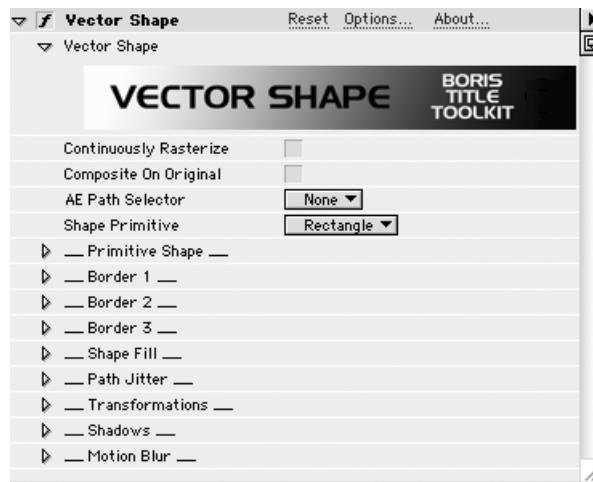




## Working with the Vector Shape Filter

The Vector Shape filter allows you to quickly create color backdrops behind text. You can use one of the supplied shapes or create your own using the After Effects Pen tool. The backdrops can include texture maps, borders and shadows. The vector shapes include rectangle, wedge, oval, arrow, star, medallion, heart, gird, line and circle. You can add a border and set the fill of the backdrop using the Border and Fill parameter groups.



To create a backdrop behind text, you can apply the Vector Shape filter to a layer below the text layer in the timeline. Alternatively, you can apply the Vector Shape filter to the same layer as the text, making sure that the Vector Shape filter is above the text in the Effects Controls window. You also need to select the **Composite on Original** checkbox in the Vector Text filter.

When the **Continuously Rasterize** checkbox is selected, the vector form of the backdrop is forced to recalculate based on Transformations parameter changes. While this can be useful for specific types of effects, it is unnecessary for many effects and can slow performance - most noticeably when using sophisticated text styles.

Select the **Continuously Rasterize** checkbox to improve image quality in the following situations.

- When the Scale parameters are set to scale the backdrop much larger than 100% size.
- When using large negative Position Z values.
- When the Tumble or Spin parameters are set so that parts of the backdrop appear very close to the viewer.
- When Rotating backdrops with a bevel or emboss style and you want the highlight to recalculate accordingly.



When using the **Continuously Rasterize** option, set up the effect with the option disabled to improve preview performance. Then select the option as a final step to improve the quality of the render.

You do not need to select the **Continuously Rasterize** checkbox for any parameters other than Transformations. The Vector form of the backdrop is always recalculated for any scaling or rotating or repositioning in the **Primitive Shape**, **Border 1**, **Border 2**, **Border 3**, **Shape Fill**, **Path Jitter**, and **Shadow** parameter groups.

When the **Composite on Original** checkbox is selected, the filter composites the backdrop over the source image, which remains visible behind the backdrop. When this checkbox is deselected, the backdrop is composited over an alpha channel.

The **AE Path Selector** menu lets you use a path that you create in After Effects as a backdrop. Use the Pen tool to create the text backdrop. Then choose the appropriate mask from the AE Path Selector menu. When this menu is set to *None*, the chosen Shape Primitive menu setting is used instead.



If you delete an AE path while it is being used to define the backdrop, the Shape Primitive menu will become dimmed. To use the Shape Primitive menu, toggle the **Continuously Rasterize** checkbox at the top of the effect controls.

The **Shape Primitive** menu sets the shape of the backdrop. The choices are *Rectangle*, *Wedge*, *Oval*, *Arrow*, *Star*, *Medallion*, *Heart*, *Grid*, *Line* and *Circle*. Each shape has its own parameter controls which are described in the following sections.

## Working with the Primitive Shape Parameter Group

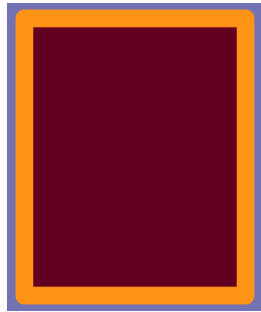
The parameters in the Primitive Shape parameter group allow you to adjust the size and shape of the backdrop. Each shape offers its own controls.

### Working with the Rectangle

When the Shape Primitive menu is set to *Rectangle*, **Shape Left**, **Shape Top**, **Shape Right**, and **Shape Bottom** control the positions of the corners of the rectangle. These values are scaled as percentages of the width and height of the Comp window.



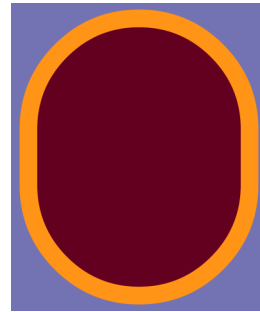
**Corner Size** adjusts the size of the rectangle's corners.



*Corner Size=0*



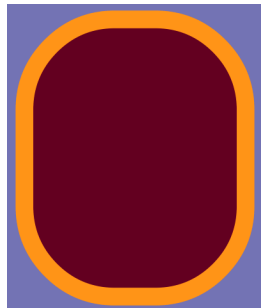
*Corner Size=25*



*Corner Size=50*

The **Corner Type** menu sets the shape of the rectangle's corners.

- *Convex* produces corners that curve inward.
- *Concave* produces corners that curve outward.
- *Straight* produces corners that are straight lines.



*Corner Type=Convex*



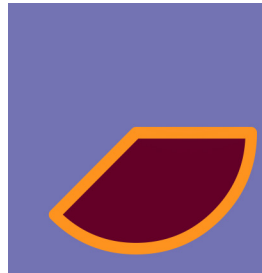
*Corner Type=Concave*



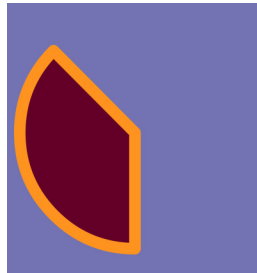
*Corner Type=Straight*

### Working with the Wedge

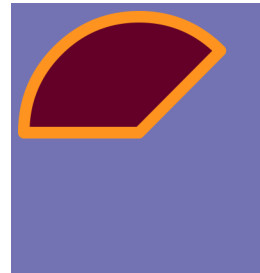
When the Shape Primitive menu is set to *Wedge*, **Wedge Start** sets the location of the starting edge of the wedge. Increasing this value moves the starting edge around the Z axis.



*Wedge Start = 0*



*Wedge Start = 90*

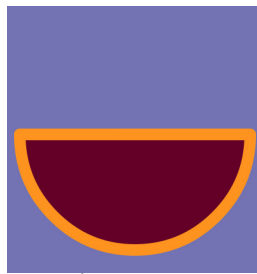


*Wedge Start = 180*

**Wedge Length** specifies the distance between the starting and ending edges of the wedge, or the length of the arc which forms the outer edge of the wedge.



*Arc Angle = 90*



*Arc Angle = 180*

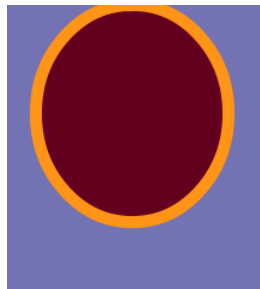


*Arc Angle = 270*

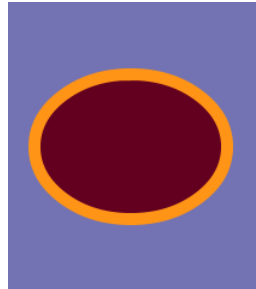


### Working with the Oval

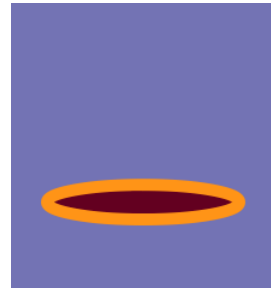
When the Shape Primitive menu is set to *Oval*, **Shape Left**, **Shape Top**, **Shape Right**, and **Shape Bottom** control the positions of the corners of a rectangle in which the oval is inscribed. These values are scaled as percentages of the width and height of the Comp window.



*Shape Top=0*



*Shape Top=25*



*Shape Top=63*

### Working with the Arrow

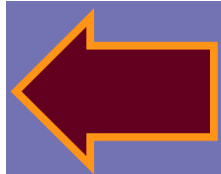
When the Shape Primitive menu is set to *Arrow*, the **Arrow Type** menu determines which way the arrow points. Choose *Up*, *Down*, *Left*, or *Right*.



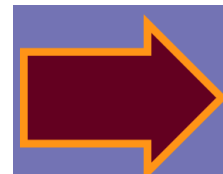
*Arrow Type=Up*



*Arrow Type=Down*



*Arrow=Left*



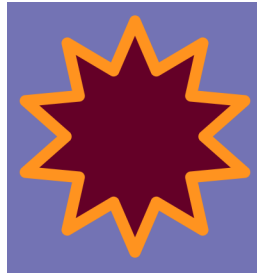
*Arrow Type=Right*

### Working with the Star

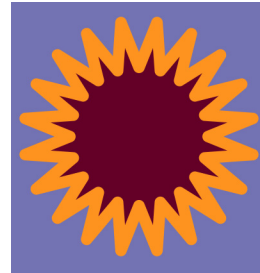
When the Shape Primitive menu is set to *Star*, **Number of Points** adjusts the number of points in the star. Higher values produce more points, while lower values produce fewer points.



*Number of Points=5*

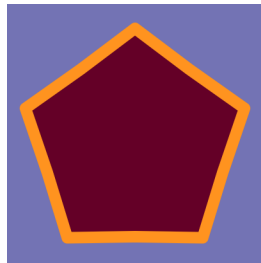


*Number of Points=10*



*Number of Points=20*

**Point Length** sets the length of each point in the star. Higher values produce longer points, while lower values produce shorter points.



*Point Length=25*



*Point Length=50*



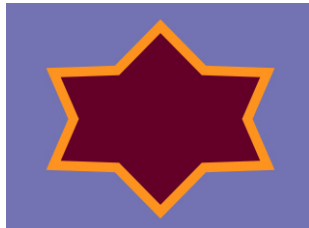
*Point Length=75*



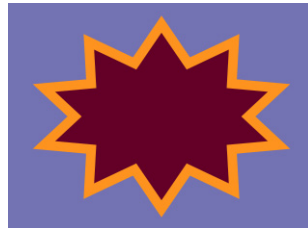
### Working with the Medallion

Medallion creates a a medallion-shaped spline. The medallion shape is similar to a star, but with a greater number of shorter points. In addition, the medallion is stretched horizontally.

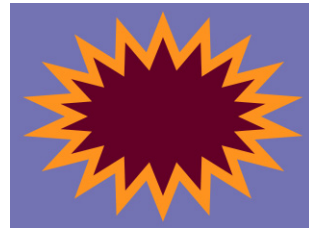
When the Shape Primitive menu is set to Medallion, **Number of Points** adjusts the number of points in the medallion. Higher values produce more points, while lower values produce fewer points.



*Number of Points=6*

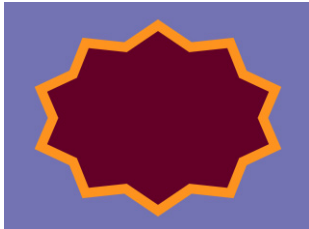


*Number of Points=10*

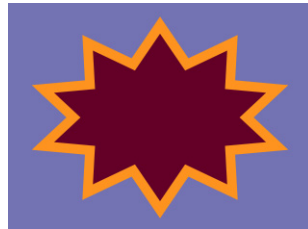


*Number of Points=18*

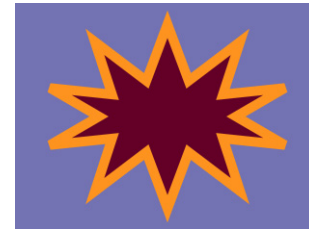
**Point Length** sets the length of each point in the medallion. Higher values produce longer points, while lower values produce shorter points.



*Point Length=25*



*Point Length=50*

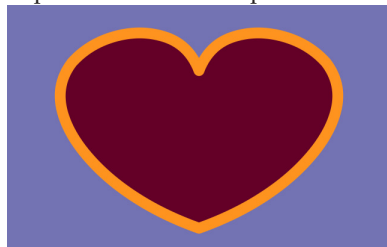


*Point Length=75*

### Working with the Heart

Heart produces a heart-shaped spline.

When the Shape Primitive menu is set to Heart, **Heart Roundness** adjusts the shape of the point at bottom of the heart. Lower values produce a more rounded point, while higher values produce a narrower point.



*Heart Roundness=0*

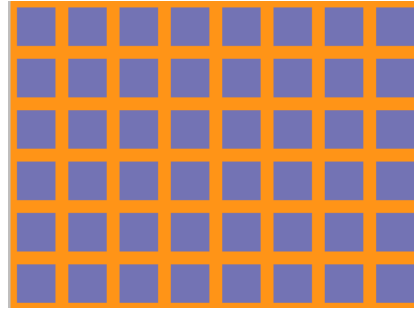


*Heart Roundness=100*

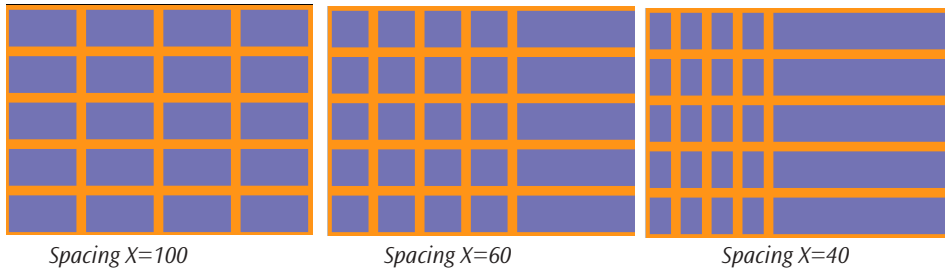
### Working with the Grid

Grid produces a grid-shaped spline.

**Grid Columns** and **Grid Rows** set the number of grid lines along the X and Y axes, respectively. By default the grid includes eight columns and six rows.



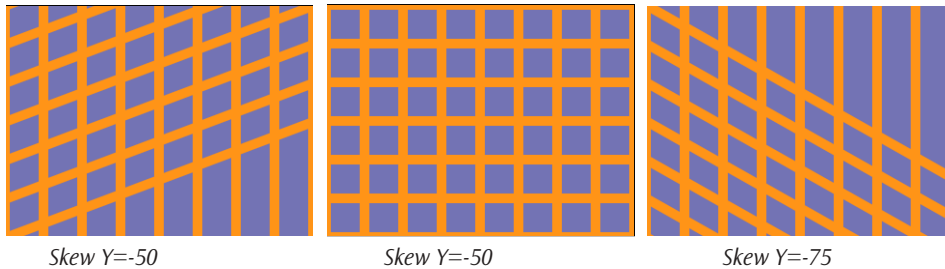
**Spacing X** and **Spacing Y** scale the distance between lines along the X and Y axes, respectively. These parameters are scaled as percentages of the grid's original width or height. To scale the size of entire grid, use the Scale parameter in the Transformations parameter group.



The **Hide Last Lines** menu lets you hide the corresponding extreme line. The choices are *None*, *All*, *Top and Bottom* and *Left and Right*.

**Grid Offset** allows you to set the starting position of the lines along the horizontal and vertical axes.

**Skew X** and **Skew Y** distort the lines along the horizontal and vertical axes, respectively.





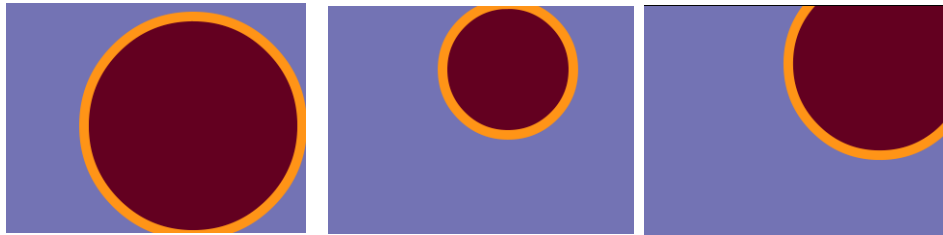
### Working with the Line

Line produces a line-shaped spline.

**Point 1** and **Point 2** allow you to set the starting and ending position of the line along the horizontal and vertical axes.



### Working with the Circle



**Point 1** and **Point 2** allow you to set the center and radius of the circle along the horizontal and vertical axes. Point 1 sets the center point of the circular path. Point 2 sets the radius of the circle.

### Working with the Border 1, Border 2 and Border 3 Parameter Groups

The Border 1, Border 2 and Border 3 parameter groups allows you to apply up to three different border styles to the backdrops. The parameters can be used to create beveled or glowing effects. By default, the Border 2 and Border 3 parameter groups are set to have no border.

Each parameter group offers the following controls.

The **Edge Type** menu controls the style of the border. The choices are *None*, *Plain*, *Bevel* and *Radial*. Each type has its own controls, which are described in the following sections.

When Edge Type is set to Plain, **Edge Position** sets the location of the border.

- *Inside* positions the border on the inside of the edges.
- *Outside* positions the border on the outside of the edges.
- *Center* centers the border over the edges of the selected character(s), so half of the border is on the inside of the edges, and half on the outside.

### Working with the Plain Edge Type

Plain applies a flat border to the backdrop.

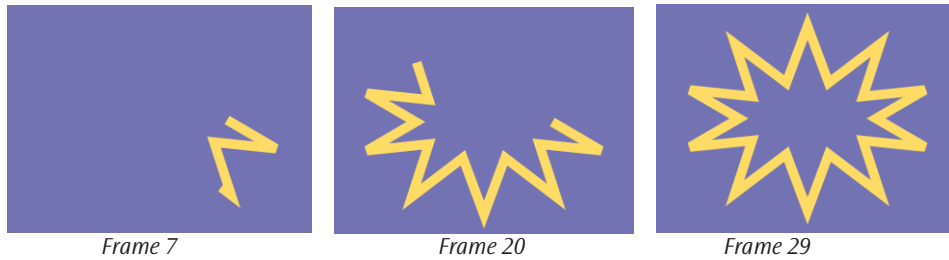
**Edge Color** sets the color of the border. Click the color chip to access the system color picker, or use the eyedropper to choose a color from the screen.

**Edge Width** sets the width, in pixels, of the border.

**Edge Opacity** adjusts the opacity of the border. A setting of 100 makes the border completely opaque, while a setting of 0 makes the border completely transparent.

**Border Begin** and **Border End** adjust the percentage of the border that is visible at each frame in the timeline, allowing you to create animated border effects. These values are measured as a percentage of the complete border. For example, if Border Start is set to 0 and Border End is set to 50, the first half of the border is visible. If Border Start is set to 50 and Border End to 100, the second half of the border is visible.

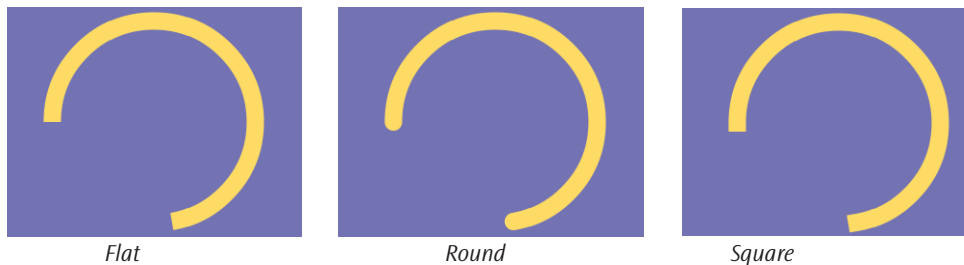
Effect with Border End animated from 0 to 100.



When Plain is selected, **Edge Softness** softens the edge of the border. A value of 0 creates a border with a hard edge, and raising this value increasingly softens the border.

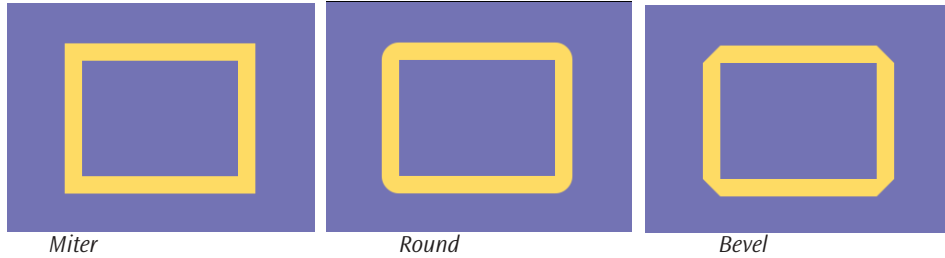
When Edge Style is set to Plain, the **Cap menu** controls the shape of the ends of the border.

- **Flat** creates flat ends.
- **Round** adds a circular cap to the end of the border, which slightly lengthens the border and creates a rounded end.
- **Square** adds a square cap to the end of the border, which slightly lengthens the border and creates a flat end with square corners.





The **Join** menu determines the shape of the corners of the border. Choose *Round* to create rounded corners, *Miter* to create corners with sharp points, or *Bevel* to create clipped corners.



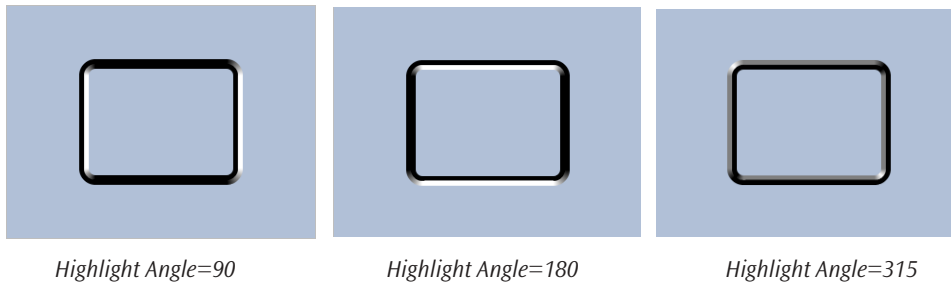
#### Working with the Bevel Edge Type

Bevel creates a beveled border effect.

When Bevel is selected, **Highlight Color** sets the color of the lightest parts of the bevel.

**Shade Color** sets the color of the darkest parts of the bevel.

**Highlight Angle** sets the angle between the highlights and the horizontal axis.

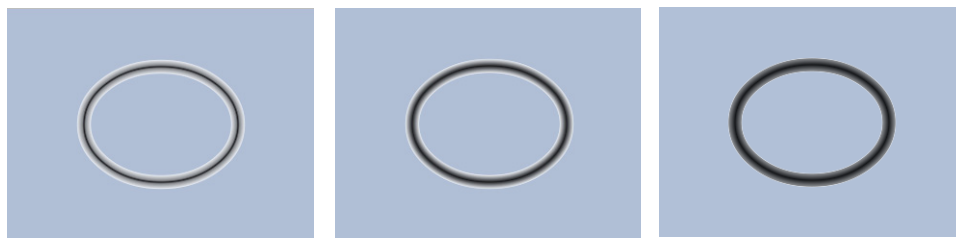


### Working with the Radial Edge Type

Radial creates a soft glowing border effect.

When Radial is selected, **Outside Color** sets the color of the soft edges of the border.

**Radial Fade** controls the opacity of the outer edge of the border. When Radial Fade is 0, the outer edge is opaque. Higher Radial Fade values increase the transparency of the edge, and at a value of 100, the outer edge is transparent.



*Radial Fade=1*

*Radial Fade=3*

*Radial Fade=6*

**Edge Softness** softens the edges of the border. A value of 0 creates a border with a hard edge, and raising this value increasingly softens the border.

### Working with the Shape Fill Parameter Group

The Shape Fill parameters set the fill of the backdrop.

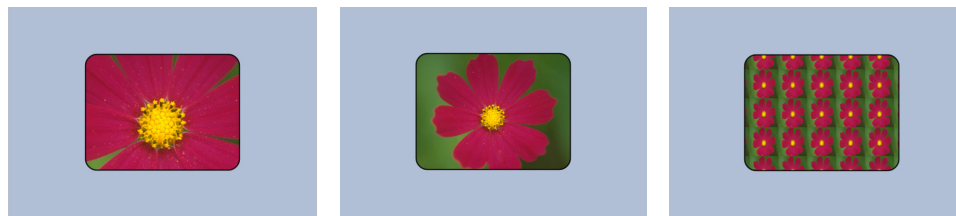
Select the **Fill On checkbox** to turn on the fill. Deselect this option to leave the backdrop unfilled.

**Fill Opacity** determines the opacity of the fill.

**Fill Color** sets the color of the fill. Click the color chip to access the system color picker or use the eyedropper to choose a color from the screen.

The **Texture Map Layer menu** allows you to map media onto the backdrop. Choose the appropriate layer from the Texture Map Layer menu. When the Texture Map Layer menu is set to None, the chosen Fill Color is used.

The **Map Method menu** controls how the media is mapped onto the backdrop. The following example shows a still image of a flower as a texture.



*Clip Map Method*

*Stretch Map Method*

*Tile Map Method*



- Choosing *Tile* repeats the texture image on the face of the backdrop. When you choose *Tile*, decrease the **Tile Size X** and **Tile Size Y** parameters to better see the tiled image within the backdrop.
- Choosing *Stretch* sizes the texture image to fit the backdrop. Stretch can distort the image, depending on its aspect ratio.
- Choosing *Clip* allows you to independently size and position the texture image on the backdrop. When you choose *Clip*, **Scale X** and **Scale Y** resize the texture image along the X and Y axis respectively.

**Offset X** and **Offset Y** move the center of the Texture image along the X and Y axis respectively. This repositions the texture within the text. These parameters have no effect when you choose *Stretch* as the Map Method.

### Working with the Path Jitter Parameter Group

The Path Jitter parameter group allows you to randomize the backdrop's Position. These parameters only apply to a path created as a mask in After Effects and chosen in the AE Path Selector menu. They do not apply to Shape Primitive backdrops. The Path Jitter parameters are expressed as a percentage. All parameters have a range of 0 to 100, except for **Scale** which has a range of 0 to 600.

**Jitter X** and **Jitter Y** randomize the backdrop on the X and Y axis respectively.

**Jitter Velocity** varies the speed of the Jitter.

**Jitter Seed** varies the amount of Jitter from frame to frame.

### Working with the Transformations Parameter Group

**Opacity** adjusts the opacity of the text. A setting of 100 makes the text completely opaque, while a setting of 0 makes the text completely transparent.

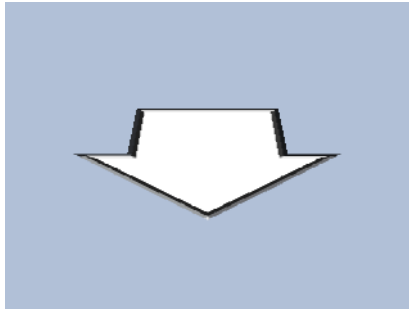
**Position X/Y** set the coordinates of the text's center point. You can adjust or animate these values to offset the text as it moves in or out.

**Position Z** adjusts the apparent depth of the text. Decreasing negative values move the text closer to the viewer, while increasing positive values move the text farther away. Very low Position Z values move the text behind the viewer, making it invisible.

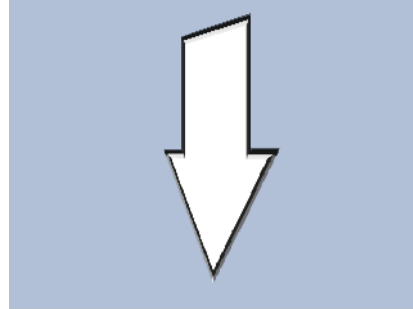
**Master Scale** lets you adjust Scale parameters globally. Parameters can still be changed independent of one another by using the individual Scale parameters. For example, you set **Scale X** to 100 and **Scale Y** to 200 to create a backdrop that is stretched vertically. If you then set **Master Scale** to 200, the resulting backdrop is twice as wide and four times as tall as the original.

**Scale X** and **Scale Y** change the size of the backdrop along the X and Y axes, respectively. These parameters are scaled as percentages of the object's original width or height. Thus, a **Scale X** setting of 200 produces a backdrop twice as wide as the original.

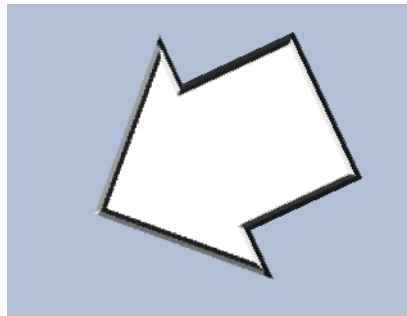
**Tumble**, **Spin**, and **Rotate** move the backdrop around the X, Y, and Z axis respectively. Tumble, Spin, and Rotate can animate over values greater than 360° to make the image complete more than one full revolution.



*Tumble = -65 Degrees*



*Spin = 65 Degrees*



*Rotate = 65 Degrees*

When the **Lock Pivot to Position** checkbox is selected, the text tumbles, spins, and rotates around its own center. If this option is deselected, you can set an external pivot point around which to tumble, spin, or rotate. **Pivot X/Y** and **Pivot Z** set the X, Y, and Z coordinates of the pivot point. If the Lock Pivot checkbox is selected, moving the pivot point has no affect.



## Working with the Shadows Parameter Group

The Shadows parameter group applies one of three types of animatable shadows to the backdrop.

The **Shadow Type** menu determines what type of shadows are created.

- *None* does not apply a shadow.
- *Drop shadows* fall a specified distance from the object.
- *Cast shadows* appear to fall on another object; therefore the appearance and shape of this type of shadow depends on the distance between the two objects, and the shape of the object on which the shadow falls.
- *Solid shadows* simulate the appearance of a 3D object by applying a gradient to a shadow. Solid shadows are useful if you want to create text with a three dimensional appearance but do not need to apply transformations that would reveal that the text is actually 2D.



**Shadow Color** sets the color of the shadow. Click the color chip to access the system color picker, or use the eyedropper to choose a color from the screen. You can also apply colors from the Style Palette. For more information, see “Working with the Style Palette” on page 36.

**Shadow Distance** sets the distance between the shadow and the text. Use a small value to offset the text slightly; use a larger value to create distinct shadows that appear to fall on another surface.

**Shadow Opacity** sets the degree of opacity. A value of 100 makes the shadow completely opaque. Lowering this value makes the shadow increasingly transparent. A value of 0 creates a completely transparent shadow.

**Shadow Softness** softens the edges of the shadows, emulating the appearance of shadows cast by a diffuse light source. A value of 0 creates shadows with hard edges. Increasing this value softens the shadow edges.

**Shadow Angle** sets the angle between the shadow and the horizontal axis of the text.

When the **Shadow Type** menu is set to *Solid Shadow*, **Highlight Color** sets the color of the highlighted areas of the shadow, and **Shade Color** sets the color of the shaded areas. Click the color chip to access the system color picker, or use the eyedropper to choose a color from the screen. These parameters have no affect with any other shadow type.