

Compositing

Creating complex Timelines, adding sound and video

In this section

In this section, you will learn how to:

- make nested *Timelines*
- add video files
- add and tweak sound files

You have the skills to draw graphics, create symbols and make simple animations. Now bring those skills together to build effects-upon-effects for sophisticated results.

Nested Timelines

Probably the biggest challenge to working with Flash is the existence of *Timelines-within-Timelines*.

Any symbol can contain any other symbol. A button can contain *Movie clips* in each of its first three frames. Those *Movie clips* can in turn contain motion tweens, which can contain shape tweens. The combinations are endless.

Movie clips within buttons

A button has three visible frames, which show depending on what you are doing with the mouse. You can use a *Movie clip* inside each of those frames to create animated buttons:

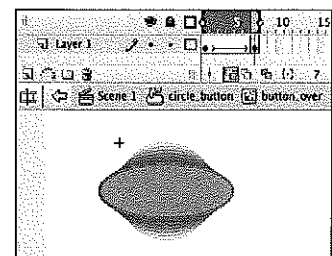
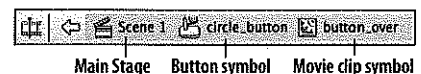
- 1 Create a simple circle and convert the circle to a *Button* symbol.
- 2 Double-click the symbol to edit the button. Press F6 three times to add a keyframe to each button state.
- 3 Select the circle inside the *Over* state and convert it to a *Movie clip* symbol (see right).
- 4 Double-click the symbol to edit the *Movie clip*. Keep an eye on where you are! Check the *Scene Menu* and you should see that you are **inside** the *Movie clip* symbol which is **inside** the *Button* symbol which is **on** the main *Stage* (see right).
- 5 Inside that *Movie clip* symbol, create a simple shape tween across approximately 7 frames (see right).
- 6 Navigate back to the main *Timeline* by clicking *Scene 1* and test the movie. The *Movie clip* plays inside the button when the mouse is held over the button. The *Movie clip* animation would need some *ActionScript* to stop it looping; you will learn how to do that in the next chapter.

tip Buttons within buttons?

This is the one combination that does **not** work. Never put a button symbol inside any frame of another button symbol!



Convert the contents of this frame into a *Movie clip*



Buttons within Movie clips

Buttons are used extensively inside *Movie clips*. Any *Timeline* can contain any number of buttons. It is a good idea to keep all buttons on their own layer, just to keep things organised.

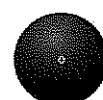
Movie clips within Movie clips

'Nested' *Movie clips* can seem complex, but they are very useful. To make a simple example now, in a new Flash file:

- 1 Choose *Insert > New Symbol*. Make a *Movie clip* symbol and call it 'ball_squash'. A symbol made in this way will **not** automatically be placed on the *Stage*.
- 2 Inside this *Movie clip Timeline*, make a small red ball (see right).

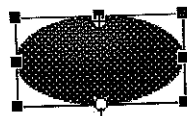
tip Naming symbols

Name symbols with care. With *Movie clips* inside each other, it can become confusing to know what animation is what. Carefully descriptive names help a lot.

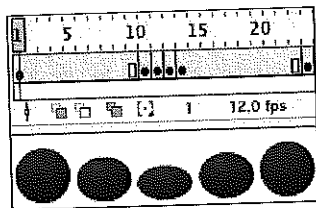


3 Add keyframes to frames 11, 12, 13, 14 and 24 (see right).

4 Use the *Free Transform* tool to adjust the vertical scale of the ball in frames 11, 12 and 13. It should be a little bit squashed in 11 and 13, and very squashed in 12 (see right). So that the button looks as if it's squashing downwards, move the transformation point down to the bottom edge (see right).



Transformation point



5 Go back to the main *Timeline* (click *Scene 1*) and make another new *Movie clip* symbol. Call this one 'ball_fall'.

6 Inside frame 1 of the 'ball_fall' *Timeline*, drop the 'ball_squash' *Movie clip*. Create keyframes at frames 12 and 24.

7 In the 'ball_fall' *Timeline* at keyframe 12, move the 'ball_squash' *Movie clip* down about 120 pixels—far enough that it looks as if it's falling.

8 Add motion tweens to frames 1 and 12. In frame 1, push the *Ease* slider all the way down to -100 (see right). Do the opposite in frame 12.

9 Go back to the main *Stage*. Find the 'ball_fall' *Movie clip* and drag and drop it onto the *Stage*, near the top.

10 Test the movie. The 'ball_squash' *Movie clip* plays inside the 'ball_fall' *Movie clip*—both are synchronised to frames 12 and 24 so that when the ball falls to an imaginary floor, it squashes (see right). You must preview this movie to see the nested timelines animating properly.

11 Finally, on the main *Stage*, motion tween the 'ball_fall' *Movie clip* across the *Stage* for about 50 frames. Test the movie. It should now look as if the ball is bouncing across the movie.

