

Starting the lesson

In this lesson, you'll learn to use transitions between video and audio clips. Video editors often use transitions to help an edit flow more smoothly. You'll learn best practices for choosing transitions selectively.

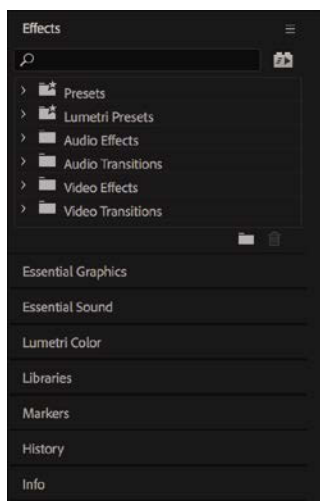
For this lesson, you'll use a new project file.

- 1 Start Adobe Premiere Pro CC, and open the project Lesson 07.prproj in the Lessons/Lesson 07 folder.
- 2 Save the project as Lesson 07 Working.prproj in the same folder.
- 3 Choose Effects in the Workspaces panel, or choose Window > Workspaces > Effects.

● **Note:** If you have been using Premiere Pro for a while, there's a small chance your settings will prevent the Workspaces panel from being displayed. You can always restore it by selecting the correct workspace in the Window menu and then going back to the Window menu and resetting the workspace there.

This changes the workspace to the preset that was created to make it easier to work with transitions and effects. If you have been using Premiere Pro for a while, you may need to reset the workspace to the saved version by clicking the menu next to the Effects option in the Workspaces panel.

This workspace uses stacked panels to maximize the number of panels that can be on-screen at a time.



Stacked panels save space—enable or disable them in the panel menu.

You can enable stacked panels for any panel group by going to the panel menu and choosing Panel Group Settings > Stacked Panel Group. The same option will toggle off stacked panels.

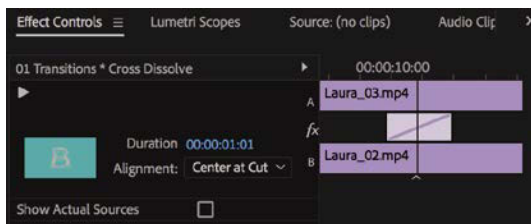
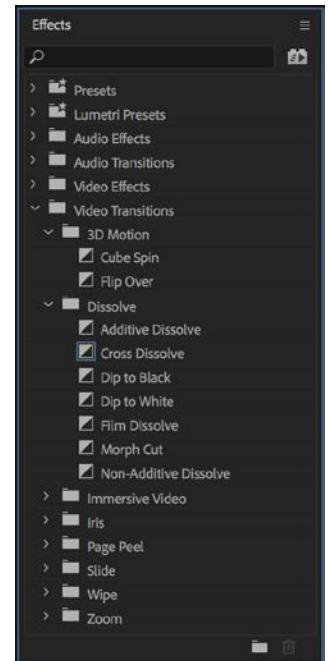
Click the name for any panel in a stack to view it. Start with the Effects panel.

What are transitions?

Adobe Premiere Pro offers several special effects and preset animations to help you bridge neighboring clips in the Timeline. These transitions—such as dissolves, page wipes, dips to color, and so on—provide a way to ease viewers from one scene to the next. Occasionally, a transition can also be used to grab viewers' attention to signify a major jump in the story.

Adding transitions to your project is an art. Applying them starts simply enough; drag the transition you want onto the cut between two clips. The skill comes in their placement, length, and parameters, such as direction, motion, and start/end locations.

You can adjust settings for transitions on the Timeline and in the Effect Controls panel. In addition to the various options unique to each transition, the Effect Controls panel displays an *A/B timeline*. This feature makes it easy to move transitions relative to the edit point, change the transition duration, and apply transitions to clips that don't have sufficient head or tail frames (additional content to provide an overlap). You can also apply a transition effect to all the cuts in a group of clips.



VR video transitions

Though it is beyond the scope of this book, Premiere Pro includes excellent support for 360 video and includes effects and transitions intended for this unique format.

Unlike 2D or stereoscopic video, 360 video requires visual effects and transitions designed to deal with wraparound video with no edges.

The techniques described here when working with effects also apply to 360 video transitions. You'll find them in the Video Transitions > Immersive Video category in the Effects panel.

Knowing when to use transitions

Transitions are effective when they help the viewer understand the story. For example, you may switch from indoors to outdoors in a video, or you may jump forward in time by several hours in the same location. An animated transition, a fade to black, or a dissolve helps the viewer understand that time has passed or that the location has changed.

Modern audiences have a clear understanding of the signals transitions give, and they're a standard storytelling tool in video editing. For example, a slow fade to black at the end of a scene is a clear indication that the scene has finished. The key with transitions is to be intentional—and this often means using restraint—unless, of course, a total lack of restraint is the result you intend to show.

Only you can know what is right for your creative work. As long as it looks like you meant to include a particular effect, your audience will tend to trust your decision (whether or not they agree with your creative choices). It takes practice and experience to develop sensitivity for the right time, and wrong time, to use effects such as transitions.

Following best practices with transitions

● **Note:** Transitions are fun and interesting to add to your project. However, overuse can make a video seem amateurish. When choosing a transition, make sure it adds meaning to your project. Watch your favorite movies and TV shows to learn how to use transitions elegantly.

New editors sometimes overuse transitions, perhaps because it's an easy way to add visual interest. You may be tempted to use a transition on every cut. Don't! Or at least, get them out of your system with your first edit.

Most TV shows and feature films use cuts-only edits. You'll rarely see any transitions. Why? An effect should be used if it gives a particular additional benefit, and most often, transition effects do not. In fact, they can be distracting.

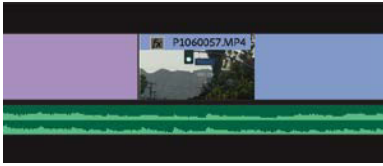
If a news editor uses a transition effect, it's for a purpose. The most frequent use in newsroom editing is to take what would have been a jarring or abrupt edit—called a *jump cut*—and make it more acceptable.

More dramatic transitions do have their place in storytelling. Consider the *Star Wars* movies with their highly stylized transition effects, such as obvious, slow wipes. Each of those transitions has a purpose. In this case, George Lucas purposely created a look reminiscent of old serialized movies and TV shows. The transition effects send a clear message: "Pay attention. We're transitioning across space and time."

Using edit points and handles

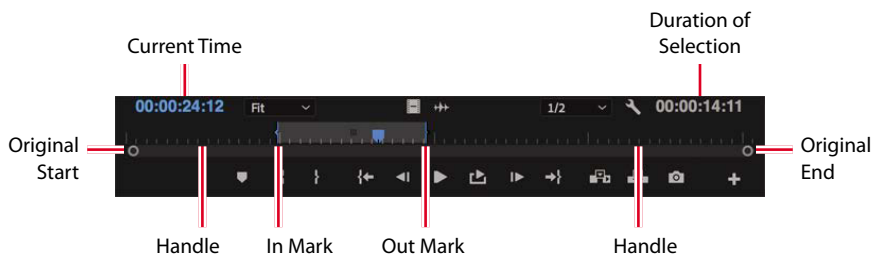
To understand transition effects, you'll need to understand edit points and handles. An edit point is the point in your Timeline where one clip ends and the next begins. This is often called a *cut*. These are easy to see because Premiere Pro draws

vertical lines to show where one clip ends and another begins (much like two bricks next to each other).



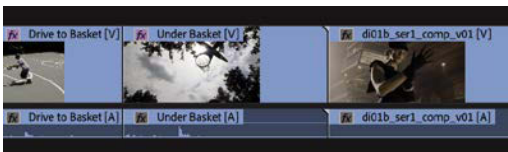
When you edit part of a clip into a sequence, the unused sections at the beginning and end are still available but hidden. Clip handles are those unused sections.

When you first edited a clip into a sequence, you set In and Out marks (also known as In and Out points) to select the part you wanted. There's a handle between the clip's original beginning and the In mark you chose. There's also a handle between the clip's original end and the Out mark you chose.



Of course, you may not have used In or Out marks, or you may have set just one or other mark at the beginning or end of the clip. In this case, you would have no unused media or unused media at one end of the clip.

On the Timeline, if you see a little triangle in the upper-right or upper-left corner of a clip, it means you've reached the end of the original clip and there are no additional frames available (referred to as *handles*).

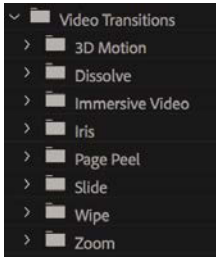


In this example, the middle clip has a handle available at the start (on the left) but no handle at the end (on the right).

For transitions to work, you need handles, because these are used to create the overlap needed when creating a transition effect.

These unused sections of clips are not visible unless you apply a transition effect. The transition effect automatically creates an overlap between the outgoing clip and the incoming clip. For example, if you wanted to add a 2-second Cross Dissolve transition centered between two video clips, you'd need at least a 1-second handle on both clips (1 additional second each that would not normally be visible in the Timeline).

Adding video transitions



Premiere Pro gives you multiple video transition effects to choose from. Most options are available in the Video Transitions group in the Effects panel.

The main transitions are organized into eight effect subcategories. You'll find some additional transitions in the Video Effects > Transition group in the Effects panel. Those effects are meant to be applied to an entire clip and can be used to reveal the footage (typically between its start and end frames). This second category works well for superimposing text or graphics.

● **Note:** If you'd like more transitions, check the Adobe website. Visit <http://helpx.adobe.com/premiere-pro/compatibility.html> and click the Plug-ins link. There, you'll find several third-party effects to explore.

Applying a single-sided transition

● **Note:** You can use the Search field, at the top of the panel, to locate the effect by name or keyword, or you can manually open the folders of effects.

The easiest transition to understand is one that applies to just one end of a single clip. This could be a fade from black on the first clip in a sequence or a dissolve into an animated graphic that leaves the screen on its own.

Let's give it a try.

- 1 Open the sequence Transitions.

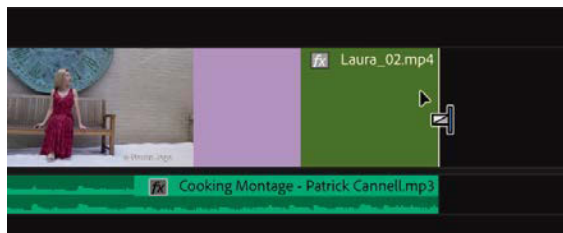
This sequence has four video clips. The clips have handles long enough for transition effects to be applied between them.

- 2 In the Effects panel, open the Video Transitions > Dissolve group. Find the Cross Dissolve effect.
- 3 Drag and drop the effect onto the start of the first video clip.



A highlight shows you where the transition effect will be added before you release the mouse button.

- 4 Drag the Cross Dissolve effect onto the end of the last video clip.



The Dissolve icon shows the timing for the effect. For example, the effect you just applied to the last clip in the sequence will start before the end of the clip and complete by the time it reaches the clip's end.

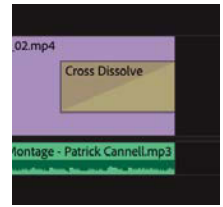
Because you're applying the Cross Dissolve transition effect at the ends of clips, where there is no connected clip, the picture dissolves into the background of the Timeline (which happens to be black).

Transitions of this kind don't extend the clip (using the handle) because the transition doesn't reach past the end of the clip.

5 Play the sequence to see the result.

You should see a fade from black at the start of the sequence and a fade to black at the end.

When you apply a Cross Dissolve effect in this way, the result looks similar to the Dip to Black effect, which transitions to black. However, in reality you are causing the clip to become gradually transparent in front of a black background. The difference is clearer when you work with multiple layers of clips, with different-colored background layers.

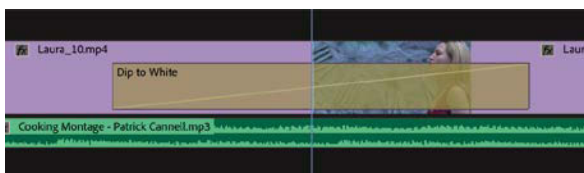


Applying a transition between two clips

Let's apply transitions between several clips. For the purposes of exploration, you'll break some artistic rules and try a few different options.

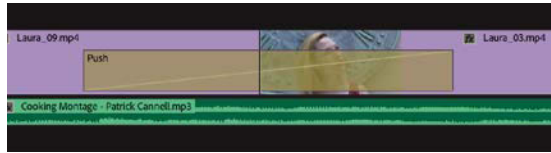
- 1 Continue working with the previous sequence, Transitions.
- 2 Move the playhead to the edit point between clip 1 and clip 2 on the Timeline and then press the equal sign (=) key two or three times to zoom in fairly close. If your keyboard does not have the = key, use the zoom slider control at the bottom of the Timeline.
- 3 Drag the Dip to White transition from the Dissolve group in the Effects panel onto the edit point between clip 1 and clip 2. Be sure to line up the midpoint of the effect with the cut, not the end of the first clip or beginning of the second clip.

► **Tip:** It's easy to remember that pressing the = key zooms in because it normally has a + symbol on the same key.

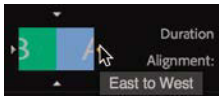


The Dip to White transition effect gradually builds to a completely white screen, which obscures the cut between the first clip and the next.

- 4 Drag the Push transition from the Slide category onto the edit point between clip 2 and clip 3.



- 5 Position the Timeline playhead on the edit between clip 2 and clip 3 by pressing the down arrow on your keyboard. The Up and Down arrow keys are shortcuts to move the Timeline playhead to the next or previous edit.
- 6 Click once on the Push transition effect icon on the Timeline to select it, and open the Effect Controls panel.



- 7 Change the direction of the clip from West to East to East to West by clicking the direction control on the small thumbnail, at the top right of the controls. This changes the direction from which the next clip will appear.

- 8 Drag the Flip Over transition from the 3D Motion group onto the edit point between clip 3 and clip 4.

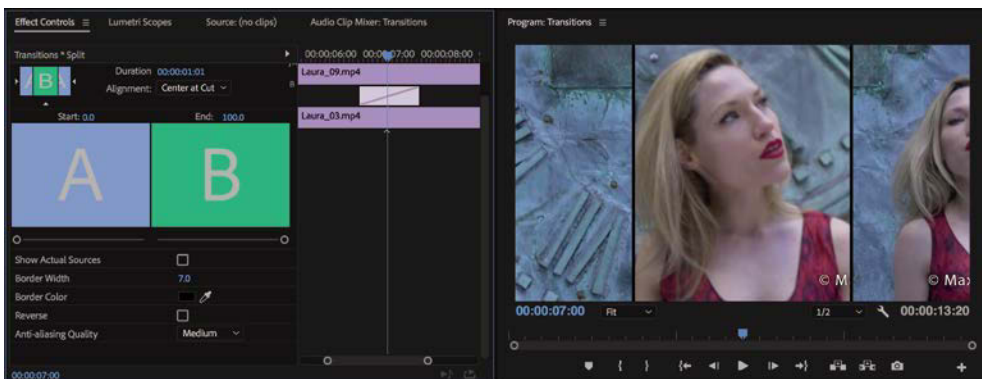
- 9 Review the sequence by playing it from beginning to end.

Having watched this sequence, you can probably see why it's a good idea to use transitions with restraint!

Let's try replacing an existing effect.

- 10 Drag the Split transition from the Slide category onto the existing Push transition effect icon, between clip 2 and clip 3. The new transition effect replaces the old one, taking the duration of the old effect.
- 11 Select the Split transition effect icon on the Timeline, so its settings will be displayed in the Effect Controls panel. Using that panel, set Border Width to 7 and Anti-aliasing Quality to Medium to create a thin black border at the edge of the wipe.

● **Note:** When you drag a new video or audio transition effect from the Effects panel on top of an existing transition, it replaces the existing effect. It also preserves the alignment and duration of the previous transition. This is an easy way to swap transition effects and experiment.



The anti-aliasing method reduces potential flicker when the line animates.

● **Note:** You may need to scroll down in the Effect Controls panel to access further controls.

12 Watch the sequence to see the new transition effect.

Video transitions have a default duration, which can be set in seconds or frames (it's frames by default). The duration of the effect will change depending on the sequence frame rate, unless the default duration is set in seconds. The default transition duration can be changed in the Timeline tab of the Preferences panel.

13 Choose Edit > Preferences > Timeline (Windows) or Premiere Pro CC > Preferences > Timeline (macOS).



Depending on your region, you may see a default Video Transition Duration of 30 Frames or 25 Frames.

14 This is a 24-frames-per-second sequence, but this doesn't matter if you change the Video Transition Default Duration option to 1 second. Do so now, and click OK.

The existing transition effects stay the same, but any future transitions you add will have the new duration.

The duration of a transition effect can dramatically change its impact. Later in this lesson, you'll learn about adjusting the timing of transitions.

Applying transitions to multiple clips at once

So far, you've been applying transitions to video clips. However, you can also apply transitions to still images, graphics, color mattes, and even audio, as you'll see in the next section of this lesson.

One common project type that editors encounter is the photo montage. Often these montages look good with transitions between photos. Applying transitions one at a time to 100 images would take a long time. Premiere Pro makes it easy to automate this process by allowing the default transition effect (that you define) to be added to any group of contiguous or noncontiguous clips.

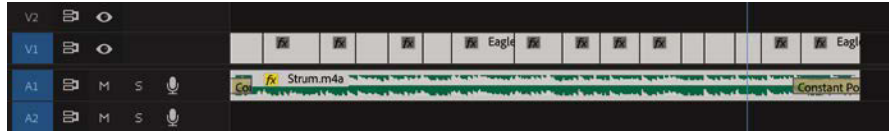
1 In the Project panel, find and open the sequence Slideshow.

This sequence has several images edited sequentially. Notice a Constant Power audio crossfade has already been applied to the beginning and end of the music clip to create a fade in and out.

2 Play the Timeline by pressing the spacebar.

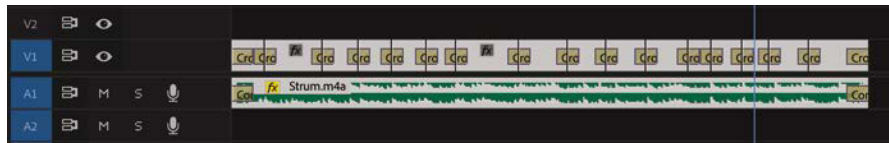
You'll notice that there's a cut between each pair of clips.

- 3 Press the backslash (\) key to zoom out the Timeline so the whole sequence is visible.
- 4 With the Selection tool, draw a marquee around all the clips to select them.



- 5 Choose Sequence > Apply Default Transitions To Selection.

This applies the default transition between all the currently selected clips. Notice that the Constant Power audio crossfade at the beginning and end of the music clip is now shorter.



The default video transition effect is a 1-second Cross Dissolve, and the default audio transition effect is a 1-second Constant Power Crossfade. The shortcut you just used replaced the existing crossfades with new, shorter ones.

You can change the default transition by right-clicking an effect in the Effects panel and choosing Set Selected As Default Transition.

- 6 Play the Timeline to see the difference the Cross Dissolve transition makes to the montage.

Note: If you're working with clips that have linked video and audio, you can select just the video or audio portions if you Alt-drag (Windows) or Option-drag (macOS) with the Selection tool. Then choose Sequence > Apply Default Transitions To Selection. Note that this command works only with double-sided transitions.

You can also copy an existing transition effect to multiple edits using the keyboard. To do this, select the transition effect icon on the Timeline, and press Ctrl+C (Windows) or Command+C (macOS). Then hold the Ctrl (Windows) or Command (macOS) key while you drag with the selection tool around multiple other edits to select them, rather than clips.

With the edits selected, you can press Ctrl+V (Windows) or Command+V (macOS) to paste the transition effect onto all the selected edits.

This is a great way to add transition effects with matching settings to multiple edits.

► **Tip:** You'll find the option to apply audio-only or video-only transition effects in the Sequence menu too.

Sequence display changes

When you add a transition to a sequence, a red or yellow horizontal line may appear above it in the Timeline panel. A yellow line indicates that Premiere Pro expects to be able to play the effect smoothly. A red line means that this section of the sequence may be rendered before you can record it to tape or view a preview without dropped frames.

Rendering happens automatically when you export your sequence as a file, but you can choose to render at any time to make these sections preview more smoothly on slower computers.

The easiest way to render is to press Enter (Windows) or Return (macOS). You can also add In and Out marks to select a part of your sequence and then render. Only the selected part will render. This is useful if you have many effects that need to render, but you're concerned with only one section for now.



Premiere Pro will create a video clip of that segment (tucked away in the Preview Files folder) and will change the line from red or yellow to green. As long as the line is green, playback should be smooth.

Using A/B mode to fine-tune a transition

Viewing transition effect settings in the Effect Controls panel gives access to an A/B editing mode that splits a single video track into two. What would normally be displayed as two consecutive and contiguous clips on a single track are now displayed as individual clips on separate tracks, giving you the option to apply a transition between them, to manipulate their head and tail frames (or handles), and to change other transition options.

Changing parameters in the Effect Controls panel

All transitions in Premiere Pro can be customized. Some effects have few customizable properties (such as duration or starting point). Other effects offer more options for direction, color, border size, and so on. The major benefit of the Effect Controls panel is that you can see the outgoing and incoming clip handles (unused media in the original clip). This makes it easy to adjust the position of an effect.