

Motion Tween Animations

Adobe Flash provides two main ways of animating, Tweening and Frame by Frame Animation. The most common form is Tweening where you set a start point and an end point and let the program animate the object BETWEEN them. This is where the term TWEEN comes from.


In this chapter you will be shown how to create TWEEN ANIMATIONS for a text symbol. The next few chapters will demonstrate animating graphics.

Creating a Motion Tween

Motion Tweening involves moving objects from a start point to an end point. You can motion tween objects, text, drawings, etc. They must be grouped or converted to a symbol (although text boxes can be animated directly). To illustrate motion tweening, a simple text symbol will be moved around the stage.

A Setting the Symbol

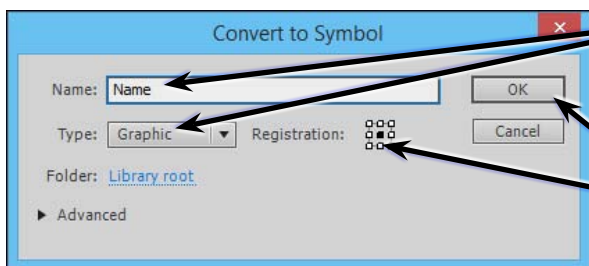
- 1 Load Flash or close the current file and create a new ACTIONSCRIPT 3.0 file.



The screenshot shows the Adobe Flash interface. On the stage, the word "Jessica" is written in a blue, bold font. The Properties panel on the right is open, showing the text's characteristics. Two callout boxes provide instructions:

- 2 Select the TEXT TOOL in the TOOLS panel and enter your first name at the top left of the stage.
- 3 Highlight the text and, in the PROPERTIES panel, set the STYLE to BOLD, the TEXT FILL COLOUR to BLUE and the FONT SIZE to 30 pt.

- 4 Select the SELECTION TOOL and the text box should be selected, then use the MODIFY menu to select CONVERT TO SYMBOL.



5 Call the symbol NAME and set the TYPE to GRAPHIC.

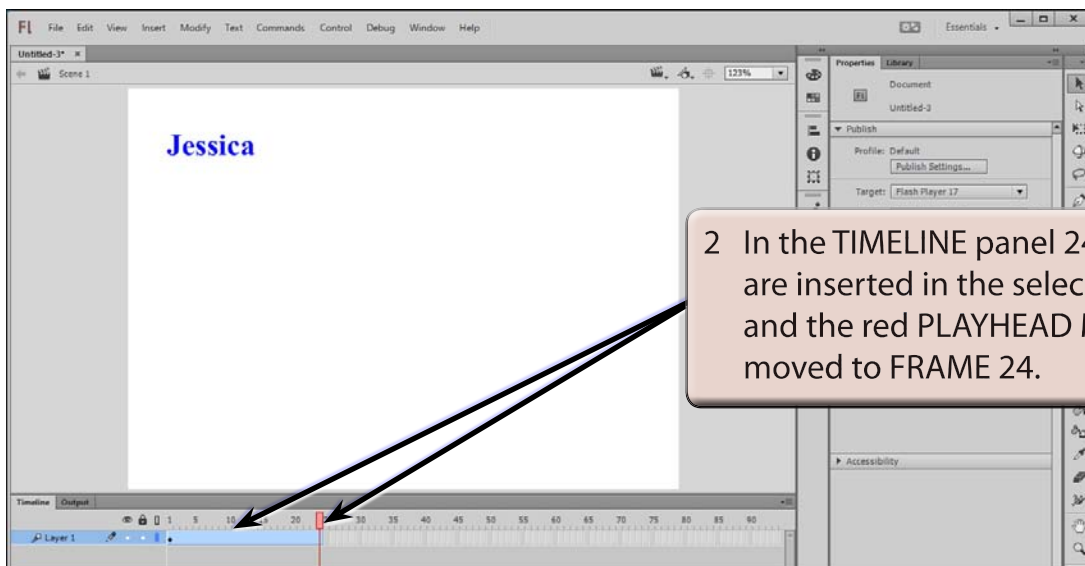
6 Set the REGISTRATION to CENTRE and select OK.

NOTE: Text can be Motion Tweened without converting it to a symbol, but it is useful learn how to create a symbol as other shapes do need to be converted to a symbol before they can be Motion Tweened.

B Setting the Motion Tween

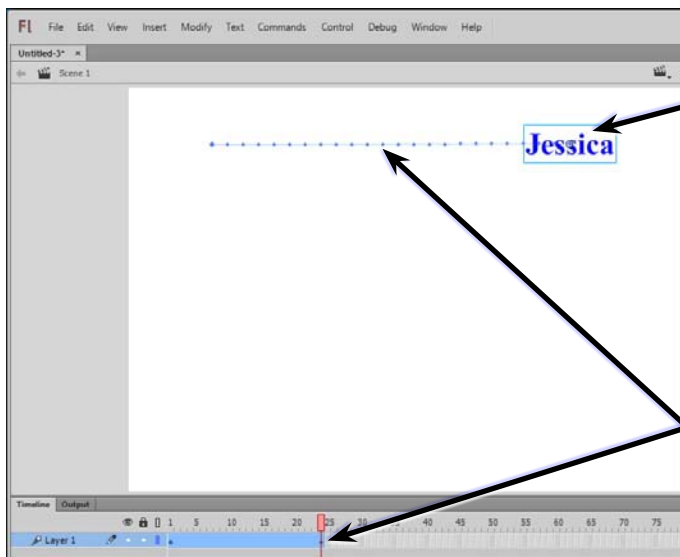
To animate an object, frames need to be inserted in the TIMELINE panel. Flash is preset to insert 24 frames (which represents a 1 second animation) when you set a Motion Tween, although you can easily adjust the number of frames once the animation is set.

- 1 Display the INSERT menu and select MOTION TWEEN.



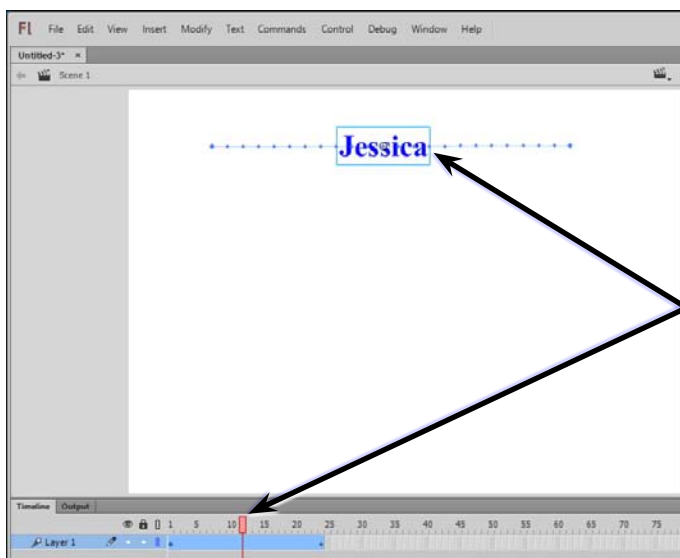
2 In the TIMELINE panel 24 frames are inserted in the selected layer and the red PLAYHEAD MARKER is moved to FRAME 24.

- NOTE:**
- i You can **RIGHT+CLICK** on the symbol and select **CREATE MOTION TWEEN** to create the **MOTION TWEEN** rather than using the **INSERT** menu.
 - ii You can change the default number of frames that are inserted using **DOCUMENT** from the **MODIFY** menu.



3 Move the symbol to the right of the stage. This will set its end position in the animation. It has not affected the position of the name at **FRAME 1**.

4 A blue **MOTION PATH** line is inserted to show you the path of the animation and a **PROPERTY KEYFRAME MARKER** is inserted at **FRAME 24** in the **TIMELINE** panel.



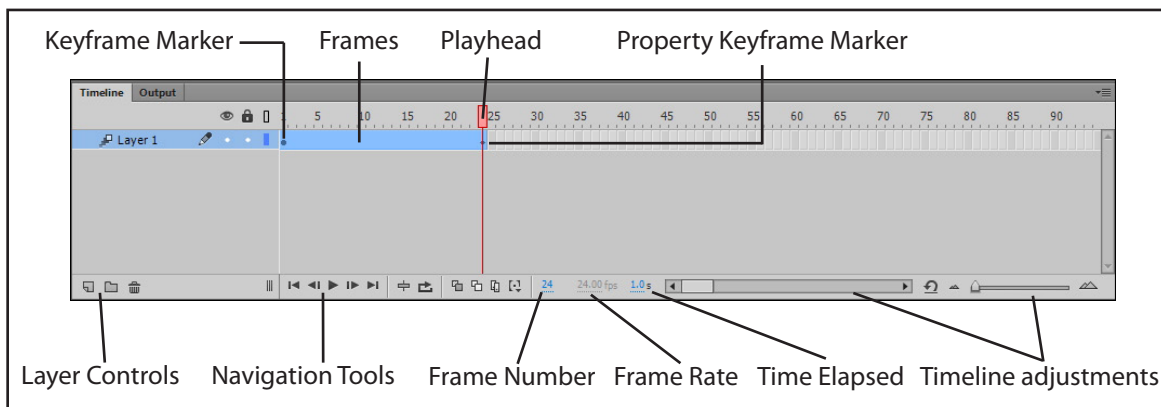
5 Move the red **PLAYHEAD** marker in the **TIMELINE** panel across the frames and your name should move along the motion path.

- 6 Test the movie then close the **TEST MOVIE** screen.

- 7 You can do a live preview of the animation without opening the TEST MOVIE screen.
- 8 Move the PLAYHEAD MARKER to FRAME 1, press the <enter> or <return> key and the animation should play once. It is a useful way of quickly testing that an animation is working correctly. You can also click on the PLAY arrow at the base of the TIMELINE panel.

Understanding the Timeline Panel

Now that you have created your first animation it is important that you understand the symbols used in the TIMELINE panel. The following diagram labels its sections.



The important sections of the TIMELINE panel are:

- The **KEYFRAME MARKER** which is a solid •. It stores major changes in an animation. If there is no content in a KEYFRAME the dot will open.
- The **PROPERTY KEYFRAME MARKER** which is a diamond shape. It stores symbol property changes such as position, rotation, size, etc. in the animation.
- The **PLAYHEAD** which is the red rectangle and line. It allows you to move through the frames. The frame that the PLAYHEAD is over is the FRAME NUMBER which is displayed at the base of the TIMELINE panel.
- The **FRAMES** which are contained in a shaded bar in the TIMELINE panel. They control the duration of the animation.