Motion Graphics Introduction: Lesson 4
Tips and Tricks, Notes and Hotkeys

Photoshop and Illustrator

If you know your way around Photoshop and/or Illustrator, you already have a good start on learning After Effects. Adobe has spent a lot of time connecting their software applications together through common tools, similar (or the same) hotkeys and various other workflow shortcuts.

Importing Hotkeys

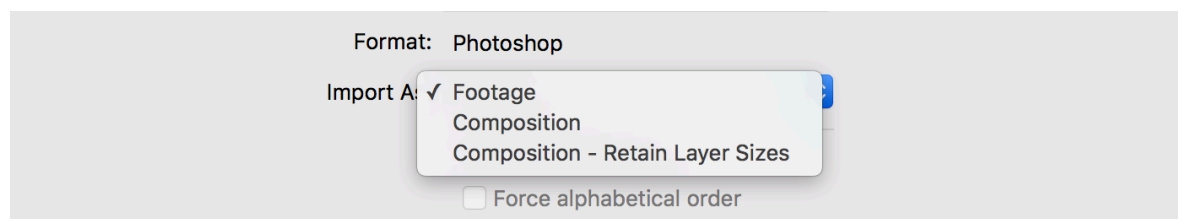In AE, you OPEN projects and then IMPORT artwork and other assets into those projects.

Import .... **Command + I** (PC: CTRL + I)

Open (projects) .... **Command + O** (PC: CTRL + O)

Import as Footage .... **For importing assets with only one layer, like audio, photos or video.**

Import as a Composition .... **For importing layered artwork. Anchor point defaults to the center of the composition. Layers default to comp size, not layer size.**

Import as Composition
(Retain Layer Sizes) .... **Also for importing layered artwork. Anchor point defaults to center of each layer, not the comp. Individual layer sizes are preserved.**

Making Artwork for AE

When you make layered artwork to import into After Effects, remember these rules and good ideas.

RULES:

1. Always RGB, never CMYK

2. Always 72 pixels per inch (ppi) and no higher

3. Anything that needs to animate individually, must be on its own layer
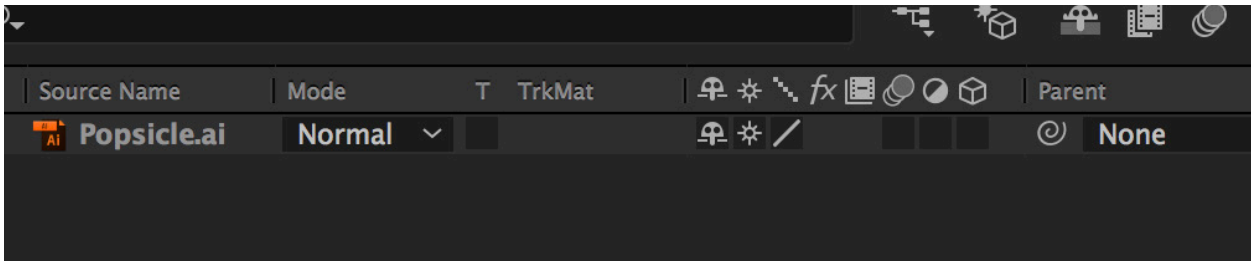
GOOD IDEAS:

1. Name every layer clearly

2. If you need PS artwork to appear big on screen in AE, make it big in PS.

Vectors vs. Pixels

Photoshop .... **Pixel-based artwork. Also known as bitmap.**

Looks crappy when scaled up over 100% in After Effects

Illustrator .... **Vector-based artwork. Can scale up infinitely in After Effects**

if you press the Continuous Rasterization "sunshine" button.

Remember to press this "sunshine" button when you scale Illustrator layers up above 100%. It is also called the "Continuous Rasterization" button, but that doesn't exactly roll off the tongue.

More Keyboard Shortcuts!

The more you know, the faster you can work.

Show Masks .... **M**

Move layers from Project

Window to Composition .... **Command + /** (PC: CTRL + /)

To make an animation longer or shorter without moving your keyframes individually, select all the keyframes and then hold Option (ALT on a PC) while dragging the first or last keyframe in the group. Warning: this might cause your keyframes to fall between the frames.