

After Effects Custom Preset: Layer Stack Workflow

This document outlines the standard layer stack configuration for achieving a high-impact, textured visual aesthetic in Adobe After Effects. Following this hierarchy ensures consistent depth, grit, and stylized compositing across your motion design projects.

Layer Hierarchy Breakdown

Construct the composition using the following bottom-to-top layer order in your timeline:

- 1. Layer 1: Base Texture (Bottom)**
Type: Texture Map (e.g., Halftone, Grunge, Dirt, Paper)
Purpose: Serves as the foundation of the composite. It breaks up the digital perfection of the background, adding organic grit and visual interest. Halftone patterns work exceptionally well for backing bold, kinetic typography.
- 2. Layer 2: Blur Map**
Type: Luma Matte or Gradient Blur Map
Purpose: Sits directly above the base texture. This map should be used in conjunction with a *Camera Lens Blur* or *Compound Blur* effect to drive the depth of field, pushing the base texture out of focus in specific areas to create atmospheric depth.
- 3. Layer 3: The Core Preset**
Type: Custom AE Preset / Main Subject
Purpose: Apply your designated custom preset here. This layer contains the primary motion graphics or text element. Ensure it interacts correctly with the blur map beneath it so it pops against the background.
- 4. Layer 4: Top Overlay (Top)**
Type: Overlay Video / Additional Texture Map
Purpose: The finishing touch to tie the composite together. A cinematic overlay (like film grain, dust, or scratches) is preferred. Set the blending mode to *Overlay*, *Screen*, or *Soft Light* depending on the luminance of the asset to unify the color grade and texture.

Quick Reference Table

Timeline Order	Layer Type	Recommended Blend Mode
4 (Top)	Overlay / Texture Map	Overlay / Screen
3	Custom Preset	Normal / Dependent on Preset
2	Blur Map	Normal
1 (Bottom)	Base Texture (Halftone/Dirt)	Overlay / Screen

Texture Folder & Presets :  **Texture**