

MonkeyBars  
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## Welcome to the first official MonkeyBars User Manual

**MonkeyBars** is a quick and easy way to create complex text box animations. These are ideally suited for info graphics, lower third banners, subtitles, bullet points or any other application that needs high volume production of legible text.

### Installation:

Windows - Copy "MonkeyBars.jsxbin" into "After Effects Directory/Support Files/Scripts/ScriptUI Panels"

Mac - Copy " MonkeyBars.jsxbin" into "After Effects Directory/Scripts/ScriptUI Panels"

### Process:

Once you click **Do It!** MonkeyBars will create a build which includes a box, box matte, text – using the font designated in the Character Window – and a text matte for each line of text. Everything except the text matte will be shy'd and locked.

Once complete, all will be pre-comped and markers are placed on the final comp layer to allow for retiming of the transitions. Lastly, all pre-comps will be placed in a MonkeyBars folder in the Project panel.

You can make changes to the transformations by selecting the control layers in the pre-comp timeline. Size, angle, and position can easily be altered for each line using this method.

Additional changes to the text and box layers can also be made by either unshying the comp, or using the MonkeyTools in the UI to help isolate specific layer types.

Multiple MonkeyBars builds can be created within a single comp, although each build will have its own pre-comp found in the MonkeyBars folder in the Project panel.

## UI Breakdown:

## Text Entry Box:

This is where you type or paste your text.

*Note: Key Commands, which are used in the Text Entry Box, will be addressed later in the User Manual. (See below)*

## Text Section:

**All Caps:** When active, all text in the Text Entry Box will be set to upper case.

**Stencil Text:** This uses text as a see-through stencil for its corresponding bar.

Note: At least one Text Box must be active for this to work.

- If the 'Include Box' checkbox is deselected, then Stencil Text will be deactivated. All text will appear as non-stencil text.
- If a Box Fill is set to off, the corresponding text will appear as non-stenciled text.

**Spacing:** Spacing controls the leading between lines. The Space setting will automatically adjust for boxes that are expanded.

**Text Size:** This sets the size for all text except text using the Alt Text Size via Key Commands.

**Text Color:** This is the main text color. All text not using the Alt Text Color will be set to this color.

**Alt Text Size:** This is the alternate text size that will be assigned to text that have either ~ or ^ preceding that line of text in the Text Entry Box. Hovering the cursor over Alt Text Size will reveal a pop up of the key command. See *Key Commands* below.

**Alt Text Color:** This controls the alternate text color for the build. This color will be applied to any text using the ~ key command, or any text enclosed within [ ]. See *Key Commands* below.

## Box Section:

**Include Box:** When selected, the Box section of the UI will be active. If this checkbox is deselected, there will be no boxes in the build.

**Expansion:** This is the number of pixels the main box is expanded beyond the initial size of the text. If the setting is 0, then the box will be the same size as the text.

*Note: Alt Text Boxes are expanded proportionally based on the main expansion setting. For example, if the main text size is 30 and the box expansion is 20, then an Alt Text Size of 15 will be expanded by 10, which is half the amount.*

**Opacity:** This controls the transparency of the boxes. It does not affect the text.

**Pre-Comp Box Fill:** When activated this feature will create a pre-comp of each box associated with that build. These pre-comps will be located in the MonkeyBars folder in the Project panel.

The purpose of the pre-comps is to make it easy to replace the text bar solids with custom artwork or mattes.

**Box Fill:** This is the On/Off switch for the main text box. This control determines whether a box will be created for all text lines (except those overridden by a key command).

**Box Color:** Sets the color for the main box.

**Alt Box Fill:** This is the On/Off switch for the alternate text box.

**Alt Box Color:** Sets the color for alternate boxes. You can control the use of this color by using the pipe (|) key command in the Text Entry Box...  
*See Key Commands (next page).*

## Key Commands:

If you click on the Star button at the top of the UI, a list of key commands, rules and examples will pop up. These explain how MonkeyBars assigns the alternate text size, color and box fill in the Text Entry Box. A helpful reminder for each of

these features will also pop up if you hover over those parts of the UI.

The Enter or Return key will start a new line. Empty lines are ignored. Alter the Spacing setting in the UI to adjust leading between lines, or do it manually in the pre-comp)

Spaces can be used to extend boxes to the left or right of the text.

The Tilde (~) symbol means everything in that line will be Alt Text Size, Alt Text Color and Alt Box Color

To individually specify any of the Alt settings, you can use any of the following keys:

**Alt Text Size:** The Carot (^) (Shift 6).

**Alt Text Color:** Square Brackets ([ ]) Note: You can also have a single open bracket, which means everything to the right of it will be the alternate color.

**Alt Box Setting:** The Pipe Key (|). (Shift \)

Other than the Tilde (~), which needs to be used by itself, any of these keys can be used independently or in combination with each other, but the square brackets are the only ones that can appear anywhere in a line. The rest have to be at the beginning of a line. Spaces cannot appear before one of these key commands.

Additional rules and examples can be found in the Info Box.

## Layout:

**Position:** This section controls where the text bars appear on screen. If one of the lower positions is selected, MonkeyBars will use the bottom of the lowest box to align to title safe and will use the top of the upper box for one of the upper positions.

**Alignment:** Dictates the justification of the text.

## Animation:

The Animation Section defines how the text and boxes move.

**Transition:** This dropdown controls whether the animation transitions In, Out, or In & Out. The layer or markers can slide either way to alter the timing.

**In:** MonkeyBars will place a marker at the current comp time marker - beginning of Transition In.

**Out:** If this is selected, the comp will need a minimum of three seconds prior to the Transition Out. It also needs enough time to complete its animation, so make sure your comp is long enough to accommodate that.

**In & Out:** MonkeyBars will begin the Transition Out three seconds after the end of the Transition In. This timing can be adjusted by sliding the markers.

*Note that adjusting the markers won't adjust the speed of the move. To globally change the speed of the entire move, disable Time Remapping and either Time Stretch the whole layer, or re-apply Time Remap and adjust accordingly.*

**Speed:** Sets the animation speed. The choices are:

- Fast** (.5 seconds)
- Medium** (1 second)
- Slow** (2 seconds).

**Movement** sets the interpolation of the move. There are nine basic motion types, or interpolations to choose from.

The various eases are listed at the top of the dropdown. These ease types are roughly equivalent to ease names you may be more familiar with, as follows:

- Extreme** = Exponential
- Large** = Quintic
- Medium** = Circular
- Small** = Cubic (Easy Ease)
- Extra Small** = Sine

Next are the physics-based moves:

- Inertia**
- Anticipate**

Lastly, two non-ease interpolations are included:

- Linear**
- Cut**

When **Cut** is selected, many of the options in the UI are disabled (Speed, Ease Type, Text Direction, and Box Direction), since they deal with motion characteristics and cuts have no motion.

**Ease Type:** This dropdown controls when the selected Movement will occur: at the start of the move (In), at the end (Out), or both (In & Out).

Text Direction and Box Direction control which way those layers move. Their initial starting point will be just outside the perimeter of the stationary matte.

**Delay:** This control determines how the trigger points for text lines and boxes are staggered. The longer the Delay setting, the longer the animation will take to complete.

- No Delay**: All layers will be triggered simultaneously.

- Short**: The Text will be triggered halfway through its corresponding box move and the next box will be triggered halfway through the previous box move.

- Medium**: The Text will be triggered halfway through its corresponding box move. The next box will be triggered at the end of the previous box move.

- Long**: The Text will be triggered halfway through its corresponding box move. The next box will be triggered at the end of the previous text move.

- Extra Long**: The Text will be triggered at the end of its corresponding box move. The next box will be triggered at the end of the previous text move.

## Miscellaneous

**Do It!** Initiates the building process

**Undo it:** Deletes the pre-comps associated with the build

**Save:** Will save all the UI settings other than the text box content as an .xml file.

**Load:** Will load saved .xml files

**MonkeyTools:** These will help speed up the process of manually revising the MonkeyBars pre-comps. They will not work in any other comps.

**Unshy Text:** Unshys and unlocks all text in pre-comp, locks and shys everything else.

**Unshy Boxes:** Unshys and unlocks Box Fills (including pre-comp box fills - if created), locks and shys everything else.

**Reset View:** Unshys and unlocks master layer, locks and shys everything else

## Pre-Comping

Since MonkeyBars relies on a complex set of expressions referencing multiple comps, you can't duplicate MonkeyBars layers with markers. If duplicate layers exist, MonkeyBars will always get its marker timing info from the top MonkeyBars layer in the timeline.

Along a similar line, if you pre-compose a MonkeyBars layer, you may notice that the animation is frozen at full reveal. This means that the animation expressions can no longer find the In and Out markers because the comp name has changed. In order to avoid this issue when pre-comping, drag the composition onto the comp icon at the bottom of the project window.

Alternatively, you can manually select layers within a comp and follow these steps:

- 1) Select Pre-comp, naming the new comp with the exact name of the existing comp (e.g. if the original is named Comp 1, the new comp must be also named Comp 1).
- 2) After pre-comping, you can then rename the original comp if you'd like - but the new pre-comp name cannot be changed or the expressions will be broken (eg. after pre-comping the original Comp 1 can be re-titled Old Comp 1) .

If you have already pre-comped a MonkeyBars build and the expressions are broken, then you can take the following steps to fix it:

- 1) Change the name of the main comp but remember what it was.
- 2) Rename the new pre-comp with the old name of the main comp.

Note: When pre-comping you must always select 'Move all attributes into the new composition', otherwise the expressions will be broken.

*More FAQs, tips and tricks will be posted on the [aescrpts.com/monkeybars](https://aescrpts.com/monkeybars) product page, so please check there for more info.*

*Thank you and good luck with your brand new Monkey!*

*-Dan & Orrin*