



importing artwork into Flash

Flash recognizes various different bitmap and vector graphic formats which you can import using "copy&paste" or via the File>Import command in the top menu.

The most common formats imported into Flash are

jpg - **eps** - **gif** - **png** - **pict** -

ai (Illustrator) - **fh** (Freehand) - **dxf** (Autocad)

A few things to remember when importing bitmap images:

- Importing bitmap images into a movie can increase the movie's file size. To keep this at a minimum - make sure to save your file accordingly in whichever graphics program you're using, eg in Photoshop - use the "save for web" option to compress your image.

- Once imported into Flash, you can reduce the file size further by using the compression option in the Bitmap Properties dialog box =>
 - select the bitmap in the library window
 - doubleclick the icon /or/ click on the "i" at the bottom of the palette /or/ access the properties through clicking on the arrow in the top right corner of the library
 - select Allow Smoothing to smooth the edges of the bitmap with anti-aliasing
 - For Compression, choose one of the following options:
 - › Choose Photo (JPEG) to compress the image in JPEG format. To use the default compression quality specified for the imported image, select Use Document Default Quality. To specify a new quality compression setting, deselect Use Document Default Quality and enter a value between 1 and 100 in the Quality text box. (A higher setting preserves greater image integrity but yields a smaller reduction in file size.)
 - › Choose Lossless (PNG/GIF) to compress the image with lossless compression, in which no data is discarded from the image.

- !!! Use Photo compression for images with complex color or tonal variations, such as photographs or images with gradient fills. Use Lossless compression for images with simple shapes and relatively few colors. And always use "test" to check whether your settings result in an acceptable output quality.

- **trace bitmap to convert bitmaps to vector graphics**

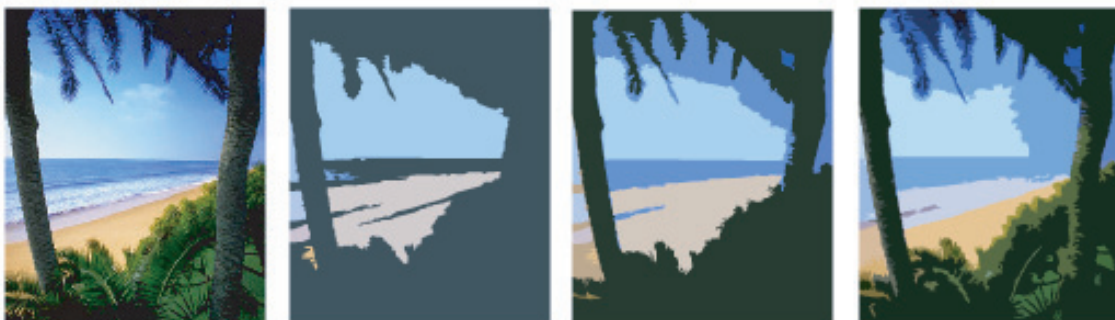
The Trace Bitmap command converts a bitmap into a vector graphic with editable, discrete areas of color. Use this command to manipulate the image as a vector graphic, or to reduce file size.

If you convert a bitmap to a vector graphic, the vector graphic is no longer linked to the bitmap symbol in the Library window.

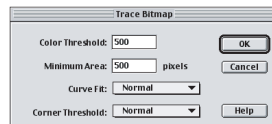
!!! If the imported bitmap contains complex shapes and many colors, the converted vector graphic can have a larger file size than the original bitmap. Try a variety of settings in the Trace Bitmap dialog box to find a balance between file size and image quality.

To convert a bitmap to a vector graphic:

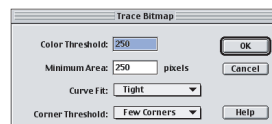
- Select the bitmap image in the current scene
- Choose Modify › Trace Bitmap
- Enter a Color Threshold value between 1 and 500.
When two pixels are compared, if the difference in the RGB color values is less than the color threshold, the two pixels are considered the same color. As you increase the threshold value, you decrease the number of colors
- For Minimum Area, enter a value between 1 and 1000 to set the number of surrounding pixels to consider when assigning a color to a pixel
- For Curve Fit, select an option from the pop-up menu to determine how smoothly outlines are drawn
- For Corner Threshold, select an option from the pop-up menu to determine whether sharp edges are retained or smoothed out



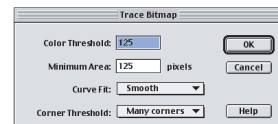
original



colour threshold 500
minimum area 500
curve fit normal
corner threshold normal



colour threshold 250
minimum area 250
curve fit tight
corner threshold few corners



colour threshold 125
minimum area 125
curve fit smooth
corner threshold many corners

- **breaking apart a bitmap**

Breaking apart a bitmap separates the pixels in the image into discrete areas that can be selected and modified separately. When you break apart a bitmap, you can modify the bitmap with the Flash drawing and painting tools. You can also paint with the bitmap as a fill.

Using the Lasso tool with the Magic Wand modifier, you can change the fill of selected areas of a bitmap that has been broken apart.

After you paint an area with a bitmap, you can use the Paint Bucket tool to rotate, skew, or scale the bitmap image.



To break apart a bitmap:

- Select the bitmap image in the current scene
- Choose Modify › Break Apart

To paint with a bitmap's image:

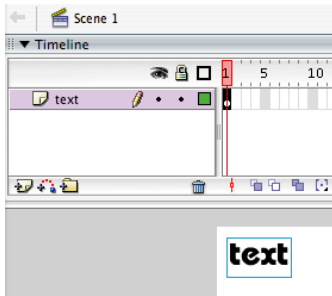
- Break apart the bitmap, as described above
- Select the Eyedropper tool and then click the bitmap.
The Eyedropper tool sets the bitmap to be the current fill and changes the active tool to the Paint Bucket.
- Paint with the Brush or Paint Bucket tool

To change the fill of selected areas of a broken-apart bitmap

- Select a broken-apart bitmap in the scene
- Select the Lasso tool and click the Magic Wand modifier 
- Click the Magic Wand Settings modifier and set the following options: 
 - › For Threshold, enter a value between 1 and 200 to define how closely the color of adjacent pixels must match to be included in the selection. A higher number includes a broader range of colors. If you enter 0, only pixels of the exact same color as the first pixel you click are selected
 - › For Smoothing, select an option from the pop-up menu to define how much the edges of the bitmap will be smoothed
- Click the bitmap to select an area. Continue clicking to add to the selection
- Select a fill that you want to use to fill the selected areas in the bitmap
- Select the Paint Bucket tool and click anywhere on the selected areas to add the new fill

alpha fade

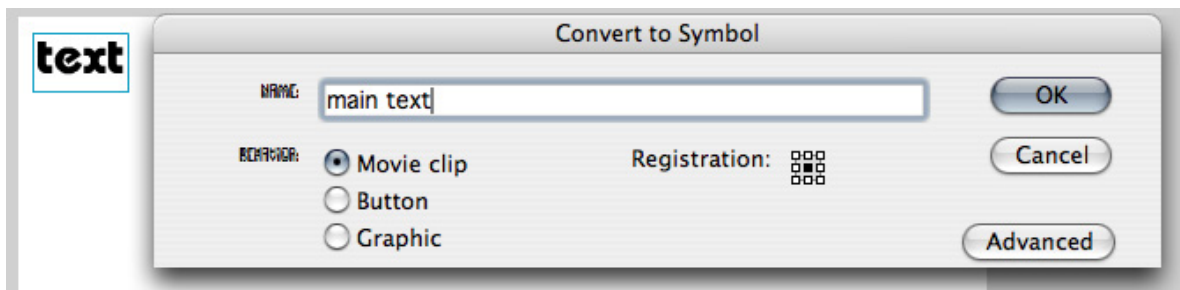
- Open new movie. In layer 1, select the text tool and type the word of your choice in the first keyframe. Start a good habit and always name your layers straight away, it will save you a lot of headaches later!



Text in Flash will stay editable, unless you break it apart, turning it into a graphic rather than type.

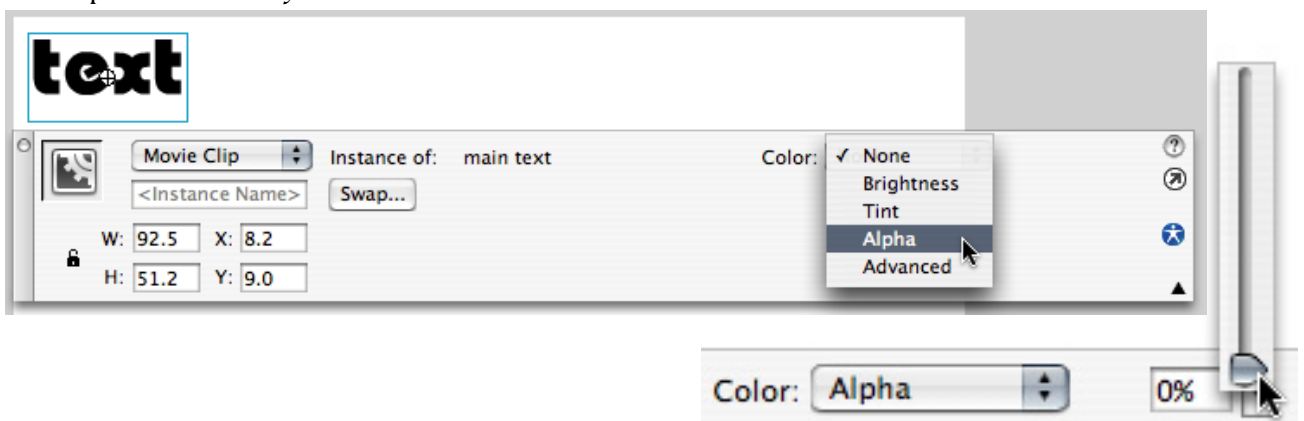
Make sure to be on the text tool for editing your text - but change to the arrow tool to select it (to convert it to a symbol as in the next step, or to move it for example).

- Select the text that you just typed. Press F8 to convert it into a symbol, or use the top menu: Modify > Convert to Symbol. Make sure 'Movie Clip' is selected, then name your symbol and click OK.

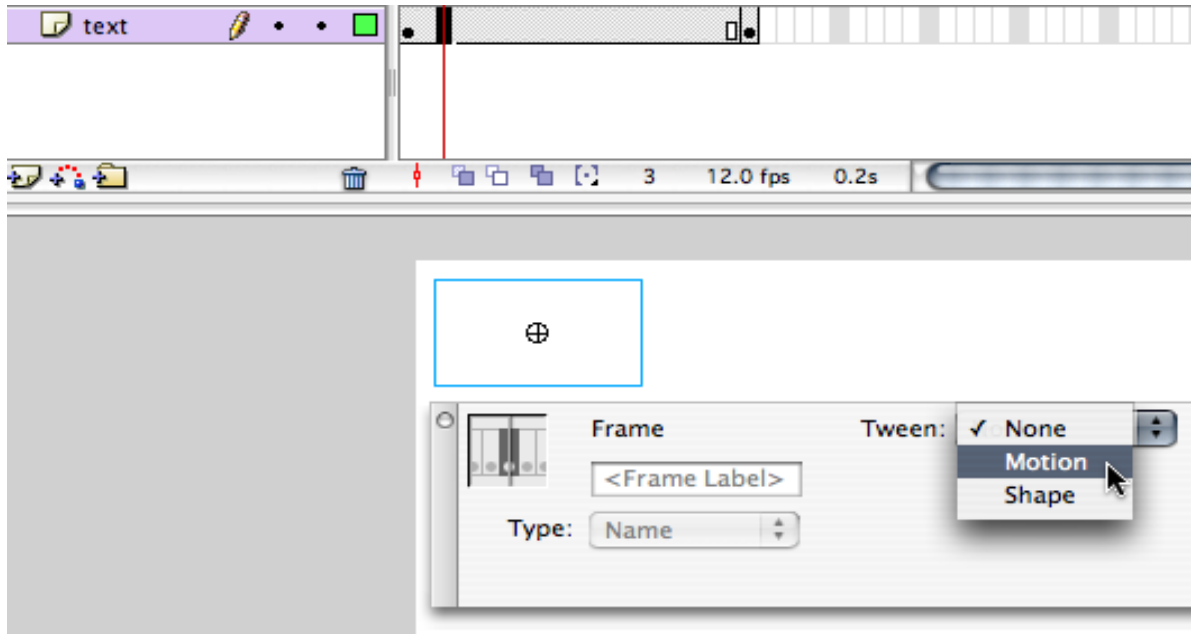


You have just created a symbol of the text you typed, once you create a movieclip symbol in flash you are able to apply instance properties to it.

- Now click on keyframe 20 and press F6. You have now created another instance of your symbol. At this point you will return to keyframe 1 and apply the alpha fade effect.
- Go to keyframe 1, select your text (symbol) again - in the properties panel you can now edit the effect settings. At the pull down menu, select Alpha and either slide the percentage scale 0, or type in "0" into the percentage box - remember always to hit the return/enter key to confirm any typed details. Next click OK. Your symbol on stage will disappear when deselected, as it is now transparent in keyframe 1.

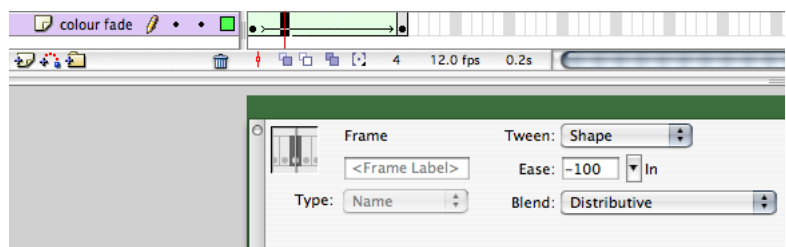


- to update the properties panel to display frame properties - click on any frame your timeline between keyframe 1 and keyframe 20. From the 'Tween' pull down menu, select 'Motion Tween'. Your tween will automatically be created for you, fading the symbol from completely transparent to solid.



This is the basis for an alpha fade effect. You can achieve many other color effects by changing the color effect used at any particular instance of a symbol. Remember that experimenting is sometimes the best way to discover new techniques and develop different design approaches.

- !!! Keep in mind that you can also use shape tween very effectively for colour fades.



- › create a rectangle covering the stage
- › set up a shape tween between 20 frames
- › choose the appropriate keyframe and

select the fill in the colour mixer panel and set the alpha value to '0'

