

Motion Graphics Introduction: Lesson 6

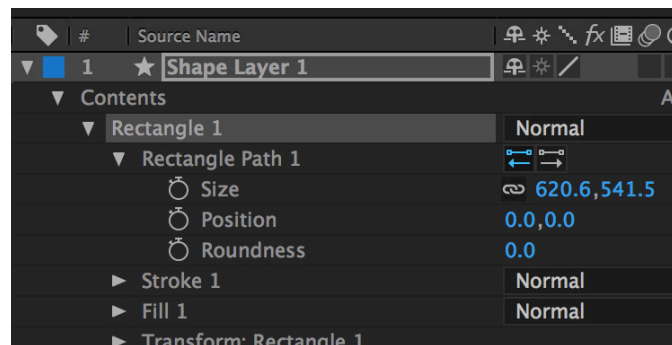
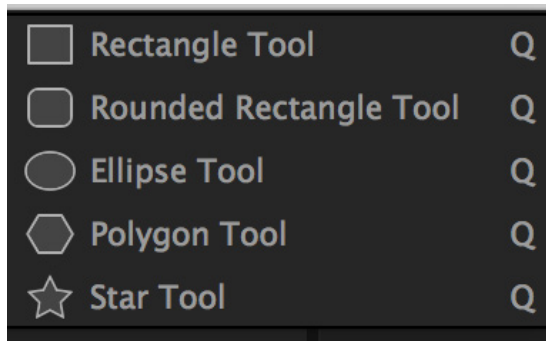
Tips and Tricks, Notes and Hotkeys

Shape Up!

Shape Layers in After Effects are completely amazing and super useful. Unlike shapes that you might make in Photoshop or Illustrator and import into an After Effects project, Shape Layers have special properties for animating. You should definitely get to know these powerful tools well.

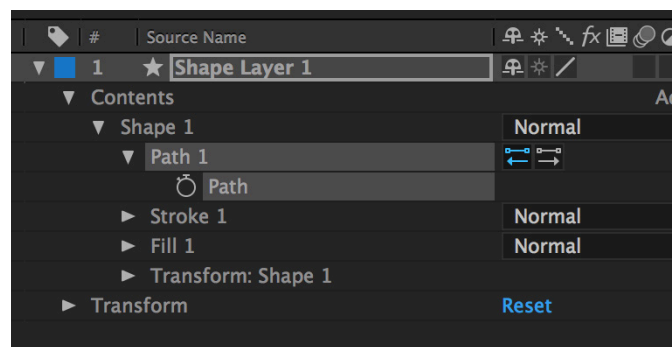
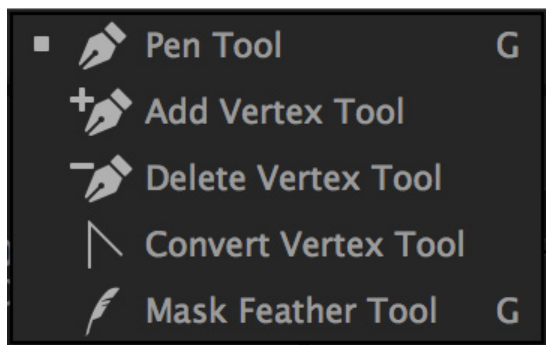
Geometric Shape Layers

The Shape Tool is for making basic geometric shapes. But not triangles! Shape Layers are very easy to edit and animate, and they have special properties that no other layers have, like Roundness.



Pen Tool Shape Layers

The Pen Tool is pretty powerful. It can be used to make polygon Shape Layers, as well as Strokes, which are also considered Shape Layers in After Effects. These shapes are directly editable with their own unique Path property, which can be animated.

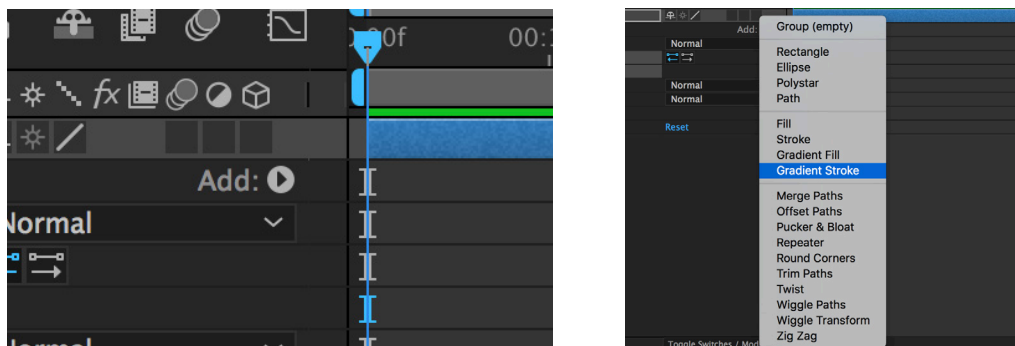


Motion Graphics Introduction: Lesson 5

Tips and Tricks, Notes and Hotkeys

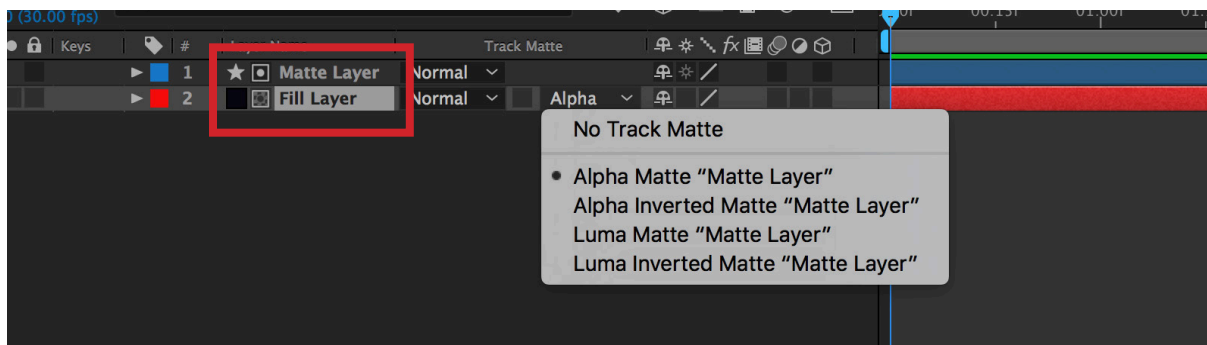
The Add Menu

This tiny little button opens a menu that contains a whole host of fun and unique ways to animate and adjust Shape Layers. In particular, Trim Paths is absolutely essential for animating any kind of stroke in After Effects.



Track Mattes / Alpha Mattes

A matte is an image that tells another image where to be transparent and where to be opaque. An Alpha Matte uses the opacity information of the matte layer to dictate the transparency of a Fill layer. **In After Effects, the Matte layer always needs to be directly on top of the Fill layer for the transform to work.**



Keyboard Shortcuts!

Shape Tool **Q**

Pen Tool **G**

Reveal Mask Path **M**

Mask Feather **F**

Hold Keyframe **Select Keyframe and the Option + Command + Click**
(or Right-Click and then Toggle Hold Keyframe)