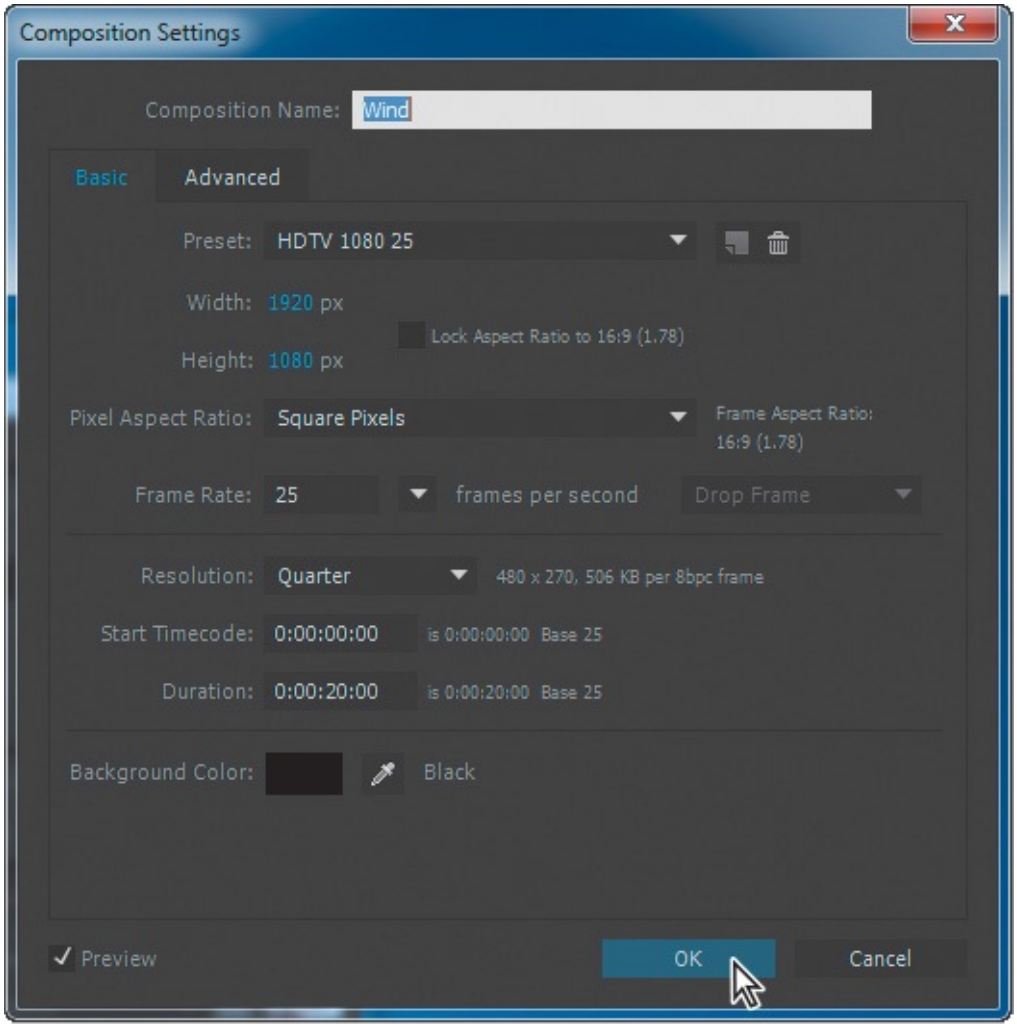
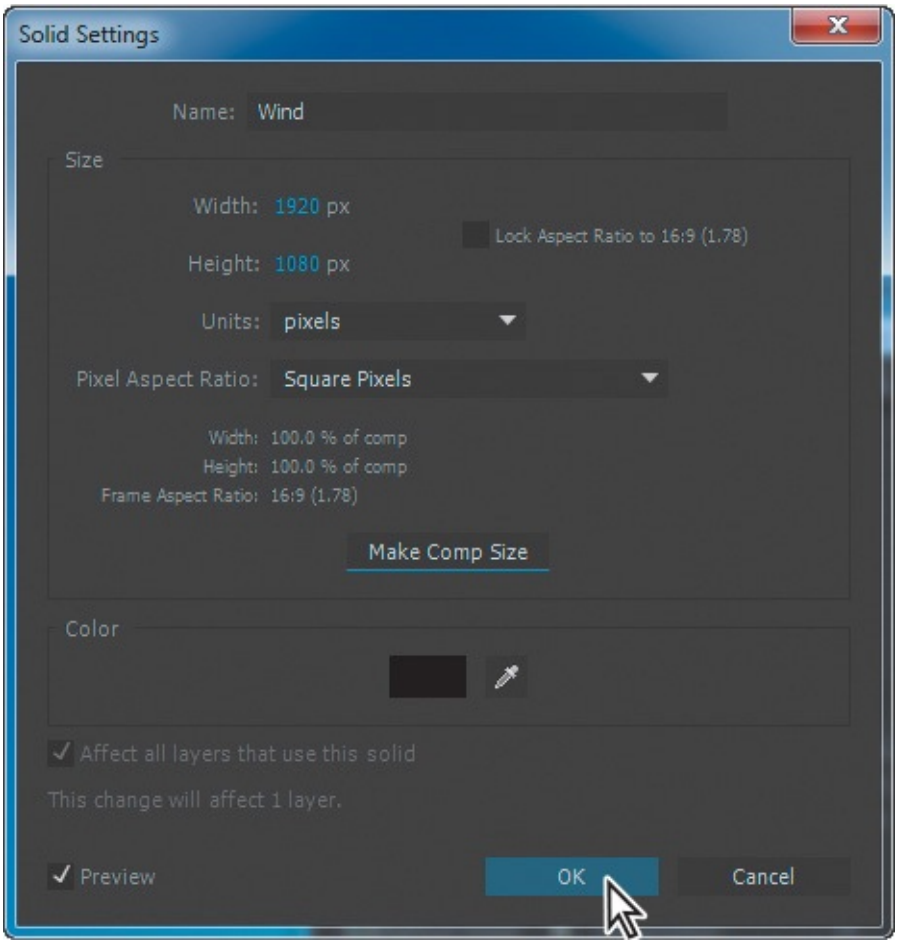
- Name the composition **Wind**.
- Make sure the width is **1920** px.
- Make sure the height is **1080** px.
- Make sure the duration is **20** seconds.
- Make sure the Frame Rate is 25 fps to match the Balloon Scene composition.
- Click OK.



3. Right-click in the Timeline panel, and choose New > Solid.

4. In the Solid Settings dialog box, do the following:

- Name the layer **Wind**.
- Select black for the color.
- Click the Make Comp Size button.
- Click OK.



About solid-color layers

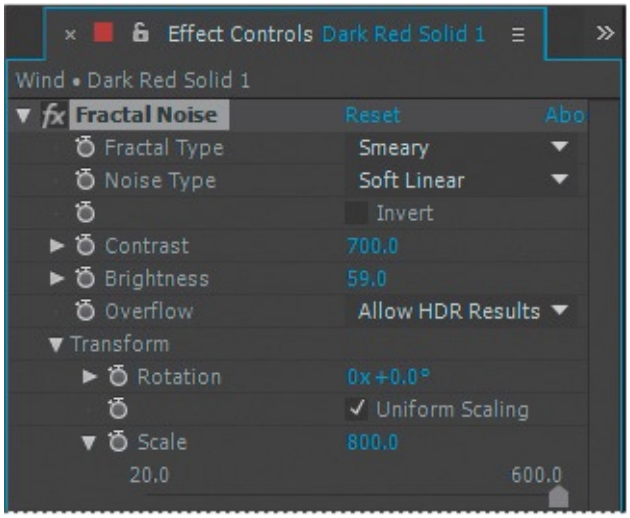
You can create solid images of any color or size (up to 30,000 x 30,000 pixels) in After Effects. After Effects treats solids as it does any other footage item: You can modify the mask, transform properties, and apply effects to a solid layer. If you change settings for a solid that is used by more than one layer, you can apply the changes to all layers that use the solid or to only the single occurrence of the solid. Use solid layers to color a background or to create simple graphic images.

Applying the effects

You're ready to apply the effects to the solid layer. The Fractal Noise effect will create the gust of wind. The Directional Blur effect will create a blur in the direction the canvas flies.

1. In the Effects & Presets panel, search for the Fractal Noise effect; it's in the Noise & Grain category. Double-click the Fractal Noise effect to apply it.
2. In the Effect Controls panel, do the following:
   - Choose Smeary for the Fractal Type.
   - Choose Soft Linear for the Noise Type.
   - Set the Contrast to **700**.
   - Set the Brightness to **59**.

• Expand the Transform properties, and set the Scale to **800**.



3. Click the stopwatch next to Offset Turbulence to create an initial keyframe at the beginning of the time ruler.
4. Go to 2:00, and change the x value for Offset Turbulence to **20,000** px.
5. Hide the Fractal Noise properties in the Effect Controls panel.
6. In the Effects & Presets panel, search for the Directional Blur effect, and then double-click it to apply it.
7. In the Effect Controls panel, set the Direction to **90** degrees and the Blur Length to **236**.

You've created a sense of motion. Now you need to add the Wind composition to the Balloon Scene composition.

8. Switch to the Balloon Scene Timeline panel.
9. Drag the Wind composition from the Project window into the Balloon Scene Timeline above all the other layers.
10. Go to 8:10, and then press the left bracket key ([) so that the Wind layer starts at 8:10.

Finally, you'll apply a blending mode and adjust the opacity to make the effect of the wind more subtle.

11. Click Toggle Switches/Modes at the bottom of the Timeline panel to view the Mode column.
12. Choose Screen from the Wind layer's Mode pop-up menu.

13. Press T to reveal the Opacity property for the Wind layer, and then click the stopwatch to create an initial keyframe at the beginning of the layer (8:10).

14. Go to 8:20, and change the opacity to **35**%.

15. Go to 10:20, and change the opacity to **0**%.

16. Press T to hide the Opacity property, and then save your work so far.

Animating precomposed layers

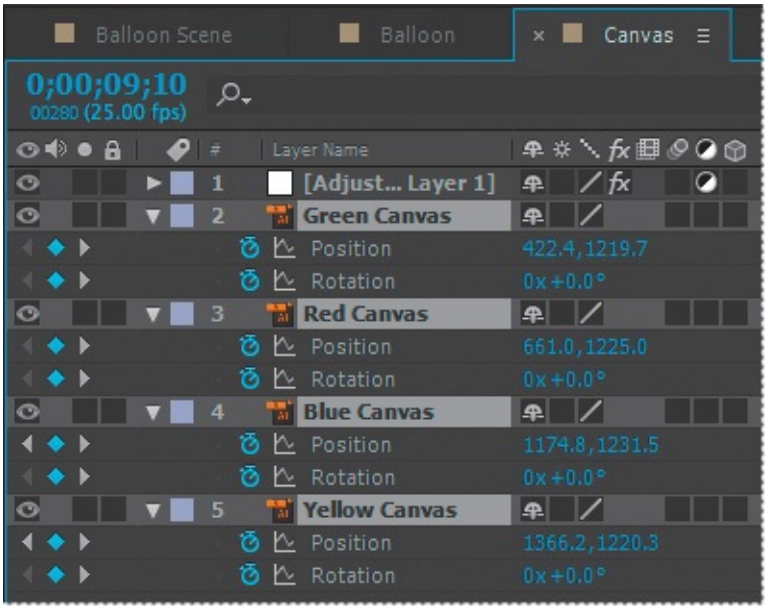
Earlier, you precomposed the four canvas layers, creating a composition called Canvas. You then positioned the Canvas composition layer to match the balloon, and parented the two. Now, you'll animate the canvas layers so that they blow off the balloon when the gust of wind occurs.

1. Double-click the Canvas layer to open the Canvas composition in the Composition panel and the Timeline panel.

2. Go to 9:10, which is about a second after the wind effect begins.

3. Shift-select all four layers, and then press R to display their Rotation properties; press Shift+P to display the Position properties, too.

4. With all layers still selected, click the stopwatch icons for the Position and Rotation properties in one of the layers to create initial keyframes for all of them.

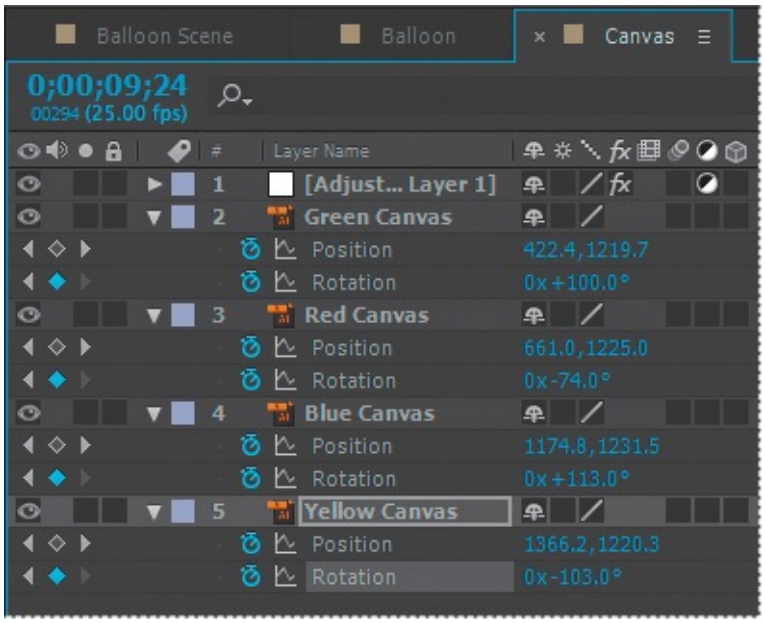


5. Go to 9:24.

6. With all layers still selected, drag a Rotation value until the canvas is nearly horizontal (about 81 degrees). All four canvas layers become nearly horizontal.

7. Press F2 or click an empty area in the Timeline panel to deselect all areas so you can adjust their Rotation values separately.

8. Adjust each Rotation value, using positive and negative numbers so that there is some variation in their appearance. (We used these values: Green: +100, Red: –74, Blue: +113, Yellow: –103.)



9. Go to 10:12.
10. Move all the canvas layers off the screen to the right. Vary their motion paths to make them more interesting. You can add intermediate rotation and position keyframes (between 10:06 and 10:12), edit Bezier curves, or just drag the canvas layers off the edge. If you edit the Bezier curves, make changes only to the keyframes on the right side of the motion path (at 10:12) so you don't disturb the original balloon formation.
11. Move the current-time indicator across the time ruler to preview the animation, and then make any adjustments you want.
12. Hide the properties for all layers, and save your work.

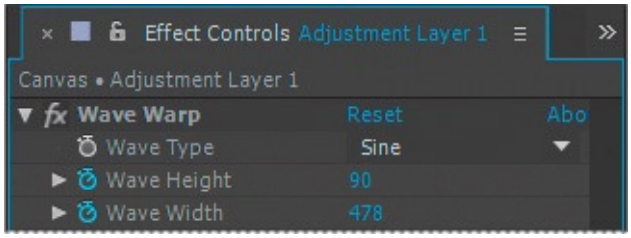
Adding an adjustment layer

You'll add a warp effect to the canvas. You can use an adjustment layer to apply an effect to all the layers beneath it at once.

1. Click an empty area in the Timeline panel to deselect all layers.
2. Choose Layer > New > Adjustment Layer.

A new adjustment layer is automatically added to the top of the layer stack.

3. In the Effects & Presets panel, navigate to the Wave Warp effect in the Distort category, and then double-click the effect.
4. Go to 9:12.
5. In the Effect Controls panel, change Wave Height to **0** and Wave Width to **1**. Then click the stopwatch icons to create initial keyframes for each of them.



6. Go to 9:16.
7. Change the Wave Height value to **90** and the Wave Width value to **478**.

Trimming a layer

You don’t need the Wave Warp effect until the canvas flies off the balloon, but even if the values are 0, After Effects will have to calculate the effect for the entire layer. So you’ll trim the layer to speed up the time it takes to render the file.

1. Go to 9:12.
2. Press Alt+[(Windows) or Option+[(Mac OS) to set the In point to **9:12**.

Note

Press [to move the In point of a clip without changing its duration. Press Alt+[or Option+[to trim a clip to a new In point, shortening its duration.

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3. Return to the Balloon Scene Timeline panel.
4. Press the spacebar to preview the movie. Press the spacebar again to stop the preview.
5. Save your work so far.

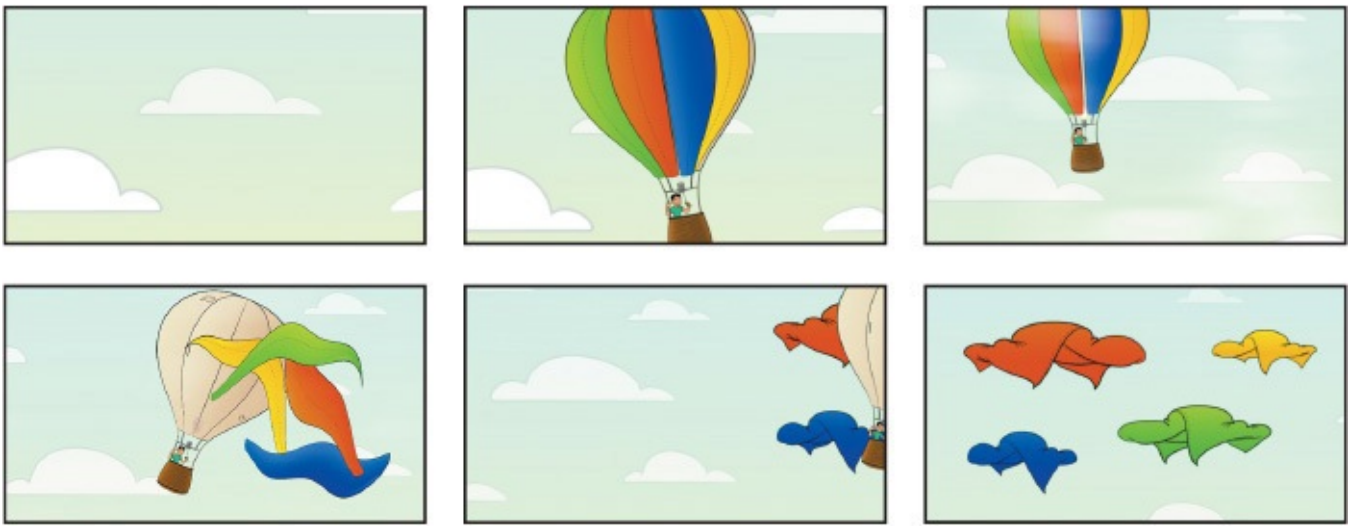
Animating the background

The movie should end with the revelation that the canvas from the balloons has been draped on the clouds. But right now, the canvas flies off and the balloon floats away. You need to animate the sky so that the canvas-covered clouds are centered at the end of the scene.

1. In the Balloon Scene Timeline panel, go to the beginning of the time ruler (0:00).
2. Select the Sky layer, and press P to display its Position property.
3. Click the stopwatch icon to create an initial keyframe.
4. Go to 16:00, and drag the Sky layer until the wrapped clouds are in the center of the frame. (Our values are –236.4, 566.7.)
5. Go to 8:00, and move the wrapped clouds completely off the screen, far off to the right.
6. Right-click the first keyframe, and choose Keyframe Assistant > Easy Ease Out.
7. Right-click the middle keyframe, and choose Keyframe Assistant > Easy Ease, and then right-click the last keyframe, and choose Keyframe Assistant > Easy Ease In.
8. Move the current-time indicator through the time ruler to see how the canvas’ departure matches up with the appearance of the canvas-colored clouds. The canvas should be completely offscreen before the canvas-colored clouds appear.
9. Move the middle keyframe forward and backward in the time ruler to adjust the sky animation so that it matches the progress of the canvas and the balloon. The bare

balloon should float in front of at least a few of the canvas-colored clouds before it disappears.

10. Press the spacebar to preview the entire video. Press the spacebar again to stop the preview.



11. Adjust the motion paths and rotations for the balloon, canvas pieces, or the sky as necessary.

12. Hide the properties for all layers, and save the project.

Adding an audio track

Give yourself a hand—you've done a lot of animating in this project. But you're not quite done. You'll add a soundtrack that matches the lighthearted mood of the video, and fade it out. You'll also shorten the composition, since the last few seconds are static.

1. Double-click an empty area of the Project panel to open the Import File dialog box.
2. Navigate to the Lessons/Lesson05/Assets folder, and double-click the Soundtrack.wave file.
3. Drag the Soundtrack.wav item from the Project panel into the Balloon Scene Timeline panel, placing it at the bottom of the layer stack.
4. Preview the movie. The music changes just as the canvas flies off the balloon.
5. Go to 18:00, and press N to move the work area end point to the current time.
6. Choose Composition > Trim Comp to Work Area.
7. Go to 16:00. Expand the Soundtrack.wav layer and the Audio properties.
8. Click the stopwatch icon to create an initial keyframe for Audio Levels value.
9. Go to 18:00, and change the Audio Levels value to –**40** dB.
10. Preview the animation, and then save it.

Congratulations. You've just created a complex animation, practicing all kinds of After Effects techniques and capabilities along the way.

Supported audio file formats

You can import any of the following types of audio files into After Effects:

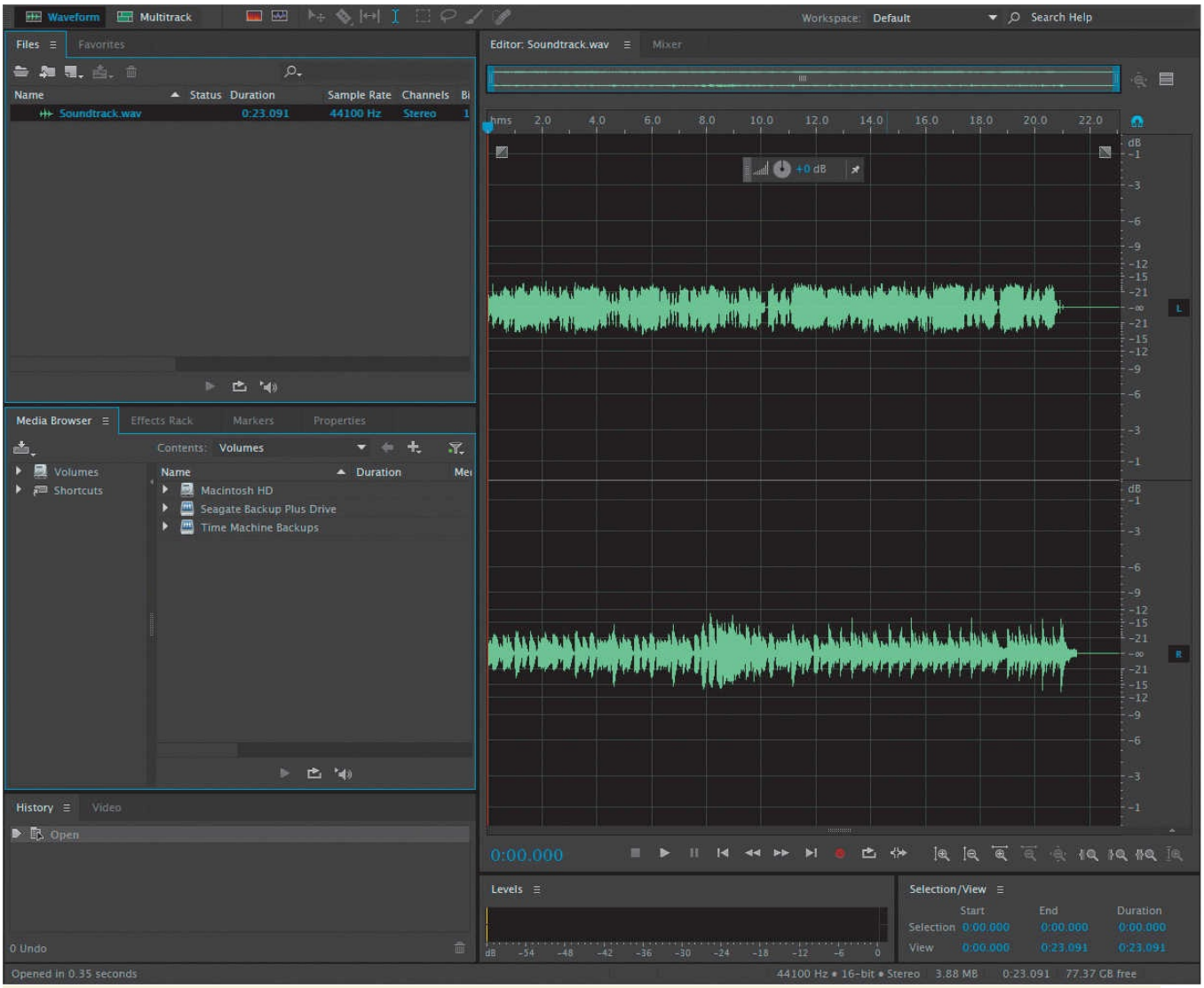
- Adobe Sound Document (ASND; multitrack files import as merged single track)
- Advanced Audio Coding (AAC, M4A)
- Audio Interchange File Format (AIF, AIFF)
- MP3 (MP3, MPEG, MPG, MPA, MPE)
- Video for Windows (AVI, WAV; requires QuickTime on Mac OS)
- Waveform (WAV)

Editing audio files in Adobe Audition

You can make some very simple changes to audio in After Effects. For more substantial edits, use Adobe Audition. Audition is available with a full Adobe Creative Cloud membership.

You can use Audition to change the length of an audio file, alter its pitch, or change its tempo. You can apply effects, record new audio, mix multitrack sessions, and more.

To edit an audio clip you've used in After Effects, select the file in the Project panel, and choose Edit > Edit In Adobe Audition. Then, make your changes in Audition, and save the file. The changes you made are automatically reflected in your After Effects project.



Review questions

1. How does After Effects display an animation of the Position property?
2. What is a solid-color layer, and what can you do with it?
3. What types of audio can you import into an After Effects project?

Review answers

1. When you animate the Position property, After Effects displays the movement as a motion path. You can create a motion path for the position of the layer or for the anchor point of a layer. A position motion path appears in the Composition panel; an anchor-point motion path appears in the Layer panel. The motion path appears as a sequence of dots, where each dot marks the position of the layer at each frame. A box in the path marks the position of a keyframe.
2. You can create solid images of any color or size (up to 30,000 x 30,000 pixels) in After Effects. After Effects treats solids as it does any other footage item: You can modify the mask, transform properties, and apply effects to the solid layer. If you change settings for a solid that is used by more than one layer, you can apply the changes to all layers that use the solid or to only the single occurrence of the solid.

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