

After Effects CS4: Introduction

Course Overview

Whether you are a motion graphics designer, visual effects artist, video editor, or a rich media designer for the web, Adobe After Effects CS4 Professional lets you design and animate with greater creative freedom

This Adobe authorized two day introductory course is designed to allow those new to post production techniques to get the most from this immensely powerful software.

The emphasis throughout this introduction is on practical exercises. These exercises will cover incorporating footage with Photoshop and Illustrator graphics, video layering techniques, working with key frames, using filters for special effects and rendering your final project. You will also look at different rendering techniques and ways to optimise the finished production for broadcast, DVD or the web.

Course content

DAY ONE

Starting a project

- The Composition windows
- Using the Project window
- Working with layers over time
- Animating layers independently
- Designing backgrounds from scratch
- Using Bezier motion paths
- Applying effects to layers

Importing footage

- Importing layers from Photoshop
- Using Alpha channels
- Interpreting footage
- Looping video footage
- Drafting a project

Working with layers

- Different layer masking techniques
- Creating animated Bezier mattes
- Exposing elements of your last project
- Trimming and moving layers
- Changing playback speed
- Changing playback direction

- Working with Shape layers
- Using Brainstorm to experiment and refine designs

Working with text

- Using text animation presets
- Customising text presets
- Animating text
- Antialiased text
- Using text layers

Working with key frames

- Animating graphic elements
- Precisely controlling animations
- Synchronising actions

Introduction to using mattes

- Using colour keys
- Making layers react interactively
- Working with multiple effects
- Using paths in After Effects
- Using adjustment layers
- Using the Keylight keyer

DAY TWO

Compiling your project

- Optimising project settings
- Rendering the composition

Using Effects

- An in-depth look at After Effects filters including:
 - Levels
 - Creating drop shadows
 - Perspective filters
- Using texturise
- Setting mattes
- Beveling the Alpha channel
- Beveling edges of rectangular objects
- An in-depth look at transitions
- Using the Comp window
- Creating text effects
- Animating text

More about key frames

- Further principles of key framing
- Copying and pasting key frames

- Key frame assistants
- Time reversing key frames
- Simultaneously editing multiple key frames

Finalising your project

- Using the pen tool to edit the value graph
- Issues involved in interpolation methods
- Precise control over velocity
- Controlling speed of change
- Nesting complex compositions
- Mixing interpolation methods

Linear and Bezier interpolation

- Previewing in wire frame
- Using audio effects
- Importing a project from Adobe Premiere

Final rendering

- Creating custom rendering templates
- Setting field rendering order
- Creating PDF video files

Saving your work for film, video, multimedia, mobile devices and the web

- Using Device Central