

Beginning Flash 8

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Flash Journalism: How to Create Multimedia Journalism Packages (Focal Press, 2005)

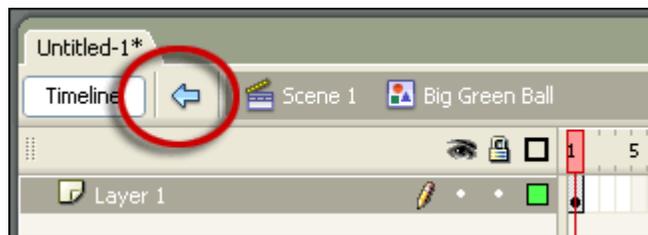
This workshop will cover the basics of how to handle photos well in Flash and control the presentation with buttons.

Part 1: Photo Handling

1. Overview of the Flash 8 interface
2. BMPs inside, JPGs outside
 - a. PNG-24 files may be used instead of BMPs
 - b. Never *import* a JPG file into Flash (see the separate **Tip Sheet!**)
 - c. When loading external photos, *those files must be* JPGs
3. Photo file size for the Web (see the separate **Tip Sheet!**)
 - a. 72 ppi
 - b. Pixel dimensions (not inches!)
 - c. Use Photoshop “Save for Web” for all JPGs
4. Importing and optimizing BMP images (see the separate **Tip Sheet!**)—these are the uncompressed images we import into the FLA file

Part 2: Animating Photos

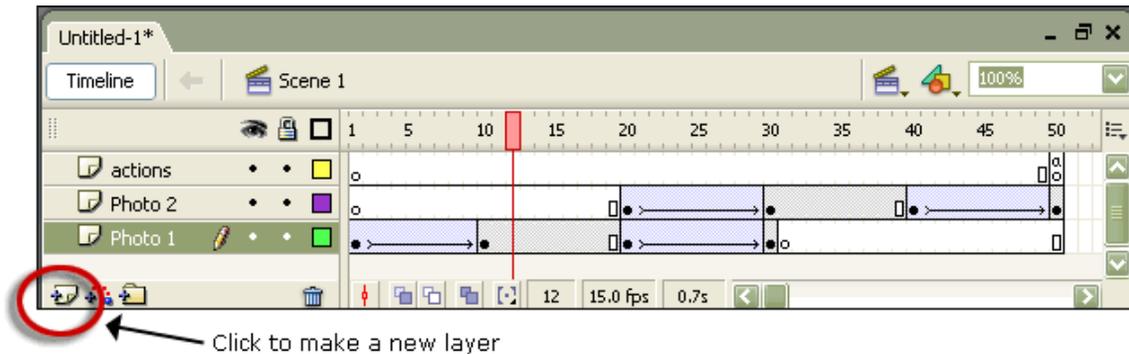
5. Moving
 - a. **Symbols:** If you want to move, zoom or fade an image, you must first *Convert to Symbol*.
 - 1) Select the entire object. If it’s a bitmap, just click it *once* to select it.
 - 2) Modify menu > Convert to Symbol (*or* press F8)
 - 3) In the dialog box, give it a name and select Type: Graphic. Then click OK.
 - 4) In the Library panel, you should now see the new symbol.



IMPORTANT! If you see a *blue arrow*, as shown above, you have double-clicked and gone *inside* a symbol. (In this case, you are inside a symbol named “Big Green Ball.”) *Watch out for this*—it is a dangerous mistake! To return to normal editing mode, when you see the blue arrow, press Ctrl-E (Mac: Cmd-E)—E for “Edit.” The arrow will be *gray* when you are in normal editing mode.

- b. **Keyframes**
 - 1) In the Timeline, a keyframe is a frame with a *dot* in it. A keyframe is a frame where a change begins or ends.
 - 2) A simple motion requires *two* keyframes: One at the start; one at the end. There can be *any number* of *regular* frames in between two keyframes.
 - 3) Make sure the object in the *first* keyframe is already a *symbol* BEFORE you add any more keyframes!
 - 4) To add a new keyframe: Insert menu > Timeline > Keyframe (or press F6)
 - 5) To *add* regular frames after the first keyframe: Insert menu > Timeline > Frame (or press F5)
 - 6) Click the *first* keyframe. Move the symbol to its *starting* position.
 - 7) Click the *second* keyframe. Move the symbol to its *ending* position.
 - c. Add a **motion tween**: Right-click (Mac: Control-click) once in the frames between the two keyframes. Select “Create Motion Tween” from the menu.
 - d. Save and test your Flash movie. To test, press Ctrl-Enter (Mac: Cmd-Return).
 - e. Adjust the timing: *Add* or *remove* regular frames within the sequence to make the motion longer or shorter. (To *remove* frames: Shift-F5.)
 - f. ActionScript: **stop () ;**
 - 1) All Flash movies *loop* by default.
 - 2) To make the movie play once and stop, write ActionScript on the last frame of the Timeline.
 - 3) Add a new layer in the Timeline. Name the layer “actions.”
 - 4) Click the *last frame* in that layer and *make a new keyframe*.
 - 5) Open the Actions panel and add the script: **stop () ;**
6. Zooming (transformation point)
 - a. Zooming a photo requires *all the same steps* as moving a photo.
 - b. The difference is in the two keyframes. In one keyframe, the image is full size. In the other keyframe, the image is smaller.
 - c. Use the Free Transform Tool and/or the Transform panel.
 - d. After “Convert to Symbol,” move the *transformation point* (white dot) to the center of interest in the photo.
 - e. Then create the other keyframe.
 7. Fading (use alpha: Properties panel)
 - a. Fading a photo requires *all the same steps* as moving a photo. However, you need more keyframes (4), in three sequences.
 - b. First sequence: Fade in from 0% alpha to 99% alpha (motion tween).
 - c. Second sequence: Photo stays at 99% alpha (no tween).
 - d. Third sequence: Fade out from 99% alpha to 0% alpha (motion tween).
 8. Cross-fades (layer management)
 - a. To fade one photo into another, each photo must be on *its own layer*.
 - b. You can copy and paste frames using the right-click menu in the Timeline (Mac: Control-click).

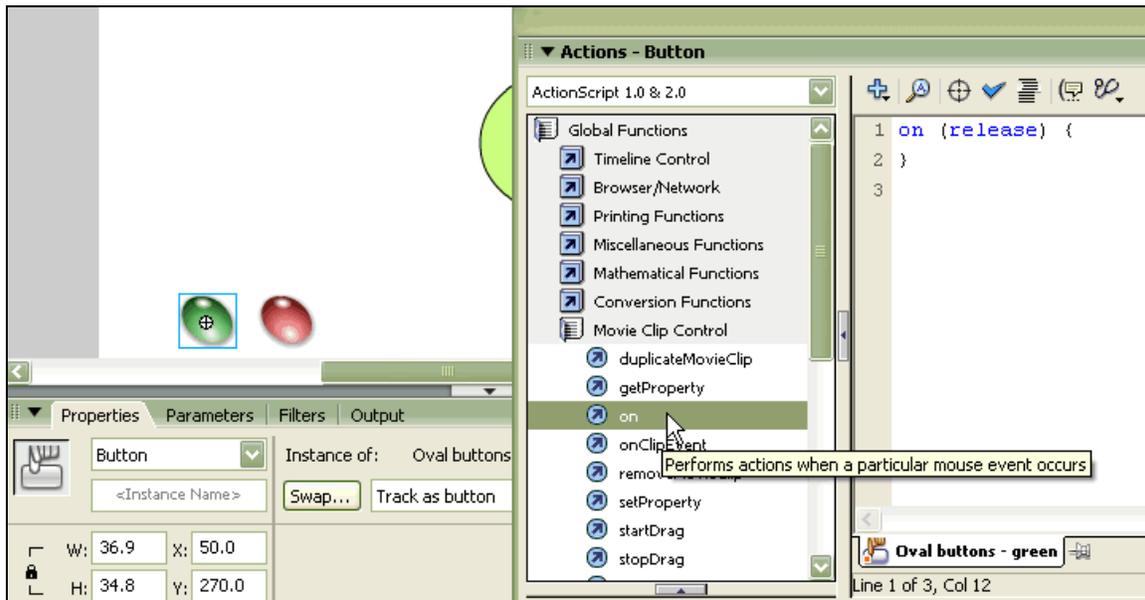
- c. To achieve a cross-fade, your Timeline will look like this:



Part 3: Buttons and Interactivity

9. Adding buttons

- a. You can use buttons supplied with Flash: Windows menu > Common Libraries > Buttons (you may also create custom buttons).
- b. Drag a button from the External Library to the Stage. Note: It's usually a good idea first to create a *new layer* just for buttons.
- c. To write script on a button, click it *just once* to select it. Then open the Actions panel. (If you see the blue arrow, as explained on page 1, you clicked twice. Correct that mistake!)
- d. The illustration below shows how to write script on a button. The instructions to make the button do something will appear between the curly braces `{ }` shown at right.



Some common scripts you will write on Flash buttons:

```
on (release) {  
    stop();  
}
```

Stops the movie.

```
on (release) {  
    play();  
}
```

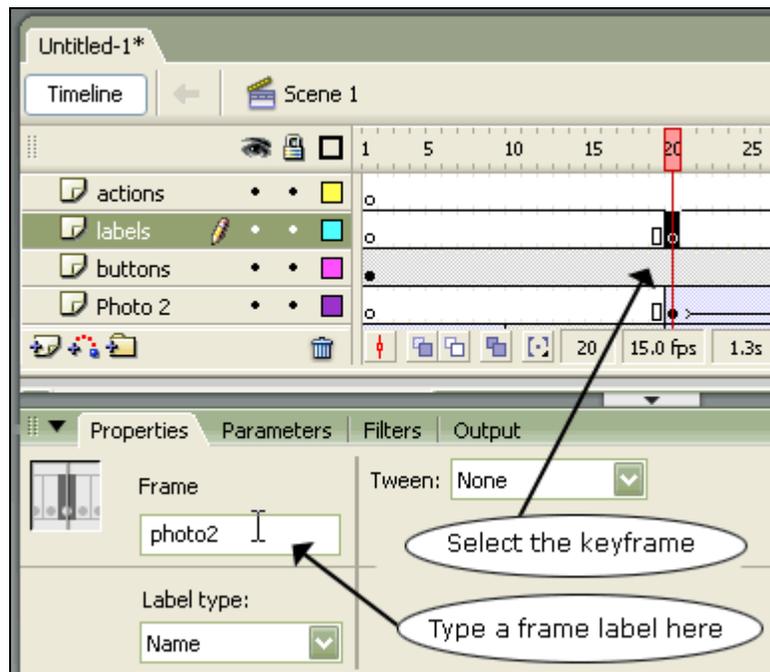
Starts the movie (if it was stopped).

```
on (release) {  
    gotoAndPlay(1);  
}
```

Sends the movie back to Frame 1.

10. Scripting buttons (with frame labels)

- If you write a label on a frame in the Timeline, you can then make the playhead go to that exact frame at any time, using script on a button, *or* script on a frame (as when you wrote **stop()** ; on the final frame).
- Usually we create a *new layer* just for labels.
- A label needs its own *keyframe*.
- Do not use spaces or punctuation in the frame label.
- ActionScript: **gotoAndPlay("myframeLabel") ;**



11. Loading an external JPG via a button: If you write the *correct script* on a button, Flash can display an external JPG file.

```
on (release) {  
    loadMovieNum("myphoto.jpg", 2);  
}
```

Displays an image named *myphoto.jpg*

```
on (release) {  
    unloadMovieNum(2);  
}
```

Removes the file from Level 2

More about this in the intermediate workshop!