Chroma Key for ScreenPlay and Sequel

What is Chroma Key?

Chroma Key creates the popular keying effect used by television weather reporters when they stand in front of a weather map on a news set. Chroma Key tools are commonly used in Hollywood feature films to create alien worlds and impossible situations.

Applied Magic's Chroma Key effect allows you to record live action video in front of a colored background. Blue and green are the most commonly used background colors. Chroma Key replaces the colored background with alternate video footage. Applied Magic's Chroma Key has the ability to key out *any* color you choose. This opens a whole world of opportunity to create endless special effects.

A good Chroma Key effect is dependent on an evenly colored, and evenly lit, background. Getting Chroma Key right, requires practice and good materials when shooting the original footage. For best results, Applied Magic recommends StudioDepot.com for purchasing Chroma Key (green and blue screen) material and paint background supplies. There are also plenty of books and articles that describe how to set up a Chroma Key shot.

Installing/Activating Chroma Key

1) Put the 2.5+ CD-ROM in your ScreenPlay and install Chroma Key from the **Extras** selection.

2) Choose **Activate Chroma Key**. This will prompt you for your activation code.

3) When you purchase Chroma Key (MSRP $120.00) from Applied Magic or an authorized dealer, you will be given an activation code. When purchasing Chroma Key, make sure you have your System ID number and purchasing information ready.

4) After installing and activating, restart your system, the go to the transitions bin and find the Chroma Key Icon at the bottom of the bin.

Getting Started With Chroma Key

1) Select the *ChromaIN* effect/transition in the Transitions Bin.

2) Select details and adjust the Chroma Key duration to play as long as possible.

3) When you later drag the Chroma Key onto the storyboard, it will automatically be adjusted to the length of the shortest clip.

4) Repeat this procedure with the *ChromaOUT* effect/transition.

Adding Chroma Key to Your Video

1) Drag the clip you wish to use as the background of your blue or green screen clip from the Clips Bin.

2) Next, drag the live action clip that has been shot in front of a blue or green screen from the Clips Bin to the storyboard.

3) In the Transitions Bin, find the *ChromaIN* transition and drag it between the background video clip and the live action video. Make sure the arrow on the transition points to the keyable clip.

4) Next, choose the color to key out by selecting the *ChromaIN* transition and going into *Details*. Click the *Set Color* button and then click on the color to remove from the action clip in the preview window.

5) Next, preview your Chroma Key effect by selecting the *ChromaIN* transition and going into *Details.* When in *Details,* you can scrub the video and determine if the *Threshold* requires adjustment.

Key Threshold allows you to adjust the range of shade of the color that you have selected. If the Chroma Key background is evenly lit then the default Threshold may be fine. But if the lighting on the background is uneven, creating several different shades of that specific color, broadening the Key Threshold to a higher number may be required to key out all the color successfully. Whereas lowering the Key Threshold will narrow the selection, selecting only a specific range of shade.

6) After you complete any adjustments, *Merge* the Chroma Key effect.

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Merging a Chroma Key for Playback

Merging a Chroma Key effect allows you to preview the results in Full Screen Mode. To Merge, select the *ChromaIN* transition, then select *Merge*

Adding Transitions

1) To add a transition into, or out of, your Chroma Key effect, you will need to merge the entire effect together into one clip.

2) Hold down the SHIFT key and select the "background clip", the Chroma Key effect and the "live action" clip with the blue or green background on your storyboard.

3) Select *Merge*.

4) This process will merge all three elements together.

5) At the end of the process, ScreenPlay will ask if you wish to replace the items on your storyboard with the merged clip. Select Yes.

Now you can add transitions into, or out of, your Chroma Key effect.

For the latest in Applied Magic products, including ScreenPlay and Sequel systems, accessories, and related items, please visit Sensory Echo at www.sensoryecho.com