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Gen-3 Alpha Prompting Guide

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

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:

✓ 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.

✗ 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



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**.

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.

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
Low angle	
High angle	

Overhead



FPV



Hand held



Wide angle



Close up



Macro cinematography



Over the shoulder



Tracking



Establishing wide



50mm lens




SnorriCam





Realistic documentary



Camcorder	
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Lighting Styles

Keyword	Output
Diffused lighting	
Silhouette	

Lens flare



Back lit



Side lit

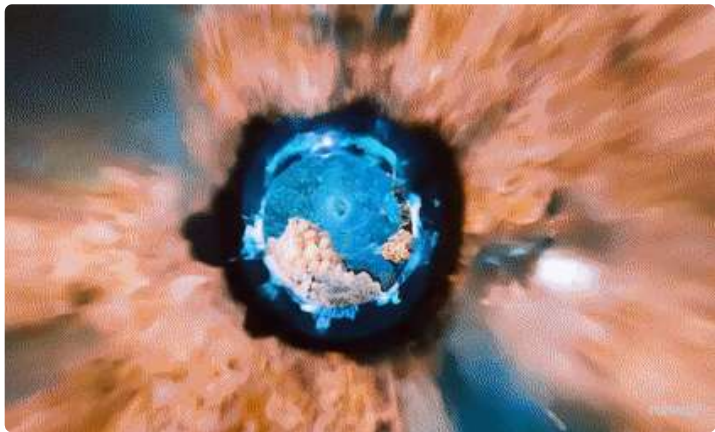





[color] gel lighting




Venetian lighting	
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Movement Speeds

Keyword	Output
Dynamic motion	
Slow motion	

Fast motion	 A fast-motion video of a city skyline, showing buildings and streets in a compressed time frame. A Runway logo is visible in the bottom right corner.
Timelapse	 A timelapse video of a city street, showing the progression of time from day to night. A Runway logo is visible in the bottom right corner.

Movement Types

Keyword	Output
Grows	 A video showing a couch in a dark room, with a spotlight effect that grows in intensity over time. A Runway logo is visible in the bottom right corner.

Emerges



Explodes



Ascends



Undulates



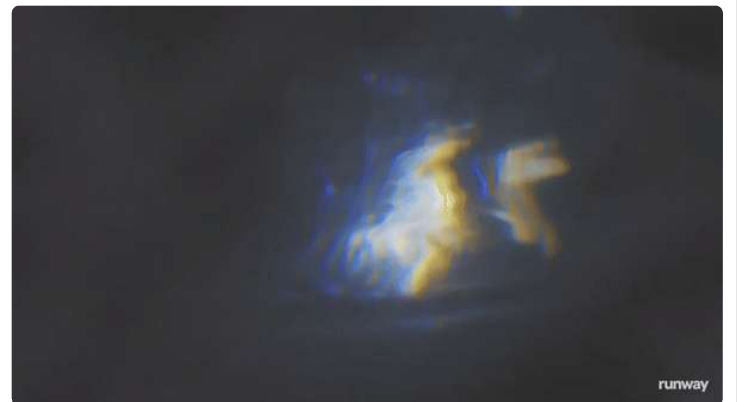
Warps



Transforms





Ripples






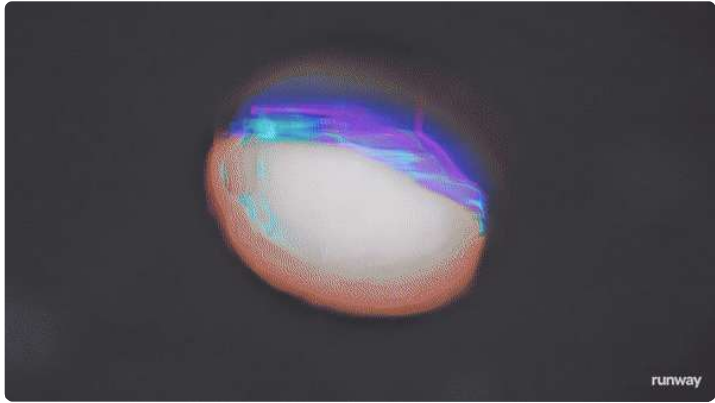
Shatters



Unfolds	
Vortex	

Style and Aesthetic

Keyword	Output
Moody	

Cinematic	
Iridescent	
Home video VHS	
Glitchcore	

Text Styles

Bold



Graffiti



Neon



Varsity



Embroidery



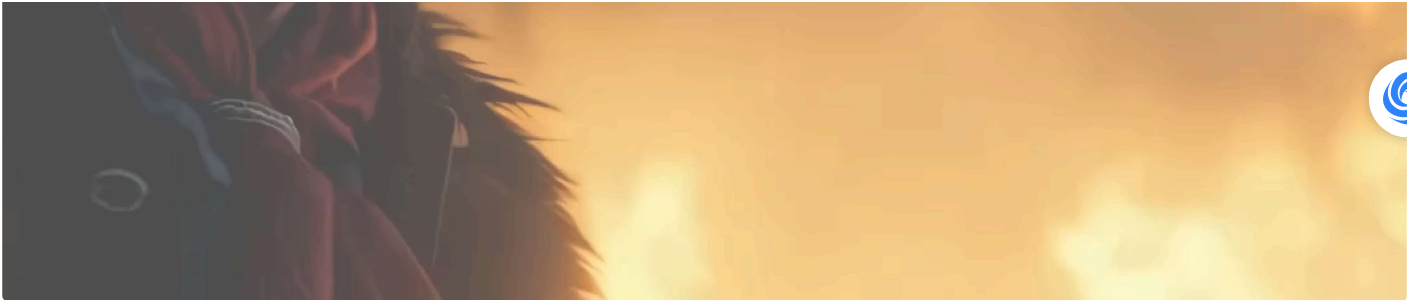
Bracket Placeholders

For creating custom presets that are easy to reuse, you can also put part of your prompt in brackets to 1-click replace the text. For example:

The camera seamlessly flies through a [subject location]

When saved as a preset, this allows you to 1-click replace the bracket area and start typing your text whenever you reuse it.





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