



----- VFX QUICK LINKS -----

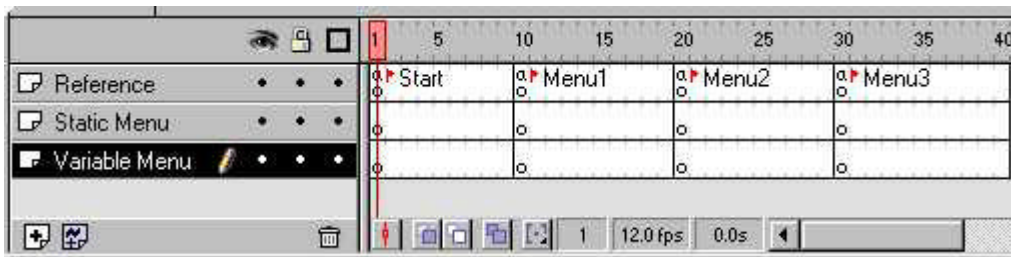
Hierarchical Menu Layout

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- [DOWNLOAD THE .FLA](#)
- **SKILL LEVEL: Intermediate / Advanced (Very time consuming)**
- Know how to make buttons - inside and out (If not go back the tutorial on creating buttons)
- Adding actions to symbols AND instances
- Be comfortable working with multiple layers and frames
- Basic programming logic in frames (You'll see what I mean later)
- Lots of patience - lots and lots of patience

TUTORIAL

Screenshot of the Frames you will create in this tutorial:



Pregame warm up

Before you start - have an idea what you want to have your menu layout look like. Editing buttons is easy but changing the layout of the menu will be very hard to change once everything is laid out and instance actions are assigned.

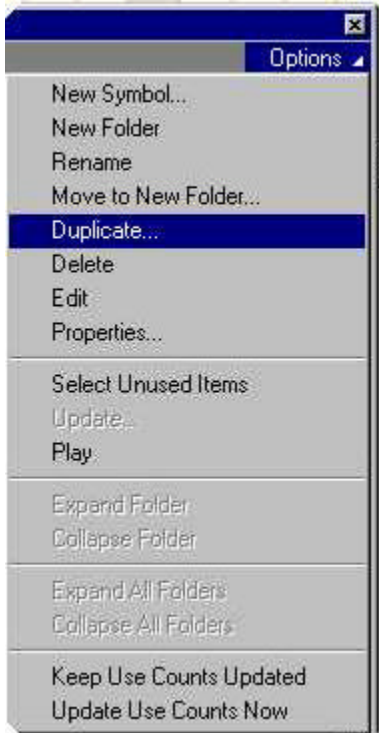
The example I do involves 3 main menus that extend into 3 additional menus each - you can add or subtract as you like

Make lots of buttons. The logic of this menu is 1) You have a static layer - i.e. menu buttons that never disappear. and 2) You have a sub level to each button - a sub menu that appears and disappears upon mouse events - also each layer of sub menus will make another level disappear - if you click on menu 1 3 menus appear - if you click on menu 2 - 3 buttons appear BUT the 3 from menu 1 disappear.

Stage 1 - Buttons

OK - lets get the show on the road

For this example you need to make 12 buttons - 3 for the **static menu** and 9 for the **variable menus**.
Make 1 button - and label it Static1 - duplicate this button twice and re-name the 2 copies Static2 and Static3 (The duplicate command is located in the library (Control L) and in the Options you have the following menu



(Or you can right click on each button and duplicate from that menu too)

After duplication - edit each button and re-label the text - if necessary. (You don't want all your menus saying menu 1 in the text :)

Now Make another button - call it variable 1 - copy this button 8 times and name each button variable 2, 3, 4.... up to 9 (As above edit text if necessary)

Side note - copying buttons not only saves you time but it also keeps the set of buttons uniform in size and shape.

Stage 2 - Menu construction

Back to the main stage (Control E)

Start by making 3 layers and label them as follows:

Layer 1 = Reference

Layer 2 = Static Menu

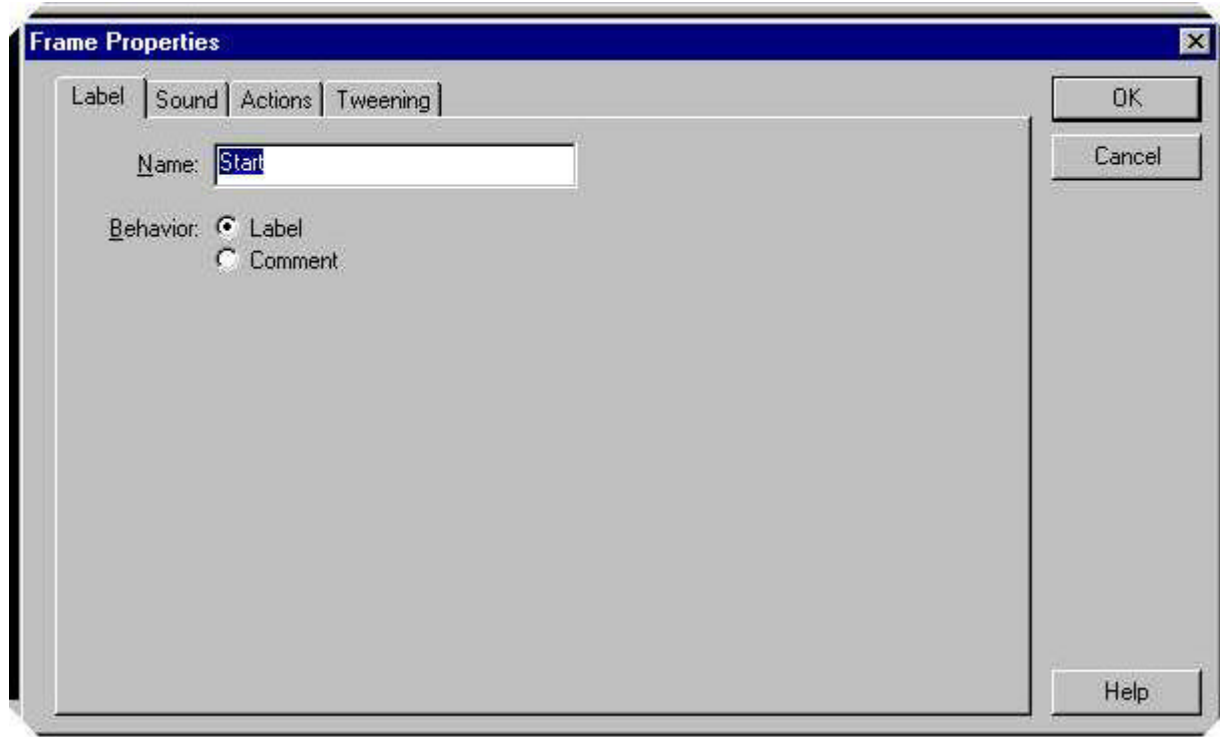
Layer 3 = Variable Menu (This is the level that will appear and disappear upon various mouse commands)

Insert **frames** (F5) at 40 in all 3 layers

In the **Reference Layer** Insert **keyframes** (F6) at 1, 10, 20 and 30

Labels

In the **Reference Layer** - Double click on each keyframe in 1, 10, 20, and 30 - the Frames Properties dialog boxes pops up.



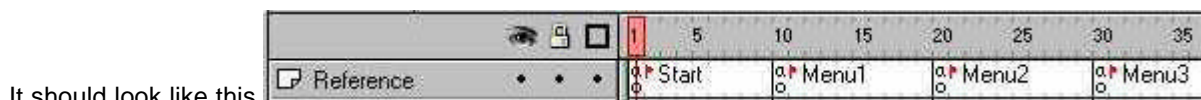
Select the *Label Tab* and label each frame as follows

Keyframe 1 - Start

Keyframe 10 - Menu1

Keyframe 20 - Menu2

Keyframe 30 - Menu3

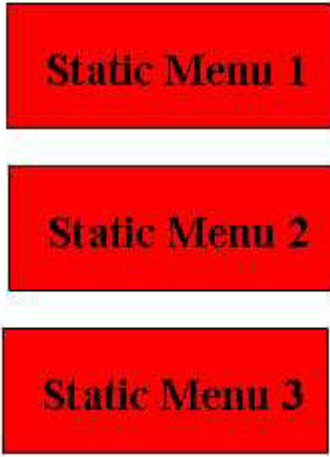
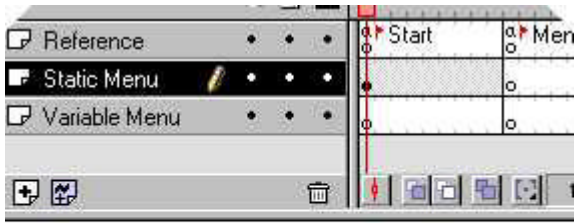


While your at it - switch to the *Actions tab* and put a **stop** action on each keyframe of this layer (If not the file will play through as a movie and the menu will not function)

Static menu setup

Make **Static Menu** your current layer

In keyframe 1 insert the 3 main (static) menu buttons on the stage



Line them up the way you want them - these buttons will not disappear

Now insert **keyframes** (F6) at 10, 20 and 30 - that is pretty much it for this layer - *for now*

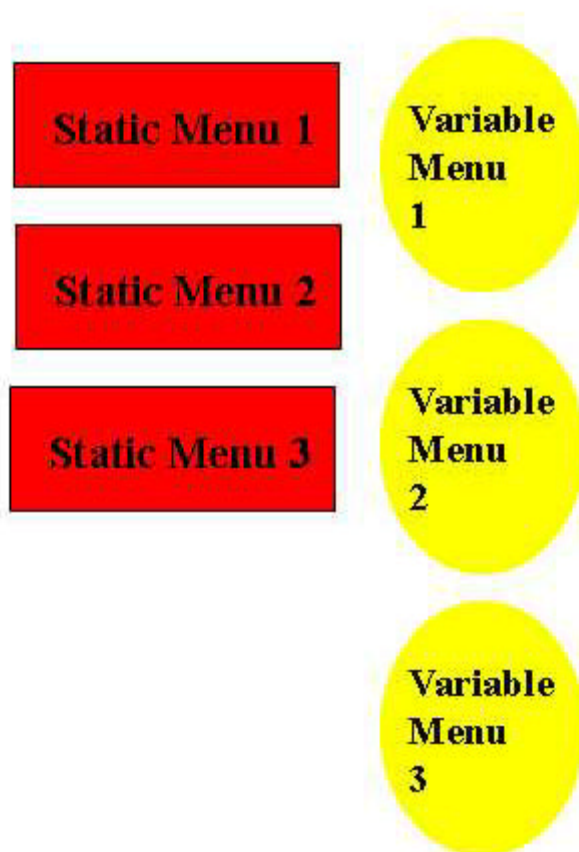
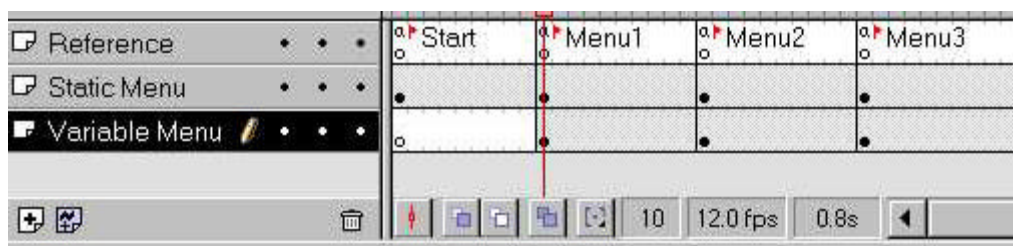
Stage 2 - Part 2 - Setting up the variable menus

Now pay attention kids - this is the stage that gets real messy and time consuming

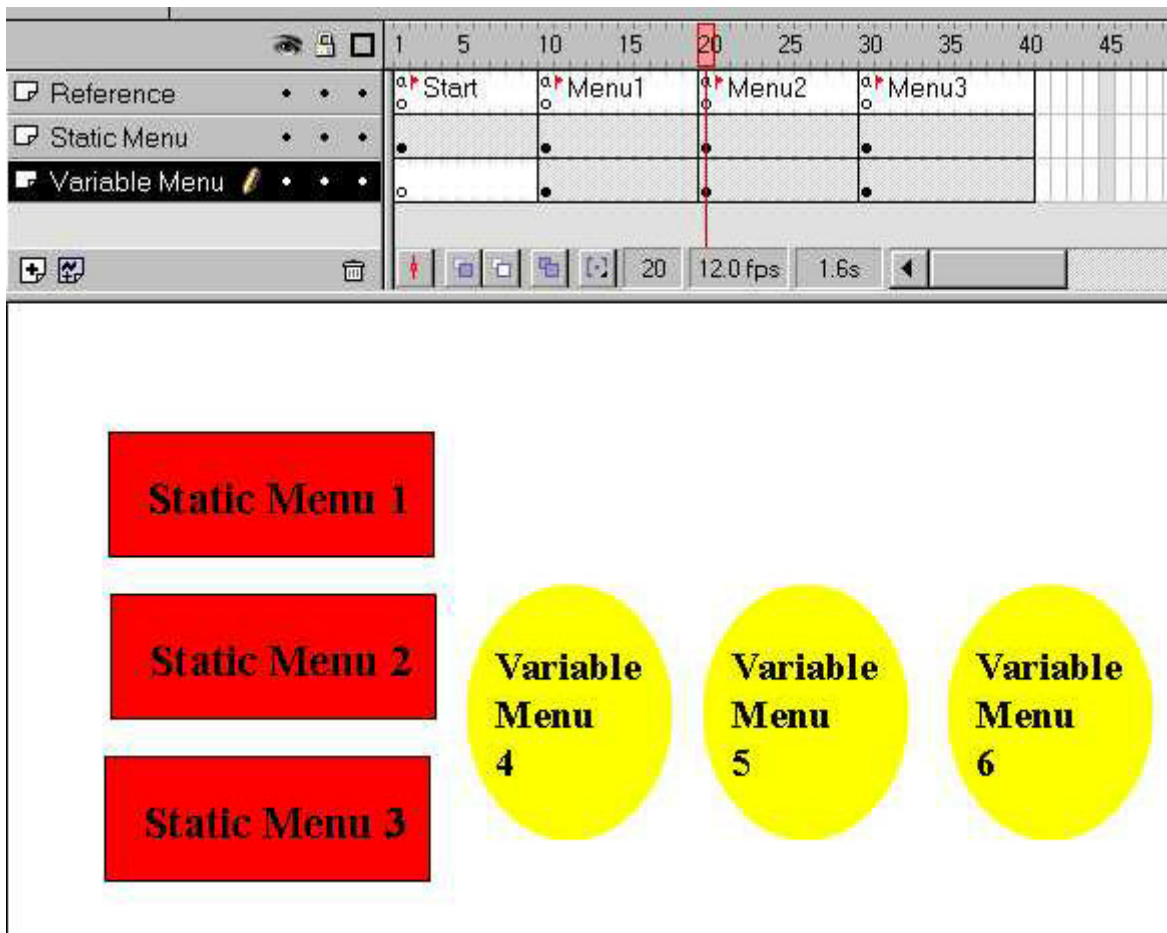
Make the Variable Menu layer your current layer (Lock all other layers)

In Frame 10 - Start placing the variable menu buttons on the stage for Menu 1 - use variable buttons 1,2, and 3 (See screenshot below)

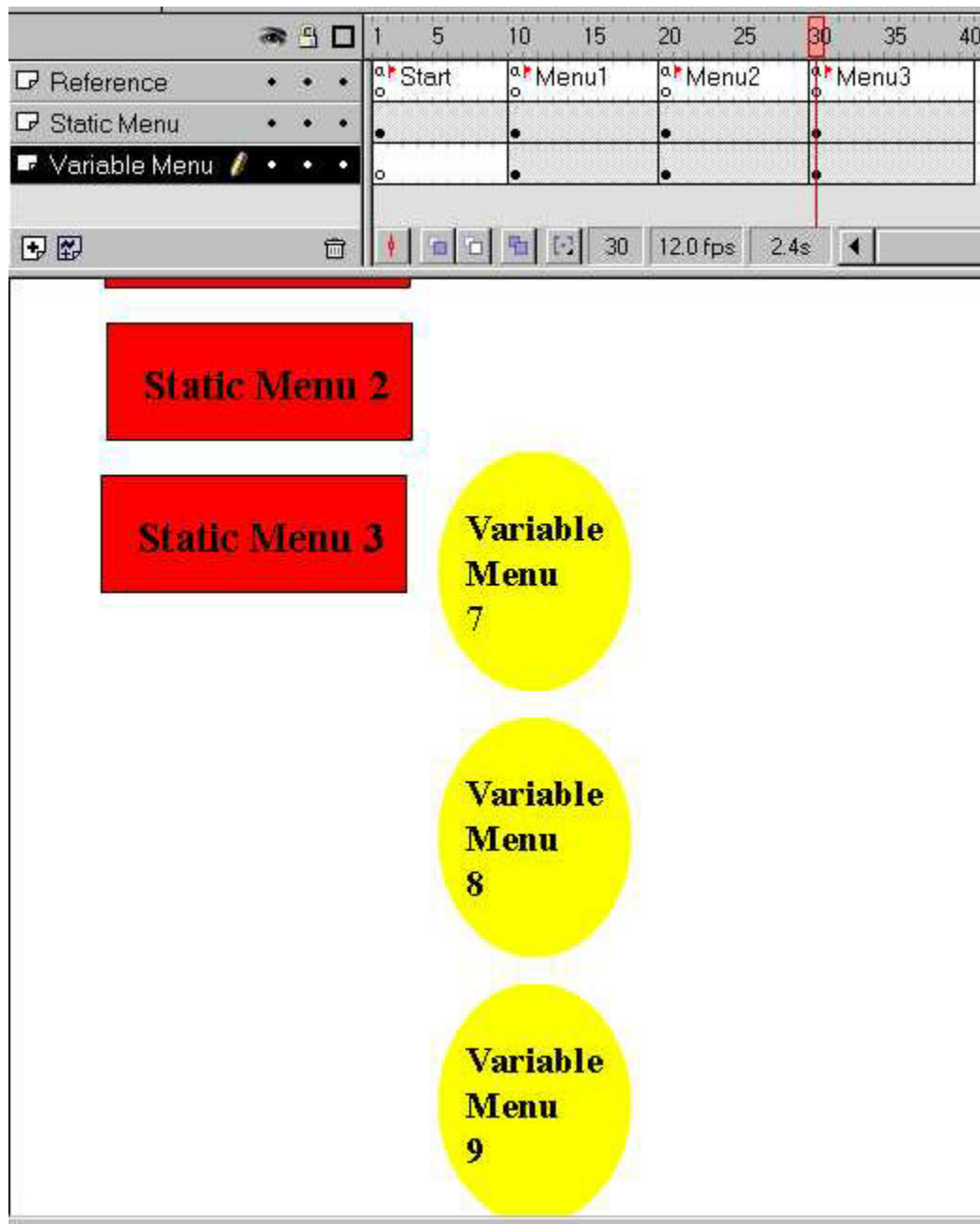
At Frame 10 (Menu 1)



Move to Frame 20 for Menu 2 - and place variable buttons 4, 5, and 6



Finally - at Frame 30 for Menu 3 - place variable buttons 7, 8, and 9



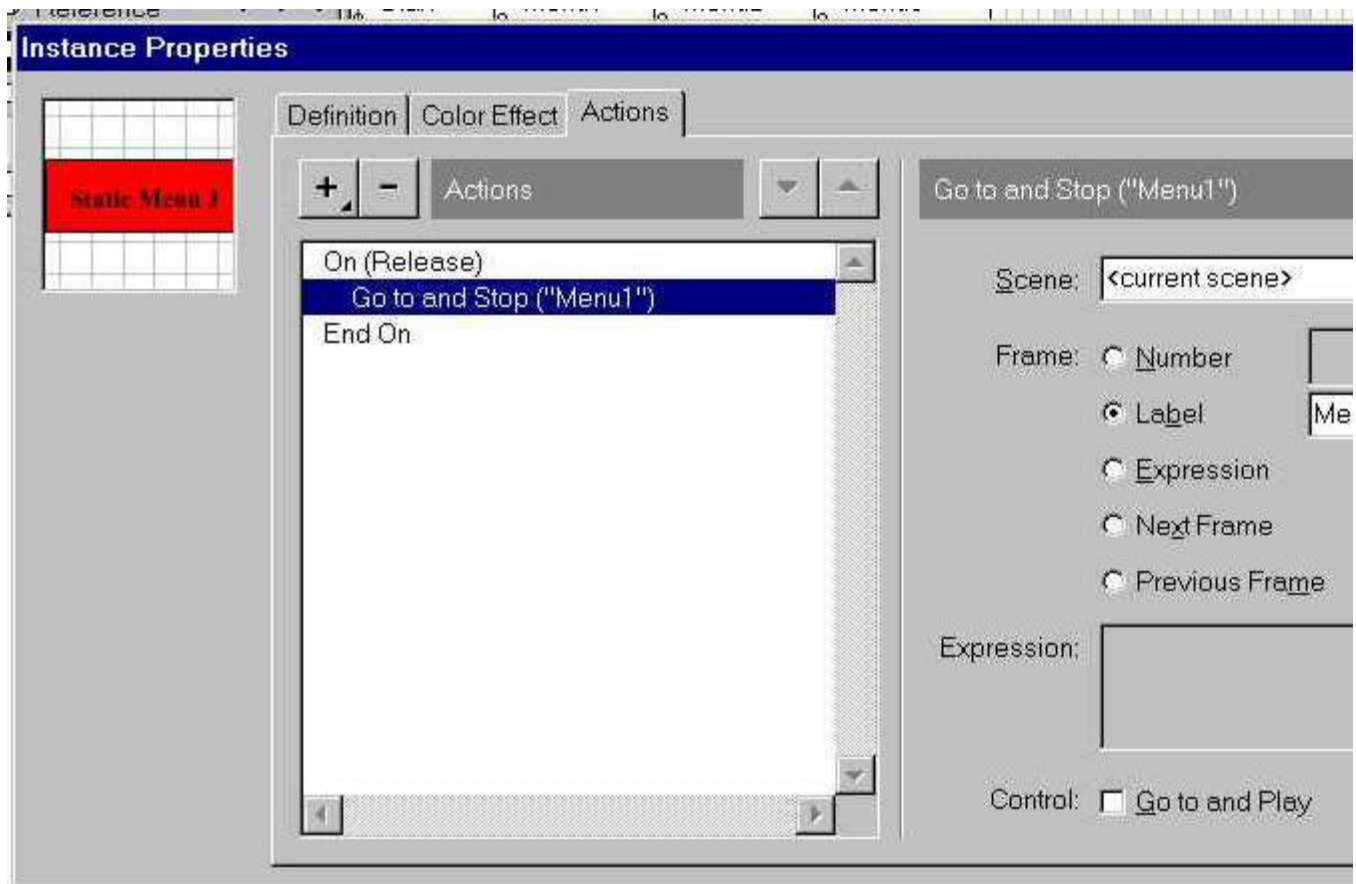
Stage 3 - Assigning actions and references

We are not out of the woods yet

Now that you have the layout of how you want your menus to appear and disappear - let make them work

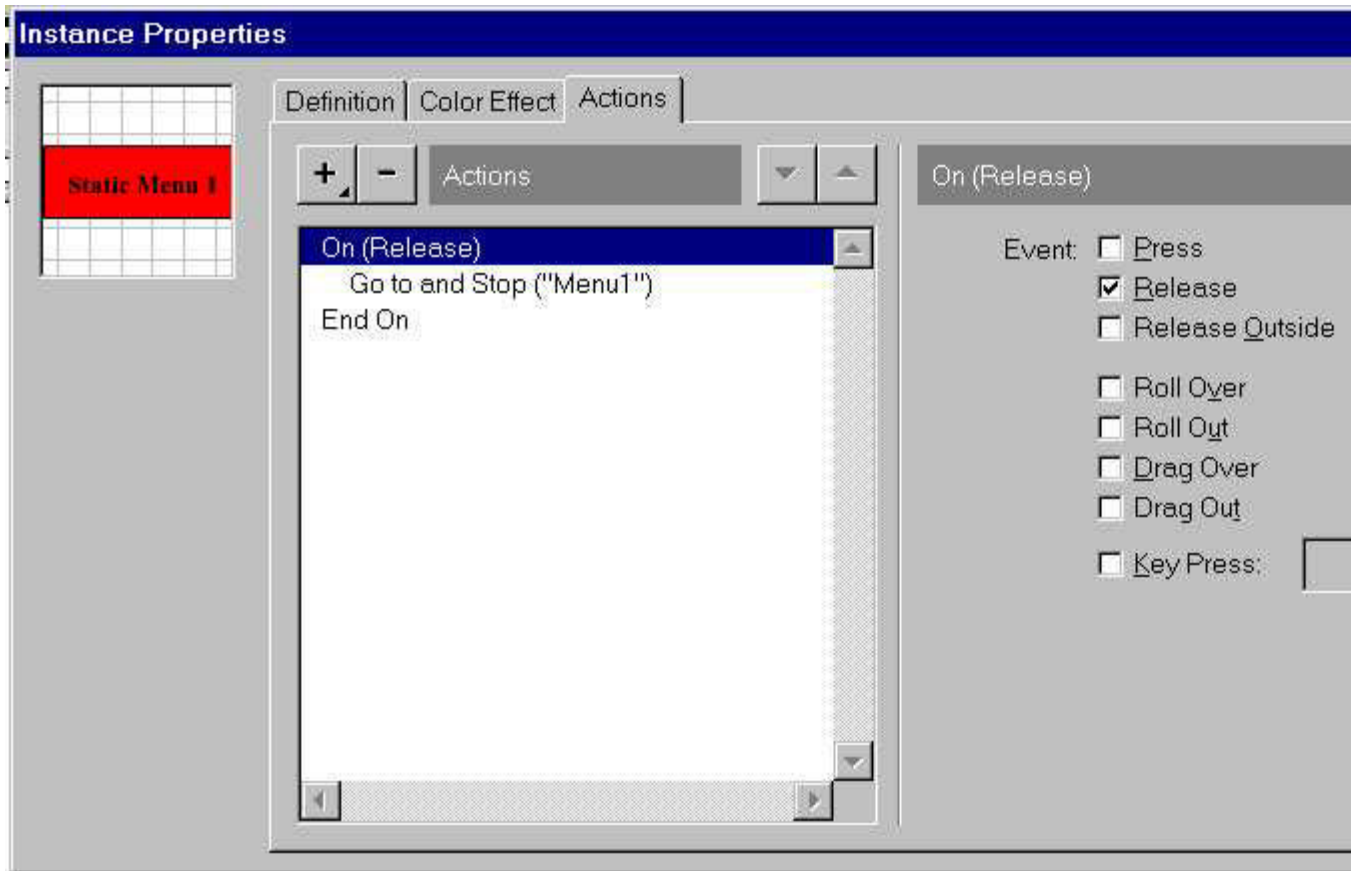
Back to the *Static menu* layer

In keyframe 1 (Labeled Start) - Double click on 1st *static button* - assign the following action - Go To and Stop
In the parameters (right menu) set the frame to "label" and select menu1" (see screenshot below)



Repeat this 2 more times - assigning *menus* 2 and 3 to *static buttons* 2 and 3

Note - make sure mouse event is set to "release" (See screenshot below)



Stage 3 - Part 2 - Making the menus collapse

This is where the programming logic comes in

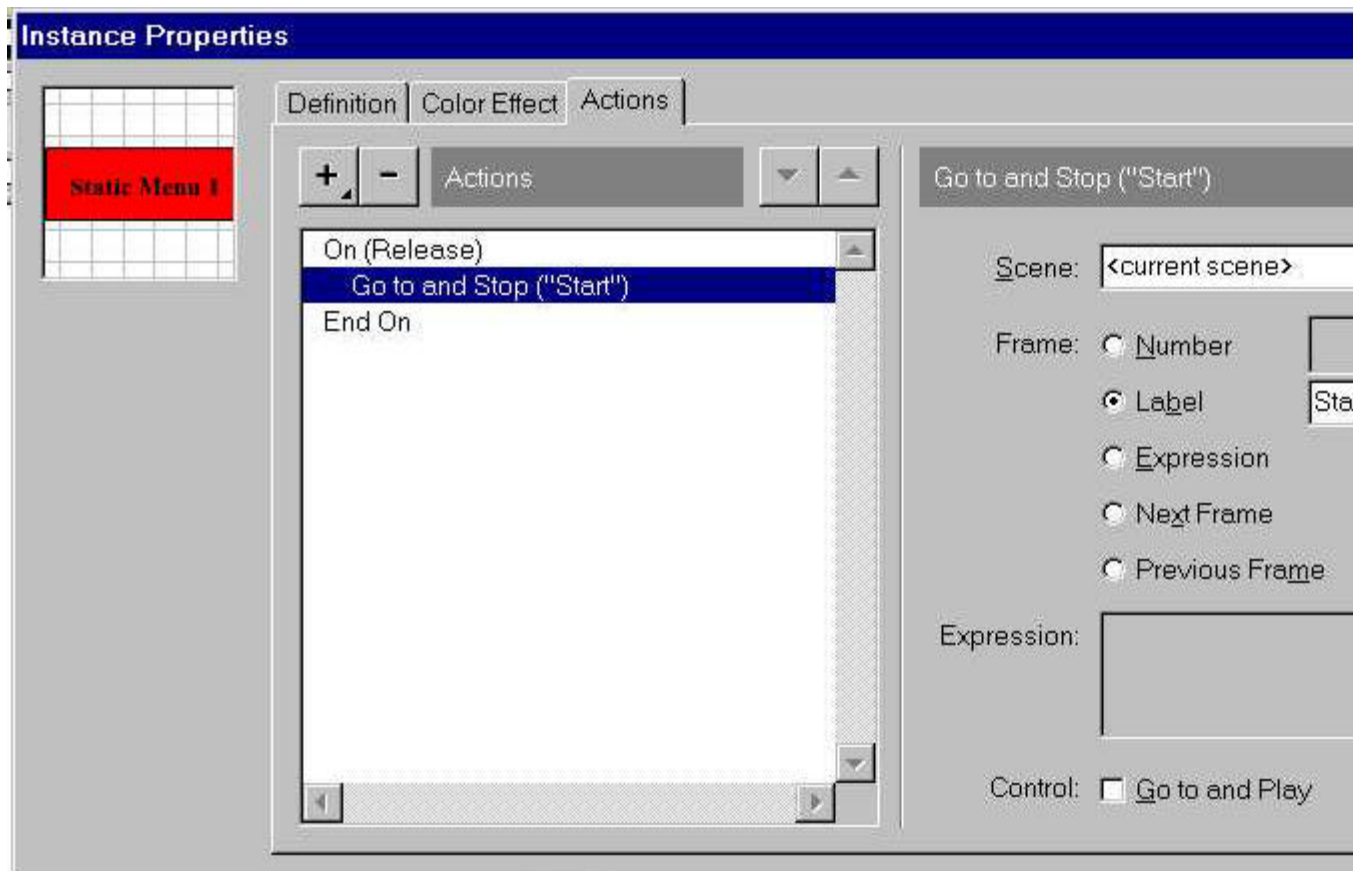
In the *Static menu* Layer - go to Frame 10 (Labeled Menu1)

OK - bare with me - there are 3 things you want to do here -

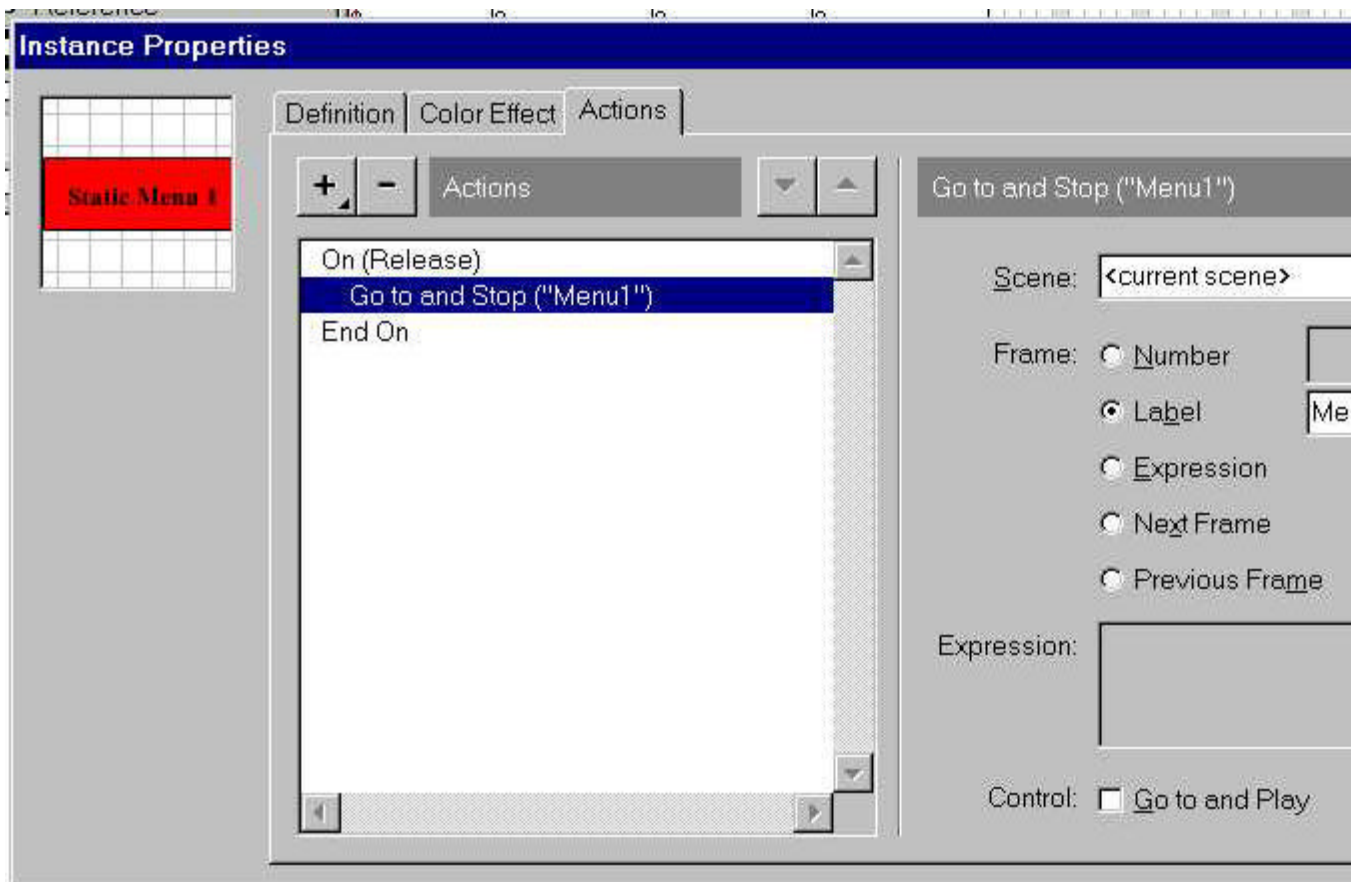
- 1) On first click open variable menu1
- 2) On second click - Send menu1 back to its hidden state and / or
- 3) Open variable menus 2 and 3 while closing variable menu 1 upon mouse event

Here's how frame 10 will look

For *static button 1* assign the following value



Also in frame 10 - assign static buttons 2 and 3 to go to their respective menu - NOT start



Repeat this 2 more times in frames 20 and 30 - Here is the break down of commands

In frame 10

Button 1 is set to return to label "start"

Button 2 is set to advance to label "menu2" (and close menu 1)

Button 3 is set to advance to label "menu3" (and close menu 1 or 2 - which ever is open)

In frame 20

Button 1 is set to menu1

Button 2 is set to start

Button 3 is set to menu3

In frame 30

Button 1 is set to menu1

Button 2 is set to menu2

Button 3 is set to start

Last but not least - assign what ever actions you want to the sub menu buttons - i.e. get URL, tell target, etc.

That's it - now you have a menu system

Trouble Shooting

- 1) If the movie plays through - make sure you have *stop* actions on every frame in the Reference layer
- 2) Buttons appear but don't disappear or don't appear at all - make sure each frame in the reference layer is set to 1 of 2 actions - return to its "start" position or advance to its "menu" label. Also make sure each action mouse event is set to "go to and stop on release"

Customize

Once you get the hang of this you can go to town.

You can add or subtract buttons as you like - Macromedia's main site uses 10 static buttons that exploded into sub menus - some with 10 buttons and some with 5

You make what ever button shapes you want - add pictures or events to the static state that will disappear when a menu is called or other tell target commands - the possibilities are endless

But keep in mind this is a menu system - you want to make your button set uniform and not get too wild.

You can also set deferent mouse actions - "roll over" instead of "on release" but I suggest not changing that aspect of the menu - it makes the assigning actions very messy - more over it makes it harder to get sub menus to collapse properly

Enjoy!!

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