



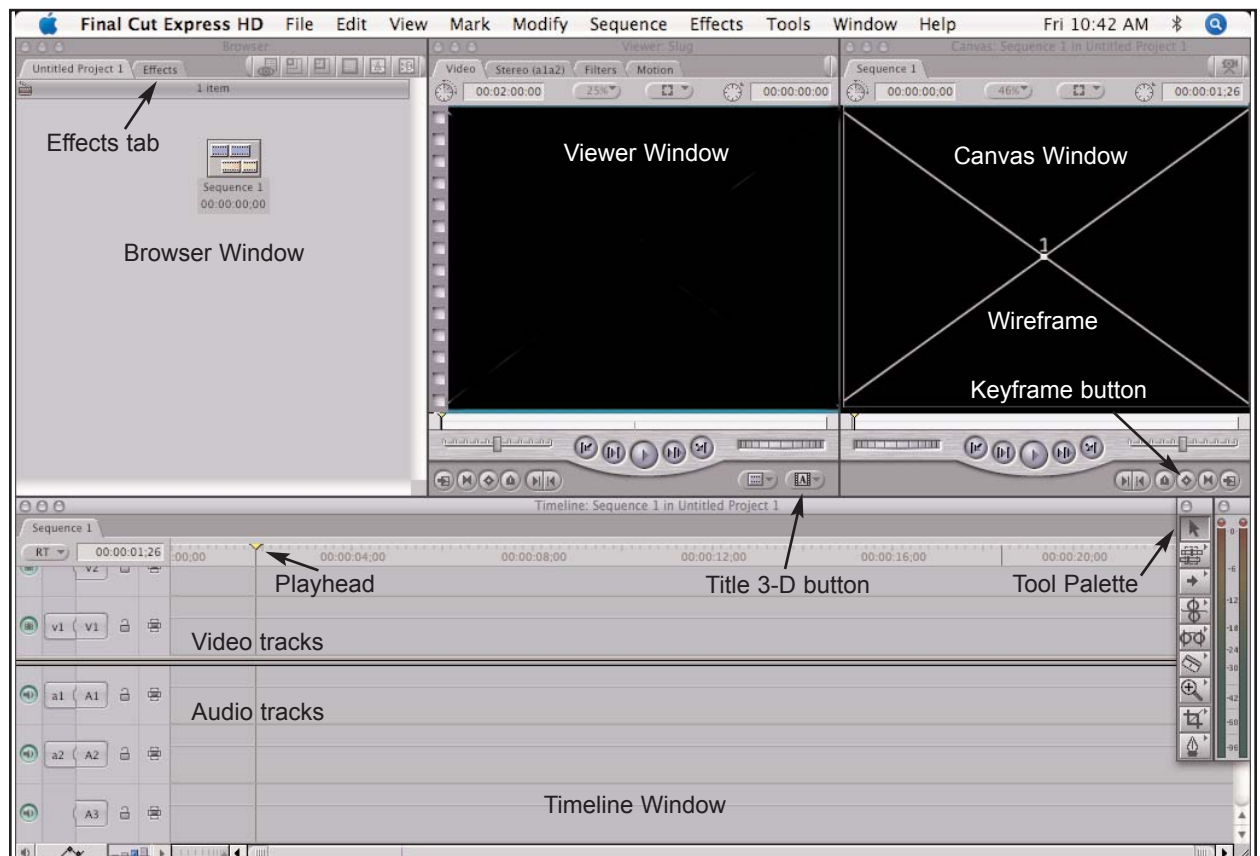
Final Cut Express Quick Guide

Final Cut Express is the relatively inexpensive consumer version of a professional video editing suite. Express gives you the capability to synchronize images and sound, add special effects, and export projects as standalone videos in a variety of formats.

Step 1 — Open Program and Add Media

When you open Final Cut Express, the program automatically starts an untitled new project. On the menu bar select File>Save As and navigate to your folder on the desktop. Open the Projects folder and name your project before clicking Save. (We recommend calling it your first and last name.) You will see four windows. In the upper left is the Browser window, where your media will be stored. On the bottom of the screen is the Timeline, where you will drag and drop your media and arrange it over time. Above the Timeline in the middle of the screen is the Viewer, which can be used to fine-tune clips in your project. In the upper right is the Canvas, where you will watch the work you've created in the Timeline play back.

Here's a map of what the Final Cut Express workspace looks like. The main tools and windows you will be using to make your story are labeled.



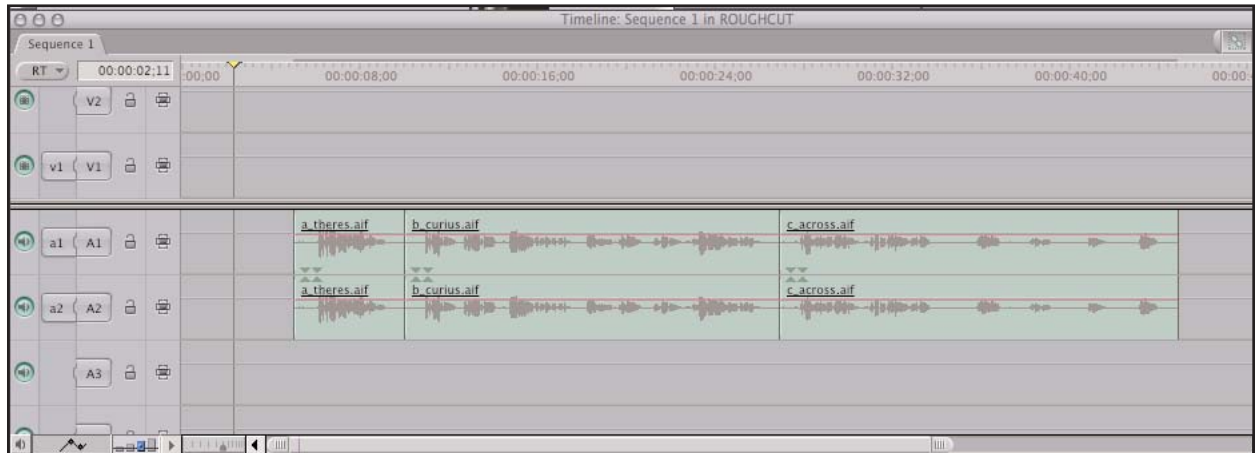
Your first step is to get the media you'll use in your digital story. Click on File > Import > Folder. Navigate to and select your "voiceover" folder and click Choose. Do this for the "ready images," "soundtrack," and "video," folders as well.

Step 2 — Editing in the Timeline

We recommend placing the voiceover into the Timeline first, because it is a finite piece of media with a beginning and an end. We find it's easier to use the voiceover as a base and then place photos to match up with the voice.

To get the voiceover into the Timeline, first find the “voiceover” folder in the Browser. Make sure no other folders are selected. Drag and drop the entire “voiceover” folder into the far left side of the bottom half of the Timeline, in the part labeled A1 (Audio track 1) and A2 (Audio track 2).

In the Timeline, you should see a black line with a yellow triangle on top, called the playhead. Your playhead will be at the end of your last audio clip.



To get back to the beginning of the timeline, move the scrollbar at the bottom of the Timeline to the left. Then click in the gray calibrated area at the top of the Timeline. Your playhead will jump to wherever you click.

Once your playhead is at the beginning of the Timeline, tap the spacebar on your keyboard, and it will start moving across the Timeline. You should be able to hear the voice, but the Canvas window will show black because we haven't put any pictures on the timeline yet.

Step 3 — Editing the Voiceover

The next step is to edit the pacing of your voiceover. Listen to the entire voiceover, and decide if you need to shorten or lengthen any pauses. You can adjust the length of an audio clip using the selection tool.

There are two basic functions of the selection tool in Final Cut Express. If you click in the middle of a clip and drag the clip left or right, you can change its place on the timeline without changing its duration. If you put your pointer at the edge of a clip (so the cursor shape changes to a double-pointed arrow) and drag to the left or right, you can change the clip's duration on the timeline. Use this tool to shorten any pause between the clips of your voiceover. You can lengthen a pause between clips by moving the clips further apart on the Timeline to create space between them.

Step 4 — Adding and Editing Images

Your next step is to start bringing in images. Open your “ready images” folder and locate the first picture you want to use. Make sure this is the only image selected and drag it into the Video 1 track in the Timeline so that the left edge of the gray image bar snaps to the playhead line. When you see a black arrow pointing down, drop the image. If you move the playhead so it's over the image in the Timeline, you will see the image in the Canvas.

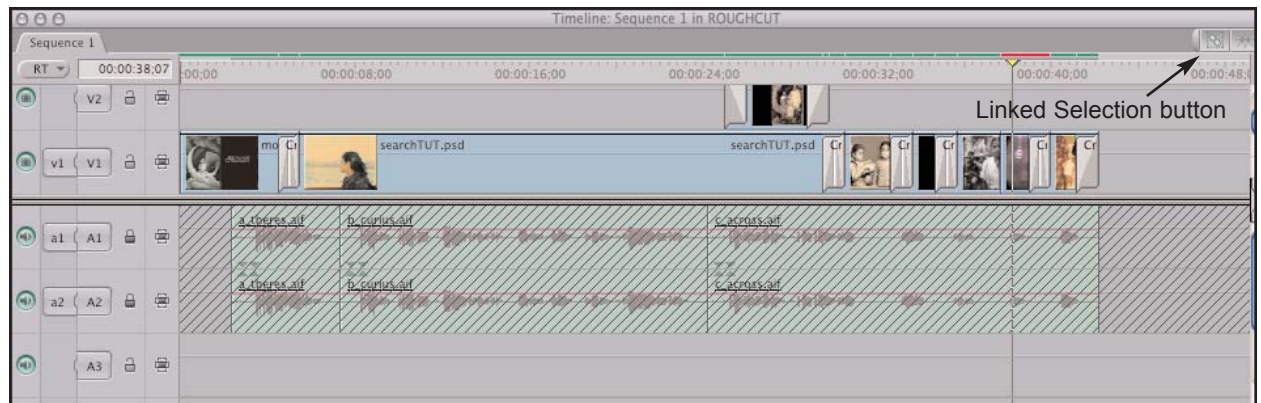
Now you can use the selection tool to shorten or lengthen the image clip, just as you did with your audio clips in Step 3. Your task is to work through your story from beginning to end and put the images where you want them. Play back each edit, to make sure the image is on screen in the right place for the right amount of time.

Step 5 — Adding and Editing Video

If you're using video, have one of your teachers show you how to capture and save the clips you want. To edit video, you can double click on the file in your “video” folder, and it will open in the Viewer. You'll see a playhead there, and you can play back the clip, setting in (I) and out (O) points by pressing “I” and “O” on your keyboard. Then you can drag/drop the clip into your Timeline and adjust its

length. Note: Make sure to avoid overwriting your voiceover audio with audio from a video clip; you can put video clips on track V2 to be safe.

Once the video clip is on the Timeline, you can unlink the video and audio by clicking on the Linked Selection button, shown below. Once unlinked, you can make changes to either the video or the audio without effecting the other.

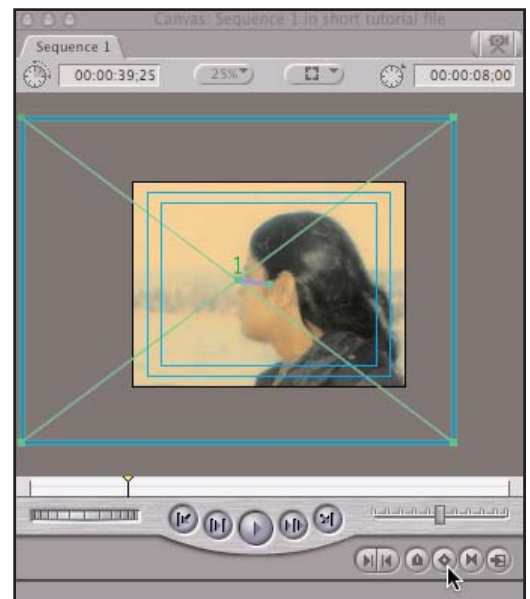


Step 6— Panning and Zooming

To pan or zoom (in or out) on an image, you must set keyframes. For instance, to zoom in on the girl's face in the "search" image, we will need to set two keyframes — one that shows how we want the clip to look at the beginning of the zoom, and one that shows how we want the clip to look at the end of the zoom.

Find a clip you want to zoom in on, and click on it in the Timeline to select it. Move the playhead to the point in the Timeline where you want the zoom to start. In the Canvas window, click the small round button with the diamond, the Add Keyframe button. Use the wireframe in the Canvas to adjust the size and position of the image so that it looks the way you want it to at the beginning of the zoom.

Then move the playhead to the point in the Timeline where you want the zoom to stop. Click the Add Keyframe button to set the second keyframe. Again, use the wireframe in the Canvas to manipulate the image until it looks the way you want it to at the end of the zoom. Playback the section you've worked on to review your work.



You can use the same procedure to create a pan: set the first keyframe in the place on the Timeline where you want the pan to start, using the wireframe in the Canvas to position the image at the starting point of the pan; then move the playhead forward in the Timeline to the end of the pan, click the diamond button to add the second keyframe, and reposition the image in the Canvas.

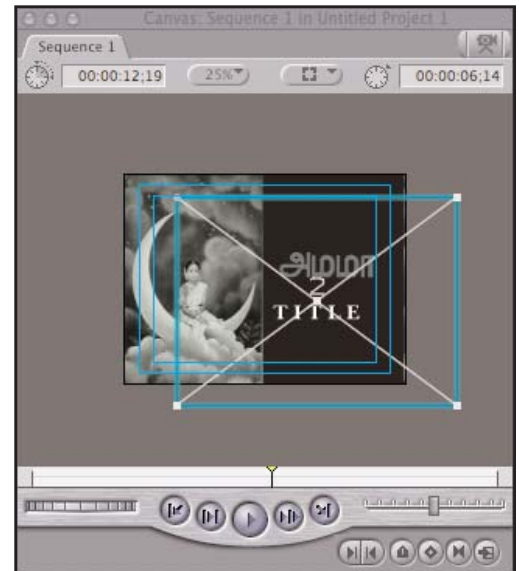
Step 7 — Compositing (titles)

The easiest way to think about layers in Final Cut is to make a title. In the bottom right corner of the Viewer window, click on the letter A and pull down to Title 3D. In the box that pops up, type your title, and use the controls to adjust font, color, size, etc. Then click Apply. You will now see your title in the Viewer window.

Before you can drag your title into the Timeline, you must make sure that the wireframe is turned off. At the top of the Viewer window, click on the button with the square and make sure the check mark is next to "Image." Now you can drag and drop the title into the Video 2 track, and it will appear on top of whatever image is in the Video 1 track at that point on the Timeline. You can use the wireframe in

the Canvas window to position the title over the other image. You can apply transitions to the title (fade in/out) if you want. The title is now a layer that lives on top of another layer (the image beneath it).

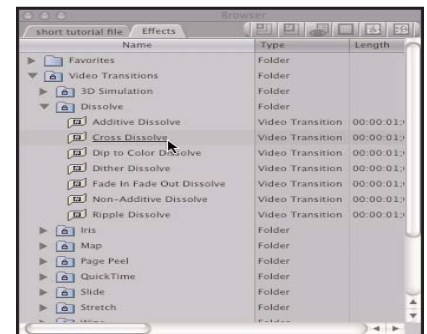
This same concept can be done with multiple images or video clips. The thing to remember is that if you have two layers that are the same size (720x480), and the top one is not transparent or partially transparent, then you will not see the layer beneath it. The title, for example, is much smaller than the image beneath it, and the space around the title itself is transparent, so that's why the composite works and you can see both images at once. Your choice to achieve layering or compositing is to either make a top layer smaller than the bottom layer or to make the top layer partly transparent.



Step 8 — Adding Transitions

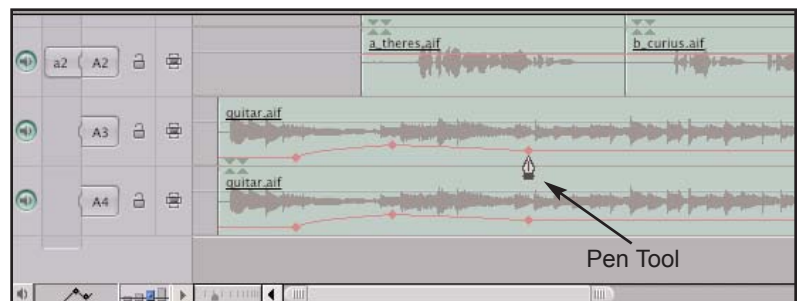
When working with video, most people don't use transitions other than the cut edit (cutting straight from one shot to another), but when working with still images, transitions can help create a flow to the work. The cross dissolve is the most basic way to do this.

To add a transition, click on the Effects tab in the Browser. Click on the Video Transitions folder, then the Dissolve folder. Then click the Cross Dissolve icon, and drag and drop the transition into the Timeline, covering the spot where two files meet. You can use your selection tool to lengthen or shorten the duration of the dissolve.



Step 9 — Adding Music

Make sure you copy all music files you want to use into your "soundtrack" folder. Then import the folder into your browser. You can then drag and drop an audio clip into Audio 3/Audio 4. In this sense, you are "layering" audio. You can fade in/fade out the audio by applying a cross fade, by using the Effects tab in the Browser window. (Look in the "Audio Transitions" folder.)



You can also change the volume of the entire audio clip by taking your cursor into the clip and moving the pink line (volume line) up and down. Another way to change the volume is to use the Pen tool to set points on the volume line. You can then manipulate these points by moving them up and down to change the volume level in only one section of the audio clip.

Step 10 — Exporting a Movie

When you're finished editing, click on File>Export. From there you can decide what kind of file you'd like and the quality and relative size of that file. We recommend exporting one large file for archiving or putting on a DVD, and one compressed (smaller) file for putting on a CD, on the web, etc.