Good News!

Congratulations! At this point you know how to make basic animation in After Effects. It's not *that* hard. The bigger challenge is learning how to bring finesse and naturalism to your work, and in order to do that you'll need to get In Between The Keyframes and see how it all works.

Shapers of the Lost Arc

The shortest distance between two points is a straight line, but in the real world very few things move that way. One way to add some finess to your work is to utilize and create curve motion paths. Rove keyframes are useful for keeping the speed of an object consistent through complex curves, and Auto Orientation will help you keep your shapes pointing in the correct direction along the path.
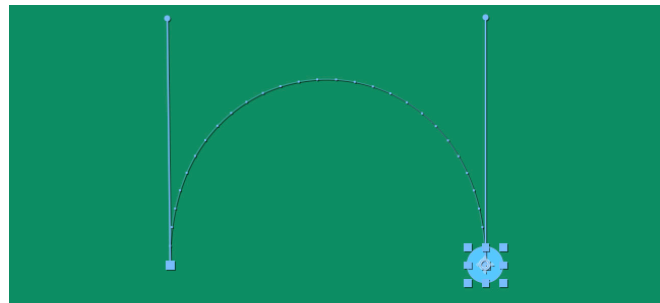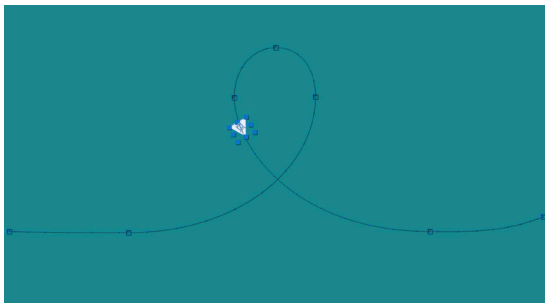
Keyframe Interpolation in the Graph Editor

In order to have the most control over the speed and flow of your work, you need to get comfortable with the Graph Editor. This powerful tool in AE contains both a Speed Graph and a Value Graph which allows control over the speed of your animation into and out of the keyframes. Below, the Speed Graph on left, and Value Graph on right.
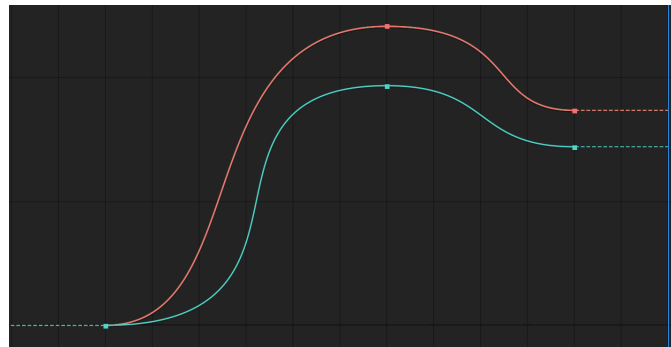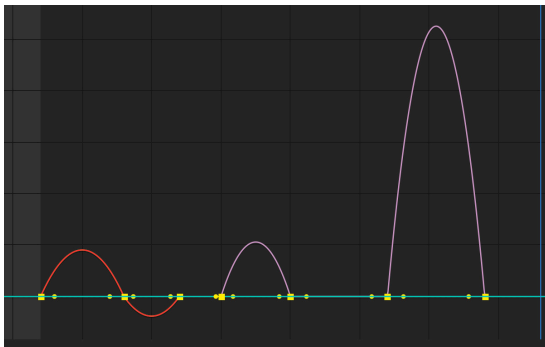
Speed Graph vs Value Graph

The Speed Graph graphs the speed of you animation (duh), whereas the Value Graph is intended to adjust specific property values, like, for example, charting the Rotation between 45 degrees and 115 degrees. You'll get used to it.

Keyboard Shortcuts For Your Pleasure

Put Anchor Point in Center .... **Option + Command + Home**

Move to Center of Screen ....**Shift + Option + Command + Home**

Open Graph Editor .... **Shift + F3**

Convert to Ease Keyframe **F9**

Add to Composition from Project Window .... **Command + /**

Mac to PC Converter

I really should have put this in an earlier PDF, but here's the conversion between Mac and PC:

MAC	PC
Command	CTRL
Option	ALT

Nol's Rules of Contrast

Contrast on screen can take many forms, but is almost always a desirable thing. Without enough interplay between Contrast and Harmony on screen (in the form of design or animation) viewers will easily get fatigued or bored watching your work. Here's a few ways to think about contrast:

Luminance Contrast .... Black vs White; Light vs Dark

Color Contrast ....Red vs Green; Blue vs Orange

Speed Contrast.. Fast vs Slow

Motion Contrast ....Jerky vs Fluid

Numbers Contrast .... Lots of Things vs One Thing

Roundness Contrast .... Square vs Circular