

# FLASH 1 STEP BY STEP

Directions: The following is a guided tutorial. The teacher is meant to deliver each of the steps verbally, while students perform the task on their computers using Flash. You may choose to project this page (or create an overhead copy to be used on an overhead projector) onto a screen so that your class can see the screen shots below and identify that they are progressing accurately through each step of this tutorial. **We recommend that you give the students a copy of the Step by Step, as it will greatly assist in their note-taking and provide them with “how to” reference material for their class project.** Students should also be taking notes on the process so that when they come back to the lab for future Flash lessons, the teacher does not have to repeat information already given here. The students would be responsible for referencing their notes, if they forget how to use a tool.

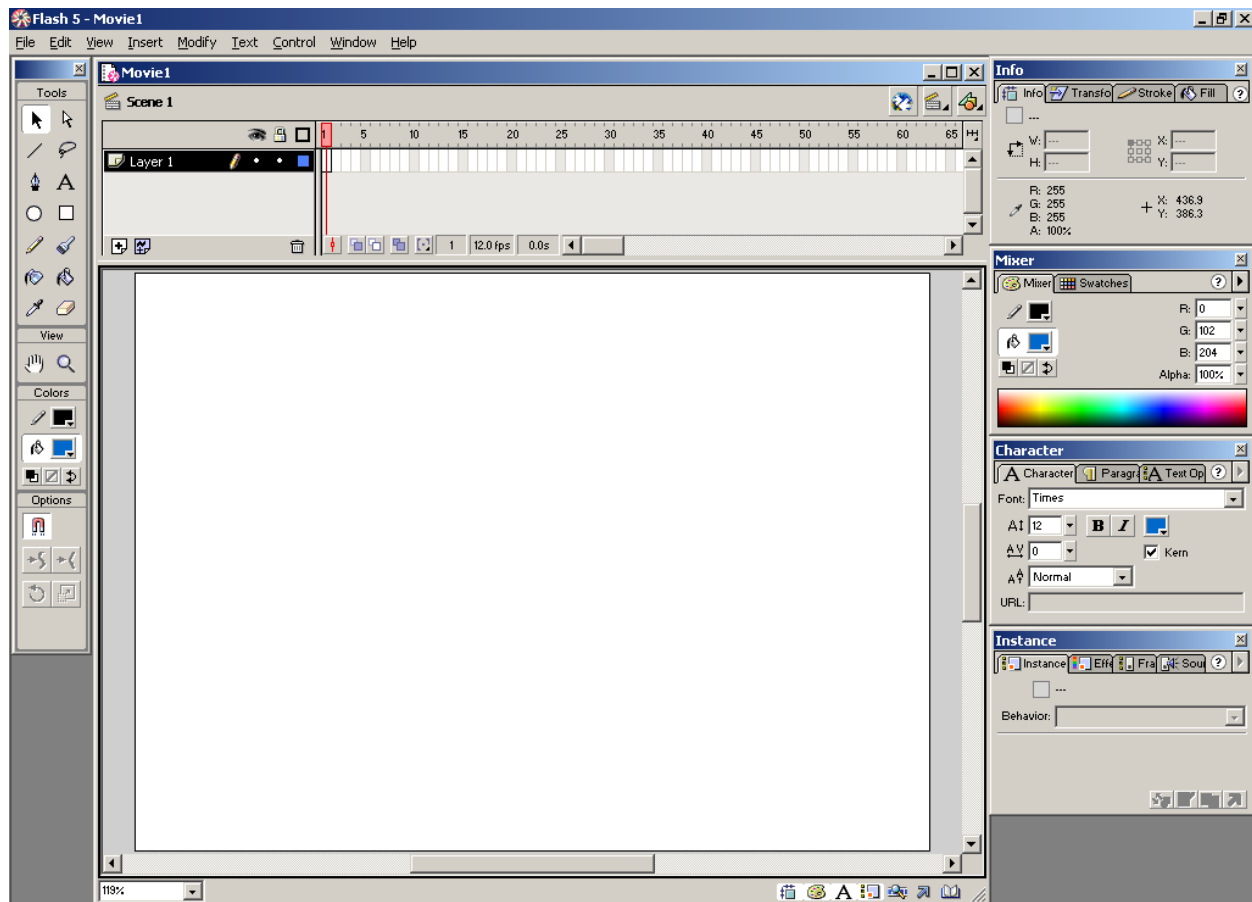
## 1. Purpose

- Learn the difference between FLA and SWF File Types
- How to start/exit, create a file
- What’s in the tool, Help, Reference material.
- Set basic Movie parameters
- Create a one Frame Movie and Publish it

## 2. Start the Flash Program

Double click on the icon on your computer’s desktop, or  
From the Start Menu select Programs, then select Macromedia Flash 5 and click on the submenu Flash 5.

Below is the opening screenshot of Flash.



Notice:

On the top we have the Menu, on the left side *Toolbars*, in the Center Top the *Timeline* which consists of the *Frames* and *Layers*, the Center bottom is the *Stage* and on the right *Panels*.

The interface is similar in look and feel to Macromedia Dreamweaver and Adobe Photoshop.

Toolbars contain tools for drawing shapes, inserting text and moving objects on the Stage.

Panels are used to fill in or change the properties of objects or the actions being applied to them.

The Timeline shows the timeline – sequence of action for a Flash movie. Moving across the right are the Frames and listed down the left are the Layers. The Timeline, Frames and Layers will be discussed in a future lesson.

### 3. Saving and Naming Files

On the Menu select File > Save or CTRL-S and select the appropriate directory or Floppy Disk and then give the file your name such as Mary Smith.

Notice that the file extension is .FLA for the Flash Movies created with the program.

Press SAVE and save the file.

Notice that the file name now appears on the top of the Timeline.

### 4. Help

We are looking at the Help information available in the Flash program, so that you know where it is and you can use it to help you learn Flash. The Flash lessons cover only the basics of the program, for some of your projects you may wish to use other features and these Help tools will give the information you need.

From the Menu select Help

“Using Flash” F1 will bring up the Flash help in a Browser window

“Lessons” and “Samples” tab will bring up tutorial lessons and example methods. Look at the submenu under each now.

In addition, the **Flash Reference** document contains references to other sites with Flash tutorials and information.

Press F1 – which can be pressed from anywhere in the program – and go to the browser window that is opened with the Flash Help. On the left there is the Table of Contents, Index and Search functionality that work in a similar fashion to other software programs Help.

On the left is the Table of Contents, if you click on an entry – such as Drawing – you will see the sub-entries that come under Drawing. Click on Flash Drawing and Painting Tools. This explains all the parts of the Drawing Toolbar. The Flash Lessons only cover a few of these tools, so you may need this page to assist in completing your assignments.

Click on the Index Tab in the left Panel and then on the letter ‘D’ and you see a standard book index show up.

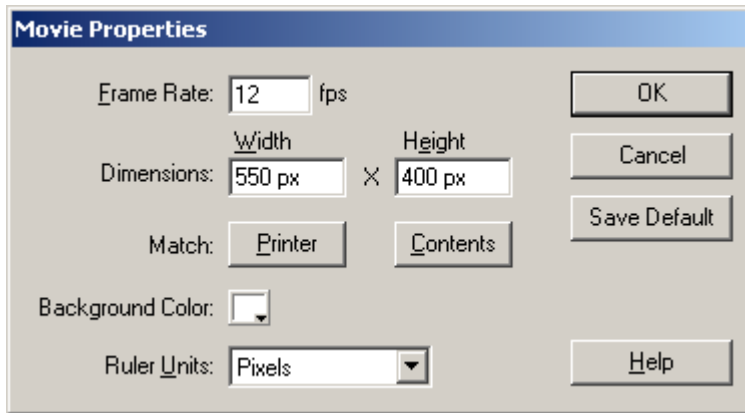
Click on the Search Tab in the left Panel, notice a small window appears. This is a search window. Type in what you are searching for – for example “Drawing” – and click on List Topics. At the bottom, you will see a list of all Topics in the Help system that have the word “Drawing” in them.

Close this window and close the Browser window.

### 5. Setting the Basic Movie Parameters.

From the Menu select Modify and then Movie or CTRL-M





Set the values as they are shown here (these should be the default values).

You can change the Background Color for your projects, if you wish. Click on the Background Color box and select another color from the palette of browser safe colors.

For the class project, a student can increase the size of the dimensions to 800 x 600. This will increase the size of the Flash Movie and give more space for artwork and design, but also require more time to complete the project. The use of the larger dimensions should be balanced against the fact that there is a limit to the time available to complete the class project.

For the class projects there is no need to have a Frame Rate greater than 12. (For comparison, professional web sites would often use values between 15-18, film is 24 and video 30.) Increasing the Frame Rate increases creates smoother animations and increases the size of the Flash movie.

Press OK when finished.

## 6. Typing Text

From the Toolbar on the right select the Text Tool – the capital **A**. Move the cursor to a location on the Stage, notice that the cursor (mouse pointer) changes to a plus sign with an A underneath it.

When you click with the Text Tool on the Stage, it creates a box with a little circle or square on the upper right hand corner. Dragging the little circle or square will set the width of the text box. The length will be determined by how much text you type.

On the right side there is a Panel called “Character.” It allows you to set the font, size, bold face, italic and color (similar to Microsoft Word) and like Word you can set the Character properties first and then type the text or type the text first and then highlight different sections to set the font, size and other qualities. Each letter in the text can have different Character properties.

If the Character Panel is not visible, go the Menu and select Window > Panels > Character.

Select a font, size, and color for your text.

Move the cursor back to the Stage.

Type a word from your word diary.

Go to a different part of the Stage and type all the information about that word from the word diary entry. (These entries must include the word and the meaning, as well as the time and/or place that the word is used, or the type of speaker that would use it. Now, with the cursor, select one of the words of this phrase and change the font, size and color in the Character panel.

## 7. Save Your Work

File > Save or CTRL-S

## 8. Publish Your Work

Publishing means to take the Flash Movie and package it up into a self-contained Flash file that cannot be modified; it can only be played by the Flash Player (which is usually installed as a Plug-in for the Browser.) Publishing is how one takes the Flash Movie and packages it up for display on the web.

File > Publish

A dialog box will quickly flash by. This created a file with an .SWF and .HTML suffix of the same name and on the same directory as the file you have been saving.

## 9. Exit Flash

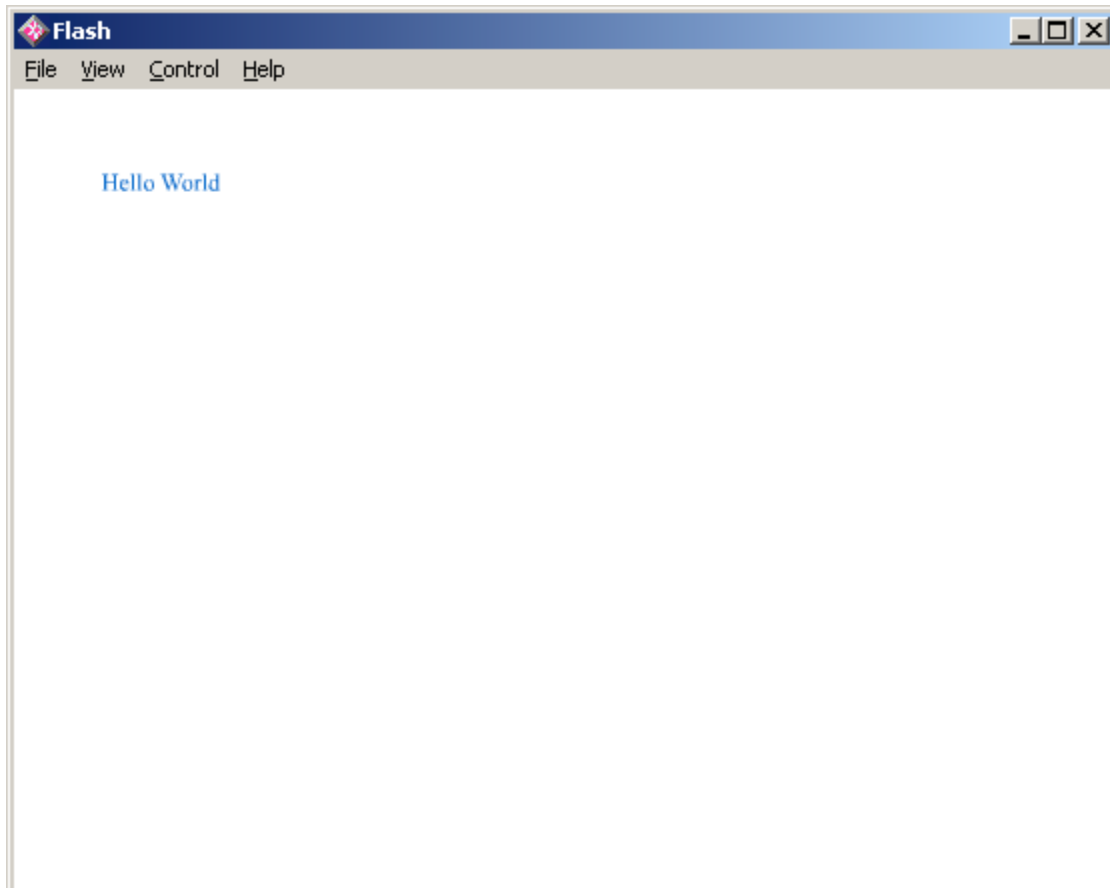
File > Exit or CTRL – Q

## 10. Run the Published Flash Movie

This is how you will present your class projects. Using the windows explorer look on the directory where you saved the FLA file and you will see a file with the same name but with an .SWF file extension. (i.e. Mary Smith.SWF) Double click on this file.

The Flash Player will open up showing the Flash Movie, as in the screenshot below.

There are various controls on the Player. Under the Control Menu option, you see the Play and Rewind commands. You also see the Loop toggle. By default the Movies loop – Play and Rewind continuously (this behavior won't be visible in this lesson because its only a one Frame movie, but in latter lessons and the class project, it will be visible.) By deselecting the Loop toggle, you set the Flash Movie to play only once. Then you must manually execute the Rewind and Play command to have it play again. You also have control to move through the movie one Frame at a time, either backwards or forwards. This can be useful for testing your presentation.



Exit the Flash Player. File > Exit

Go to the Windows Explorer and double click on the .HTML file.

Notice the Flash Movie shows up in a Web Browser. However, in this method of displaying the Flash Movie there are no controls, the Flash Movie will loop continuously.

This is an HTML page. It shows an example of how to embed a Flash Movie – the .SWF file - in an HTML page. It and the .SWF file could be moved directly to the web.

For class projects we will use the .SWF file to test our work and display our final results because of the additional control the Flash Player gives us.

Exit the Web Browser window. File > Close.

Congratulations! You have created your first Flash Movie.