



A Crash Course in iMovie – ‘Cause That’s All You Need!

As the title implies, iMovie is an intuitive, easy-to-learn application for editing digital video. This handout primarily covers the technical ‘how tos’ of using iMovie, but whenever possible, we offer artistic tips about video editing as well.

Topics covered in this handout include:

- Introduction to iMovie
- How to import video
- How to edit video – video, audio, effects, transitions
- How to export video either to a QuickTime movie or to a DVD

Note that Apple has an excellent support center that includes QuickTime demonstration movies for using iMovie. <http://www.apple.com/support/imovie>

The Big Picture

Here are the steps a nutshell:

1. Bring your video into iMovie.
2. Edit your video in iMovie.
3. Choose an output format:
 - a. QuickTime movie for playing on the web
 - b. iMovie movie to play only on your MAC
 - c. DVD to play on a DVD player

Note: These steps are true for all video projects, and will work on a PC provided you have the equivalent PC-based software and hardware requirements. iMovie is MAC only.

Getting Started

What hardware and software do I need?

- A Macintosh **computer** with iMovie installed. iMovie is usually preinstalled on all MAC’s running OS X. However, it can be purchased from www.apple.com as a part of the iLife suite of products.
- A **firewire cable** to connect your video camera to the MAC. These cables are available for purchase from any computer supply store.
- The MAC should have at least 2 GB of available **memory**. Why? Each second of full video is equal to approximately 30 pictures, which makes video files HUGE. This means that you cannot store them on a network server. You must work locally on your own computer.

Video Production Basics

Video has three components:

- Preproduction – Planning and storyboarding your video.
- Production – Shooting your raw (unedited) video footage.
- Post production – Editing and distribution of your video.

iMovie is a digital editing application used during post-production. Digital editing is a lot like word-processing. You use it to cut and paste and video clips and if you make a mistake, you can delete the mistake easily and redo it. Post-production can't fix production problems, however, so here are some quick production tips:

- Plan your production and shooting carefully. When shooting, make sure you shoot a variety of shots of your subject matter including: long shots (LS) showing the entire scene you are shooting, medium shots (MS); showing just the person/subject being shot; and close-up shots (CU) showing details of faces and action. Also, be sure to shoot additional scenery footage of surrounding area and details. You will find these useful during editing.
- Don't zoom a lot while shooting. Zooms are hard to edit.
- If panning (left and right camera movement), try to keep the pan speed consistent.
- Bad audio ruins good video. Try to use an external microphone during recording or keep close to the audio source if using an in-camera microphone.
- Editing always takes longer than you think. Editing is done in hours, not minutes, so set aside a good block of time for your editing session.

The iMovie Interface

The iMovie interface has four main sections as follows (and pictured below):

- **Movie Display** – When you connect your digital video camera to the MAC, your movie will appear within this window.
- **Clip Gallery** – After connecting and viewing your movie in iMovie, you can then begin the process of importing segments or “clips” of footage. These clips will sit within the gallery for use later.
- **Controls** – These VCR-like controls allow you to manipulate the video on your camera and the import the clips within iMovie.
- **Clip Viewer** – Click and drag clips from the Clip Gallery to the Viewer to begin building your movie.

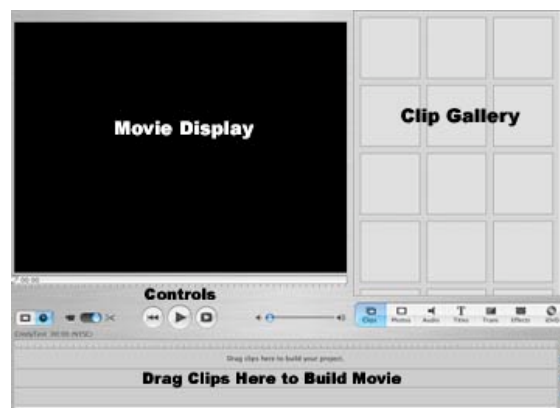


Figure: The iMovie Interface

Importing Digital Video Into iMovie

Step One: Open iMovie

1. From the Dock, click once onto iMovie to open it.
2. Start a new Project. Go to **File → New Project**. Enter a name for your project and designate a location for it on the MAC hard drive.

Step Two: Connect your Camera to the MAC Using a Firewire Cable

1. Using a firewire cable, attach the camera to the back of the MAC.
2. Look at the cable, and note the difference between the 4-pin (smaller) and 6-pin ends (larger). Refer to the figures below.
3. Plug the 4-pin end of the cable into the camera. Plug the 6-pin end into the firewire port on the rear of the MAC.

Figure: The Firewire symbol.

- Look for this mark on the back of your MAC.
- Plug the 6-pin end of the firewire cable into this port.

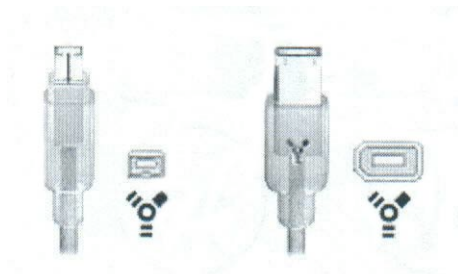


Figure: The two ends of a firewire cable. 4-pin (left) and 6-pin (right).



Figure: Connecting the 4-pin end to your camera, and the 6-pin end to the MAC.

Step Three: Set up Video Import Preferences.

1. In iMovie, select **iMovie** → **Preferences**. Select the following options:

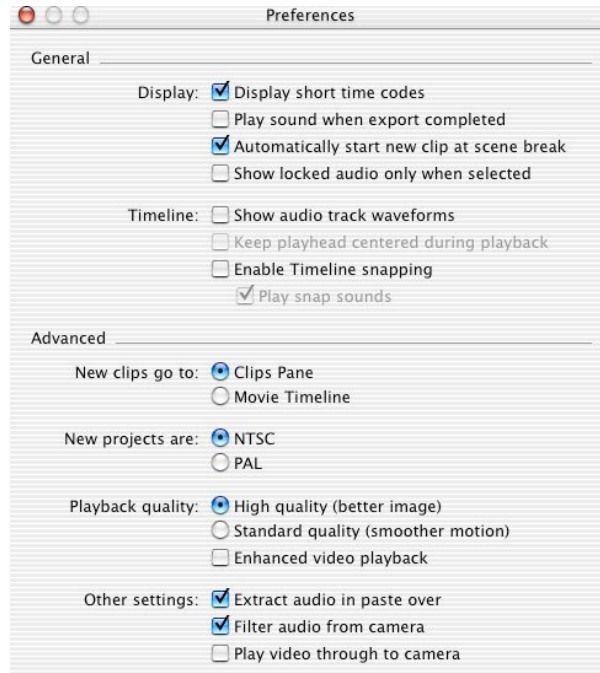


Figure: Setting Up Import Preferences iMovie.

2. On your video camera, switch to digital video mode so that you can feed digital video into the MAC.
3. Once the connection has been made, iMovie will display the message “Camera Connected.”

Step Four: Import Video Clips into iMovie

Now that iMovie and your camera are connected, you can begin importing sections of video or your entire video into iMovie. iMovie will automatically separate your movie into segments called “clips”.

1. VCR-like controls now appear for you to use (see image below).



Figure: The “VCR” options that appear in iMovie when a camera is connected.

2. Play back your movie. Use the VCR style buttons underneath the movie screen area. You have the option of rewinding, stopping, playing, pausing, and fast forwarding.

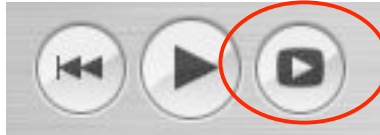


Figure: Selecting the “Play in Full Screen” option in iMovie (circled above).

3. Import the portions of video you want or the entire video.
 - a. Click “Import” to import a section of video.
 - b. Click “Import” again to stop.
 - c. Note: If you want to import the entire movie, click Import once and click it again once the end of the movie is reached.
4. Repeat this process until all desired clips are in iMovie.
 - a. Note: To obtain information about clip size:
 - Click once onto the clip to select it.
 - Go to File → Show Info.
 - A small window opens displaying the name and size of your selected clip.

Work with Clips to Build Your Basic Story

Now you want to put your clips together and begin telling your story. You can do this by dragging or copying clips to the Clip Viewer. Try to keep them in chronological order for now; you can always change them later.

- Select a clip from the Clip Gallery and drag it to the Clip Viewer area.
- To copy clips, hold down the option key and drag the clip.
- To drag multiple clips, shift click to highlight more than one clip, then drag them.
- Save your movie.

Edit Mode: Editing Your Clips

- To begin editing your clips, switch from Clip Viewer mode to Timeline mode using the following button:



Figure: Switch from Clip Viewer Mode to Timeline Mode

- You will now see your clips in a video track, above two (empty) audio tracks (see below). Note the presence of the playback head (circled).

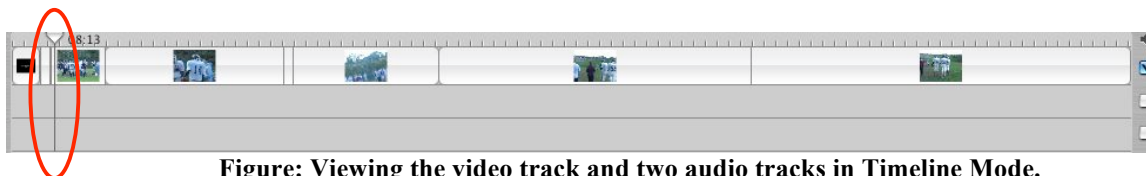


Figure: Viewing the video track and two audio tracks in Timeline Mode.

- You can expand or contract your timeline if desired using the “Zoom” sliding scale and the bottom left of the screen.

- You can slow down the movie preview by using the “Speed” track along the bottom middle portion of the timeline. Note that the speed ranges from Turtle to Rabbit speed.
- You can delete clips just as you would in a word processing program. Highlight the clip in the timeline and click on the delete key.
- Save your movie.

Edit Mode: Adding Transitions between your Clips

You’ll probably want to add transition to fade up the movie opening and fade down the ending. You can use other transitions between clips but *be careful*; transitions have a way of becoming outdated quickly (remember those old 1960’s music videos??). Most editors rely on cuts and cross-dissolves whenever possible. Cuts, which really are no transition at all, indicate immediate action, so they are best used for dialog and action scenes. Cross-dissolves, where one scene gradually fades into another, indicate slow time passage, so they are good for mood enhancement and artistic effects (think ballet, not football).

To add a transition, do the following:

- Place your playback head between two clips.
- Click on Transitions Menu button.
- Select a transition (carefully!)
- Preview it if desired by clicking on the preview button.
- Drag transition to timeline.
- Now WAIT. Transitions, effects and titles can take a while to render and if you ask iMovie to do another task too suddenly, it might crash. Zooming in on the timeline helps you to see the rendering of your transition, an expanding red line superimposed on the clip.
- Save your movie.

Edit Mode – Adding and Editing Audio Media Clips

Adding Audio works the same way – Typically, video productions use three audio tracks; one for ambient sound recorded in the field, one for narration or voiceover, and one for mood enhancement with music, often called music under because it is under the narration. iMovie provides three audio tracks for these three types of audio. The ambient track is included in the video track but it can be extracted and placed on a different track.

Switch from “Clip Viewer” mode to “Timeline Viewer” mode to display the audio tracks.

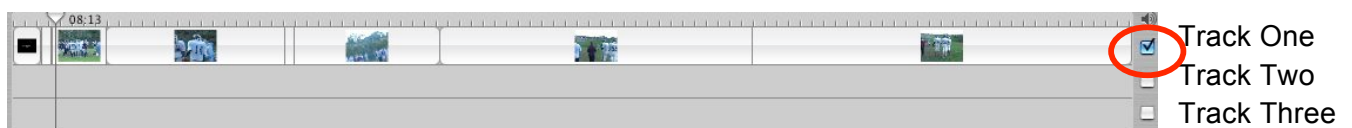


Figure: Viewing the audio tracks in the timeline.

There are three audio tracks, two of which are empty. First add your audio clips, and then adjust volume. Track one has ambient sound, recorded during your actual shooting in the field. Use track two to add narration and use track three to music or sound affects. You can listen to one or more by selecting it (see circle above).

Add audio to tracks two and three as required by your project.

Ambient audio on track one: This is the ambient sound originally recorded with your video footage. Ambient sound adds authenticity to your video.

Add narration or voiceover to track two: Use this track to add a voice narration if you wish.

- Make sure you have audio editing selected.
- Click on the audio menu button.
- Place playback head where you want the narration to begin in track two.
- Click on the record button and speak. By default, it will only record on audio track two, but you can drag it to another track afterwards. It's generally good to keep tracks consistent, keeping narration on one track, music on the other, etc. rather than mixing them up on one track.
- Save your movie.

Add music or sound effects to track three: Use this track to add prerecorded audio from CD, from your sound effects library or from the iTunes Library.

- Place the playback where you want the audio to begin.
- Select the media clip from whatever media library you are using.
- Drag media clip to track three in your timeline (or two if you aren't doing a narration).
 - NOTE: Some music options (e.g. iTunes Library) will not be available for use if there are no music files available. Add your music to your iTunes Library *before* you start editing.
- Save your movie.

Edit volume. To modify volume on each track, you must first select the Edit Volume Control tool. (You may have to move your dock if it is in the way.) A thin line appears on each audio track. This is your volume. You can click on this line and drag it up or down to increase or decrease the volume. You can also edit overall volume using the slider bar (see figure below).



Figure: Edit Volume Control

Carefully listen to all three tracks to make sure they aren't competing with one another. If they are, adjust volume in the individual tracks so you can hear one dominant track (e.g., narration) without being distracted by the others. You can lower the volume of any of three audio tracks by selecting the desired track and dragging it either higher or lower in respect to the other tracks.

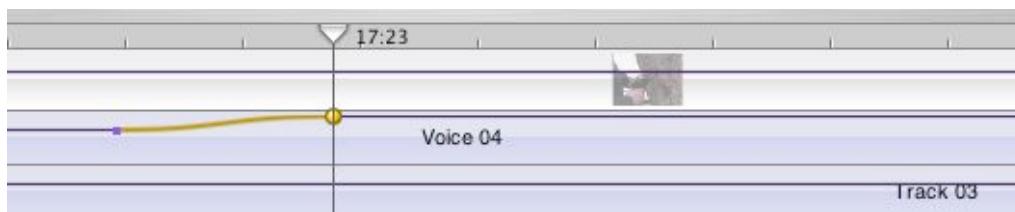


Figure: Editing Audio Volume

Edit Mode – Adding Effects

You can add effects to all or parts of your video but again, don't get too carried away here. Use these judiciously unless you are creating a Science Fiction movie. Like transitions, special effects also have a way of getting outdated fast. To add an effect:

- Highlight clip.
- Click on Effects Menu button.
- Select an effect.
- Preview effect if desired by clicking on the preview button.
- Click Apply.
- Now WAIT. Transitions, effects and titles can take a while to render and if you ask iMovie to do another task too suddenly, it might crash. Zooming in on the timeline helps you to see the rendering of your effect, an expanding red line superimposed on the clip.
- Save your movie.

Edit Mode – Adding Titles

Most movies include titles and credits. Titles are placed at the beginning of the movie. Credits come at the end and have the same function as sources in a publication except that, in this case, the sources are your camera operator, audio person, etc. As with transitions and effects, simple is best. To add an effect:

- Place playback head where you want your titles to begin.
- Click on Titles Menu button.
- Select the effect for title entry on to the screen – tumble, fade, etc.
- Select font type and replace the sample text, 'My Great Movie', with your text.
- Change font size using the slider control.
- Preview titles if desired by clicking on the preview button.
- Drag title effect to timeline.
- Now WAIT. Transitions, effects and titles can take a while to render and if you ask iMovie to do another task too suddenly, it might crash. Expanding the timeline helps you to see the rendering of your effect, an expanding red line superimposed on the clip.
- Save your movie.

Edit Mode – Adding Bookmarks

As you edit, you can bookmark scenes or moments you like. These can be useful markers for Chapters or Scenes when you are burning your video to DVD.

To add a bookmark, do as follows:

1. Move the playback head to the spot where you want the bookmark.
2. Select **Bookmark** → **Add Bookmark**. A bookmark will now appear as a green, diamond-shaped object along the top of the timeline (see below).



Figure: The Bookmark “diamond” symbol above the timeline.

Finishing Up: Export your Show

Now that you have finished creating your movie, you can choose the output options for it. If you have a DVD burner on your MAC along with the iDVD software (optional part of the iLife suite of products), you can create your own DVD movie for use on a DVD player. Your other option is to compress your finished video into a QuickTime movie. As long as you have the QuickTime player (a free plug in available from www.apple.com) you will be able to share your movie with others.

Burning to DVD

Creating a DVD, Option 1

Be forewarned, burning your movie might take a long time. Before you send your movie along to iDVD, you might want to add chapter titles to sections of your movie. You can do this within iDVD itself or you can use iMovie.

To add DVD chapter titles in iMovie;

1. Select the “iDVD” icon from the Clips Panel.
2. Move the playback head to the place where you want to insert a chapter.
3. Click onto “Add Chapter” from the Clips Panel to add a Chapter to your movie.
4. When you have finished adding chapter titles, select “Create iDVD Project” to send your movie to iDVD.

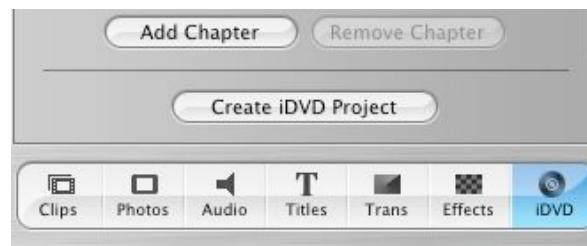


Figure: Selecting the iDVD icon from the Clips Panel.

Creating a DVD, Option 2

To begin creating a DVD, do as follows:

1. Select **File** → **Share**
2. A small window will appear. Select the “iDVD” icon in the top portion of the window.



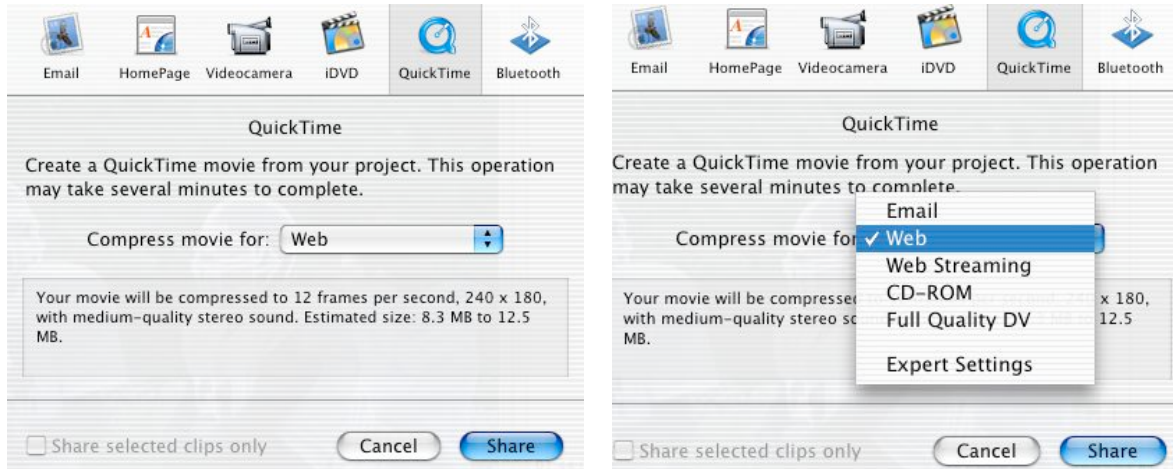
Figure: Creating an iDVD project.

- iDVD will open. For instructions on how to use iDVD, refer to Apple's iDVD tutorials located at <http://www.apple.com/support/iddvd/>. Tutorials are offered, in HTML, PDF or QuickTime Movie format.

Creating a QuickTime Movie

To create a QuickTime movie, do as follows:

- Select **File** → **Share**.
- A small window opens. Select "QuickTime" and choose your options (see below).



- Select your desired output format (Email, Web, Web Streaming, CD-ROM, or Full Quality Digital Video).
- Click **Share**. Choose a place to save your QuickTime movie.

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