

Shape Hints in Flash

Use shape hints to control complex shape tweens (not motion tweens). Shape hints identify points that correspond in the start and finish keyframes.

To use shape hints:

1. Create a shape tween (not a motion tween).
2. In the appropriate layer, select the first keyframe in the sequence.
You must be in the *first* frame of a *shape* tween to add a hint.
3. Select Modify > Shape > Add Shape Hint [CTRL-SHIFT-H]
Letters a through z are used to identify up to 26 points.
4. Move the shape hint (a small circle with a letter inside) to a point that you want to mark
Hint colors: yellow – start frame, green – end, red – not on a curve.
5. Select the keyframe at the end of the shape tween. Be sure you click in the right layer.
6. Move the hint to the point that corresponds to the point marked in the first keyframe.
7. Return to step 2 to add additional hints.

To see all shape hints, click a layer and keyframe that contain shape hints, then select View > Show Shape Hints. To remove hints, go to the first frame of the tween and drag a single hint out of the window or select Modify > Shape > Remove All Hints. You can also right-click a hint and select "Remove Hint" or "Remove all Hints".

For best results:

- Place hints on an edge or corner. Flash ignores hints that are inside a shape.
- Place both ends of a hint before adding a new hint.
- Place hints in **counter**-clockwise order, beginning at top left.
- Keep hints in the same logical order at start and end.
- Use simple shapes. Don't try to morph a photo of a baby into that of a grownup.

If you have trouble:

- Break down a complex shape tween by creating intermediate shapes.
- Separate a complex object into pieces and shape tween them in different layers.
- To position hints accurately, you can use onion-skinning or rulers and guides.
- Try using fewer hints, rather than more.