

Video Editing Made Easy

By Gary Hendricks

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Table Of Contents

Introduction.....	4
1. What You'll Need.....	5
1.1 A Digital Camcorder.....	5
1.2 A Video Editing Software Program.....	6
1.2.1 Programs For Beginners.....	6
1.2.2 Programs For Intermediate Level Users.....	8
1.2.3 Programs For Advanced Users.....	10
1.3 A Video Editing Computer.....	12
2. Overview Of The Video Editing Process.....	13
3. Step 1: Capture Your Footage.....	16
3.1 Get A Good Camcorder And Learn Its Features.....	16
3.2 Learn How To Shoot Good Video.....	16
3.2.1 Avoid Zooming In and Out Too Much.....	16
3.2.2 Where Are You?.....	17
3.2.3 Lighting, lighting, lighting.....	17
4. Step 2: Edit Your Footage.....	19
4.1 Import Your Video.....	19
4.2 Locate Important Parts Of Your Video.....	20
4.3 Trim Out Unwanted Video Footage.....	20
4.4 Preview Your Video.....	21
5. Step 3: Enhance Your Video With Effects And Titles.....	22
5.1 Apply Filters To Your Video.....	22
5.2 Add Video Effects.....	22
5.3 Add Video Titles.....	24
5.4 Add Music Soundtracks.....	25
6. Step 4: Record Your Video To DVD And Other Formats.....	26
6.1 Find A Good Video Editing Program.....	26
6.2 Decide Which Video Format To Use.....	26
6.3 Get Proper Hardware.....	27
Conclusion.....	28

Introduction

Have you always wanted to edit digital videos like a professional? They all make it seem so easy don't they?

Many beginners who want to get into video editing don't know where to start.

Most probably you'd have captured some great footage of your last vacation, family birthdays and gatherings on your nifty new digital camcorder.

The trouble is, your footage has been staying in those camcorder tapes for a long time. It's just too much trouble rewinding those tapes, doing a fast forward on parts you want to remove, and otherwise plod through the video on the small camcorder screen.

What you really need to do is to port your digital video over to disc, where you'll have random access to all its scenes. You can also use video-editing software and your PC to edit that raw footage, all the best bits into a convenient and high-quality DVD that will work in almost any video player.

But that's all easier said than done, you say. How do you get video from your camcorder to the computer? How do you then load up your video into your video editor and add effects and titles? After that, how do you burn a professional looking DVD to showcase your work? It seems impossible - you don't know where to start!

Well, the truth is, video editing is not that difficult once you understand a few basic concepts. The key thing is to understand the overall workflow when creating a digital video - capture, import, edit and burn. Once you understand the workflow, it becomes amazingly easy.

This is precisely where this eBook comes in. In this eBook, I want to show you step-by-step how you can easily capture, edit and produce professional looking videos in a short time.

If you read some of the books out in the market about editing video, you'll find that they go onto a lot of technical details about video production. Some other books talk about the super duper amazing feature in Adobe Premiere Pro which you neither need or understand.

This book is different. I want to show you JUST the steps you need to produce a great looking video. Forget about trawling through thick manuals and guidebooks. My eBook shows you how to do it - in a fraction of the time.

So without further ado, let's jump right in and start our video editing journey!

1. What You'll Need

Let's start off by looking at what you need to start video editing. Here's a list of the basic components:

- A digital camcorder
- A video editing software program
- A video editing computer

1.1 A Digital Camcorder

The first thing you need is a good digital camcorder. There are many camcorder types out there, including those based on tape, mini-DVD, hard drive, flash storage and SD/SDHC card.

MiniDV tape camcorders are considered older equipment, but they are easy to archive and cheaper than Mini-DVD or storage-based models. Mini-DVD camcorders are also popular and allow you to just take the disc out of the camcorder and load the footage straight into a DVD set-top player.

Hard-drive and flash-drive camcorders are tapeless and DVD-less and are the wave of the future and are quite speedy and light compared to MiniDV and Mini-DVD camcorders.

SD and SDHC card camcorders are also interesting – just pop the memory card out of your camcorder and transfer footage without hooking up the camera itself.

In general, when buying a digital camcorder, try to go for a model you can comfortably handle in one hand, yet has the proper essential features to make your video editing task easier (e.g. Firewire support).

Also, remember these other shopping tips:

- Try to check out the LCD screen in daylight, if possible.
- Look at the lens's optical zoom ratio instead of the digital zoom ratio.
- Buy an extra, higher-capacity battery for longer recording times
- Try out the camera's controls before you buy.

1.2 A Video Editing Software Program

One of the most important items you'll need I. Your video editing adventure is a good video editing software program.

The market is full of video editing software packages you can choose from. For the uninitiated, the vast array of choices can simply be overwhelming.

Let's take a look at some of the more popular video editing programs out there I'll split them out into three categories - programs for the beginner, intermediate level user as well as those for advanced users.

1.2.1 Programs For Beginners

Under this category, we're looking at programs such as muvee Reveal, Roxio Creator, along with CyberLink PowerDirector. These programs are highly "automated", meaning that once you port your video into the program, the software will automatically detect transitions between video scenes and apply some standard effects and templates. The program then allows you to quickly burn a DVD with a few clicks, usually driven by a wizard style interface.

While these programs are good for beginners and can produce a DVD video very quickly, they lack the some essential video editing features found in the better video editing packages. For example, if you wanted an in-depth catalog of screen titles to choose from, it is unlikely these beginner level packages can provide them.

muvee Reveal

muvee Reveal is an award-winning video editing software that's great for beginners. You can choose from over 100 styles to personalize your home video production. Simply add your photos and video, then use the simple user interface to quickly create the video you want.

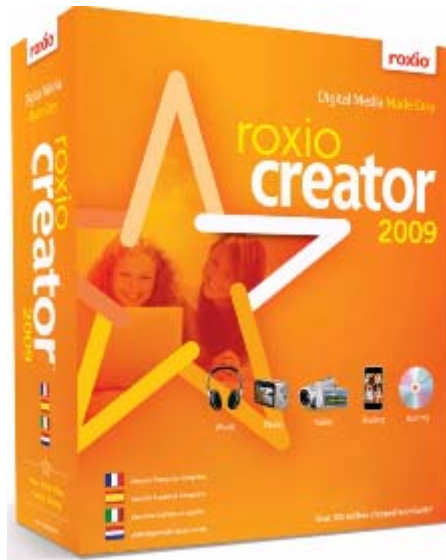


A box shot of muvee Reveal

Of course, don't expect too many advanced level functions in the package. What muvee does very well is to quickly put together a video based on the style you select with a minimum amount of effort. Simply pick your photos and video, select a style, and let it automatically create and synchronize a movie to the beat of your music

Roxio Creator

Roxio Creator is a massive suite of applications that covers nearly everything you can do with or to CDs and DVDs and their photo, audio, data, or video contents. Burning, backing up, transcoding video, editing audio--you name it, Creator does it.



A box shot of Roxio Creator

CyberLink PowerDirector

CyberLink PowerDirector offers many video enhancement and editing tools, designer tools and more timeline tracks to let you create great videos.



A screenshot of CyberLink PowerDirector

You can spice up your projects too by downloading any of the 1000s of free effects and templates already uploaded and shared by other PowerDirector users.

1.2.2 Programs For Intermediate Level Users

Under this category, we have programs such as Adobe's Premiere Elements and Pinnacle Studio Plus and Corel VideoStudio. These intermediate level packages provide a good balance of quick, user-friendly features to ease users into the program. However, they also include some solid video editing options for users who want to be a bit more adventurous in their work. The other good thing about these packages is their price - most of them are very affordable, costing less than \$100 each.

Adobe Premiere Elements

Adobe's Premiere Elements is the most powerful of the three, with a sophisticated interface that will appeal to both novices and experienced home-video editors. It also provides a great collection of special effects.



Adobe Premiere Elements 7

Corel VideoStudio

Corel's VideoStudio offers a feature called the Auto Music Maker, which generates a musical track – in a number of styles – that exactly matches the length of your movie. Some might be a bit sceptical about such a feature but with a large library of generally well-done musical samples, there's a good chance that one or more will match up nicely with your video's content. Of course, you may just want to capture 'real' music from your favorite music CDs, which is easy to do in all editors as well.



A box shot of Corel VideoStudio

Pinnacle's Studio Plus

Pinnacle's Studio Plus is quite straightforward and you can likely get it to work just by glancing over its menus and some self-explanatory buttons and tool icons. This kind of intuitive design is especially important if you plan to edit video infrequently, as it spares you from repeatedly relearning the application's process and tools. In addition, all three apps can export to DVD (or create Web movies).



A box shot of Pinnacle Studio Plus

1.2.3 Programs For Advanced Users

Let's take a look at some of the video editing programs suitable for advanced level users. These packages include well known names like Adobe Premiere Pro, Avid's Xpress DV and Sony's Vegas 5. These programs are industrial strength tools, with complicated user interfaces used to edit everything from wedding videos to documentaries and even feature films.

While these packages contain almost all the features you'd want in a video editor, they aren't really suitable for casual videographers. My take is that you can always grow into these heavy-hitter applications later. When you're starting off, it's best to use a beginner or intermediate level package. Besides, the professional packages like Adobe Premiere Pro don't come cheap - they usually cost hundreds of dollars.

Adobe Premiere Pro

The industrial standard for video editing software, Adobe Premiere Pro is the start-to-finish solution for video production that includes Adobe OnLocation CS4 and Encore CS4 software. You can save time with a tapeless workflow, project intelligence with new XMP metadata support, dozens of editing enhancements, and tight integration with other Adobe software.



A box shot of Adobe Premiere Pro CS3

Avid Xpress DV

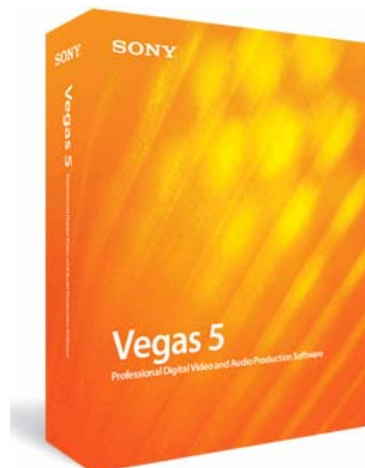
Avid Xpress DV is a real-time DV studio featuring more customizable real-time effects than any other product in its class. It combines legendary Avid ease of use with the powerful tools that continue to define the editing industry. With Windows and Macintosh versions for one low price, Avid Xpress DV is perfect for anyone who wants to explore the exciting world of digital video.



A screenshot from Avid Express DV

Sony Vegas 5

Sony Vegas 5 has many new features and has really come a long way from its earlier incarnations. If you are looking for a professional video editing program which is competitively priced and yet gives you tremendous control over your workflow, then this is the product to consider. You can get real creative control without having to add in compositing programs and audio tools.



A box shot of Sony Vegas 5

1.3 A Video Editing Computer

One of the other things you will need in the video editing process is a good personal computer. Now, this PC need not be a top of the line machine, but it does need to be pretty fast.

How fast is fast for video editing? Based on my experience, I'd say you need at least an Intel Pentium Dual Core processor, or an Athlon equivalent. For best results, a CPU running at 2.0 GHz or above is preferred.

Another important component of your video editing computer is its RAM. I'd say that a minimum of 2 GB of RAM is required to run good video editors like Adobe Premiere Elements, Corel VideoStudio and Pinnacle Studio Plus smoothly. Professional, heavy duty video editors like Adobe Premiere Pro like require even more powerful computer specs.

For the operating system, its best to run either the latest Windows 7 operating system or Windows Vista. These have better multimedia support than previous versions of Windows and will make your video editing work much easier.

You will also want to have a good hard drive with ample space to hold your digital video files - a minimum of 200 GB in that hard disk drive should be sufficient.

Another component you should have in your video editing computer is Firewire support. Most digital camcorders these days provide a Firewire cable connection to a PC, making it much easier and faster to transfer video over for editing.

Another useful thing is a card reader slot in your PC – especially if you intend to use a SD or SDHC card camcorder.

In addition, you will need a rewritable DVD drive if you want to record your movies to DVDs.

A large monitor is a nice-to-have, though not absolutely critical. It just helps to have a nice, crisp display to view your digital videos on.

Another thing – some users might be Mac instead of PC users. For your information, I find that Macs are much better machines for video editing, simply because they have all the hardware (powerful CPUs, ample RAM, lots of disk space, Firewire support) and software (Apple iMovie) bundled together in one package. Some folks, of course, still prefer a PC as opposed to a Mac platform. PCs are generally still cheaper than Macs and have more options in terms of software – it's all really a matter of personal preference.

2. Overview Of The Video Editing Process

Let's take a look how the entire video editing process flow works. As shown in the diagram below, there are always 4 steps required to produce a video from start to finish:

Step 1: Capture Your Footage

Armed with your trusty camcorder, the first thing you need to do to produce a video is obviously to capture good footage. How do you do that? Well, there are a few things to take note of.

The first is that you need a good camcorder. Go for a model you can comfortably handle in one hand, yet has the proper essential features to make your video editing task easier (e.g. Firewire support). Also, learn all you can about what it can do.

The second thing is to learn how to shoot good video - I've written a [good tutorial](#) on how to do this.

The third thing is to prepare for the video shoot. For example, if you're shooting a wedding video, you'd better go in prepared with a list of the type of shots you want to take. If you're photographing a birthday event, do you have the proper lighting and birthday cake ready? Things like these matter and make the difference between a good video and a bad one.

Step 2: Edit Your Footage

The next step in the video editing workflow is to edit your footage. You need to import your video into your PC, usually through a Firewire connection and Firewire card.

From there, there are three things you should always remember when editing a video. The first is to locate important sections of the video you want to keep. For example, in a wedding video, the part where the bridegroom exchanges the wedding ring with the bride is a must-have section. In a holiday video to Paris, a shot of the Eiffel Tower is obviously another must-have. Locate these critical bits of video and make sure they are present in the video.

The second thing to do is to chop off any unwanted parts of the video. With the important sections of your footage identified, the next thing to do is to eliminate extraneous video footage. I'm talking about things like the video camera shooting the inside of your video bag, or bad shots of somebody's face. Modern video editing programs make this a breeze by allowing you to zoom in on specific portions of the video timeline, marking and deleting what you don't need.

Once you located the critical portions of your video, eliminated the unwanted video footage, then you can proceed to preview the footage in our video. Tools like Adobe Premiere Elements makes this simple by rendering your video in preview windows

for your analysis.

Step 3: Enhance Your Video With Effects, Titles and Music

All right, with the video edited and firmed up, it's time for some fun with effects and titles. When it comes to effects, you need to add stuff like transition effects (what happens when one video scene cuts to another), music soundtracks and also special styles like old-film effects.

Most video editors come with built-in effects you can sample and they are actually quite good. Video titles are also another portion which is essential - make sure you label the video with a proper introduction at the start and credits at the end. In between, you can add titles to certain scenes as needed.

For example, if you're doing a video interview, make sure you include the name and title of the person you're interviewing. If you're travelling to Thailand for a holiday, then you can cut to a title screen that says "*3 Days of Fun in Thailand*". You catch my drift?

Step 4: Record Your Video to DVD and Other Formats

The last step in the video editing process is to record your video to DVD or other formats.

Couple of points to note here. The first is that you should find a good video editor that allows you to create DVDs and has good DVD menu templates to choose from. It's tough to do DVD menus from scratch, so always look for a video editor that can do it for you. The usual mid-level packages like Adobe Premiere Elements, Corel VideoStudio and Pinnacle Studio Plus all can do this.

The second thing to remember is that DVDs are still the best format for sharing your videos with others. They are easy to transport around, usually play in most DVD players and last for a very long time. While you can post videos online these days (e.g. to YouTube) - these tend to sacrifice quality in the video due to bandwidth restrictions.

Finally, the last thing to remember about recording your DVD is that you should get good hardware - both the DVD burner and the DVD media itself. I once used a cheap unbranded DVD disc to burn an important video of an event - the output came out very choppy due to the disc quality. So make sure you invest in a good DVD burner and discs.

Now one more thing. For the purposes of our eBook, I'm going to assume you're using Adobe Premiere Elements. This is usually very affordable and provides you with a more full-featured editing capabilities, special effects, titling, and the ability to burn a DVD right from the software.

What's also very good about Adobe Premiere Elements is that if you eventually want to make the leap and start using Adobe's professional package (Adobe Premiere Pro), all the tips and tricks you learnt and applied in Premiere Elements can be directly brought over. The user interface of both programs are also very similar, making the transition from one to the other quite seamless.

Of course, other software packages are also suitable for editing your video. These include Corel VideoStudio and Pinnacle Studio Plus which are powerful editing programs in their own right. They can do mostly whatever Adobe Premiere Elements can do.

And there you have it, a good overview of the entire video editing process. The next few sections will zoom in on each of these steps described above so you gain a better understanding of what's entailed.

3. Step 1: Capture Your Footage

The first step in creating a video is obviously to capture your footage. There are a few things we need to discuss here:

- Get a good camcorder and learn its features
- Learn how to shoot good video
- Prepare for the video shoot

3.1 Get A Good Camcorder And Learn Its Features

The first thing I always, always tell my readers is this: get a good camcorder, then learn about its features. This is SO important but often disregarded by beginner digital video enthusiasts.

Most people do a good job in buying a good camcorder - they often go for the best models out there. But they then fail to learn how those camcorders work, severely limiting their ability to shoot good video. The modern digital camcorder, be it from Sony, Canon, Panasonic, etc. has a whole host of features ranging from night shots, digital imaging, zoom technology, auto and manual focus, different built-in scene modes and even video editing functions.

To be a good videographer, you need to know these features in your camcorder inside out. Especially the basic features like recording, playback and video previews. I don't know how many poorly captured videos I've seen that can be improved simply by turning on a special function in the camcorders.

3.2 Learn How To Shoot Good Video

The second thing is to learn how to shoot good video in general. How often do you shoot a video, and only later do you realize that the video footage was too dark, or the video quality was terrible. Usually, you can never re-shoot that video as the happy moments are now gone. The best way of avoiding these problems is to learn some basic video shooting skills. You need not learn complex cinematography or directorial skills, of course. But you should have some fundamental knowledge of what goes into a good video shoot and doesn't.

Here are a few examples:

3.2.1 Avoid Zooming In and Out Too Much

Many digital camcorders come with a super duper 1000X zoom in and zoom out feature. This is a good thing, but the problem is, many people get carried away. I've seen countless videos which keep zooming in and out during the shoot - they generally succeed in giving me a bad headache. Use the zoom in and out feature sparingly. Even if you must use it, do it slowly. A slow, well-controlled zoom is much

more professional looking than a quick zoom. Another tip is to restrict the usage of the zoom in between scenes.

3.2.2 Where Are You?

One tip that I've picked up while shooting family vacations is to always, always look for a landmark, a sign or natural monument that tells the audience where you are. Do you notice the professionals do this as well? For example, in the movies, you may see the camera zooming in on the Statue of Liberty first, before cutting to a scene that happens within. Or there is a shot of the White House before the director cuts into a scene within the Oval Room. Another tip is to make the people you're filming talk or smile. This makes the whole video much more lively and interesting.

3.2.3 Lighting, lighting, lighting

Of all the factors listed here, nothing spoils a video shoot as much as poor lighting. I've seen many innovative videos marred by poor lighting. One important tip is to shoot video with the light source behind you, shining on the subject. An example is an outdoor shot where the sun is shining. Make sure the sun shines on your subject and not on your camera lens! Another tip is to use the camera's backlight feature if there is one. It allows you to compensate for overly bright light.

I've written up a [full tutorial](#) on shooting good video here. You should definitely check it out.

Ok, the last item to remember about capturing your footage is to prepare in advance for it. Here are some examples of what I mean.

If you're shooting a wedding video, then you should prepare well ahead of time by researching the kinds of shots you want to take. These can include:

- The reception area for the wedding
- The couple entering the church
- The couple exchanging rings
- The first dance
- The speeches made by the couple or the family members

If you're on holiday, try to plan ahead of time and think about:

- Shots showing where you have been in the trip, e.g. these could be road signs or entrances to buildings which show up in the video footage you capture.
- Think of shots where you can show your friends and family enjoying themselves, e.g. If you're in Disneyland, then shots of the kids having rides would turn out fabulous in the footage.
- If you are doing an interview, then you have to have a question list ready so that the interview goes ahead without hiccups.

These are just some examples of preparing well ahead of time for your video shots. I'm sure you can think many other examples – remember to apply this knowledge the

next time you're out and about shooting some video clips.

And there you have it, a good synopsis of how to properly capture video footage. In the next section, we'll take a look at how to edit your video.

4. Step 2: Edit Your Footage

The next step in the video workflow is to edit your footage. For our purposes, I am going to assume we are using Adobe Premiere Elements, although competing packages like Corel VideoStudio and Pinnacle Studio Plus can do the same job in a very similar fashion.

Let's see what we need to cover:

- Import your video
- Locate the important parts of your video
- Trim out unwanted video footage
- Preview your video

4.1 Import Your Video

The very first thing we do is to move the digital video from your camcorder into your computer's hard drive.

Here's what you need to do. Connect your PC and camcorder with a FireWire cable, turn the camcorder on, and open your video editing software.

Your video editing program (Adobe Premiere Elements in our case) should have no problems recognizing the camera automatically.

Once the camera is detected, select from the menu the capture command. In Adobe Premiere Elements this opens up a window containing VCR-like controls for playing, stopping, fast-forwarding, and rewinding. Press the record button to import video from the camera into the PC.



The main Adobe Premiere Elements screen

Allow your digital video to be copied over. This may take a while, so go have a cup of coffee while you wait. Once it is completely imported, make sure you give your video clip a name that will remind you of their content.

4.2 Locate Important Parts Of Your Video

Ok, after importing your video, the next thing you need to do is to locate important bits of your video. Adobe Premiere Elements has a good timeline display that allows you to easily view the clips in your imported footage.

Here are some tips on locating and keeping important bits of footage.

Firstly, any scenes which describe where you are should be kept. For example, a road sign or the name of a building is a useful video clip to retain as it sets the context of where you are.

Next, important parts of an event, e.g. your child blowing out his birthday candles, or the wedding couple exchanging rings, should always be retained as important footage.

Finally, you should also consider keeping parts of your video footage bring out the 'mood' of an event. For example, if there are ambient sounds like birds chirping or a choir singing, I think of these as good pieces of footage for setting the tone and mood of your video.

4.3 Trim Out Unwanted Video Footage

Having located the important parts of your footage, you now need to trim out the unwanted parts.

The good thing about Adobe Premiere Elements is the way the software shows the frame-by-frame sequence of your footage. Select each clip in turn and set the "in" and "out" points. These are the frames that mark where each video clip begins and ends. By setting these points, you're trimming the tops and tails from your clips to remove unwanted pieces. Other video editors (e.g. Corel VideoStudio and Pinnacle Studio Plus) also have a timeline and the concept of trimming video using "in" and "out" points.

Some thoughts about unwanted footage. Most unwanted footage like the inside of your camcorder bag, or blacked out video clips should be removed. Less obvious would be those parts where the same scene remains for a long time. Remember that viewers of your video are probably strapped for time. Don't give them long, uninterrupted video clips showing nothing much. They'd be bored to death!

4.4 Preview Your Video

Alright, we're almost there. The next thing to do is to preview your trimmed video. Adobe Premiere Elements makes this simple by rendering your video in preview windows for your analysis.

When previewing the video, check for bits where you still find extraneous footage or anything that doesn't fit in with the overall video flow. It's best to detect these now before you finalize the video for burning into a DVD.

Right, with all that done, we now need to add effects and transitions to your video, which is the topic of the next section.

5. Step 3: Enhance Your Video With Effects And Titles

The next step in the video workflow is to edit your footage. For our purposes, I am Ok, moving right along. After your the most important footage has been located, your video trimmed down and unwanted footage eliminated, it's time to have some fun!

We're talking about doing the following to your video:

- Apply some filters to your video
- Adding video effects like old film effects and also fast / slow motion effects
- Adding video titles to the beginning and ending of your video production, as well as specific captions to scenes of interest
- Adding music soundtracks to enhance your video

5.1 Apply Filters To Your Video

Let's first discuss filters on your video. You'll usually want to tweak at least a few of your clips to give the whole group a more consistent appearance. For example, you might find that some clips are brighter or more colorful than others. In Adobe Premiere Elements, you can use filters that allow you to adjust a scene's brightness, contrast, and color balance. Do note, however, there's a limit to how finely you can polish poorly lit or jerky footage (which is why you need to learn to shoot good raw footage in the first place).

5.2 Add Video Effects

Next, let's talk about the first kinds of effects you can introduce to a digital video. One of them is the old film effect - similar to the types you see in old Hollywood movies. These effects are available in Adobe Premiere Elements out-of-the-box and there are multiple variations too.

The other type of effect we can try is fast and slow motion. Some of the favorite effects used by movie producers are what I call the 'speed up and stop' trick.

Slow motion effects are also powerful. If you have watched the movie The Matrix, you will be familiar with 'bullet time'. It's a powerful way of spicing up an action scene.

One of my favorites is “film countdown” video effect, which shows “5”, “4”, “3”, “2”, “1” numbers flickering on the screen before the movie starts. An example is shown in the diagram below.



The “film countdown” video effect

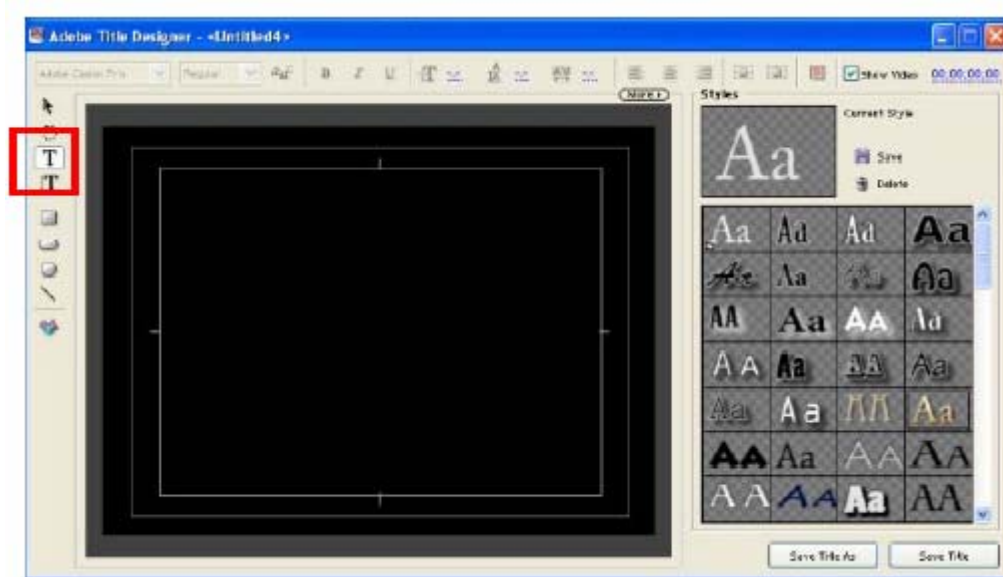
Some other effects you can explore include transitions – these can help to smooth shifts between clips, or to add dramatic impact.

Adobe Premiere Elements provides a slew of transitions and wipes which you can use. My suggestion is to keep it simple and stick to straight cuts, dissolves, and the ever-popular "fade to black" (or if you're a Six Feet Under fan, "fade to white"). You can also try out different types of "dissolves". A cross-dissolve fades out one clip as another clip fades in. An additive dissolve adds a second clip and then fades out the first one.

5.3 Add Video Titles

The next thing we want to do is to explore how to add interesting titles to your videos.

In Adobe Premiere Elements, the screen for adding captions and titles is shown below.



The Adobe Title Designer screen

There are a few places where titles and captions make perfect sense in a video. The start up credits or the ending credits are places where you want to add titles or words.

The other place to add titles or captions would be specific footage where they are necessary.

For example, if you cut away to a scene in another location or country, it makes sense to indicate to the audience where you are. If you were conducting an interview, it makes sense to add the name and position of the interviewee. In a wedding, the various stages of the wedding (e.g. the oath and the ring exchange, the first dance can be brought out by titles).

If you're imaginative, you can also try all sorts of special effects in titles like animated text or zoom in and out effects (use these sparingly though or it will give the audience a headache).

5.4 Add Music Soundtracks

One final point that is important in terms of adding effects would be that of a music soundtrack. Adobe Premiere Elements allows you to add in your own MP3 music to your video and synchronize it with individual video scenes.

Adobe Premiere Elements can handle up to 99 audio tracks in one movie. The application also gives you the ability to separate the audio that you import along with your video into individual, editable tracks.

One thing about adding music to your video - it's all about relevance and timing. The music theme you select has to be suitable for the video clip you're showing. If you're showing off a clip about teenagers skateboarding, then an edgy tune with lots of heavy guitar riffs would be great. If, however, you're showing some mountain scenes in China, then perhaps some flutes and Asian music might be in order.

Remember that you should also time the music correctly for maximum impact. When showing a comical scene you insert some clownish music at just the right moment. When trying to play up the suspense, you can play some 'Psycho' type of music just before your horror scene ensues. You get the idea.

Adding voice-overs to your video is another important thing to learn. A simple trick is to use your camera to record the narration. Then import the video and audio together into your program, throw away the unwanted video track, and then position the audio track in your project. Remember to make the audio continuous by staggering the audio so that the sound from one clip runs into the next. If you do this, the cut will be less abrupt because the audio and the video won't end at the same time.

And there you have it! Easy ways to approach your video editing by adding filters, special effects, transitions as well as music. In the next section, we'll look at how to burn your video into a DVD medium or share it in other formats.

6. Step 4: Record Your Video To DVD And Other Formats

The last step in the video editing process is to record your video to DVD or other formats.

Let's look at the key points here:

- Find a good video editing program
- Decide which format to share your videos
- Get proper hardware

6.1 Find A Good Video Editing Program

The first thing to remember when trying to burn your movie to DVD or other formats is to invest in a good video editor. Adobe Premiere Elements is a good bet. Other packages like Corel VideoStudio and Pinnacle Studio Plus also offer great DVD burning options. It's essential to have a good editor because a good program allows you to record to not just DVD, but also to newer media like Blu-ray. Some of them also allow direct uploads to the web, sharing on YouTube.

Good programs like Adobe Premiere Elements also allow you to pick from stock DVD menu templates. Remember that creating DVD menus from scratch is very tough. A good video editor allows you to create DVDs and has good DVD menu templates. With stock templates to choose from, your DVD creation process will be much quicker.

6.2 Decide Which Video Format To Use

Alright, the second thing to remember about sharing your videos with others is to decide which video format is the most appropriate. Here's the thing - DVDs are still the best way for sharing your videos with others. The burning process is quick with new hardware these days and DVD as a medium is cheap. You can also be assured that your DVD will play in most DVD players out there.

Some folks are beginning to explore capturing HD video and burning them to Blu-Ray discs. This is a good option - I've seen the resulting video quality - and it is fabulous. However, as with all new technologies, expect to pay more both for your HD camcorder and your Blu-ray disc burner.

Another option when it comes to sharing video is to upload it to the web for sharing. YouTube is one obvious place to upload your videos too. The limitations of this approach is that the video gets compressed and you end up with a low quality version out there in YouTube.

The other issue is storage. Storing video online is fine but it's hard for Grandma to “own” a copy of that home video. A DVD, however, is a very tangible product and might serve as a better way to share that video with family and friends.

6.3 Get Proper Hardware

Here's the last point to note. If you're sharing your videos using DVDs, you should always invest in a good DVD burner. The hardware is important - good brands like Sony and NEC will burn discs without much issues - but I've encountered many types of unknown burners which produced problematic disc after problematic disc. So watch out in the hardware department.



A Sony DVD burner

Besides a good DVD burner, good DVD media is also important for producing good video discs. Don't go for unknown brands which are cheap but potentially give you bad discs after the burn process. Some good DVD media brands include Verbatim, Imation and Maxell. Try to stick to these known brands and you will have no issues.

Alright then, we've covered the process of sharing your video via DVD other formats, and seen that the DVD format is still the traditional and best way to distribute your video to others.

In the next section, we'll wrap the video editing process and what we've discussed so far.

Conclusion

And there you have it! In this eBook, we've discovered how we can easily edit video using a step-by-step approach.

We've seen how you should capture some good raw footage, then import it into your PC for editing. We've seen how we can then locate the good parts of the video and trim out unwanted portions. Subsequently, we saw how to add filters, transitions, video effects and music to your video. We wrapped up with a section on how to burn your video into DVD or other formats.

I hope this eBook has helped you understand the front-to-back video editing workflow. Hopefully, with this knowledge, you'll find it a breeze to start editing and improving your next home video productions. If you have any questions at all about video editing, do feel free to [drop me a note](#).

Gary Hendricks runs a hobby site on digital videography. Visit his website at <http://www.desktop-video-guide.com> for tips and tricks on buying digital camcorders, as well as shooting and editing great videos.
