Advanced Motion Graphics Design with Adobe After Effects

5-Day Intensive Course Outline

Course Level: Advanced | **Duration:** 5 Days | **Recommended Format:** Instructor-led + Hands-on Lab

Course Overview

This advanced course develops professional motion-design skills in Adobe After Effects, from animation systems and visual effects to compositing, expressions, 3D workflows, motion tracking, and production-ready delivery. Learners complete practical exercises throughout the five days and finish with a polished motion graphics project.

Target Audience

Motion graphic designers, video editors, visual designers, e-learning developers, UI/UX designers, animators, content creators, and experienced After Effects users who want to build advanced production skills.

Prerequisites

Basic-to-intermediate familiarity with After Effects, layers, keyframes, compositions, masks, text, shape layers, and the standard editing workflow.

Learning Outcomes

- Create sophisticated motion systems using keyframes, graphs, parenting, and animation principles.
- Build advanced shape, text, and typography animations for professional communication and branding.
- Use expressions and procedural techniques to automate repetitive animation tasks.
- Integrate 2D and 3D elements with cameras, lights, depth, and compositing techniques.
- Apply motion tracking, rotoscoping, keying, and visual-effects workflows to live-action footage.
- Design polished title sequences, promotional graphics, and cinematic motion compositions.
- Optimize projects and render professional outputs for video, social media, presentations, and e-learning.

Day 1: Advanced Animation Principles & Motion Systems

Time	Session	Topics / Practical Coverage
09:30–10:15	Advanced Motion Design Foundations	Motion principles; timing, spacing, anticipation, overshoot, follow-through; visual hierarchy; designing for attention.
10:15–11:30	Advanced Keyframe Animation	Speed Graph vs Value Graph; easing; velocity; custom interpolation; keyframe assistant workflows; animation refinement.
11:45–13:00	Motion Systems & Controllers	Parenting; null objects; pick-whip workflows; anchor-point strategy; reusable animation controls; modular compositions.
14:00–15:15	Shape Layer Animation	Trim Paths; Repeater; Merge Paths; Offset Paths; animated strokes; procedural shape combinations.
15:30–16:45	Advanced Text Animation	Text animators; selectors; range/wiggly selectors; per-character animation; kinetic typography systems.
16:45–17:30	Hands-on Project	Create a 10–15 second kinetic typography ident using advanced easing, shape layers, and text animation.

Day 2: Expressions, Procedural Animation & Advanced Effects

Time	Session	Topics / Practical Coverage
09:30–10:30	Expressions Fundamentals	Expression syntax; pick-whip; variables; linking properties; common expression patterns.
10:30–11:45	Procedural Motion	Looping animation; wiggle; posterizeTime; time-based animation; responsive controls.
12:00–13:00	Expression Controls	Slider, Angle, Checkbox, Color and Point controls; building animator-friendly master controls.
14:00–15:15	Advanced Effects & Stylization	Glow, blur, displacement, turbulence, echo, particle-style effects, distortion and stylized transitions.
15:30–16:30	Precomps & Modular Templates	Nested compositions; essential property workflows; reusable scene structures; maintaining editability.
16:30–17:30	Hands-on Project	Build a procedural animated logo/title package with linked controls and reusable motion presets.

Day 3: 3D Motion Graphics, Camera & Compositing

Time	Session	Topics / Practical Coverage
09:30–10:30	3D Layers & Spatial Design	2.5D concepts; 3D layer properties; depth; orientation; coordinate systems; 3D layer organization.
10:30–11:45	Cameras & Cinematic Movement	One-node vs two-node cameras; camera rigs; depth of field; focal length; controlled camera animation.
12:00–13:00	Lights, Shadows & Depth	Light types; material options; shadows; ambient effects; creating depth and visual separation.
14:00–15:15	3D Compositing Workflow	Integrating 3D graphics with footage; screen-space design; parallax; depth-based transitions.
15:30–16:30	Advanced Compositing	Blending modes; mattes; adjustment layers; precomp strategy; color integration and visual consistency.
16:30–17:30	Hands-on Project	Create a cinematic 3D product reveal or title sequence using camera movement, depth, lighting and compositing.

Day 4: VFX, Tracking, Rotoscoping & Green Screen

Time	Session	Topics / Practical Coverage
09:30–10:30	Motion Tracking	Point tracking; position/rotation/scale tracking; stabilizing footage; track cleanup and troubleshooting.
10:30–11:45	3D Camera Tracking	Solving camera movement; 3D scene setup; placing graphics into live-action footage.
12:00–13:00	Rotoscoping & Masking	Mask design; feathering; animated masks; Roto Brush concepts; edge refinement.
14:00–15:15	Keying & Green Screen	Keylight workflow; spill suppression; matte cleanup; edge treatment; realistic integration.
15:30–16:30	VFX Integration	Screen replacement; tracked graphics; particles; atmospheric effects; light wrap and color matching.
16:30–17:30	Hands-on Project	Composite tracked motion graphics into live footage using tracking, keying/roto and final color integration.

Day 5: Professional Production, Design Project & Delivery

Time	Session	Topics / Practical Coverage
09:30–10:30	Advanced Design Workflow	Creative direction; storyboarding; style frames; visual consistency; composition planning.
10:30–11:30	Title Sequences & Brand Motion	Logo animation; broadcast-style graphics; lower thirds; transitions; title hierarchy.
11:45–12:45	Performance & Project Optimization	Pre-render strategy; caching; proxy workflow; project organization; expressions and render performance.
13:45–14:45	Rendering & Delivery	Render Queue; Adobe Media Encoder; codecs; frame rates; alpha channels; social/video delivery specifications.
14:45–16:45	Capstone Project	Plan, design, animate, composite and refine a 20–30 second professional motion graphics piece.
16:45–17:30	Presentation & Review	Project presentation; technical review; creative feedback; portfolio readiness; next-step development plan.

Assessment & Certification Structure

Assessment can be conducted through daily practical assignments, instructor observation, technical checkpoints, and the final capstone project.

Component	Suggested Weight	Evidence
Daily practical exercises	40%	Four hands-on exercises covering animation, expressions, 3D and VFX.
Technical checkpoints	20%	Short demonstrations or knowledge checks.
Capstone project	40%	20–30 second polished motion graphics piece with project files and final render.

Suggested Capstone Brief

Design a 20–30 second motion graphics sequence for a fictional brand, product, event, or learning campaign. The final piece should demonstrate advanced animation, typography or shape design, at least one procedural/expression-based element, 3D or camera movement, compositing, and professional rendering.

Recommended Software & Assets

Adobe After Effects (current version), Adobe Media Encoder, Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop for supporting artwork, plus royalty-free footage/audio and custom graphics as required by the project.

Deliverables

- Daily project files and rendered exercises
- Reusable animation presets/controllers where applicable
- Final 20–30 second capstone video
- Organized After Effects project file with linked assets
- Portfolio-ready presentation of the final work

Note: Course timings can be adjusted for corporate, academic, or bootcamp delivery. Exercises may be customized for branding, advertising, film/VFX, e-learning, or social-media motion design.