

MonkeyWipes User Guide

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MonkeyWipes is a procedural transition system for Adobe After Effects that quickly generates a vast array of unique text and graphic transitions for use in motion graphics.

Installation:

Windows: Copy "MonkeyWipes.jsxbin" and the "MonkeyWipes" folder into "After Effects Directory/Support Files/Scripts/ScriptUI Panels".

Mac: Copy "MonkeyWipes.jsxbin" and the "MonkeyWipes" folder into "After Effects Directory/Scripts/ScriptUI Panels".

Note: Do not put the "MonkeyWipes.jsxbin" script inside the "MonkeyWipes" folder. The script and the folder should be adjacent to each other, inside the "ScriptUI Panels" folder.

Getting Started:

To generate a default build, simply launch the script, create a comp, set your text specs in the AE Character window, set your work area to the amount of time you want the animation to last (technically it will last slightly longer based on the duration of the motion – more on this later) and click **Do It!**

Terminology:

Build: Everything that's created once Do It! is clicked.

Layer: The end product of a Build. These are the layers (which are actually comps themselves) that MonkeyWipes creates in your composition. There will be one or more layers created in each Build.

Split: A precomp that contains a piece of the original asset.

Source: The precomp where all the splits are reassembled.

Each of these terms are referenced in the MonkeyWipes layer naming system.

There are several native After Effects features used to create each build:

1. **Work Area:** Before running MonkeyWipes, set the work area. This is the first step in the process. It designates the amount of time it takes to trigger all the splits associated with a layer or text build.

Keep in mind that an animation will take longer to resolve than the work area. For example, if a work area is 30 frames, and the duration of each transform and/or wipe is 30, the animation will resolve at 60 frames, since the last split begins its animation at the end of the work area, or approximately 30 frames.

For Animate In & Out the resolve time for the animation is approximately:
 $\text{Animation} = 2x \text{ Work Area} + 2x \text{ Duration} + \text{Hold}.$

2. **Character** panel: This is where the font specs and color for your text are assigned. If you need to use multiple fonts or sizes, create your text in Photoshop or Illustrator and import it into After Effects.

3. **Paragraph** panel controls the alignment/justification of your text.

4. **Effects:** MonkeyWipes creates its transitions and transformations by applying a series of native effects to the splits. Because of this, the transformations are limited to 2D space. MonkeyWipes can be used in 3D space if you precomp your build (see *Precomp* Section in **Miscellaneous**).

MonkeyWipes User Interface (UI)

Source

This designates whether MonkeyWipes will animate your selected layers or your text from the MonkeyWipes Text Panel.

If Text is chosen, then the **Text Panel** becomes active. Text will animate anything in the Text Panel and is selected by default. If you're working with text other than Text Panel-generated text, then switch the Source to Layer, which uses selected layers from the timeline as the source.

There are a couple options on how to split up the text layers. **Paragraph** will group multiple lines of text into one layer and **Lines** treats each line as a separate layer.

Both will follow the specs in the **AE Character** and **Paragraph** panels. If a line is skipped, the position of the next block of text layers will be reset.

***MonkeyWipes** can work with any layer that's able to be animated (but will ignore anything that is locked or shy'd). This includes vectors, jpegs, photos, video or anything else that can be imported into AE.*

Locked or shy'd layers, lights, cameras, nulls, guide, adjustment and audio layers will be ignored in the build process.

***MonkeyWipes** will create a build with selected layers in the timeline, in the order of selection. If nothing is selected, then it will use all recognized files and order them from top down.*

*In most cases, importing files should be done using the **Retain Layer Size Mode**, since **MonkeyWipes** bases the split algorithm on layer size.*

Animate:

This designates in which direction the animation transitions – In, Out or In & Out.

Hold: *If In & Out is selected in the Animate dropdown, then the Hold number entry box is activated. Hold controls the number of frames between when the animation has resolved and the point at which it begins the transition off. Hold can be adjusted after the build using the effects control at the bottom of the effects stack on the master layer.*

The Splitter Section

This part of the UI controls how MonkeyWipes divides layers into a series of subsections. The Splitter uses the layer size as its reference, not the comp size. If the layer has extra space around it, consider precomping it and using *the Crop to the Region of Interest* feature in AE to remove the excess area.

If importing layers, use the Retain Layer Size option (instead of artboard or document size) to prevent excess space around each asset.

Shape

Shape controls the proportion of the Splits.

1. **Rectangle:** Divides the original asset or text into an even number of specified rectangles. The total number of splits will equal the product of X and Y settings
2. **Row** will create a designated number of horizontal subdivisions
3. **Column** will do the same vertically.
4. **Off** will disable this section. Once disabled, MonkeyWipes can still be used as a simple and powerful procedural animator.

Grid designates the number of splits created, with numeric entries for X and Y.

A **Randomize Size %** makes the size of the splits less consistent.

A couple of notes: Be careful with these settings, the number of precomps will build up fast. If you have multiple layers and many designated splits, your computer might choke. (e.g. ten layers subdivided using a 5/5 grid will result in 250 splits.)

Depending on the number of layers, it would be best to use a minimal number of grid subdivisions, or you can pre-render, if needed

Grouping

The way effects are assigned to the Splits is determined by Grouping. Grouping combines individual splits into multi-split groups. Each group shares the same effects – both wipe and transform.

Important: Each layer is assigned its own set of groups. If there are multiple layers in the build, each layer will have its own set of groups assigned to it.

Groupings control how much variety is in the animation.

The Transform and Wipe controls can be found in the effects panel of the Master layer. Each group has their own set of effects controls. For example, if a layer has 3 Groups, then 6 effects will be applied – 3 Transforms and 3 Wipes.

Note: The more groups that are used, the more variety in the animation. But this will also impact the complexity and speed of the preview and render. Keep these groups as low as possible to avoid slowdowns. It's good to find a balance between variety and performance.

Constant: All that layers in the build will have the same number of groups assigned (*though not necessarily the same transform/wipe selections*). Use this setting if you have only one layer in your build.

Random: Assigns a random number of groups within the min/max range to each layer individually. Multiple layers will be assigned different numbers of groups.

Min>Max / Min< Max: These are Random options with weighting applied. The first will result in mostly the Minimum number of groups, the latter will be weighted mainly to the Maximum number of groups.

Flow

This refers to the order the in which the splits are revealed. Flow Left, for example, reveals the left columns first.

Each layer can only have one flow to it. But if there are multiple layers in a build, you can choose Random, which assigns each one a random selection from the dropdown.

The Multi-Layer Section

This section only applies to cases where multiple MonkeyWipe Layers are created in a single build. It controls the offset and overlap between the layers in the build. If only one layer is built, then the Multi-Layer Section doesn't have any affect.

Sequence and **Auto- Offset** are active by default. This means that each MonkeyWipe layer will be triggered once the previous layer is almost finished animating.

If Auto is turned off, then the manual **Offset** control becomes active. This controls how much overlap (in frames) can be dialed in between layers. If Offset is left at zero (0), the next layer won't start animating until the previous one finishes. A negative value will create overlapping animations, and a positive value will create a pause between animations.

If Sequence is deactivated, then all the layers will animate on at once, starting at the beginning of the work area. This can also be adjusted by the manual Offset control, or you can manually slide the layers around in the timeline after the build.

Note: *MonkeyWipes* features two kind of Offsets. First is Offset between Splits. This is handled by setting the work area. Each Split is equally offset within the work area, triggered in the order assigned in the Flow Dropdown.

The Color Palette

This section is used select fill colors that will be added to the splits created during the build. There are five swatch icons available. You can load a color into each swatch individually by clicking on it, or you can load all five at once from one of our preset palettes by clicking the **P** button. Each swatch also has a checkbox to control whether the corresponding swatch is enabled.

Colorize: This control determines how the colors are assigned to the splits.

If **Layers** is selected, all the splits for a layer will be assigned the same color, and the layers will be assigned colors in a left-to-right round robin fashion, starting with the left-most enabled swatch. If **Group** is selected, each split group will be assigned a different color in a left-to-right round robin fashion, starting with the left-most enabled swatch. If **Random** is selected, each split group will be assigned a random color from the available, enabled swatches.

Resolve Tint: Resolve Tint is a feature that applies a single tint effect that fades in as the animation resolves. By clicking this checkbox, *MonkeyWipes* will place a global tint on the Master Layer, which will dissolve in as the animation resolves. By default, the tint is white, but the timing and the color can be adjusted using the Effects Controllers located at the bottom of the Effects Stack on the Master Layer.

The Speed and Duration Section

The **Speed** and **Duration** settings control the length of each split animation

1. **Constant:** All splits will animate for the same length of time. (e.g. If the **Duration** number entry box is 45, each split animates for 45 frames)
2. **Random:** Each split will animate within a randomly assigned range designated by the min and max **Duration** number entry boxes. (e.g. If the number entry boxes are 15 & 45, each shape animates anywhere from 15 to 45 frames)
3. **Max/Min:** Each split will animate in progressive order within the range designated by the min and max **Duration** number entry boxes. (e.g. If the number entry boxes are 15 & 45, the first split will animate for 45 frames and the last will animate for 15 frames. All splits in between animate in equal descending steps)
5. **Min/Max:** The opposite of above. Each split will animate in progressive order within the range designated by the min and max **Duration** number entry boxes. (e.g. If the number entry boxes are 15 & 45, the first split will animate for 15 frames and the last will animate for 45 frames. All splits in between animate in equal ascending steps).

To calculate the approximate total time of an animation, keep in mind that **Duration** is only part of the equation:

Animate In or Out: Animation = Work Area + Duration

Animate In and Out: Animation = 2x Work Area + 2x Duration + Hold

The Transform and Wipe Sections

The Transform and Wipe sections are enabled by checkboxes that reside above the Transform section. When the corresponding checkbox is off, that section of

the UI is disabled and the effects that implement the corresponding Transform or Wipe will not be applied during the build.

Dropdown Organization: The Wipe and Transform dropdowns are roughly organized in the same way: single effects or motions grouped together in blocks, followed by randomized combinations of that group.

For example, the linear wipes are followed by random combinations of different types of linear wipes.

At the bottom of the dropdown are generic random selections that choose from many of the wipes or motions above.

After a build, it is possible to go into the effects applied to each master layer and change many of the elements of the animation. Each Master layer has *Effect Controllers* applied that are parents of effects that appear in the precomps. They are organized by Groups, all the Transform Effects are grouped together, then the Wipe Effects. The last number in the Effect Label indicates the group they correspond to. This allows you to tweak most elements of an animation after the build.

Note: Visual References for many of the following features will be posted on the MonkeyWipes FAQ page on aescrpts.

Eases

There are plenty of Eases to choose from. A more varied look can be achieved by choosing one of the randomized options. Eases work differently than Transforms or Wipes in that they are applied to the Splits individually and not by Groups. That way, when Random is chosen, a more diverse range is achieved.

Intensity

Intensity assigns the strength (distance or amount) of each transform. For Position transforms, it is based on a percentage of the raster or comp size. Scale and rotation are hard numbers.

The Utility Section

The Utility section is a collection of miscellaneous functions and actions, only two of which directly affect a build.

If **Comp Markers** is checked, during the build a comp marker is created corresponding to the first marker on each layer (and an additional marker where the last animation will end). This is intended mainly for use with our **Beatnik** script, which is our marker-based Auto Re-time script. **Beatnik** can also be used to retime to a beat or if there are marker layers created with **Text Syncr**.

The **Parent to Null** checkbox causes each build to create a null to which the master layers are parented. This allows you to easily transform all the layers created in a build. Multiple builds in a comp will create multiple nulls.

The **Pop-ups** checkbox suppresses many of the helpful warnings and reminders that MonkeyWipes may generate during normal operation of the script. This is the only MonkeyWipes setting that is automatically saved on your computer and will survive closing and relaunching the script.

The **Clean** button is used to remove the MonkeyWipe ID (layer comment) from an original asset used in a build, so it can be reused in a new build. Just make sure the comp is active, click the button and MonkeyWipes will restore all the eligible layers.

The **Save** and **Load** buttons will save the current state of the UI, and let you restore it later, as needed. There isn't a specific place you need to store them – it's up completely up to you (but it should be somewhere you'll remember

because you'll need to navigate there when you perform the Load.

We have also supplied a separate utility script called **MonkeyWipes Copy Comp Markers**. This can be used to combine MonkeyWipes with other Monkey scripts (like MonkeyCam Pro or LayerMonkey) that use Layer Markers, but can't sync to Comp Markers. You can find it in the MonkeyWipes installation folder.

Presets

Presets are a selection of easy, pre-created set ups that allow for quick builds without requiring a lot of messing with the UI. Each one can be adjusted manually.

There are two **Surprise Me** presets that create very random set ups for quick brainstorm experimentation. These are **Surprise Me A** and **Surprise Me B**. They each do exactly the same thing, but we created two so that by moving back and forth between them, you can quickly generate a new random set up.

Miscellaneous Notes

Precomping

There are several instances where you might need to precomp a MonkeyWipes build. One reason would be to perform multiple passes on a single layer, (which can give you some really cool results). Another would be to use in 3D space.

Important: In order not to break the MonkeyWipes expressions, the entire comp will need to be dropped into a new comp **in the project window** – using the small comp icon at the bottom. Do not select a MW layer and precomp normally...it will break the expressions.

Selection Order

When working with layers, then the order they are selected dictates the order that they will be animated. If you want one layer to animate over the next, place the first layer at the bottom of the layer stack, then select the layers above.

If nothing is selected, the MonkeyWipes will animate all eligible layers, from the top down.

Please check the MonkeyWipes FAQ page at aescrpts.com/monkeywipes for more info and examples.

-Dan & Orrin