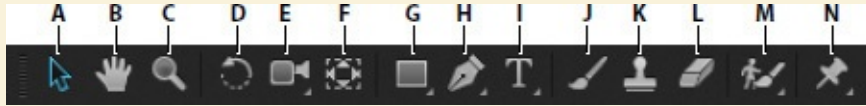


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## About the Tools panel

As soon as you create a composition, the tools in the Tools panel in the upper left corner of the After Effects application window become available. After Effects includes tools that enable you to modify elements of your composition. Some of these tools—the Selection tool and the Hand tool, for example—will be familiar to you if you use other Adobe applications, such as Photoshop. Others will be new.



**A.** Selection **B.** Hand **C.** Zoom **D.** Rotation **E.** Camera tools **F.** Pan Behind **G.** Mask and Shape tools **H.** Pen tools **I.** Type tools **J.** Brush **K.** Clone Stamp **L.** Eraser **M.** Roto Brush and Refine Edge tools **N.** Puppet tools

When you hover the pointer over any button in the Tools panel, a tool tip identifies the tool and its keyboard shortcut. A small triangle in the lower right corner of the button indicates that one or more additional tools are hidden behind it. Click and hold the button to display the hidden tools, and then select the tool you want to use.

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## Adding effects and modifying layer properties

Now that your composition is set up, you can start having fun—applying effects, making transformations, and adding animation. You can add any combination of effects and modify any of a layer’s properties, such as size, placement, and opacity. Using effects, you can alter a layer’s appearance or sound, and even generate visual elements from scratch. The easiest way to start is to apply any of the hundreds of effects included with After Effects.

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### Note

This exercise is just the tip of the iceberg. You will learn more about effects and animation presets in [Lesson 2](#), “[Creating a Basic Animation Using Effects and Presets](#),” and throughout the rest of this book.

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## Preparing the layers

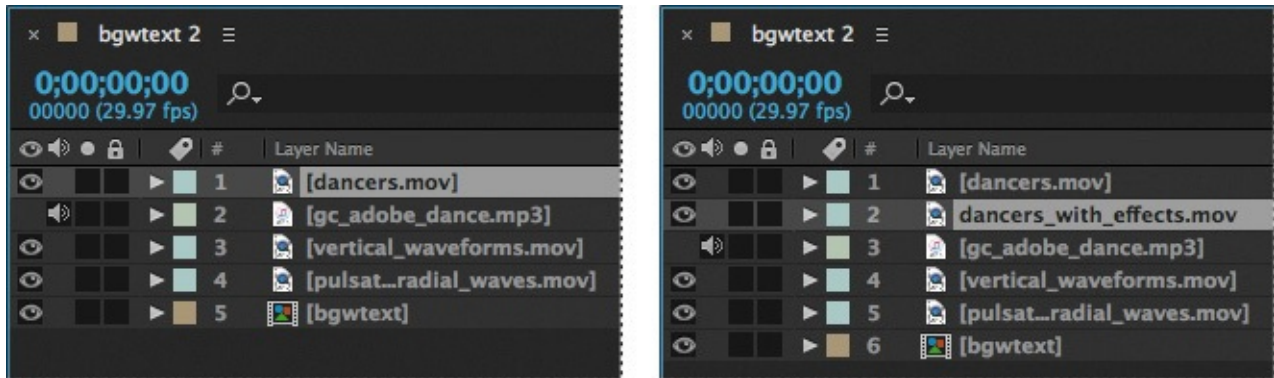
You’ll apply the effects to duplicates of selected layers—the dancers layer and the vertical\_waveforms layer. Working with duplicates lets you apply an effect to one layer and then use it in conjunction with the unmodified original.

1. Select the first layer, dancers.mov, in the Timeline panel, and then choose Edit > Duplicate. A new layer with the same name appears at the top of the stack, so the first two layers are now both named dancers.mov.
2. Select the second layer, and rename it to avoid confusion: Press Enter (Windows) or Return (Mac OS) to make the name editable, and type **dancers\_with\_effects.mov**.

Then press Enter or Return again to accept the new name.

### ► Tip

You can make the Layer Name column wider in order to see the full layer name, if you need to.

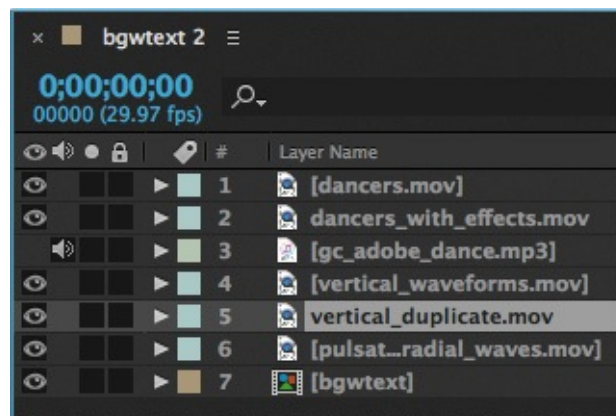


3. Select the vertical\_waveforms layer, and make one duplicate. Rename it **vertical\_duplicate.mov**.

### ► Tip

Use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+D (Windows) or Command+D (Mac OS) to duplicate the layer quickly.

4. Drag, if necessary, to rearrange the layers in the Timeline panel so that they're in the order shown.



## Adding a Radial Blur effect

The Radial Blur effect creates blurs around a specific point in a layer, simulating the effects of a zooming or rotating camera. You'll add a Radial Blur effect to the dancers.

1. Select the dancers\_with\_effects layer in the Timeline panel. Notice that layer handles appear around the layer in the Composition panel.

## Note

If you double-click a layer in the Timeline panel, it appears in the Layer panel. To return to the Composition panel, click the Composition tab.



2. Click the Effects & Presets panel (in the panel stack at the right side of the application window) to open it, and type **radial blur** in the search box.

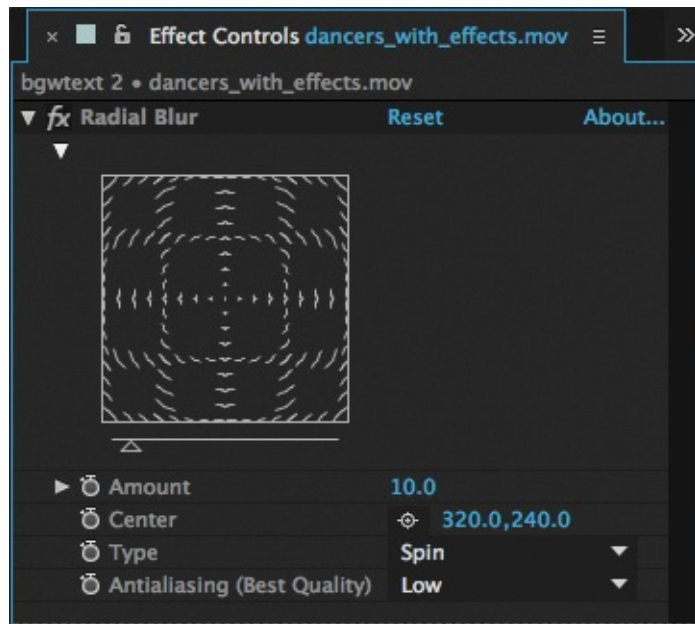


After Effects searches for effects and presets that contain the letters you type, and displays the results interactively. Before you have finished typing, the Radial Blur effect—located in the Blur & Sharpen category—appears in the panel.

3. Drag the Radial Blur effect onto the dancers\_with\_effects layer in the Timeline panel.



After Effects applies the effect and automatically opens the Effect Controls panel in the upper left area of the workspace.



Now you'll customize the settings.

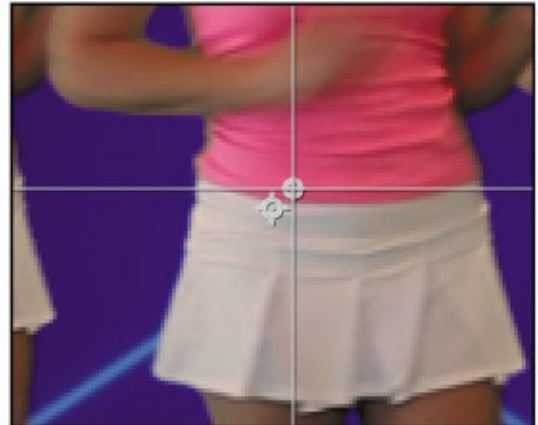
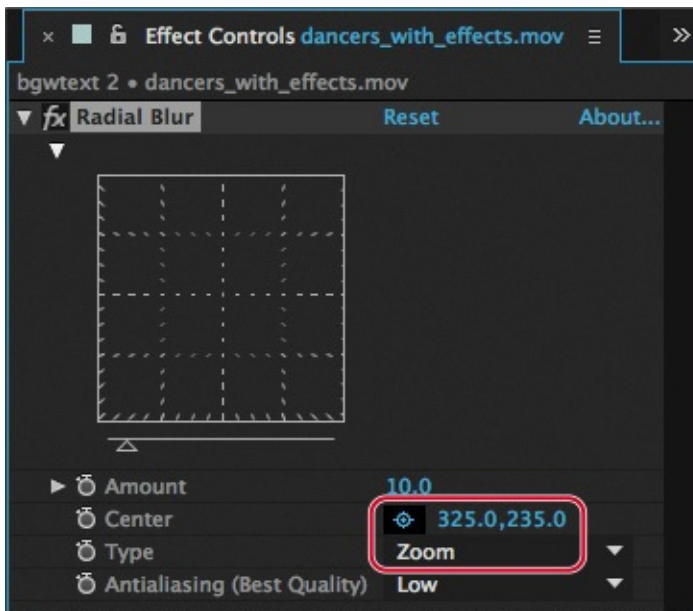
4. In the Effect Controls panel, choose Zoom from the Type menu.

#### Tip

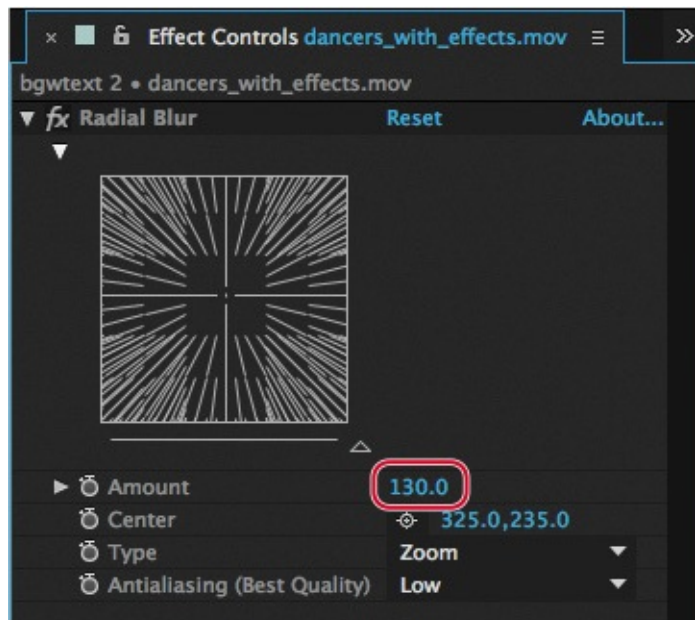
You can also type the x and y values directly into the coordinate fields in the Effect Controls panel, or you can position the pointer over the fields to see the double-arrow icon (↔↕), and then drag right or left to increase or decrease the values, respectively.

5. In the Composition panel, move the center point of the blur by dragging the center cross-hairs icon (⊕) until it's roughly centered in the image. As you drag the cross-hairs, the Center value updates in the Effect Controls panel. The left and right values are x and y coordinates, respectively. Center the blur at approximately 325, 235.





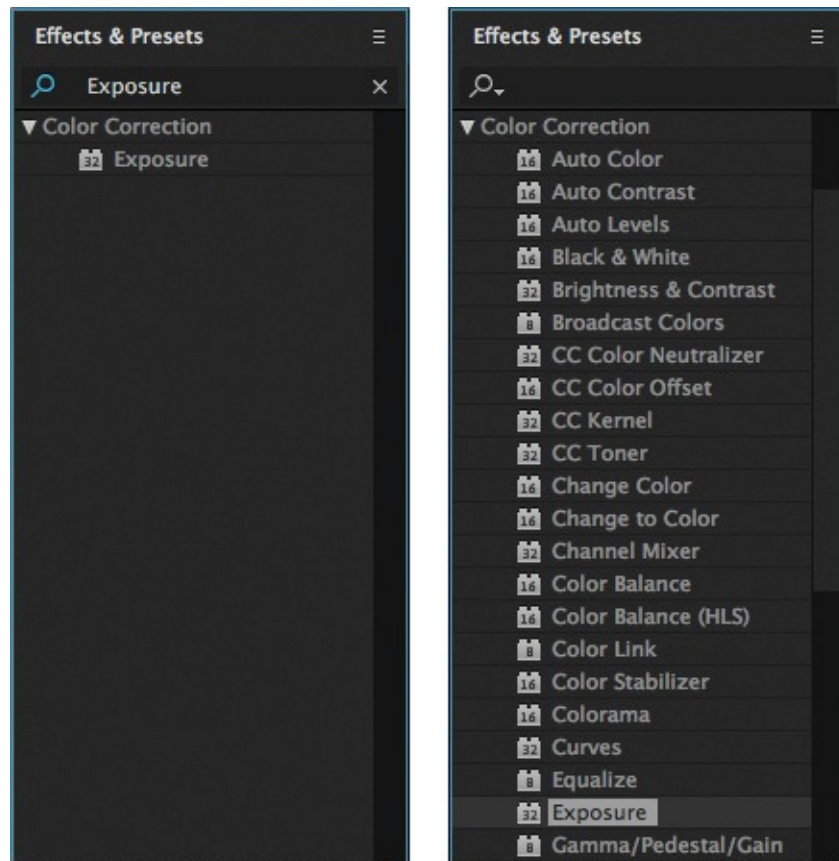
6. Click the number next to Amount, type **130** to increase the amount of blur, and press Enter or Return.



## Adding an exposure effect

To punch up the brightness of this layer, you will apply the Exposure color-correction effect. This effect lets you make tonal adjustments to footage. It simulates the result of modifying the exposure setting (in f-stops) of the camera that captured the image.

1. Click the x in the search box in the Effects & Presets panel to clear it, and then locate the Exposure effect by doing one of the following:



- Type **Exposure** in the search box.
- Click the triangle next to Color Correction to expand the list of color-correction effects in alphabetical order.

2. Drag the Exposure effect in the Color Correction category onto the dancers\_with\_effects layer name in the Timeline panel. After Effects adds the Exposure settings to the Effect Controls panel under the Radial Blur effect.

### ► Tip

Make sure to select the Exposure effect in the Color Correction category, not the Exposure animation preset in the Lights And Optical category.

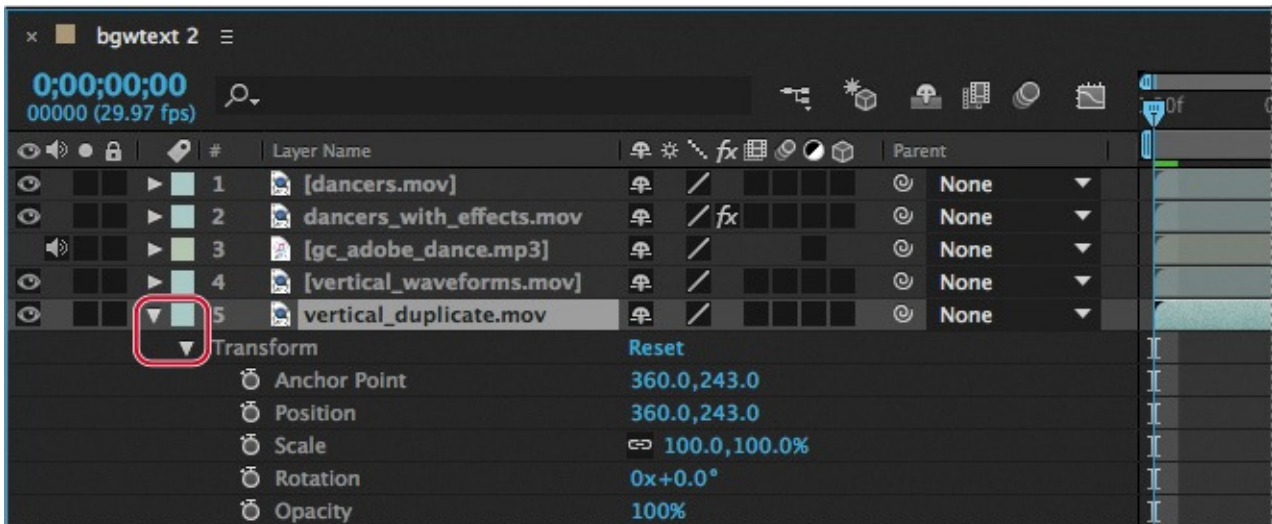
3. In the Effect Controls panel, click the triangle next to the Radial Blur effect to hide those settings so that you can see the Exposure settings more easily.
4. For Master Exposure, type **1.60**. This will make everything brighter in the layer, simulating an overexposed image.



## Transforming layer properties

The dancers look smashing, so you can turn your attention to the vertical waveforms that are part of the background. You'll reposition the duplicate layer you created earlier to create an edgy effect.

1. Select the vertical\_duplicate layer (layer 5) in the Timeline panel.
2. Click the triangle to the left of the layer number to expand the layer, and then expand the layer's Transform properties: Anchor Point, Position, Scale, Rotation, and Opacity.



3. If you can't see the properties, scroll down the Timeline panel using the scroll bar at the right side of the panel. Better yet, select the vertical\_duplicate layer name again, and press P.

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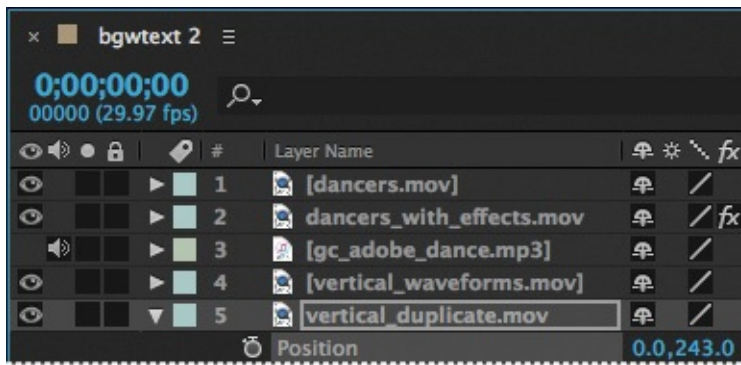
### ► Tip

With any layer selected in the Timeline panel, you can display any single Transform property by pressing a keyboard shortcut: P displays Position; A displays Anchor Point; S displays Scale; R displays Rotation; T displays Opacity.

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This keyboard shortcut displays only the Position property, which is the only property you want to change for this exercise. You'll move this layer to the left approximately 200 pixels.

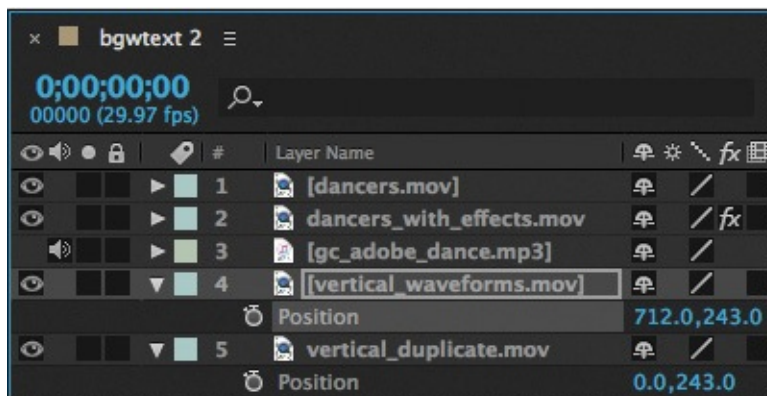
4. Change the x coordinate for the Position property to **0**. Leave the y coordinate at 243.



5. Select the vertical\_waveforms layer (layer 4), and press P to display its Position property.

You will move this layer to the right.

6. Change the x coordinate for the vertical\_waveforms Position property to **712**. Leave the y coordinate at 243. Now you can see the two waveforms in the Composition panel, emerging from either side.



Now you will reduce the opacity of the waveforms.

7. Select the vertical\_waveforms layer in the Timeline panel, and press T to reveal its Opacity property. Set it to **75%**.
8. Select the vertical\_duplicate layer in the Timeline panel, press T to reveal its Opacity property, and set it to **75%**.

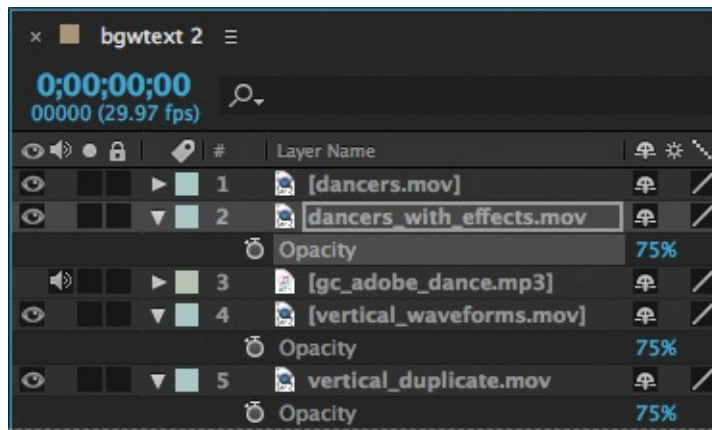
### Tip

To change the Opacity property for multiple layers at once, select the layers, press T, and change the property for one of the selected layers.

While you're at it, you'll reduce the opacity of the dancers\_with\_effects layer, too.

9. Select the dancers\_with\_effects layer in the Timeline panel, press T to reveal its Opacity property, and set it to **75%**.





10. Hide the properties for all layers, and then choose File > Save to save your work so far.

## Animating the composition

So far, you've started a project, created a composition, imported footage, and applied some effects. It all looks great, but how about some movement? You've applied only static effects.

In After Effects, you can change any combination of a layer's properties over time using conventional keyframing, expressions, or keyframe assistants. You'll explore many of these methods throughout the lessons of this book. For this project, you'll animate the Position property of a text layer using keyframes, and then use an animation preset so that the letters appear to rain down on the screen.

## Preparing the text composition

In this exercise, you'll work with a separate composition—the one you imported from a layered Photoshop file.

### About the Timeline panel

Use the Timeline panel to animate layer properties and set In and Out points for a layer. (In and Out points are the points at which a layer begins and ends in the composition.) Many of the Timeline panel controls are organized in columns of related functions. By default, the Timeline panel contains a number of columns and controls, as shown here: