

Jumpstart Card #4



USE THE BONE TOOL TO MAKE A CHARACTER MOVE

The bone tool allows you to create character animation quickly and easily. It allows you to create bone structures that join multiple objects or parts of a character or object. Once you have a bone structure created, the parts remain together. This means you have a character that is a bit like a puppet. You can move the arms and legs at different keyframes to animate your character.



1. CREATE YOUR CHARACTER

You are going to create a character that has 6 parts that are all individual movie clips.

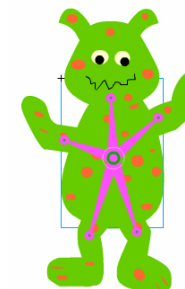
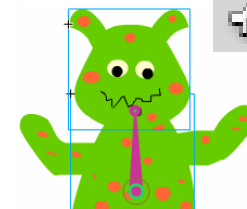
- To begin, create a new Flash file and in the first frame on layer 1, draw the body of your character. Select the body and press **F8** to convert the body to a movie clip. Enter **body_mc** and select the **movie clip** type option.
- Create the following parts of your character and convert each of them to a movie clip symbol.
 - head (head_mc)
 - left leg (leftleg_mc)
 - left arm (leftarm_mc)
 - rightleg (rightleg_mc)
 - rightarm (rightarm_mc)
- Position all the pieces in place so that your character looks complete. Your character will move best if the legs and arms slightly overlap the body.

www.flashclassroom.com

2. CREATE THE BONES FOR YOUR CHARACTER

It's now time to add the bones (or armature) for your character. In this activity, we will do this at a very simple level. This tool is very powerful and can be used at a much higher level for very intricate character animation.

- Select the bone tool (shown here).
- Click on the centre of the body of your character and drag your mouse up to the bottom of the head. You will see a 'bone' appear. This links the two parts together.
- Repeat this process until you have created bones from the centre of the body to the start of each of the arms and legs. Click undo if you make a mistake. When you are finished your bone structure (armature) should look like this. Click on the black selection arrow and have a go at moving the parts.



2. ANIMATE YOUR CHARACTER

Let's make our character move using the bone structure you have created.

- Click on frame 5 and right click and select **Insert Pose**.
- Use the black arrow tool to change the position of the parts of your character.
- Extend your animation by adding more new poses at other points along your timeline.
- Test your animation by pressing **Ctrl + Enter**.

For more detailed tutorials and virtual lessons on the bone tool, visit the Flash Classroom at:

www.flashclassroom.com