

KEY STEPS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN YOU WORK IN FINAL CUT

After launching Final Cut Pro (FCP) there are several steps you should take to make sure your work is all stored in one folder.

1. After launching FCP, open "System Settings" from the "Final Cut Pro" pull-down menu.
2. In the System Setting click on the top "Set" button to set where your scratch and render files will be stored. If it's a new project, go to the desktop, click on create a new folder, give it a name, click "Create" then click "Choose" and finally click "Create". This will be the folder were you'll keep all your project files. Later it will be easier to move the project to another computer because all the project, capture and render files will be in the same folder.
3. If this a new project, then you should name and save the project. From the "File" menu select "Save Project as...", give it a name and put it in the folder you just created for your scratch and render files.
4. You might also want to check the "Audio Visual Settings" in the "Final Cut Pro" pull-down menu to make sure you're working in the right format. This format probably will be "DV Pal 48 Hz" if you're using a PAL camera. If you're using an NTSC camera, then it will be "DV NTSC 48 Hz".
5. If you're not seeing all the Final Cut windows on the screen (meaning "Browser", "Viewer", "Canvas", "Timeline" and "Toolbar"), go to "Windows" pull-down menu, then select "Arrange / Standard". If you're still not seeing the Canvas and Timeline, go to "File" menu and select "New / Sequence". This should do the trick.
6. If you're working on an ongoing project, it's always a good idea to duplicate your sequence and save a copy with the date in the title before you start each day in case you mess it up and you want to go back to what you did the day before. To duplicate a sequence Control-Click on the sequence icon in the browser and choose "Duplicate". Then select the name of the new sequence and add the date. However, when you start working, make sure to Double-Click on the sequence icon in the browser so you work on it rather than work on the copy.
7. Now you're ready to work. If you have to capture your footage, connect the camera to the computer using Firewire. From the "File" menu select "Log and Capture". in the Log and Capture window you can control the camera's playback using the buttons that appear under the screen on the left, or the keys L (forward), K (stop) J (back).
8. if when you open the Log and Capture window you see color bars and a title that says, Preview Disabled, don't worry about it. if, on the other hand, you try to

run the tape and nothing happens, then you have a problem. if when you open the Log and Capture, there's no controls under the color bars, then you don't have a camera connected to the computer or it's turned off. so check your connection and make sure the camera is set for "Playback" and on "Camera".

9. I find that the most efficient way of capturing is using the "Capture Now" command, instead of "Log" and "Batch Capture". You can find the Capture Now button on the bottom right corner of the Log and Capture window. The best way to do it is clicking the "Now" button a couple seconds before you get to the footage you want to capture. When you want to stop recording, hit the "Escape" key on the top left of your keyboard. remember the camera has to be playing when you start capturing. you can't press "Capture Now" and the press play, you have to play, then pres "Capture Now". if you have breaks in the timecode, the image will freeze, so press "Escape" and start capturing a new clip. if you Log and Batch Capture and have breaks in the timecode, you'll waste a lot of time and end up getting nothing done. so be wary of breaks and timecode and work through them.

10. When you're shooting and rewind the tape to review what you shot, you might end up with a break in the timecode. The best way to avoid this is by running the camera for a few seconds before and after your shot. then, if you rewind, try to stop and start recording again before you reach the end of what you recorded previously. When you're recording the camera inserts what's called timecode in the tape.

11. timecode is what all editing systems use to keep track of footage. if there's a gap between clips in the camera, then there'll be a break in timecode... you've probably seen this when you're viewing a tape, then it stops playing and it goes to blue, then it starts again and the counter starts at zero.

12. timecode breaks make capturing very difficult. so if you do have timecode, breaks, be wary and work through them.

13. when editing remember the difference between insert and overwrite edits. inserts will mover everything further down the timeline to make room for the new clip. overwrite will cover whatever footage it replaces. everyone has different ways of editing. i prefer to never use overwrite. if i want to replace footage i usually place it on a new layer and then i'll delete what i wanted to replace.

14. remember, to delete a clip on the timeline, highlight it and press the "Delete" key. If you Shift-Delete a clip the other clips after it will shift left and cover the gap left by the clip.

15. You can move clips around the timeline by selecting and moving with the Move tool.

16. When you're editing remember the two switches on the right of your timeline. One (the one with the two arrows) enables snapping, meaning that if you move a clip near another, they'll snap together. The other (the one with the square and the perpendicular figure 8) disengages the audio and video tracks. you can deselect this when you want to move the audio or video of a clip independently in the timeline.

16. to edit clips onto the timeline you can either drag them from the viewer to the timeline or use the insert and overwrite buttons on the bottom left of the canvas (the yellow and red buttons). sometimes you might get an "insufficient media for edit" message. if that happens, try dragging the clip into the timeline.

17. on the top right corner of the viewer you'll see a pull-down menu that will allow you do see the title safe area on the screen and will also give you the option of seeing the image and wire frame. the wire frame is useful because then you can move the image and shrink it, etc. like you would do in Photoshop. the title safe area (two rectangles half an inch from the edge) will tell you where you can put your titles.

18. You can also move the image, shrink, rotate, etc. by Double-Clicking the clip, then clicking on the "Motion" tab on the top right of the Viewer window. There you can also change the opacity and crop the image.

19. if you're not seeing something you expected to see in the Motion tab, click on the little triangles on the left of the pane to reveal other options.

20. To see the sound levels on the audio track, click on the little mountain-looking icon on the bottom left of the timeline window. you will then see a red line appear on the soundtrack. The red line represents the level of your audio. if you pull it down it lowers the audio.

21. When you're working on the timeline and you see a red line on the top (or you see a screens that says "unrendered" when you try to play back), that means you have to render the media to be able to see it. The is done by either pressing Apple-R or by going to "Sequence" on the top menu and selecting "Render All".

22. To add text to your movie go to the bottom left of the Viewer window and select "Text" and "Text". Then click the "Control" tab on the top left of the Viewer window, and write the text in the box. Make sure that your text is big and legible and that it fits within the confines of the Title Safe rectangle.

23. To make subtitles first write the titles using the Text tool. Center the titles on the bottom of the screen, within the "title safe" margins. The text should be white and 36 size and there should one be one or two lines per title. If it's one line set in the "Motion" tab the center to 0, 215. If it's two lines set the center to 0, 170.

24 under the titles place a box to make them legible. You can create the box by selecting “Matte” from the button on the bottom left corner of the viewer window (the same button you selected for text). Choose the matte to be black, then double-click on it after placing it in the timeline. Go to the motion tab and set “Opacity” to 50%, then open the crop menu and set the left to 10, right to 10, top to 71 (if it’s a single title) and 77 (if it’s a double title). Set the bottom crop to 8. After you’re done the titles should be on top of the translucent box you created.

25. Remember to SAVE SAVE SAVE (Apple-S) as you work.