Version 4.1.2

BatchFrame

Move Anchor Point

Version 4.1.2

| Instantly and precisely move anchor points anywhere without moving the layer

Move Anchor Point 4 allows you to quickly and easily manipulate the anchor point of any layer with precision using a variety of presets or custom options.

Compatibility

Move Anchor Point 4 works with After Effects CC2014 and newer

Installing

Move Anchor Point 4 is an **extension**, not a script or a plugin. It must be installed using an installer. For Move Anchor Point 4, the recommended installer is the ZXP Installer from aescripts.com, which is available for free.

This installer will take care of everything for you. All you need to do is open the `.zxp` file in the installer and it will become available in all compatible versions of After Effects.

Using the installer is highly recommended, however, if you must install manually, there are instructions here.
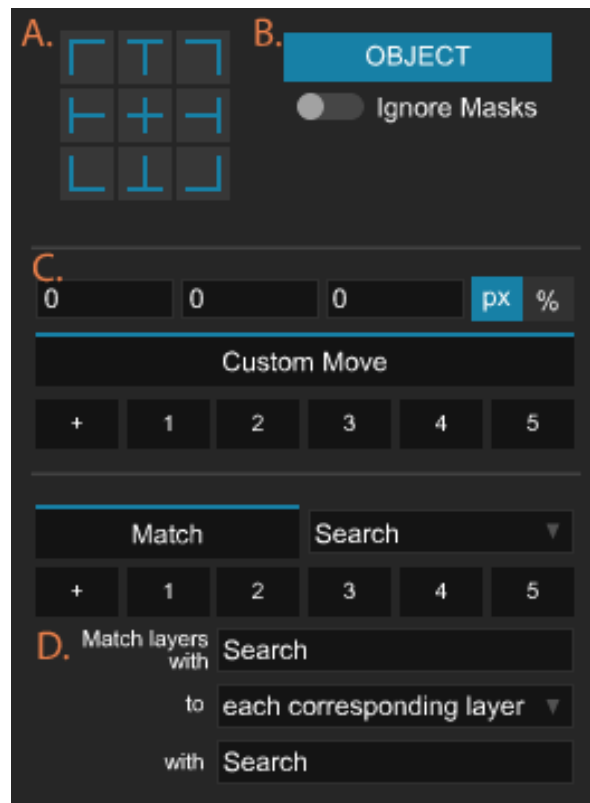
Accessing Move Anchor Point 4

To open the Move Anchor Point 4 panel, open a compatible version of After Effects, then go to `Window > Extensions > Move Anchor Point 4`

> Remember: It is an extension, not a script. It does not show up at the bottom of the `Window` menu. It will be in the `Extensions` sub-menu.

Interface Overview

When you open Move Anchor Point for the first time, you should see an interface that looks like the image below. This is the default interface, however it can be customized to suit your workflow. Customizations are described in the preferences section of this readme.

A. The Grid

This area contains a quick-preset grid that allows you to click on any of the buttons to snap the anchor point of the selected layer(s) to the corresponding point.

B. Options

The options area allows you to set a few key options that affects how anchor points are moved.

C. Custom Move

If the grid's presets don't give you the exact options you need, get even more precise using a custom move. This section allows you to specify anchor points using pixel values or percentages based on the layer or composition.

D. Match Move

The match move section gives you several options for matching the anchor point of layers to other layers in the composition.

Working with Move Anchor Point

There are three different move types and three different modes. The basic usage of the tool is the same for all modes. Select a layer or group of layers, then click any of the "move" buttons which could be any of the Grid buttons, Custom Move, or Match.

The changes caused will vary depending on the type of move you choose (described in detail below).
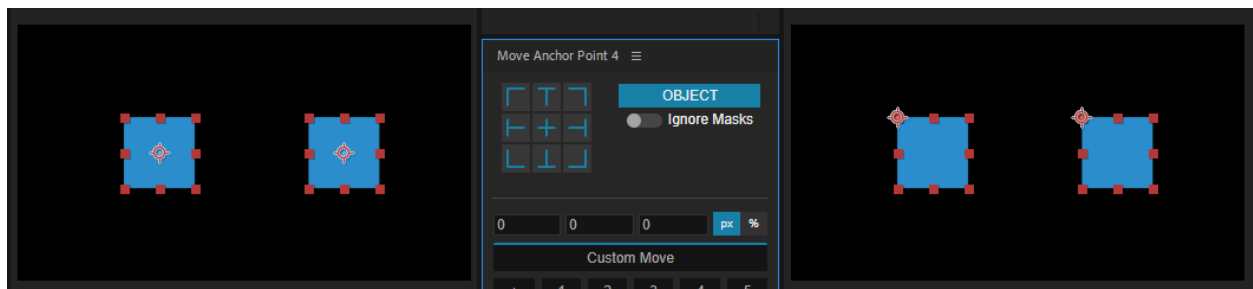
Modes

Move Anchor Point has 4 has three modes that affect the way anchor point positions are calculated.

> The selected mode will affect both Grid presets and Custom Moves, but not Match Moves.

The mode is shown as a large rectangular header at the top of the interface. The color of the rectangle will change depending on the mode that is selected, along with other highlighting throughout the interface. To change the mode, click on the rectangle and choose an option from the dropdown menu that appears.
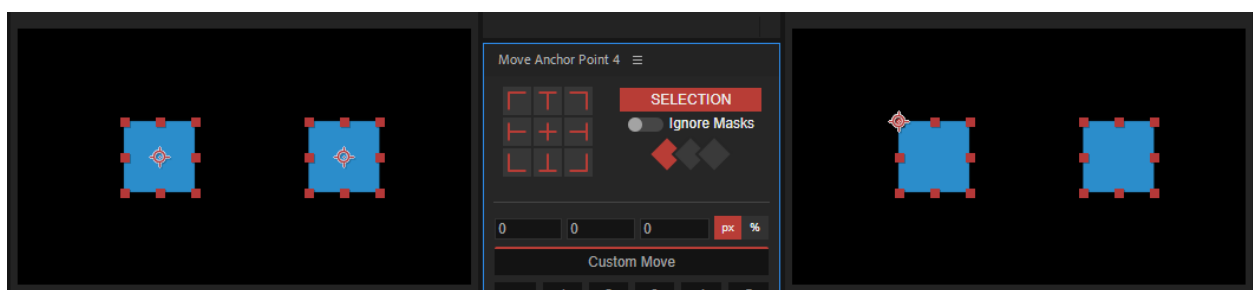
Object (Blue)

Object mode is the default mode. Anchor points will be moved relative to the individual layers. If you have a group of layers selected and choose the top-left grid preset, each layer will have its anchor point moved to its own top-left corner.

Selection (Red)

If selection mode is active, Move Anchor Point will treat the entire group as a single entity. If a group of layers is selected and you choose the top-left grid preset, all layers will have their anchor point moved to the same location, that corresponds with the top-left corner of a bounding box that encompasses the entire selection.
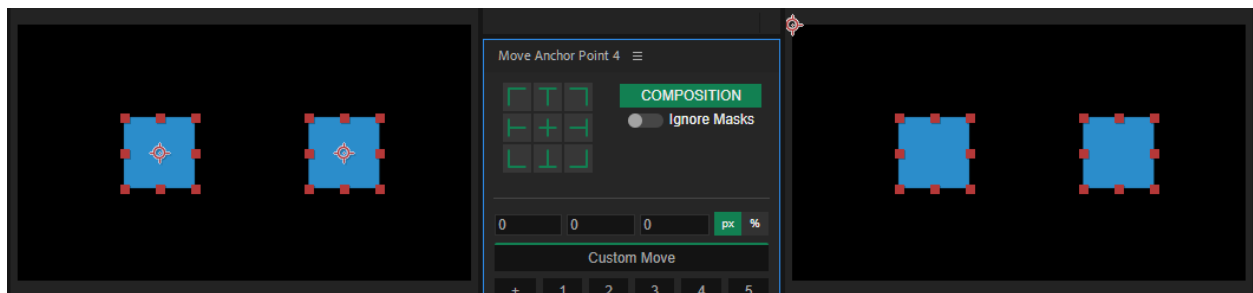
If "selection" mode is active and only a single layer is selected, its results are identical to "object" mode.

"Selection" mode also takes z-space into account. Since a group of layers can all have different Z positions, "selection" mode also enables you to sync the Z positions.

Composition (Green)

Composition mode will move anchor points based on the bounds of the composition the layers are in, disregarding any positioning of the individual layers. If a layer or group of layers is selected and you choose the top-left grid preset, the anchor points of all layers will move to the top-left corner of the composition.

Grid Presets

The grid is the main and quickest way to use Move Anchor Point. Click and of the preset buttons and all of the selected layers will have their anchor points moved to the corresponding position. The exact position where anchor points are moved will depend on the mode that is selected.
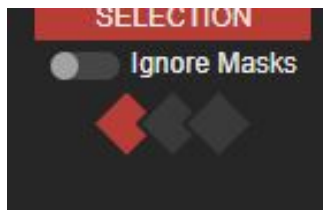
By default, the grid is a 3x3 grid, however this can be modified in the preferences.

Ignore Masks

Depending on the way that masks are applied to a layer, they may affect they layer's boundaries. If you would like to move the anchor point as if no masks were applied, check this option. Otherwise, the anchor point will move based on the resulting bounding box.

If a layer has no masks, this option has not effect.

Z-Space Presets

The Z-Space presets are only available when the mode is set to 'Selection'. They appear below the 'Ignore Masks' option in the 'Options' section. Unlike the grid, clicking on one of the z-presets will not immediately move the layer's anchor point. Click the z-space preset you want, then click a grid-preset option to move the anchor points.

> These presets will only have an effect if multiple layers are selected that have different Z position values. The leftmost preset is the furthest back in z-space and the rightmost preset is the furthest forward. The number of Z-Space presets can be set in the preferences.

As an example: Say you have two layers selected, one with a z position of 300 and the other with a z position of 500. If you are in 'Selection' mode and select the center 'Z-Space' option, the final anchor point of the layers will be at 400 in z-space.

Custom Move

The custom move section is used when you need precise control of the anchor points that are not available with the grid-presets. There are three input boxes corresponding to the X, Y and Z positions respectively. Just to the right of those is a toggle switch allowing you to switch between a percentage (%) or a precise pixel value (px).

To use it, enter a value for each axis and click the "Custom Move" button.

Custom Move Options

> Values that are set in the custom move options are always relative to the top-left corner of the layer.

Pixel Values (px)

If `px` is selected, values you put into the axis input-boxes will be the number of pixels away from the top-left corner of the layer. (or selection or composition, depending on the selected mode)

Percent Values (%)

If `%` is selected the values your set are percentages based on the width, height and depth of the layer, the selection or the composition depending on the mode that is selected. (If you are in object mode and you set a Z percentage, it will be disregarded as layers by themselves do not have any depth. This option is only used in 'Selection' mode)

A value of `0` for all axes would put the anchor point in the top-left corner (top-left-front if working with z-space). `100` for all would put it in the bottom-right corner (bottom-right-back if working with z-space).

> Custom Move values can be set larger than the layer or over 100%. They can also be set to negative values.

Presets

Custom moves can be saved in to presets. Creating presets is described below.

Match

Match moves allow you to match the anchor point of a selection of layers to the anchor point of another layer.

There are two types of 'Match' moves, 'Basic' and 'Search'

Basic

A basic match allows you to manually select a group of layers and move all of their anchor points to match the position of the last layer in the selection.

> The last layer in the selection refers to the order in which the layers were added to the selection, not the layer order.

To select a group of layers, simply hold down the CTRL (Windows) or CMD (OSX) key while selecting layers in the timeline. This will allow you to select multiple layers. The 'key' layer will be whichever layer is selected last. Once you have made your selection and click the 'Match' button, all of the selected layer's will have their anchor point moved to match the anchor point of the 'key' layer.

Search

The search match feature allows you to match anchor points based on layer naming conventions.

Searching works by matching corresponding layer names. A layer corresponds with another layer if the name, minus the search term is the same as another layer.

Let's say we have the following layers:

```
1. Left Hand
2. Right Hand
3. Left Wrist
4. Right Wrist
```

Lets say we wanted to match the anchor points of each hand to their corresponding wrist.

For the `Match Layers with` input, we would type `Hand`. For `to`, we'd select `each corresponding layer`. For `with` we'd type `Wrist`. These options are meant to read as a sentence: `Match layers with "Hand" to each corresponding layer with "Wrist"`

Because our layers are named in a consistent way, when this search runs, it will be able to match against "Left" and "Right" to find the corresponding layers. The left hand's anchor point will move to the left wrist's and the right hand's will move to the right wrist's anchor point.

This was a simple example, but if you have *many* layers with consistent naming conventions, "Search Matching" would be able to move them all with just a single click.

Options

Match Layers With

This search box determines the search for the layers that will have their anchor points moved. The search string can be contained anywhere in the layer name. Searches are not case sensitive, meaning that if you search for layers containing 'planet' it will also match 'PLANET' or 'Planet' or any other capitalization combination.

This input can also use a special matcher `##`. This allows you to match any number. For example, if your layers were:

```
 1. Planet 1
 2. Planet 2
 3. Planet 3
 4. Planet 4
 5. Planet 5
 6. Planet 6
 7. Planet 7
 8. Planet 8
 9. Planet 9
10. Planet 10
11. Planet
```

Using the search `Planet ##` would match all layers 1-10. Layer 11 would not be matched because it doesn't have a number in its name.

To

The 'to' dropdown can be set to either `each corresponding layer` or `the selected layer`.

If `each corresponding layer`, the 'with' search box will be shown

If `the selected layer` is chosen, all the layers that are included in the search to a layer that you have selected in the timeline. If multiple layers are selected, only the first layer selected will be used.

With

This option is only available if the 'to' option is set to 'each corresponding layer'

The 'with' search box allows you to set a second search term and then matches corresponding layers from the first search to the second. The numeric matcher (`##`), available in the "Match Layers With" section, is *not* available in this search box since we are trying to target a single layer.

Creating Presets

'Custom Move' and 'Match' both allow you to create your own presets that can be saved and then reused with one click. You can have a total of five presets for each section.

To create a preset, first enter the values you would like to use. Once everything is set, simply click on the '+' button and then select the number button to which you would like to save that preset. To preview the values contained in a preset, simply hover your mouse over it and the values will change to the preset ones.

To use a preset, just click the preset button where you saved the desired preset.

Preferences

To open the Move Anchor Point preferences, either right click anywhere in the interface or click on the panel menu and then select 'Preferences' from the options list. This will open the preferences in a separate window.

The preferences window has two sections: 'Interface Visibility' and 'Grid Properties'

Interface Visibility

These four toggle-switches allow you to show or hide the different sections of the Move Anchor Point interface. By default, all sections are visible.

Grid Properties

These four sliders allow you to control the appearance of the grid.

Grid Points X and Grid Points Y will increase the number of preset positions on the grid. The default is 3 and 3.

Point Z allows you to set the number of points available along the Z axis. This option only apples when you are in 'Selection' mode. The default is 3.

Grid Button Size allows you to scale the grid to fit your needs. The default is 26.

Menus

Some options and actions can be controlled and triggered from the menus. To access the menus, right click anywhere in the Move Anchor Point interface or use the panel menu button at the top of the panel.

Questions or Comments?

If you have any questions or comments or would like to report a bug, feel free to send us an email at contact@batchframe.com or use the contact form.