

intro to cool text

Learn the basics of the star of our Text Anarchy filters. This tutorial will teach you to simplify letter-by-letter animation using Cool Text.



a tutorial for : [cool grid](#) : from text anarchy

Text Anarchy



cool tools for text in motion.

[from Digital Anarchy]

f/x tools for revolutionaries.



Cool Text gives you access to five different Effect sections with five possible Effects in each. The plugin is letter-by-letter animation with sliders. We'll go over how to use four of the Effects – Scale, Rotation, Color, and Blur – in this tutorial. [figure 1]

00- download & install

Before you start this tutorial, you will want to download the [text_CTintro-tute.zip](#) file from our website. This ZIP file contains an After Effects .aep file and QuickTime example movies.

You also need to install our Text Anarchy plugins into your After Effects/Plugins folder. The set will appear in the 'Effect' dropdown menu, in a 'Digital Anarchy' submenu, as eight separate plugins. [figure 2]

If you are working with the demo version of Text Anarchy, a red 'X' will watermark your footage.

01- project setup

From your download folder, open up the [text_CTintro.aep](#) project file in After Effects. If you want to see how the final composition looks, check out the 'Finish' Comp.

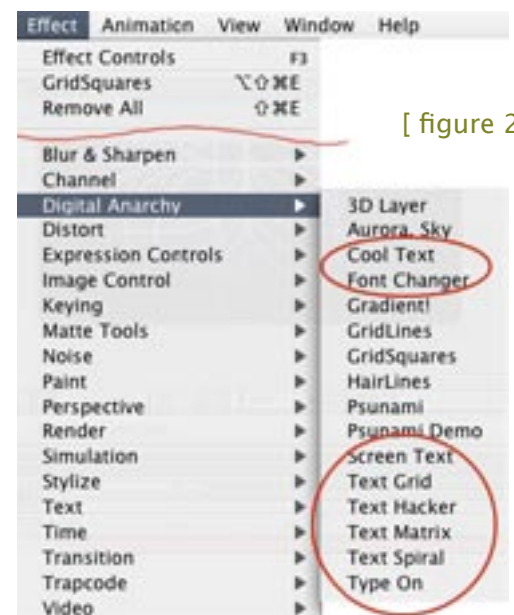
You can also play the QuickTime movie called [text_CTintro-final.mov](#) to see the final composition that you will create.

The 'Start' comp is simply a 720x486 project with a new Solid layer. You'll notice that we've already applied Cool Text and input the text 'Digital Anarchy'. [figure 3]

Alternately, you can create your own 720x486 comp; add a Solid layer; apply Cool Text (Effects> Digital Anarchy> Cool Text); and type the words 'Digital Anarchy' into the initial popup box. We've kept our text at the default typeface, but feel free to choose your preference.



[figure 1]



[figure 2]



[figure 3]



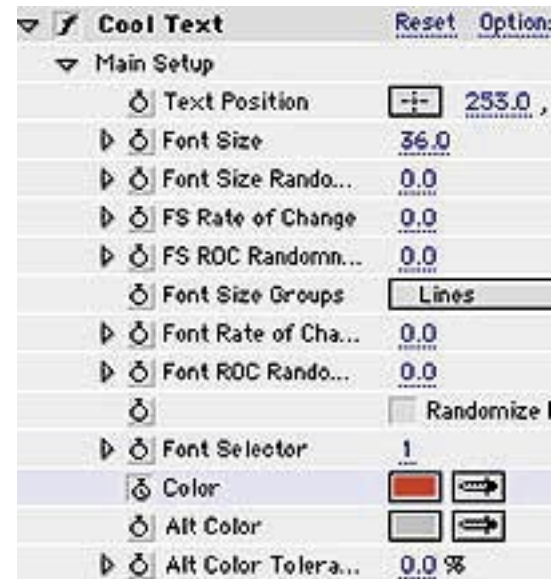
02- animate the color

Before we jump into Cool Text's slider Effects, let's set up a few parameters.

Twirl down the 'Main Setup' category. This is where you can make basic typography choices and add 'Randomness' options to them. All we need to do is set the 'Font Size' to 36 points.

In your Timeline, go to 01:00. Set a keyframe for the 'Color' Parameter. Currently your 'Color' is set to gray. Now go to 03:00 and change 'Color' to a medium red. This sets a keyframe. [figure 4]

If you preview the comp, you'll see that we've animated the color of the text. This is just a simple use of the 'Color' parameter in the 'Main Setup'. It doesn't use the 'Color Effect'. Nothing fancy. Yet.



[figure 4]

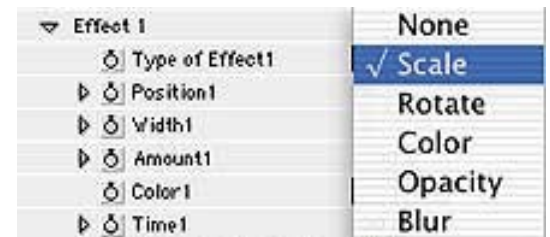
03- effect 1: scale

The first Effect we're going to make use of is the 'Scale Effect'. Twirl down 'Effect #1' and select 'Scale' from the 'Type of Effect' pop-up. [figure 5]

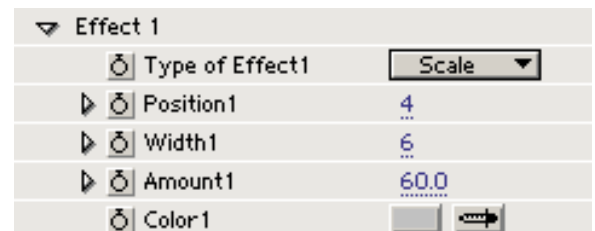
We're going to permanently make the 'igital' in 'Digital' a different size than the regular text. Usually, if you want two point sizes in After Effects, you have to have two layers. Not so with Cool Text. You can do it all on one layer by using the Scale Effect.

We need to select the characters we want affected. Each character has an index number. For example, the second 'i' in 'Digital' has an index number of 4 because it's the fourth letter going towards the right.

Set the 'Position' to 4. This will select the second 'i'. Set the 'Width' to 6. This will tell Cool Text to select the six characters around the second 'i'. The Scale Effect will be now applied to all six characters equally. [figure 6]



[figure 5]



[figure 6]



04- its all in the timing

All the Cool Text Effects are time-based in frames. The 'Time' parameter sets how long it takes for a character(s) to go from their normal state (a Scale of 100%) to their affected state (Scale of 50% or 200%, for example).

So if 'Time' is set to 30, it'll take 30 frames for the character to go from a Scale of 100 to a Scale of 200 (or 50, etc).

In this case, we want the Effect to happen immediately and stay permanent. Set 'Time' to 0. This will cause the Effect to happen over zero frames, meaning it happens immediately.

05- effectasy!

What Effect will this cause? Set the 'Amount' parameter to 60. [figure 7] Now all the affected characters scale to 60%.

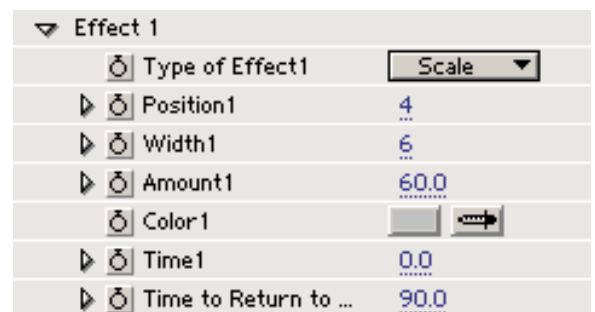
As you might guess, the 'Amount' parameter sets the value of the Effect. We want the characters to be scaled down to 60% and that value is entered here.

06- don't return

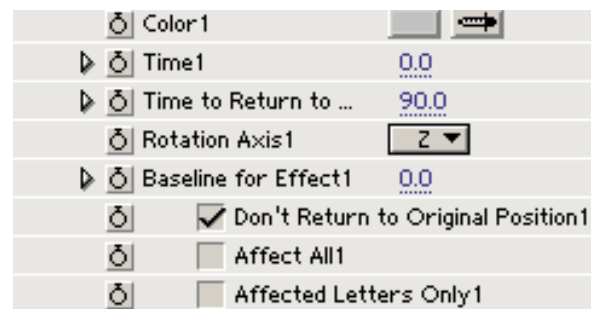
Last but not least, we want to turn on the 'Don't Return To Original Position' checkbox. That's a mouthful, but this parameter will cause the Effect to be permanent and the characters to always remain at 60%. [figure 8]

If 'Don't Return' is not selected, the characters will eventually return to 100% Scale. Basically, they would animate themselves.

We've got the animation rolling. [figure 9] For our next trick, we'll have our characters do some swinging. To pull this off we're going to have to get kind of tricky. A tricky trick, so to speak.



[figure 7]



[figure 8]



[figure 9]

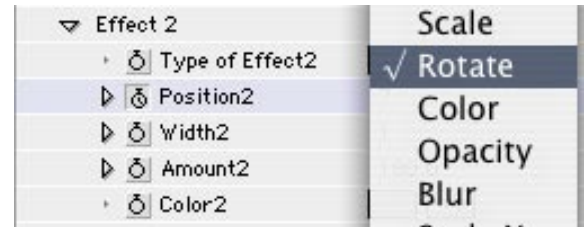


07- effect 2: rotate

Twirl down 'Effect 2', and set the 'Type of Effect' pop-up to 'Rotate'. [figure 10]

Set the 'Amount' parameter to 180. This will cause the characters to rotate 180 degrees.

We want the 'Rotate' to take 30 frames to happen. So, set 'Time' to 30. This will cause the initial rotation to occur over 30 frames.



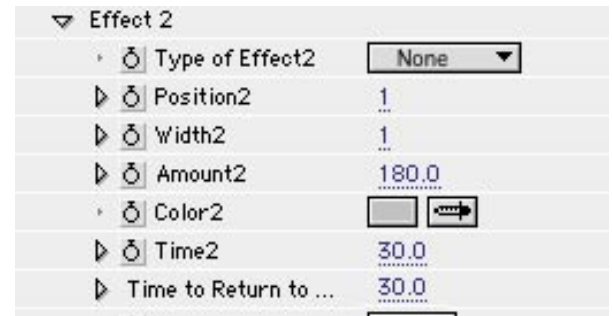
[figure 10]

08- time to return

Once our characters have rotated 180 degrees, we want them to rotate back to their original position. 'Time to Return to Original Position' controls this function.

'Time to Return' works just like the 'Time' parameter, except it sets the duration of the Effect in the other direction. 'Time' sets how long it takes to go from the original position to the affected position. 'Time to Return' sets how long it takes to go from the affected position back to it's normal state.

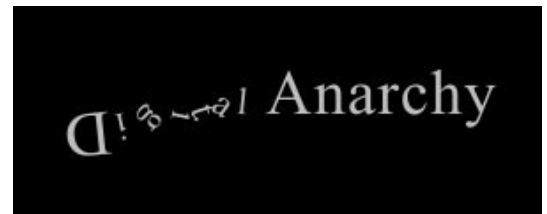
Set 'Time to Return' to 30, so it takes 30 frames to go back to its un-rotated state. [figure 11]



[figure 11]

09- tricky position

Tricky thing #1: We want this animation to gradually affect all characters. We want the first character to start rotating. Then a couple frames later we want the second one to start, then the third one, and so on. [figure 12]



[figure 12]

To do this, we need to animate the 'Position' parameter. At Time 00:00 set a keyframe for 'Position' at 1. Move to Time 02:15 and set 'Position' to 15. [figure 13]

[figure 13]





10- adjust the baseline

That's all well and good, but we want a different kind of rotation. We want the characters to swoop up and then swing down. Right now they're just kind of swinging around the baseline.

The baseline is at its normal position at the foot of the characters. We can adjust the baseline, creating all sorts of effects.

Still in the Effect 2 parameters, set 'Baseline for Effect' to -50. [figure 14] This moves both the baseline and the center of the Effect above the characters. The characters are now rotating around some invisible point in space, which causes them to swing up and swing back down. [figure 15]

To the finish line! Let's add in a color effect for the hell of it. This will cause the color of the characters to temporarily change colors.

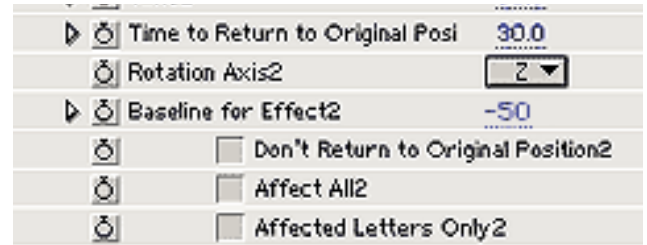
11- effect 3: color

We already animated our text color at the beginning of this tutorial by using the 'Color' parameter in the 'Main Setup' section. We're now going to animate over that using a third Effect.

We will animate the text from white to yellow via the Color Effect. Then the text will animate to red via the Color parameter animation.

Choose 'Color' for 'Effect 3'. [figure 16]

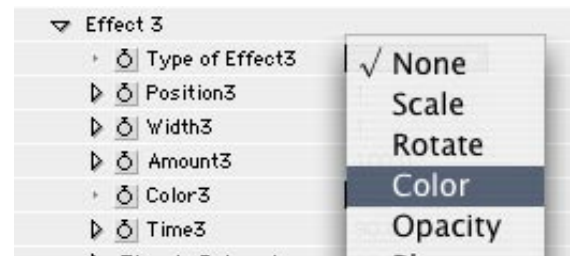
In your Timeline at Time 00:00, set a 'Position' keyframe for 1. Move to Time 02:00 and change 'Position' to 15. Now choose a medium yellow for the 'Color' parameter. [figure 17]



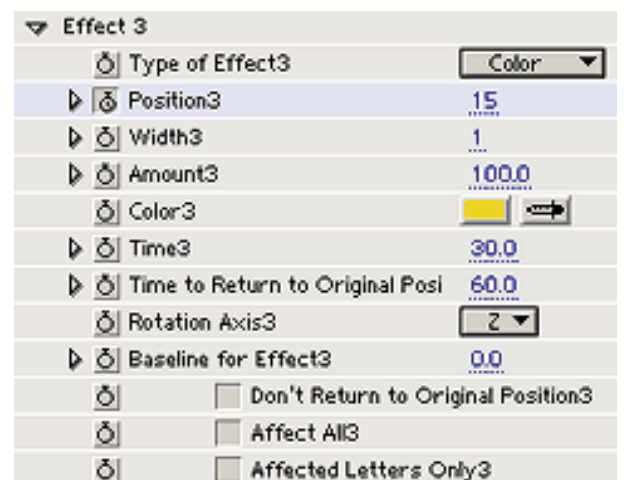
[figure 14]



[figure 15]



[figure 16]



[figure 17]



This keyframing will animate the color effect across the text. [figure 18]

12- time to go

Still in the 'Effect 3' category, notice that 'Time to Return to Original Position' is set to 60 and 'Time' is set to 30.

This means that it'll take longer to go back to the original text color than it did to change in the first place. We want the characters to finish the color animation after they've landed in place.

The Rotate Effect 2 will take 60 frames to complete (30 frames to 180, and 30 frames to return to 0). By setting the Color Effect 3 to take 90 frames to complete, there will be an extra 30 frames of color animation after the characters have stopped rotating.



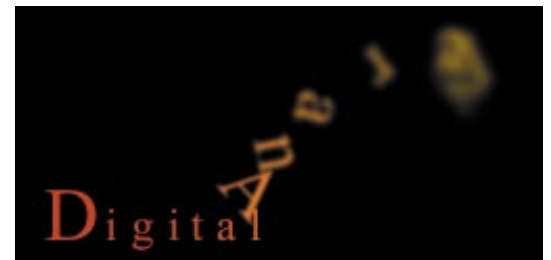
[figure 18]

13- the final blurry frontier

In Effect 4 and 5, set the Type of Effect to Blur. This will give you our final animation. [figure 19] So for the final section we're going to let you figure out what we did.

Some tips:

- 1) We are doing an un-effect. This means we're starting off with all the characters affected, and using a second Effect to bring them back to their normal values.
- 2) In most cases, the 'Amount' can be negative meaning it'll subtract from the Amount of any other Effect.
- 3) The 'Don't Return To Original' checkbox means exactly that. If it's selected the characters never return to their original state, unless a second Effect causes them to do so. If this is turned on, then 'Time to Return to Original Position' is ignored.
- 4) 'Affect All' does what it says. It causes the 'Position' parameter to be ignored and all characters are affected by the Effect.



[figure 19]



conclusion

To see how it all should look, open up the 'Finish' comp to see all the settings. You can also compare the [text_CTintro-pre.mov](#) with the [text_CTintro-final.mov](#).

That's it! Happy Rendering!