Setting up a sequence

In your Premiere Pro project you will create a sequence (or several sequences), into which you'll place video clips, audio clips, and graphics. If necessary, Premiere Pro will automatically change video and audio clips that you add to a sequence so they match the settings for that sequence. Frame rates and frame sizes for clips, for example, will be converted during playback to match the settings you choose for your sequence. This is called *conforming*.

Each sequence in your project can have different settings, and you'll want to choose settings that match your original media as precisely as possible to minimize conforming during playback. Doing so reduces the work your system must do to play back your clips, improves real-time performance, and maximizes quality.

If you're editing a mixed-format project, you may have to choose which media to match with your sequence settings. You can mix formats easily, but playback performance improves when the sequence settings match.

If the first clip you add to a sequence does not match the playback settings of your sequence, Premiere Pro asks if you would like to change the sequence settings automatically to fit.

Premiere Pro will ask you what to do if your first clip does not match your sequence.

Creating a sequence that automatically matches your source

If you're not sure what sequence settings you should choose, don't worry. Premiere Pro can create a sequence based on your media.

At the bottom of the Project panel, there's a New Item menu ▪. Use this menu to create new items, such as sequences, titles, and bins.

To automatically create a sequence that matches your media, drag and drop any clip (or multiple clips) in the Project panel onto the New Item menu. A new sequence will be created with the same name as the clip and a matching frame size and frame rate.

Using this method, you can be confident your sequence settings will work with your media. If the Timeline panel is empty, you can also drag a clip (or multiple clips) into it to create a sequence with matching settings.

Choosing the correct preset

If you do know the settings you need, you can configure the sequence exactly. If you're not so sure, you can use a preset.

Click the New Item menu at the bottom-right corner of the Project panel ![icon], and choose Sequence.

The New Sequence dialog has four tabs: Sequence Presets, Settings, Tracks, and VR Video.
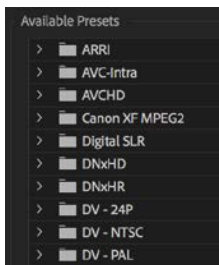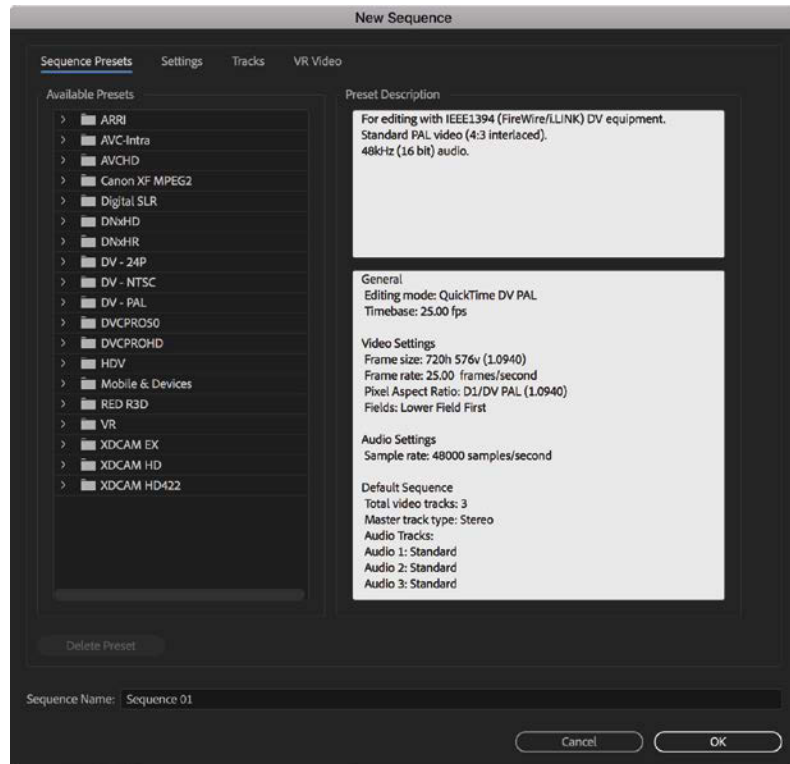
The Sequence Presets tab makes setting up a new sequence easier. When you choose a preset, Premiere Pro applies settings for the new sequence that closely match a particular video and audio format. After choosing a preset, you can adjust these settings on the Settings tab if necessary.

You'll find a wide range of preset configuration options for the most commonly used and supported media types. These settings are organized based on camera formats (with specific settings inside a folder named after the recording format).

You can click the disclosure triangle to see specific formats in a group. These are typically designed around frame rates and frame sizes. Let's look at an example.

1 Click the disclosure triangle next to the group Digital SLR.

You can now see three subfolders, based on frame sizes. Remember that video cameras can often shoot video using different frame sizes, as well as different frame rates and codecs.

2 Click the disclosure triangle next to the 1080p subgroup.

3 Choose the DSLR 1080p30 preset by clicking its name.
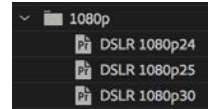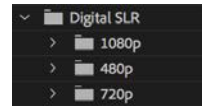
Formats and codecs

Video and audio files have a particular *format*, that is, a frame rate, frame size, audio sample rate, and so on.

Video files such as Apple QuickTime, Microsoft AVI, and MXF are containers that can carry many different video and audio codecs.

Codec is a shortening of the words *compressor* and *decompressor*. It's the way video and audio information is stored and replayed.

The media file is referred to as the *wrapper*, and the video and audio inside the file are sometimes referred to as the *essence*.

If you output your finished sequence to a file, you'll choose a format, a file type, and a codec.

When you're starting out in video editing, you may find the number of formats available a little overwhelming. Premiere Pro can work natively with a wide range of video and audio formats and codecs and will often play back mismatched formats smoothly.

However, when Premiere Pro has to adjust video for playback because of mismatched sequence settings, your editing system must work harder to play the video, and this will impact real-time performance. It's worth taking the time before you start editing to make sure you have sequence settings that closely match your original media files.

The essential factors are always the same: the number of frames per second, the frame size (the number of pixels in the picture), and the audio format. If you were to turn your sequence into a media file without applying a conversion, then the frame rate, audio format, frame size, and so on, would all match the settings you chose when creating the sequence.

When you output to a file, you can convert your sequence to any format you like (for more on exporting, see Lesson 18, "Exporting Frames, Clips, and Sequences").

● **Note:** The Preset Description area of the Sequence Presets tab often describes the kind of camera used to capture media in this format.
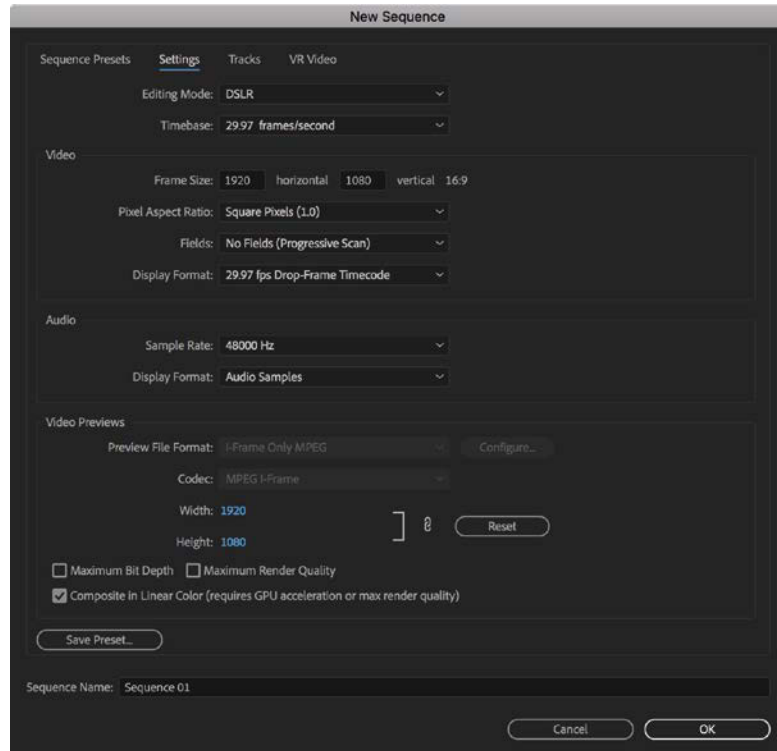
Customizing a sequence preset

Once you've selected the sequence preset that most closely matches your source video, you may want to adjust the settings to meet a particular delivery requirement or in-house workflow.

The detailed settings are accessible by selecting the Settings section of the New Sequence dialog. Remember, Premiere Pro will automatically conform footage you add to your Timeline so that it matches your sequence settings, giving you a standard frame rate and frame size, regardless of the original clip format.

The Settings section gives precise control over sequence configuration.

▶ **Tip:** For now, leave the settings as they are, but examine the way the preset is going to configure the new sequence. Look at each setting from top to bottom to build familiarity with the choices required to configure a sequence.

Creating a sequence preset

While the standard presets usually work, you may need to create a custom setting. To do so, first choose a sequence preset that matches your media closely and then make custom selections in the Settings section of the New Sequence dialog. Having adjusted the settings, you can save your custom preset for future use by clicking the Save Preset button near the bottom of the Settings section.

If you save a preset, you can give your customized project settings preset a name in the Save Settings dialog box, add notes if you want, and click OK. The preset will appear in a Custom folder under Sequence Presets.

If your media matches one of the presets, it's not necessary to change the settings. In fact, it's recommended that you use the default settings.

You'll notice that some settings cannot be changed when you use a preset. This is because they're optimized for the media type you selected on the Preset tab. For complete flexibility, change the Editing Mode menu to Custom.

Maximum Bit Depth and Maximum Render Quality settings

When editing with GPU acceleration (dedicated graphics hardware graphics performing some of the visual effects rendering and playback), advanced algorithms are used and effects are rendered in 32-bit color.

When working without GPU acceleration, you can enable Maximum Bit Depth, and Premiere Pro will render special effects at the maximum quality possible. For many effects, this means 32-bit floating-point color, which allows for trillions of color combinations. This is the best-possible quality for your effects but is more work for your computer, so expect less real-time performance.

If you enable the Maximum Render Quality option or if you have GPU acceleration enabled in the project's settings, Premiere Pro uses a more advanced system for scaling images. Without this option, you might see minor artifacts or noise in the picture when making images smaller. Without GPU acceleration, this option will impact playback performance and file export.

Both of these options can be turned off or on at any time, so you can edit without them to maximize performance and then turn them on when you output your finished work. Even with both options on you can use real-time effects and expect good performance from Premiere Pro.

Understanding audio track types

When you add a video or audio clip to a sequence, you'll put it on a *track*. Tracks are horizontal areas in the Timeline panel that hold clips in a particular position in time. If you have more than one video track, any video clips placed on an upper track will appear in front of clips on a lower track. For example, if you have text or a graphic on your second video track and a video clip on your first video track (below it), you'll see the graphic in front of the video.

The Tracks section of the New Sequence dialog allows you to preselect the track types for the new sequence.

All audio tracks are played at the same time, creating a complete audio mix. To create a mix, position your audio clips on different tracks, lined up in time. Narration,

sound bites, sound effects, and music can be organized by putting them on different tracks. You can also rename tracks, making it easier to find your way around more complex sequences.

Premiere Pro lets you specify how many video and audio tracks will be included when the sequence is created. You can easily add and remove tracks later, but you can't change your Audio Master setting. Choose Stereo for now.
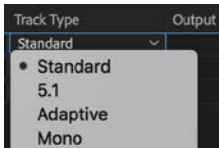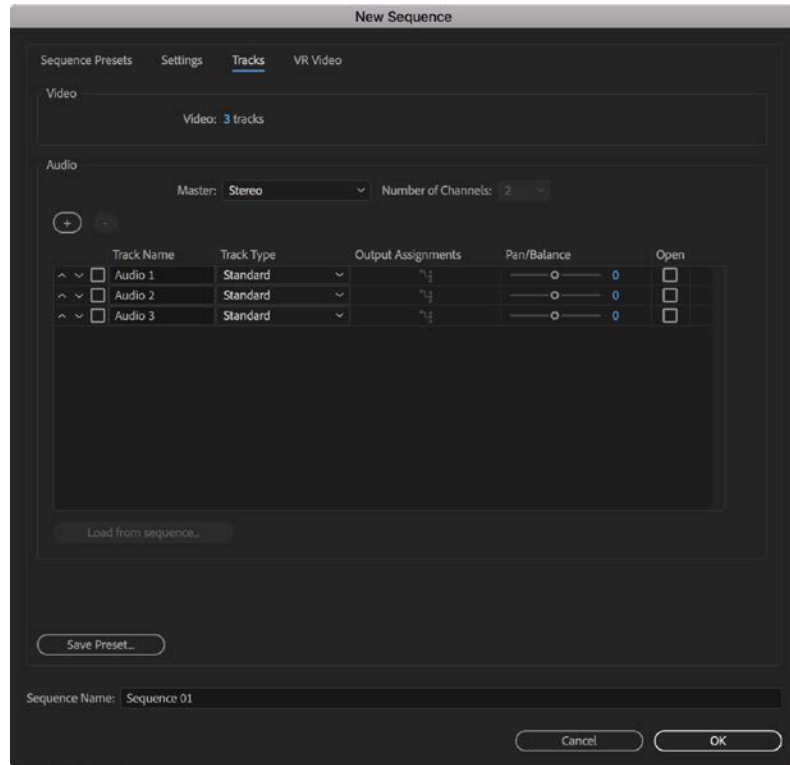
You can choose from several audio track types. Each track type is designed for specific types of audio. When you choose a particular track type, Premiere Pro gives you the right controls to make adjustments to the sound, based on the number of audio channels. For example, stereo clips need different controls than 5.1 surround-sound clips.

The types of audio tracks available in Premiere Pro are as follows:

• **Standard:** These tracks are for both mono and stereo audio clips.

• **5.1:** These tracks are for audio clips with 5.1 audio (the kind used for surround sound).

- **Adaptive:** Adaptive tracks are for both mono and stereo audio and give you precise control over the output routing for each audio channel. For example, you could decide the track audio channel 3 should be output to your mix in channel 5. This workflow is used for multilingual broadcast TV, where precise control of audio channels is used at transmission.

- **Mono:** This track type will accept only mono audio clips.

When you add a clip to a sequence that has both video and audio, Premiere Pro makes sure the audio channels go to the right kind of track. You can't accidentally put an audio clip on the wrong kind of track; Premiere Pro will automatically create the right kind of track if one doesn't exist already.

You'll explore audio more in Lesson 11, "Editing and Mixing Audio."

VR video

Premiere Pro offers exceptional support for 360 video, often described as *VR video*, where multiple cameras, or a very wide lens, are used to capture a video image that can be viewed with a VR headset to create an immersive experience.

In the VR Video section of the New Sequence dialog, you can specify the angle of view captured so Premiere Pro can accurately display the image.

You will find a dedicated display mode, and special VR video visual effects are available in Premiere Pro.

For this sequence, use the default settings. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with the options; then do the following:

1 Click in the Sequence Name box, and name your sequence First Sequence.

2 Click OK to create the sequence.

3 Choose File > Save.

Congratulations! You have made a new project and sequence with Premiere Pro.

If you have not already copied the media and project files to your computer, please do so before continuing to the next lesson, as you'll need them to follow along. You'll find instructions for copying the files in the "Getting Started" section at the beginning of this book.

Review questions

1 What is the purpose of the Settings tab in the New Sequence dialog box?

2 How should you choose a sequence preset?

3 What is timecode?

4 How do you create a custom sequence preset?

5 What options are available in Premiere Pro to capture video from tape with no additional third-party hardware?

Review answers

1 The Settings tab is used to customize an existing preset or to create a new custom preset.

2 It's generally best to choose a preset that matches your original footage. Premiere Pro makes this easy by describing the presets in terms of camera systems.

3 Timecode is the universal system for measuring time in hours, minutes, seconds, and frames. The number of frames per second varies depending on the recording format.

4 When you've selected the settings you want for your custom preset, click the Save Preset button, give it a name and a description, and click OK.

5 Premiere Pro records DV and HDV files if you have a FireWire connection on your computer. If you have additional connections provided by installed third-party hardware, consult the documentation for that hardware for the best settings.