

Exercise | 48

Skills Covered

- About Adobe Flash
- Start Flash and Create a New Document
- Set Document Properties
- Enter Content on the Stage
- Change the Stage View

Software Skills Adobe Flash CS5 is a software program you use to create animations and applications that range from simple (such as an animated logo) to very complex (an interactive game).

Design Skills Being able to add animation, video, and more to the Web pages you create expands your skill set as a Web designer.

Application Skills You will be developing Flash content to include on the GardenProjects Web site. In this exercise, you learn some basic Flash concepts, start Flash, explore the Flash interface, and then exit Flash.

TERMS

Actions Built-in Flash components you can use to animate Flash applications.

Flash player A program used to run Flash applications.

Frames The basic unit of time used in a Flash animation.

Objects Elements you add to the Stage and animate in Flash.

Stage The central work area of the screen where you create Flash applications.

Timeline The Flash panel at the top of the screen where you arrange, sequence, and set the timing of Flash objects.

NOTES

About Flash

- Use Flash to create Flash applications, to publish applications for use in other programs such as a Web browser, and to play applications on your computer.
- A document file that you create, save, and edit with Flash has a .fla file extension. The .fla files are XML-based, which makes it easier for you to edit a project file and have the changes reflected in other documents that use that same animation.
- When you publish the file, it is saved with a .swf file extension. You play .swf files using the **Flash Player** program.
- Flash applications are comprised of a series of **frames**, called a **Timeline**. You insert content such as shapes, images, and **actions** on the frames. When you play the application, the frames are displayed in sequence, so that the content appears to change and move.
- This process is similar to creating a flipbook from a simple pad of paper. If you draw a picture on each page in the pad, and then flip the pages quickly, the picture seems to move. A Flash application functions on the same basic principle, with each frame acting as a page in the pad of paper.

- Some of Flash's unique features include the following:
 - Flash has a built-in vector-based graphics drawing utility that you can use to draw, edit, and modify shapes.
 - Flash enables you to create both bitmap and vector graphics for use in your animations.
 - You can incorporate interactivity in Flash applications. For example, you can set buttons and images to start actions when clicked, enabling users to access different parts of the application or to start different animations.
 - Flash files download faster and start playing faster than other similar file types because they are smaller and they are streamed, which means they start playing while they are still downloading.
 - Flash CS5 includes a new text engine (called TLF, or Text Layout Framework) that gives you a high degree of control over the text you add to your animations.

Start Flash and Create a New Document

- Start Adobe Flash CS5 by selecting it in your All Programs menu.
- By default, when you first start Flash, the Start page displays, as shown in Figure 6-10.
- From the Start page, you can open a recent item, create a new item, create an item from a template, view a number of Flash CS5 tutorials, or extend the capabilities of your version of Flash by visiting the Flash Exchange Web site.
- If the Start page is not displayed, you can create a new Flash document by choosing the File > New menu command and choosing the document type you want to create in the New Document dialog box, as shown in Figure 6-11.

Figure 6-10. Adobe Flash CS5 Start page

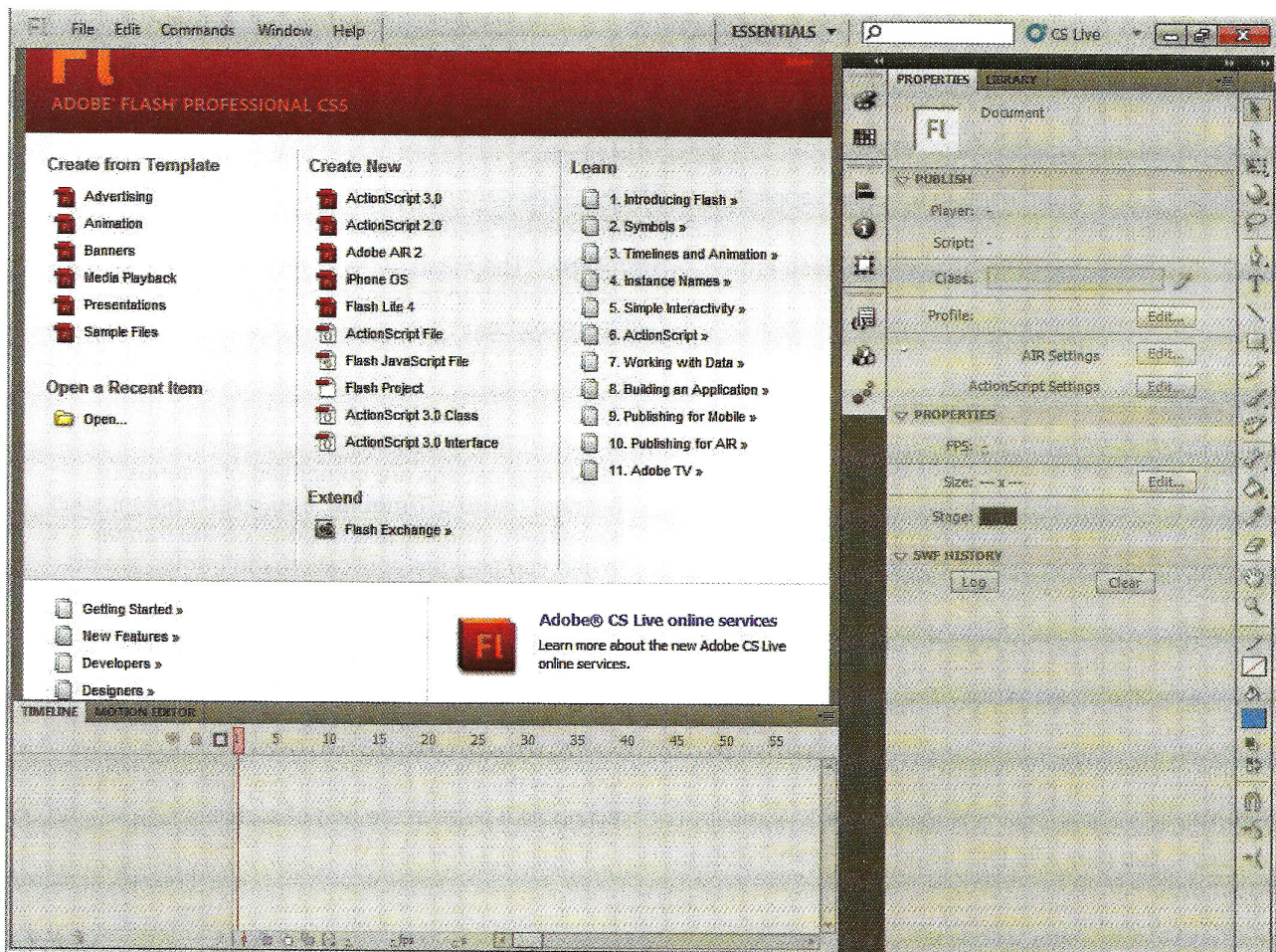
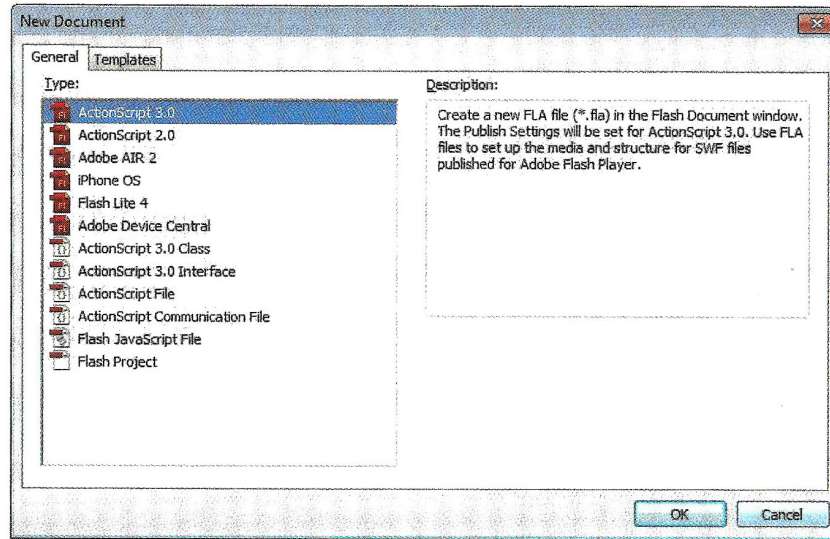


Figure 6-11. Start a new Flash document

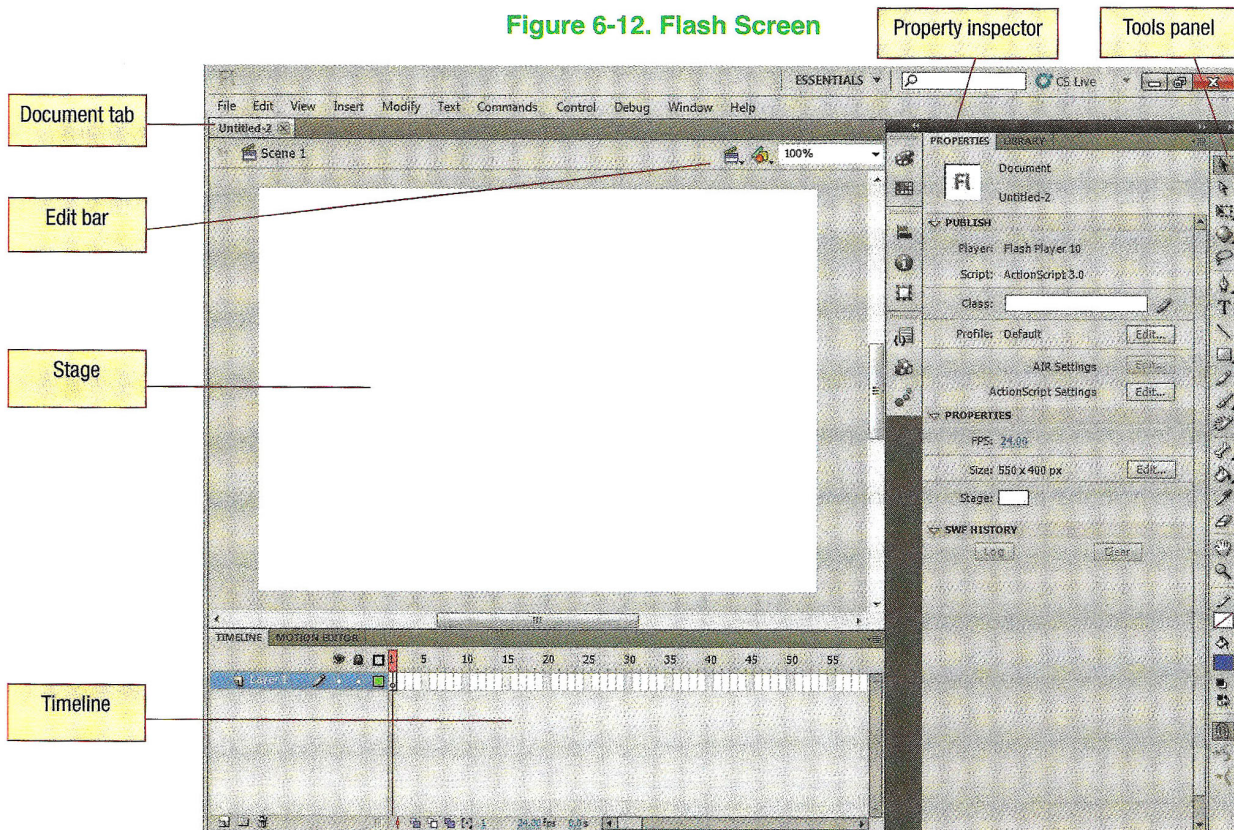


Explore the Flash Window

- A new Flash document file opens in the Flash window.
 - ✓ *If someone has rearranged the Flash screen on your system, the screen that opens on your computer may not look exactly like the default screen shown in the following illustration. (As in other CS5 applications the workspace can be changed in the workspace drop-down menu. Select Essentials to have your screen display like the illustration.)*

- In addition to typical Windows elements such as a title bar, menu bar, and control buttons, the Flash interface includes the following screen elements:
 - Stage. The rectangular area where you create content and preview the file.
 - Pasteboard. The gray area outside the Stage, where you store content that you do not want to display when the file plays.

Figure 6-12. Flash Screen



- **Timeline.** A special panel where you organize and control content using layers and frames. The timeline is explored more fully in the next section.
 - **Property inspector.** A panel that displays the most commonly used attributes for the currently selected item. You can view and modify the attributes in the Property inspector.
 - **Toolbars.** Flash displays the Edit Bar by default in the work area. To display the other toolbars, choose the **Window > Toolbars** menu command and click the toolbar you want to add.
 - **Panels.** Panels along the right side of the Stage in which you select options to control the behavior or appearance of the selected object. The panel name appears on its title bar. You can collapse or expand panels as needed.
- The tools panel includes tools for selecting objects, drawing and painting on the Stage, applying color, setting color preferences, and zooming the display, as Figure 6-14 shows. The lower portion of the tools panel displays additional choices that relate to the specific tools you select.
 - Flash CS5 includes three new tools that offer special functions. The 3D Rotation Tool enables you to easily turn a 2D object into a 3D object; the Bone tool enables you to link separate instances into a single animated process; and the Deco tool enables you to make a geometric pattern out of shapes you create.

Understand the Timeline

- The timeline is a vitally important part of arranging, ordering, and timing your Flash projects.
- The layers of your Flash document appear in the column on the left side of the timeline.
- The frames in each layer appear in a row to the right of the layer name.
- The timeline header shows frame numbers.
- The playhead moves as the animation plays, showing the current frame (the one displayed on the Stage).
- The timeline status bar shows the current frame number, the current frame rate, and the elapsed time of the current frame.

Learn About the Tools Panel

- The tools panel gives you a collection of tools you use to draw, paint, select, and modify content, and to change the view of the Stage.
- Some of the tools are similar to the ones you find in Fireworks CS5; others are unique to Flash.
- Tools that display small arrows in the lower-right corner of the tool offer additional tools behind the currently displayed tool. To display the additional tools, click and hold the mouse button on the tool.

Figure 6-14. Tools panel

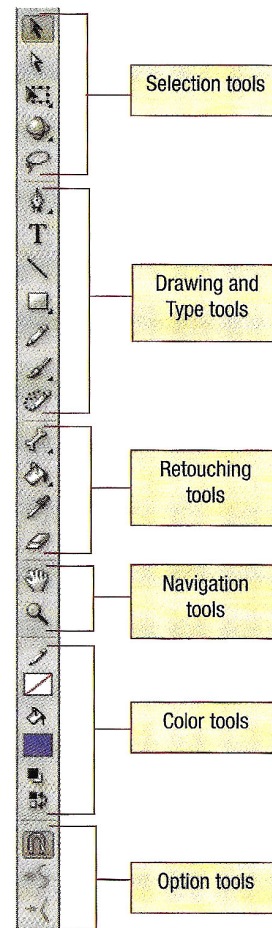
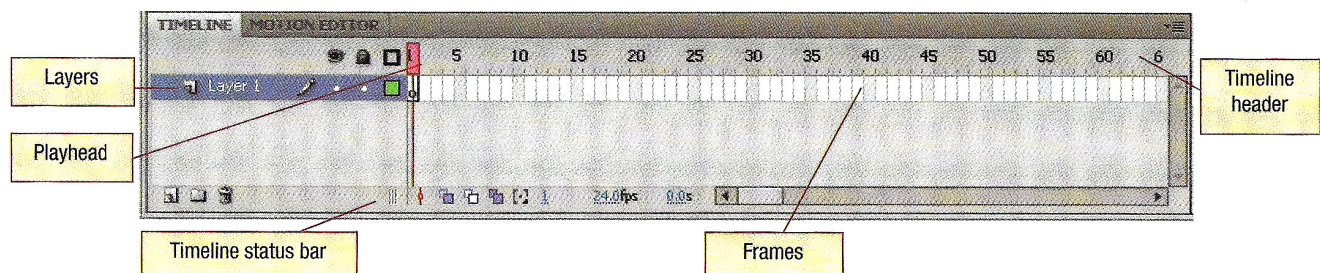


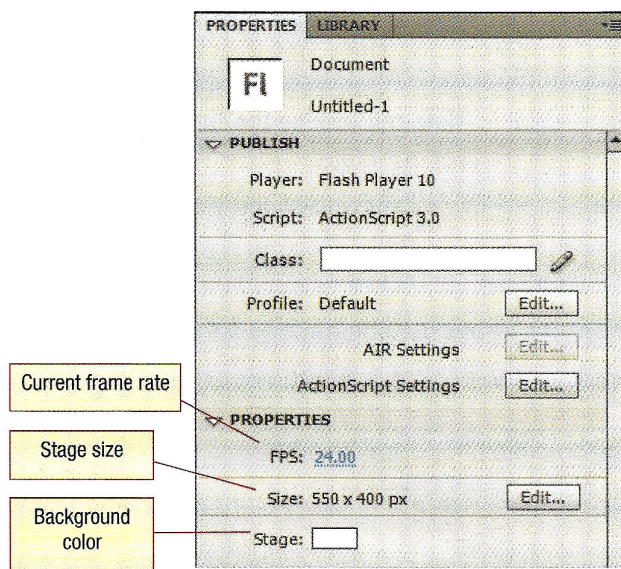
Figure 6-13. Timeline elements



Set Document Properties

- Before you create content in a Flash document, you should set the document properties in the Properties inspector.
- In the Property inspector, you can set the frame rate (fps), the size of the Stage, and the color of the background (see the following illustration).
 - ✓ *You can also set document properties in the Document Properties dialog box. Display the dialog box by choosing the Modify > Document menu command.*


Figure 6-15. Property inspector



- Frame rate in Flash is measured in frames per second (fps). The default frame rate is 24.
- By default, Stage size is measured in **pixels** (px). The default size of the Stage is 550 x 400 px. The minimum size is 1 x 1 px; the maximum size is 2880 x 2880 px.

- You can select a background color from the color palette. The hexadecimal color code for the selected color appears in the code box at the top of the palette when you click in the Stage box.

Enter Content on the Stage




- Adding content in Flash involves using the tools in the Tools panel to draw your objects directly on the Stage. You can also import objects such as pictures, sound, video, or text.
- The quality of objects that you draw may depend on your artistic ability. However, anyone can learn to create basic shapes and apply formatting to enhance content in an application.
- To quickly draw an oval, for example, you select the  Oval tool, and then drag the mouse pointer on the Stage.
- Flash displays the shape using the default color settings.
 - ✓ *You will learn more about drawing basic shapes in Exercise 49.*

Change the Stage View





- You can close or hide panels you don't need when entering content on the Stage. For example, close the Timeline while drawing objects so that it does not obscure the bottom of the Stage.
- You can use the Zoom control in the edit bar to change the magnification setting of the Stage.
- Changing the magnification does not affect the actual size of the objects on the Stage. It affects only the appearance of the objects on your screen.

PROCEDURES

Start Flash





1. Click  on the Windows taskbar .
2. Click **All Programs** .
3. Click **Adobe Web Premium CS5**.
✓ If you are using a different suite, the program name displayed in All Programs will vary from the one shown here.
4. Click **Adobe Flash CS5 Professional**.
OR
■ Double-click the **Adobe Flash CS5 Professional** icon on the desktop.




Create a New Document

1. Start Flash.
2. On the Start page, under Create New, click **Flash File**.
✓ Choose Flash File (ActionScript 3.0) to create a file that reflects the latest Web standards.
OR
■ Click the **New** button  on the main toolbar.
OR
1. Click **File**  .
2. Click **New**  .
3. Click **Flash File**.
4. Click **OK**  .









Set Document Properties

Set the Stage size:










1. Create a new Flash document.
2. Click **Modify**  .
3. Click **Document**  .
- OR**
■ In Property inspector, click the **Edit** button next to the Size setting.
✓ The Document Properties dialog box appears, with the width value selected.

4. In the Dimensions setting, type a new Stage width.
5. Press **Tab** .
6. Type a new Stage height.
7. Click **OK**  .






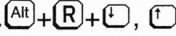



Set the Frame rate:

1. Click **Modify**  .
2. Click **Document**  .
3. Click **Frame rate**  .
4. Type a new Frame rate.
5. Click **OK**  .
- OR**
1. In the Property inspector, click FPS.
2. Type a new Frame rate.
OR
Drag the slider to the Frame rate you want to use.



Set the Background color:

1. Click **Modify**  .
2. Click **Document**  .
3. Click the **Background color** palette .
- OR**
In Property inspector, click the **Stage** box.
✓ The mouse pointer changes to an eye dropper.
4. On the color palette, click the desired color.
OR
 - a. In the Hexadecimal code box, type the code for desired color.
 - b. Press **Enter**  .
5. Click **OK**  .

Change the Ruler units:





1. Click **Modify**  .
2. Click **Document**  .
3. Click **Ruler units**   .
4. Click desired unit.
5. Click **OK**  .

Draw an Oval on the Stage







1. In Tools panel, click **Oval** tool  .
2. Position the mouse pointer at the desired location on the Stage.
3. Click and drag to draw the shape.
4. Release the mouse button.
✓ See Exercise 49 for more information on drawing basic shapes in Flash.

Hide and Display the Timeline



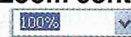























Hide the Timeline:

- Double-click the Timeline tab.
OR
■ Press    .

Display the Timeline:

1. Click **Window**  .
2. Click **Timeline**  .
3. Click **OK**  .

Change the Stage View

- On edit bar, type desired magnification percentage in Zoom box  .
- OR**
 1. Click **Zoom control** drop-down arrow  .
 - OR**
 - a. Click **View**  .
 - b. Click **Magnification**  .
 2. Click desired percentage:
 - **Fit in Window**  
 - **25%**  
 - **50%**  
 - **100%**  
 - **200**  
 - **400**  
 - **800**  
 - **Show Frame**  
 - **Show All**  

EXERCISE DIRECTIONS


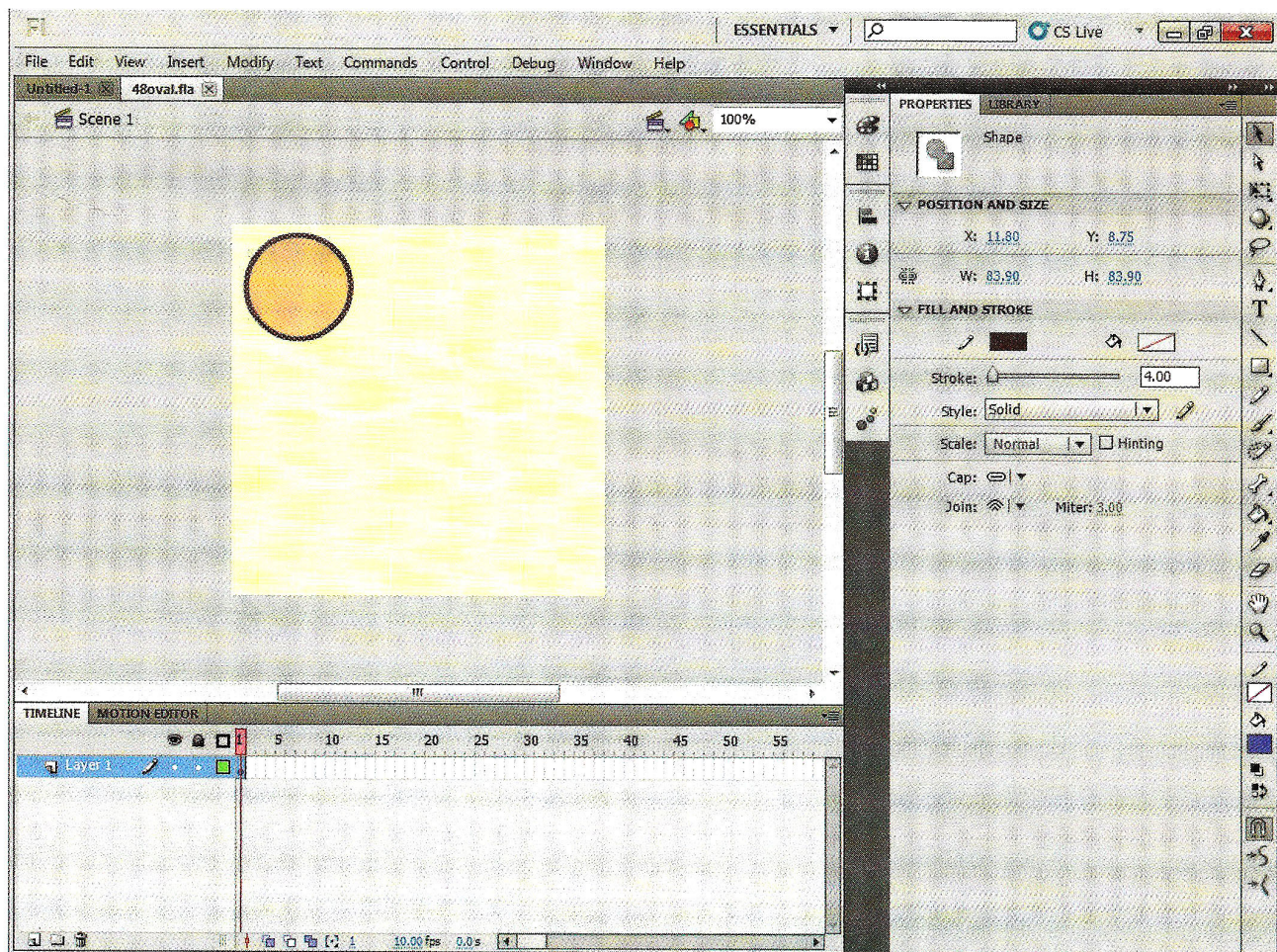
1. Start Flash.
2. Create a new document.
3. Move the mouse pointer over each of the tools in the Tools panel and review the ToolTips.
4. Change the Stage size to 300 x 300.
5. Save the file with the name `Lastname,firstinitial_48oval`
6. Hide the Timeline by double-clicking the Timeline tab.
7. Open the Document Properties dialog box and change the Background color to light yellow (`#FFFFCC`).
8. Change the Frame rate to 10.
9. Set the magnification to 50%.
10. Set the magnification to Show All.
11. Select the Oval tool by holding the mouse button after clicking the  Rectangle tool.
✓ Notice that the Property inspector now displays properties for the oval shape.
12. In the Property inspector, select a Stroke color of `#663333`.
13. Change the Stroke fill to `#FFCC99`.
14. Change the Stroke height to 4.
15. Change the display back to 100%.
16. Draw an oval in the upper-left corner of the Stage. Redisplay the timeline. Your screen should resemble Illustration A.
17. Save the changes to the file.
18. Close the file.
19. Exit Flash.

Illustration A



ON YOUR OWN

1. Start Flash and create a new document.
2. Change the size of the Stage to fit dimensions to your liking.
3. Set the background color as desired.
4. Click the drawing tool of your choice.
5. Set the Stroke color, Stroke fill, and Stroke height as desired.
6. Draw the shape on the Stage.
7. Change the view to Fit in Window.
8. Save the file as **SO_48sample_xx** in your Solutions folder.
9. Exit Flash.