

How to import sound

In Adobe Flash CS4, you can import sound and video to integrate them into the Timeline. You can create media-rich content with very precise control.

Importing sound

You can use sound for many purposes in Flash. Some examples include soundtracks, narration, and sound effects that complement objects such as rollover buttons.

You can import the following sound file formats into Flash:

- ASND Adobe Sound Document
- WAV (Windows only)
- AIFF (Mac OS only)
- MP3 (Windows or Mac OS)

If you have QuickTime 4 or later installed on your system, you can import these additional sound file formats:

- AIFF (Windows or Mac OS)
- Sound Designer II (Mac OS only)
- Sound Only QuickTime Movies (Windows or Mac OS)
- Sun AU (Windows or Mac OS)
- System 7 Sounds (Mac OS only)
- WAV (Windows or Mac OS)

When you import a sound file, it's placed in the library. Then you can drag an instance (copy) of the sound onto the Stage. Sound files must be tied to keyframes.

You can synchronize a sound to your movie in several ways (using the Sync pop-up menu in the Property inspector):

- *Event*: An event sound plays when the playhead reaches the first keyframe containing the sound. It plays in its entirety, independent of the Timeline, even if the movie stops. If a different instance of the same sound is started, the sounds will overlap.
- *Start*: The same as Event, except that if the sound is already playing, no new instance of the sound will begin playing.
- *Stop*: Silences the specified sound.
- *Stream*: Forces the movie to keep pace with the sound. If Flash can't draw animation frames quickly enough, it skips frames. Unlike event sounds, stream sounds stop if the movie stops. Stream sounds can also produce a much smaller file size, although their quality tends to be poorer than event sounds.

Import a sound

1. Start Flash and open a document.
2. Insert a new layer.
3. Double-click the new layer name, and rename it Sound.
4. Select File > Import > Import To Library.

The Import dialog box opens (**Figure 1**).

5. Locate a sound file, select it, and click Open (Windows) or Import To Library (Mac OS).

Note: You can download free music loops and sound effect clips at www.flashkit.com, for example.

6. Select frame 1 on the Sound layer.
7. Make sure the Library panel is open. (If not, select Window > Library.)

The sound appears in the Library panel. To preview the sound, select it and then click the Play button in the preview (upper) pane of the Library panel (**Figure 2**).

8. Drag the sound file from the Library panel onto the Stage.

Note: The Sound layer must contain enough frames to play the entire sound. For example, if your movie is set for 12 frames per second and your sound is 2 seconds long, the Sound layer must contain at least 24 frames. If you are adding sound to an existing movie, your movie might already be long enough to accommodate the sound.

9. If necessary, add frames to the Sound layer. To do this, click a frame down the Timeline for the Sound layer, such as frame 24 for a 2-second movie at 12 fps, and select Insert > Frame.

The sound does not appear on the Stage but does appear on the Timeline as a waveform (**Figure 3**).

Note: Press the F5 key to insert a frame. Press Shift-F5 to delete a frame.

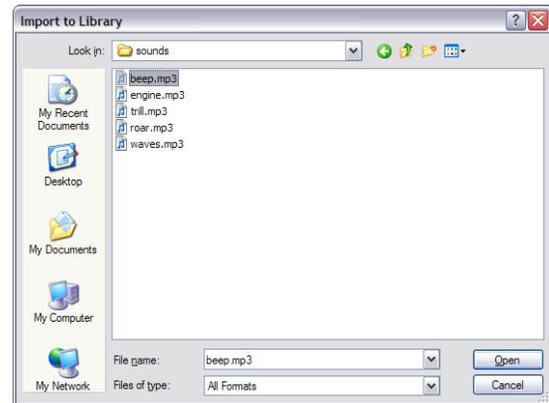


Figure 1 Import dialog box

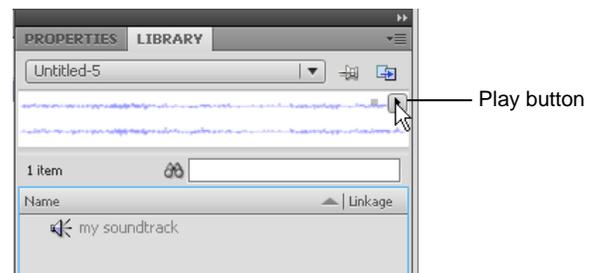


Figure 2 Library panel

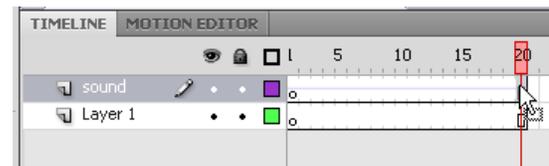


Figure 3 Sound in Timeline

Editing sound settings

Through the Property inspector, you can change settings for the sound, including making the sound fade in and fade out.

10. Select the first keyframe and adjust the settings for the sound in the Property inspector (**Figure 4**).

Effect: Choose from previously created effects such as Fade In, Fade Out, keeping sound in only one channel (left or right), or fading sound from one channel to the other (**Figure 5**). Choosing Custom (or clicking the Edit button) opens a sound-editing window where you can create your own fading effects (**Figure 6**). In the sound-editing window, called the Edit Envelope dialog box, adjust the sound handles to control sound volume in each channel.

Sync: Choose Event, Start, Stop, or Stream.

Loop: Set the number of times to have the sound replay.

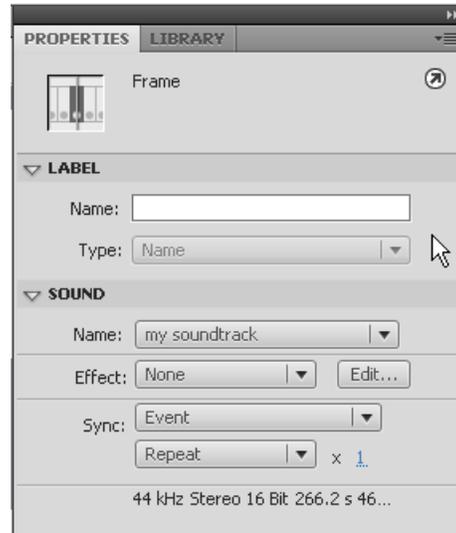


Figure 4 Sound Property inspector

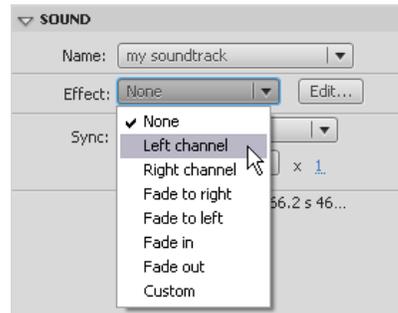


Figure 5 Effect pop-up menu

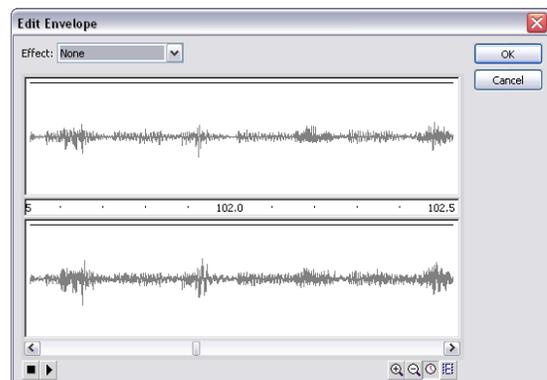


Figure 6 Edit Envelope dialog box

Sound compression

Sound files can drastically increase the file size of your movies. One way to control this is to set the compression for the sounds in Flash.

1. Make sure the Library panel is open, and select the sound file.
2. Click the Properties button in the Library panel (**Figure 7**).

The Sound Properties dialog box opens (**Figure 8**).

3. Choose a compression method from the Compression menu and click OK.

ADPCM: This method sets the compression for 8-bit and 16-bit sound data. Use this when you export short event sounds such as button clicks.

MP3: This method offers good compression and sound fidelity for longer stream sounds such as music tracks.

Raw: This resamples the file but does not perform any compression.

Speech: A good compression to use for speech sound files.

4. Save the movie.
5. Select Control > Test Movie.

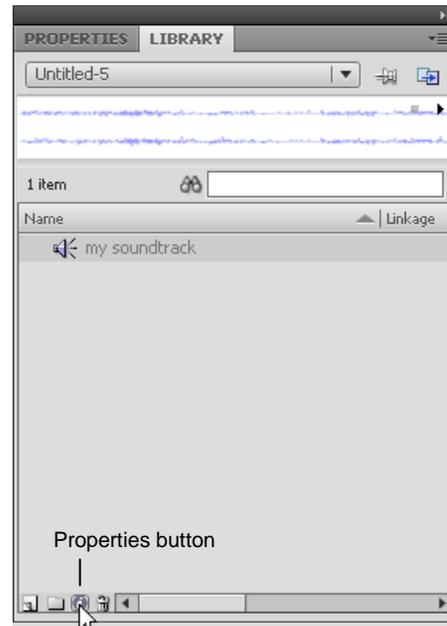


Figure 7 Library Properties button

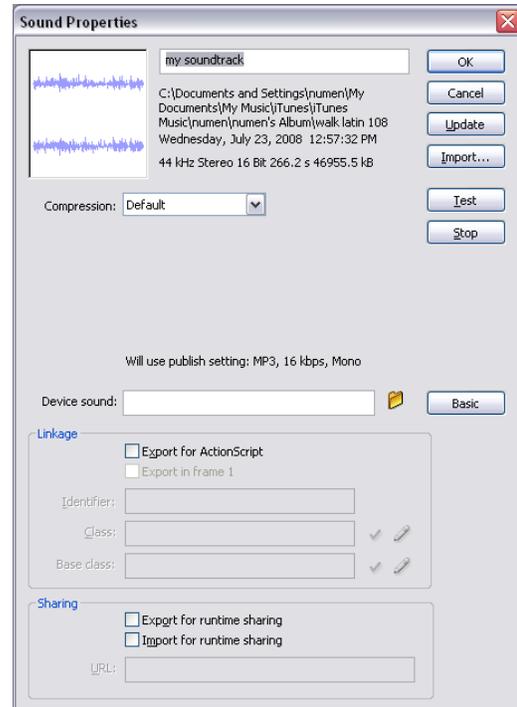


Figure 8 Sound Properties dialog box