USER GUIDE

CineStage

From the first shot to the final film

Cameras, animation, lighting, atmosphere and finishing.
Workflows, tools and a complete command reference.

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Welcome & requirements

CineStage brings camera shots, animation, lighting, scene atmosphere, weather and final-film output into Blender. This guide explains the interface, the workflows and the bundled assets.

Requirement	What you need
Blender	Blender 5.2 or newer.
Rig Animation	A compatible armature with animator controls, for example Rigify.
Rig Motion	A compatible armature. Use your own FBX motion files, for example from Mixamo.
Rendering	Works with Cycles and EEVEE. Smart Lighting measurements, Film Look and Weather work in both.
MP4 output	A Blender build with FFmpeg support. PNG sequence output is the alternative.
Project storage	Save your .blend before using // relative render paths. Use a writable output folder with enough free space.

Three different kinds of shots

Term	Meaning
Camera shot	A camera, its aim and movement setup, and a source frame range. Used by Camera, Render and Final Review.
Animation shot	A named range/mark for a character's animation.
FBX motion	One imported motion item in a particular rig's Rig Motion session. Build combines items into that rig's output Action.

Default values described in this guide are the values of new settings. A saved project or a selected preset can supply different values, so read the visible panel values before applying an operation.

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Installation, updates & removal

1. Download the CineStage installation ZIP and keep it intact.
2. Open Blender 5.2 or newer. Go to Edit > Preferences > Get Extensions.
3. Open the menu at the top right, choose Install from Disk, and select the ZIP.
4. Enable CineStage if it is not enabled automatically. Return to the 3D Viewport.
5. Press N to open the Sidebar, then select the CineStage tab. Expand only the sections you need.

Updating an existing installation

1. Save your .blend and close any active render.
2. Disable the previous CineStage installation before enabling another copy. Two copies cannot be enabled at once.
3. Install the new ZIP through Install from Disk.
4. Restart Blender and reopen a copy of your project. Confirm camera shots, rigs and saved animation entries appear as expected.

Your saved Animation Library and Workflow Presets live in your user folder, outside the add-on installation. Keep a backup of those folders when moving computers.

Removing CineStage

Save first, disable CineStage in Preferences, and remove the extension there. Disabling the add-on does not remove scene objects or bake generated constraints. Bake the motion you need before handing a project to someone who will work without CineStage.

> Install the inner installation ZIP if you downloaded a bundle that also contains documentation. A bundle that contains another ZIP is not itself a Blender add-on.

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Interface

All main tool sections start collapsed. Open only the section you are working in. A compact animation-key strip stays at the top of the panel. All settings of the add-on live in one place: Edit > Preferences > Add-ons > CineStage.

Area	Use
Key strip	Toggle Auto Key and insert or remove transform keys. Safe Auto Key uses complete transform channels and restores Blender's previous preference when disabled.
Key Easing	Interpolation and easing on selected keys.
Camera	Create and manage cinematic camera shots.
Object / Rig Animation	Separate workflows for object motion and character controls.
Rig Motion	Build FBX motion for a compatible rig.
Scene look tools	Lighting, Scene Fog, Weather & Particles and Film Look build the look of the scene.
Attach / Animation Library	Manage props and reusable Actions.
Render / Final Review	Render separate shots or assemble one complete film.

Viewport header and Quick Snap Dock

The header gives quick access to Front, Back, Left, Right, Top and Bottom views, Global/Local orientation, Wire, Solid, Material and Rendered shading, and In Front for a suitable active object. Labels shrink to icons in narrow viewports. The Quick Snap Dock has independent Snap and Origins toggles. Vertex, Edge, Face, Grid, Volume and Increment select one snapping target; Align Rotation is a separate control. With Origins on, snapping moves an object's origin instead of its geometry.

Both can be hidden in the add-on preferences under Edit > Preferences > Add-ons > CineStage.

Quick Add, origins, visibility & transforms

Quick Add provides the Blender mesh and light primitives, Camera, Plane and axis helpers, Empty Axes and Image as Plane. Origins & Cursor moves the selection or the cursor, preserves offsets, or places an origin at the geometry. Hide Selected and Unhide act on viewport hiding in the current View Layer; render visibility is a separate Blender setting. Apply Location, Rotation, Scale or All uses Blender's transform-apply operation: check existing animation, parenting and constraints first.

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Quick Menu

One shortcut opens a compact menu at the mouse with sixteen buttons: two columns of eight with a divider between them. There is one layout for 3D Viewport (Object Mode), one for Edit Mode and one for Pose Mode, and the menu shows the layout for the mode you are in.

Open and use it

1. Put the mouse over the 3D Viewport and press F8 (or press F3 and search for CineStage Quick Menu).
2. Click a button to run its action. The menu closes by itself after the choice.
3. Press Escape or move the mouse away to close it without doing anything. Opening the menu runs no action.

The default shortcut leaves Blender's ordinary Q binding intact. In Edit Mode the buttons run Blender's own mesh operators, and in Pose Mode Blender's own pose operators, so tools such as Extrude, Inset, Bevel, Loop Cut and Knife wait for mouse movement exactly as they do from Blender's menus.

Default buttons

Mode	Buttons
3D Viewport	Frame Selected, Add Cube, Add Plane, Add Point Light, Add Area Light, Add Camera, Select All, Deselect All, Duplicate, Delete, Hide Selected, Unhide All, Snap, Create Cinematic Shot, Camera View, Frame All.
Edit Mode	Extrude, Inset Faces, Bevel, Loop Cut, Knife, Merge at Center, Subdivide, Fill, Select All, Deselect All, Invert Selection, Delete, Separate Selection, Mark Seam, Frame Selected, Snap.
Pose Mode	Insert Keyframe, Delete Keyframe, Previous Key, Next Key, Copy Pose, Paste Pose, Paste Pose Flipped, Clear Transform, Clear Location, Clear Rotation, Clear Scale, Select All, Deselect All, Invert Selection, Safe Auto Key, Play / Pause.

Customize it

Open Edit > Preferences > Add-ons > CineStage > Quick Menu.

1. Choose the shortcut: a keyboard key, Side Button 1, Side Button 2 or Middle Mouse (pressing the wheel itself, not scrolling).
2. Use the 3D Viewport / Edit Mode / Pose Mode tabs to choose which layout you are editing.
3. Pick an action for each of the sixteen buttons, or Empty to leave one blank.
4. Use a ready-made layout from the preset row (3D Viewport: General, Animation, Camera; Edit Mode: Modeling, Selection, Cleanup; Pose Mode: Animation, Posing, Selection).
5. Press Save to remember the current sixteen buttons of that tab; My Layout restores them at any time.

More actions are available than fit on the default layouts: for Edit Mode, Grid Fill, Bridge Edge Loops, Dissolve, Select Linked, Hide/Reveal, Mark Sharp, Flip Normals, Shade Smooth/Flat, Proportional Editing and Cursor tools; for Pose Mode, Select Mirror, Hide/Reveal Bones, Add/Clear IK and Apply Pose as Rest; for the 3D Viewport, key actions, camera actions, more primitives, origin tools and Film Look Preview.

A conflicting shortcut is shown in the settings when detected. Change the shortcut if another tool uses it. The layout belongs to your Blender preferences, not to a .blend; if Auto-Save Preferences is off, use Save Preferences. Unavailable actions stay in place as disabled buttons; hover to see the requirement.

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Your first cinematic scene

1. Save a new .blend. Add a subject and a ground surface or use your existing scene.
2. Select the subject, open Camera and click Create Cinematic Shot. Choose a target and a frame range. Static is the default movement, so the camera simply frames the subject.
3. Create the shot and enter its camera view. Framing, lens and focus are live: changes apply as you make them.
4. Select the subject, open Lighting, choose a style such as Three-Point and click Create Smart Lighting.
5. Optional: add atmosphere with Scene Fog, Weather & Particles or a Film Look.
6. Play the shot and save the project. Use Render Preflight to inspect setup issues.
7. For individual shot output use Render & Film > Render Shots. For one complete film from several shots, open Render & Film > Render Film, order the cards, Preview Film and Render Film.

Begin with a short frame range and a low-resolution test. Confirm framing, focus, visibility and motion before final output.

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Camera shots

Create, inspect & edit

1. Select the subject or assign a Camera Target. Open Camera and click Create Cinematic Shot.
2. Choose the source frame range, movement, framing, angle and subject position. The defaults are Static movement, Full framing and a natural 35 mm lens, so the whole target is in frame without extra setup.
3. Create the shot. Use its shot list to select, view, play, edit, copy or remove it. Removing a shot also removes its timeline marker.
4. Use Select Camera Rig for manual transform editing and View Camera to look through the real shot camera.

Movement	Result
Static	Stationary framing with the selected aim setup. The camera has no movement keys of its own.
Dolly In / Dolly Out	Move closer to or away from the target.
Side Track	Sideways tracking movement.
Orbit	Move around the subject.
Cinematic Follow	Follow a moving subject with smoothing and look-ahead controls (Calm, Cinematic or Action style).
Operator	A simulated camera operator follows the subject: natural lag, lead room, a dead zone and four styles (Steadicam, Tracking, Handheld, Tripod). The result is baked as editable keys.
Chase	Follow from a chase position.
Crane	Vertical cinematic movement.
Reveal	Reveal the target from the chosen side.
Custom Path	Travel along an editable Bezier path.

Operator camera

Choose Operator as the movement and pick a Tracking Bone if the subject is a rig. Open Camera Feel and choose a style: Steadicam glides and leads the subject, Tracking moves like a dolly only when the subject leaves the frame zone, Handheld reacts late and breathes, and Tripod stays in place and only pans. The style fills the Fine Tune values: Smoothness, Pan Lag, Reaction (frames), Lead Room (seconds), Dead Zone and Height Follow. Press Bake Operator Camera. CineStage plays the subject's motion and writes ordinary keys on the Camera Rig and Aim Target, so you can edit them. Press the button again after changing the animation, the target or any value; baking plays through the shot's frame range. Camera Position adds a slow move around the subject: Swing (degrees), Swing To (Right or Left of the subject) and Distance Change (negative moves closer, positive moves away). Each style starts with its own values, and you can change them.

Director Assist

Director Assist builds a whole sequence from a few decisions. Choose the Target, then open Director Assist in the Camera section. Add a cut at each frame where the picture should change (Add Cut Here, or Quick Coverage for four cuts spread over the timeline) and pick the shot type of each cut: Establishing Wide, Follow Medium, Tracking Side, Close-Up or Hero Low Angle. A cut can follow a different subject. Press Build Sequence: CineStage creates one camera shot per cut with its own framing, lens and movement, and the

timeline cuts between the cameras. Keep 180 Line keeps every camera on the same side of the action so the screen direction never flips; turn it off to let the cameras alternate sides. Remove Built Shots deletes what was built while keeping your cuts list, and Build Sequence can be pressed again after any change.

Framing

Framing offers Wide, Full, Medium, Close and Extreme Close. Full is the default and keeps the whole target in the frame; CineStage measures the target and keeps the camera far enough away. Angle offers Low, Eye Level and High. Camera Distance is a multiplier on that measured distance.

Lens & Focus

Lens presets are Wide 24 mm, Natural 35 mm, Portrait 85 mm, Telephoto 135 mm and Custom. The Lens & Focus box is linked both ways to the real camera: choose a preset or type a value and the camera changes immediately; change the lens or Depth of Field directly on the camera and the panel follows. There is no Update button to press. Depth of Field defaults on with F-Stop 2.8; lower F-Stop values give more blur, so check that the Aim Target is where you want the focus.

Keys & the Aim Target

Camera Auto Key is the first control in the keys box. Turn it on if you want CineStage to key camera changes as you move the camera yourself; leave it off to work without keys. Add Camera Key (red) keys the camera at the current frame. Add Aim Key (red) keys the Aim Target and needs Animate Aim Target switched on. A new Aim Target is not animated automatically. Use Center Aim Target or Select Aim Target to reposition focus deliberately.

> Applying a shot setup rebuilds CineStage-generated camera motion. For a manually adjusted shot, save first and check the shot after applying new setup values.

Camera Feel & impacts

Use Handheld and Handheld Speed, then Apply Camera Feel. A Handheld value of 0 requests no handheld movement. Add Impact at Current Frame applies a short camera shake using Impact strength and duration.

Custom Camera Path

1. Select the camera shot and choose Draw Custom Path.
2. Draw or edit the Bezier curve in Blender and use Finish & Attach.
3. Set Path Timing to Linear or Smooth and adjust or key Path Progress. Use Reverse, Smooth and Show / Hide when needed.
4. Detach Camera keeps the path; Reattach Camera reconnects the saved path.

Continuity, light assignment & presets

Continue Previous Camera extends a chosen setup through a later range. Copy Previous Shot creates a new shot based on the selected setup. Assign a Lighting Look or a Film Look to a shot when it should use it during rendering. Camera Workflow Presets reuse lens, focus and feel settings; they do not replace the shot's identity or its animation.

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Object Animation & physics

Targets & transform keys

1. Open Object Animation > Object Target. Select an object and click Use Active Object.
2. Enable Affect Selected Objects to work on the selected group; disable it to work on the main target.
3. At the first frame, set the transform and insert a key with the key strip or Blender's Insert Keyframe.
4. Move to another frame, transform the object and insert another key. Play the range to check the motion.

Motion Effects contains Animation Match and Slow Motion. Timing & Loops contains mirrored continuation, Loop, Ping-Pong, reverse and timing tools. Physics contains rigid-body setup, timeline states, ground collision and baking.

Rigid Body setup

1. Select the objects and expand Object Animation > Physics > Object Physics.
2. Choose Dynamic or Static / Passive, choose a Shape, set Mass for Dynamic bodies and click Enable.
3. Select the ground separately, open Ground Collision, pick a collision shape and click Enable.
4. Play sequentially from the simulation start. Use Clear Physics Cache after changing physics settings.

Control	Practical meaning
Dynamic	An Active rigid body that can fall and collide.
Static / Passive	A collision surface that does not respond as an Active body. It can be animated when Animated is enabled.
Shape	Convex Hull is a good start for closed props. Box is simple for a ground. Mesh suits detailed passive surfaces but costs more.
Animated at Frame	Use keyed animation at the current frame. Key Transform While Animated can preserve the release pose.
Dynamic at Frame	Release an Active object into simulation at the current frame.
Bake to Keys	Convert simulated motion to ordinary transform keys over the chosen range and Bake Step.

Viewport Hide does not switch render visibility or physics participation. Verify collection, object and rigid-body settings independently.

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Rig Animation

Shots, keys and poses for a character rig with animator controls.

Choose a character & organize animation

1. Select an armature and use it as Character under Rig Animation > Character & Motions.
2. Use Add Animation Clip to mark useful ranges of normal Blender animation. Rename marks and use their navigation controls.
3. Use Go to Shot and Play Animation to review. Removing a shot mark removes the mark, not the character's animation keys.

Keyframes & pose editing

Use Add Key on selected animator controls or Key Full Rig for every detected control. Remove Key first targets selected Timeline keys, otherwise the selected-bone key at the current frame. Previous/Next Key navigates keyed moments. Mirror X mirrors pose editing and can key both matching sides. Breakdowner creates an in-between pose, Push exaggerates a pose difference and Relax softens it.

Resetting controls

Reset Selected (in Pose Editing) resets selected controls. Select animator controls rather than deform or mechanism bones for routine posing.

Rig Display

Show All reveals Bone Collections, Hide All hides them, Focus Selected isolates collections containing selected controls and Restore View restores the recorded display. Per-collection show/hide, solo and selection controls are available for compatible rigs. These change rig display, not how the mesh renders.

IK / FK

Selected to FK / IK switches detected selected limbs; Switch Full FK / IK switches all detected limbs. These switches try to keep the visible pose and add keys. Key IK/FK Switch keys the values at the current frame, over the whole shot or over a custom range. Rig naming and the rig's own snapping tools determine support.

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Rig Motion: build FBX animation

Rig Motion keeps a separate session for each selected rig. Selecting a different armature switches the active motion list and its settings. Supported profiles include Rigify, Auto Rig Pro, Mixamo and compatible Rokoko rigs; recognition depends on the bone and control structure.

1. Select the destination rig in the viewport. Open Rig Motion and click Setup.
2. Wait for Ready. Click Add FBX and choose your own motion file. Add more files to build a sequence.
3. Select each item and set Repeat Motion > Loop, Motion Speed, In Place and Smooth Motion.
4. Move items earlier or later to set their order. Click Build to apply changes to the output Action.
5. Play the result. The displayed built frame range is the real placement of the sequence, not the source FBX range.

Setting	How to use it
Loop	Repeat this imported item. Default 1.
Speed	1.0 is normal. Higher plays faster, lower slower. Rebuild to apply.
Smooth	Incoming transition length in frames. Default 5; the first item has no incoming transition.
In Place	Remove forward travel while keeping height, body movement and rotation.
Clear Bone / Copy Bones	Clear selected bone channels, or copy selected bone motion from one item number to another.

Reset restores the state recorded before Setup. Clear List clears the active rig's motion list. Save first if you need to keep the built animation. Removing an FBX item does not delete the file on disk.

> Auto Rig Pro is an optional supported destination-rig type; CineStage does not include it. Your FBX files and their usage rights come from you.

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Pose Hold: edit a built motion with the mouse

Imported FBX motions are baked, with a key on almost every frame, so posing a bone on one frame is overwritten by its neighbours. Pose Hold takes the pose you make in the viewport and blends it over a frame range, for example to keep one arm raised during a whole run.

1. Build Rig Motion first. In the 3D Viewport, select the bones you want to change in Pose Mode.
2. Turn Auto Key off. Go to a frame inside the range and move or rotate the bones with the mouse.
3. Open Pose Hold. Choose Hold or Add, choose the range, and set Blend In / Out.
4. Click Apply. The motion is changed over the range; the rest of the body keeps its original animation.
5. Click Reset to restore the motion as it was before the first Pose Hold.

Control	Meaning
Hold	The selected bones stay exactly on your pose for the whole range.
Add	Your change is added on top of the running motion, so the bones keep moving.
Range	Current Motion, Full Sequence or Custom. The arrow buttons use the current frame as Start or End.
Blend In / Out	Frames used to ease into the pose and back to the motion. Default 8.
Reset	Restores the Action stored before the first Pose Hold.

Build again replaces the motion, so Pose Hold changes are made after the final Build. Pose Hold works on rotation, location and scale curves that already exist on the selected bones.

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Foot & Hand Lock

Foot & Hand Lock detects foot contacts and corrects sliding using temporary helpers. Preview evaluates the correction; Apply & Bake creates an editable corrected Action; Reset returns to the preserved original.

1. Build Rig Motion first. Open Foot & Hand Lock and choose Current Motion, Full Sequence or Custom range.
2. Enable Left/Right foot contact as needed. Optional: assign a Ground mesh.
3. Set Minimum Contact, Blend, Motion Threshold and Ground Threshold. Click Detect Foot Contacts.
4. For a prop grip, choose Left or Right Hand, assign Lock To and add a hand contact over the chosen range.
5. Use Preview and inspect feet and hands through the range. Adjust thresholds or contacts before baking.
6. Use Apply & Bake to keep the correction. Reset before changing a baked cleanup.

Control	Meaning
Minimum Contact	Shortest accepted contact in frames. Default 3.
Blend	Transition frames around the contact. Default 3.
Motion Threshold	Foot velocity threshold relative to rig height. Default 0.012. Increase it if true contacts are missed.
Ground Threshold	Height threshold relative to rig height. Default 0.025.
Root Compensation	Adjust reach through the root. Default on.
Auto Fix After Build	Run cleanup after Build. Default off.

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Travel, matching & motion finishing

Rig Motion > Motion Travel

1. Build a motion sequence. Open Motion Travel and choose Follow Path or Follow Object.
2. Assign the Curve or guide Object. Set Forward axis, direction, initial offset and range.
3. With Match Stride on (Follow Path), use the full animation, not an In Place one. CineStage measures how far the character runs, takes that travel out of the root bone and moves the character along the curve by the same distance, so the feet do not slide. Follow Speed 1.0 keeps the natural stride. If the animation is shorter than the path, add more Repeats; if the path is shorter, the character stops at its end. Turn Match Stride off to set Start and End manually.
4. Inspect the preview, then use Bake & Remove. Clear removes the travel setup.

Animation Match

1. Open Animation Match in Object Animation or Rig Animation.
2. Choose a Source object or bone and a Target object or bone.
3. Choose World or Local space, Keep Offset and the Position / Rotation / Scale channels.
4. Apply to Current Frame, Selected Keys or Frame Range with a Step, then click Match Animation.

Animation Match keys the Target. Keep Offset preserves the existing relationship; use World space to match visible motion between differently parented objects.

Look-At Director

Look-At Director makes the character look at something without changing its keys. Open the Camera section and the Look-At Director foldout below Director Assist. Choose what to look at (Use Selected, Camera, or New Target, an empty you can move and animate), set From and To frames and press Add Look. CineStage adds Damped Track constraints on the head, a share of the neck and the eyes when the rig has them. A hidden control holds one animated value, 0 for your original animation and 1 for looking at the target, and eases in and out over Blend Frames. Max Turn keeps the head from twisting too far, Strength mixes the look with the original pose, and Show Look Curve lets you edit the timing. If the head turns away from the target, turn on Flip Facing in Bones & Options. Remove Look puts the original animation back.

Motion Finishing

Tool	Result
Make In Place	Remove net horizontal travel while keeping smaller movement.
Move Travel to Rig	Move root-control horizontal travel onto the armature object.
Correct Height	Shift animation vertically toward the chosen Ground level.
Mirror Animation	Create a left/right mirrored Action copy.
Follow Path	Drive the active rig along a selected curve for the range.
Bake & Remove Path	Bake the path motion to object keys, then remove the generated constraint.
Remove Path / Restore Original	Remove the path setup or restore the animation backup.

Choose one travel method. Combining existing root travel, Motion Travel and another path constraint can double the movement.

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Timing, curves & slow motion

Key Easing

1. Select keys in the Timeline, Dope Sheet or Graph Editor.
2. Open Key Easing and choose an interpolation mode and easing.
3. Click Apply to Selected Keys. Only the selected keys change.
4. Use Undo Timing Change to restore the values recorded by the last operation.

Constant holds a value until the next key, Linear moves at a constant rate and Bezier gives shaped smooth transitions. Sine, Quadratic, Cubic, Quartic, Quintic, Exponential, Circular, Back, Bounce and Elastic are also offered. The interpolation stored on a key controls the segment leaving it.

Timing Toolkit & Key-to-Key Curves

Earlier/Later shifts keys without changing their spacing. Timing Scale changes spacing around First Key or Current Frame: above 1 stretches, below 1 compresses. Even Spacing distributes existing key moments evenly. Check Affect Selected Bones versus Whole Shot before applying Key-to-Key Curves.

Loops, reverse & mirrored continuation

Object Animation > Timing & Loops offers Loop, Ping-Pong, Clear and Reverse Frame Range. Continue Mirrored Motion copies the Start-to-Peak location motion into Peak-to-End and returns Z to the Start ground level. Set Start, Peak and End in chronological order and inspect the landing.

Slow Motion

1. Choose the object or rig animation, select Whole Animation or Custom Frames, and choose 75%, 50%, 25% or Custom Speed.
2. Set Smooth In / Out and whether linked camera timing should stay with the animated target. For rigs, check Include Root Motion.
3. Apply Slow Motion and inspect the expanded animation and camera range.
4. Restore Original restores the backed-up timing. Keep Current Timing adopts the new timing as the base.

Animation Offset

Animation Offset applies the current selected-bone pose difference across an open shot or custom range at a chosen Strength.

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Repeat Animation

Repeat selected keys, or a frame range, as real keyframes. It is available in Object Animation, and every copy can be edited like any other key.

1. Select the object, then select the keys in the Timeline (or type a Start and End frame).
2. Choose where the copies go with Place Copies.
3. Set Repeat Times and the options you need.
4. Press Repeat Animation.

Place Copies	Where the first copy starts
At Playhead	At the playhead, in empty space only. Nothing existing is replaced and the copies stop before the next key.
After Range	Where the repeated range ends. Existing keys inside the copied span are replaced.
After Last Key	One frame after the last key of the selected objects. Nothing existing is replaced.

Option	What it does
Repeat Times	How many extra copies to place.
Continue Motion	Each copy continues from where the previous one ended, for travel such as walking forward.
Skip Duplicate Key	Does not add a key twice when a copy's first key equals the previous copy's last key.
Extend Scene End	Moves the scene End frame after the last repeated key if needed.

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Attachments & Smart Pivot

Static parenting

1. Select the child objects, then select the intended parent last so it is active.
2. Open Attach and choose Parent - Keep Transform.
3. Use Clear Parent - Keep Transform to detach while keeping the visible world transform.

Parent to a bone

1. Select the object to attach (for example a sword), then select the rig last so it is active.
2. Enter Pose Mode and click the bone that should carry the object, such as the hand.
3. Open Attach > Static Parent and click Parent to Bone - Keep Transform. It works like Ctrl+P > Bone and the object stays where it is.
4. Use Clear Parent - Keep Transform to detach it.

Animated Attach / Release

1. Assign the Child and Parent with Use Selected Child and Use Selected Parent. Objects and active pose bones can be used.
2. Go to the pickup frame and click Attach. Inspect the preserved pose and following motion.
3. Go to the release frame and click Release. Choose After Release: None, Dynamic or Static / Passive.
4. For Dynamic release, set the mass and make sure the scene has collision surfaces. Play from the simulation start.
5. Clear attachment keys, or choose a range and Bake & Remove when the result is final.

Bake & Remove samples the visible motion and removes only CineStage-owned attachment constraints. Review the baked animation before handing the file to another user.

Smart Pivot

1. Select the controls you want to move together. Choose the pivot location: Active Bone or 3D Cursor.
2. Click Create Smart Pivot and transform the generated pivot.
3. Use Add Pivot Key at the intended frames.
4. Set Bake Start/End, then Bake & Remove Pivot to bake the control motion and remove the temporary pivot.

> Keep rigid accessories as separate objects during body rigging, then attach them to the appropriate rig control once the character is ready.

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Animation Library & Workflow Presets

Persistent Animation Library

1. Select the source rig and a suitable Action or open shot.
2. Open Animation Library, supply a name and category, and use its Save control.
3. Search by name, use Category Filter, or enable Favorites Only.
4. Select the destination rig and use the apply/add control. Review the frame placement and overlap handling.
5. Remove a saved entry only when you intend to delete it from the library.

Categories are General, Locomotion, Acting, Action, Idle, Interaction, Facial and Other. Adaptation to a compatible rig uses supported profiles; it is not universal retargeting for arbitrary rigs.

Workflow Presets

Camera presets reuse lens, focus, look-ahead, smoothing and Camera Feel settings. Fog presets reuse the selected fog style and its controls. Save with a name and category, then Apply, Rename or Delete. Applying a preset keeps scene object and shot identity and does not replace animation keys.

Data	Location under your user home folder
Animation files	CineStage/Asset Library/Animations/*.blend
Animation metadata	CineStage/Asset Library/Animations/animation_library.json
Workflow Presets	CineStage/Presets/workflow_presets.json

The library is shared by all your Blender projects on that computer. Back it up separately from your .blend files.

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Lighting Looks & Smart Lighting

Select your subject, choose a style, and Smart Lighting creates a camera-aware starting point. It fits the style around the target, tries nearby positions when geometry blocks a light, and balances the visible subject with small preview renders. Artist review remains part of choosing the final look.

Create and review

1. Choose Cycles or EEVEE and frame your subject with a camera.
2. Open Lighting. Set Target (or select the mesh, rig or parts and click Use Selected) and set Camera.
3. Choose the category and style and click Create Smart Lighting.
4. Let the preview stages finish. Preview switches the viewport to Rendered shading. Tune Brightness, Contrast and Softness under the active Look.
5. Make a normal final render to inspect the result with your full settings.

Control	Use
Brightness	Overall power after balancing. Auto Balance respects it as artistic intent; it must be above zero.
Contrast	The relative key / fill / rim balance of the preset.
Softness	Source size and shadow softness.
Auto Balance	Rebalance the existing enabled Look without moving manually positioned lights.
Advanced Controls	Distance, warmth, rotation, height, rim, World, effects, reset, and Smart Refit & Balance.
Advanced Setup	Balance quality, obstacle search, automatic balancing, tracking, matching World and Create Standard Lighting.

How the balance works

A subject mask excludes the background from the measurement. A first preview measures existing illumination with the Look at zero power; unrelated lights and materials are not changed. A second preview measures the Look's contribution, a common gain scales its enabled lights and matching World (ratios, colors and effects stay), and a third preview checks the result. Low Key, Noir and other dramatic styles use a darker goal so their shadows are not flattened. Exposure and view transform are never changed.

Advanced setup (closed by default)

Setting	Meaning
Avoid Obstructions	On by default. Tries modest direction and distance changes near each style position.
Auto Balance on Creation	On by default. Switch off for placement without preview renders.
Balance Quality	Fast: 256 px, 12 samples. Balanced (default): 384 px, 24 samples. Detailed: 512 px, 48 samples.
New Light Tracking	Aim at Target, Follow Target, Follow + Aim, Follow Camera + Aim, or No Tracking.
Create Matching World	Off by default: your own World and HDRI stay untouched. When on, a separate World owned by the Look is used while the Look is active.
Create Standard Lighting	The target-scaled preset arrangement without obstruction search or balancing.

Working with an existing Look

Auto Balance rebalances the active Look and keeps manually moved lights. Smart Refit & Balance recalculates placement and then balances: it intentionally replaces manual positioning. Reframe regenerates positions without rendering. Reset restores the artistic controls but keeps the calibrated gain. Duplicate copies the calibration with the Look. Activate, rename, duplicate, remove, replace targets, or assign a Look to a Camera shot from the Look list. Light Manager & Tracking has enable/solo, intensity, color, target overrides and offsets for individual lights.

Preview and cancellation

Preview rendering runs while Lighting shows the current stage. Esc cancels the current render; Stop After Current Preview lets the active pass finish and then rolls back. A cancelled new Look is removed and the previous Look and World restored. Render resolution, samples, border, compositor, camera and passes are restored on completion, cancellation and handled failures. No final output file is overwritten.

When to rebalance

Run Auto Balance again after changing the target, pose, camera, materials, environment, other lights or exposure. It calibrates the current frame only; for animated styles use a representative frame and check bright and dark phases.

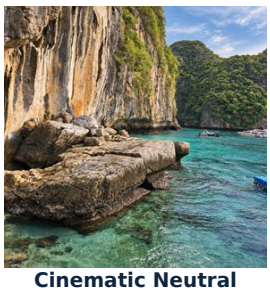
Auto Balance needs a renderable subject visible in the active view layer and camera. Target object names containing commas or quotation marks must be renamed for the subject mask. An enclosed room, narrow cavity, transparent materials, instances or volumetrics can need manual placement and review.

Tracking modes

Mode	Behavior
Aim at Target	Keep position fixed and aim at the target.
Follow Target	Move with the target and keep the offset.
Follow + Aim	Move with the target and keep aiming at it.
Follow Camera + Aim	Move with the camera while aiming at the target.
No Tracking	Keep the light independent.

The 30 bundled styles

Each style is a managed arrangement of lights (and, optionally, a matching World). Thumbnails are real renders of the style.



Cinematic Neutral
Balanced film lighting



Three-Point
Key, fill and back light



Soft Cinema
Large soft sources



High Key
Bright, low contrast



Low Key
Sparse, deep shadows



High Contrast
Key with colored rim



Rembrandt
Angled key, restrained fill



Loop
Natural portrait key



Butterfly
Centered beauty light



Split
Light and shadow halves



Clamshell
Upper and lower frontal



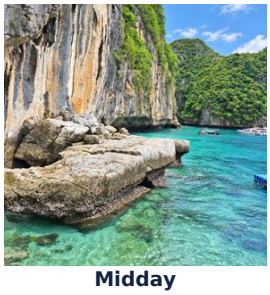
Rim Portrait
Two sculpting edges



Sunrise
Low warm sun, cool sky



Golden Hour
Warm low sun, blue fill



Midday
High sun, neutral fill



Overcast
Diffuse skylight



Twilight
Cool dusk, warm horizon



Moonlight
Cool directional moon



Film Noir
Hard mono key



Horror
Unsettling under-light



Cold Thriller
Steel-blue key



Romantic Warm
Soft warm key, rose edge



Sci-Fi Clean
Crisp white panels



Neon Duo
Cyan and magenta



Candle / Fire
Warm irregular flicker



TV Screen
Cool screen light



Police Lights
Alternating red and blue



Fluorescent Flicker
Cold overhead flicker



Lightning
Storm ambience, flashes



Energy Pulse
Rhythmic colored light

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Scene Fog

1. Open Environment > Fog, reveal the style picker and choose a look.
2. Create Scene Fog. Auto Domain fits a local fog volume to the scene; Use Hidden controls whether hidden objects affect the fit.
3. Adjust Enable Fog, Density, Height, Variation, Fog Color, Light Direction, Variation Scale and Volume Quality.
4. Refit the domain after important scene-scale or subject changes. Use Remove Scene Fog when it is no longer needed.

Density sets how strongly fog scatters and absorbs light. Height shapes its vertical reach. Variation adds procedural irregularity and Variation Scale controls the pattern. Light Direction is the scattering direction. Volume Quality selects Fast, Medium or Best; higher quality costs more render time.

The 9 fog styles



Light Haze
Subtle, long visibility



Soft Fog
Balanced cinematic depth



Ground Fog
Denser lower fog



Dense Fog
Heavy, short visibility



Morning Fog
Soft warm morning



Mist
Lighter, keeps contrast



Dusty Fog
Warm particulate haze



Cinematic Fog
Visible depth and light shafts



Stage Fog
Bright theatrical fog

Choosing a fog style applies that style's values. Inspect fog with your actual lights and render engine.

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Weather & Particles

Add rain, snow, dust, embers or ash to a shot with one button. The effect is built with Geometry Nodes, so it works in Cycles and EEVEE and renders like any other scene content. CineStage creates and manages every object it needs.

1. Open the CineStage tab and expand Environment > Weather & Particles.
2. Pick a style and press Add Weather.
3. The sky is full from the first frame, so you can scrub anywhere on the Timeline.
4. Adjust Intensity, Size, Blur, Opacity, Brightness, Color, Area and Wind. Changes update immediately.

Style	Look
Rain	Steady rain streaks.
Heavy Rain	Dense, fast storm rain. Add Wind for a stormy look.
Snow	Soft flakes drifting slowly down.
Dust Motes	Tiny floating particles. Best with a strong light beam.
Embers	Glowing sparks that rise from ground level.
Falling Ash	Grey flakes sinking slowly.

Changing the style resets Brightness, Opacity, Size, Blur and Turbulence to that style's defaults; Area, Height and Wind are kept.

Setting	Meaning
Intensity / Size	Amount of particles / particle size multiplier.
Blur / Opacity / Brightness / Color	Edge softness, visibility, emitted light and color of each particle.
Area / Height / Ground Level	Width of the filled square, where falling weather starts, and the height of your ground (set it for scenes not at Z = 0).
Follow Camera	Keeps the weather centred on the scene camera. Press Refresh after changing the active scene camera.
Wind / Wind Direction	Sideways speed in metres per second, and an angle in degrees from +X toward +Y.
Turbulence / Seed	Random drift of each particle, and the random pattern.
Viewport Density	Percentage of particles shown in the viewport. Rendering always uses all particles.

Weather appears around the camera, so keep Area large enough to cover the shot. Lower Viewport Density if the viewport gets slow. Particles are not blocked by objects, so rain falls through roofs: keep the action outside covered areas or limit the Area. Remove deletes the emitter, material and collection.

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Film Look & Stylize

Film Look is a creative grading and lens-effects workflow inside Blender. It works with Cycles and EEVEE, still images and animation, and needs no model, LUT file or network connection.

First use

1. Set up your camera and lighting, then open CineStage > Film Look.
2. Choose a Look and Strength. Click Apply Film Look.
3. Click Preview Render. It uses your current render settings and captures Before and After images from the same render.
4. Use Before / After to inspect the pair in an Image Editor.
5. Change the Look or Strength directly. Open a detailed section only when you need it. Save the .blend to keep the recipe.

The six Looks



Clean Cinema
Neutral finish, soft highlights



Warm Drama
Warm color, quiet texture



Cool Thriller
Cool color, firmer contrast



Noir
Monochrome, deep contrast



Vintage Film
Muted warm, lifted blacks



Neon Night
Cool night, controlled glow

These are creative CineStage recipes, not measured reproductions of commercial film stocks. Changing a preset restores its recipe controls and keeps your Look name, strength and identity. Reset returns the Look to its current recipe.

Main controls

Control	Use
Film-wide Look Enabled	Activate or bypass the film-wide selection.
Strength	Blends the whole finish with the original image. Zero is an exact bypass.
Preview Render	Capture a real before/after pair using the current camera.
Before / After	Display the last captured pair; no new rendering happens.
Reset	Restore the selected recipe's control values.

Detailed sections (closed by default)

Section	Controls
Color & Tone	Exposure, Warmth, Tint, Contrast, Saturation (zero is monochrome), Highlight Softness, Shadow Lift.
Film Texture	Grain, Grain Size, Animate Grain, Grain Seed. The same seed and frame give the same grain when re-rendering.
Lens & Glow	Bloom, Halation (an artistic edge halo), Highlight Threshold, Vignette, Chromatic Aberration and Lens Flare (both off by default).
Frame & Output	Cinema bars: Original, 1.85, 2.39 or a custom Frame Aspect. Camera Thirds Guide is an overlay only and is not rendered.
Saved Looks & Shots	New Look, Save a Copy, Remove; per-shot Use Film Look / Custom Look / Off; Apply This Look to Active Shot; Use Scene Look for All Shots.

Stylize

Open Film Look > Stylize and pick a style. Stylize Amount blends between the photographic and stylized image; Stylize Size changes the brush, tone or pixel size. It works together with the Look; None keeps the photographic image.



Painterly
Smooth oil-paint regions



Comic Ink
Flat regions, few tones



Pixel Art
Large pixels, limited palette



CCTV Camera
Scanlines, green-gray tone



VHS Tape
Smear, scanlines, fringing

Compositor, preview and shots

CineStage inserts one managed Film Look group before the final image output of your compositor and keeps the rest. Disable Film Look to restore the original connection. Scene exposure, view transform and lens are not changed. Preview and Render Director restore the compositor and render options after success, error or cancellation (Esc cancels). The preview is a captured result: render another one whenever the scene changes. Selecting a shot activates its assigned finish; Render and Final Review apply each shot's own finish.

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Render: separate shot output

Render creates output for the selected Camera shot or every Camera shot: separate files, image sequences, or every Lighting Look as its own variant.

1. Save the .blend. Confirm the Camera shot list and source frame ranges.
2. Set Blender's output image or movie format first. Choose Shots: Selected Shot or All Shots.
3. Set Output Root and Output Mode, then choose Current, Draft, Preview, Final or Animation quality.
4. Keep Safe Versions enabled. Configure Separate Shot Folders, Skip Completed and lighting variants as needed.
5. Run Preflight. Inspect errors and warnings; use the conservative fix controls where appropriate.
6. Start rendering. Press Esc in the render window to cancel. Check the output folder and the completion report afterward.

Quality	Temporary queue settings
Current	Keep current Blender render settings.
Draft	25% resolution; 16 Cycles samples.
Preview	50% resolution; 64 Cycles samples.
Final	100% resolution; 256 Cycles samples.
Animation	100% resolution; 128 Cycles samples.

Sample presets apply where Cycles settings exist; they are not EEVEE sample guarantees. Render restores its saved camera, range, frame, output and supported settings after completion or cancellation.

Preflight, packing & resume

Preflight inspects camera, range and output readiness, external-file references, visibility mismatches and disk space. Collect Project Files packs supported data after confirmation; save the .blend afterwards. Safe output versions use v001, v002 and later folders. Matching interrupted image sequences can render only the missing frames; a movie cannot resume from the middle. After changing scene content, use a fresh output root or version.

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Final Review: one complete film

Render Film is inside the Render & Film section, below Render Shots. It shows Camera shots as cards with thumbnails, source ranges, status, View, Play, Refresh and Earlier/Later controls. The visible order is the final film order.

1. Create the Camera shots first. Expand Render & Film > Render Film and refresh the thumbnails you need.
2. Inspect each shot with View or Play. Set Needs Review, Ready or Final as your own production label.
3. Use Earlier/Later to arrange the film order. This does not retime the source animation.
4. Choose Output (MP4 or PNG Sequence), Safe Versions, and Cut or Crossfade. Set Crossfade Frames when needed.
5. Optional: choose a Soundtrack and Volume. Run Preflight and resolve blocking issues.
6. Click Preview Film. CineStage prepares a temporary film scene in the current editor; Return to Scene leaves it.
7. Click Render Film to output one H.264 MP4 or one continuous numbered PNG sequence.

The original shot animation is not retimed: the film uses a generated edit scene and scene strips. Statuses are labels you set, not automated quality checks. A thumbnail is a still from the shot's midpoint and can take time on heavy scenes. Cut places shots one after another; Crossfade overlaps neighbouring shots by up to the requested frame count. MP4 needs FFmpeg. The soundtrack is used for preview and MP4; PNG files contain images only.

Your own cameras

Final Review works with the Camera shots created by CineStage. Each shot needs at least two source frames, its range must be inside the scene range, and its camera must belong to the source scene. Each shot keeps its own Film Look.

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Project Health, troubleshooting & support

Check CineStage Project inspects camera and animation references, frame ranges, identities and Lighting Looks. Report opens the full last result. Repair Safe Issues fixes supported CineStage identity, range and derived-data issues; it is not a general mesh or rig repair tool.

Symptom	What to check
CineStage tab missing	Use the 3D Viewport, press N, enable the extension, and confirm Blender 5.2 or newer. Disable another CineStage copy if registration reports a conflict.
Quick Menu does not open	Mouse over the 3D Viewport; check the shortcut and conflict message in Preferences > Add-ons > CineStage > Quick Menu.
Create / Build button disabled	Check the required target and the available motion list.
Camera too close or too far	Check Framing (Full is default) and Camera Distance. Static shots have no movement keys.
Aim Target unexpectedly animates	Check Animate Aim Target, existing target keys and Auto Key.
Rig Motion differs after Reset	Reset restores the state before Setup. Run Setup again for a fresh session.
Feet slide or hand lock is wrong	Inspect the range, limb recognition, thresholds, ground, selected hand and target, Preview, and any baked state.
Object appears in render after Hide	Hide from the Quick Menu affects the viewport. Use Blender's render visibility controls.
Relative output path fails	Save the .blend or choose an absolute output folder. Do not select a drive root.
MP4 unavailable	Confirm FFmpeg support, or choose PNG Sequence.
Some resumed frames look old	Resume does not detect every scene edit. Change the output root for a fresh render.
Smart Lighting stops	Make sure a visible mesh subject is in the camera view and its name has no commas or quotation marks.

Backups & support

Back up the .blend, Animation Library, Workflow Presets, FBX inputs, custom media and final output. For support, use the marketplace purchase channel or https://designic.net/cinestage-addon/. Include your Blender and CineStage versions, operating system, the steps, and a small example.

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Glossary, credits & licensing

Term	Meaning
Action	A Blender animation data block containing keyed animation.
Armature / rig	The bone and control object used to pose a character.
FK / IK	Forward Kinematics rotates a limb chain through controls; Inverse Kinematics positions an end control and solves the chain.
NLA	Blender's Nonlinear Animation system for working with Action strips.
Bake	Sample evaluated motion into ordinary keys or saved output frames.
Aim Target	A helper that directs camera aim and focus.
Lighting Look	A managed collection of lights and controls, optionally with a World.
World	Blender's environment and background lighting data.
Preflight	A setup check before rendering.
// path	A Blender path relative to the saved .blend file.
Safe Versions	Separate v001 / v002 output folders that preserve completed results.

Licensing

CineStage's Python source is distributed under GPL-3.0-or-later; the full text is in the LICENSE file inside the add-on. The bundled visual assets (Lighting Look, Film Look and preset thumbnails) are licensed separately under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY 4.0); see ASSET_LICENSE.txt and ASSET_CREDITS.txt in the add-on. No third-party libraries are bundled; motion files you add yourself keep their own licenses. Blender is a trademark of the Blender Foundation; CineStage is an independent add-on.

CineStage by DESIGNIC, Abdullah Alnasrallah. https://designic.net/cinestage-addon/

25 / REFERENCE

Command reference

Every command is also available from F3 search as its label. Descriptions are the ones shown in Blender's tooltips.

Camera

Command	What it does
Add Aim Key	Key the camera aim target at the current frame
Add Camera Key	Key the camera rig position, path progress, and lens at the current frame
Add Cameras from Markers	Create one shot for every camera bound to a Timeline marker (Ctrl+B in the Timeline). Each shot starts at its marker and ends before the next one
Add Impact	Add a short camera impact shake at the current frame
Apply Camera Feel	Apply or update non-destructive handheld motion for the selected shot
Apply Shot Setup	Build or update the selected camera rig, framing, lens, focus, and movement
Center Aim Target	Move the Aim Target to the selected target Geometry Center
Continue Previous Camera	Extend the selected camera shot through the current or selected character-shot range
Copy Previous Shot	Create a new shot with the selected shot's camera setup
Create Cinematic Shot	Build a complete camera shot from one guided setup
Detach Camera	Detach the camera rig from its custom path without deleting the path
Draw Custom Path	Create a Bezier path, enter Edit Mode, and activate the curve drawing tool
Edit Active Camera Shot	Open the selected shot controls and select its camera
Edit Path	Select the custom camera path and enter Edit Mode
Finish & Attach Camera	Finish path editing or reattach the selected shot camera rig to its saved path
Go to Shot	Move the Timeline to the selected camera shot and make its camera active
New Camera Shot	Create a new independent camera shot at the current frame
Remove Camera Shot	Remove the selected CineStage camera shot and its generated rig
Reverse Direction	Reverse the camera's travel direction on the custom path
Select Aim Target	Select the active shot's Aim Target so it can be moved and keyed
Select Camera Rig	Select the active shot Camera Rig for free movement and Camera Auto Key
Select Camera Shot	Make this Camera Director shot active and select its camera
Set Shot Lens	Set the active shot's camera to this focal length
Show / Hide Path	Toggle the custom camera path visibility in the viewport
Smooth Path	Set all Bezier path handles to automatic smooth handles
Use Character as Camera Target	Use the CineStage character as the default camera target
Use Selected Camera	Create a camera shot using the selected Blender camera
View Camera	Enter the selected shot camera view

Object Animation

Command	What it does
Apply Object Slow Motion	Slow selected object Actions and keep the linked Camera Director shot synchronized
Apply Rigid Body Setup	Add Active or Passive rigid bodies and key Dynamic/Animated states at the chosen frames
Apply to Selected Keys	Apply interpolation and easing only to keyframes selected in the Timeline, Dope Sheet, or Graph Editor
Bake Rigid Body to Keys	Bake selected Active rigid-body motion to normal transform keyframes
Clear Physics Cache	Clear Blender's rigid-body point cache so the simulation can be recalculated
Clear Physics State Keys	Restore only the physics and transform keys previously changed by CineStage
Continue Mirrored Motion	Copy Start-to-Peak Location motion into Peak-to-End, continue X/Y travel, and return Z to the exact Start ground level
Enable Rigid Body	Enable the chosen Dynamic or Static rigid body on the selected objects
Ground Collision	Enable or disable a fixed Passive rigid body on the active ground object
Insert Object Key	Insert transform keys for the Object Animation targets at the current frame
Keep Object Timing	Keep selected objects' current slow-motion timing as the new base
Remove Object Key	Remove transform keys from the Object Animation targets at the current frame
Remove Rigid Body	Remove rigid-body simulation from the Object Animation targets
Restore Object Timing	Restore selected objects' original key timing while preserving animated values
Reverse Object Animation	Reverse Object Animation key timing inside the selected frame range
Set Object Animation Loop	Add a repeating or ping-pong Cycles modifier to Object Animation curves
Set Rigid Body State	Key the selected objects' physics state at the current Timeline frame
Undo Last Physics Setup	Restore the rigid-body settings and keys from before CineStage's last physics operation
Undo Timing Change	Restore only the interpolation, easing, and handles changed by the last Selected Key Timing operation
Use Active Object	Use the active object as the main Object Animation target

Rig Animation & Motion Tools

Command	What it does
Add Pivot Key	Insert or update transform keys for the active Smart Pivot
Apply Animation Offset	Apply the current selected-bone pose difference across the open shot
Apply Rig Slow Motion	Slow the open rig animation and keep its linked Camera Director shot synchronized
Apply Timing Scale	Make the selected timing faster or slower
Attach	Attach the chosen child to the chosen parent from the current frame while keeping its visible transform
Bake & Remove	Bake the visible attachment motion on the chosen child and remove only CineStage attachment constraints
Bake & Remove Pivot	Bake visible control motion, remove pivot constraints, and delete the pivot

Command	What it does
Clear Attachment Keys	Clear only CineStage attachment keys at the current frame or across the child
Clear Ghost Poses	Remove CineStage ghost pose objects
Clear Motion Paths	Clear Blender motion paths from selected controls
Clear Parent • Keep Transform	Clear the standard Blender Parent while preserving the visible transform
Create Motion Paths	Calculate Blender motion paths for the selected controls
Create Smart Pivot	Create a temporary pivot and attach the top-level selected controls to it
Even Spacing	Redistribute existing key moments evenly between the first and last key
Keep Current Timing	Keep the current rig timing as the new base and remove the restore backup
Parent • Keep Transform	Parent every selected child to the active object while preserving visible transforms
Refresh Ghost Poses	Show static armature poses at the previous and next key moments
Release	Release the chosen child at the current frame and keep its visible transform
Remove from Library	Remove the library tag; actions already used by a sequence remain safe
Restore Original Timing	Restore the rig animation's original key timing while preserving pose-value edits
Save Open Shot	Save an independent copy of the open shot in this Blender file
Shift Timing	Move keys earlier or later without changing their spacing
Use After Finish	Select this saved shot for Add Existing Shot after editing is finished
Use Selected Child	Use the active object or active pose bone as the animated attachment child
Use Selected Parent	Use the active object or active pose bone as the animated attachment parent

Rig Animation

Command	What it does
Add Key	Insert or update transform keys for the selected bones at the current frame
Apply to Shot	Apply interpolation, easing, and easing strength to the open shot
In-Between Pose	Use Blender's Breakdowner, Push, or Relax on selected controls
Key Full Rig	Key every animator control at the current frame, even when nothing is selected
Key IK/FK Switch	Insert keyframes for the detected IK/FK switch values on the current frame or chosen range
Mirror X	Mirror pose transforms on X and make Add Key key both matching sides
Next Key	Jump to the next key in the open shot
Pose Clipboard	Copy, paste, or mirror the selected control pose
Previous Key	Jump to the previous key in the open shot
Remove Key	Remove selected Timeline keys; otherwise remove selected-bone keys at the current frame
Reset Selected	Reset selected controls and update their keys at the current frame
Select Controls	Select useful control groups without searching through the rig
Selected to FK / IK	Switch selected limbs, snap their visible pose, and add keys automatically

Command	What it does
Switch Full FK / IK	Switch every detected limb, preserve the visible pose, and add keys automatically

General & Rig Motion

Command	What it does
Add Animation Shot	Add a visual Shot mark without changing normal Blender animation
Add Animation Shot	Add the next visual Shot after the previous animation; the Timeline playhead is ignored
Add Current Shot	Add an editable copy of the character's currently active Action
Add Existing Shot	Add a single-user editable copy of the chosen Action
Add Existing Shot	Search for an Action and add an independent editable copy
Cancel	Close the open shot without adding it
Default Color	Remove the custom shot color and use Blender's default look
Edit Selected Shot	Open this shot in Blender's native NLA Tweak Mode so its keys remain editable in place
Finish & Add	Add the open Action to the shot sequence
Finish Editing	Close NLA Tweak Mode and return to the complete shot sequence
Go to Shot	Move the Timeline to the start of the selected shot
Move Shot	Change the order of the selected shot
Play Animation	Play the rig's normal Blender animation from the first marked Shot
Recover Last Shot	Reopen the most recent CineStage Action if a previous finish attempt failed
Remove Shot Mark	Remove only the selected Shot mark; keep every animation key and every other Shot mark unchanged
Remove Shot Marks	Remove CineStage Shot marks without deleting animation
Rename Shot	Rename the selected shot
Update Timeline	Apply start frames, blend, speed, repeat, and mute changes
Use Selected Character	Use the selected armature without changing its rig

Lighting

Command	What it does
Activate Lighting Look	Make this Lighting Look active and safely hide the other CineStage looks
Apply Tracking to All	Apply the selected tracking mode to every light in the active Lighting Look
Assign Look to Shot	Use the active Lighting Look whenever this Camera Director shot is activated or rendered
Clear Shot Lighting	Remove the Lighting Look assignment from the active shot without deleting the look
Create Lighting	Analyze the chosen target and create a non-destructive camera-aware Lighting Look
Duplicate Lighting Look	Duplicate the active Lighting Look, including controls, light edits, targets, and tracking

Command	What it does
Enable All Lights	Enable every light in the active Lighting Look
Preview Lighting	Switch this 3D Viewport to Rendered shading with the scene lights and World
Reframe Lighting	Recalculate light placement from the current target size and camera
Remove All CineStage Lighting	Remove every CineStage-owned Lighting Look while preserving all user-created lights
Remove Lighting Look	Remove only the active CineStage Lighting Look and its owned data
Reset Director Controls	Reset the active look controls without deleting the Lighting Look
Reset Selected Light	Restore the selected light's preset transform, intensity, color, target, and original tracking mode
Select Light	Select the active Lighting Director light in the viewport
Solo Light	Temporarily enable only the selected light inside this Lighting Look
Use Active Camera	Use Blender's active scene camera for camera-relative lighting
Use Active Shot	Use the active Camera Director shot camera and target
Use Selected	Use all selected supported objects as one Lighting Director target
Use Selected as Look Target	Replace the active Lighting Look target with all selected supported objects and reframe it

Smart Lighting

Command	What it does
Create Smart Lighting	Create target-aware lighting without rendering; Auto Balance on an existing Look uses small camera preview renders
Stop After Current Preview	Finish the current small render, then cancel and restore the previous lighting; Esc cancels rendering

Scene Fog

Command	What it does
Create Scene Fog	Create or change the CineStage photoreal fog domain
Fit Fog to Scene	Refit the CineStage fog domain around current scene geometry
Remove Scene Fog	Remove CineStage Scene Fog
Reset Fog Color	Restore the selected Fog Style default color

Film Look

Command	What it does
Apply Film Look	Create a saved Film Look from the selected style and apply it to this scene
Apply to Active Shot	Assign the selected saved Film Look to the active Camera Director shot
Compare in Viewport	Before sets viewport compositing to None; After restores Camera or Always. Other compositor effects are included; no render is started
Preview Film Finish	Preview the selected saved Look once and capture real Before/After images; shot assignments are preserved

Command	What it does
Remove Film Finish	Remove the Film Finish node and restore the original compositor; saved Looks and shot assignments are kept for reuse
Remove Film Look	Remove this saved look; shots assigned to it return to the scene look
Reset to Preset	Restore the selected preset controls without changing its name or shot assignments
Save a Copy	Save a separate copy of this look; existing shot assignments keep their original look
Set Frame Aspect	
Show Film Comparison	Show a captured Before or After image from the last Film Finish preview
Stop After Current Render	Cancel Film Finish preview safely when the active Blender render completes
Toggle Film Finish	Bypass or resume all Film Finish effects in this scene; saved Looks and shot assignments are kept
Use Scene Look for All Shots	Set all Camera Director shots to follow the scene Film Look
Viewport Compositor	Set viewport compositing only: None, camera view, or all views; no render is started

Quick Menu helpers

Command	What it does
Cursor to Active	
Cursor to Selected	
Cursor to World	
Hide Selected	Hide selected objects in the current View Layer only; render visibility is unchanged
Image as Plane	Import an image as a mesh plane
Origin to Geometry	
Selection to Cursor	
Selection to Cursor — Keep Offset	
Unhide All	Reveal all objects hidden with Viewport Hide; render visibility is unchanged
Unhide Object	Reveal this object in the current View Layer without changing render visibility

Repeat Animation

Command	What it does
Repeat Animation	Copy the keyframes in the chosen range after its end, several times, as real keyframes. Keys inside the repeated span are replaced

Shot markers

Command	What it does
Add Marker	Add or update a CineStage marker at the current Timeline frame
Next Marker	Jump to the next CineStage marker

Command	What it does
Previous Marker	Jump to the previous CineStage marker
Remove Marker	Remove the CineStage marker at the current Timeline frame

Viewport

Command	What it does
In Front	Show the active object in front of scene geometry
Quick View	Switch the 3D Viewport to a standard orthographic view
Set Transform Orientation	Change Blender's active transform orientation
Set Viewport Shading	Change the current 3D Viewport shading mode

Workflow Presets

Command	What it does
Apply Workflow Preset	Apply the selected preset without replacing scene objects or shot identity
Delete Workflow Preset	Permanently delete the selected per-user preset
Rename Workflow Preset	Rename or recategorize the selected preset
Save Workflow Preset	Save the current reusable CineStage settings to the per-user preset library

Project Health

Command	What it does
Check CineStage Project	Validate camera shots, animation shots, Lighting Looks, ranges, references, and stable IDs without changing the file
CineStage Project Report	Show the complete result from the most recent Project Check
Repair Safe Issues	Repair CineStage IDs, invalid ranges, and derived Timeline metadata without deleting user data

Quick Menu

Command	What it does
Add Selected Key	Key only the currently selected objects or pose controls
CineStage Quick Menu	Open your sixteen CineStage action buttons at the mouse
CineStage Quick Toggle	