

Frequently asked questions about Adobe After Effects

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Adobe After Effects?

Adobe After Effects is the industry choice for creating motion graphics and visual effects for film or broadcast. It is also widely used to enhance other video productions, to create DVD motion menus, and to produce animated Web graphics. Adobe After Effects is available in two editions, Standard and Professional, to meet the needs of motion graphics designers, visual effects artists, and other creative professionals who produce content for film, video, DVD, and the Web.

Why should I purchase Adobe After Effects 6.5?

Whether you're producing content for film, video, DVD, or the Web, After Effects 6.5 boosts your efficiency with superior performance and the right tools that enable you to work both faster and smarter. After Effects delivers powerful features that help you to be visually innovative, meet production challenges, and deliver the quality results your clients expect. Plus, tight integration with Adobe Premiere® Pro, Adobe Encore™ DVD, Adobe Photoshop® CS, Adobe Illustrator® CS, and other video editing and 3D animation tools ensures a seamless workflow. After Effects is the essential tool for film and video professionals because it delivers power and creative freedom.

What's the difference between After Effects Standard and After Effects Professional?

Designed for the most demanding production environments, After Effects Professional combines the core 2D and 3D compositing, animation, and effects tools from the Standard edition with advanced motion tracking and stabilization controls, additional keying and warping tools, over 30 additional effects including new grain management effects, an advanced particle system, scripting, network rendering, 16-bit per channel color, AAF and OMF support, and additional audio effects. If your business doesn't require these additional features now, you can purchase After Effects Standard for its core tools, then upgrade to After Effects Professional later.

What are the top new features in Adobe After Effects 6.5?

After Effects 6.5 includes over one hundred new features designed to boost your productivity and expand your creative options. They include:

- **Advanced Clone tool** so you can see your source frame as you paint over multiple frames; five presets make it easy to quickly apply frequently-used Clone tool settings
- **Disk caching** for speeding up your interactive work
- **Animation Presets**, including more than 250 professionally-designed text Animation Presets
- **New integration** with Adobe Premiere Pro, Adobe Encore DVD, and Adobe Photoshop CS
- **New grain management (Professional edition only) and color correction tools**, including Synthetic Aperture's Color Finesse, a \$595USD value
- **More than 60 new effects**—Use more than 60 new effects to add drama to your compositions, including Particle World, Light Burst, Light Sweep, and Toner
- **New text animation features**, including the ability to set blend modes between characters, randomize text, write scripts that replace a layer's text (Professional edition only), and more
- **Firewire video output** for previewing on NTSC and PAL video monitors, now on both Windows and Mac OS X systems
- **More flexible motion tracking** (Professional edition only) so you can track a layer's scale, the X or Y axis only and edit the motion path of a tracked layer
- **Scripting support** (Professional edition only) for automating production tasks

For more detailed information about these and other new features in After Effects 6.5, please refer to the *Adobe After Effects 6.5 New Feature Highlights*, which you can find at www.adobe.com/products/aftereffects/newfeatures.html.

What operating systems does After Effects support?

After Effects supports the latest platforms from both Apple and Microsoft, including Mac OS X 10.3.2, Windows 2000, and Windows XP® with Service Pack 4 or Windows XP Professional or Home Edition with Service Pack 1.

When will After Effects 6.5 be available? How much will it cost? Where can I buy it?

After Effects 6.5 is expected to be available in late spring 2004.

Adobe After Effects 6.5 Professional is available for \$999USD, and After Effects 6.5 Standard for \$699USD. Customers can upgrade from Adobe After Effects 6.0 to After Effects 6.5 for \$99USD (both Standard and Professional editions). Upgrades from After Effects 3.x, 4.x, or 5.x Production Bundle versions to After Effects 6.5 Professional are \$299USD, while upgrades from After Effects 3.x, 4.x, or 5.x Standard to After Effects 6.5 Standard are \$199. Customers can upgrade from any Standard edition version to After Effects 6.5 Professional for \$499. Please note that prices are approximate and do not include taxes, shipping, handling, or other related expenses.

You can purchase Adobe After Effects 6.5 from Adobe Authorized Resellers or at the Adobe Store (www.adobe.com/store/main.jhtml).

I'm interested in the new Adobe Video Collection. Can I upgrade from After Effects?

You can upgrade from any previous version of After Effects Standard to the Adobe Video Collection 2.5 Standard for just \$799 (USD), saving more than \$800 (USD) over upgrading After Effects and buying the other products separately. If you own After Effects Professional or any version of the After Effects Production Bundle, you can upgrade to the Adobe Video Collection 2.5 Professional for just \$1199 (USD). Please note that prices are approximate and do not include taxes, shipping, handling, or other related expenses.

I just recently bought a copy of Adobe After Effects 6.0. Can I exchange it for version 6.5?

Customers who purchased After Effects 6.0 between April 19, 2004 (US date), and July 18, 2004, are eligible for an After Effects 6.5 upgrade for the price of shipping only. The upgrade must be for the same computer platform and version as your previous version, e.g. qualifying After Effects 6.0 Standard for Mac OS will receive After Effects 6.5 Standard for Mac OS. This offer is available only through Adobe and applies to purchases made from Adobe or Adobe Authorized Resellers. You must provide a dated proof of purchase and your serial number when you place your order. Claims for this offer must be received by August 2, 2004. To qualify for upgrades, customers in the U.S. and Canada can call Adobe customer service at (800) 833-6687. To contact Customer Service in other parts of the world, please see www.adobe.com/support/intl/support.html.

Can I try Adobe After Effects before I purchase it?

A fully functional tryout version of Adobe After Effects 6.5 Professional, which expires after 30 days of use, will be available from the Adobe Web site shortly after the product starts shipping at www.adobe.com/products/tryadobe/main.jsp#product=13.

What Open GL cards does After Effects 6.5 support?

For a complete list of the Open GL cards supported please visit www.adobe.com/products/aftereffects/opengl.

Will After Effects 6.5 work well with my other Adobe software?

Tighter integration with other Adobe products—especially those in the Adobe Video Collection—is an important enhancement in this release because it allows you to work more efficiently. For example, text from Photoshop CS files—point text, paragraph text, and text on a path—is fully editable when you import native PSD files as compositions, and Photoshop CS files saved with 16-bit color can be imported into After Effects with layers remaining intact. New import options in After Effects 6.5 enable you to choose specific sequences to import within an Adobe Premiere Pro 1.5 project file. Drag and drop content, or copy and paste clips between After Effects 6.5 and Adobe Premiere Pro. After Effects 6.5 reads all markers set up in Adobe Premiere Pro. When you later import this footage into Adobe Encore DVD, these markers are available to set up chapter points in Adobe Encore DVD. You can directly import and enhance Adobe Encore DVD menus, or use After Effects 6.5 to transform groups of layers into buttons or label a specific layer as a video

background for a motion menu with just one click. After Effects 6.5 automatically adds the correct naming conventions and formats, so that menus you create in After Effects import directly into Adobe Encore DVD.

What is GridIron X-Factor™ and how do I get it?

GridIron X-Factor is a new grid computing technology for After Effects 6.5 that is available for the Professional edition. Unlike a render farm, which uses multiple CPUs to render frames at the end of a project, GridIron X-Factor uses CPUs on a network to speed up processing in After Effects 6.5 while you are working. After Effects 6.5 Professional users can download a grid rendering plug-in at no charge from the GridIron web site: www.gridironxfactor.com/download.

What is Color Finesse from Synthetic Aperture and how do I get it?

After Effects 6.5 (Standard and Professional, both retail and upgrade versions) includes the Color Finesse plug-in from Synthetic Aperture, a professional color processing system that uses a 32-bit floating-point color space for precise adjustments. With Color Finesse you can fine tune color corrections in HSL, RGB, CMY, and YCbCr color spaces, and also take advantage of automatic color matching and custom correction curves. You can monitor all color levels using Color Finesse's built-in waveform monitor, vectorscope, histogram, and correction curve displays. The Color Finesse plug-in is located on the application CD and needs to be installed separately.

What are the new Cycore effects and how do I get them?

After Effects 6.5 (Standard and Professional, both retail and upgrade versions) includes bundled effects from Cycore, the original developers of Final Effects. Now you can add smoke and sparks to your compositions using Particle World, blazing ray of light transitions using Light Burst and Light Sweep, or change all the colors in an image to just three hues using Toner. These effects are located on the application CD and need to be installed separately. Please note that Education versions of After Effects do not include these effects.

What is Zaxwerks 3D Invigorator Classic, and how do I get it?

Zaxwerks 3D Invigorator Classic is ideal for film and motion graphics designers wanting to add custom 3D elements and 3D text to their work without ever having to leave After Effects. Zaxwerks 3D Invigorator Classic, a \$495 (USD) value, is included in the box for customers who purchase the retail version of After Effects 6.5 Professional or upgrade from the Standard edition of After Effects to the Professional edition. Customers who purchase the Standard edition of After Effects, or who upgrade to version 6.5, receive a \$200 (USD) discount coupon from Zaxwerks good toward the purchase of 3D Invigorator (Classic or Professional versions).

What are the 3D Assistants Lite plug-ins and how can I get them?

After Effects 6.5 Professional edition also includes the 3D Assistants Lite plug-ins from Digital Anarchy, which make arranging and animating 3D Layers easy. Quickly arrange 3D layers into cubes, tunnels, or just distribute them throughout the 3D space in your composition. The three keyframe assistants have an easy to use interface that makes setting up complex arrangements and animations of 3D layers simple. These plug-ins are located on the application CD and need to be installed separately.

What is Keylight and how can I access it?

Keylight is a technical Academy Award winning green and bluescreen keying tool from the Foundry. Included in After Effects 6.5 Professional, it is located on the application CD and needs to be installed separately.

Does any training come with After Effects?

When you purchase After Effects (either full retail or upgrade) you'll receive a DVD produced by Total Training that includes more than three hours of training on After Effects and Adobe's other video products. Note that French versions of After Effects 6.5 do not include this DVD.

Why should I register Adobe After Effects?

When you register your Adobe products, you receive expert technical support, new product announcements, special offers, and early notice of product upgrades. As a registered owner of the current version of an Adobe product, you are eligible to receive person-to-person support on issues related to installation (www.adobe.com/support/compsupport_def_install.html) and product defects (www.adobe.com/support/compsupport_def_proddfect.html), including crashes and errors caused by the Adobe software. There is no charge (www.adobe.com/support/compsupport_def_nocharge.html) for this service; you only pay for the cost of the call. After your complimentary support ends, you can still receive personal service from qualified support specialists. Adobe offers several levels of flexibly priced support that ranges from one-time fees to annual plans.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

In North America, contact customer services at 888-724-4507. For all other areas, please visit www.adobe.com/support to find out how to contact a local Adobe Customer Service Representative.

Does After Effects support Hyperthreading and Multiprocessors?

After Effects takes advantage of hyperthreading and offers support for multiprocessors.

How can I keep up-to-date on the latest support info about After Effects?

You can subscribe to Adobe Technical e-mail announcements www.adobe.com/support/emaillist.html to keep informed about new technical how-tos, software updates, and more. After Effects users can also connect to a lively user to user forum at www.adobe.com/support/forums/main.html.

Will After Effects grow with my professional needs?

You choose between the Standard edition and Professional edition, and an open architecture enables third-party developers, such as The Foundry, Digital Anarchy, Automatic Duck, Profound Effects, Synthetic Aperture, and Zaxwerks to produce plug-ins that are closely integrated with the tools and environment of After Effects. This means you have access to a wide range of affordable design options that simply aren't available with other motion graphics products. For a comprehensive list of third-party plug-ins for After Effects, visit www.adobe.com/products/plugins/aftereffects.

Does the same software used to create opening titles and visual effects in feature films have a place in business communications?

Absolutely. The need to communicate—with customers, prospects, and employees—is at the heart of every business. And communications that engage your audience with motion and animation are the ones that get noticed and get their points across. Adobe After Effects makes high-quality motion graphics and visual effects affordable and accessible to film and video professionals, Web content creators, video enthusiasts, and graphic designers alike. Whether you're creating a motion picture, Web site, a retail POP display, a training video, a tradeshow presentation, or a sales demo, Adobe After Effects helps bring your messages to life.