

Stacker

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Description

Stacker is a powerful layer management tool that organizes project window items or selected layers in Your composition by stacking layers to the bottom, top, left, or right sides, while also providing options for layer alignment, fixed starting position, and more. Experience the benefits of efficient layer management in your workflow.

0. INSTALL AND OPEN

0.1.A. AE SCRIPTS MANAGER

The easiest way to install our tools is by using our manager app.

<https://aescrpts.com/learn/aescrpts-aeplugins-manager-app/>

It can install and license and update all your tools in one click!

0.1.B. MANUAL INSTALLATION

Scripts with dockable/embeddable UI's are installed/extracted to the "ScriptUI Panels folder" and run from the Window menu in After Effects.

macOS:

"/Applications/Adobe After Effects (version)/Scripts/ScriptUI Panels/"

Windows:

"C:Program Files/Adobe/Adobe After Effects (version)/Support Files/Scripts/ScriptUI Panels/"

0.2. Open As UI WINDOW

After You have installed the script open After Effects (If you had AE open while installing, close After Effects and re-open).

TO OPEN User Interface Window ->

The Top Panel of after effects -> Window -> Stacker

(Scroll down the list if needed by placing the mouse on its list's end).

1. GETTINGS STARTED

1.1. Start Adobe After Effects and open the Stacker panel.

Customize the settings according to your preferences.

1.2. Open an existing project or create a new one and import the necessary assets.

1.3. Choose items or layers to work with:

A. Select assets/items within the Project window (This will create a composition based on your composition settings within the settings dialog, located under "Composition").

or

B. Select layers within your composition.

2. MOVE SETTINGS BETWEEN AE VERSIONS

(if you want to move settings between ae versions follow those steps)

2.1. Open script UI.

2.2. Go to settings tab.

2.3. Save Settings.

2.4. Open script UI in other version.

2.5. Go to settings tab.

2.6. Load settings.

3. USER INTERFACE

3.1. (Stack items) "To bottom" Button

Stacks layers from top to bottom.

*** Default Hotkey: "Down"**

3.2. (Stack items) "To top" Button

Stacks layers from bottom to top.

* **Default Hotkey: "Up"**

3.3. (Stack items) "To Right" Button

Stacks layers from Left to Right.

* **Default Hotkey: "Right"**

3.4. (Stack items) "To left" Button

Stacks layers from Right to Left.

* **Default Hotkey: "Left"**

3.5. "Settings" Dialog

Opens settings dialog.

(Settings will automatically save when changed).

* **NOTE: "LEFT" AND "RIGHT" Arrow Keys change between tabs.**

* **Default Hotkey: "S"**

3.5.1. "SETTINGS" - POSITIONING TAB

* **Default Hotkey: "A"**

3.5.1.1. ALIGN Dropdown

Aligns layers horizontally and vertically based on the first layer.

3.5.1.1.1. (Align) Horizontally

Aligns layers horizontally based on the first layer.

* Default Value: "**Center**"

"Top"

All layers are aligned horizontally to the top of the first layer.

"Center"

All layers are aligned horizontally to the center of the first layer.

"Bottom"

All layers are aligned horizontally to the bottom of the first layer.

"None"

Does nothing.

3.5.1.1.2. (Align) Vertically

Aligns layers vertically based on the first layer.

* Default Value: "**Center**"

"Left"

All layers are aligned vertically to the left of the first layer.

"Center"

All layers are aligned vertically to the center of the first layer.

"Right"

All layers are aligned vertically to the right of the first layer.

"None"

Does nothing.

3.5.1.2. SPACE BETWEEN LAYERS

Adds space between layers horizontally and vertically.

3.5.1.2.1. (Add Space) Height Input

Space between layers on Y axes.

* Default Value: **0.5**

* Minimum Value: **0** | Maximum Value: **1,000**

* Rules: **In Pixels, Should be a number**

3.5.1.2.2. (Add Space) Width Input

Space between layers on X axes.

* Default Value: **2**

* Minimum Value: **0** | Maximum Value: **1,000**

* Rules: **In Pixels, Should be a number**

3.5.1.3. FIXED STARTING POSITION

Sets starting X and Y Positions.

3.5.1.3.1. Auto X Checkbox

Uses first selected object X position.

* Default Value: **"True"**

3.5.1.3.2. Auto Y Checkbox

Uses first selected object Y position.

* Default Value: **"True"**

3.5.1.3.3. Fixed X Position Value Input

Sets starting position value for X.

NOTE: "Auto X" Checkbox should be off.

- * Default Value: **960**
- * Minimum Value: **-30,000** | Maximum Value: **30,000**
- * Rules: **In Pixels, Should be a number**

3.5.1.3.4. Fixed Y Position Value Input

Sets starting position value for Y.

NOTE: "Auto Y" Checkbox should be off.

- * Default Value: **540**
- * Minimum Value: **-30,000** | Maximum Value: **30,000**
- * Rules: **In Pixels, Should be a number**

3.5.2. "SETTINGS" - ORGANIZE TAB

- * **Default Hotkey: "S"**

3.5.2.1. Move Layers to the Top Checkbox

Move selected layers to the beginning of all layers.

- * Default Value: **"False"**

3.5.2.2. Create Null Checkbox

Creates null and connects all selected layers to it.

- * Default Value: **"True"**

* **NOTE: Connects all selected layers to this Null**

3.5.2.3. Null Scale Input

Changes null's scale at the end of the "stacking operation".

NOTE: Create Null should be ON!

* Default Value: **100**

* Minimum Value: **1** | Maximum Value: **1,000**

* Rules: **In Percent, Should be a number**

3.5.2.4. Ignore Parent's Scaling Checkbox

Layers are connected in a chain ignoring the parent's scale

(Adds expression to each layer).

* Default Value: **"False"**

* **NOTE: Parenting layers by Chain Parent (IF Create Null is OFF)**

* **NOTE: Adds expression to each layer**

* **TIP: Can be combined with alignments**

* **TIP: Can be combined with Fixed Starting Point**

3.5.2.5. Ignore Parent's Rotation Checkbox

Layers are connected in a chain ignoring the parent's rotation

(Adds expression to each layer).

* Default Value: **"False"**

* **NOTE: Parenting layers by Chain Parent (IF Create Null is OFF)**

* **NOTE: Adds expression to each layer**

3.5.2.6. Connect layers to Parent's Opacity

Connects all layers opacity to parent's opacity.

(Adds expression to each layer).

* Default Value: "**False**"

* **NOTE: If Create Null is on - adjusts Null's opacity to 100**

* **NOTE: Parenting layers by Chain Parent (IF Create Null is OFF)**

* **NOTE: Adds expression to each layer**

3.5.3. "SETTINGS" - COMPOSITION TAB

Creates new composition using those settings (when no open/active composition).

* **Default Hotkey: "D"**

3.5.3.1. Sort Compositions Checkbox

If you are working with multiple compositions - this option will sort your compositions renumbering them by lowest is most important.

NOTE: Works only when using project window selected items (Which creates a new composition).

NOTE: The Script will suggest to trim compositions if there are more than 10.

NOTE: The more compositions there are in the project window the busier it will get to sort - try to keep compositions at minimum.

* Default Value: **"True"**

3.5.3.2. Composition Name Input

Script uses this name input when opening a new composition.

* Default Value: **My Stacker Composition**

* Min. Characters: **1** | Max. Characters: **1,000**

3.5.3.3. Composition Width Input

Script uses this Width input when opening a new composition.

* Default Value: **1920**

* Minimum Value: **4** | Maximum Value: **30,000**

* Rules: **In Pixels, Should be a number**

3.5.3.4. Composition Height Input

Script uses this Height input when opening a new composition.

* Default Value: **1080**

* Minimum Value: **4** | Maximum Value: **30,000**

* Rules: **In Pixels, Should be a number**

3.5.3.5. Composition Duration Input

Script uses this start-second input when opening a new composition.

* Default Value: **60**

* Minimum Value: **1** | Maximum Value: **10,800**

* Rules: **In Seconds, Should be a number**

3.5.3.7. Composition FPS (Frames per second) Input

Script uses this FPS input when opening a new composition.

* Default Value: **30**

* Minimum Value: **8** | Maximum Value: **120**

* Rules: **In Seconds, Should be a number**

3.5.3. "SETTINGS" - HOTKEYS TAB

You can set your preferred hotkeys for action.

* **"LEFT" AND "RIGHT" Arrow Keys change between tabs.**

* **Default Hotkey: "F"**

3.5.3.1. "MAIN" Hotkeys TAB

3.5.3.1.1. (Set) "TOP TO BOTTOM" Button Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

*** Default Hotkey: "Down"**

3.5.3.1.2. (Set) "BOTTOM TO TOP" Button Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

*** Default Hotkey: "Up"**

3.5.3.1.3. (Set) "LEFT TO RIGHT" Button Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

*** Default Hotkey: "Right"**

3.5.3.1.4. (Set) "RIGHT TO LEFT" Button Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

* **Default Hotkey:** "Left"

3.5.3.1.5. (Set) "SETTINGS" Button Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

* **Default Hotkey:** "S"

3.5.4.2. "SETTINGS" TABS Hotkeys

3.5.4.2.1. (Set) "POSITIONING" tab Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

* **Default Hotkey:** "A"

3.5.4.2.2. (Set) "ORGANIZE" tab Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

* **Default Hotkey: "S"**

3.5.4.2.3. (Set) "COMPOSITION" tab Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

* **Default Hotkey: "D"**

3.5.4.2.4. (Set) "HOTKEYS" tab Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

* **Default Hotkey: "F"**

3.5.4.2.5. (Set) "RESET" tab Hotkey

Click the current registered key button (**from the right**) to

register a new key.

(UI window Should be selected so the key will be registered).

NOTE: You cannot set a key that is already assigned.

* **Default Hotkey: "G"**

3.5.5. Save/Reset/Load TAB

NOTE: This tab cannot be reset.

* **Default Hotkey: "G"**

3.5.5.1. "SETTINGS" Group

3.5.5.1.1. Positioning Checkbox

Resets align Horizontally and Vertically, Width and Height, Spacing, Auto X, auto Y, Auto X, and Auto Y values.

* Default Value: **"True"**

3.5.5.1.2. Organize Checkbox

Resets Re-order layers, Create null, Null scale, and Ignore parent's scaling values.

* Default Value: **"True"**

3.5.5.1.3. Composition Checkbox

Resets Sort, name, width, height, start and end second, and fps,

values.

* Default Value: **"True"**

3.5.5.2. "HOTKEYS" Group

3.5.5.2.1. Main Checkbox

Resets top to bottom, bottom to top, left to right, right to left
Settings and Information Hotkeys.

* Default Value: **"True"**

3.5.5.2.2. Settings Tabs Checkbox

Resets Positioning, Organize, Composition, Tabs and Reset / Save
/ Load Hotkeys.

* Default Value: **"True"**

3.5.5.3. "Don't Show Again, Paths And Tab Selections" Group

3.5.5.3.1. Don't show again Checkbox

Resets Load Settings, Reset Settings and Remove Compositions
don't show again checkboxes.

* Default Value: **"False"**

3.5.5.3.2. Paths Checkbox

Resets save and load saved paths.

* Default Value: **"False"**

3.5.5.3. Selections Checkbox

Resets settings dialog and hotkeys last selected tab.

* Default Value: **"False"**

3.5.5.4. "RESET SETTINGS" Button

Settings and Hotkeys Are reset by selected groups to default values.

3.5.5.5. "SAVE SETTINGS" Button

Save all settings and hotkeys to a file.

3.5.5.6. "LOAD SETTINGS" Button

Load settings and hotkeys (by selected groups) from a file.

3.6. "Information" Button

Pops up Information UI.

* **Default Hotkey: "i"**

(UI window Should be selected).

4. Features

4.1. Compact User Interface Panel

UI can be used vertically or horizontally in After Effects, built to save space.

4.2. Settings saved on change

4.2.1. Save Settings on success

Settings will be automatically saved after the field is out of focus.

NOTE: IF YOU SWITCH AFTER EFFECTS VERSION SETTINGS WILL BE LOST, YOU CAN SAVE THEM AND LOAD IN OTHER AE VERSION.

4.2.2. AFTER EFFECTS v12 and above

Settings are saved within the after effects prefs file.

4.2.3. Below AFTER EFFECTS v12

Settings are saved in a file within the data folder in the Folder script was run from.

NOTE: BELOW AE V12 if the settings file is broken or touched manually -> it will rename them with (OLD) tag.

(The script will suggest deleting all of the OLD versions - if you

have over 10 files with (OLD) tag).

4.2.4 Save last OS paths

Load and save files last location is saved and loaded on After Effects reset.

(NOT available on MAC).

4.2.5 Save the last selected tab

Saves the last selected vertical and horizontal tabs.

4.3. Keyframes support

The script will check your selected keyframes and adjust only selected ones

NOTE: if the Current time indicator is on a keyframe that isn't selected the script will select it as After Effects would naturally do.

NOTE: If the Current time indicator is NOT on a keyframe, it will create a new keyframe.

4.4. Action Window pop-ups

To improve responsivity - script pop-ups an informative windows.

4.4.1. Tooltips

Shows full field Description, minimum, maximum, default and rules.

4.4.2. Success

4.4.3. Warning

4.4.4. Error

The window shows where the error appeared. Errors aren't supposed to happen - it's best to report them.

Create a screenshot of a window including the error code and press on the "Report" button to open a ticket.

4.4.5. Confirmation

Script confirms actions for Load, Reset and Remove Compositions.

4.5. Hotkeys

The script user interface is packed with short keys to boost your productivity, You can also set them to your liking.

Make sure the script User interface is selected - so that hotkeys

will work.

4.5.1. MAC Keys Support

Differentiates between Mac and Windows keys.

4.5.2. "Enter" on the input field

The "Enter" Key removes focus from the field.

4.6. Pre-load settings and text messages

The script loads all settings and messages to improve performance and reduces duplicates.

4.7. Loading bar

Shows progress bar for pre-load, save, load, reset and ae functions.

5. Known Bugs/Issues

5.1. Text Effectors are un-supported.

5.2. Shape Properties (transform, scale and anchor point) are un-supported.

5.3. Transform Effect (transform, scale and anchor point) are

un-supported.

5.4. Field Update: After inputting the value and clicking outside of the UI Window, it will keep the field hanging - the value won't be updated.

Solution: None.

5.5. Hotkeys: Clicking on Horizontal Tabs (Hotkeys tabs) disables hotkeys ("Tabs" And "Up" and "Down" hotkeys).

Solution: Clicking on any Vertical Tabs tab (results in next issue).

5.6. Hotkeys: Clicking on Vertical Tabs disables "Left" and "Right" hotkeys for the Hotkeys tabs.

Solution: Click on the checkbox or dropdown to the right.