Final Cut Pro Workshop

With RICHARD M. HARRINGTON

Richard M. Harrington

Author's Bio/Description

A certified instructor for Adobe, Apple, and Avid, Rich is a practiced expert in motion graphic design and digital video. His producing skills were also recognized by AV Multimedia Producer Magazine who named him as one of the Top Producers of 2004.

Rich is a member of the National Association of Photoshop Professionals Instructor Dream Team, and a popular speaker on the digital video circuit. He is also an instructor at the Art Institute of Washington and the American University in Washington, D.C.

Rich is an internationally published author. His book, Photoshop CS for Nonlinear Editors, was the first of its kind to focus on Photoshop's application in the world of video. He is also a contributing author for Final Cut Pro On the Spot, After Effects On the Spot, Broadcast Graphics on the Spot, After Effects at Work, and The Photoshop World Dream Team Book, Volume 1.
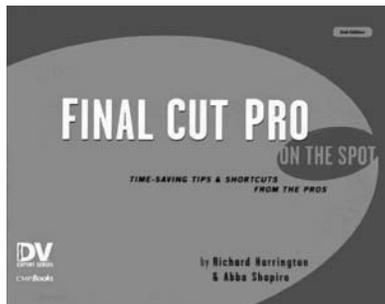
A Masters Degree in Project Management fills out Rich's broad spectrum of experience.

    RHED Pixel – www.rhedpixel.com

    Photoshop for Video – www.PhotoshopforVideo.com

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So you've made (or are thinking about) coming over to Final Cut Pro? This session is for those who've used other video editing packages as well as 'newbies.' We'll guide you through major features such as the Editing Interface, Color Correction, Audio mixing, and more. Even if you've been using Final Cut Pro for a while, Apple Certified Trainer Richard Harrington will show you new efficiencies and hidden secrets.

There's a lot to editing in Final Cut Pro. Fortunately all of the skills build on one another. I've pulled a few of my favorite tips together here for newer users. These were co-written with Abba Shapiro, a lead trainer for Apple. These come from our new book, Final Cut Pro On the Spot: Timesaving Tips and Shortcuts from the Pros, published by CMP Books.

Installation

- Final Cut Pro itself is a fast load
- Final Cut Pro Studio is a LARGE load due to all of the Library Content. Total of 9 DVD-ROMs. Allow 3 hours for full install (RTFM in your 'spare' time).
- If installing on multiple machines… copy ass disk images to a hard drive first.
- Repair Permissions before and after install. Consider using Cocktail.
- Some Optional Install Items on Individual Discs such as additional setups and Templates.

The OS Issue

- Requires OSX 10.3.9
- If going to Tiger, upgrade first
- QuickTime 7.0.x MUST be installed First
- You will lose your QuickTime Pro key… but FCP Serial unlocks QT7
- Get a three-button mouse

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Highlights of New Content

LiveType	Soundtrack Pro	Motion	DVD Studio Pro
• 40 New Templates • 71 New Objects • 15 New Fonts • 20 New Effects	• 5000 Loops • Many More Sound Effects • Several Powerful Audio Unit Plug-ins. • New HD Templates	• Core Video Filters and Generators • More Particles • 16 and 32 bit support	• New HD Templates • More Templates • AC3 integrated into Compressor

System Requirements/Recommendations

PROGRAM	PROCESSORS	RAM	RECOMMENDED
FCP	500 MHz G4	512 MB	2 GB
FCP HD	1 GHz G4	1 GB	2 GB
Soundtrack Pro	450 Dual, 500 Single	512 MB	733 MHz
Motion	867 MHz	512 MB	2 GHz & 2 GB
DVD	733 MHz	512 – 8mb VRAM	
DVD HD	G5 OS 10.4 DVD 4.6	512 – 8mb VRAM	

Editing Formats

Final Cut Pro 5 Adds Increased Support for the following formats.

HDV (Sony, Canon, Sharp, JVC)

o 25 Mbps (Same data rate and storage requirements as DV)

o Uses MPEG-2 Compression

o Dynamic decompression cuts into system performance. If disk space and speed is not an issue, use Apple Intermediate codec, which adds I Frames for every frame.

o Uses a different logging window, which is re-sizeable.

Format	Frame Size	Data Rate
DV NTSC	720 X 480	3.6 MB/sec or 12 GB/hr
DV PAL	720 X 576	3.6 MB/sec or 12 GB/hr
MPEG-2 HDV 720p30	1280 X 720	2.5 MB/sec or 9 GB/hr
MPEG-2 HDV 1080i60/50	1440 X 1080	3.3 MB/sec or 12 GB/hr
Apple Intermediate Codec HDV 720p30	1280 X 720	7 MB/sec or 25 GB/hr
Apple Intermediate Codec HDV 1080i50	1440 X 1080	12 MB/sec or 42 GB/hr
Apple Intermediate Codec HDV 1080i60	1440 X 1080	14 MB/sec or 49 GB/hr

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DVCPRO 50 & HD (Panasonic)
   o More support and RT performance
   o DVCPRO HD (100 Mbps)
   o Support for P2 cards for the soon to be released AG-DHX cameras.

HDV 1080i50	1440X1080
HDV 1080i60	1440X1080
720p30	1280X720
DVCPROHD 1080i	1920X1080
DVCPROHD 720p	1280X720

G5 RAM Hand in Hand

So you've made the plunge and bought a new G5. They're pretty cool machines (and noisy at times) thanks to all those fans. They also have a maximum RAM capacity of 8 GB… that RAM can really come in handy if you have a lot of applications open or are using Real-Time or audio filters.

But remember… when you are buying that RAM, you have to install it in pairs (like the old days). Be sure that the RAM matches, both in size, speed, and manufacturer. Also, follow instructions on installation and always use a grounding strap.

Dynamic Interfaces

One of the coolest features of Final Cut Pro is the dynamic resizing of the interface. You can now quickly adjust the size of windows using dynamic resizing. Clicking between two windows or at the intersection of multiple windows allows you to drag and resize all windows. You no longer have to resize one window at a time.

Need more space in the timeline, just grab the top edge and pull upward. Want to see more in the viewer, grab the edge and pull to the right. It's simple to quickly change the size of a window and view exactly what you need.

Get it Right from the Start

If you working with multiple formats and resolutions this is a critical preferences. It is very easy to create a new sequence and have it set up improperly for the media you are working on. Check the Prompt for settings on New Sequence checkbox and Final Cut Pro will ask you to set your sequence settings each time you create a new sequence.
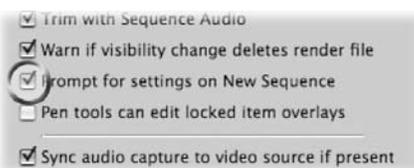
Psychic Powers

Want to quickly learn the name and shortcuts for your tools? That's what tool tips are for. Just hover over an unknown button and you will often find out its name and keyboard shortcut. If this isn't working, be sure to check that the Show Tool Tips box is checked in the general preferences panel.

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That's the spot!

You've perfectly configured your windows. Every palette is exactly where you want it. The timeline has just enough room and you've got the audio meter exactly where it should be. Now save that window arrangement.

Long-term storage

1: Choose Window>Arrange> Save Layout. This setting is stored by default in your Window Layouts folder.
2: Starting with FCP4, custom layouts are added to the bottom of the list with a new keyboard shortcut automatically assigned.
3: Now call up your Button List (Tools>Button List) or Option + J and type the word window. Grab the Window Layout button and drag it to a convenient button well.
*** Note that the Custom layout is an alphabetized list. Number your layouts when saving them. Example 1. Effects, 2. Compositing, and so on.)

Short-term storage

Still testing the layout to make sure you like it? You can save it temporarily in one of two custom positions.
1: Hold down the Option key and Choose Window>Arrange> Set Custom Layout.
**2:** The setting is stored into 1 of 2 temporary spots.
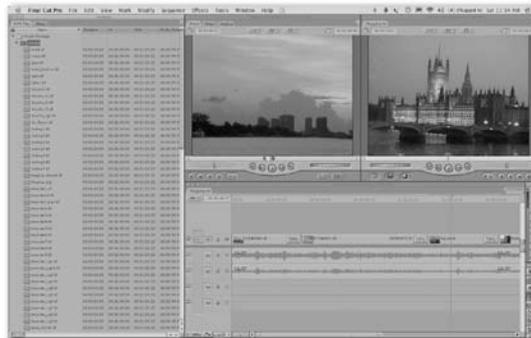
Stealing Effects

Thanks to Final Cut Pro's improved media management, you can now steal rendered effects from one sequence and place them in another. Perhaps you have a clip that has had several image effects applied to it, you can copy this to your clipboard and paste it into another sequence. As long as you do not composite anything on top of it, your render files should stick. Any transitions will just need the overlapping handles rendered.

Seeing Red

If you are getting red bars across all your footage as soon as you add to the timeline, you are probably not configured correctly. It is likely that the last project worked on used a different configuration (such as Widescreen or Offline RT). Check your sequence settings (Command + 0).
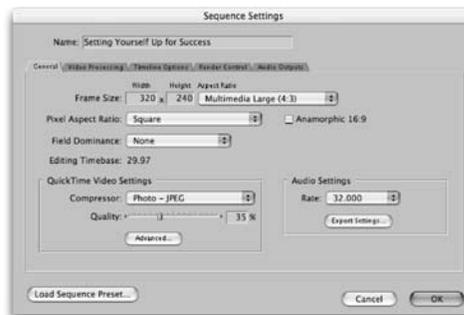
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How to Kill a Hard Drive

The best way to kill a drive is to fill it up so much that it essentially locks up. Final Cut Pro seems to have a death wish when it comes to hard drives. Call up your system settings and check the Minimum Allowable Free Space on Scratch Disks field.

You'll notice that the default setting is that your scratch discs will fill up to within 10mb before being seen as full. This is like driving in the desert with less than a 1/4-gallon of gas. Be sure to change this number to 500 MB or 5% of a drive's capacity, whichever number is bigger.
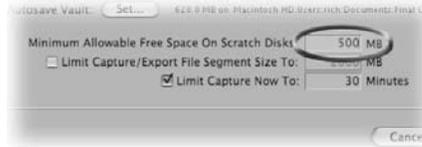
Precision Preview

Wouldn't it be nice to preview your complex effects without actually rendering to disk? It's a pain getting your hard drive all cluttered with extra render files that eat up drive space. Well you have a solution, render to RAM.

The QuickView is a great way to view your sequence outside of the Canvas window. It caches frames into RAM as you play it.

• The QuickView has creates no render files, which is good for media management.

• If you preview an effect and like it, you will still have to render before you can do finally output. QuickView is for previewing only.

• You can choose Full, Half, or Quarter as your viewing resolution. Lower quality will speed up previews, but may impact certain effects that contain mattes or fine edges.

• Be sure you have specified which video to cache:

o Auto: chooses the Viewer or the Canvas, whichever is active.

o Viewer or Canvas: Caches from selected window.

o None: Disables preview (we know… silly choice).

That music is HOT…too hot!

We talked about mixing to –12 db when you edit to DV (-18 or –20 db for digibeta)…but people often forget that music that they convert and insert off music CDs is mixed to –0db. (Yes we meant to say the – before the zero. That's because music CD's are mixed and compressed so they sound nice and loud in your car and on your iPod; they peak right below Zero db.)

Remember when ever you use music from a CD, to pull its levels down so they hit the appropriate (–12 or –20db) target levels of your show.

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Place your hands 'here'

When editing on a desktop system, it's important to think ergonomically. Proper hand position improves your speed and cuts down on work-related pain. When editing, try placing your hands in the following position.

Step 1: Place the mouse in your preferred hand
Step 2: Offset the keyboard so they J-K-L keys fall directly under your opposite hand.

Why? Well 90% of the edit commands can be accessed from this position.

J – Play Reverse. Tap J to go faster.
K – Pause. Hold K down while using J or L to play in slow- motion.
L – Play Forward. Tap L to go faster.
I – In
O – Out
F9 – Insert
F10 – Overwrite

Add the Shift, Option, and Command keys for several additional options that speed up editing. In fact, the neighboring keys all hold key commands by default; this is definitely 'prime real estate' in the editing world.

Got snaps?

Sometimes you want things to quickly jump into their proper place. Final Cut Pro referrers to this as snapping. When turned on, items will 'snap' directly to the playhead, an edit point, Markers, Keyframes, or In and Out points. This makes it easier to align clips (especially when keying graphics on a higher track).

Look for a small gray arrow that appears above or below the point which indicates the item has snapped into place. But what if snapping is getting in the way of your edit or composite? Turn it off!

You can turn snapping on or off at any time, even as you're dragging a clip. Simply press the N key to disable snapping. You'll notice the snapping icon change on the right edge of the timeline.

Snapping affects several areas besides the timeline. You may want to turn it of when scrubbing, trimming, or using motion controls. Even the Viewer and the Canvas can be affected.
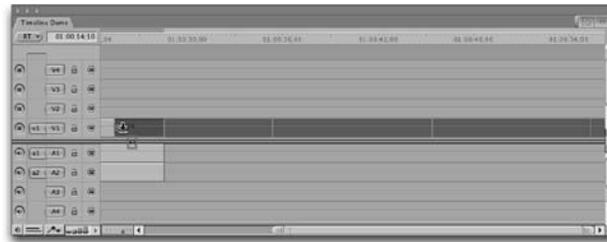
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DO NOT DRAG AND DROP.

Professional editors edit from the keyboard. Don't believe us? Ever see a concert pianist use a mouse?

Let it Roll

Too many tracks in your timeline and want to scroll up and down quickly? No need to grab the scroll bar on the right edge if you have a three-button mouse. Put the cursor over the timeline and use the third button to scroll up and down. It gets better, hold down the shift key and you can scroll left and right. Don't stop now, place the cursor over the viewer or canvas and you can scrub backwards and forward. If you aren't impressed yet by Apple's thoughtful engineers… go try these shortcuts in a bin and on effect sliders.

Fly!

It is possible to trim on the fly. This way you can listen for an audio edit or look for a particular visual cue.
1: Enter trim mode and press the space bar to cycle your trim.
2: When you reach the desired edit point, press the I key to move your in-point.
3: Press the up or down arrow to move through the timeline to your next edit point.
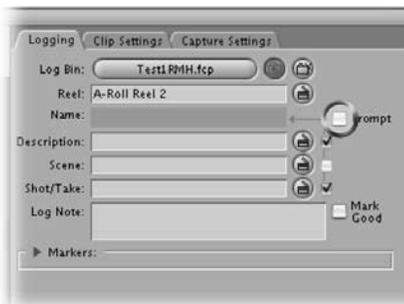
Power Log

Did you realize you can log faster than real time? Try these 3 tips to get your footage in fast.

1: Simply tap the L button multiple times to play the tape faster. With practice you can ramp your playback speed up and still understand the dialog. All of your logging controls still work.
2: Better yet, log while viewing. Tap I to mark an In point, then press F2 to simultaneously add the Outpoint and Log the Clip.
3: Uncheck the prompt box in the logging window. After you name the first clip, all subsequent clips will be progressively numbered or lettered.

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Like a guy asking for directions

Have you ever needed to go on a road-trip across state lines or to a location out of town? Some people forget the first rule of video (PLAN) and just jump in the car and try to go instantly. This option is prone to many issues.

Several editors I meet do not harness the power of Batch Capture. They rely on the very inefficient Capture Clip, or worse, the potentially dangerous Capture Now. So what's the big deal you say… the video goes into the computer.

Getting into capture mode takes time. You will see increased stability and efficiency if you do all of your capturing at once. Plus a batch capture let's you put the computer to work while you change gears. Let the computer spend 30 minutes capturing on it's own and you can work on picking music, switch to a second machine and work on graphics in LiveType or Photoshop, or even just return voice & e-mail.
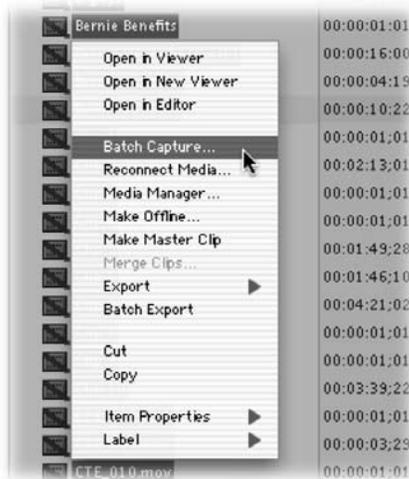
Step 1: Define which bin is your logging bin. This is where clips will be stored. It is a good idea to have a separate bin per source tape. This makes it easier to batch capture and archive.
Step 2: Review and Log your footage. Mark In and Out points like always. When a clip is defined Click the Log Clip button or press F2.
Step 3: Before a batch capture, SAVE your project. Bringing video in is one of the most demanding tasks on the application. You are most likely to crash during capture.
Step 4: When ready, click Batch Capture or press Control + C. You can only batch capture if your camera or deck supports device control. Most firewire devices and professional video decks are supported. You may need to get a special deck control cable and USB to serial adapter to use older professional decks.
Step 5: The best part of batch capture is that it is an automated process. You can leave your system unattended while it captures the logged clips.   So your system will not hiccup, you will need to change a few preferences. Under the General Settings tab be sure to uncheck the Abort capture on dropped frames and Abort capture on timecode break boxes.
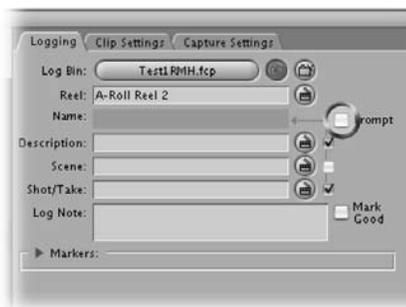
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Slowly Trim the Dynamic Trim

But what if you want to roll the edit point more slowly? This tip will come in handy when trying to trim around syllables:

1: Select the edit point with the roll edit tool or select tool, and double-click.

2: Hold down the K key and use J or L to roll the edit point left or right at quarter speed.

3: When you find the edit point, release the K key first to establish the new edit point.

What You Want

The auto-select buttons help let you work with only on the tracks you want. Say you want to delete video from tracks 1, 2, and 5 but leave tracks 3 and 4 alone. Simply auto-select tracks 1, 2, and 5, mark and In and an Out point in the Timeline, and delete. They're gone, and tracks 3 and 4 are untouched. Ripple delete works, too... but be careful, you may throw your Timeline out of sync.

Copy + Paste = Change

It seems that Copying and Pasting clips in the Timeline is a bit of a moving target. We personally think it's a change for the better. Here's the new rule, if you copy something to your clipboard, it will paste into the same track, unless you change its target.

Step 1: Select your clip(s) in the Timeline
Step 2: Press Cmd+C to copy the clip(s).
Step 3: Press Cmd+V to paste the clip(s) into the same track.

In order to copy and paste clips from one track in the Timeline to another, you use the Option key.
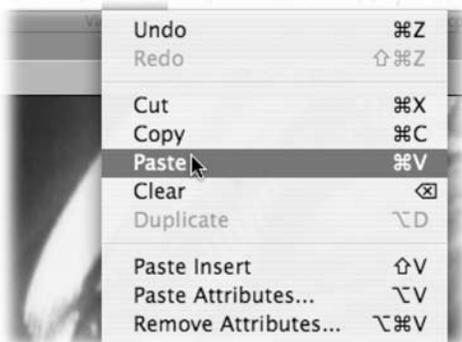
Step 1: Select your clip(s) in the Timeline
Step 2: Press Cmd+C to copy the clip(s).
Step 3: Option-click the lowest numbered Auto Select control to select the track you want to begin pasting into. If multiple tracks are selected they will paste to a higher track.
Step 4: Press Cmd+V to paste the clip(s).

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Widescreen to VHS

       This tip should have been in the first edition (thanks to Rick Finley for pointing it out to us). What happens if you have a widescreen video that you need to give to your client on VHS? Sure DVD players have a widescreen option, but VCRs don't.

1: Create a new standard aspect ration sequence

2: Drag your widescreen sequence into the Timeline as if it were a clip

3: Select the edited clip (which is really a sequence) and press Return or Enter to load it into the Viewer.

4: In the motion tab, set the aspect ratio to -33 to compensate for the widescreen shape.

5: Render then output.