

ELITENUGGETS AUTO CAPTIONS v2.8

B_eginner Guide for Adobe After Effects

A first-time-user walkthrough for installing the tool, transcribing your first voiceover, styling multiline captions, and applying motion.

FREE PRODUCT · v2.8

START HERE

What this tool does

EliteNuggets Auto Captions helps you turn spoken audio into editable caption layers inside Adobe After Effects. You select the video or audio you want, choose how much of it to transcribe, and the panel creates timed captions that you can continue styling and animating in After Effects.

You choose → The tool does

- Video/audio layer → Reads the source you selected
- Selected Layer In/Out or Work Area → Transcribes only that range
- Caption style → Builds multiline caption layers
- Emphasis words → Changes color, size, and spacing
- Motion mode → Adds whole-caption or per-word animation
- Shadow/curve settings → Applies editable effects and easing

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

What you need

- Adobe After Effects on Windows.
- The v2.8 ZIP downloaded from EliteNuggets Assets.
- Permission to copy a ScriptUI panel into the After Effects installation folder.
- Internet access the first time Whisper needs to download its speech model. After that, transcription is designed to run locally.
- You do not need to know Python or write code to use the normal workflow.

STEP 1

Install EliteNuggets Auto Captions

1. Unzip the download.

Right-click the ZIP and choose Extract All. Keep the extracted folder somewhere easy to find.

2. Run setup_windows.bat.

Double-click the included setup file once. It installs the local transcription dependency. A terminal window may appear while setup runs.

3. Copy the panel files.

Copy EliteNuggets_AutoCaptions.jsx, transcribe.py, and elitenuggets-logo.png into your After Effects Scripts/ScriptUI Panels folder.

Typical Windows path:

C:\Program Files\Adobe\Adobe After Effects 2026\Support Files\Scripts\ScriptUI Panels\

4. Restart After Effects.

Close and reopen After Effects so it can discover the new panel.

5. Open the panel.

Go to Window → EliteNuggets_AutoCaptions.jsx and dock it anywhere you like.

If the panel does not appear in the Window menu, the most common cause is copying the files into the wrong After Effects version folder.

STEP 2

Create your first captions

For your first test, use a short video with clear speech. A 10–30 second clip is ideal.

A. Select one footage layer.

Click the video or audio layer in the timeline. The panel needs one real imported source layer to know which media file to transcribe.

B. Choose the transcription range.

- Selected Layer In/Out — recommended for trimmed footage.
- Composition Work Area — best when you only want the marked section of the composition.
- Entire Source — use only when you really want the full original file.

C. Click Refresh Range.

Check the displayed start, end, and duration. If the duration looks much longer than your edit, fix the range before transcribing.

D. Click Transcribe + Generate Captions.

The first run may be slower because the speech model can download. When transcription finishes, timed caption layers are created in the composition.

STEP 3

Style the captions

Start simple. Get readability right first, then add emphasis and motion.

Recommended beginner settings:

- Max lines: 2
- Words per line: 3
- Vertical position: 70–75%
- Font size: start with the Shorts Clean preset
- Line spacing: 90–100%
- Letter spacing: 0 to slightly tight
- Outline: Off
- Drop Shadow: On, subtle
- Emphasis size: about 120–135%; 125% is a good first value
- Smart emphasis spacing: On

Emphasized words

Type important words into the Emphasis field. Those words can use a different color, larger size, and bold styling. Smart spacing automatically adds breathing room when an emphasized word becomes much larger than the words beside it.

STEP 4

Choose how the captions move

Animation scope:

- Whole Caption / Sentence — interviews, courses, corporate edits, calmer captions
- Per Word — VO synced — Reels, Shorts, energetic social clips
- Per Word — Fixed stagger — stylized motion when exact speech timing is less important
- Emphasis only — VO synced — calm captions with selective punch on key words

Motion styles:

- Pop
- Slide Up
- Bounce
- Fade
- None

Motion curves:

- Linear
- Smooth
- Snappy
- Ease Out
- Ease In
- Soft
- Custom

Custom mode lets you shape the feel quickly, then continue fine-tuning the generated keyframes in After Effects' native Graph Editor.

STEP 5

Edit without retranscribing

After one successful transcription, use Rebuild From Last Transcript when you change:

- number of lines or words per line
- font size, line spacing, or tracking
- emphasis words, size, color, or smart spacing
- drop shadow or outline
- caption position
- animation scope, style, duration, or curve preset

Safe editing workflow:

1. Finish the video cut first.
2. Set the range and transcribe.
3. Correct obvious transcription errors.
4. Choose the base caption style.
5. Add emphasis and motion last.
6. Preview the sequence at normal playback speed.
7. Export a short test before rendering the full video.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If something goes wrong

The panel is missing from Window

Check that the .jsx file is inside the ScriptUI Panels folder for the exact After Effects version you are running, then restart After Effects.

Transcription seems to process the whole source

Switch to Selected Layer In/Out or Work Area, click Refresh Range, and check the duration before starting.

The first transcription takes a long time

The speech model may be downloading. Later runs should start faster once the model is stored locally.

Captions overlap the words beside an emphasized word

Turn on Smart spacing around emphasis or reduce the emphasis size.

I changed styling but nothing happened

Use Rebuild From Last Transcript. For motion-curve changes, use the Apply Curve control on generated caption layers.

I need to stop a transcription
Use Stop Transcription in the panel.

QUICK REFERENCE

Recommended first settings

Preset: Shorts Clean
Range: Selected Layer In/Out
Max lines: 2
Words per line: 3
Outline: Off
Drop Shadow: On, subtle
Emphasis size: 125%
Smart emphasis spacing: On
Animation scope: Whole Caption for clean edits / Per Word VO-synced for energetic edits
Animation style: Pop or Fade
Curve: Smooth or Ease Out

EliteNuggets Auto Captions is an independently developed ScriptUI workflow for Adobe After Effects. It is not an official Adobe product and is not affiliated with or endorsed by Adobe.

For the latest build, article, and download instructions, visit:
<https://elitenuggets.com/free/auto-captions/>