

# Video Editing<sup>1</sup>

Ricky Telg<sup>2</sup>

This publication about video editing is the fourth of a four-part series about developing effective video production practices. This series also covers video production, script-writing, and video equipment and video shot composition.

## Introduction

Editing a video is a creative process. Video editing is where you put all the various parts together into one comprehensive program. Video editing software programs digitize video, so the video can be edited in the computer, allowing you to make changes easily. It is suggested that you become very familiar with your video editing software *before* using it to develop a large-scale video production. Some video editing software packages are easy to learn, whereas some are difficult. This publication introduces you to the concept of video editing.

## The Video Editing Process and Project Software

Video editing is time-consuming. Video editing professionals estimate that for one minute of finished video in a program, it takes at least one hour of editing time. So for a 10-minute program, you can expect a minimum of ten *hours* of editing time to complete it. Depending on the number of special effects you want to include in the video program, that amount of time may double.



Figure 1. Video editing

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Some consumer-grade video editing software programs are less than \$100 and function well to create video programs. These low-end programs are in the price range of many amateur video producers.

Other editing programs are more expensive but provide more functionality and special effects choices. These more expensive programs, with an educational discount, can run from \$150 to \$1,000. Retail prices for these pricier editing programs can be as high as \$2,000.

Video editing software programs on the market include CyberLink PowerDirector, Corel® VideoStudio®, Adobe®

1. This document is WC126, one of a series of the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date June 2012. Visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
2. Ricky Telg, professor, Department of Agricultural Education and Communication, Institute of Food and Agricultural Services, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Premiere®, Apple® iMovie®, Apple® Final Cut Pro®, Pinnacle Studio, and many others. Learn from friends and experts the video editing program they use before purchasing your own. That said, irrespective of your chosen tools, understanding some general concepts for editing video is central to delivering a video program's message effectively.

## Cross-Platform Concepts for Video Editing

*Choose shots that best tell the story.* Use various shots and angles from your shot sequence (long shot, medium shot, close-up, high angle, low angle, etc.).

*Do not use everything you shoot.* An educational or promotional video is not a home slide show or movie, where you show everything that you did on your family vacation. Have a purpose for what video shots you plan to use. This goes back to the very beginning of the production process. Know what you want the video to accomplish and carry that purpose all the way through the editing stage.

*Use, but do not overuse, video transitions.* A video transition is the term used to indicate when an edit between shots is made. Video transitions are usually categorized as *cuts*, *dissolves* (which includes the *fade*), or *wipes*:

- A **cut** is a direct transition from one shot to the next. It is the most commonly used transition. For example, in video news editing, cuts are the predominant transition of choice. Use cuts most of the time.
- A **dissolve** shows a gradual change from one shot to the next. Use of the dissolve expresses a shift in time or location by gradually superimposing the next shot as the former recedes. In most movies or television programs, you will see a dissolve used to indicate the passage of time.
- A **fade** is a special form of the dissolve. In video, a fade is any shot that dissolves to or from a single color, usually black. A fade, like a dissolve, also indicates a passage of time, but the fade punctuates it. For television programs, there usually is a fade at the end of each segment of the program before a commercial break starts.
- A **wipe** is one video picture “wiping” off and another appears. Examples of wipes are clock wipes, where the video is “wiped off” the screen with what appears to be clock hands, and checkerboard wipes. This transition style calls attention to itself and should be used only when there is a specific reason to do so.

*Properly pace the program.* **Pacing** describes the speed or rhythm of a program, as perceived by the audience. In order to maintain audience interest and involvement, edit for pace. Generally, the pacing of a video program should be kept brisk. This means that most video shots should be short—in the neighborhood of 5 to 10 seconds in length each. However, for educational videos, the shot length could be longer. Instructional videos require that the audience be given sufficient time to learn new information.

*Finally, remember **continuity**.* Insert cut-ins and cutaways to cover continuity errors and jump cuts. (Cut-ins and cutaways are discussed in the EDIS publication *Video Equipment and Video Shot Composition*, the third of this four-part series on developing effective video production practices.)

## Additional Information

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