Chapter 6
Cool Transition Tricks
Interesting ways to get from one clip to another

Sometimes you want to transition from one clip to another almost invisibly. It's then that a simple cut or subtle dissolve is in order.

But other times you want to have a little fun – to create your own, custom transitions. And with Premiere Elements, there are a number of very cool ways to do this.

Premiere Elements comes loaded with over 100 transitions, from basic dissolves to pushes, curtains, bars and stripes. And they alone can take you a long way. But for the very cool, there are ways to go beyond the standard, pre-packaged transitions, and create some interesting and custom ways to get from clip to clip.

COOL TRICK

17 Use a Preset as a Transition

Usually, when we want to add a transition between two clips, we go to the **Transitions** panel and grab one from one of the over 100 audio and video transitions included in the program.

But, although the program provides a great library of transitions to choose from, you're by no means limited to this set. A number of **Presets** are designed to be used as transitions also. (And, you can even create your own!)

1   Locate the Twirl Out preset effect

Click the **Effects** button on the **Action Bar**.

The **Twirl Out** effect is located in the **Presets** category of effects, in the **Twirls** sub-category.

2   Apply the Twirl Out effect to Clip 1

Drag the **Twirl Out** preset effect onto the clip you would like to transition from (Clip 1).

Twirl Out automatically attaches to the *end* of a clip. Its pre-keyframed settings transition the last second of the clip from no effect to a 4x twirl.
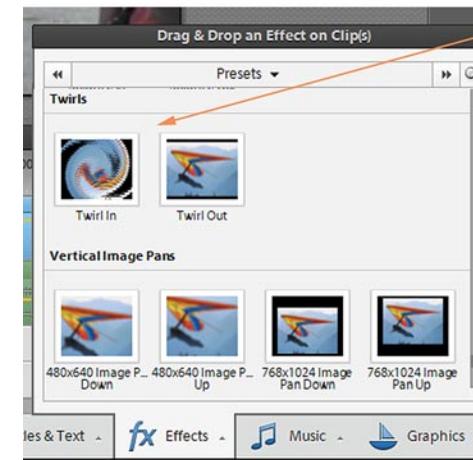
3   Apply the Twirl In effect to Clip 2

Drag the **Twirl In** preset effect onto the clip you would like to transition to (Clip 2).

Twirl In automatically attaches to the *beginning* of a clip. Its pre-keyframed settings transition the first second of a clip from a 4x twirl to no effect.

And that's really all there is to it! When you play your video, Clip 1 will end by spinning into a full twirl – and, when you spin out of the twirl, you'll be in Clip 2!

There are a couple of **Presets** that work well as transitions, each identified by the words "in" and "out" in their names. They are **Fast Blur In/Fast Blur Out, Mosaic In/Mosaic Out, Solarize In/Solarize Out** and, as we've seen, **Twirl In/Twirl Out**. In addition, a number of the **PiP** (Picture-in-Picture) **Presets** include animations that slide, zoom or spin your **PiP** video in or out of the video frame – essentially transitioning the inset video into or out of your movie.
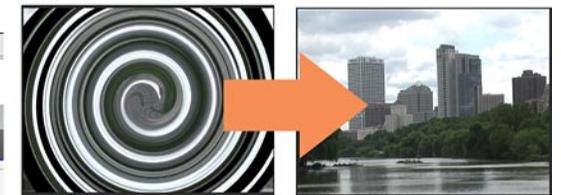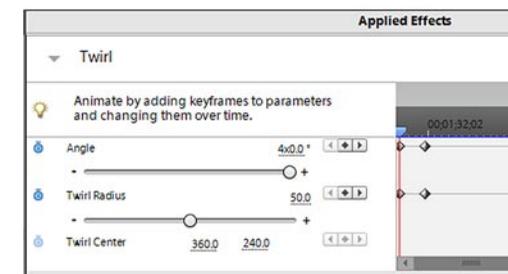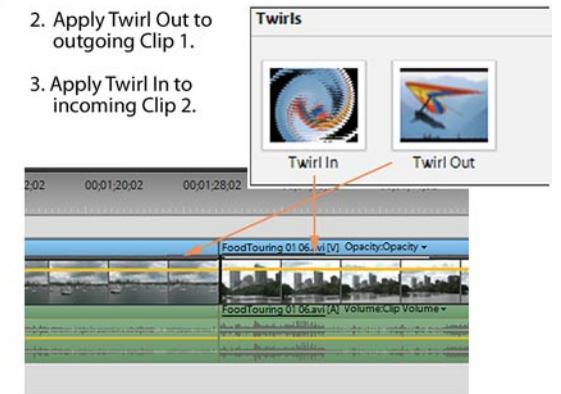
Use a Preset as a Transition

1. Locate the Twirls in the Preset Effects.
2. Apply Twirl Out to outgoing Clip 1.
3. Apply Twirl In to incoming Clip 2.

Presets are merely Premiere Elements effects to which settings and/or keyframing has already been applied. Twirl In, for instance, is keyframed from a 4x twirl to a zero twirl, using the Twirl effect to create a transition into a clip.

There is nothing particularly magical or mysterious about **Presets**. They are merely standard Premiere Elements effects to which keyframed animation has been applied to vary the effect's setting or intensity (as we do **Chapter 5, Cool Keyframing Tricks**). You can even use virtually any effect to keyframe your own transitions. And, if you'd like, you can save it as a custom, permanent **My Preset**, as described in the *Hot Tip* below.

HOT TIP
Create Your Own Preset

If you've customized or keyframed an animated effect (as we did in **Chapter 5, Cool Keyframing Tricks**) and you'd like to save it so that you can reuse it later, you can do so simply by saving it as a **My Preset**.

To save your preset, **right-click** on the effect's listing in your clip's **Applied Effects** panel and select the option to **Save Preset**. When you save a preset, you'll have the option of setting it to attach to the beginning or end of a clip so that it can be used as a transition.

Once you've saved your preset, you can be access it by selecting the **My Presets** category on the **Effects** panel

COOL TRICK

18 Dissolve from Black & White to Color

In *Cool Trick 14*, we showed you how to use keyframing to create a transition from a modern-looking video clip into the old film effect, complete with faded color, blotches and sprocket hole damage.

The **Black & White** effect, however, is one of the few effects in the Premiere Elements set that doesn't have settings. It's either on or off – which means that you can't keyframe a transition into the effect.

But, with a clever combination of existing transitions and effects, we can still create a dissolve from a black & white video into color.

1   Split your clip

Position the **CTI** (playhead) over the spot in your clip that you'd like to serve as the center of your transition from black & white to color.

Click on the **Split Clip** (scissors) button that appears on the **CTI**, as illustrated.

Your clip will be sliced into two clips – which we'll call Clip 1 and Clip 2 – although, when you play the timeline, it will still play as if they were one continuous clip.

2   Locate the Black & White effect

Click on the **Edit** tab and then click the **Effects** button.

The **Black & White** effect is located in the **Image Control** category of effects.

3   Apply the Black & White effect to Clip 1

Drag the **Black & White** effect from the **Effects** panel onto Clip 1, the first part of the clip we split in **Step 1**.

If your **CTI** is positioned over Clip 1 on your timeline, your **Monitor** will display the clip in black & white.
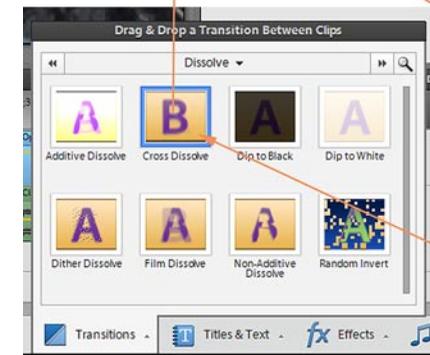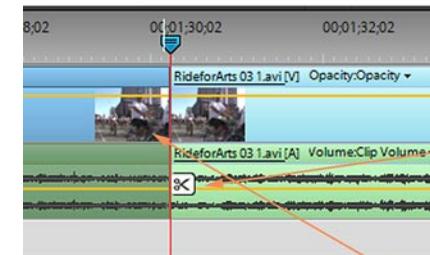
We now have a black & white video that abruptly changes to color. To make this transition a little more gradual, we'll add a dissolve between the two clips.

4   Locate the Cross Dissolve transition

Click on the **Transitions** button on the program's **Action Bar**.

The **Cross Dissolve** is located in the **Dissolve** category of transitions.
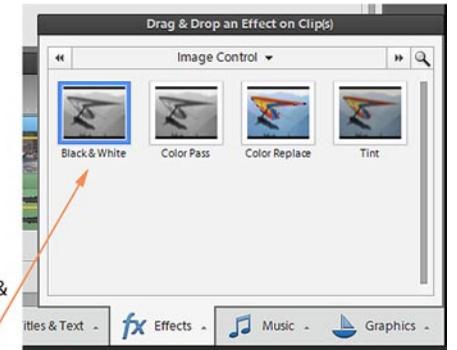
Transition from black & white to color

1. Position the CTI to the point on your clip that you'd like to transition from black & white to color.
   Click the Split Clip (scissors) button to slice the clip in two.

2. Locate the Black & White effect.

3. Apply the Black & White effect to the first part of your clip.

4. Locate the Cross Dissolve transition.

5. Apply the Cross Dissolve between your two clips.

Your clip will smoothly transition from black & white to color.

5   Apply the Cross Dissolve between the clips

Drag the **Cross Dissolve** onto the place on your timeline where the two clips meet.

Because the two clips are using essentially the same visual data (except for the color information), the only effect we'll see during the transition between the two clips is the gradual addition of color to the scene.

By default, transitions last one second. If you'd like to extend this transition from black & white to color, click to select the transition on the timeline and drag on either end of it to lengthen its duration. The longer the transition, the slower the dissolve from black & white to color.

19 Rotate Your Video in Space

As we demonstrated in *Cool Trick 15, Make Your Video Tumble Through Space*, when you combine keyframing with a 3D special effect, you can create the illusion that your video is tumbling through space, toward or away from your viewer.

In this *Cool Trick*, we'll look at how to use a similar 3D effect to transition from one clip to another.

1   Locate the Camera View effect

Click the **Effects** button on the **Action Bar**.

The **Camera View** effect is located in the **Transform** category of effects.

2   Apply the Camera View effect to Clip 1

Drag the **Camera View** effect from the **Effects** panel onto the outgoing clip (Clip 1) on your timeline.

In the **Monitor**, your video should appear slightly skewed by the default settings for the effect.

**3   Apply the Camera View effect to Clip 2**

Drag the same effect from the **Effects** panel onto the incoming clip (Clip 2) on your timeline.

You can also apply the same effect to several clips on the timeline by holding down the **Shift** or **Ctrl** key (the **Cmd** key on a Mac) and selecting a set of clips, then dragging the effect onto any one selected clip.

**HOT TIP**
Precisely positioning your CTI

You can move you **CTI playhead** to very precise positions on your timeline – positioning it, for instance, to exactly one second from the end of the clip – by using the timecode to the left of the timeline's playback buttons.
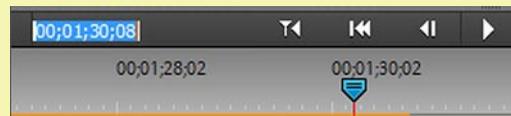
When you click to select this timecode, the numbers become dynamic, and you can overwrite them with whatever minutes, seconds or frame numbers that you'd like. When you press **Enter** after, the **CTI** playhead will jump to that precise position on your timeline!

Rotate your video in space
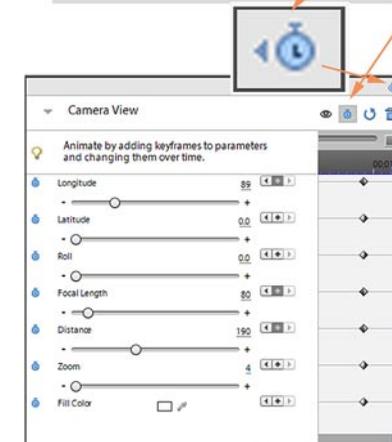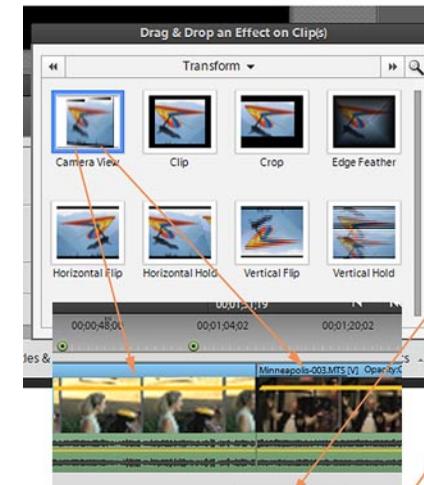
1. Locate the Camera View effect.
2. Apply Camera View to Clip 1.
3. Apply Camera View to Clip 2.
4. With Clip 1 selected, click the Applied Effects button.

   Click Show Keyframe Controls to open Applied Effects panel timeline.
5. Position CTI on Clip 1, move all sliders to left and click Toggle Animation to create initial keyframes.
6. Move CTI to end of Clip 1 and set Longitude to 89, Focal Length to 80 and Distance to 190 to create mid-rotation keyframes.
7. With Clip 2 selected, click the Applied Effects button. Then click Show Keyframe Controls to open the Applied Effects panel timeline.
8. Position CTI at beginning of Clip 2 and click Toggle Animation to create initial keyframes. Set Longitude to 269, Focal Length to 80 and Distance to 190.
9. Move CTI one second to right and set Longitude to 360 and all other sliders to the far left. New keyframes will automatically be created.

The effect will create a transition in which Clip 1 rotates out and then Clip 2 rotates in.

4   Open Clip 1's Applied Effects panel

With the outgoing clip selected on the timeline, click the **Applied Effects** button on the right side of the program's interface.

Click the **Camera View** listing in the **Applied Effects** panel to display the effect's settings and properties.

5 **Set an initial keyframe for Clip 1's Camera View effect**

Open the **Applied Effects** panel's timeline by clicking on the **Show Keyframe Controls** button in the upper right of the panel, as in the illustration on the previous page.

Position the **CTI** playhead about 1 second from the end of Clip 1.

Click the **Toggle Animation** button (the stopwatch) to the right of the **Camera View** listing. A set of keyframes points will be created for the properties of the **Camera View** effect.

Set all of the sliders to the far left so that **Longitude, Latitude** and **Roll** are set to zero, **Focal Length** and **Distance** are set to 1 and **Zoom** is set to 4. The video displayed in your **Monitor** should show *no* **Camera View** effects.

These settings will become your initial keyframes, and all video prior to this keyframe will look as if no **Camera View** effects have been applied to the clip.

6 **Set a second keyframe for Clip 1's Camera View effect**

Move the **CTI** to the end of Clip 1 and change the following **Camera View** settings:

> Set **Longitude** to 89.
> Set **Focal Length** to 80.
> Set **Distance** to 190.

New keyframe points will automatically be created at the position of the **CTI**.

These settings will collapse your video while skewing it to create the illusion of depth. In other words, it will make it appear as though your video has turned sideways inside your video frame.

If you'd like, you can also change the color of the background. To do so, click the color swatch to the right of the **Fill Color** listing and, from the **Color Picker** panel that opens, select a new background color by adjusting the Hue slider (the vertical rainbow slider in the center in the center of the panel) and then clicking on a color on the gradient window that appears on the left side of the panel.

You may want to note the R, G and B values listed for this new color in the **Color Picker** so that you can use the same color for a background in Clip 2.

7 **Open Clips 2's Applied Effects panel**

With the second or incoming clip selected on the timeline, click the **Applied Effects** button, if necessary, to open the **Applied Effects** panel for this clip.

Click the **Camera View** listing in the **Applied Effects** panel to display the effect's settings and properties.

8 **Set an initial keyframe for Clip 2's Camera View effect**

To complete your transition and "un-rotate" from the rotation you set up in **Step 6**, start with Clip 2 in what is essentially Clip 1's closing position and then go out to a "no effect" setting – essentially reversing the keyframes we created for Clip 1.

Open the **Applied Effects** panel's timeline by clicking on the **Show Keyframe Controls** button in the upper right of the panel, as in the illustration on the previous page.

Move the **CTI** to the beginning of Clip 2 and change the following **Camera View** settings:

> Set **Longitude** to 269.
> Set **Focal Length** to 80.
> Set **Distance** to 190.

Click the **Toggle Animation** button (the stopwatch) to the right of the **Camera View** listing. A set of keyframes will be created for the properties of the **Camera View** effect.

If you've changed the **Fill Color** in Clip 1, you should match that color in Clip 2 so that the transition between them will be seamless.

You may notice that this clip's initial keyframe setting for **Longitude** is 269 while the previous clip's final keyframe setting for **Longitude** is 89. Using these numbers will cause our animation to rotate in from one side and out from the other.

In other words, in the animation created by this keyframing, Clip 1 will appear to swing away to the right while Clip 2 will appear to turn to swing back toward us from the left – creating a complimentary animation so that your clips seem to swing completely around in a 180 degree arc as they transition.

It's an effect that's a bit hard to describe but, if you experiment a little, using 89 rather than 269 for this keyframe's **Longitude**, you'll quickly see the difference in the animation.

9 **Set a second keyframe for Clip 2's Basic 3D effect**

Move the **CTI** to one second into Clip 2 and move all of the sliders to the far left so that **Latitude** and **Roll** are set to zero, **Focal Length** and **Distance** are set to 1 and **Zoom** is set to 4.

Set **Longitude** to 360.

Once again we're playing with numbers to create the effect we want. The 360 degree setting for **Longitude** will look exactly the same as the zero degree setting – as if no **Longitude** effect has been applied. (This is because, of course, a circle has 360 degrees, and so a 360 here gets us back to zero.)

By using 360 for this keyframe rather than zero, however, we will cause the video to complete a quarter turn in space to the right from 269 rather than making a three-quarter rotating backwards to the left to zero.

At this final keyframe position, the video displayed in your **Monitor** should show no **Camera View** effects, indicating the end of our transitional animation.

A new set of keyframes will automatically be created at the position of the **CTI**, and all video following this keyframe will show no **Camera View** effects applied.

When you play your video, Clip 1 should play normally until about 1 second before it ends. It should then rotate away from the camera and, when it rotates back in, it should display Clip 2.

COOL TRICK

20 Create a Custom Gradient Wipe

The **Gradient Wipe** is a uniquely customizable transition.

By design, this transition will create a wipe, from one clip to another, by following any pattern you provide it – from this pattern's blackest black point to its whitest white point.

You can create your own custom gradient pattern for this *Cool Trick*. We've also got a nice variety pack of black-to-white gradients available as a free download from Muvipix.com. Just go to our home page and do a product search on "Gradient."

Save your gradient pattern or image file to your hard drive in almost any graphics format (PSD, JPEG, TIF, etc.). When you're ready to apply it as your **Gradient Wipe,** you'll just browse to it.

1   **Locate the Gradient Wipe transition**

Click the **Transitions** button on the **Action Bar**.

The **Gradient Wipe** effect is located in the **Wipe** category of **Transitions**.

2   **Apply the Gradient Wipe to your clips**

Apply the **Gradient Wipe** by dragging it onto the intersection of two clips on your timeline.

Create a Custom Gradient Wipe

1. Locate the Gradient Wipe transition.

2. Drag the transition to the intersection of two clips on your timeline.

3. In the Gradient Wipe Settings panel that opens, click Select Image.

4. Browse to select your custom pattern.

The Gradient Wipe will transition between your clips based on your pattern, from blackest black to whitest white.

To swap in a new pattern, double-click on the transition on your timeline to open the Transition Adjustments, click the More button and then click on the Custom button and browse to your new pattern.

When you apply this transition, the **Gradient Wipe Settings** panel will automatically open.

3   **Select a Gradient Wipe image**

Click on the **Select Image** button on the **Gradient Wipe Settings** panel.

A Windows Explorer or Finder browse screen will open.

4   **Browse to a pattern**

Browse to select your gradient pattern.

Although the **Gradient Wipe** will work with virtually any image of any color combination, when you custom-create your own pattern, you'll most likely be working in grayscale – a black & white image with shades of gray.

Whatever pattern or image you choose, the **Gradient Wipe** will create its wipe transition following the image's color, from its blackest black point to its whitest white, as in the checkerboard pattern illustrated above.

Once you've selected a pattern and clicked **Open**, the image will appear in your **Gradient Wipe Settings** panel, as in the illustration on the previous page.

If you'd like, you can also adjust the **Softness** of the wipe. The "harder" you set the wipe (in other words, the lower the **Softness** setting), the more the **Gradient Wipe** will create a hard line between the old and new clip during the transition.
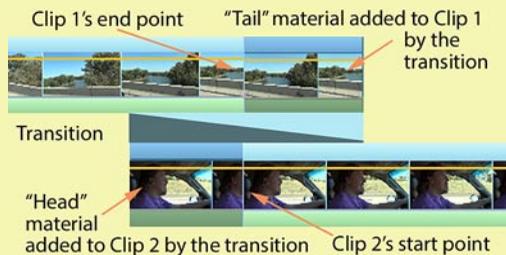
Click **OK**.

As you play back your video, your clips will transition from one to another based on the pattern you've provided and at the **Softness** level you've set.

As with any transition, you can slow the speed of the transition by dragging either end to extend its length on your timeline.

If you'd like to swap in a different gradient pattern at any point, double-click on the transition on your timeline and, in the **Transition Adjustments** panel that opens, click **More**, then the **Custom** button. This will re-open the **Gradient Wipe Settings** panel so that you can browse to select a new gradient for your wipe.

HOT TIP
How transitions work

Sometimes transitions seem to work in strange ways – loading unevenly between clips or re-adding frames that have been trimmed away. But knowing how they work can help you understand why they do what they do.

Clip 1's end point — "Tail" material added to Clip 1 by the transition

Transition

"Head" material added to Clip 2 by the transition — Clip 2's start point

When you add a transition between two clips, the program needs about half a second or more of additional frames beyond each clip's end or start point to use as a **transitional footage,** the brief segment in which one clip transitions into the other. These additional frames are officially called "head" and "tail" material, and the program automatically adds them as needed.

Sometimes this means that frames you've trimmed away are re-added to your video, while other times it means that the program will create a freeze frame (when no head or tail material is available) for the transitional frames. If this happens, or if you can't seem to make your transition sit evenly on two adjacent clips, the easiest solution is to trim back your clip(s) an additional half a second or so so that the program has the additional footage it needs to create its transition.