

LayerMonkey

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[www.typemonkey.net](http://www.typemonkey.net)

## Welcome to LayerMonkey!

LayerMonkey® is a versatile script for After Effects that arranges and animates your comp's layers in time and space. It also creates a camera and generates a master control layer that makes timing and global adjustments a piece of cake.

LayerMonkey works with photos, video, EPS files and anything else that can be imported into After Effects. Please note that, by design, locked layers, lights, cameras, nulls, guide, adjustment and audio layers will be ignored in the building process. EPS files will also be continuously rasterized

## LAYOUT:

This section is where you set the size, position and rotation attributes.

**Algorithm:** This is where the layout algorithm is selected. There are three choices: TypeMonkey, Horizontal and Vertical.

**TypeMonkey:** The same basic layout algorithm that was used in the original TypeMonkey Script. The overall design is similar to a staircase.

**Horizontal:** Lines up all the layers with a consistent horizontal baseline, disabling the Rotation Probability controls, but keeping the Scale Variable active.

**Vertical:** Lines up all the layers with a consistent left margin, disabling the Rotation Probability controls, but keeping the Scale Variable active.

**Justify:** This will resize all the layers to match the first layer in the build. It

won't change the proportions but will match the appropriate dimension to create consistent margins.

For a Justified Horizontal build, each layer will be scaled to fit the Y dimension. Justified Vertical will fit the X dimension.

Selecting Justify disables the Scale Variable.

**Scale Variable:** Controls the difference in scale between the biggest and smallest randomly sized layer in the build, which means the higher the number, the bigger the difference.

**Spacing:** The horizontal and vertical space between the layers.

**Rotation Probability %:** Chance of a 90 degree rotation occurring on the next layer. Note that once a rotation has occurred, there will be a minimum of 4 layers before another rotation. Otherwise there might be a lot of quick back and forth movements.

## ANIMATION

**Transition In:** The area that controls how the layers animate in. By default it is random, but you can isolate a specific type of motion by selecting it in the dropdown list. There are eighteen to choose from.

**Speed:** Indicates how fast the transition is. Keep in mind that since the camera is synched to the transition, this also relates to the camera moves. Roughly speaking, the selections break down like this (in FPS): Fast: 10, Med: 15, Slow: 20, Sloth: 30.

**Enable Motion Blur:** This will turn on the motion blur checkbox for all layers in the build.

## LAYER

*There are two types of layers - those with a time factor and those without.*

*Time Factor Layers: Anything that can have Time Remapping applied, like video and pre-comps. Timing controls have been added to give the user options for dealing with these.*

*Non-Time Factor Layers: Those without include stills, text, solids and shapes. They're straightforward and need no special attention. Any vector file will have Continuously Rasterized activated during the building process.*

**Order:** How the layers are sequenced in the animation. There are three options: Top (the top layer will appear first), Bottom, and Random.

**Timing Controls:** This section applies for any layer that has a time element to it - e.g. footage or pre-comp. (The controls are mainly located in the Layer section, but there is one in the Marker/Distribution section). When LayerMonkey comes across one of these layers it automatically applies a Time Remap to it.

**In Point:** This is where you select where playback starts. Note: both options in this section only refer to the In Point of the playback, not the actual trigger point of the layer being revealed- which always will be it's marker on the Master Control layer.

**Markers:** Setting the In Point to Markers will cause the footage to start playing when its marker is reached in the timeline.

**00:00:00:** This selection means that no matter when the layer appears, the playback starts at time zero. The video will be in progress when it is revealed.

**Out Point:** Gives you control of what happens at the end of a clip. The default is Freeze, but Run Out, Loop or Ping Pong options are also

available.

**Color Palette:** This is similar to the color palette in TypeMonkey, but it is defaulted to off. When activated, Layer Monkey will apply a fill effect with the selected colors to the user's layers. The fill won't be applied to videos or pre-comps. (If you want a fill applied to those, you can do that manually after the build).

**Kuler:** If you click the K button, LayerMonkey will allow you to load a Kuler (.ase) file into the Color Palette. You can download Kuler files from Kuler.com. We have included a few Kuler files in the LayerMonkey download folder for your convenience.

**Shy and Lock:** By un-checking the box, LayerMonkey won't lock or hide the layers. Note: this is not a live, update-able option, but will be used for the build.

## MARKERS

**Time Span:** This controls the length over which LayerMonkey will evenly distribute the markers.

**Work Area:** By adjusting the work area sliders (B/N on the keyboard), the animation will be distributed over a defined length within the comp. This is particularly convenient for leaving pad at the beginning and/or end.

**Comp Duration:** Markers will be distributed over the length of the comp.

**Distribution:** Controls how the markers will be arranged within the Time Span selected above.

**Evenly Distributed:** Markers will default to evenly distributed across the time span.

**Marker Synch:** This will synch up the markers to a guide layer that has markers already applied. You would use this option if you have saved a marker layer from a previous Layer Monkey build during the Undo It process. Or, you may have an audio layer that has a marker on every beat. (Two recommended scripts to generate the audio markers are Lloyd Alvarez's Audio-to-Markers and MamoWorld's Beat Assistant). When this option is selected, Layer Monkey creates a new marker layer, but places the markers to match the timing of the markers on the guide layer you have selected.

**Play Full Clips:** This will put a marker at the beginning and end of every clip, so once the clip starts playing, it won't transition to the next clip until the clip finishes. In this setting, the In Point option becomes inactive, but Out Point will still be in effect.

*Note that if your comp contains only video or pre-comps, (meaning no stills mixed in) LayerMonkey will build out to whatever the total running length of all the clips are, which may extend beyond the length of the comp. After the build, you may need to lengthen the comp and extend the layers.*

*If stills are mixed in with the video, you must expand the Comp to fit all the sequenced videos, as well as leave room for the stills. If this isn't done, an error message will appear and LayerMonkey won't perform the build.*

*LayerMonkey will evenly distribute the stills over the difference between the total running time of the clips and the length of the comp. So, for example, if you have two 10-second video clips and three stills at 3 seconds each, you will need a comp about 29 sec long...give or take a bit of time to account for the transitions.*

*Notes about Time-Factored Layers and Markers: Adjusting markers will only adjust the in and out points- it won't change their play length. If the marker cuts into a video, then the video will transition to the next shot at that point and it won't speed it up. If the Marker expands past the time the*

*layer runs, then the Out Point effect will come into play. For example, if Freeze is selected, it will freeze until the next marker triggers a transition when the clip ends.*

## **MONKEY CAM**

**Include Camera:** If you don't want a Monkey Cam, turn this box off.

**Movement:** Type of interpolation used for the movement of the camera:

***Smooth Stop & Go:*** Will ease in and out of each move.\*

***Smooth Constant:*** Will drift continuously from one layer to the next with eases.

***Linear Stop & Go:*** No eases (best for smooth pans across layers)

***Linear Constant:*** Will move continuously from one layer to the next without any easing.

*\*Stop & Go might cause skipping if the markers are too close to allow for the move to complete.*

**Auto Rotate:** Will rotate camera with each layer rotation.

**Auto Frame:** Will keep each layer a consistent size by zooming in or out. There are five options to choose from, Loose, Medium, Tight and Best Fit. You can also turn it off.

**Update Cam:** This allows for experimentation with the camera once the layout is set. Click update to revise the camera without having to regenerate the layout. To alter the speed of the camera (only), change the speed selection in the Animation section after the layout is built, and then update the camera.

**DO IT!** Tells the LayerMonkey to start the build.

**Undo it:** Will delete all of the LayerMonkey's hard work. When selected, the option of saving the existing Timing Marker layer will pop up. If you have worked on the timing by sliding the markers, we suggest you save the layer. Once the composition has been cleaned, check the Marker Synch box in the Marker Area, and then select the saved layer (it will appear in Yellow in the composition timeline) to synchronize the new marker layer with the old one.

If there are not enough markers in the saved marker layer, an error message will appear. LayerMonkey will not know what to do with the extra layers in the new composition.

**Save & Load:** Will save or load your current settings in the UI.

## **MANUAL ADJUSTMENTS:**

Customizing a layout manually is very easy. Just click and move, resize or rotate. Keep in mind that each control layers is parented to the one before it, so by adjusting one, everything after will be changed as well.