

Dear Friend,

Hello, & welcome back to **FIREWIRE**, your friendly guide to the exciting world of web-design & web-solutions! In the previous newsletter of Flash 5 Tutorial Series we had discussed about the Movie Properties, Scenes,.Key Frames, Rulers, Group & Ungroup, Overlay, Align Panel & Trace Bitmap. Let's continue with Layers, Motion Guide, Masking, Onion Skin, & Snapping.

Layers

Layers help us to organize elements and add depth to the movie. We can edit the objects in one layer without affecting the other layer. Layers are very helpful with multiple animations.



Stacking

Layers can be stacked. The items placed in the top layer appear in front of items placed on the bottom layer. Layers can be added using the "+" symbol. They can be deleted by using the Dust bin icon and to rename them double-click on the layer.

Layer Modes

1. Show / Hide All Layers: This option is denoted by an 'eye' symbol. When pressed 'on' in the corresponding layer, the layer is hidden. It is pressed back to make the layer is visible. If not pressed in the corresponding layer but on the icon itself, all layers have the effect.

2. Lock / Unlock All Layers: This option is denoted by a lock symbol. When pressed 'on' in the corresponding layer, that layer becomes un-editable or the objects in the layer cannot be moved or worked upon. If pressed on the icon itself and not in the corresponding layer, all the layers are locked.

3. Show All Layers as Outlines: This option is denoted by a square shape without any fill. If the icon is pressed, all the objects in all the layers show only the strokes of their shapes but when pressed in one particular layer or layers, only that/those layer(s) show the outlines of their objects.

Layer Properties can be modified from Modify menu.
There are three types of layers. They are:

Normal:

All the objects will appear in the movie.

Guide:

It is used as reference and for alignment. It won't appear in the final movie.

Mask:

It hides the layer which is linked to it.



Motion Guide

Motion Guide is basically a path that we draw to an object to follow during a motion tween. The motion tween is invisible outside of the authoring environment and it is placed in a special layer above the layer of the object that we are tweening.

Motion guide is indicated with a guide icon to the left of the name. A normal layer, which is linked to a motion guide layer, becomes a guided layer. The guide layer is not available in the final movie.

Masking

Mask is a way of selection to show or hide the objects in flash movie. Decide with the type of masking. For example, Sphere mask on a text. In the above example create a text in the first frame of first layer. Place a sphere in the tenth frame of second layer (place sphere over the text). Specify mask for the sphere by right-clicking the sphere layer. We can see the sphere mask effect on the text.



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Onion Skin

Onion skin is used to position and edit frame by frame animation. The frame animations can be controlled using the onion skin. It is mainly used to view the path of the animation in dimmed manner and it won't be available for the final movie. The onion skin is selected and it Onion Skin Markers will be displayed on the timeline.

Onion Skin (Only the outline of image)

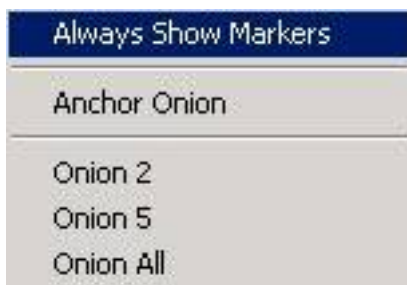
In the path of the animation, only the outline of the images will be displayed. The markers of onion skin is altered by selecting onion skin marker modifiers. The options available are:

Always show markers:

It will show the onion skin markers, even if onion skin is not selected. The marker will, always be shown on the timeline of the frame.

Anchor Onion:

Used to lock the onion markers. The markers can be moved only after the locking it.



Onion 2 or 5:

Will show onion skin for only 2 or 5 frames either at the end or in the beginning of the path of the animation.

Onion all:

Will show onion skin for all the frames of the animation. Perform an animation and select the onion skin and run the file, you can notice all the frames i.e. onion skin help us to verify the path of the animation



Snap to Object

"Snap to object" icon, which is found in the options sections of the arrow tool, is used to automatically align elements with one another. Snapping can also be turned on by clicking the options found under the view menu.

If the snap modifier for the arrow tool is on, a small black ring appears under the pointer when an element is dragged. The small ring changes to a larger one, when the object is within the snapping distance of a grid line.

While moving or reshaping an object, the position of arrow tool on the object, provides a reference point for the snap ring.

Snapping is useful for snapping shapes for motion paths for animation.

The tolerance of snapping can be adjusted by selecting the editing preferences.

Snapping is also possible for the grid or to the guides.

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Regards,

Manoj Kotak.

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