

# Final Cut Pro basics

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## What is Final Cut Pro?



Final Cut Pro X is a revolutionary application for creating, editing, and producing the highest-quality video. Final Cut Pro combines high-performance digital editing and native support for virtually any video format with easy-to-use and time-saving features that let you focus on storytelling.

In Final Cut Pro, you can:

- Edit everything from uncompressed standard-definition video to HDV, DVCPRO HD, and uncompressed high-definition video—as well as file-based formats such as AVC-Intra, AVCHD, and XDCAM HD.
- Play back and skim resolution-independent media up to 4K resolution. You can also play your video full screen or on a second display.
- Assemble clips with ease using the Magnetic Timeline, which fluidly adjusts clips around the clip you're dragging to eliminate gaps, collisions, and sync problems.
- Edit quickly with the complete set of professional editing and trimming tools. Fine-tune edits with the inline Precision Editor.
- Have Final Cut Pro analyze your video and nondestructively fix common problems such as camera shake, excess hum, or loudness. You can also have Final Cut Pro detect the presence of people or the shot type, and automatically apply keywords such as One Person or Wide Shot.
- Organize your media using Keyword Collections, which automatically group clips based on keywords, and Smart Collections, which automatically group clips based on criteria you specify.
- Try out clips in your project using auditions—sets of alternate takes, effects, or text treatments—and then choose the best clip for the edit.
- Create compound clips to group any combination of clips, and nest clips within other clips.

- Use connected clips and storylines to add cutaway shots, superimposed titles, and sound effects to your project. Connected clips and storylines always stay in sync.
- Add special effects to video, audio, and photos, and adjust them using keyframes and onscreen controls. You can also change clip speed to create fast-motion or slow-motion effects.
- Automatically balance and match color, or use the color correction tools to precisely control the look of any clip in your project.
- Publish your project directly to websites such as YouTube and Facebook, or send your project to iTunes for syncing with Apple devices such as iPhone, iPad, and Apple TV.

## Final Cut Pro workflow overview

To give you an idea of the possibilities, the overall process for putting together a movie with Final Cut Pro is described below. You don't have to do every step, and you might do others that aren't listed. The workflow isn't necessarily linear. You could, for example, go all the way through editing and adding effects, and then import more new media for your project.

### Import your media into Final Cut Pro

To use Final Cut Pro, you need to transfer your media (video, audio, and still images) from your recording device to your computer or an external disk. You can import media from many kinds of cameras and other devices, or from other applications such as iMovie.

### Organize your media

Final Cut Pro automatically organizes your imported media into Events. An Event is like a folder that contains all the media recorded on a certain date. In Final Cut Pro, your media appears as clips, which link to the media files stored on a disk. You can reorganize your clips by creating or renaming Events and moving clips between Events. For example, you could create an Event for all the media shot for a specific client.

As you review your footage, you can easily rate clips as Favorite or Rejected. These ratings make it easier to focus on your best footage. Final Cut Pro also offers other useful organizing tools, such as Keyword Collections and Smart Collections.

### Create a project and add clips to it

Your project is the movie you create using clips from your Events and from the Final Cut Pro media browsers. Start creating your movie by adding clips to the Timeline. You make all your edits in the project; your original media files remain untouched (this is known as *nondestructive editing*).

### Arrange and edit your clips

Now your movie can really begin to take shape. To assemble a rough cut, rearrange and trim clips in the Timeline. You can also try out different clips using auditions. Use connected clips and storylines to add cutaway shots, titles, background music, and sound effects to your project. Create compound clips to group any combination of clips and nest clips within other clips. You can simplify a complicated project by creating a separate compound clip for each major section.

### Add effects and transitions

Add special effects from the ample collection of video and audio effects in the Final Cut Pro media browsers. Give your movie titles and credits, and apply video or audio transitions. Adjust clip speed settings to create fast-motion or slow-motion effects.

To further polish your project, you can fine-tune cuts and transitions with the Precision Editor, keyframe video and audio effects, correct color, and composite motion graphics.

### Share your movie

When your project is finished, you can publish your movie right from Final Cut Pro to the web, or send it to iTunes, iPhone, iPad, iPod, or Apple TV. You can also burn a disc to give to others.

## Final Cut Pro interface overview

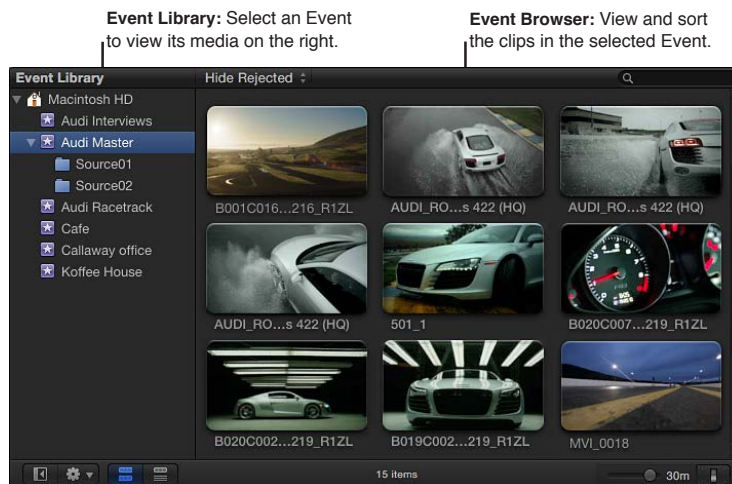
The Final Cut Pro window has three main areas:



### Organize media in the Event Library and Event Browser

All your imported media is available in the Event Library. (An Event is like a folder that contains clips.)

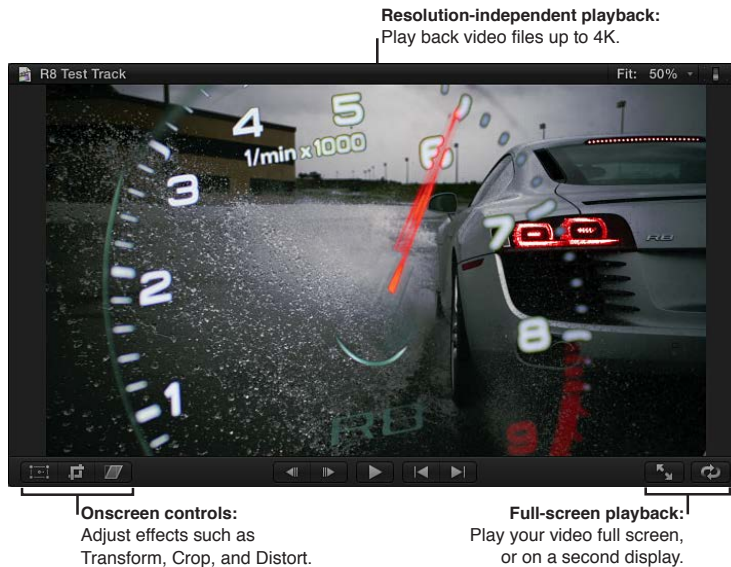
When you select an Event in the Event Library, its clips appear in the Event Browser on the right.



You can reorganize your media however you like at any time, and you can use the Event Library and the Event Browser to manage, rate, sort, and add keywords to your imported media. For more information, see [Events and clips overview](#) on page 45.

## Play back clips and projects in the Viewer

The Viewer is where you play back your video, including clips and projects with up to 4K resolution. You can play back Events, projects, or individual clips in full-screen view or on a second display. For information about ways to play media, see [Play back media](#) on page 67.

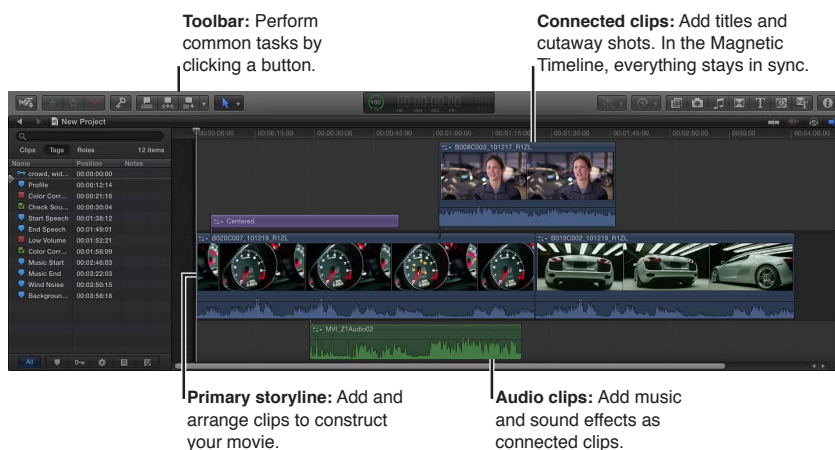


You can also use onscreen controls, superimposed over the video in the Viewer, to adjust settings for a wide array of effects and transitions.

## Edit your project in the Magnetic Timeline

The bottom portion of the Final Cut Pro window contains the Timeline, where you create your movie by adding and arranging clips and making all your edits. The Timeline in Final Cut Pro “magnetically” adjusts clips to fit around clips that you drag into place. If you drag clips out of place, the surrounding clips close up to fill the space.

A Final Cut Pro project holds all of the information for your final movie, including your editing decisions and links to all the source clips and Events. For more information about editing your project, see [Adding clips overview](#) on page 87 and [Arrange clips in the Timeline](#) on page 102.

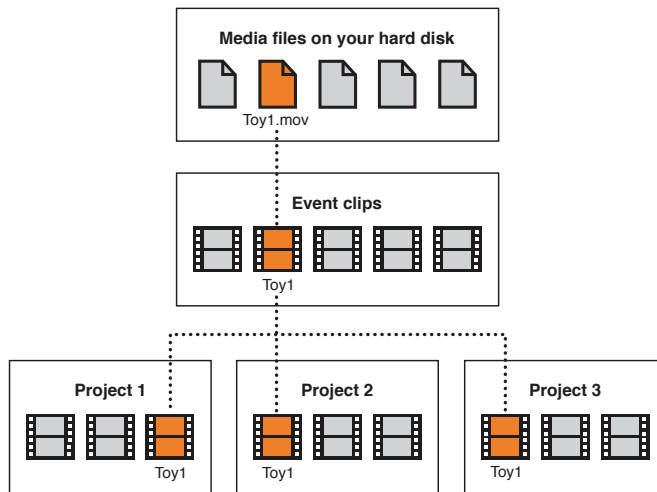


## Media files and clips

After you've imported media into Final Cut Pro, clips representing the source media files appear in the Event Browser. A large Event may hold many clips.

Media files are the raw materials you use to create your project. A media file is a video, audio, still-image, or graphics file on your hard disk that contains footage transferred from a camcorder or recording device or originally created on your computer. Media files can contain multiple video and audio components. Because media files—especially video files—tend to be quite large, projects that use a lot of footage require one or more high-capacity hard disks.

Clips represent your media, but they are not the media files themselves. The clips in a project simply point to (link to) the source media files on your hard disk. When you modify a clip, you are not modifying the media file, just the clip's information in the project. This is known as *nondestructive editing*, because all of the changes and effects you apply to clips in Final Cut Pro never affect the media itself. Trimmed or deleted pieces of clips are removed from your project only, not from the source clips in your Event Library or from the source media files on your hard disk.



## Events and projects

In Final Cut Pro X, you use Events to collect and organize media. Events are like folders that contain unedited media imported from a camera or some other source.

You use projects to edit and construct movies and share them with your audience. A project is a record of the work you do in the Timeline and the editing decisions you make. When you add a clip from an Event to a particular project, you create a link between the source Event clip and the corresponding project clip (and, by extension, between the Event and the project). However, neither the Event nor the source clip is contained within the project. You can use that Event clip in other projects, and your project can use clips from other Events.

The illustration below shows the relationship between Events and projects: Final Cut Pro X keeps track of the links between project clips and their source Event clips, but projects and Events remain independent.

