

## Key to Life – Keying in with Adobe Ultra

11/14/07-Wed- 5:00 PM-6:15 PM

In this session we will explore the steps involved in a successful key. Learn best practices for preparing a shoot and discover valuable tips and tricks on dealing with problem footage. We'll talk about the different ways you can make the most of your blue/green screen footage in the new Adobe Ultra CS3 which enables creating highly realistic background composites with drag-and-drop simplicity, customizing virtual sets with convincing effects like virtual shadows and reflections and outputting in broadcast quality to a wide range of advanced file formats.

Audience: Intermediate to Advanced Motion Graphics Artists.

*Adobe Ultra (definition taken from Adobe Ultra CS3 user Guide) is a stand-alone keying and compositing application designed to use many kinds of video sources. The keying process starts with loading a virtual set, video clips, or both. You then calibrate the keyer, change any settings as needed, and record the output to a video file for use in an editing application, such as Adobe Premiere Pro or Adobe After Effects. Ultra is compatible with many standard video formats and has been fine-tuned to provide high-quality output and smooth performance, even with DV clips. You can immediately see any changes to the keyer quality settings.*

**Input** – Assign sources and select active layers and preview your footage. It also contains tools to help you set your key

**Output** – What your composited image will look like

Control panels area will be at the bottom. Use these to set and adjust the key, you can adjust the layers and sources.

**To use:** Select the footage, see only the green screen. This is called the reference frame. You can set the key based on what this screen contains. This is sort of a difference key

Make sure that this frame is showing and click "Set Key" from the Keyer panel, and that's it! Ultra sets the key for you!

If you do not have a reference clip to set, click on the "Add point key" tool which is located on the bottom left of the preview panel, and select the color that you would like to key –this is called set key point. Click on the "Apply points" button on the Keyer tab and that's it!

If the clip does not have an even backdrop; follow these directions:

### **Apply point key**

Bring Everything to normal – not keyed

Drag start level to the right until all you see is a green halo around the subject

Drag Desaturation spill up until the green halo turns into a magenta halo – the subject should not be magenta, just the halo

Drag Spill suppression to the left until the magenta lines disappear  
Raise the transparency up until it matches the desaturation level  
drag start threshold until it matches the start level  
Right click on the background icon and select black, white or checkerboard  
Magnify display to correct jagged edges  
In the post-processing sliders soften the matte (very, very slowly)  
Sharpen the matte if you get a halo  
Output the clip for use in a different application

Go to the sessions tab, and see some sample sessions in here  
Go to empty space and right-click, choose set current directory as home – this will make Ultra open up  
in here for the sessions panel  
load session 4 pan and zoom sample go through different virtual sets

### **Output Tab**

Different options  
Do not compress  
Choose the desired format  
Choose the place where you'd like to save this clip  
Type name of file  
In the keyer tab there is a GPU boost, if your video card supports it, check it, because this will send the  
keyer to the video card and in many cases it will improve performance improve the playback in the  
preview window as well. If it's grayed out, then your card does not support it.  
Ultra renders really fast!

### **Post-processing sliders**

To fix edges – if footage is heavily compressed or has been compressed several times, you will see these  
jagged edges  
Use the previous technique to set the key  
Now go to the post-processing sliders – in this order  
Soften matte  
Sharpen Matte  
Sharpen Range  
Leave these post-processing sliders for last – always, set your key first and then “fix” it, use it only if you  
really need it, and only add a little bit.

### **Vector Keying Process**

Set Key method  
Empty frame of just the green screen footage> Click on Set Key button  
apply points Method  
Select the green with 1 or several points where the green color is – make sure that you “mark” all of the  
shades of green. There is a maximum of 65 points, but you will rarely use these many. Most of the time,

less points is better

Click on “apply points” button

### **Use sliders to set the Key**

Have some kind of a background so you can see better

Start Threshold and Transparency Sliders should be at 0

Desaturation Sliders should be at 0 also

Spill suppression slider should be all the way to full (1)

move start until all you see is a green halo

move saturation spill until the green halo turns magenta

Move Spill suppression until magenta disappears

Start threshold number should match start level

transparency Slider should match desaturation spill (you can adjust this one if you wish)

play with highlight sliders, and shadow

Sensitivity and alpha curve very rarely need to be adjusted

### **Adding Panning and Zooming**

Go to Pan and Zoom tab

Enable it

place CIT where you'd like a keyframe

Click on “Add a new Point”

Adjust pan and zooming

Hold down the SHIFT key as you drag down on the grid and this will zoom in the image (moving in the Z axis)

Click and drag the grid for the panning

### **Adding Shadows and reflections**

Go to the shadows Ta and check the reflections button

Move opacity all the way to the right

Move blur all the way to the right

Adjust the baseline slider

Scrub through clip and make sure that everything lines up throughout the clips

Turn opacity down

Blur a little bit

change virtual set and add a shadow

Use the same technique that we used for reflections for the shadow

after you are done, use the Falloff slider and Falloff Edge

You can even add more shadows, sort of like the lights are crossing



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