

8 tips to edit videos professionally

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If you just joined the editing process, you might be confused about what to do with millions of existing clips. Do not worry. Here are 8 things to keep in mind to help improve your editing.

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1. Maintain a project directory



When editing a big project for the first time, it's easy to just throw things at the desktop and hope everything goes well. Simply put, don't do that. Every time you start an editing project, you should create something called a "project directory".

It is really quite simple. Create a project folder, and in that folder, there should be a few subdirectories called Raw Footage, Sound, Music, Photos, Graphics, etc. Then you should put all your documents in these directories according to the right type. You should also label each file individually with a brief description of what's happening in it (but only if you have enough time to do it). Project files (whether for iMovie or Premiere) can be placed in the home directory, not necessarily in a subfolder.

This will make your project better organized and make it easier to access everything. The quick workflow doesn't guarantee you can find exactly what you want, but at least it can save you time.

2. Keep two backups

To prevent hard drive and memory card problems, keeping a copy in a separate location is extremely important. Cloud memory can also be a good option but to store videos is also quite time consuming. Always keep a copy of the project folder on your computer and on a separate hard drive somewhere else.

When the project ends and you want to store something else, keep the files on an external hard drive and delete everything from your main computer. Your hard drive may never have a problem, but in the event of an error, the backup will be very valuable.

3. Tidy video editing



It's easy to throw a clip on the timeline and do nothing. But don't do that. Cut off the head and the end of the clip to make it more neat, then find the right time to add the clip. No one wants to waste time watching miscellaneous things before the main action takes place, so get used to neatly editing videos for the benefit of the audience.

4. Choose 'weapon' wisely

When choosing a video editor, the most important is control. Do you need a simple tool that just throws a few clips and then adds the name to finish? iMovie, Windows Movie Maker or YouTube's video editor will be worth considering.

However, if you need a slightly more sophisticated tool that allows you to organize videos like Photoshop and use shortcuts, then Adobe Creative Cloud's Adobe Premiere Pro (used to edit releases Latest movies, like Gone Girl) will be a good choice. However, keep in mind that you will take some time to get used to these editors. Sometimes, you should start with editors like Adobe Premiere Elements, Final Cut Pro X or Sony Vegas, first.

YouTube and Vimeo offer lots of tips for any kind of editing, just take the time to search.

5. Avoid the jumpcut



(Jumpcut or jump maker is the section that was cut when editing video).

When filming an interview, the interviewee kept saying 'um' or 'uh', you will really be in trouble. The good news is that you can cut these videos and then add additional video clips related to the content (called b-roll or cutaways) in place of these awkward moments. If you do this carefully, your video will be perfect.

Note that you will need an advanced (non-linear) editing system for this using a tool, such as Adobe Premiere or Final Cut. Dedicated editors allow video layering, but iMovie does not.

6. Use the second source for audio



You will always get a clearer sound when using a tool other than the camera. If possible, record your sound with a better microphone and separate recording system. If possible, have the person you are recording the audio recording separately and synchronize the audio later (again, you will need a non-linear editor for this). You can do this visually by matching waveforms, clapping sounds or using something like PluralEyes. Currently, Adobe Premiere CC actually provides the same synchronization function by integrating this feature in the application.

Sorry, low-level editors cannot do this. If possible, find a microphone (like a lavalier or microphone line) that can plug directly into the camera. This is a quick solution for better sound and you should try to avoid using the microphone on the camera as your main audio source.

7. Change different scenes

One important thing to consider while editing is to keep your content intuitive and interesting. Instead of just using the same scene for the entire video, try changing the different angles to make the video more interesting. Do this simply like recording your interview with two cameras and switching between them (another way to remove unnecessary "uh" and "um" sections).

However, it is important to limit these sections. Do not do it after every second. An interesting rule to keep in mind is to perform cut operations based on the rhythm of the background music, or on pauses when someone is speaking. If you overdo this, the video will be jerky, causing discomfort to the viewers.

8. Tell the story seamlessly



The most important thing when you edit is to remember to tell a story seamlessly. And a story must have three parts: the beginning, the middle and the end.

If not through the editing process, you will only have a collection of random photos, without any links to each other. The editing process will make the complete video structure and professional video editors the highest paid in the film industry.

Although you may not necessarily need to become a professional editor, these tips will help a lot. Hopefully you will like them. Do you have other tips for professional video editing? Let us know in the comment section below!

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