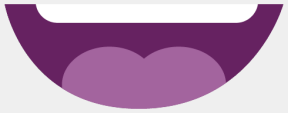
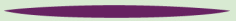
Mouth Rigging for Voiceover Lip-Syncing in Ae

Create Artwork for the Mouth

You can create the artwork for the various mouth shapes in Illustrator, Photoshop, or whatever software you're most comfortable with. Adobe Illustrator is a great choice, since the artwork is vector.

SOUND	ARTWORK	SOUND	ARTWORK
AH		TH, L, D	
OH		B, M, P	
EH, I		F, V	
SS, CH		OU, W, DOO	
U, OO, R			

SHAPE	ARTWORK
CLOSED	
LAUGH	
FROWN	
DEFAULT SHAPE	*opportunity to reveal character identity

Create the Lip-Sync Rig in Ae

Recommendation: Have a mirror ready to use, when working on lip-sync animation!

1. Open Ae and import the mouth artwork. If importing an Ai or Ps file, be certain to import as “Composition with Retain Layer Size” selected.
2. Create a new composition, named “Mouth”.
3. Bring the mouth artwork into the “Mouth” composition, and trim all layers, so that each layer is a duration of one frame.
4. OPTIONAL: If desired, adjust layer order.
5. Select all layers. Right-click > Keyframe Assistant > Sequence Layers
6. Trim comp to work area. Composition duration (total frames) should now be equal to the number of mouth artwork shapes you have.
    a. In my example there are 13 mouth shapes, so my composition duration should be 13 frames long.
7. Go back out to the main comp. Select the Mouth comp layer. Go to Layer > Time > Enable Time Remapping
8. From your main comp, create a null object, and name the null “Mouth CTRL”
9. Add Slider Control effect to Mouth CTRL null.
10. Go to Slider Control properties. Right-click > Edit Value > Set maximum range to *13
    a. *In this example I have 13 artwork options for the mouth shape. If I had 25, I would set the maximum range to be 25.
11. Link the Time Remap (“Mouth” composition) property to the Slider Control effect on “Mouth CTRL” null.
12. Add expression to Time Remap/Mouth Composition layer
    a. a=thisComp.layer("mouthCtrl").effect("Slider Control")("Slider")
       framesToTime(a)
13. To animate the mouth composition, create keyframes on the Mouth CTRL null. Use HOLD keyframes for all Mouth CTRL animation.