**FLASH 3**

Interactive programming in Flash ranges from simple to fairly complex. You can use the Help>Lessons>Buttons tutorial to help you learn to edit them. However, I find that the Lessons are not really helpful for complicated things. You might find the Help Menu at Help>Using Flash (F1) more useful and much, much more complete. We’ll start with a really simple button action.

**BEGINNING BUTTONS**

Buttons can be associated with simple or complex actions. When you create a button, you first draw an outline, then convert it to a symbol, then create features that occur when you move your mouse over it or click on it.

1. Draw a box and fill it to create your button outline. Your button can really be anything - a picture, an object, or whatever you want.
2. Select your box, choose Insert>Convert to Symbol, give it a name, and this time check the ‘button’ option on the dialog box.
3. Choose Window>Library to get the Library panel open - note that your button appears with a button icon next to it.
4. Right-Click on your button, or select it in the Library, then go to the arrow on the right side of the top of the Library panel and click to get the pop-up menu. Select ‘Edit’. You will see a new window appear. Don’t worry, you haven’t lost anything.
5. The new window is the Symbol editor. Buttons come associated with 4 states: Up, Over, Down, Hit. In the editor these are represented as large frames. Each frame is associated with a mouse movement. For example, ‘Over’ corresponds to moving your mouse over the button - you’ve seen this effect on web pages.
6. Fill in the 4 states with variations on your button - different fills, etc. Your outline appears in the ‘Up’ frame. You can modify it if you want.
7. Change the subsequent frames by clicking on the frame and inserting a Keyframe. Your ‘Up’ button will appear. Change it how you want and move on to the next frame. The only key element is to make sure that all of your subsequent buttons are registered with the first one.
8. When you finish making all 4 frames, Click Scene1 to return to your movie.
9. To check that your button works, choose Control>Enable Simple Buttons. You should see your button respond when you use your mouse.

**BUTTON ACTIONS**

Now create a simple button action to associate with your button.

1. Create a quick Motion Tween that takes up about 30 frames (in a separate layer from your button for convenience). Make sure you extend the keyframe with your button on it to be the same length as the Tween.
2. Check to see if the Actions panel is open. If not, choose Window>Actions. In ‘Normal Mode’ the Actions panel allows you to insert simple actions. There is also an ‘Expert Mode’ where you write your own code. You’ll see the Actions Options on the pop-up menu at the top right of the Panel.
3. Now select your Button symbol. On the Actions Panel, you’ll see that there are two vertical
windows. The one on the left has a list of functions. To see what the basic ones do you can open the Netscape Help viewer (hit F1 or choose Using Flash from the Help Menu), go to Creating Interactive Movies > Using basic actions for navigation and interaction.

(4) For the simplest example, just choose ‘Play’ from the left side of the actions panel (It should be under Basic Actions - click on the book icon next to Basic Actions to see the list). You will see some ‘code’ appear in the right-hand window. You don’t have to do anything to it for this case. If you wanted to, you could specify a particular movie to play, the time index to play it at, the location on the frame, etc. By default, the Play command will play the movie in the window at this time, i.e. the tween you just made.

(5) Try your movie by rewinding to the first frame, then clicking on the Button. For simple interactive actions, you can play them in the Flash window (such as this one). In order to preview more complex interactive actions, you have to go to Control>Test Movie.

(6) Try to do the same procedure to create a ‘Stop’ button. Or take a look at the Help>Creating Interactive Movies to see some more complicated options.

**CHALLENGE**

Instead of just using the default movie, create a Symbol - Movie Clip (you designate them on the dialog box from Insert>Convert to Symbol). To see how to save a Movie Clip, either experiment (create the Movie first), or read the Help text. When you create your button, use the options on the ‘Normal Mode’ to set your Movie Clip as the target so that your button is associated with one Clip - you may also find the loadMovie function useful. Now you can have several Movie Clips that run independently...

**COMPUTER OFFICE HOURS: THURSDAY 6:00 PM IN THE LAB**