

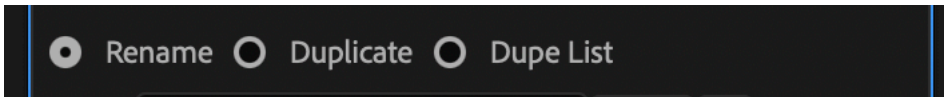
The easiest way to install is by using the aescripts + aeplugins manager
To install a trial you can select 'Add Trial' from the 'Account' menu.

To manually install, copy the Rename-a-Duper.jsxbin script into:
Applications/Adobe After Effects (version)/Scripts/ScriptUI Panels (Mac)
Program Files/Adobe/Adobe After Effects (version)/Support Files/Scripts/ScriptUI Panels (Windows)
The RAD External Scripts folder can be placed in your Documents folder or a preferred location, as they are later accessed from within the Rename-a-Duper script.
Prior to launching the script, go to your After Effects ->Settings/Preferences to ensure that the checkbox to Allow Scripts to Write Files and Access Network is checked.
This is necessary to allow storing and saving out the spreadsheet information.
Then launch Rename-a-Duper from the lower portion of After Effects -> Window menu.

What does Rename-a-Duper do?

Rename-a-Duper renames and duplicates comps. the pre-comps within, as well as renaming the text layers that reside inside them - **all at the same time**. With 6 different modes to choose from.
It will rename or duplicate selected comps in the Project window, if none selected, it can then rename or duplicate selected comp layers inside a Timeline window. If the same pre-comp is used multiple times in the timeline, and option/alt is held when duplicating, each selection will result in a new individual pre-comp. If no comps are selected in either Project window or Timeline, Rename-a-Duper will then process the Active comp window and the pre-comps within. If folders are selected in the Project window, it will rename the folder name as well.

The Core Functionality



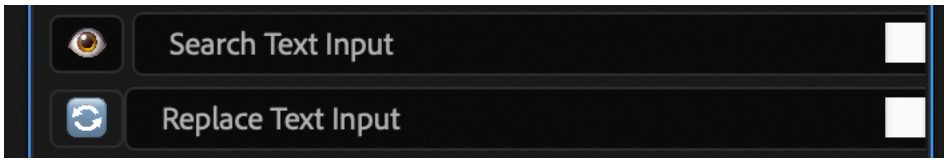
There are three different primary functions that the script does: Rename, Duplicate, and Dupe List
They all operate on selected comps in the Project window, Timeline Window or in Active comp window.
When Rename is selected, it does just that - solely renaming selected comps (and folders)
When Duplicate is selected, it will duplicate the selected comps. If multiple duplications are desired, the Copies pulldown is available to create up to 100 copies at a time. All duplicated comps will retain the same CTI (Current Time Indicator) position as the original.
When Dupe List is available (in certain modes) and selected, it will process the list of items in the Replace input. By default this list is determined by carriage returns, but in the preferences can be changed to separate by commas or blank lines using the List Separation mode pulldown.

The Mode pulldown, settings and clear button



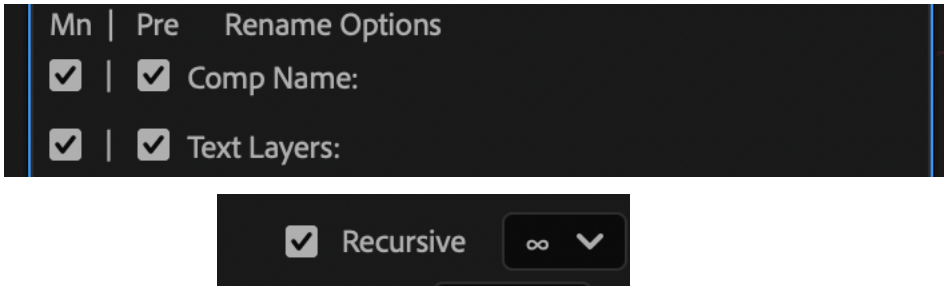
There are six different kinds of processing modes available depending on your needs.
Find and Replace is the most straightforward. You simply enter in the Search text input what you wish to find, enter the Replace text into the Replace Text input, and these will be used to find and replace in both comp names and text layer. The additional modes are explained on page 6 of these instructions.
The Main Preferences button brings up the Preferences window. (details on page 3).
The Clear Find and Replace will easily blank out shown inputs, and Swap button swaps inputs.

The Search Button and Inputs



The Search (eyeball) button will search the Project window for any item matching text that is entered in the Find input. It's primary benefit over using AE's built in search is that it is capable of doing a "sanitized" search, based on settings (also explained later in these instructions), **AND** it will then select those items, even footage and folders. *__However__, it uses a search method that will twirl open every folder in your project window in doing so, but handy for searching for comps to batch rename.
Both find and replace input windows will expand when multiple lines are entered, and will retain their entries when other modes are selected.
When comp names are renamed, carriage returns are stripped from comp names as well.

Main (Mn) and Pre-Comp (Pre) checkboxes and Recursive options



Many of the UI options utilize Main (Mn) and Pre-Comp (Pre) checkbox options.
the Pre-Comp checkboxes are only visible when the Recursive checkbox is checked, as that's the process that recursively renamed and duplicates pre-comps
When Main is checked in the Comp Name row, only the selected (Main) comp names will be renamed by any of the modes.
When Main is checked in the Text Layers row, only text layers in the main comp will be renamed.
When either of the Pre-Comp checkboxes are checked, renamed pre-comp or duplicate pre-comp names will be renamed, and text within those pre-comps will be renamed.

The Recursive checkbox determines if pre-comps will be renamed or duplicated.
It defaults to Infinity at first, but can be changed to 1 to 20 levels deep if desired, which can be further constricted by the Pre Comp Layer selection settings.
When other UI options are enabled, the Recursive checkbox will show and hide additional Pre-Comp checkboxes.

Depending on the Mode selection, numerous other options will appear in both the Comp Name and Text layers rows.

The Main Preferences

The Main Preferences button will bring up the Preference window, which contains General Preferences, UI Options, Layer Selection Control and Text Layer Selection Control.

General Preferences

Show Summary: When checked, will bring up a summary window when all renaming and processing. This can be invaluable at times as it can indicate if or how many pre-comps and other items have been processed or duplicated. If the number seems off or unusually high, hit undo and check your setting.

Select Duplicates: When duplication is done, originally selected comps will be deselected and the duplicates will then be selected. It makes it easier to then double check the results as well as easily just send to the render queue. (*even easier if you use the RenderQ script, also available as NYOP on **aescripts.com** 😉)

Fix Expressions: When renaming or duplicating comps and their pre-comps, if there are expressions inside that are linked to one another, they might break or will continue to link to the original comps. When this checkbox is checked, expressions will be fixed and duplicated comps and pre-comps will be re-linked to the newly created comps and pre-comps. Also when checked, the script will check the new names against other comp names in the project and if an identical name exists, it will incrementally number the new comps. Due to the nature of Rename-a-Duper updating both comp names and text within, the Fix Expressions process can be CPU intensive, so generally use only when necessary if your project involves expressions.

Increment/Prevent Duplicate Name: When checked, the script will check the new names against other comp names in the project and if an identical name exists, it will incrementally number the new comps.

List Separation Mode: This pulldown determines how the script separates and decides the Dupe List when using Find and Replace, Force Replace. As well as deciding the Find list and Replace list in Multi Find and Replace. It will be determined by carriage retunes, commas or blank line separation.

Curly Quotes & Apostrophes: When checked, straight quotes and apostrophes in text layers will be turned into curly quotes and apostrophes!

Sanitized Comp Name Characters: When checked, and characters are entered in the Sanitized Characters input (comma separated), those characters will be stripped from the replacement text in comp names. But Rename-a-Duper will also de-sanitize the search text to identify sanitized names in comps (as well as non-sanitized) to replace.
For example, if your search is set to search for “Friday 9/8c” and the replace is set to “Saturday 10/9c”, it will find and replace them exactly in both text and comp names, however if your original comp name is “Friday98c” and you have “/“ and spaces as sanitized characters, the script will identify Friday98c and replace it with “Saturday109c”. It can still retain un-sanitized pre-comp names, but if the “Also Sanitize Pre-Comp Names checkbox is checked, those will be sanitized as well.
If you wish to remove spaces, just place a space between two commons, or merely type in “space” between two commas. If you wish to sanitize comma’s, just type in “comma”. Also, carriage returns are automatically converted to a single space in all comp names when renaming. .

Layer Selection Control

Rename-a-Duper has a very extensive Pre-comp Layer Selection Control that can be used to limit just which pre-comps are to be renamed or duplicated when recursively processing comps.

When checked, the script will skip any locked, shy, hidden or guide layers in the comp.
Or use the Only Include or Exclude options (case insensitive) to further restrict which pre-comps are to be processed. Or restrict by label color.

***Only Include and Exclude inputs are not restricted to just a single entry**, just type in the words you wish to include or exclude , comma separated, and the script will include or exclude those numerous pre-comps.

Text Layer Selection Control

Similarly, text layers can be restricted by similar skip locked, shy, hidden or guide layers
As well as by label colors.

UI options

Not everyone likes a cluttered UI with features that are seldom used, these checkboxes will show or hide all the additional options available in Rename-a-Duper

Top Apply Button: When checked, will relocate the main apply button and recursive checkbox and pulldown to the top of the UI. Handy if you want to keep Rename-a-Duper small and docked on the side.

Prefix Change: Will present the option to add or replace the prefix of any comp or pre-comp names. This is applied after the comp names have been renamed by the

Suffix Change: Will present the option to add or replace the suffix of any comp or pre-comp names. This is applied after the comp names have been renamed by the primary mode, so use caution not to replace renamed last words.

Label Color: Will change the label color of main comps and pre-comps.
*Uses all custom label color names that have been entered in AE preferences.
(will use generic default label names if no custom label colors are set).
There is also the option to use a random color.

Comp Change: Click on the Comp Change Settings button and it will bring up a dialog that will allow the changing of frame rate, start time, duration and background color of comps and pre-comps. Enter either frame number or time-code. Use “+” or “-“ prior to add or subtract from current start times and durations. Accepts both frame numbers as well as time-code entries

External Scripts: Pulldown and options to run helper external script to further enhance Rename-a-Duping. Click on the External Script button to bring up the External Script preferences. Main Var input and extCheck checkbox are used to control external scripts. More is explained later in these instructions.

Grouping and Duplicate File Grouping

Grouping Options:

When checked, this will group renamed or duplicated comps and pre-comps into a new group folder that is created in the same folder (or root) where the parent of the selected comp resides. Enter a new group name to use in the input.
*If group name folder already exists anywhere in the project, Rename-a-Duper will place new comps in that existing folder. If no name is input, the script will use the name of the main comp that is duplicated as the name of the group.
When **Folder Hierarchy** is checked, the script will use the same names and folder structure that the pre-comps currently reside in.
When **Comp Hierarchy** is checked, the script will also use the names of the main comp and subsequent pre-comp names as folder names.
If neither is checked, main comps will be placed inside the Group folder name, and all pre-comps will be placed in a folder named .. you guessed it “Pre-Comps”!

Footage in Hierarchy: When checked and footage is being grouped or duplicated and grouped, all footage and elements will be placed in the first sub-folders of comps they first appear in.

Single Footage Folder: Will place all footage and elements into a single “Footage and Assets” folder. rather than individual Movie, Stills, Solids, Audio, Vector and 3d Objects folders.

Duplicate Footage Options:

When checked, the script will move or duplicate all footage items that are checked. This is also controlled by the Layer Selection Control settings that determine which layers to skip or only include.
When Single Footage Folder is checked they will all reside in a single Footage and Assets folders, but when un-checked, these items will all be place in individual folders.
*Due to the way After Effect works, when duplicating or grouping 3d Objects, the script must manually search thru the project window by un-twirling every folder.

The Mode Pulldown Options

There are six different processing modes of Renaming and Duplication available in the Modes pulldown. Each was developed as a result of specific needs that might occur in the world of motion graphics. Here is what each one does, (*not presented in exact order they appear in the pulldown)

Find & Replace Mode

The most basic and straightforward, the script will look for all the type that is entered in the Search input in both comp names and in all the text layers in a comp (unless restricted by the Text Layer Selection Control settings in the preferences) and will replace if it finds a match (case insensitive). If Sanitized Comp Name Characters is checked, it will additionally search for a sanitized match in comp names and replace with a sanitized version. If it finds a non-sanitized match, it will replace with a non-sanitized replace. Selected Comps and folders will be renamed in both the Project window and Timeline Window. When it replaces text in text layers, the replaced text will retain any special formatting. If Duplicate radio button is checked, comps will be duplicated and renamed. And if Dupe List is enabled, it will make a duplicate for each entry in the Replace input, based on the List Separation settings (carriage returns, commas or blank line separated.

Multi Find & Replace Mode

Nearly identical to Find & Replace, but what this does is searches and replaces for multiple words and replacements. If List Separation is set to carriage return, what it will do is search for the first line in the Search input and replaces it with the first word in the Replace Text input, then it moves to the 2nd line in Search input and will replace it with the 2nd line in the Replace Text input, and so forth. This saves the hassle of repeatedly using the standard Find & Replace multiple times to rename multiple times, and for quick duplication where a few lines need replacing.

Spreadsheet Find & Replace Mode

When you have even more words you want to find and replace, and want to make numerous duplicate versions. This option will reveal the Spreadsheet button, that when clicked will bring up a full spreadsheet window that will allow dozens of Find and Replace inputs. The top row is for all the search entries, and each row beneath contains the matching Replace Text to be used.
When the script is in Rename mode, it will only use the first row of Replace Text entries.
When the script is in Duplicate mode, the script will make a new comp for each individual row using that row's Replace Text input.

The Spreadsheet controls (used in both spreadsheet modes)

The spreadsheet modes were a logical evolution on how to organize multiple search and replace inputs. A little quirky, and pushes the limits of the AE's scripting ability, so limited to **no more than 500 total** inputs total. but they get the job done for when numerous find and replaces are necessary, as well as for batch duplication.
Entries can be entered manually, but there is also a Load CSV button that will load .csv files from your favorite spreadsheet app. There are + and - buttons to add or remove the number of columns or rows. The Dup button will duplicate the last row and it's contents.
The Save and Load file buttons will save all cell data as .json files that you can then save for later re-use, alter manually or use AI to translate and then re-import.
The Cell Width slider expands the width of the input cells and the Lines pulldown will change the height of all the inputs to make them multi-lines.
To the right of each row is a X button that will delete that row, or a CLR button that will clear the contents of that row. If more rows or columns are created than can be displayed, small sliders will appear on the side or blow to allow scrolling. *If the spreadsheet window is closed and re-opened, it will resize to fit.
***Use caution** when adjusting cell displays or increasing the number of rows or columns too high, as this might tax the system and cause significant delay when closing the window.

Force Replace Mode

This mode came about from a different need and has a unique technique for changing text layers and comp names. In many cases, comps might have just a single line of text to replace, so rather than tediously having to enter a search text each time, why not just replace the whole thing! And that's what this does. When selecting this mode, and in a few other modes as well, numerous options appear in the Comp Name and Text Layer sections in the UI to determine which text layers are renamed (Top, Bottom or All) and how the script will insert the replace text into the comp names. When renaming type layers in this mode, if Bottom or Top is selected, and that layer is restricted by the layer selection control preference, the script will chose the next available text layer. This mode offers the Dupe List option as well.

Using the Digital Cinema Naming Convention to rename comps

The Industry-standard film file naming system. Or in a nutshell - using underscores in file names.

In the Comp Names row, a pulldown is revealed that will determine the position in the comp name, based on underscores, to insert the Replace Text.
However this can be overridden by the entries in the keyword input. (which are comma separated).

Keyword Input

Providing even more control on determining where to insert the Replace Text is the keyword input. What the script does is look at those words, in the order they appear, and will insert the position of the text based on those words, and if they include an underscore before or after them.
If the words do not contain any underscores, the script will use that word to search the comp name, and will fully replace the words if it exist in the comp name with the Replace Text (regardless of underscores).
If the Keyword starts with an underscore, the script will replace the entire section that proceeds that _word in the comp name.
And if the keyboard ends with an underscore, the script will replace the full section following that match in the comp name.
For example, if the comp name is something like "final_v1_shot name_preview", and the keyword is "_preview", the script will replace "shot name" with the Replace text. and the resulting comp name will be "final_v1_(replace text)_preview". This system can be handy if you commonly have pre-comp names such as "pre_" or "_type", etc.
IF the comp name does not contain any underscores and there is no keyword match, the script will skip renaming the comp.

Named Text Layers Mode

This mode is similar to Multi Find and Replace mode, however instead of searching for text inside text layers, it looks for the actual names of the text layers, and replaces all the type inside those text layers when it finds a named layer that matches. A "Layer Names" input appears above the Replace Text input, enter the layer names. (case insensitive) separated by carriage returns, comma's or blank lines (determined by the List Separation Mode preferences, and it will replace the matching items in the Replace Text input. A "Control Layer Visibility" checkbox appears int he Text Layers row, when this is checked, when the script encounters a text layer to rename, and it's visibility (eyeball) is turned off, it will turn that text layers visibility on. If the Replace Text is empty for that named layer, it will turn it's visibility off. This works with my other script, https://aescripts.com/line-em-up/ that works with text lines that change when their visibility is turned off.

Also in this mode, an additional pulldown is visible that determines how many of replace text entries will be used to rename the comp (renaming via underscores and keywords). If it's set to 1, it will use only the first replace text entry.
When the script digs further into pre-comps to rename, it will actually rename comps based on the text layers that it encounters, which is beneficial when each pre-comp might contain a different text layer.

Spreadsheet Named Text Mode

Much like Spreadsheet Find & Replace, this is the spreadsheet version of Name Text Layers mode.
The first row in this spreadsheet are the list of Layer Names to search for, followed with the rows of matching Replace Text.
This also utilizes the underscore and keyword method of renaming comp names, as well as utilizes the Control Layer Visibility to turn layers visibility on or off if there entries are empty.

External Scripts

There's more to just renaming text layers inside comps, and that's where this section comes in.
There are a number of helper scripts available, and more to come.
The aescripts manager automatically places them in a newly created Rename-a-Duper folder located in your OS Documents folder.
To run external scripts (which can be applied to main comps or pre-comps), click on the External Scripts button and the External Scripts window will become available.
Click on the checkboxes to enable or disable scripts options.
Enter the Name to be used, that will then populate the pulldown in the main UI pulldown.
Each pulldown option is capable of running two scripts at a time, which are entered via the Path inputs, or use the Path buttons to locate the helper scripts on your computer.
The VAR inputs are extra information that is passed to the individual scripts.
In the main UI there is the mainVAR input and extCheck checkbox, these are also used to pass information along to the helper scripts.
Additional information on how to use external scripts is provided in the read-me that accompanies the external scripts.

The History of Rename-a-Duper

So how did this script come about?
The culmination of many production needs that not even a combination of existing scripts could quite achieve.

It started with a very simple desire, renaming comp names (including changing prefix) and text layers inside them - at the same time.
Sometimes a decision would be made to change the day or time a show might air , and I'd then have to rename dozens of comps and the text inside.
Sometimes it would involve text layers that I'd then have to manually turn on and off their visibility.
Using multiple existing tools was cumbersome, so when the technology finally caught up, why not make a script that could do it all in one shot!
So I've spent much time working on it and the concepts, testing it out in the trenches of TV production.
First by renaming the text and comps at the same time, figuring out how to sanitize the comp names, then moving on to duplication, and then further into pre-comp duplication.
Then adding everything I could think of to make this the best Rename-a-Duping script possible.
And now it does it all, and then some.
Adding the External Scripts feature allowed for additional in-house flexibility needs rather than customizing the script internally, which also opens up many more possibilities.
I'm quite pleased with how it's turned out, and thrilled to finally share with the AE community.

If you have any questions or suggestions, or want to check out some of my other scripts, drop by https://aescripts.com/authors/gary-reisman/
Or visit https://garyreisman.com/gfx as I intend to make additional helper scripts and tutorials available there.

-Gary Reisman