Please go through the tutorial for learning Flash
http://www.smartwebby.com/Flash/attractive_graphics.asp

1. What is a Flash Symbol?

A symbol is a reusable object used/created in Flash. A **Symbol** can be reused throughout your movie or imported and used in other movies. There are three types of symbols: Graphics, Buttons, and Movieclips.

2. Types of Symbols

Graphic symbols are reusable static images that are used mainly to create animations. Any drawn vector/plain text/imported bitmap (photo), or combinations of these, can be converted into a single controllable object: as a graphic symbol. They have only one frame in their timeline. Learn how to create a graphic symbol.

Movieclip symbols are reusable pieces of flash animation - consisting of one or more graphic/button symbols - thus they are flash movies within your flash movie. They have their own non-restricted Timeline (any number of layers and frames - just like the main timeline) that plays independent of the main movie's Timeline. Learn how to create a movieclip symbol .

3. Flash Effects

a) Timeline effect

When you add a Timeline effect to an object, Flash creates a layer and transfers the object to the new layer. The object is placed inside the effect graphic, and all tweens and transformations required for the effect reside in the graphic on the newly created layer. The new layer automatically receives the same name as the effect, appended with a number that represents the order in which the effect is applied, out of all effects in your document. When you add a Timeline effect, a folder with the effect's name is added to the library, containing elements used in creating the effect.

Prebuilt Timeline effects let you create complex animations with a minimal number of steps. You can apply Timeline effects to the following objects:

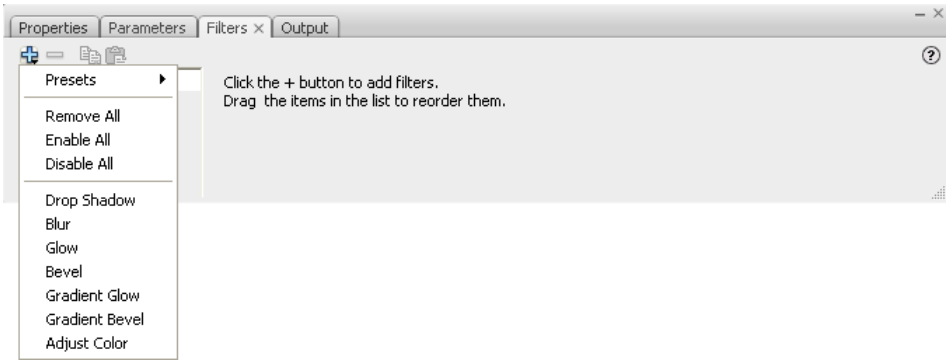
- Text
- Graphics, including shapes, groups, and graphic symbols
- Bitmap images
- Button symbols

Note: When you apply a Timeline effect to a movie clip, the effect is nested in the movie clip.

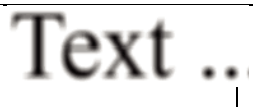
b) Flash blend modes let you create composite images. Compositing is the process of varying the transparency or color interaction of two or more overlapping objects. Blending modes also add a dimension of control to the opacity of objects and images.

Filters: filters (graphic effects) let you add interesting visual effects to text, buttons, and movie clips. A feature unique to Flash is that you can animate the filters you apply using motion tweens.

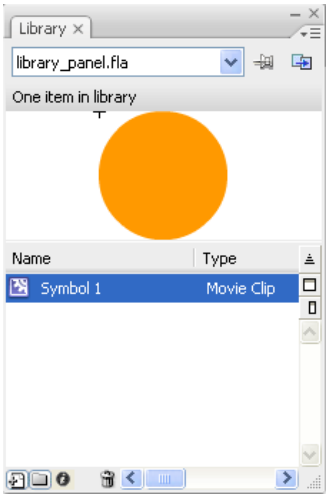
Animating filters: You animate filters in the Timeline. Objects on separate keyframes joined by a tween have the parameters for corresponding filters tweened on intermediate frames. If a filter does not have a matching filter (a filter of the same type) at the opposite end of the tween, a matching filter is added automatically to ensure that the effect occurs at the end of the animation sequence.



EG:

				
drop shadow	skewed drop shadow	blur	glow	bevel

4. Library panel



The Library panel is where you store and organize symbols created in Flash, as well as imported files, including bitmap graphics, sound files, and video clips. The Library panel lets you organize library items in folders, see how often an item is used in a document, and sort items by type.

The Library panel showing a movie clip symbol

To display the Library panel, select Window > Library, or press Control+L (Windows)

5. Mask layers

For spotlight effects and transitions, use **a mask layer** to create a hole through which underlying layers are visible. A mask item can be a filled shape, a type object, an instance of

a graphic symbol, or a movie clip. Group multiple layers under a single mask layer to create sophisticated effects.

Tutorials: http://www.smartwebby.com/Flash/photo_masking_effects.asp

6. Motion guide layers

Motionguide layer let you draw paths along which tweened objects, groups, or text blocks can be animated. You can link multiple layers to a motion guide layer to have multiple objects follow the same path. A normal layer that is linked to a motion guide layer becomes a guided layer.

7. Animations

a) Motion Tween :

To tween(animate) the changes in properties of instances, groups, and type, use motion tweening. Flash can tween position, size, rotation, and skew of instances, groups, and type. Additionally, Flash can tween the color of instances and type, creating gradual color shifts or making an instance fade in or out.

To animate individual characters in a block separately, place each character in a separate block. If you apply a motion tween and then change the number of frames between the two keyframes, or move the group or symbol in either keyframe, Flash automatically tweens the frames again.

b) Shape tweening: Shape tweens allows us to change the shape of objects. This is similar to **morphing** where one object changes to another. By tweening shapes, you can create an effect similar to morphing, making one shape appear to change into another shape over time. Flash can also tween the location, size, and color of shapes. You can create Shape Tweened animations using **Shape option from the Tween panel** of the Properties inspector. In shape tweening, you draw a shape at one specific time, and change that shape or draw another shape at another specific time. Flash interpolates the values or shapes for the frames in between, creating the animation.

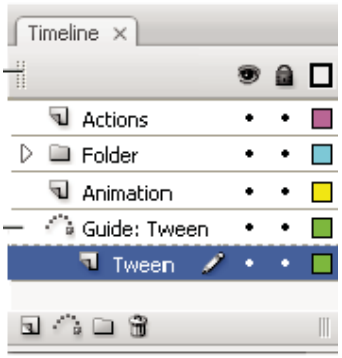
c) Frame-by-Frame animation

This type of animation changes the contents of the Stage in every frame and is best suited to a complex animation in which an image changes in every frame instead of simply moving across the Stage.

Disadvantage: This type of animation increases the file size more rapidly than tweened animation because Flash stores the values for each keyframe.

To create a frame-by-frame animation, you define each frame as a keyframe and create a different (typically modified) image for each frame. Each new keyframe on a layer typically contains the same contents as the keyframe preceding it because the

8. Layers



Layers **help you organize the object/symbol in your document**. You can draw and edit objects on one layer without affecting objects on another layer. In areas of the Stage with nothing on a layer, you can see through it to the layers below. To draw, paint, or otherwise **modify a layer or folder, select the layer in the Timeline to make it active.**

Only one layer can be active at a time When you create a Flash document, it contains only **one layer.** To organize the objects, animation, and other elements in your document, **adds more layers**. You can also **hide, lock, or rearrange layers.**
The **layers do not increase the file size** of your published SWF file. **Only the objects you place into layers add to the file size.**

To **organize and manage layers, create layer folders and place layers in them**. You can **expand or collapse layer folders in the Timeline** without affecting what you see on the Stage.
To help create sophisticated effects, use **special motionguide layers to make drawing and editing easier, and mask layers.**

9. Stage/Scene

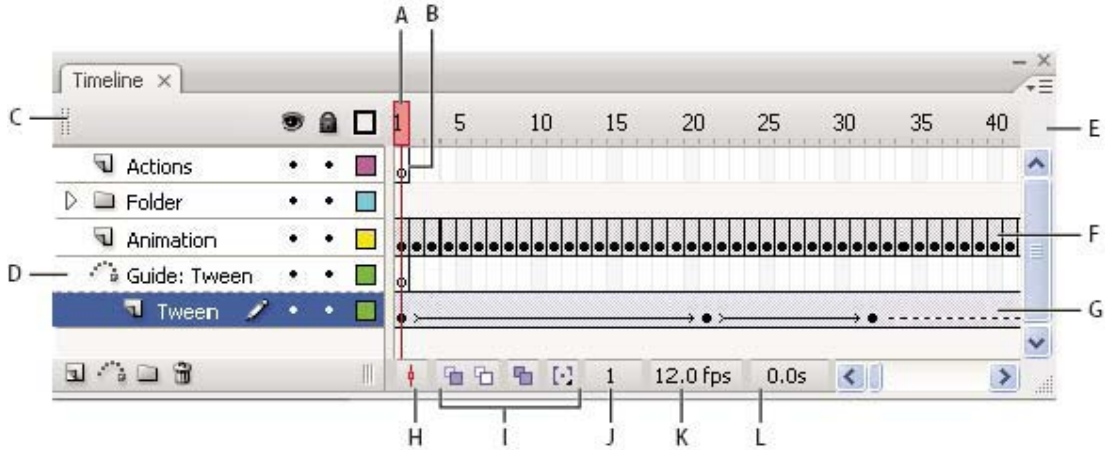
The Stage is the rectangular area where you place graphic content when creating Flash documents. The Stage in the authoring environment represents the rectangular space in Flash Player where your document appears during playback. To change the view of the Stage as you work, zoom in and out. To help you position items on the Stage, you can use the grid, guides, and rulers.

10. Timeline window

The Timeline shows where animation occurs in a document, including **frame-by-frame animation, tweened animation, and motion paths.**
Layers in a document are listed in a column on the left side of the Timeline. Frames contained in each layer appear in a row to the right of the layer name. The Timeline header at the top of the Timeline indicates frame numbers. The playhead indicates the current frame displayed on the Stage. As a document plays, the playhead moves from left to right through the Timeline.
The **Timeline status displayed** at the bottom of the Timeline indicates the **selected frame number, the current frame rate, and the elapsed time to the current frame**.

Differences
The Timeline organizes and controls a document's content over time in layers and frames. Like films, Flash documents divide lengths of time into frames. The Timeline also shows where animation occurs in a document, including **frame-by-frame animation, tweened animation, and motion paths.**

Layers are like multiple film strips stacked on top of one another, each containing a different image that appears on the Stage. The major components of the Timeline are layers, frames, and the playhead.



A. Playhead, **B**. Empty keyframe, **C**. Timeline header , **D**. Guide layer icon , **E**. Frame View pop-up menu , **F**. Frame-by-frame animation, **G**.Tweened animation, **H.** Scroll To Playhead button, **I**. Onion-skinning buttons , **J.** Current Frame indicator, **K.** Frame Rate indicator
L. Elapsed Time indicator