Lesson 3

Organizing a New Project

On larger, story-driven projects, navigating large amounts of footage can seem like a daunting task. In this lesson, you will learn how to organize your footage before the editing process starts, to prepare for a documentary-style project. By tagging footage with keywords in advance, DaVinci Resolve can automatically sort and display groups of footage quickly—to keep your attention on building out a story and not having to scroll through pages and pages of footage.

You'll begin by grouping clips into folders (called bins) and using metadata and smart bins to make it easier to search and sort through large amounts of content.

Time

**This lesson takes approximately 30 minutes to complete.**

Goals

# Configuring Project Settings and System and User Preferences

When you started the project in the Lesson 1, you didn't configure any settings at all. That project was designed to skip the project setup tasks and jump right into the fun stuff. For Lesson 2, you restored a project archive that had many of the project settings already configured for you. Now, you'll take a step back and learn the steps needed to correctly set up a new project from the start.

1   Open DaVinci Resolve, or if it is already open, choose File > Project Manager or press Shift-1.
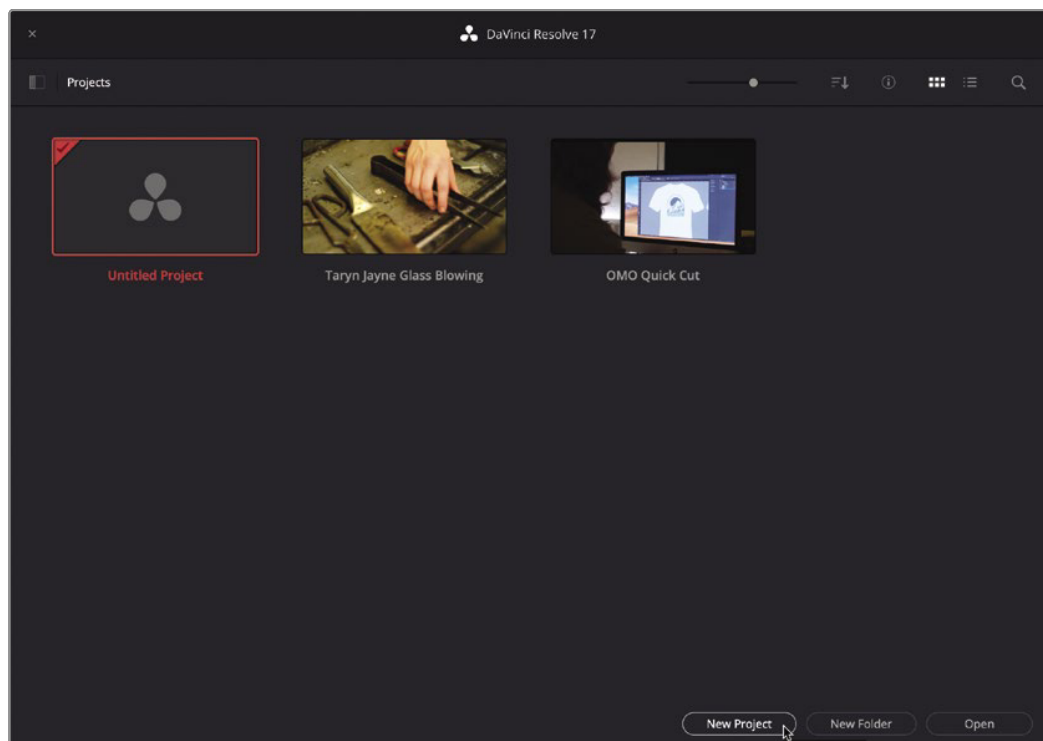
You'll create a new project in this exercise.

2   At the bottom of the Project Manager, click the New Project button.

3   In the Create New Project dialog that appears, enter the project name, **My New Project**, and click Create.
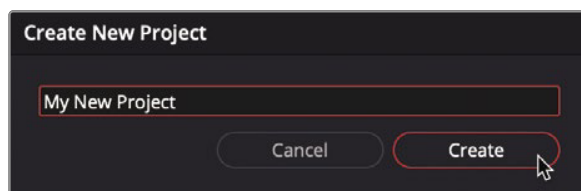
4 If necessary, click the Edit Page button.

> **TIP** New projects open to the last page you used previously in DaVinci Resolve.

5 To close all the extra panels that you may have opened during the previous lesson, choose Workspace > Reset UI Layout.

DaVinci Resolve uses default values for project settings such as the frame rate for playback, and the output resolution. You can customize these values in the Project Settings window to match your final output requirements.

6 Choose File > Project Settings to open the Project Settings window.
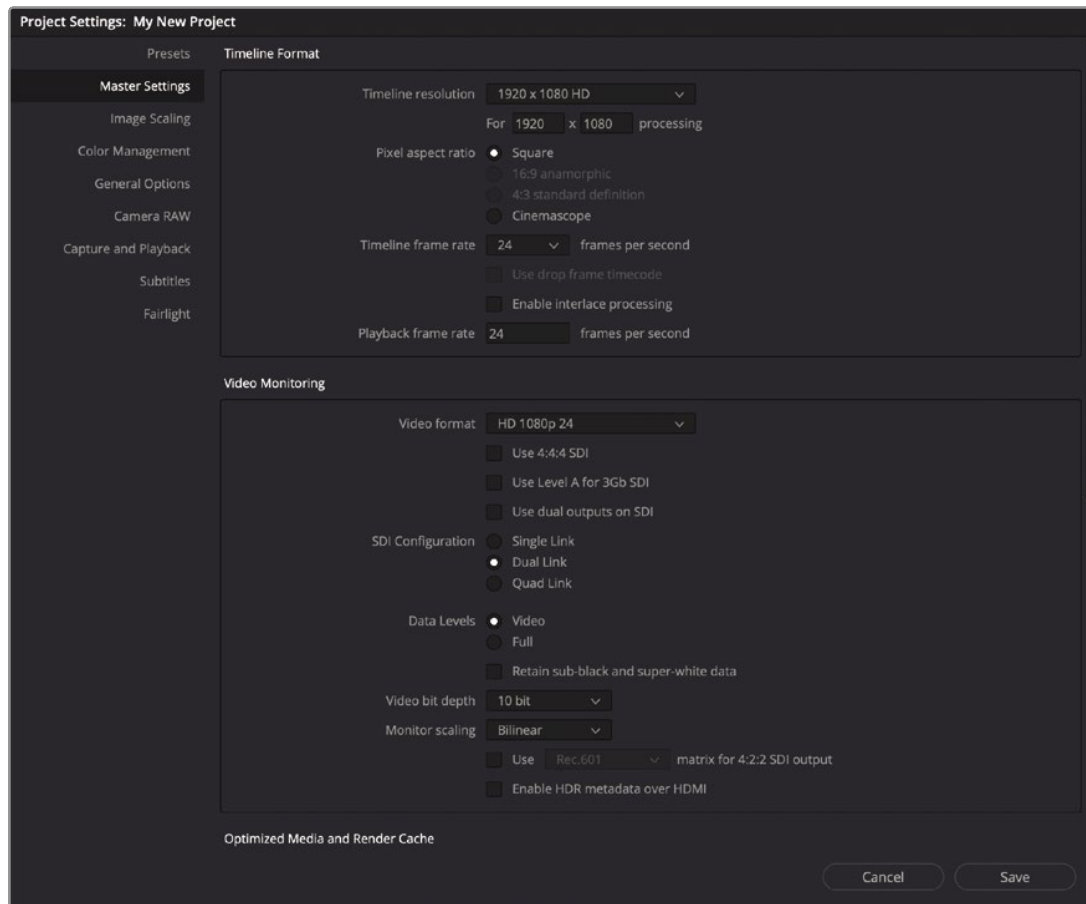
For this project, we'll edit in 720P to match the media type that was recorded. A unique feature of DaVinci Resolve is that you have the choice of editing in any format you wish, and you can change the timeline resolution later—for instance, changing a timeline from 1280 x 720 to 1920 x 1080.

**7**   In the Timeline resolution drop-down menu, choose 1280 x 720 HD 720P.
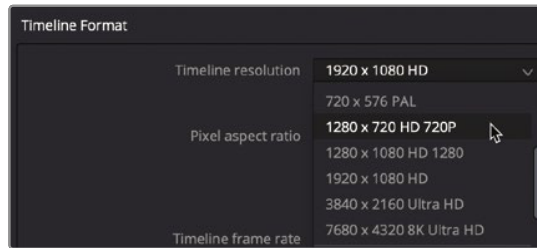
Below the timeline resolution, you can see the timeline frame rate.

8   In the Timeline frame rate menu, choose 23.976.

9   In the Project Settings window, click Save to save your changes and return to the edit page.

Although the timeline resolution and frame rate can be customized for each timeline in a project, it's more efficient to set up the default project resolution and frame rate ahead of time. This also leaves less room for operator error. You should set up two other areas before you begin importing clips. Let's start in the Preferences window, which is used for configuring DaVinci Resolve settings that do not typically change from project to project.

10   Choose DaVinci Resolve > Preferences or press Command-, (comma) in macOS or Ctrl-, (comma) in Windows to open the Preferences window.
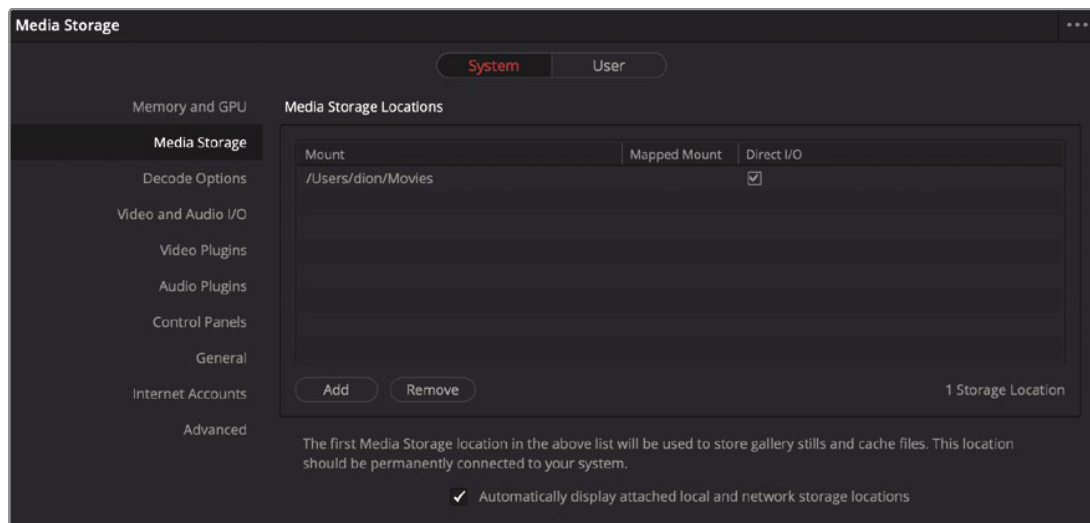
Like the Project Settings window, the Preferences window includes categories along the left side. The Preferences window opens to the Media Storage category, which is the one you'll typically want to set up.

The Media Storage category allows you to add drives, often called *scratch disks*, to your system when using DaVinci Resolve. Throughout the duration of a project,

DaVinci Resolve will occasionally create media that must be saved to a hard drive. This may include cached or rendered files, still frames, and various media that are optimized to improve playback performance. Such files are saved to the first hard drive listed in the media storage preferences.

11 If you wish to change the drive used for cached content, click the Add button and select your fastest and largest hard drive.

It's almost always advisable to set your scratch disk to the largest, fastest hard drive available to your computer. If you don't specify a scratch disk, your system disk will be used by default.

> **TIP** If you purchased DaVinci Resolve from the macOS App Store, add the fastest, largest drive first, and then enable "Automatically display attached local and network storage locations." Enabling this checkbox before adding your scratch disk will cause macOS to add the Macintosh HD drive as the first drive, which is not usually a good choice for a scratch disk.

The Preferences window displays two tabs at the top. The default selected tab is the System tab. Its settings, like the media storage settings, are specific to your computer hardware for all projects. The User tab displays preferences that are not saved with a project but are saved for use with the current workstation.

12 At the top of the Preferences window, click the User tab.

13 Along the left side of the Preferences window, click the Project Save and Load category.
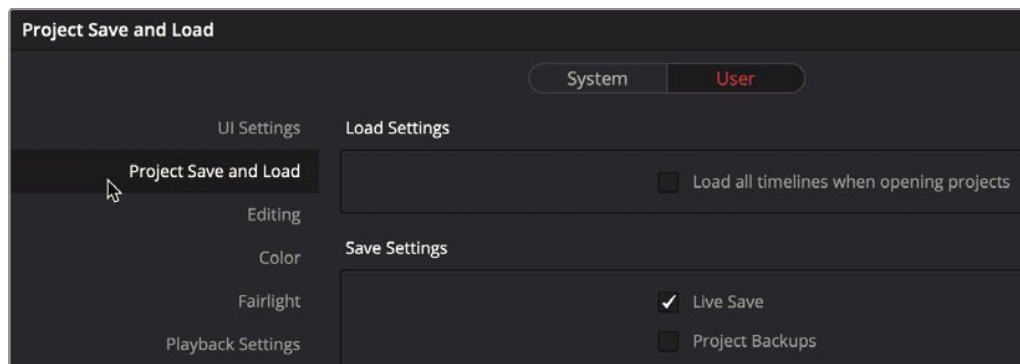
The Project Save and Load settings can configure regularly timed project backups as well as implement a continuously Live Save mode that always saves your work. Live Save is enabled by default on new projects, but you'll need to enable the Project Backups setting.

14 Click the Project Backups button to enable the feature.

> **TIP** The Keyboard Mapping setting is located under the DaVinci Resolve menu and allows you to customize the keyboard shortcuts so that they match other popular editing systems or your own unique layout.

15 Click Save to close the Preferences window.

Changing some options in the preferences will require you to restart DaVinci Resolve, and a dialog will appear warning you of those situations.

16 Click OK to close the warning dialog.

Now your setup is complete, and you are ready to start importing clips.
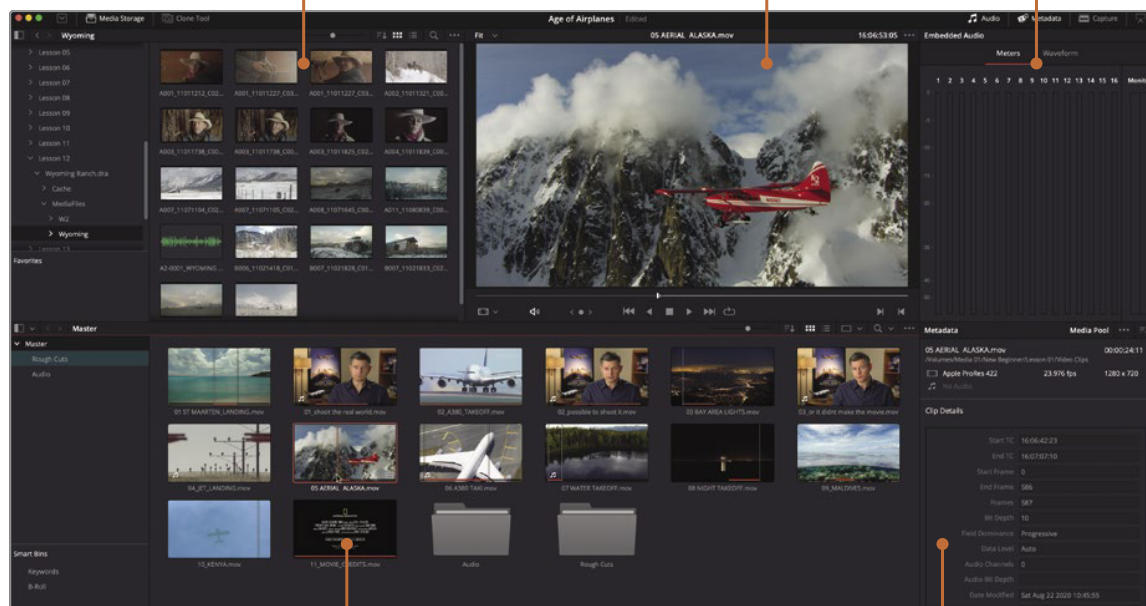
Importing Clips

When you're ready to import clips into a project, the most efficient place to do this is through the library browser in the media page where you can navigate to any folder or hard drive in which you store your media. When you import clips into your project, they are stored in bins in the media pool.

1 Click the Media button to switch to the media page.

The media storage browser shows all the connected drives and the files stored on those drives.

Viewer for previewing video

Audio meters for checking audio levels

The media pool contains all the media for your current project, organized in bins. You can import files from the drives in the library browser into the media pool for each project.

Metadata editor for viewing, adding, or editing clip metadata

The media page gives you the most flexibility and functionality when it comes to importing media from your hard drives. You'll also perform other tasks here such as media management, clip organization, syncing audio and video clips, and troubleshooting clips that unexpectedly appear offline.

2   In the media storage browser sidebar to the left, click the icon of your computer's internal hard drive.
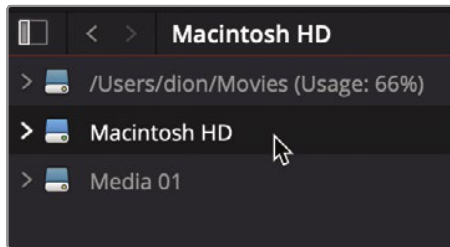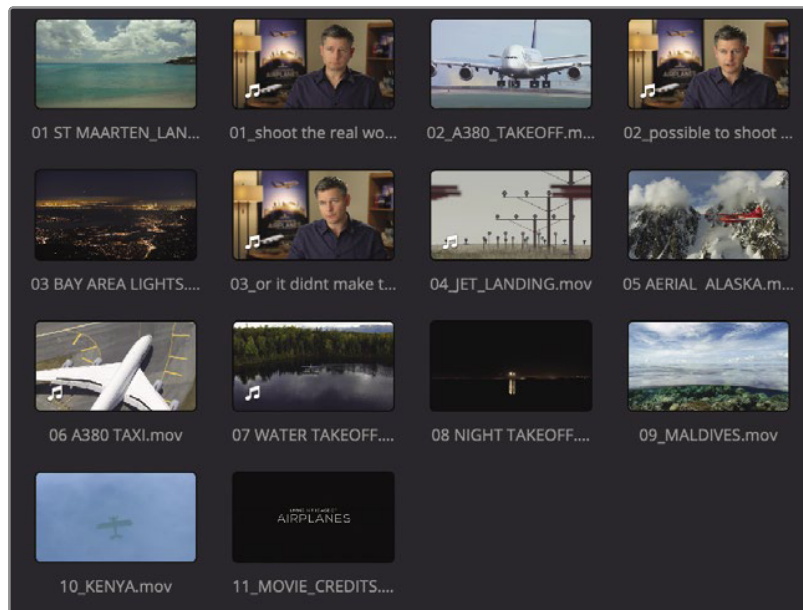

3   In the right panel, navigate to the R17 Beginner Guide lessons folder.
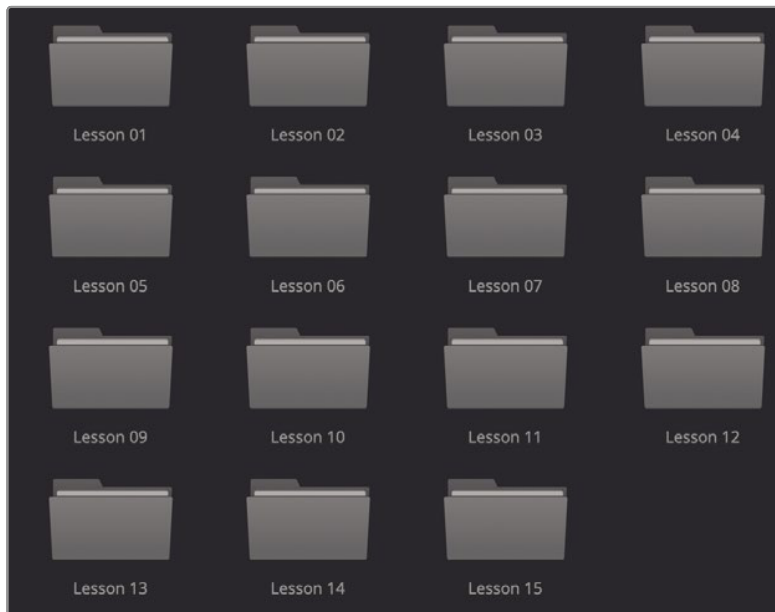
The library displays several subfolders in the R17 Beginner Guide lessons folder. You'll import clips for this project from the video clips folder located in the Lesson 03 folder.
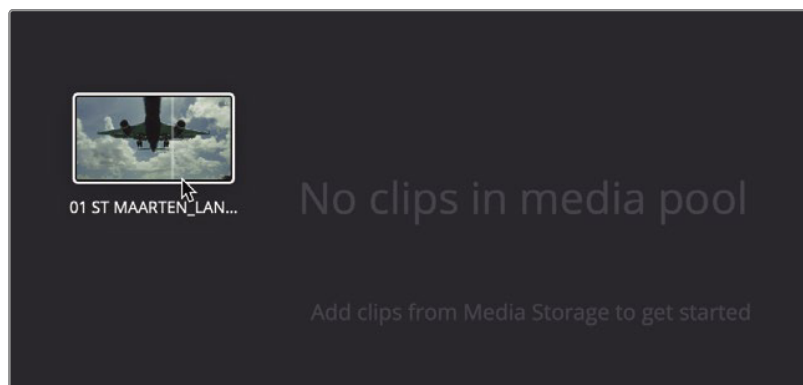
4 Double-click the Lesson 03 folder and then double-click the video clips folder to open it.

The right panel of the library displays a thumbnail-sized image icon for each of the clips you want to import. You can preview each clip in the viewer.

5 Click any thumbnail to see the clip in the viewer.

6 Press the Spacebar to begin playing the clip and then press Spacebar again to stop playback.

After you're finished previewing clips, you can choose to import one or more of them into your project.

7 Choose Edit > Select All to select all the clips displayed in the library or press Command-A (macOS) or Ctrl-A (Windows).

8 Drag any selected clip from the library into the media pool where it is labeled "No clips in media pool."

All the selected clips are added to the Master bin in the media pool. Every project always includes a Master bin. This Master bin contains every clip you add and every new bin you create. It is also important to understand that the clips are not copied, moved, or transcoded when you import them. DaVinci Resolve is completely non-destructive; it simply links to the unaltered files in their current locations on your hard drive.

Importing Folders

Instead of selecting each of the clips you want to import and adding them all to the Master bin, you can import an entire folder and automatically create a custom bin.

1   In the upper area of the library, click the back arrow to view the contents of the Lesson 03 folder.
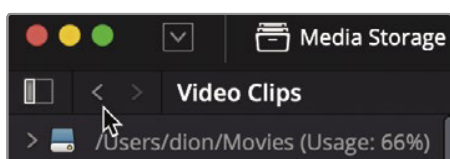
2   Right-click the Audio folder and choose Add Folders and Subfolders into Media Pool (Create Bins).
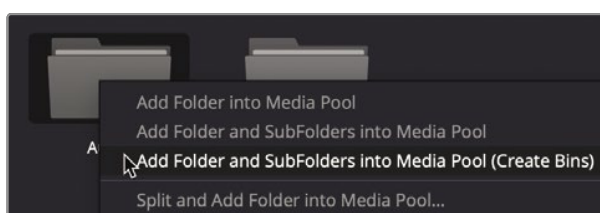
Choosing this menu item creates a bin with the folder's name and adds it to the Master bin. All the clips contained in the folder are imported as part of the new bin.

Making New Bins

Our project has video and audio files already imported. Before we can begin editing this content into a timeline efficiently, it would be best to organize the content in the project first. To do this, we will create *bins*.

Bins are like folders for all your clips. Although there are already video clips in the default Master bin, it is not very efficient to rely entirely on a single bin to hold everything. It's like having a filing cabinet and stuffing everything in one folder. A better strategy is to create custom bins and organize your clips by media type.

1　In the media pool, select the Master bin.

2　To create a new bin, choose File > New Bin, or press Command-Shift-N (macOS) or Ctrl-Shift-N (Windows).

A new bin with the default name bin 1 is created and added to the media pool. Let's change the name.

3　Type **Ending Credits** as the name of the bin.
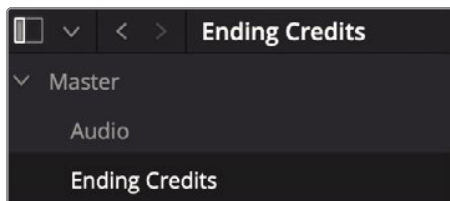
All new bins that you create appear inside the master bin. With a new bin created and named to suit your project, you're ready to start organizing your clips into bins.

4　Select the Master bin and then drag the 11_MOVIE_CREDITS thumbnail onto the Ending Credits bin name in the bin list sidebar. When the Ending Credits bin name highlights, release the mouse button.
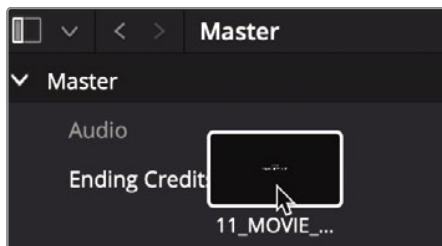
TIP You can open multiple bins at the same time by right-clicking a bin name in the bin list sidebar and choosing Open As New Window.

5　In the media pool sidebar, click the Ending Credits bin to view its contents.

You've now successfully moved clips from one bin to another. By sorting media into bins by type, such as a particular shoot date, or by asset type, such as graphics, you will navigate your projects with confidence during editing.

Reviewing and Scrubbing Clips

Before you can start to edit content into a timeline and build a story, you will need to become familiar with the footage available in your project. To do this, use the source viewer in the edit page.

1   In the media pool sidebar, select the Master bin.
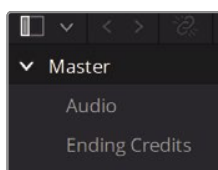
2   In the bin, hover the mouse pointer over any video clip.

When your mouse pointer is located over any clip in a bin, a live preview of the clip is displayed in the viewer.

> **NOTE** Due to screen and window size differences, the order of clips in your bin may appear slightly different from the figures shown in this lesson.

3   Move the mouse pointer back and forth over the thumbnail to scrub quickly through the clip and see it in the viewer.

> **TIP** Live preview can be disabled in the Options menu located in the upper-right corner of the viewer.

The live media preview feature allows you to quickly skim over a clip without having to play it. Still, to edit clips most efficiently, you will need to know their contents intimately. For that purpose, nothing can replace just sitting down and watching a clip play from start to end.

4   While your mouse hovers over the thumbnail, press the Spacebar to play the clip. The clip plays at its native frame rate.

5   Press the Spacebar again to stop playback.

6   Load the clip into the source viewer by double-clicking your mouse on the clip you wish to review.

The viewer transport buttons include playback as well as other buttons to play a clip in reverse and to move the playhead to the beginning or the end of a clip.

Choosing Representative Thumbnails

The thumbnail used to represent each clip in the bin is the first frame of that clip. At times, that first frame might not be the best representation of the clip, so it is useful to be able to change it.

1   In the upper-right corner of the media pool, drag the scale slider to increase the size of the thumbnails.
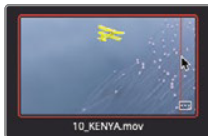

2   Select the thumbnail labeled 10 KENYA so it is highlighted with a red outline.
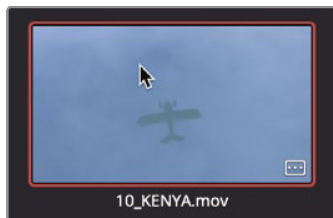
3   Move the mouse pointer left and right over the thumbnail.

As you move the pointer left and right, DaVinci Resolve displays various frames from the clip as if you were fast forwarding and rewinding through it.

4   Move the pointer over the thumbnail until you see the yellow airplane.

This image will make a better representative frame than the blue water.

5   Right-click the thumbnail, and in the menu, choose Set Poster Frame or press Command-P (macOS) or Ctrl-P (Windows).

Although setting appropriate poster frames can help a lot when you are searching clips, to become truly familiar with the content you are using, you should always watch each source clip. Once you complete this lesson, take time to review the clips and set poster frames for any other clips that may not currently display the best representative frame.