A Beginners Guideline

POST
PRODUCTION
VIDEO
EDITING

Editing Video on Macintosh
Compiled by Training Final Cut Pro
https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Post Production Video Editing

TABLE

OF

CONTENTS

Post Production Video Editing

TABLE

OF

CONTENTS

PAGE TWO

Outline

Preproduction involves the steps you should take before shooting a video.

You may think this unnecessary, but it really is one of the most essential things in the whole process, professional or otherwise. So, you need to have a plan (or at least a rough outline).

Write down a list of shots you will need. Let's consider a video of a social football game. You can make a checklist of the following "must have" shots.

• A close shot of a favourite player.

• A long shot of the park.

• The team practicing and warming up.

• Shots of the scoreboard before, during and after the game.

• A few shots of the crowd.

• A close up of the players smiling after the game.

Shooting Tips

Shoot as much content as you possibly can. You will appreciate this habit when you edit in the post-production stage.

The content could include video footage, snapshots and sounds. (Record some of the ambient sounds in a quiet spot - without air or traffic noise.)

You will value this when you are editing a clip with a plane flying overhead.

Use a tripod:
A steady hand held video is a rare achievement, even if your camera has an image stabilization feature. You should mount your camera on a tripod whenever possible to avoid jerky videos.

Lighting:
Perhaps the most important aspect of video production is the lighting.

A common mistake most amateurs make, is to shoot towards the sun.

Whenever possible, try to keep your back towards the sun, keeping your shadow out of the frame.

The same principle applies while shooting indoors. If you shoot in a bright light, then your subject might appear dark.

Try to shoot in front of backgrounds with uniform lighting to avoid bright spots or reflection.

Smooth zoom in and out:

Abrupt zoom-in and zoom-outs never look good in videos.

If you HAVE to, always zoom-in and zoom -out of subjects slowly. Start by framing the subject for a second or two, then zoom-in very slowly.!

After completing the zoom-in, hold the camera on the subject for a moment before zooming-out or panning away.

Handy tip:

While shooting an event, take good shots of relevant text documents, invitation cards, banners - anything of interest.

These can prove to be useful during post production for making title slides. - Don't forget ambient audio segments.

This involves organizing all your clips, editing them, and then putting them in a format that is appropriate to export.

Editing establishes the structure and content of the video, along with the overall mood, intensity, and tempo.

You shoot a lot of footage, but the finished video must hold the viewers' attention. The creative art of editing is to tell the whole story in a shorter, crisp narrative, without losing anything essential.

Editing gives you a chance to play with space and time. You can take a person from one location to another. When you take a still photograph you capture a moment in time that represents an occasion. Think of video clips as moving photographs - you need only a short time to tell the story. When you look at photographs of an occasion you only spend a few seconds looking at each photo, edit the video clips with a similar feel.
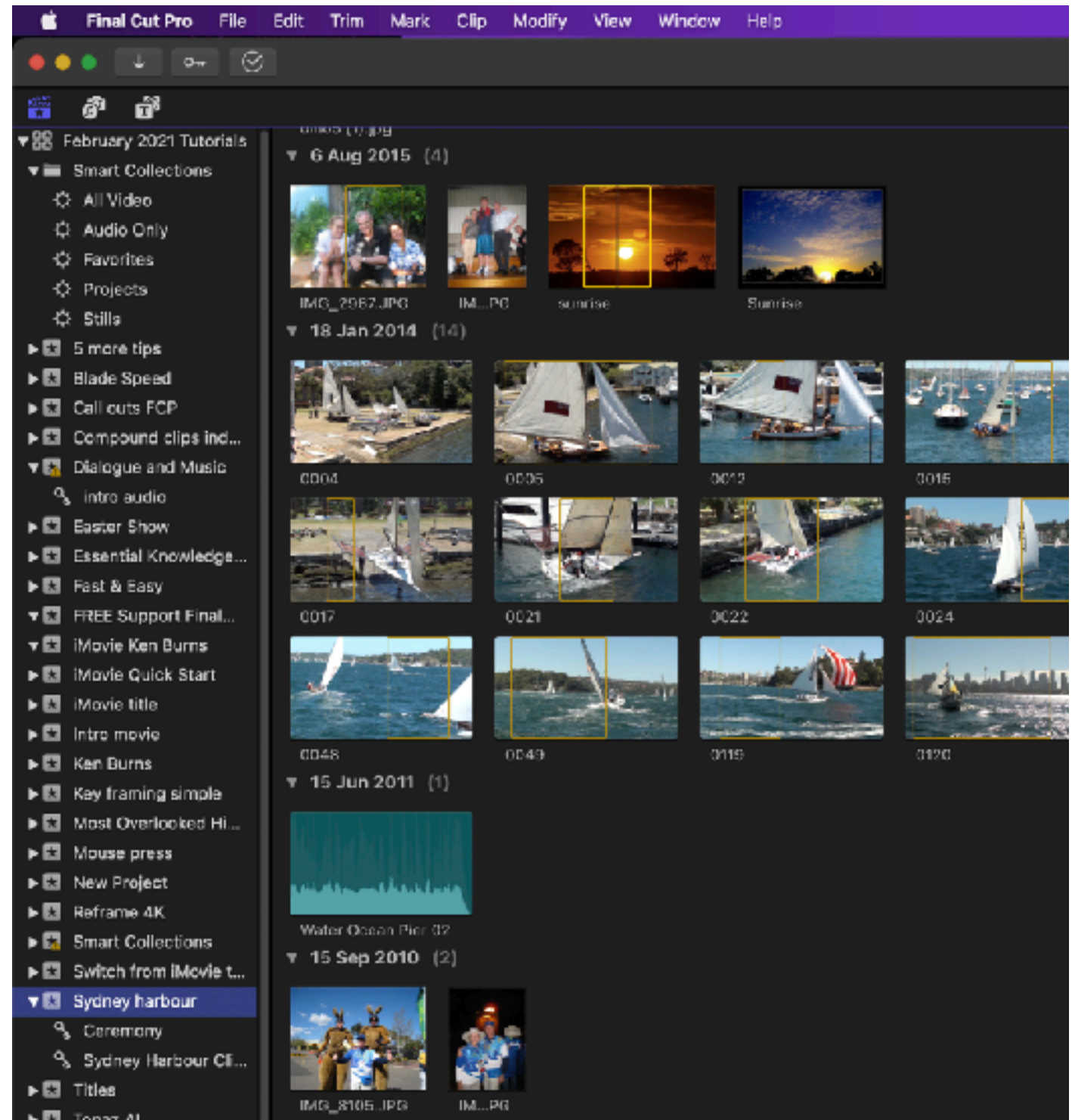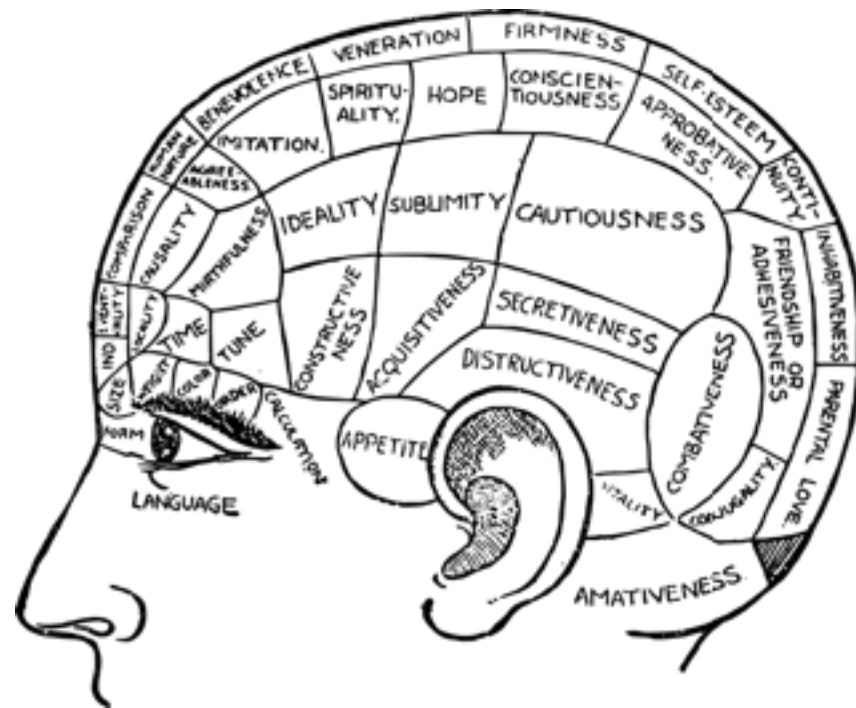
There are two distinct aspects to video editing.

The creativity and the mechanics - these take up different parts of the brain - so a video editor needs to be adaptable.

Editing is the assembly of a story and as with any story it needs a beginning, a middle and an end.

Assemble the story by editing (short) clips and make sure that the move from one scene to the next is smooth.

Keep motion moving in the same direction.

If you have a person moving out of the first clip to the right, make sure that the movement into the next clip is in the same direction.

The object moving does not need to be the same thing.

You will need to continue that flow of motion as the motion itself hides the cut.
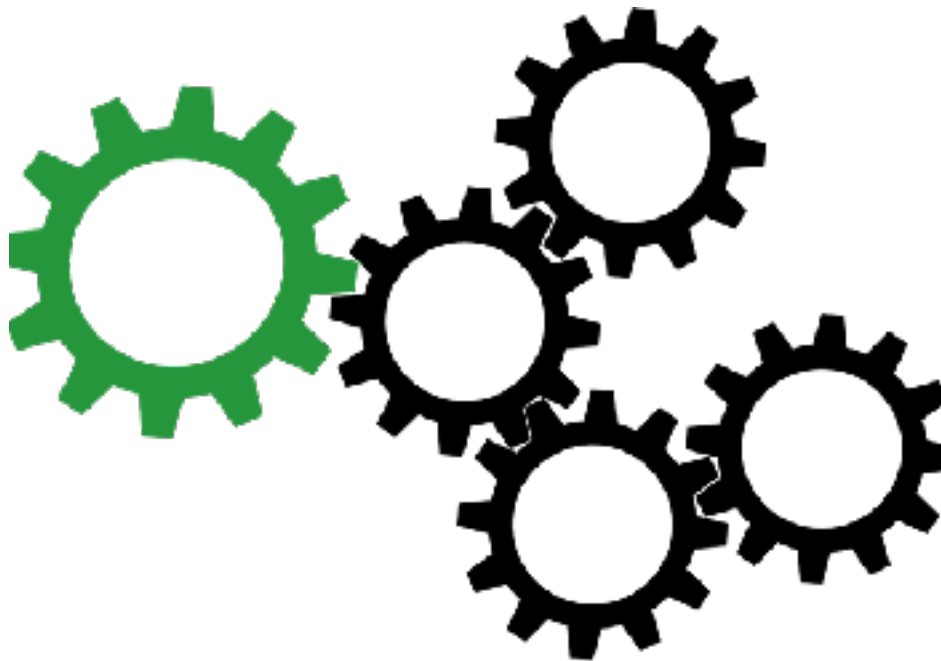
Chronological order

The methods and the steps in the process can vary from editor to editor, but they do generally have a chronological order sequence.

1. The raw footage or rushes are viewed and pencil and paper notes are taken relative to the time code.

   This may happen in a group session with director and others or just with the editor alone in front of a computer monitor or TV set.

2. Some editors will opt to go straight to this step, by transferring from the camera or deck straight to the computer.

   This process could involve a rough edit and selected footage could then be batch captured.

   Some editors will capture all footage from the camera without this pre-edit.

3. Once footage is in the computer's media area (browser) then it can be edited into the timeline. This is the main edit - In a perfect world this would be the last cut that would be made. But it is not a perfect world and, as situations change, we all change our minds.

4. Trims can be made in the timeline to adjust clips.

5. Effects are added - titles, transitions, filters, animations, audio and colour matching.

6. The timeline is exported to the preferred method of distribution, Thumb drive, Web or it can be archived back to tape or Hard Disk.

7. Before any of this, you need to organize the footage

     videoeditoz@gmail.com.   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Organization of the Footage

This, you may feel that this is unnecessary for your short projects, but don't be fooled, as organising your clips into categories will speed up the editing when you start adding clips to the timeline.

The takeaway here, as experienced users will testify, is that once you start the editing process your creative flow needs to be continuous and not interrupted by having to search for suitable footage to continue your video story.

The organization process is not difficult and involves simply putting your different types of camera footage in to separate "Folders". Depending on the Video editing software that you are using these may be titled differently.

For example, if you are using Final Cut Pro you will be able to use, Folders, Keywords, Smart Collections and Favourites to store your camera footage, so that you can access the different categories as you are editing in the timeline.

Organization is particularly important when you are looking for "B" Roll clips - (video or still images that relate to the subject matter being discussed). "B" Roll is frequently used for interview videos, it breaks the monotony of the person rabbiting on - giving some visual relief to just seeing a face.

For another example of the need for organization, imagine a surfing competition that you have filmed. You will have riders that you will want to show at different times - there will be close ups, long shots of the surf, shots of the crowd cheering, shots of the scores.

If you have these in categories, you will be able to access the footage you want when you need it - without having to search though all your clips in one big disorganised location.

The bigger your project, the more you will need to organize.

The more people involved in the edit, the more they will need to know where different footage can be located.

   videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Where to cut

It is a good idea to cut on an "action" or "motion". For a person moving between scenes, cut at the eyes on exit, start the next clip as the person walks in - a few frames before their eyes enter the scene.

When filming watch out for "actions" that will help the edit - standing up, sitting down, exiting door, moving a hand, waving goodbye, shaking hands.

When your footage has no natural point for a cut, you may need a transition or perhaps an insert between scenes, to help tie them together.

You may want to indicate the passing of time between the scenes, this can easily be covered by a dissolve transition, this tends to imply a short time, as does a fade-to-black.

Other more obvious transitions - like circles opening and pages flipping, tend to say that the next clip is a new part of the story. Keep transition effects to a minimum as they interrupt the story.

videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Editing Guidelines

You will be easily tempted to impress your viewer with "Effects" but, they just call attention to themselves. Effects divert attention away from your central message.

Production techniques are best when they are transparent; i.e., when they go unnoticed by the viewer.

However, in music videos, commercials, and program introductions, these techniques are used as "eye candy" to mesmerize audiences.

The accepted editing guidelines are:
Edits work best when they are motivated. When making any cut or transition from one shot to another there is a risk of breaking audience concentration and subtly pulling attention away from the story.

When cuts or transitions are motivated by production content they are more likely to go unnoticed.

• When someone glances to one side during a dramatic scene, you can use that as motivation to cut to whatever has caught the actor's attention.
• When one person stops talking and another starts, that provides the motivation to make a cut from one person to the other.
• Hear a door open, or someone calls out from off camera, we generally expect to see a shot of whoever it is.
• Picking up a strange object to examine it - the natural move is to cut to an insert shot of the object.

Whenever possible, cut on the subject's movement. If cuts are prompted by action, that action will divert attention from the cut, making the transition more fluid. Small jump cuts are also less noticeable because viewers are caught up in the action. If a man is getting out of a chair, you can cut at the midpoint in the action. In this case some of the action will be included in both shots. Try to not have audio edits at the same point as video edits - overlap them if you can so that when there is a jump from one video clip to the next the audio does not jump at the same time.

   videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Maintaining Action Consistency

Pay attention to detail. This is most important where you have more than one take of each scene.

Make sure that the relative position of feet or hands, in both shots match, but also the general energy level of voices and movements.

You will also need to make sure nothing has changed in the scene - hair, clothing, accessories, the placement of props - make sure the actor is doing the same thing in exactly the same way in each shot.

Match cuts with the same movement from the clip before.

Watch out for actors who have changed position relative to others in the scene.

 videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Entering and Exiting the frame

As an editor, you often need to "Cut" from one scene to another. The person exits the frame on the right and enters the next shot from the left.

The best method is to "Cut" out of the first scene, as the person's eyes pass the edge of the frame, then "Cut" to the second scene about six frames before the person's eyes enter the frame of the next scene.

The timing is significant. It takes about a quarter of a second for viewers' eyes to switch from one side of the frame to the other.

During this time, whatever is taking place on the screen becomes a bit scrambled and viewers need a bit of time to refocus on the new action.

Otherwise, the lost interval can create a jump in the action.

An editor can use distractions in the scene to cover the slight mismatches in action that inevitably arise in single-camera production.

When someone in a scene is talking, attention is generally focused on the person's mouth or eyes, and a viewer will tend to miss inconsistencies in other parts of the scene.

Scenes can be added to divert attention.

TIP
Learn and remember the role insert shots and cutaways can play in covering jump cuts.

videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Strengths and Limitations of the Medium

Television is a close-up medium, as is YouTube. The viewer feels they control the medium as opposed to a movie where the viewer feels controlled by the larger image.

Editors need to be aware, that picture detail can be lost in video images on TV or Youtube. The best way to show important detail is through close-ups.

Except for establishing shots, designed to momentarily orient the audience to subject placement, the editor should emphasize medium shots and close-ups.

There are some things to keep in mind with close-ups. Close-ups on individuals are appropriate for interviews and dramas, but not as appropriate for light comedy.

In comedy the use of medium shots keeps the mood light. You normally don't want to pull the audience into the actors' thoughts and emotions.

In contrast, for interviews and dramatic productions, it's generally desirable to use close-ups to zero in on a subject's reactions and provide clues to the person's general character.

In drama, a director often wants to communicate something of what's going on within the mind of an actor. In each of these instances the close-up can be important.

videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

When to Cut Away

The pace of a production rests largely with the editing, although, the best editing won't save bad acting or a script that is boring to start with.

So how long should scenes be?

First, keep in mind that audience interest quickly wanes once the essential visual information is conveyed. Shots with new information stimulate viewer interest.

New vs. Familiar Subject Matter

Shot length is in part dictated by the complexity and familiarity of the subject matter. How long does it take for a viewer to see the key elements in a scene? Can they be grasped in a second or does the subject matter require time to study?

You wouldn't need a 15-second shot of the Sydney Opera House, because we've all seen it many times. A one or two-second shot would be all that's needed to remind viewers of the symbolism - unless, of course you were pointing out specific points of interest.

On the other hand, the viewer would be confused by a one or two second shot of an unusual animal that has been sighted in a national park. The audience who haven't seen this animal before would need time to see what it really looks like.

Long montage edits are not necessary. The technique requires only 10-15 video frames per image. Obviously, it's not necessary to see all of elements in the image.

The idea in this case is simply to communicate general impressions, not details. Commercials often use this technique to communicate such things as excitement or "good times."

videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

The Cutting Rate

The cutting rate depends on the production content:

For example, tranquil pastoral scenes imply longer shots than scenes of rush hour on Main Street.

You can increase production tempo by making quick cuts during rapid action.

Vary the Tempo

A constant fast pace will tire an audience; a constant slow pace will get them to look for something more interesting.

When video content doesn't have natural swings in tempo, the video editor, with possible help from music, could edit segments together to create changes in pace.

This is one of the reasons that editors like parallel stories in a dramatic production.

Pace and content can be varied by cutting back and forth between stories.

videoeditoz@gmail.com   *https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com*

How you Start a Production

This is critical.

Starting out slow and boring - your audience will probably immediately go elsewhere.

During these opening seconds, viewers are most tempted to "channel hop" and see what else is on, especially on social media like YouTube videos.

Try to start out with segments that are strong, these will "hook" your audience.

Once you have their attention, you have to hold onto it.

Should the action or content peak too soon, then the rest of the production goes down hill, you may also lose your audience.

Opening with a strong audio or video statement is recommended, then fill in needed information as you go along.

In the process, try to gradually build interest until it peaks at the end.

A strong ending will leave the audience with positive feelings about the video.

         <u>*videoeditoz@gmail.com*</u>   <u>*https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com*</u>

Emphasize the "B" Roll:

In a dramatic production the "B" Roll might consist of relevant details - insert shots and cutaway shots - that add interest and information.

One critical type of cutaway, especially in dramatic productions, is the "Reaction shot" - a close-up showing how others are responding to what's going on.

Sometimes this is more telling than holding a shot of the person speaking.

By using strong supplementary footage the amount of information conveyed in a given interval increases.

More information in a shorter time results in an apparent increase in production tempo.

Interviews typically consist of a rather static looking "talking head." In this case the "B"Roll should consist of

scenes that support, accentuate, or in some way visually elaborate on what's being said.

For example, in doing an interview with a car engineer who has just perfected a new model for Ferrari you would expect to see the car in as much detail as possible, and maybe even the factory where it was built.

This "B"Roll footage could be more important to see than the - talking head - interview footage.

If in Doubt, Leave It out:

If you don't think that a particular scene adds any useful information, leave it out.

Those new to video editing, almost always, commit the same universal mistake.
They include too much footage.

Less is more effective.
Less has more impact.
Less actually takes more effort.
Minimalism beats clutter.
Substance trumps verbosity.

When you include everything, you will probably slow down your story development, and maybe even blur the focus of the production and sidetrack the central message. Unless an insert shot, cutaway, or segment adds anything significant to the main message, LEAVE IT OUT.

Continuity refers to arranging the sequence of shots to suggest a progression of events. With the same shots, an editor can suggest different scenarios. Consider these clips:

- a person

   glancing up"

- another man

firing a gun

In this order it appears that the first person was shot. However, if you reverse the order of these clips, the first person appears to be watching the event.

An editor guides the audience through a sequence of events, and, in the process, shows them what they want to see when they want to see it.

In the end, you've told a story or logically traced a series of events to their conclusion.

But you can, for dramatic effect, leave the audience hanging to create tension.

- A man is working at his desk late at night.
- There is a knock at the door.
- The man behind the desk routinely calls out, "Come in."
- After looking up, the expression on the man's face changes to alarm.

Why? You don't know. Where is the image of who or what just came in? What happens if you don't cut to that expected shot? The viewers are then just left hanging with curiosity and apprehension. Always keep in mind what you think the audience expects to see at any given moment. If you do, the sequence of edits will write itself

Acceleration Editing

When editing Video, "Time" is routinely condensed and expanded.

Here's an example of a woman going out on an important date.

The actual time for her pick out clothes, shower, dry her hair, do her nails, put on make-up, then drive to some prearranged place could take 90 minutes.

That's the total time devoted to most feature films - and the interesting part hasn't even started yet.

 That 90 minutes or so it took the woman to meet her date could be shown in a few seconds with these clips:

The woman on the phone
(3 seconds)

Selecting clothes
(2 seconds)

Blow-drying her hair
(4 seconds)

Heading out the front door.
(2 seconds)

Driving to the meeting place
(4 seconds)

Finally, arriving meeting place
(2 seconds)

Or even quicker:
Hanging up the phone.

Arriving at the meeting place.

Expanding time

You may, for dramatic effect, want to drag out an event beyond the actual time represented.

This will really bring dramatic tension to your video

Let's set the scene, In a flashy restaurant, group of people are sitting around a the dining table.

The scene suddenly changes as the restaurant is blown up by a time bomb.

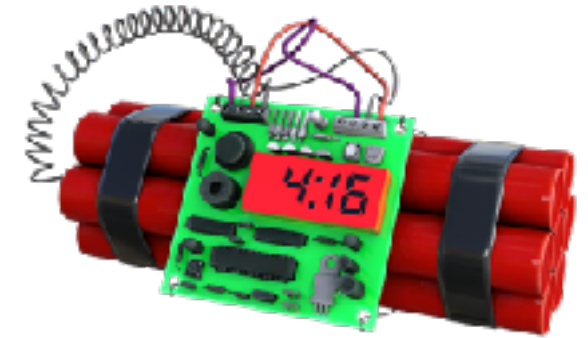In a real-time version of the scene, the people sit down at the table and the bomb goes off.

End of people. - end of scene.

But a more dramatic approach would be:

The people gather, talk, and casually sit down at the dinner table.

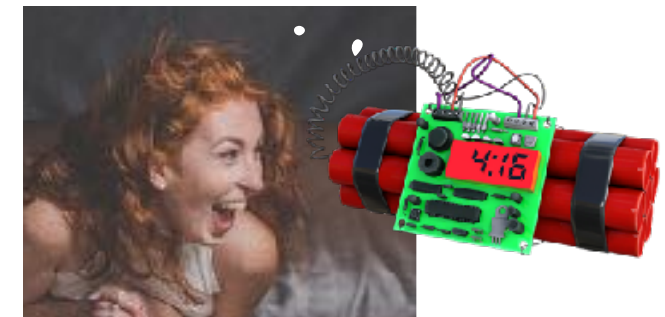A shot of the bomb ticking away under the table is shown revealing to the audience what is about to happen.

Unaware of the bomb, the people continue talking, close-up of food.

Closer shots of the bomb are then intercut with the guests laughing and enjoying dinner.

The intercutting continues (speeds up) - until the bomb finally blows.

videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Causality

A good editor suggests or explains why things happen.

You would not cut to a shot of someone answering the phone unless we had heard the phone ring.

A ringing phone brings about a response - the phone is answered.

In the first five minutes of a video there is a corpse on the living room floor but you do not find out who the killer is until 90 minutes later.

In this case effect precedes cause.

It makes a more interesting story - one that would be more likely to hold an audience - if we present the result first and reveal the cause gradually over time.

You can edit to assume cause. If you show a shot of someone attempting a difficult feat on skis for the first time, followed by a shot of them arriving back home with one leg in a cast, the audience assumes that things didn't quite work out.

There is also the question of why something has happened.

To provide that answer an editor may have to take the viewer back to incidents in the past.

Editors must perceive the dynamics of these cause-and-effect relationships to skilfully handle them.

They must also have an understanding of human psychology so that they can portray feelings and events realistically.

videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Insert Shots

You can enhance the look of an edit by adding insert shots and cutaways

An insert shot is a close-up of something that exists within the basic scene.

The latter is typically visible within the establishing wide shot.

Insert shots add needed information, information that wouldn't otherwise be immediately visible or clear.

Cutaways

Unlike insert shots that show significant aspects of the overall scene in close-up, cutaways, "Cut" from the main scene or action to add related material.

During a parade, you might cutaway from the parade to a shot of people watching from a nearby rooftop or a child in a pram sleeping through the commotion.

In the editing process you rely on regular insert shots and cutaways to effectively present the elements of a story.

Make sure you shoot plenty of "B" Roll or instruct your camera person.

Still images of related scenes can be used effectively here as "B" Rolls.

It can also be a good technique to hide some bad footage or save an awkward transition between clips.

videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Relational Editing

An important aspect of editing is to understand the human tendency to try to establish a relationship between a series of scenes.

In relational editing, scenes that by themselves seem not to be related take on a relationship significance when edited together in a sequence.

If you have a clip of someone waving, you would expect that the next clip will show who the are waving at and why.

If this scene were followed by a shot of a car pulling up to the curb, the audience would naturally assume that they would go over to the car and get in.

If it's followed by a shot of a child, some distance away walking along a path, the audience would assume something quite different.

It is best to combine continuity and relational editing as the audience likes to know why and will assume an answer dependent on the way you edit.

 videoeditoz@gmail.com https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Montage Editing

When montage editing, images are edited together based only on a central theme.

In contrast to most types of editing, montage editing is not designed to tell a story by developing an idea in a logical sequence, but is a rapid, impressionistic sequence of disconnected scenes designed to communicate feelings or experiences. - example - a slideshow of moving images.

This type of editing is often used in music videos, commercials, and film trailers or promotional clips.

The intent is not to trace a story line, but to simply communicate action and excitement.

Eye Lines Determine the Next Scene

Eye lines will help you decide which clip to edit next.

What are eye lines? They show the direction path, that people in your video are looking, and indicates to the viewer, what to expect next in the video. You then show them the clip what they are expecting to see.

What is she looking at in the distance?

Show the Computer screen next

Show close up of flowers next

Show clip of man on left talking

Show Close up of women on the left

 videoeditoz@gmail.com https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Parallel Cutting

Afternoon soap operas, sitcoms, and dramatic productions typically have two or more stories taking place at the same time.

The multiple story lines could be as simple as intercutting between the husband who murdered his wife and the simultaneous work of the police as they try to convict him. This is referred to as parallel action.

When the segments are cut together to follow the multiple (different) story lines, it's referred to as parallel cutting.

By cutting back and forth between two or more mini stories within the overall story, production pace can be varied and overall interest heightened.

Dramas typically have eight or ten major characters, and although intertwined with the main drama, each has their own continuing story.

 videoeditoz@gmail.com https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

When edits end up being confusing or unsettling, they are called jump cuts. These occur when the continuity jumps in the action. One shot shows a car driving down the road in one direction L to R and the next clip shows the car moving in a different direction R to L.

These are usually caused by scenes being shot at different times, usually in a single camera shoot.
They should be picked up at the shoot but, Post Production can solve some of these action differences.

The car moving in opposite directions in clips immediately next to each other would look out of place but it could be covered up if another clip is dropped in between and then the excuse could be the road has twisted.

This is the place where insert or cutaway clips can come in very useful.

Maybe the cutaway could be used as a "B"Roll and have the audio conversation continue so that one of the car direction shots would not be used at all. These cutaways, which are typically done in editing with an insert edit, are often reaction.

Editors depend greatly on this supplementary "B" Roll footage to bridge a wide range of editing problems.

Therefore, you should always take the time to record a variety of "B" Roll shots - insert shots, cutaways, whatever you can get that might be useful during editing.

Another, much less than elegant, way of handling the jump cut associated with editing together non sequential segments of an interview is to use an effect such as a dissolve between the segments.

This makes it obvious to an audience that segments have been cut out, and it smoothes out the "jump."

Abrupt Changes in Image Size

A big jump in image size constitutes another type of jump cut.

Going from a wide-angle (establishing shot) directly to a close-up shot can be too abrupt.

An intermediate medium shot is generally needed to smooth out the transition and orient the audience to the new area you are concentrating on.

This 1-2-3 shot formula starts with:

1. a very short wide shot (establishing shot), then
2. a cut to a medium shot, and then
3. cuts to one or more close-up shots

Periodically going back to the wide or establishing shot is often necessary to remind viewers where everyone and everything is.

This is especially important during or after an actor's actions.

When you cut back to the wide shot in this way, it's referred to as cutting to a re-establishing shot.

For dramatic effect you could start a scene with an extreme close-up of a crucial object, you can immediately focus attention on that object.

In a drama that could be a smashed picture frame, a gun, or any crucial subject matter.

Once the importance or significance of the object is established then cut or zoom back to reveal the surrounding scene.

videoeditoz@gmail.com   *https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com*

Another type of jump cut results from cutting from one shot to a shot that is almost identical.

To cover this situation, use the 30-degree rule.

According to this rule, a new shot of the same subject matter can be justified only if you change the camera angle by at least 30 degrees.

Also consider the issue of on-screen direction.

If two separate shots are used of two people talking on the phone have the shots facing each other.

Which angle seems the most logical:

facing the right or facing the left?

videoeditoz@gmail.com   https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com

Background Music Continuity

Music can smooth the transition between segments and create overall production unity - if it's used in the right way.

Background music should add to the overall mood and effect of the video, without calling attention to itself.

The music selected should match the mood, pace, and time period of the production.

Vocals should be avoided when the video contains normal dialogue such as an interview video or where actors are talking.

Ideally, the beginning of a music should coincide with the start of a video segment and end as the segment ends.

Beginners tend to have audio level of the music too high, compared to the audio levels recorded by the camera.

Don't be let down with bad quality audio. Just because it called a video production, it doesn't mean you neglect audio.

Audio plays a pivotal role in telling a story, because it represents at least 70% of the video experience.

Our ears are much more critical of glitches than our eyes. If a picture is less than perfect and the audio is clear, people will watch for longer than they will watch a great picture with bad audio.
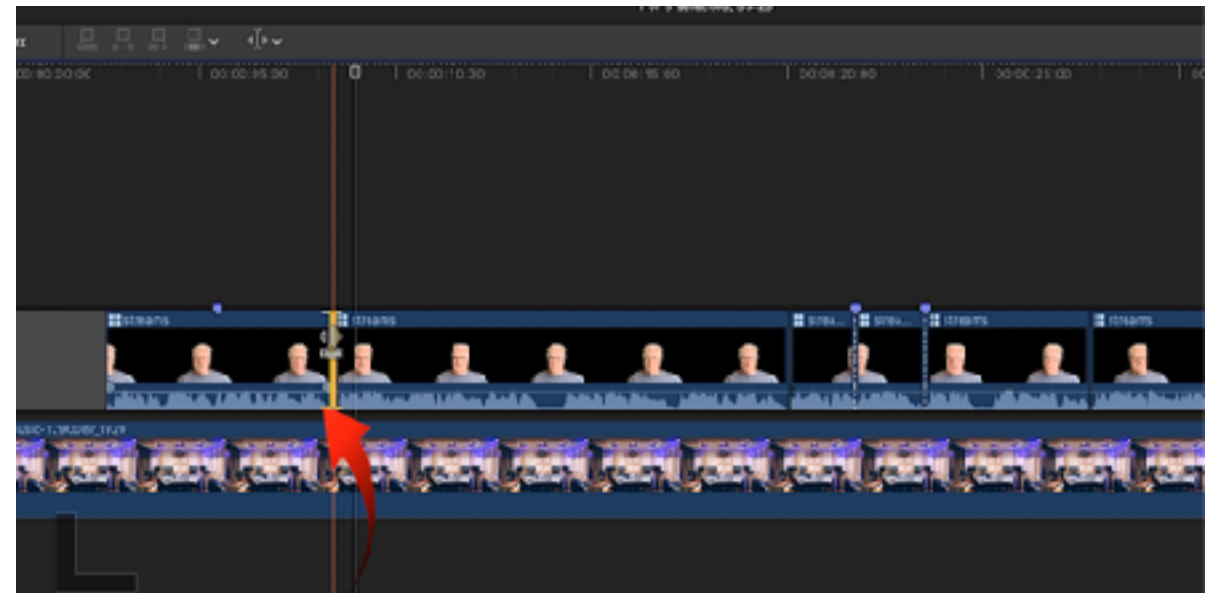
Good audio is not just good volume levels, but also be aware of clear voices. Watch for background sounds that may interrupt the clarity of the audio

videoeditoz@gmail.com   *https://www.trainingfinalcutpro.com*

How Long does an Edit Take

Time will run away with you.

One minute it will be morning and the next time you look up from the computer it will be night.

Be aware that editing is a very time consuming occupation and don't promise to complete a project in too short a time.

Consider that years can be spent on editing movies like "Lord of the Rings", - even TV programs, have expansive editing times.

Take a 30 minute free-to-air soap, it has about 23 minutes of finished footage. It takes 5 days to shoot, (about 4 x minutes of completed footage per day) an editor could take 60 hours to get the first edit for evaluation.