



## description

**keyboardFX** is a specialized tool for Adobe After Effects that enables the creation of fully customizable keyboards along with user-defined typing animations.

Simply input your text, and keyboardFX will generate a graphical keyboard within the composition, automatically assigning all necessary expressions to the layers. It synchronizes the illumination of keys with the typing of your text. Beyond alphanumeric keys, keyboardFX also supports the illumination of the Function, Modifier, Arrow, Navigation and Numeric Keypad keys.

## installation

**keyboardFX** can be run as a dockable panel or as a window.

To install and run as a dockable panel (will be visible in the "Window" menu):

1. Copy the file **keyboardFX.jsxbin** into the folder:

"..\Support Files/Scripts/Script UI Panels" (on Windows)

or "..Scripts/Script UI Panels" (on MacOS) of your After Effects installation.

2. Restart After Effects

To install and run as a window (will be visible in the File -> Scripts Menu):

1. Copy the file **keyboardFX.jsxbin** into the folder:

"..\Support Files/Scripts/" (on Windows)

or "..Scripts/" (on OS X) of your After Effects installation.

2. Restart After Effects

## interface 1/3

The script can be run as a dockable panel (will be visible and run from the "Window" menu of After Effects) or in "window mode" (visible and run from the File -> Scripts menu). The mode depends on which folder you install the script in (see instructions on page 2)



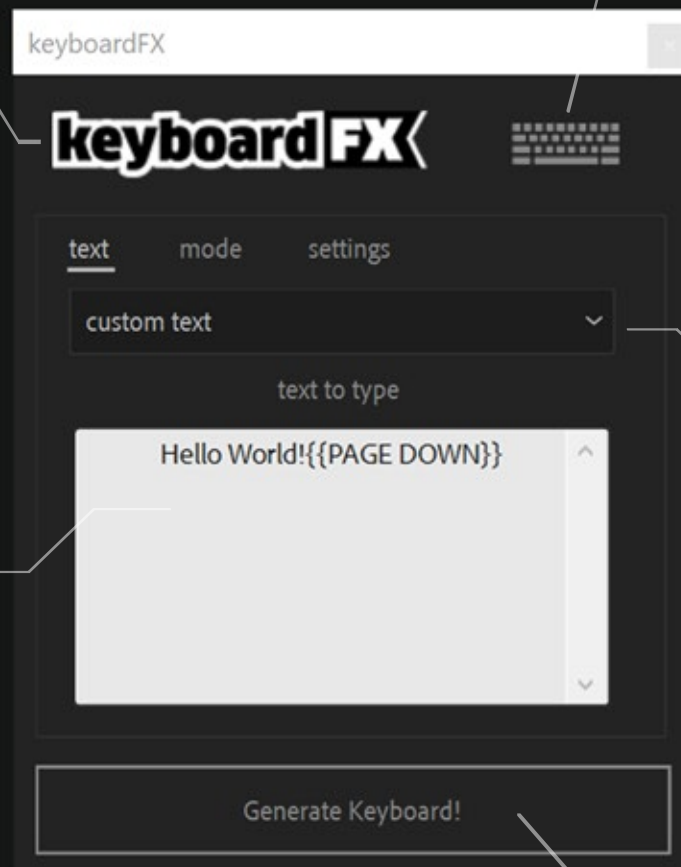
Opens the Virtual Keyboard panel. Here you can insert the special codes for illuminating Function, Modifier, Arrow, Navigation & Numeric Keypad, fast and easy

Clicking on the logo brings up a window with small help tips.

Here we will also find a list of special codes for illuminating the modifier (CTRL, SHIFT etc.) cursor (arrow keys) navigation (Page Up/Down etc.) and numeric pad keys of a keyboard

Here you can type the custom text that keyboardFX will generate typing animations for.

Please refer to pages 5-8 on this guide for more information on how to illuminate special keys.



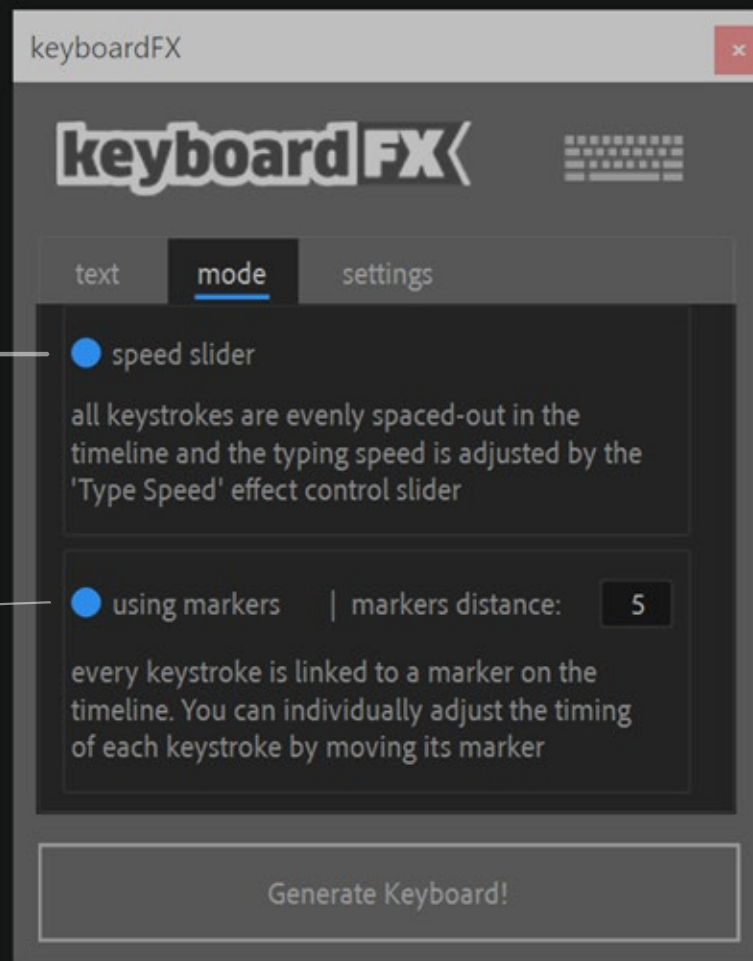
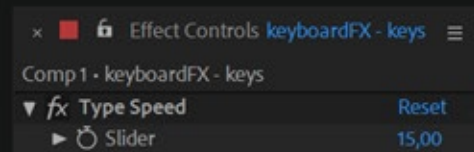
Besides the custom text, there are five presets for generating interesting lighting key animations:

- \_ sequentially horizontal
- \_ sequentially vertical
- \_ random
- \_ spiral-in
- \_ spiral-out

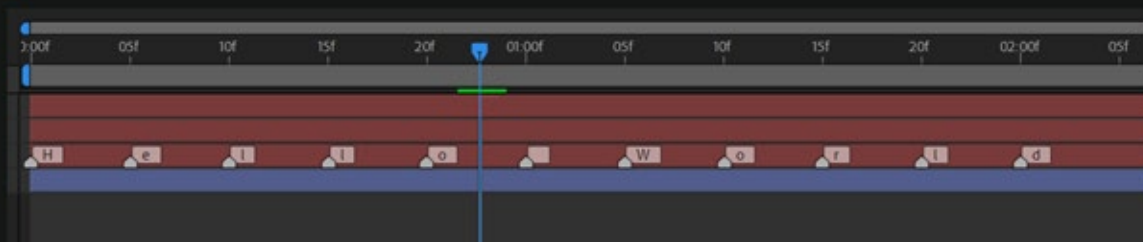
Starts the generation procedure

## interface 2/3

**Speed Slider Mode:** In this mode, the typing speed of the generated text is controlled from the “Type Speed” effect control. This controls the speed of the typing animation as a whole.



**Using Markers Mode:** In this mode every character of the generated text is assigned to a named marker on the timeline. There is no “Type Speed” slider. You can precisely time your typing animation by moving each marker.



## interface 3/3

You can select between 7 basic types of keyboards. Keep in mind that all keyboards are highly customizable with a lot of effect controls.

The 7 basic types of keyboards are:

- Apple - Dark \_
- Apple - Light \_
- PC - Dark \_
- PC - Classic 2-Color Beige \_
- Mobile/Tablet Dark \_
- Mobile/Tablet Light \_
- Commodore 64 \_

select between a QWERTY, AZERTY or DVORAK keyboard layout

The screenshot shows the 'keyboardFX' application window. It has a title bar with the name 'keyboardFX' and a close button. The main content area has three tabs: 'text', 'mode', and 'settings'. The 'settings' tab is active. Inside the 'settings' tab, there is a 'keyboard:' dropdown menu currently set to 'Apple - Dark'. Below this are four checked checkboxes: 'Enable the 3D switch', 'Create text layers for each key', 'Shy the key text layers', and 'Enable the progress bar'. At the bottom of the settings section is a 'keyboard layout' section with three radio buttons: 'Qwerty' (selected), 'Azerty', and 'Dvorak'. A large 'Generate Keyboard!' button is at the bottom of the window. Annotations with lines pointing to specific elements are present: one points to the 'keyboard:' dropdown, another to the 'Enable the 3D switch' checkbox, a third to the 'Create text layers for each key' checkbox, a fourth to the 'Shy the key text layers' checkbox, a fifth to the 'Enable the progress bar' checkbox, and a sixth to the 'Qwerty' radio button.

Enables the 3D switch for all layers that keyboardFX creates and applies a small extrusion to the keys and backplate of the keyboard

creates separate text layers for each key. keyboardFX uses the Arial font by default

enables the shy switch for all the key text layers

enables/disables the progress bar

# special codes

A keyboard, apart from the CHARACTER keys, also features a lot of extra keys.

These typically are:

The **FUNCTION** keys: F1, F2 . . . F12 etc.

The **MODIFIER** keys: ALT, CTRL, SHIFT, MENU etc.

The **ARROW** keys: ↑ ← ↓ →

The **NAVIGATION** keys: INSERT, DELETE, HOME, END, PAGE UP etc.

The **NUMERIC KEYPAD** keys: 0....9, NUM LOCK, SLASH, ASTERISK, MINUS SIGN, ENTER etc.




In order for keyboardFX to understand -on a string of text- that you want these keys to be illuminated, a special code must be typed. This special code is nothing more than double curly brackets before and after the special key you want to illuminate, like this: **{{SPECIAL KEY}}**

For example:

You want keyboardFX to generate typing animations for the following two words: **Hello World!** and immediately after that, you want to illuminate the “**Page Down**” key. What you should type in the text field of keyboardFX is: **Hello World!{{PAGE DOWN}}** and then press the “Generate Keyboard!” button.

To make this process easier, we created a convenient virtual keyboard where you can insert the **special codes** -required for illuminating Function, Modifier, Arrow, Navigation & Numeric Keypad keys- into your text, by just clicking their corresponding buttons on the panel.



(You can access the Virtual Keyboard Panel by clicking this icon:  on keyboardFX's UI.)

(If you don't want to use the Virtual Keyboard for entering special codes and want to type them manually, the following pages contain detailed lists of all the codes, for every available keyboard)

# special codes - Apple

Escape: **{{ESC}}**

F1: **{{F1}}**

F2: **{{F2}}**

F3: **{{F3}}**

F4: **{{F4}}**

F5: **{{F5}}**

F6: **{{F6}}**

F7: **{{F7}}**

F8: **{{F8}}**

F9: **{{F9}}**

F10: **{{F10}}**

F11: **{{F11}}**

F12: **{{F12}}**

▲ : **{{EJECT}}**

F13: **{{F13}}**

F14: **{{F14}}**

F15: **{{F15}}**

F16: **{{F16}}**

F17: **{{F17}}**

F18: **{{F18}}**

F19: **{{F19}}**

fn: **{{FUNCTION}}**

home: **{{HOME}}**

page Up: **{{PAGE UP}}**

delete: **{{NAV DELETE}}**

end: **{{END}}**

page down: **{{PAGE DOWN}}**



delete: **{{DELETE}}**

tab: **{{TAB}}**

caps lock: **{{CAPS LOCK}}**

return: **{{RETURN}}**

left shift: **{{LEFT SHIFT}}**

right shift: **{{RIGHT SHIFT}}**

left control: **{{LEFT CONTROL}}**

left option: **{{LEFT OPTION}}**

left command: **{{LEFT COMMAND}}**

spacebar: **{{SPACEBAR}}** (optional)

right command: **{{RIGHT ACOMMAND}}**

right option: **{{RIGHT OPTION}}**

right control: **{{RIGHT CONTROL}}**

arrow up: **{{ARROW UP}}**

arrow left: **{{ARROW LEFT}}**

arrow down: **{{ARROW DOWN}}**

arrow right: **{{ARROW RIGHT}}**

clear: **{{NUM CLEAR}}**

= : **{{NUM EQUAL}}**

/ : **{{NUM SLASH}}**

\* : **{{NUM ASTERISK}}**

7 : **{{NUM 7}}**

8 : **{{NUM 8}}**

9 : **{{NUM 9}}**

- : **{{NUM MINUS}}**

4 : **{{NUM 4}}**

5 : **{{NUM 5}}**

6 : **{{NUM 6}}**

+ : **{{NUM PLUS}}**

1 : **{{NUM 1}}**

2 : **{{NUM 2}}**

3 : **{{NUM 3}}**

0 : **{{NUM 0}}**

• : **{{NUM FULL STOP}}**

enter: **{{NUM ENTER}}**

# special codes - PC

Escape: **{{ESC}}**

F1: **{{F1}}**

F2: **{{F2}}**

F3: **{{F3}}**

F4: **{{F4}}**

F5: **{{F5}}**

F6: **{{F6}}**

F7: **{{F7}}**

F8: **{{F8}}**

F9: **{{F9}}**

F10: **{{F10}}**

F11: **{{F11}}**

F12: **{{F12}}**

Insert: **{{INSERT}}**

Home: **{{HOME}}**

Page Up: **{{PAGE UP}}**

Delete: **{{NAV DELETE}}**

End: **{{END}}**

Page Down: **{{PAGE DOWN}}**

Print Screen: **{{PRINT SCREEN}}**

Scroll Lock: **{{SCROLL LOCK}}**

Pause/Break: **{{PAUSE BREAK}}**

Numbers Lock: **{{NUM LOCK}}**

Slash: **{{NUM SLASH}}**

Asterisk: **{{NUM ASTERISK}}**

Minus Sign/Dash: **{{NUM MINUS}}**

Seven: **{{NUM 7}}**

Eight: **{{NUM 8}}**

Nine: **{{NUM 9}}**

Plus Sign: **{{NUM PLUS}}**

Four: **{{NUM 4}}**

Five: **{{NUM 5}}**

Six: **{{NUM 6}}**

One: **{{NUM 1}}**

Two: **{{NUM 2}}**

Three: **{{NUM 3}}**

Zero: **{{NUM 0}}**

Full Stop: **{{NUM FULL STOP}}**

Enter: **{{NUM ENTER}}**



Backspace: **{{BACKSPACE}}**

Tab: **{{TAB}}**

Caps Lock: **{{CAPS LOCK}}**

Enter: **{{ENTER}}**

Left Shift: **{{LEFT SHIFT}}**

Right Shift: **{{RIGHT SHIFT}}**

Left Control: **{{LEFT CONTROL}}**

Left Windows: **{{LEFT WINDOWS}}**

Left Alt: **{{LEFT ALT}}**

Spacebar: **{{SPACEBAR}}** (optional)

Right Alt: **{{RIGHT ALT}}**

Right Windows: **{{RIGHT WINDOWS}}**

Menu: **{{MENU}}**

Right Control: **{{RIGHT CONTROL}}**

Arrow Up: **{{ARROW UP}}**

Arrow Left: **{{ARROW LEFT}}**

Arrow Down: **{{ARROW DOWN}}**

Arrow Right: **{{ARROW RIGHT}}**



## special codes - mobile/tablet



★

In this specific keyboard, keyboardFX automatically inserts any **{{SHIFT}}** codes in between your text when a lower/upper change occurs, so there is not need to do it manually.

Backspace: **{{BACKSPACE}}**

## special codes - Commodore64



Apart from special codes for each keyboard there are also two extra codes that apply to every keyboard that keyboardFX generates.

## PAUSE

The **{{PAUSE}}** code. This code pauses the animation of the keys for a brief moment. The duration of a single PAUSE is one keystroke. You can prolong the duration of a PAUSE for more than one keystroke by putting a number after the HOLD code. You can enter **{{PAUSE1}}**. . . up to **{{PAUSE30}}**.

For example if you enter the following text in keyboardFX text field:

This takes a long **{{PAUSE10}}** time!

The typing of the text will begin, then just after typing the word “long”, it will pause for a few moments and then continue typing the rest of the given text.

## HOLD

The **{{HOLD}}** code. This code prolongs the duration of the illumination of a key by one keystroke.

For example if you enter the following text in the keyboardFX text field:

Let's see a key combination!**{{LEFT CONTROL}}****{{HOLD3}}****{{RIGHT ALT}}****{{HOLD2}}****{{NAV DELETE}}****{{HOLD1}}**

The typing of the text will begin. The **Left Control** key is going to illuminate, then while it stays illuminated the **Right Alt** key is going to light up, and while both of these keys stay illuminated the **Nav Delete** key is also going to light up. When all three light up completely, then they all going to turn off simultaneously.

The duration of a single HOLD is one keystroke. You can prolong the illumination of a key for more than one keystroke by putting a number after the HOLD code. So you can enter **{{HOLD1}}**...up to **{{HOLD30}}**

You can use the **{{HOLD}}** command to show key combinations, even light up complete rows or sections of a keyboard.

NOTE: The HOLD command works only in the “Speed Slider” mode.

# effect controls

Once the keyboard has been generated, you will find a number of the following effect controls in the effect panel of the shape layer of keyboardFX.

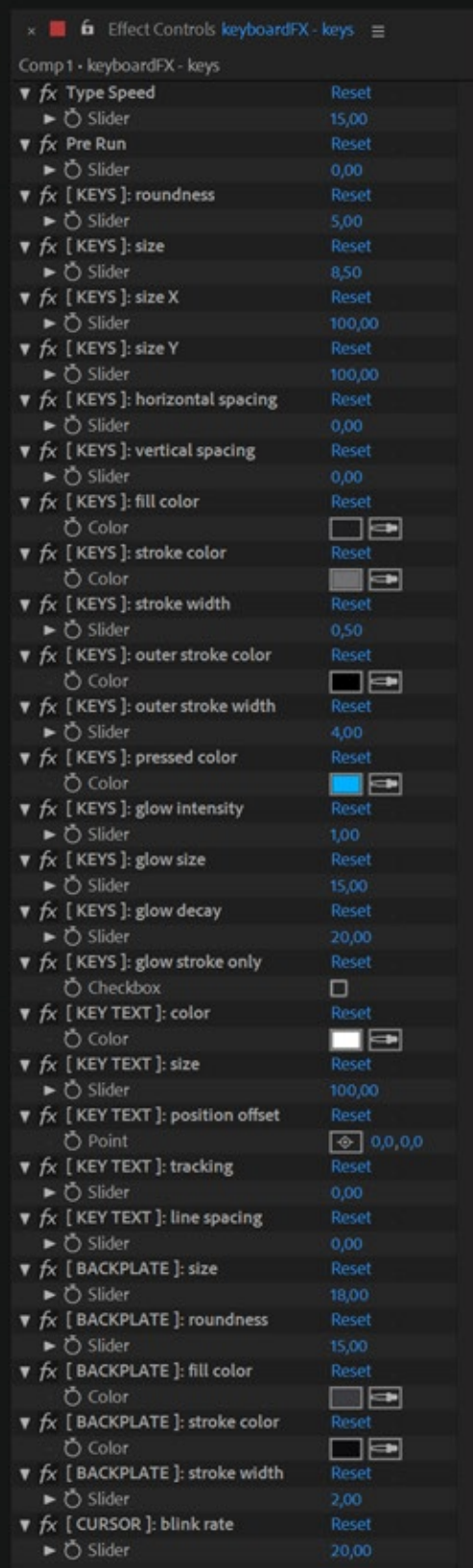
effect controls for adjusting  
the typing speed and the  
pre-run time

effect controls for adjusting  
the roundness size, spacing, color  
and glow properties of the keys

effect controls for adjusting  
the color, size, position, track-  
ing and line spacing of the text  
layers for each key

effect controls for adjusting  
the look of the backplate

effect control for adjusting  
the cursor blinking rate



## compatibility

**keyboardFX** is compatible and has been successfully tested on:

- After Effects CS6
- After Effects CC
- After Effects CC 2014
- After Effects CC 2015
- After Effects CC 2015.3
- After Effects CC 2017
- After Effects CC 2018
- After Effects CC 2019
- After Effects 2020
- After Effects 2021
- After Effects 2022
- After Effects 2023
- After Effects 2024

on both Windows and Mac OS platforms.

## trial limitations

You can test keyboardFX free for 7 days. In trial mode these limitations apply:

- 15% of the total keys of the keyboard will not be available

# version history

## 1.51 September 16, 2024

- **fixed:** an issue where in some AE installations **keyboardFX** would freeze on setting-up expressions
- **fixed:** an issue where **keyboardFX** would not set the Arial Font name properly for the generated text layers

## 1.5 September 2, 2024

- **updated:** the license framework
- **optimized:** significant overall speed improvements in generating any type of keyboard
- **fixed:** a few annoying bugs
- **updated:** some special codes and also added a few more
- **added:** a Virtual Keyboard to easily input special codes for each type of keyboard
- **added:** numbers [0-9] on the mobile/tablet keyboard
- **added:** lower/case letters on the mobile/tablet keyboard
- **optimized:** the mobile/tablet keyboard now automatically reads your text and inserts **{{SHIFT}}** codes on every lower/upper case change, updating the keyboard keys as well

## 1.2 November 28th, 2019

- **fixed:** a bug which prevented the complete generation of Commodore64 keyboards on AE CS6
- **fixed:** the random preset for Commodore64 was not random. It's now fixed.
- **fixed:** a few typing errors on some of the presets
- **fixed:** a bug where the custom input text field was locked on first run on AE CS6
- **fixed:** carriage returns no longer mess the timing of the animations and properly light up the "Enter" key
- **fixed:** the order of the layers became shuffled, if there were other existing layers in the timeline. It's now fixed.
- **fixed:** some layer properties stayed open in the timeline after the generation of the keyboard. It's now fixed and every property is closed (twirled up)
- **changed:** the glow and key layers are no longer locked
- **changed:** renamed the effect control "**Glow Decay**" to "**Glow Decay Speed**" for better clarity
- **changed:** smaller UI + a few cosmetic changes
- **optimized:** before generating any keyboard, keyboardFX checks the input text and informs the user about mistyped special codes
- **optimized:** when deleting keyboardFX layers, expression errors are now suppressed
- **optimized:** the **-initial-** typing speed and glow decay speed is automatically adjusted at a comfortable pace of approximately 8 characters per second
- **optimized:** redesigned progress bar that is more accurate, more informative, and works both in window and in dockable panel mode.  
Also added a enable/disable checkbox for it, in the settings tab (CS6 only)
- **optimized:** compatibility with macOS Catalina
- **optimized:** instead of typing multiple **{{PAUSE}}** codes to further prolong a pause you can now type **{{PAUSE1}}** through **{{PAUSE30}}**  
(the same applies with the HOLD code)
- **added:** the **{{HOLD}}** special code which allows the illumination of key combinations (like Ctrl+Alt+Del)
- **added:** a second mode of controlling the keystroke animations through markers (**Using Markers Mode**)

## 1.1 January 9th, 2019

- **added:** the DVORAK keyboard layout
- **added:** five keys lighting animation presets
- **optimized:** broadened compatibility. keyboardFX is now compatible with older versions of After Effects (CC + CS6)
- **changed:** keyboardFX no longer uses the "Arial" font as the default font for every text layer it generates.  
It will now use what ever font is selected in the After Effects Character Panel upon generation.

## 1.0 October 28th, 2018

- initial release

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This script is provided "as is," without warranty of any kind, expressed or implied. In no event shall the author be held liable for any damages arising in any way from the use of keyboardFX.