

Motion Graphics Introduction: Lesson 5

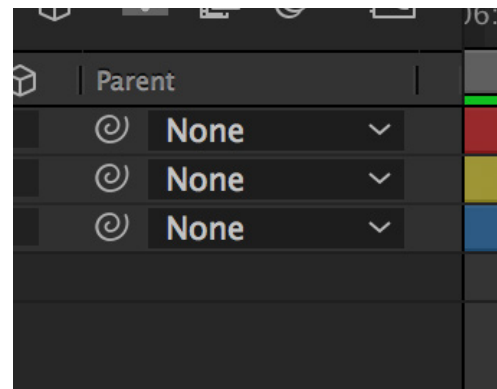
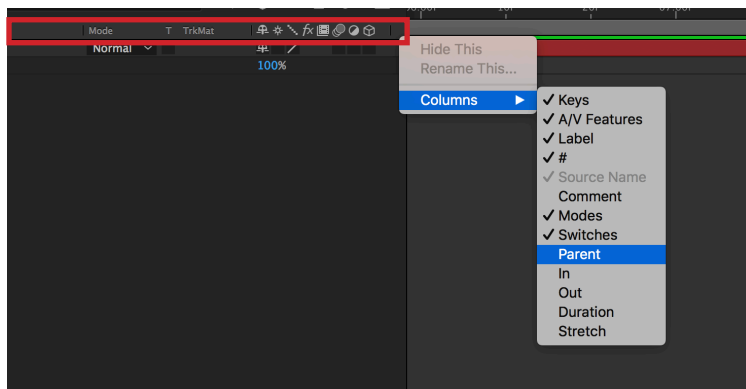
Tips and Tricks, Notes and Hotkeys

The Joys of Parenting

Parenting is a really useful way in After Effects to link layers together. When you parent one layer to another, the parent controls the Position, Scale and Rotation of the “child” layer -- but not the opacity. Layers can also be linked together in “parent chains”, when Layer A is parented to Layer B, which is in turn parented to Layer C.

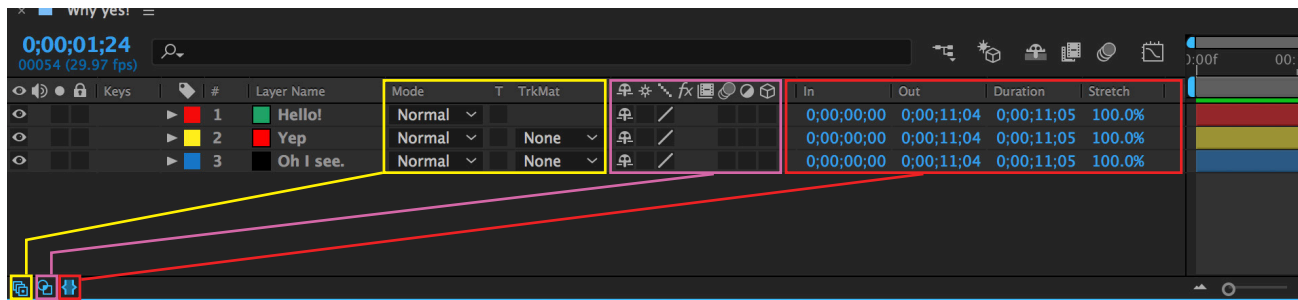
Mommy? Daddy?

Just in case you can't find your Parent tab, make sure you right-click in the gray bar above your layers in the Timeline, and then choose Columns > Parent. Make sure to Parent responsibly.



More Little Buttons!

Down in the lower left corner of your AE Timeline, there are three little buttons that are pretty easy to miss. Though they are small, they are important because they help us control our precious screen real estate. If you click on these buttons, they open up hidden control panels that contain important properties.



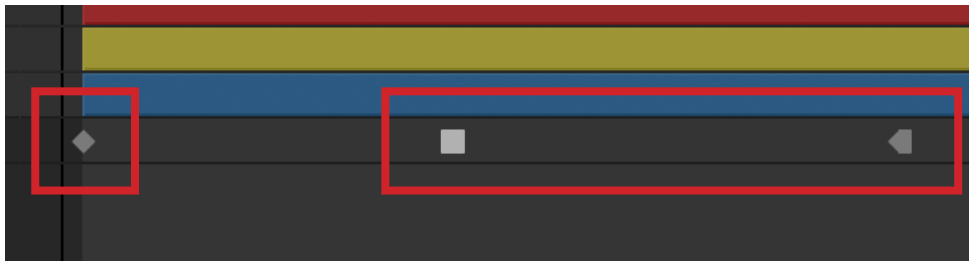
The first button on the left also controls the display of your regular property values, like Scale and Position. Make sure to keep that one on at all times. The one all the way on the right is the least important. I always leave that closed.

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Hold It Right There!

Hold Keyframes are totally awesome. Instead of letting After Effects interpolate the animation between the keyframes, these keyframes “hold” the value until they reach another keyframe -- and then they change all at once.



Linear Keyframes are diamond-shaped. These are the ones we’ve been using all semester so far. Hold Keyframes can look a few different ways, but always have one square edge.

Even More Keyboard Shortcuts!

The more the merrier, as far as I’m concerned.

Hand Tool H (or press Space Bar if normal V arrow is active)

The Hand Tool is super useful for moving around in your timeline and comp window, without worrying that you might accidentally select one of your layers.

Duplicate Layer Command + D

Split Layer (at current time) Shift + Command + D

Splitting layers is useful in many circumstances. When Parenting, splitting a layer is sometimes critical, because there is otherwise no way to “unparent” a layer once it has been parented.

**Hold Keyframes Option + Command + Click (on selected keyframes)
or, right-click and Toggle Hold Keyframe.**

Show/Hide Guides Command + ; (semicolon)

New Empty Type Layer Shift + Option + Command + T