# Creating Movie Clips

Movie clips are an important feature of Flash. You can create an animated movie clip as a symbol and use it many times within other animations without affecting the size of the file. Movie Clip Symbols are self-contained animations with their own independent timeline so they do not complicate the timeline of the main animation you are creating. Think of a Movie Clip Symbol as a completed animation that can be used within other animations.
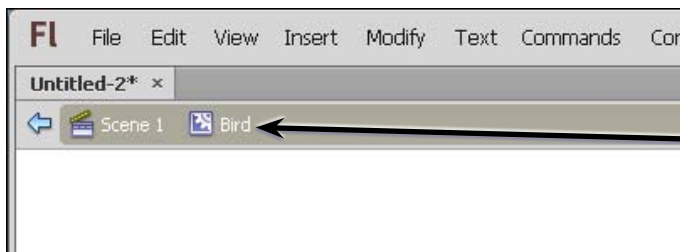
Creating a Movie Clip

Movie clips are created as a symbol then used as required. A simple movie clip of a bird flapping its wings will be created.

A   Setting a Movie Clip Symbol

1   Load Flash or close the current file and create a new ACTIONSCRIPT 3.0 file.

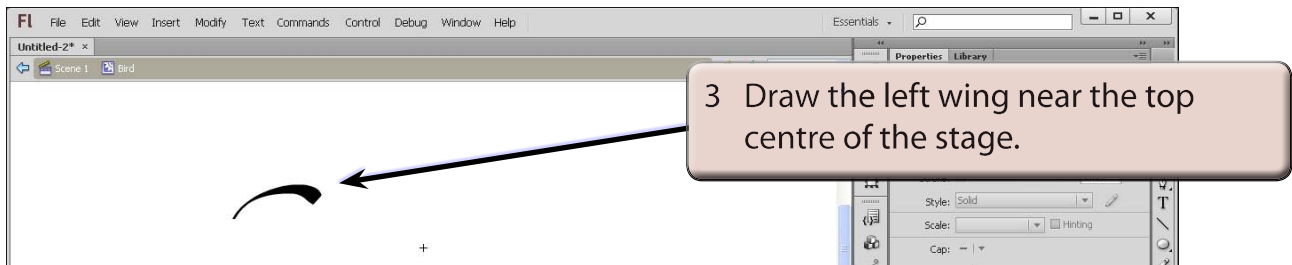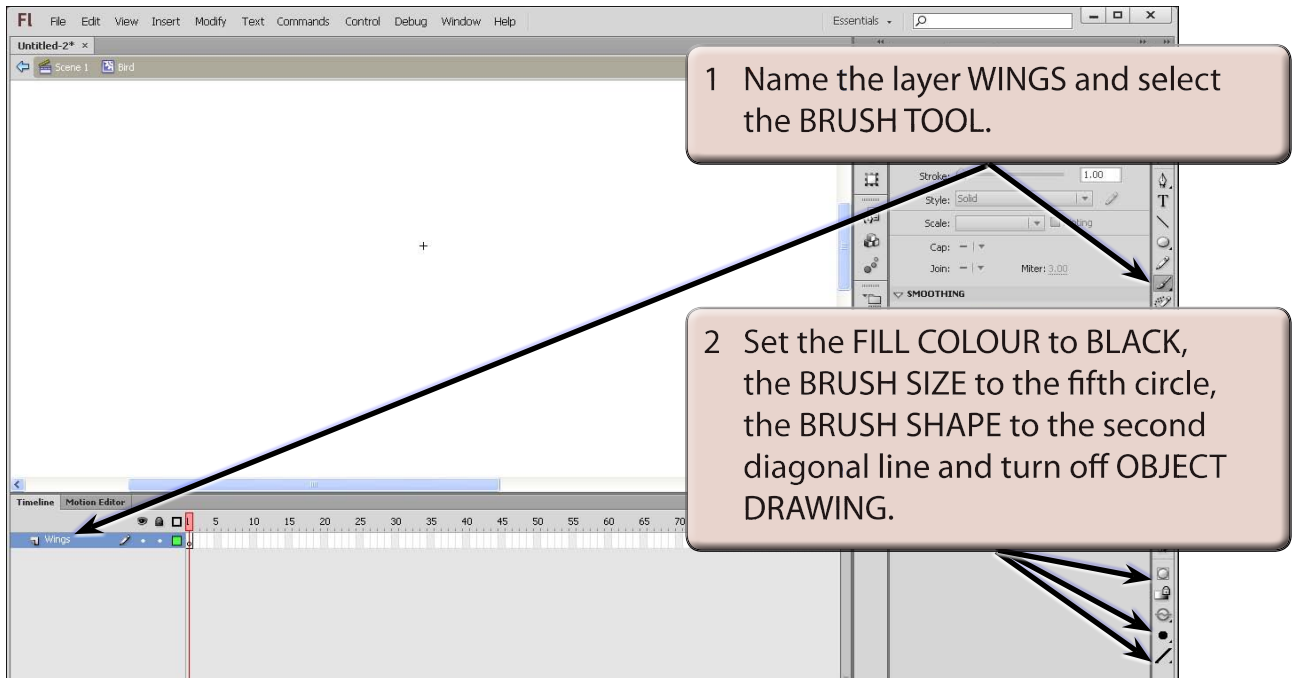2   Display the INSERT menu and select NEW SYMBOL.
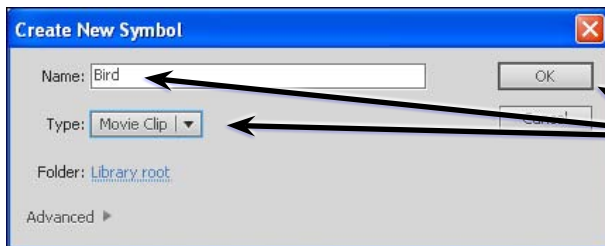
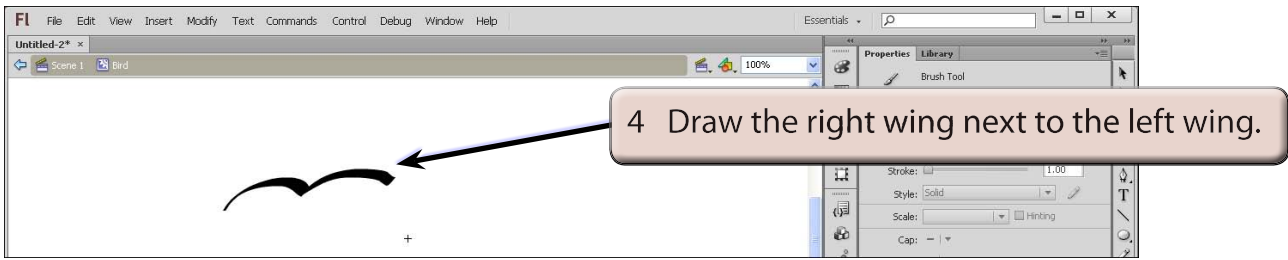3   Name the symbol BIRD, set the TYPE to MOVIE CLIP and click on OK.

4   The screen will be set to MOVIE CLIP EDIT MODE. Notice that the BIRD label is added above the STAGE to indicate that you are editing the symbol.

B Drawing the First Position of the Bird

1 Name the layer WINGS and select the BRUSH TOOL.

2 Set the FILL COLOUR to BLACK, the BRUSH SIZE to the fifth circle, the BRUSH SHAPE to the second diagonal line and turn off OBJECT DRAWING.

3 Draw the left wing near the top centre of the stage.

NOTE: It might take a few goes to get the wing looking right. Use CTRL+Z or COMMAND+Z to undo the wing until you produce the shape you want. The mouse needs to be rotated a little as you draw the wing.

4 Draw the right wing next to the left wing.

C   Drawing the Second Position of the Bird

1 Display the INSERT menu, highlight TIMELINE and select BLANK KEYFRAME to add a second (empty) keyframe to the TIMELINE. The BIRD should disappear.

2 Click on the ONION SKIN button at the base of the TIMELINE panel to see a watermark of the bird from FRAME 1.
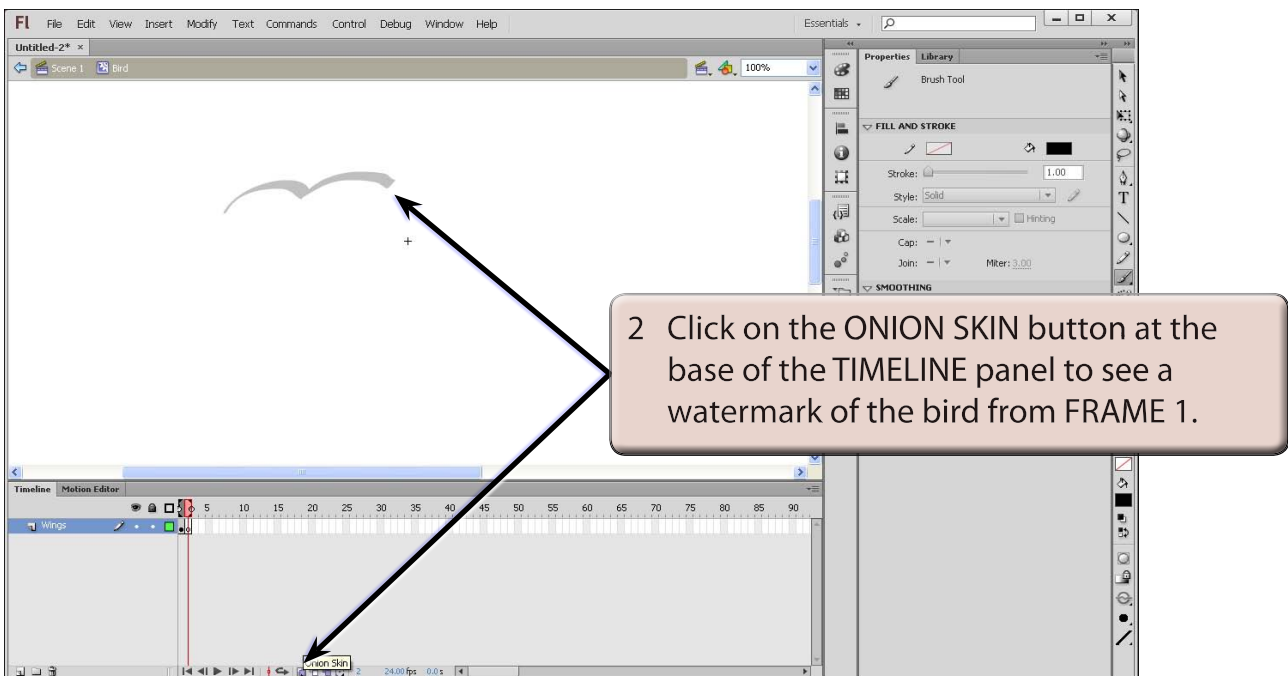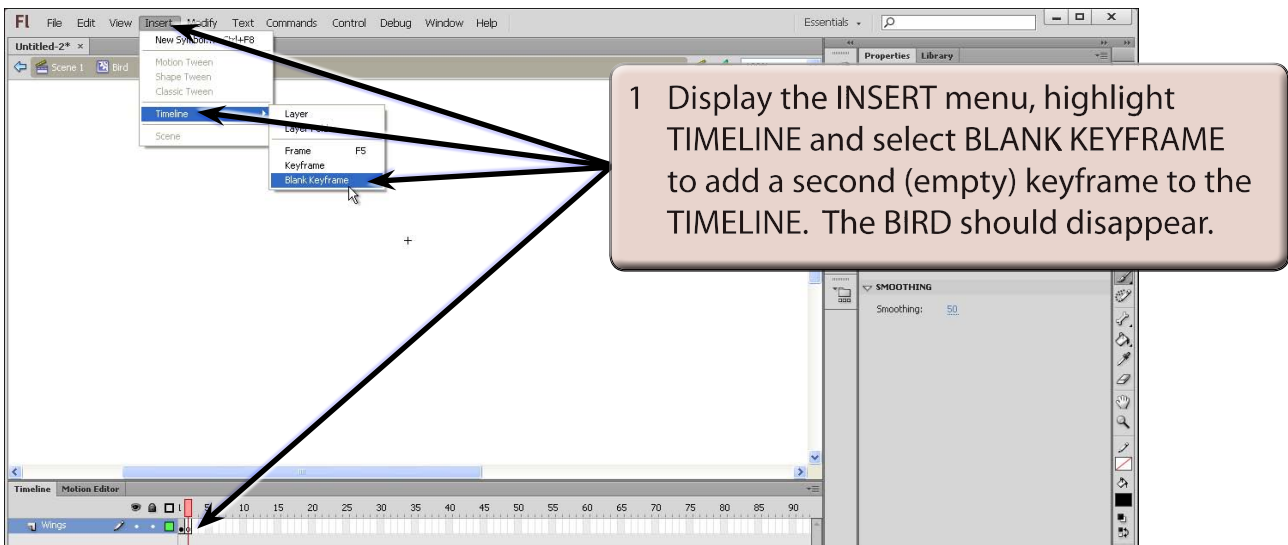
> **NOTE:** **i** **The BLANK KEYFRAME will allow you to alter the shape of the bird.**
>
> **ii** **The ONION SKIN image is just a watermark on the screen. It cannot be altered at FRAME 2.**

3 Draw another set of wings over the ONION SKIN image, but make the wings a little higher and narrower.
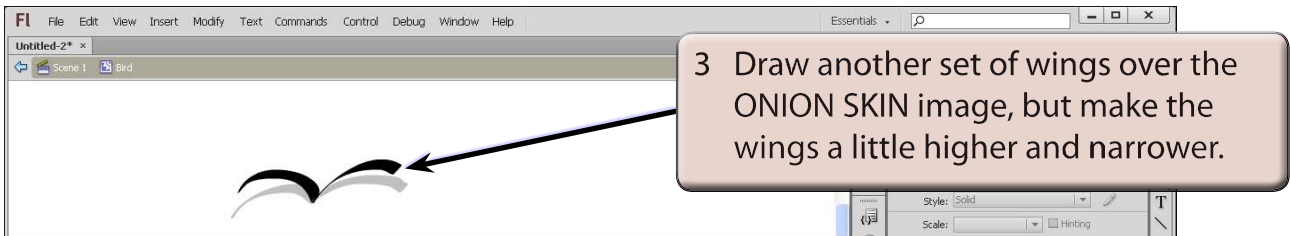
D Setting the Third Position of the Bird

1 Use the INSERT menu - TIMELINE to insert another BLANK KEYFRAME.

2 The two previous images will be displayed as ONION SKINS.

3 Draw another set of wings with the wings a little higher and narrower.