ALPHA PIXEL MODEL FONTS

Thanks for buying AP Model Fonts!

We work in motion graphics just like you. So we know how challenging working with fonts can be in many situations. That's why AP Model Fonts are different. We have designed our font sets to have very smooth surfaces and edges that can stand up to deformation, allowing you to bend, twist and distort fonts in ways you've never been able to do before.

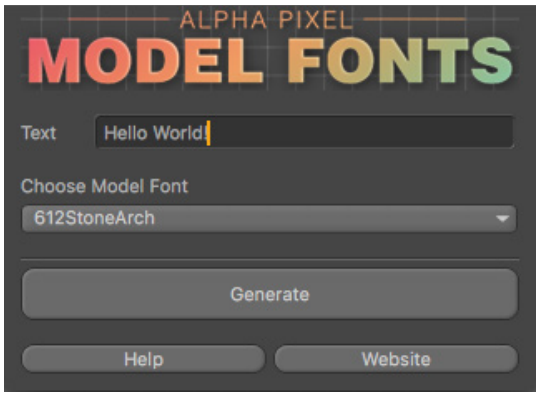
One thing to know right away, **these are not regular system fonts**. So you can't load any other fonts into our font plugin. When you purchase a Model Font, you will only have access to the Model Font you have purchased and installed. (See page 6 of this manual for plugin and font install instructions.)

For those who don't love to read manuals, here's a quick synopsis of this one. To use Model Fonts, you first need to install the plugin and the font you have purchased. Next, enter your text and select the Model Font you want to use.

Now click Generate. Your text will appear in the viewport and a special null will appear in the object manager with the letters gathered underneath it. The null will have a tag that offers a number of interactive, animatable settings for extrusion, depth, edge bevel, subdivision level, word spacing and kerning, as well as a setting to slightly round the face surface to enhance lighting and reflection effects.

The plugin tag also includes options for baking the geometry, reverting to original settings and launching the Alpha Pixel web-site for support and/or to shop for additional Model Fonts.

Quick Start



1. Install plugin (see page 6)
2. Choose AP Model Fonts plugin
   (from Plugins menu or Extensions menu R21 and later)
3. Enter your text
4. Choose your Model Font
5. Click generate!
6. Your text will appear in the viewport

ALPHA PIXEL

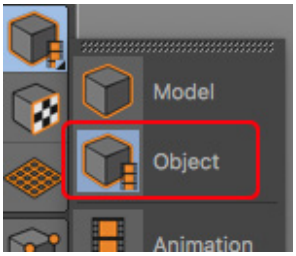
MODEL FONTS

Working with your text

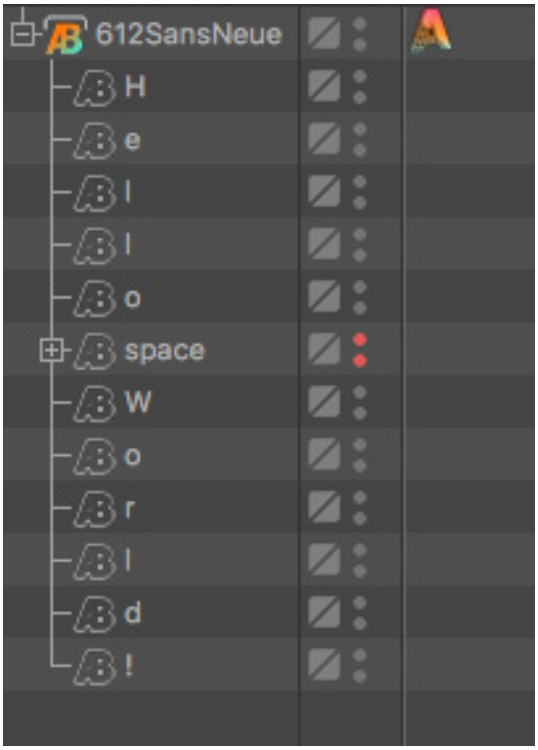
A special null with your text as individual letters will appear as child objects in the object manager.

To the right of the top null will be the AP Model Fonts tag. Select the tag and the interactive controls will appear in the attribute manager.

IMPORTANT: Do not make any changes to the individual letter objects or add/remove anything under the parent null in the object manager. Instructions on using deformers with the text can be found on page 3.

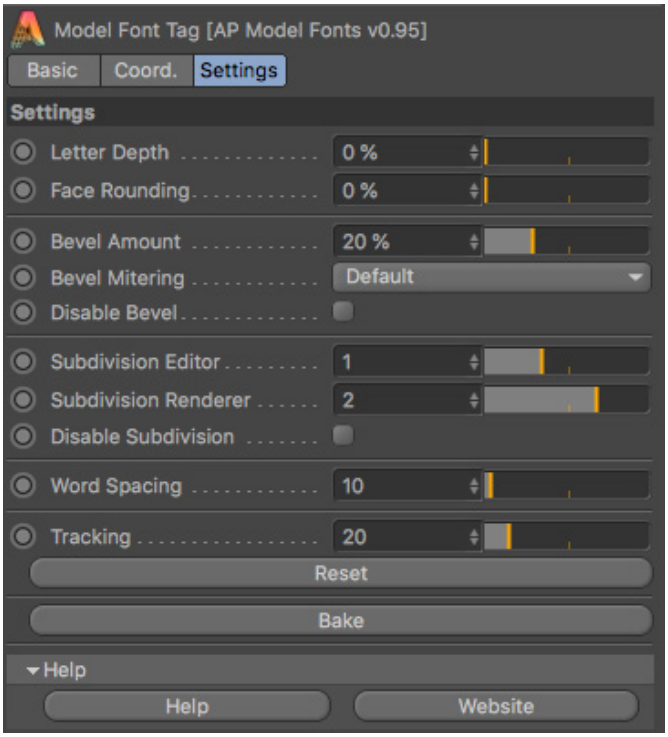


SCALING NOTE: If you want to scale your letters, you must use Object Mode instead of Model Mode. The interactive features are based on Pose Morphs and scaling in Model Mode will not work.



Interactive Controls

The AP Model Fonts tag allows you to access a number of interactive controls, most of which are self-explanatory. But there are a few things to keep in mind when making adjustments. All of the adjustments can be animated.



Letter Depth: Controls the extrusion depth.

Face Rounding: This is a special feature that adds a slight amount of soft curvature to the face of the letters. Its purpose is to slightly enhance light, shadow and reflection effects.

It is not for creating a very rounded face. Use caution when setting both face rounding and bevel amounts high as some artifacts and unwanted ridges can appear on the letter face.

(continued next page)

Interactive Controls (continued)

Bevel Amount: The bevel setting controls how soft or sharp the edges will be. A low number will create a very sharp edge, and a high number creates a softer edge (see note below regarding soft edges and disabling the bevel).

NOTE: Even if you want a very sharp edge, set the bevel amount to very low values but not to 0%. A low setting of 5-10% will still give a sharp edge but retain a tiny bevel to catch light and reflections.

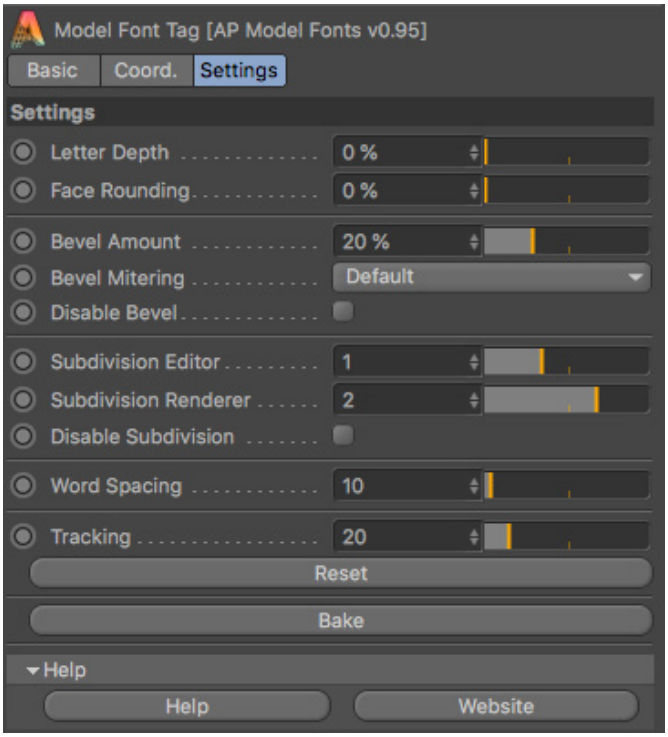
Bevel Mitering: Changing the bevel mitering type can be useful in some cases. See page 4 for a more in-depth look at this setting and its relationship to texture mapping.

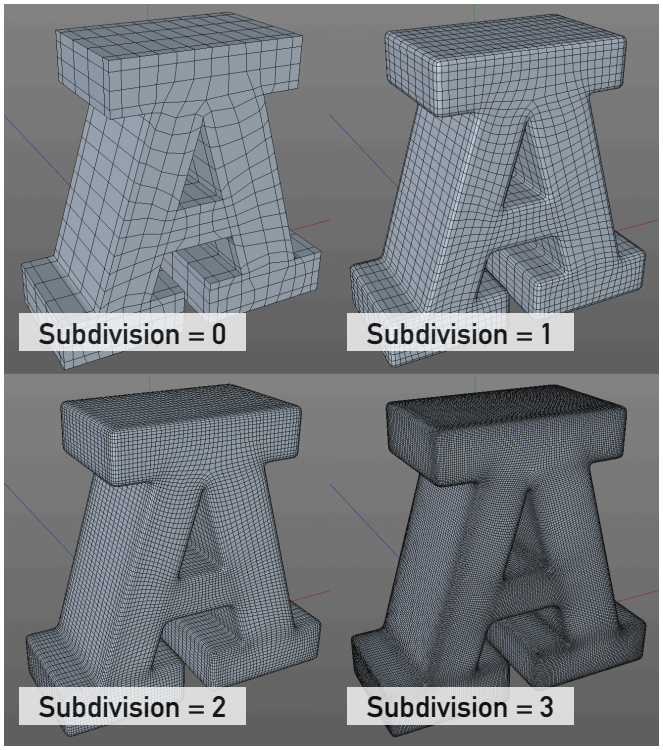
Disable Bevel: The higher the bevel setting, the softer the edge. For a very soft edge, it is best to check Disable Bevel because very high bevel settings can cause problems with geometry or texturing in some cases. Also, be careful when combining high face rounding and high bevel values.

Disable Bevel is also useful for increasing performance while animating. Just be sure to re-enable it when you render. (Leave it off at render time for a soft edge.)

Subdivision Editor/Subdivision Renderer: Use these values to adjust how much the mesh is subdivided in either the editor or renderer. The defaults are just a starting point, and the settings you choose will depend on many factors.

Generally the defaults are good for getting set up and animating. Once it is time to render, the renderer setting likely should be set to 2 or 3. If you are making extreme deformations you may need to play with these values to get the results you want. The Disable Subdivisions checkbox will turn off all subdividing and is useful for increasing editor and preview render performance during development (re-enable at render time).





Interactive Controls (continued)

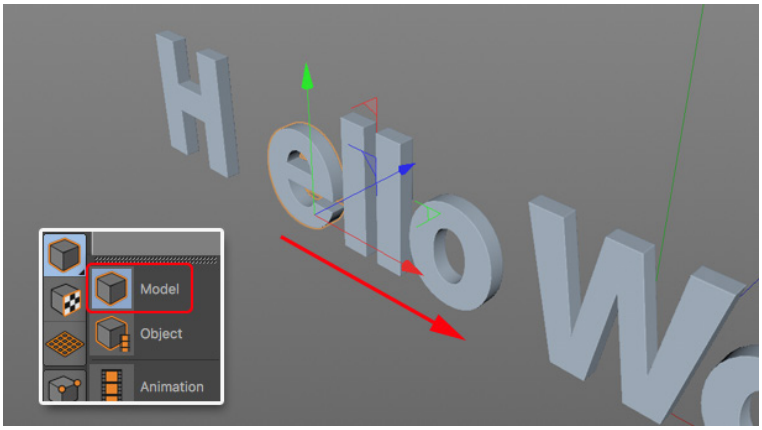
Word Spacing: Globally adjusts the space between words.

Tracking: Globally adjusts the space between letters.

Reset: Sets your text back to the originally generated state.

Bake: Creates simple geometry of the current state of your text, and removes all tag controls and animation.

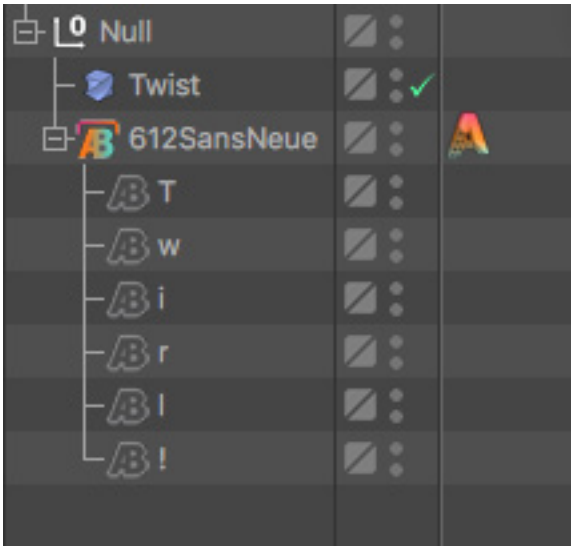
Individual Letter Kerning



Once you have the tag's attribute manager settings configured, you can fine tune letter spacing interactively. Simply select a letter and drag it into the viewport. All of the letters behind it will follow along on the X axis. To have the most control, drag using the red X axis handle. Individual letters can also be moved along the Y and Z axis, but other letters will not be affected. Use the reset button in the tag Object Manager to return all of the letters to their original positions.

ANIMATION NOTE: Due to a limitation caused by the interactive kerning system, you can only keyframe individual letter position and rotation values on the Y and Z axis.
For more animation control over individual letters, you'll need to bake the AP system.

Using Deformers



One of the advantages of Model Fonts is their ability to stand up to extreme deformation. But you must set things up very specifically in the object manager. Create a new null and place the AP Model Fonts null, as well as any deformers as children of that null. Do not place any other objects under the AP Model Fonts null. Using this configuration, all of the interactive controls will stay active and animatable, even as the deformer is also deforming the letters.

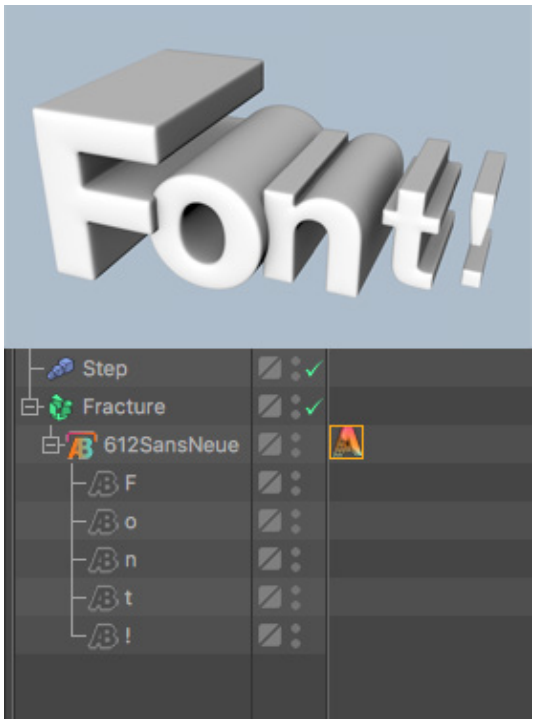
Alternately, if you no longer need the interactive controls, you can bake the letters using the bake button in the Model Font tag. You will then have a group of normal polygon objects that you can treat any way you need to. (Remember, though, interactive controls are permanently removed.)

ALPHA PIXEL

MODEL FONTS

Usage Tips

Want to use MoGraph effectors? To use effectors with your letters, place the AP Model Fonts null under a fracture object and set the fracture object's mode to Explode Segments & Connect. Now you can add effectors to the fracture object and still have live access to Model Font's interactive settings. Note: in some cases, for example, multi-object letters like a lowercase l, may have its two parts separated when using a random effector.



Viewport slow? Improving viewport performance by checking the Disable Bevel and/or Disable Subdivisions.

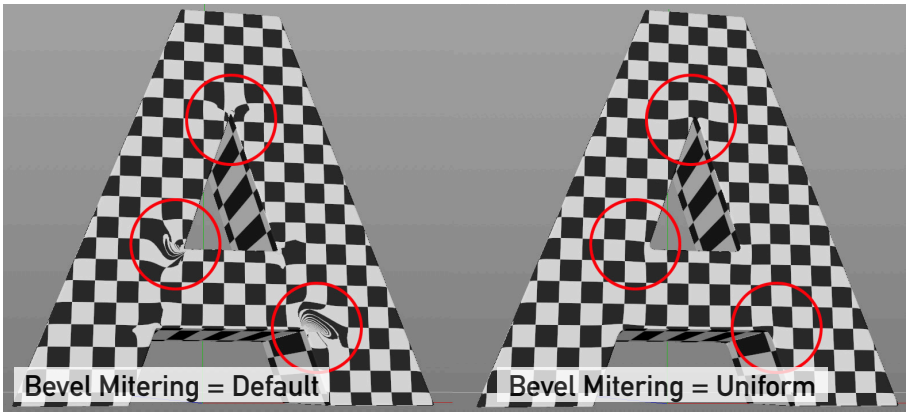
Want to control subdivision level when baking? AP Model Fonts uses the Subdivision Renderer setting when baking to control the mesh density.

Want to use multiple deformers? Add as many deformers as you want under the new null you created along with the AP Font null.

Bevel Mitering and Texturing

The geometry of all of the characters of an alphabet has so many different angles, joints and corners, it's hard to create a bevel mitering solution that will work well in all cases. Add in the relationship between geometry and UV mapping, and things get even more unpredictable. AP Model Fonts has a bevel mitering pop-up to help you troubleshoot these issues.

In most cases, with low-bevel and face-rounding values, as well as non-patterned texture, the default bevel mitering choice will often work. But if you have trouble with creases, corners and/or edges, try some of the other bevel mitering options. For example, with a patterned text, the Uniform mitering option can help smooth out the UV map if you are seeing distortions.



Be aware, though, the Uniform mitering option is likely going to cause issues when combined with high bevel values. The best approach is trial and error until the mesh starts behaving correctly.

ALPHA PIXEL

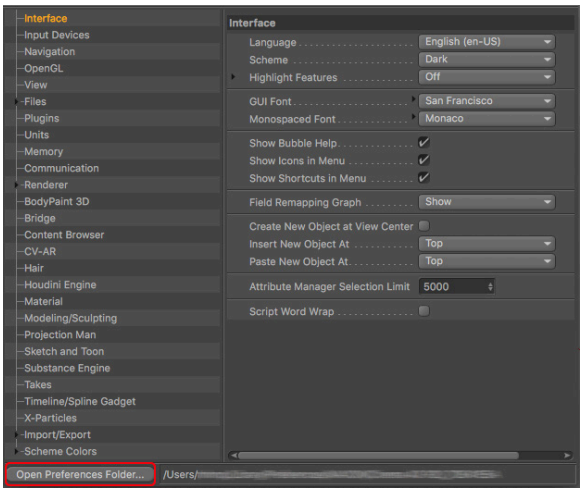
MODEL FONTS

Installing the AP Model Fonts plugin

To install the AP Model Fonts plugin, copy the entire AP Model Fonts folder into Cinema 4D's plugins folder, which is located in C4D's Preferences folder.

The Cinema 4D preferences folder can be found by choosing Preferences from the C4D edit menu, then clicking the Open Preferences Folder button on the bottom left to open the folder. You should find a plugins folder inside here.

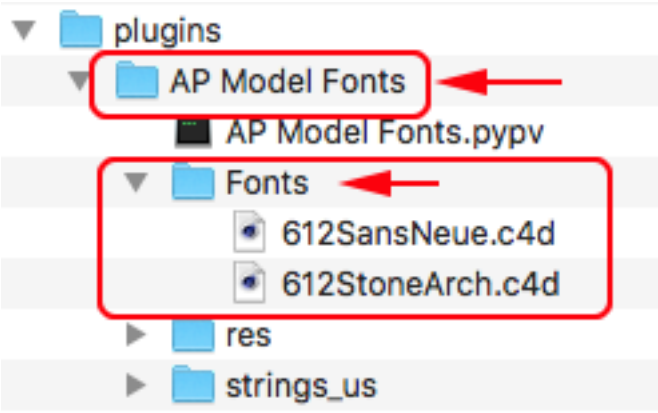
Now you need to install the individual Model Fonts themselves (see below).



Installing or adding Model Fonts

To install individual Model Fonts, go to the AP Model Fonts plugins folder inside C4D's Preferences folder (as explained above) and add the new font file to the Fonts folder.

Important Note: Do not rename the Model Font C4D file. If occasional font file updates are needed, remove the currently installed Model Fonts C4D file and replace it with a new version.



That's it! We hope you enjoy using our plugin to make some cool stuff.