click it to open in the Graphics section of the Text panel and customize
5. You can also customize the graphics in the Essential Graphics panel on the right side of the interface
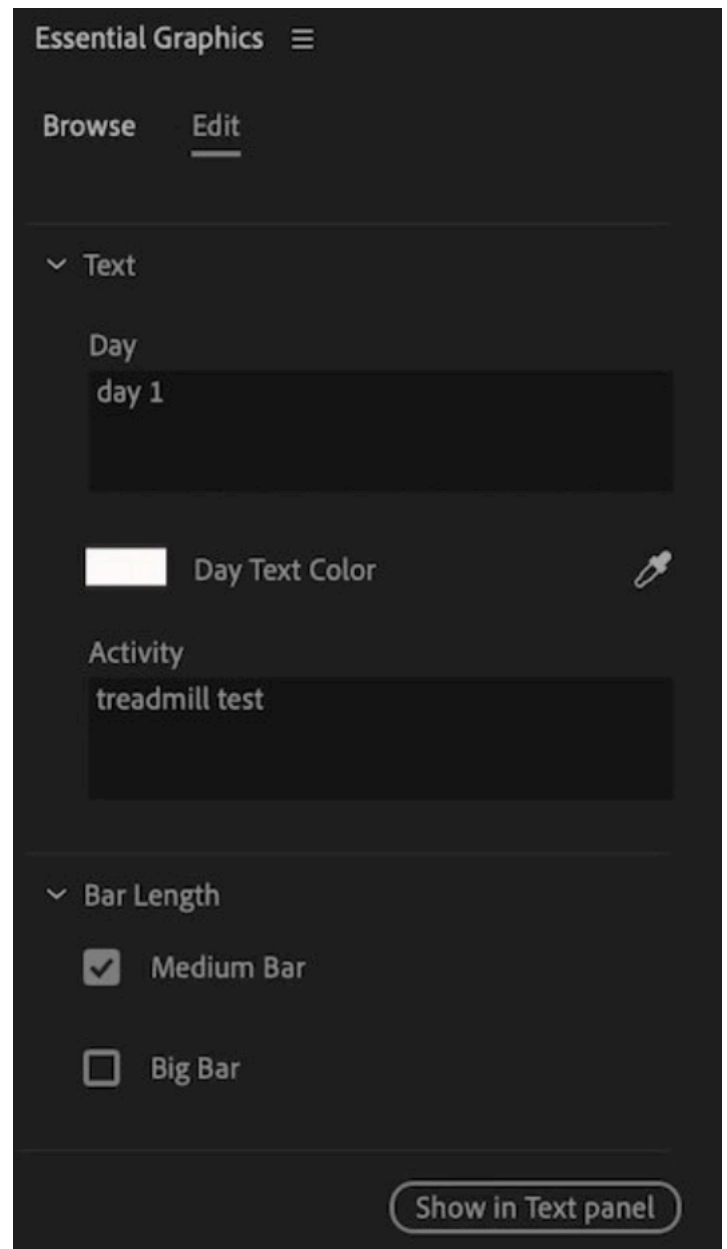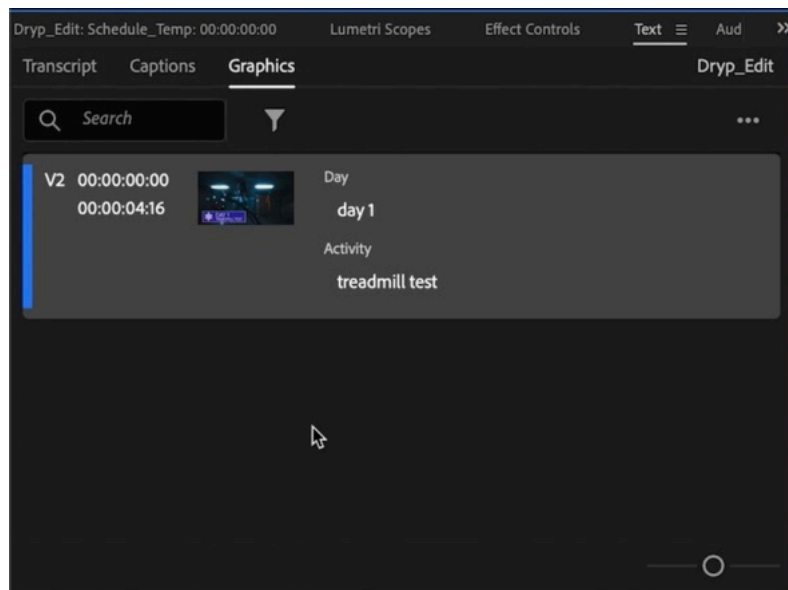
A farewell note from the author:

Hello! And once again thank you for checking out this course! If you have any questions, feel free to reach out. Thanks again for your time.

Sincerely: Ian Robinson - ian@softboxmedia.com