Gen-3 Alpha Prompting Guide

6-8 minutes

Gen-3 Alpha has endless potential to bring your artistic vision to life for a wide variety of use cases. Creating a strong prompt that conveys the scene is the key to generating video aligned with your concept.

This article covers different example structures, keywords and prompting tips to help you get started with Gen-3 Alpha. These are just examples – don't be afraid to experiment when bringing your ideas to life.

Gen-4 is now available to all users with a subscription. Review our **Gen-4 Prompting Guide** for more details.

Article Highlights

- Avoid negative phrasing, such as the camera doesn't move, in your text prompts
- Use a simple and direct prompt that describes the desired movement when using an input image
- You do not need to describe your input image in a text prompt

Related Links

Creating with Text/Image to Video

Prompting Basics

All prompts should be direct and easily understood, not conceptual

When crafting a prompt, it can be helpful to pretend that you're describing a scene to a new collaborator who is unfamiliar with your previous work and preferred aesthetic. This new collaborator will be responsible for filming the scene that you're describing, so ensure that important elements are conveyed with clarity.

Avoid using overly conceptual language and phrasing when a simplistic description would efficiently convey the scene.

- 🗙 a man hacking into the mainframe.
- ✓ a man vigorously typing on the keyboard.

Prompts should be descriptive, not conversational or command-based

While external LLMs thrive on natural conversation, Runway's models are designed to thrive on visual detail. Including conversational additions to your prompt will not bring value to your results, and could even negatively impact your results in certain cases.

- 💢 can you please make me a video about two friends eating a birthday cake?
- 🔽 two friends eat birthday cake.

Using a command-based prompt may have a similar negative effect, as it may not include sufficient details to create the desired scene:

- X add a dog to the image
- ✓ a dog playfully runs across the field from out of frame

Prompts should use positive phrasing

Negative prompts, or prompts that describe what *shouldn't* happen, are not supported in the Generative Video models. Including a negative prompt may result in the opposite happening.

- X no clouds in the sky. no subject motion.
- 🔽 a clear blue sky. subtle and minimal subject motion.

Text-only Prompting

Text-only prompts are most effective when they follow a clear structure that divides details about the scene, subject and camera movement into separate sections.

Using the following structure should help provide consistent results while you're familiarizing yourself with Gen-3 Alpha:

[camera movement]: [establishing scene]. [additional details].

Using this structure, your prompt for a woman standing in a tropical rainforest might look like this:

Low angle static shot: The camera is angled up at a woman wearing all orange as she stands in a tropical rainforest with colorful flora. The dramatic sky is overcast and gray.

Repeating or reinforcing key ideas in different sections of your prompt can help increase adherence in the output. For example, you might note that **the camera quickly flies through** the scenes in a **hyperspeed** shot.

Try to keep your prompt focused on what *should* be in the scene. For example, you would prompt for a **clear sky** rather than a **sky with no clouds**.

Image + Text Prompting

When using input images, use a **simple** and **direct** text prompt that describes the **movement** you'd like in the output. You **do not** need to describe the contents of the image.

In example, you might try the following prompt if using an input image that features a character:

Subject cheerfully poses, her hands forming a peace sign.

Using a text prompt that significantly differs from the input image may lead to unexpected results. Keep in mind that complex scene transitions may require multiple iterations to achieve the desired output.

Sample Prompts

Seamless Transitions

Continuous hyperspeed FPV footage: The camera seamlessly flies through a glacial canyon to a dreamy cloudscape.

Camera Movement

A glowing ocean at night time with bioluminescent creatures under water. The camera starts with a macro close-up of a glowing jellyfish and then expands to reveal the entire ocean lit up with various glowing colors under a starry sky. Camera Movement: Begin with a macro shot of the jellyfish, then gently pull back and up to showcase the glowing ocean.

Text Title Cards

A title screen with dynamic movement. The scene starts at a colorful paint-covered wall. Suddenly, black paint pours on the wall to form the word "Runway". The dripping paint is detailed and textured, centered, superb cinematic lighting.

Prompt Keywords

Keywords can be beneficial to achieve specific styles in your output. Ensuring that keywords are cohesive with your overall prompt will make them more apparent in your output.

In example, including keywords about skin texture wouldn't be beneficial to a wide angle shot where the camera is not closely focused on a face. A wide angle shot might instead benefit from additional details about the environment.

While keeping this cohesiveness in mind, below are different keywords you can experiment with while drafting your prompts.

Camera Styles

Different camera styles can be achieved through Text to Video prompts, but we recommend using Camera Control when using an input image.

Keyword

Output

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High angle

Low angle



Overhead



 FPV



Hand held





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Wide angle

Close up

Macro cinematography



Over the shoulder

Tracking

50mm lens SnorriCam Realistic documentary Camcorder **Lighting Styles** Keyword Output

Establishing wide

Diffused lighting Silhouette Lens flare Back lit Side lit

Venetian lighting	
Novement Speeds	
Novement Types	
Keyword Output	
Grows	
Emerges	
Explodes	

[color] gel lighting

Ascends Undulates Warps Transforms Ripples

Shatters Unfolds Vortex Style and Aesthetic Keyword Output Moody Cinematic

Iridescent

Home video VHS

Glitchcore

Text Styles

Keyword Output

Bold

