

SUPPORT

Tips & Techniques - Thinking Particles

Thinking Particles:
Thinking Particles Basics

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Works with:
XL, Studio

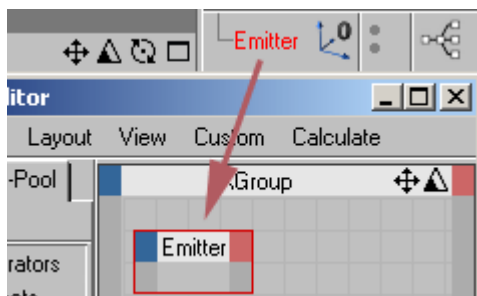
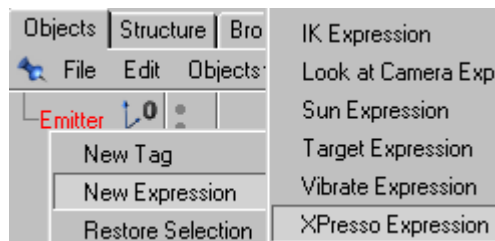
Requires:
Version 8+

Thinking Particles is one of CINEMA 4D's newest additions. Picking up where the current particle system left off, Thinking Particles gives you the power to create almost any particle effect that you can dream up.



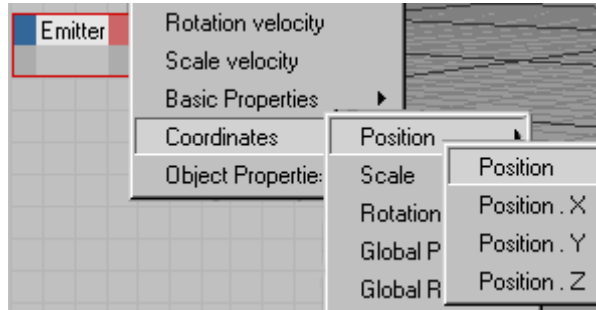
Step 1: Create a Null Object (Objects=>Null Object) and rename it 'Emitter'. This object will supply the information for the emitter's Position and Alignment (or rotation).

Step 2: Now, create an **XPresso Expression** for the 'Emitter' in the Object Manager (File->New Expression=>XPresso Expression).



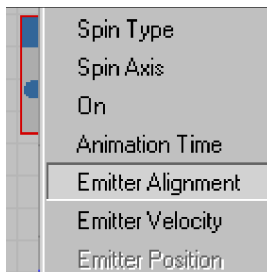
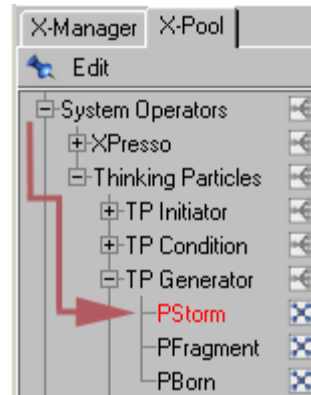
Step 3: Drag and drop 'Emitter' into the XPresso window.

Step 4: Create a **Position** port by clicking on the **Red Box** and selecting **Coordinates=>Position=>Position**.



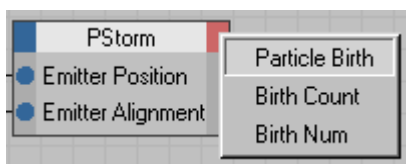
Step 5: Add a **Global Matrix** port as well.

Step 6: Now, create a **PStorm** node. Go into the **X-Pool** and choose **PStorm** by selecting **System Operators=>Thinking Particles=>TP Generator=>PStorm**. Drag the **PStorm** into the XPresso window.



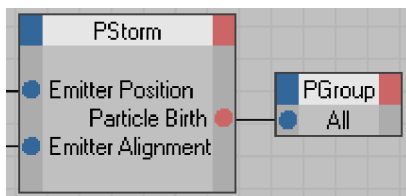
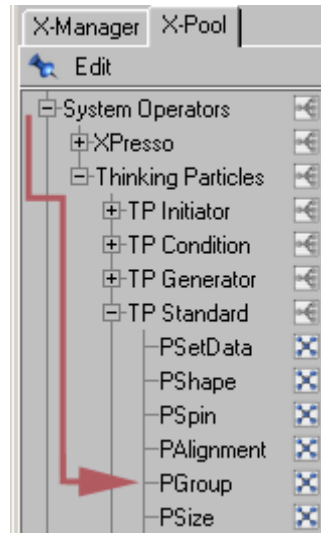
Step 7: Click on the **Blue Box** on the **PStorm** node. Select **Emitter Alignment**.

Step 8: Now, drag wires between the two nodes. Connect **Position** with **Emitter Position** and **Global Matrix** with **Emitter Alignment**. You now can control the Emitter through the Null.



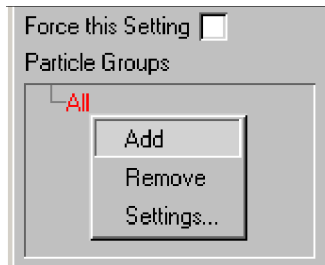
Step 9: It's always a good idea to assign particles to a group. To make a group, you must first output the particle data. Click on the **Red Box** and select **Particle Birth**.

Step 10: Now, create a PGroup node by selecting **System Operators=>Thinking Particles=>TP Standard=>PGroup**. Drag it into the XPresso window.



Step 11: Connect **Particle Birth** with **PGroup**.

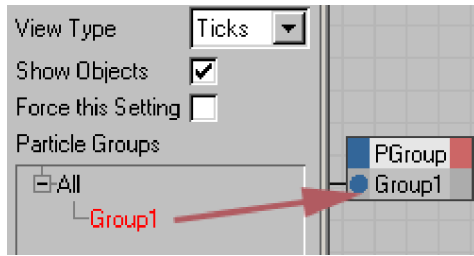
Step 12: Until specified, the particles will be assigned to the **All** group. To change this, open the **Thinking Particles Settings**. In the Xpresso window, go to **Custom=>Thinking Particles=>Settings**.



Step 13: Right click or Cmnd+click on **All** and choose **Add**. A group will be added as a child of the **All** group.

Step 14: You can now right click or Cmnd+click on the new group to alter its settings.





Step 15: To change the **PGroup** to this new group, simply drag and drop the name onto the **PGroup** node.

Step 16: Press the play button to see what you've just created. Use the **Attributes Manager** along with **XPresso** to further change the settings of the individual nodes.

Experiment with all of the Thinking Particles nodes. It may be a bit overwhelming at first, but once you have the basics down, you'll soon be creating complex particle systems with ease.

-Special thanks to Josh Miller.

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