## Beginning Flash 8

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Flash Journalism: How to Create Multimedia Journalism Packages (Focal Press, 2005)
FILES http://mindymcadams.com/guest/flash_beginners/
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 online)
c. When loading external photos, those files must be JPGs
3. Photo file size for the Web (see the separate Tip Sheet online)
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 online)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 doubleclicked 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 $a d d$ 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: CmdReturn).
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 () ;
8) All Flash movies loop by default.
9) To make the movie play once and stop, write ActionScript on the last frame of the Timeline.
10) Add a new layer in the Timeline. Name the layer "actions."
11) Click the last frame in that layer and make a new keyframe.
12) 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) {
}
```

Stops the movie.

```
on (release) {
}
Sends the movie back to Frame 1.
```

10. Scripting buttons (with frame labels)
a. 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).
b. Usually we create a new layer just for labels.
c. A label needs its own keyframe.
d. Do not use spaces or punctuation in the frame label.
e. 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) { ("myphoto.jpg", 2); 隹 (release) {
}
Displays an image named myphoto.jpg
Removes the file from Level 2
```

