

Adobe® After Effects® CS6

DigitalClassroom™

A Complete Training Package!

- Full-color, step-by-step instructional book
- Video training from Adobe Certified Experts



Jerron Smith and the AGI Creative Team

Adobe®

After Effects® CS6

Digital Classroom

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After Effects® CS6
**Digital
Classroom**

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John Wiley & Sons, Inc.



Adobe® After Effects® CS6 Digital Classroom

Published by
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
10475 Crosspoint Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46256

Copyright © 2012 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana
Published simultaneously in Canada
ISBN: 978-1-118-14279-0
Manufactured in the United States of America
10987654321

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2012936853

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The **AGI Creative Team** is composed of Adobe Certified Experts from American Graphics Institute (AGI). The AGI Creative Team has authored more than 25 Digital Classroom books, and previously created many of Adobe's official training guides. They work with many of the world's most prominent companies, helping them use creative software to communicate more effectively and creatively. They work with design, creative, and marketing teams around the world, delivering private customized training programs, and teach regularly scheduled classes at AGI's locations. The Digital Classroom authors are available for professional development sessions at companies, schools and universities. More information at agitraining.com.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to our many friends at Adobe Systems, Inc. This book would not be possible without their valued input. Thanks also to the many clients of AGI who trust us to provide After Effects training. Many of the tips and suggestions found in this book come from teaching these classes. A special thanks to the instructional team at AGI for their input, assistance, and editorial guidance in the review process, truly making this book a team effort.

Thanks to my wife Monique and daughters Kerowyn and Lauryn for their support during the months of writing this book

Thanks to the following for permission to use their content in this book:

Tony Billz, producer, Creating FreeForm Masks.

Ian Haigh, creator, Ease and Wizz Script

Natalee Shale, editor, Creating Shape Masks.

Zeenal Thakare, editor, Creating Track Mattes.

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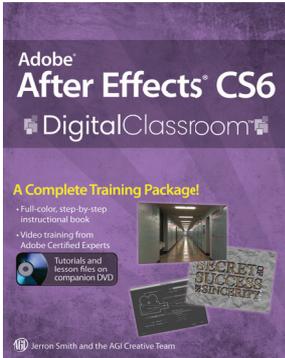
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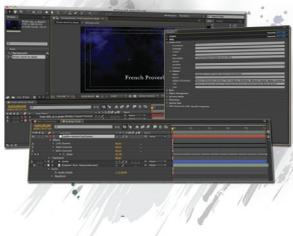
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Starting up

About Digital Classroom

Adobe® After Effects® CS6 lets you create artwork for a variety of uses. The animation and compositing tools of After Effects are second to none; allowing you to manipulate text, images, audio and video. After Effects provides you with the tools to express your creative ideas for video, film and broadband production. After Effects CS6 is also tightly integrated with other Adobe products such as Photoshop®, Illustrator®, and Premiere Pro®.

Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom is like having your own personal instructor guiding you through each lesson while you work at your own speed. This book includes 12 self-paced lessons that let you discover essential skills and explore the new features and capabilities of After Effects CS6 on either a Windows or Mac OS computer. Each lesson includes step-by-step instructions, lesson files, and video tutorials, all of which are available on the included DVD. This book has been developed by the same team of Adobe Certified Experts and After Effects professionals who have created many official training titles for Adobe Systems.

Prerequisites

Before you start the lessons in *Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom*, you should have a working knowledge of your computer and its operating system. You should know how to use the directory system of your computer so that you can navigate through folders. You need to understand how to locate, save, and open files. You should also know how to use your mouse to access menus and commands.

Before starting the lessons files in *Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom*, make sure that you have installed Adobe After Effects CS6. The software is sold separately, and not included with this book. You may use the 30-day trial version of Adobe After Effects CS6 available at the adobe.com website, subject to the terms of its license agreement.

System requirements

Before starting the lessons in *Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom*, make sure that your computer is equipped for running Adobe After Effects CS6, which you must purchase separately. The minimum system requirements for your computer to effectively use the software are listed below and you can find the most current system requirements at www.adobe.com/products/aftereffects/tech-specs.html.

Windows

- Intel® Core™ Duo or AMD Phenom® II processor; 64-bit support required
- Microsoft® Windows® 7 with Service Pack 1 (64 bit)
- 4GB of RAM (8GB recommended)
- 3GB of available hard-disk space; additional free space required during installation (cannot install on removable flash-based storage devices)
- Additional disk space for disk cache (10GB recommended)
- 1280×900 display with OpenGL 2.0–capable system
- DVD-ROM drive
- QuickTime 7.6.6 software required for QuickTime features
- Broadband Internet connection required for software activation and access to online services

Mac OS

- Multicore Intel processor with 64-bit support
- Mac OS X v10.6.8 or v10.7
- 4GB of RAM (8GB recommended)
- 4GB of available hard-disk space for installation; additional free space required during installation (cannot install on a volume that uses a case-sensitive file system or on removable flash-based storage devices)
- Additional disk space for disk cache (10GB recommended)
- 1280×900 display with OpenGL 2.0–capable system
- DVD-ROM drive
- QuickTime 7.6.6 software required for QuickTime features
- Broadband Internet connection required for software activation and access to online services

Starting Adobe After Effects CS6

As with most software, Adobe After Effects CS6 is launched by locating the application in your Programs folder (Windows) or Applications folder (Mac OS). If necessary, follow these steps to start the Adobe After Effects CS6 application:

Windows

- 1 Choose Start > All Programs > Adobe After Effects CS6. If you have the Creative Suite installed, you may have to select Adobe After Effects from within the Creative Suite folder.
- 2 Close the Welcome and Tip of the Day Screen when it appears. You are now ready to use Adobe After Effects CS6.

Mac OS

- 1 Open the Applications folder, and then open the Adobe After Effects CS6 folder.
- 2 Double-click on the Adobe After Effects CS6 application icon.
- 3 Close the Welcome and Tip of the Day Screen when it appears. You are now ready to use Adobe After Effects CS6.



Menus and commands are identified throughout the book by using the greater-than symbol (>). For example, the command to save a project would be identified as File > Save.

Fonts used in this book

Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom includes lessons that refer to fonts that were installed with your copy of Adobe After Effects CS6. If you did not install the fonts, or have removed them from your computer, you may substitute different fonts for the exercises or re-install the software to access the fonts.



If you receive a Missing layer dependencies warning dialog when you open a file, it is usually due to not having a necessary font installed on your system. If this occurs, press OK and After Effects will substitute a default system font. You can then change the default font to one similar to the one used in the lesson.

Resetting Adobe After Effects CS6 preferences

When you start Adobe After Effects, it remembers certain settings along with the configuration of the workspace from the last time you used the application. It is important that you start each lesson using the default settings so that you do not see unexpected results when working with the lessons in this book. Use the following steps to reset your Adobe After Effects CS6 preferences.

Steps to reset Adobe After Effects CS6 preferences

- 1 Quit After Effects.
- 2 Locate and rename the Adobe After Effects 11.0 MC Prefs file, as follows.

In Windows: Rename the Adobe After Effects 11.0 MC Prefs (for example to Adobe Effects 11.0 MC Prefs-old) in the Users/(user)/AppData/Roaming/Adobe/After Effects/11.0



In Windows 7, it is necessary to set hidden files to display in the folder and search options dialog box in order to see the AppData folder.

In Mac OS: Rename the Adobe After Effects 11.0 MC Prefs file in the Users/(user)/Library/Preferences/Adobe/After Effects/11.0 folder.

- 3 Start After Effects. It creates a new preferences file.



You can also reset preferences using a keyboard shortcut. When starting the application, press and hold Control+Alt+Shift (Windows) or Command+Shift+Option (Mac OS). When the dialog box appears asking if you are sure you want to delete the preferences file press OK. Note that you have a very short window for using this keyboard command, so do it immediately after starting the application.

Loading lesson files

The *Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom* DVD includes files that accompany the exercises for each of the lessons. You may copy the entire lessons folder from the supplied DVD to your hard-drive, or copy only the lesson folders for the individual lessons you wish to complete.

For each lesson in the book, the files are referenced by the file name of each file. The exact location of each file on your computer is not used, as you may have placed the files in a unique location on your hard drive. We suggest placing the lesson files in the Documents folder (Windows) or at the top level of your hard-drive (Mac OS).

Copying the lesson files to your hard drive:

- 1 Insert the *Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom* DVD supplied with this book.
- 2 On your computer desktop, navigate to the DVD and locate the folder named aelessons.
- 3 You can install all the files, or just specific lesson files. Do one of the following:
Install all lesson files by dragging the aelessons folder to your hard drive.
Install only some of the files by creating a new folder on your hard drive named aelessons. Open the aelessons folder on the supplied DVD, select the lesson you wish to complete, and drag the folder(s) to the aelessons folder you created on your hard drive.

Unlocking Mac OS files

Mac users may need to unlock the files after they are copied from the accompanying disc. This applies only to Mac OS computers and is because the Mac OS may view files that are copied from a DVD or CD as being locked for writing.

If you are a Mac OS user, and have difficulty saving over the existing files in this book, you can use these instructions so that you can update the lesson files as you work on them and also add new files to the lessons folder

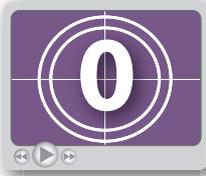
Note that you only need to follow these instructions if you are unable to save over the existing lesson files, or if you are unable to save files into the lesson folder.

- 1 After copying the files to your computer, click once to select the aelessons folder, then choose File > Get Info from within the Finder (not After Effects).
- 2 In the aelessons info window, click the triangle to the left of Sharing and Permissions to reveal the details of this section.
- 3 In the Sharing and Permissions section, click the Lock icon (🔒), if necessary, in the lower-right corner so that you can make changes to the permissions.
- 4 Click to select a specific user or select everyone, then change the Privileges section to Read & Write.
- 5 Click the lock icon to prevent further changes, and then close the window.

Working with the video tutorials

Your *Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom* DVD comes with video tutorials developed by the authors to help you understand the concepts explored in each lesson. Each tutorial is approximately five minutes long and demonstrates and explains the concepts and features covered in the lesson.

The videos are designed to supplement your understanding of the material in the chapter. We have selected exercises and examples that we feel will be most useful to you. You may want to view the entire video for each lesson before you begin that lesson. Additionally, at certain points in a lesson, you will encounter the DVD icon. The icon, with appropriate lesson number, indicates that an overview of the exercise being described can be found in the accompanying video.



DVD video icon.

Setting up for viewing the video tutorials

The DVD included with this book includes video tutorials for each lesson. Although you can view the lessons on your computer directly from the DVD, we recommend copying the folder labeled videos from the *Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom* DVD to your hard drive.

Copying the video tutorials to your hard drive:

- 1 Insert the *Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom* DVD supplied with this book.
- 2 On your computer desktop, navigate to the DVD and locate the folder named videos.
- 3 Drag the videos folder to a location onto your hard drive.

Viewing the video tutorials with the Adobe Flash Player

The videos on the *Adobe After Effects CS6 Digital Classroom DVD* are saved in the Flash projector format. A Flash projector file wraps the Digital Classroom video player and the Adobe Flash Player in an executable file (.exe for Windows or .app for Mac OS). Note that the extension (on both platforms) may not always be visible. Projector files allow the Flash content to be deployed on your system without the need for a browser or prior stand-alone player installation.



The accompanying video files on the DVD use the Adobe Flash Video format to make universal viewing possible for users on both Windows and Mac OS computers.

Playing the video tutorials:

- 1 On your computer, navigate to the videos folder you copied to your hard drive from the DVD. Playing the videos directly from the DVD may result in poor quality playback.
- 2 Open the videos folder and double-click the Flash file named PLAY_AECS6videos to view the video tutorials.
- 3 After the Flash player launches, press the Play button to view the videos.

The Flash Player has a simple user interface that allows you to control the viewing experience, including stopping, pausing, playing, and restarting the video. You can also rewind or fast-forward, and adjust the playback volume.



A. Go to beginning. B. Play/Pause. C. Fast-forward/rewind. D. Stop. E. Volume Off/On. F. Volume control.



Playback volume is also affected by the settings in your operating system. Be certain to adjust the sound volume for your computer, in addition to the sound controls in the Player window.

Additional resources

The Digital Classroom series goes beyond the training books. You can continue your learning online, with training videos, at seminars and conferences, and in-person training events.

Training from the Authors

The authors are available for professional development training workshops for schools and companies. They also teach classes at American Graphics Institute including training classes and online workshops. Visit agitraining.com for more information about Digital Classroom author-led training classes or workshops.

Book series

Expand your knowledge of creative software applications with the Digital Classroom training series. Books are available for most creative software applications as well as web design and development tools and technologies. Learn more at DigitalClassroom.com.

Seminars and conferences

The authors of the Digital Classroom seminar series frequently conduct in-person seminars and speak at conferences, including the annual CRE8 Conference. Learn more at agitraining.com and CRE8summit.com.

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