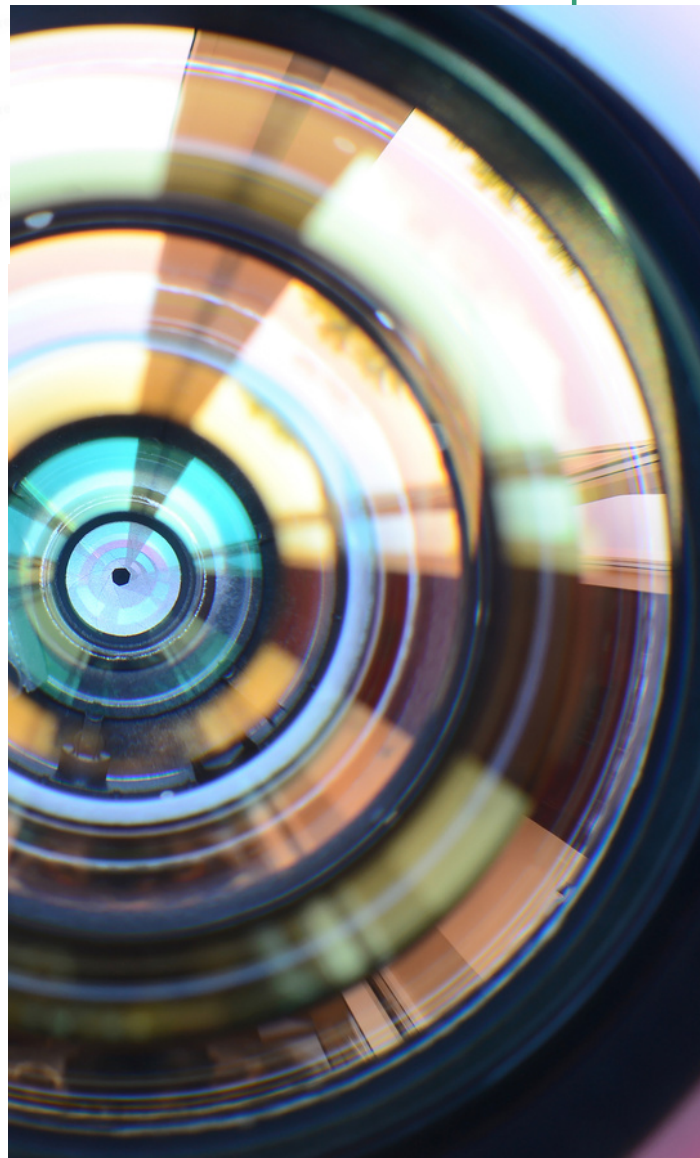


# GUIDANCE FOR AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION



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# IMPRINT



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# Introduction

This publication provides practical information and advice for you to create video content for various social media platforms (e.g. YouTube, Facebook, etc). The booklet briefly introduces you to how to plan a video material, what steps you should pay attention to during implementation, how you can make more attractive videos with simple technical tools, what to pay attention to during post-production (editing), and it also gives ideas for implementing the distribution. No prior training is required to use the guide, and you can even start working with a smartphone capable of recording video. To make it easier for you to navigate, we have grouped the work processes into four steps.

## First step: preparing for the shooting

Preparation is the basis of all work. The stronger the foundation you build on, the better your results will be.

### This step includes:

- Topic selection. Ask yourself exactly what topic you want to work on and why. Why are you interested in this topic? Will others be interested?
- Title. A good title arouses the viewers' interest, they will be curious about the film.
- Genre. You will get to know the different documentary and online genres, and you can choose the one that best suits the topic.
- Creating the storyline. Why it's important to have a storyline. How to start and end a movie.
- Shooting and setting lists. Getting to know the different camera positions, making a simple shot-list.

Tip: take time to prepare everything for the shoot, because there are very few things you can change or improve during the shoot.

## Second step: filming

In this step, you will actually shoot your movie.

### This step includes:

- Communication. Description of work with the character of the film.
- Setting the scene / production processes. How do you set up the scene before the shooting?
- Video camcorders and smartphones. Knowledge of how video recording devices work.
- Sound recording. Knowledge of audio equipment and working with it.
- Lighting. Understanding the use of natural light and extra lighting.
- B-rolls and inserts. The role of taking extra shots and their effect on the film.
- Organizing files. The importance of organizing your files when transferring them to your editing device.

Tip: here, in addition to the actors (or interviewees), you may also need the help of your friends who support the filming. They will be the "crew members", e.g. camera operator, director, reporter, technical assistant, etc.

## Third step: post-production

During post-production, you will arrange the recorded scenes one behind the other. This is where the music, noises and subtitles are added to the film. Post-production is often simply called editing or cutting.

### This step includes:

- Video editing platforms. Different editing softwares / editing modes.
- Different cuts. For example, learning about rough cutting, fine cutting and final cutting.
- Sound editing. Editing the audio track and removing background noises.
- Color grading. The effect of colors on the film.
- Choosing the music and sound effects.
- Exporting. Choosing the right format for your purpose.

Tip: creative editing makes the film even more exciting.

#### Fourth step: distribution

After the completion of the film, the finished production must be delivered to the viewers. In our case, this primarily means online distribution.

#### This step includes:

- Online platforms. Introducing different online video platforms.

Tip: you can find more help on online distribution at [www.edufluencer.eu](http://www.edufluencer.eu) (IO5-Public Awareness Campaign document).

# Preparing for the shooting

## Choose your theme

The very first step is to choose an exciting topic or person (interviewee). Think about why you chose this particular topic and what questions concern you in this regard. Gather all available information on the topic. If necessary, do a little research too. Ask yourself if the chosen topic or person is also interesting to the audience and why? Plan what effect you will have on the audience and what the main message of the film will be.

For example, you want to interview a foreign musician living in your country. Think about the difficulties and problems you have to deal with in her/his life and work. Imagine yourself in her/his situation and start planning the shoot based on that. If you have the opportunity, meet the interviewee before the shoot so that you can get to know them better and could ask more personalized questions.

Always make sure your questions are tactful and free of stereotypes.

Here are some questions to ask yourself before you start working:

- Why is it important to talk about this topic?
- What is the message of the film?
- How do you want to tell this story?
- How can the end result be useful, how can it help the interviewee (more people get to know her/him, he gets more opportunities to perform, etc.)?

## Title

After you have chosen the topic, you should give the project a name, this will be the title of your film. If you choose a good title at the initial stage, you will establish a connection with the project, which will increase your positive attitude necessary for making it. Remember, choosing a good title is key to getting people's attention to watch your movie. By trying out several different titles as you work, you can find out which one is the most eye-catching and which one is closest to the story. You can also choose a mysterious title to grab viewers' attention. The title can include your character's name, a fantasy name, or a text with a sign opposite to the film's story, which can also be exciting.

## Genre

Documentary films, like fiction films, have different genres. Genre is the systematization of motion picture expression, based on similarities either in subject matter, formal approach, or audience reactions to the film. For example, it can be a portrait film, nature film, ethnography film, concert film, educational film, interview series, travel film, etc. Of course, there is a transition between genres, for example, if we include fictional events in the story, we are talking about a docudrama. In addition, online video genres come in many forms: vlogs, educational videos, product reviews/unboxing videos, humorous scenes, do-it-yourself videos, ask-me-anything videos, etc. The style of online videos is usually more informal and personal than traditional documentaries. The character often presents the subject in the first person and work with small video crews. We have to mention that behind these seemingly spontaneous and 'easy-to-do' videos, there is often a lot of professional work. It is important to choose a genre that fits the chosen topic, your target group (viewers) and your personality.

## Creating the storyline

A documentary must also have a storyline. A documentary does not need an exact pre-written script like a fiction film, but by giving the documentary a storyline, it will be easier for the viewers to follow the events.



The main story/plot can be described in a few lines or paragraphs. This is necessary to specify the beginning of the film, the dramatic points and the ending/closure. The history of the documentary can be colored by answers to questions, archival recordings, clippings, and photos. Explore the drama of the film's theme or character; then put it on paper and shoot it. During the preliminary research, the interviewer has a significant role in the development of the story, as your character's answers will give the drama of the film, and this will allow the audience to immerse themselves in the action of the film.

The more you get to know the subject or character before the shoot, the more powerful your interview questions will be because you will bring extra content to the questions and answers. Remember that empathy with people who trust you and share their stories is essential. You can find help for compiling the questions in the following document: IO2-Minority Culture Descriptor ([www.edufluencer.eu](http://www.edufluencer.eu)).

Let's say the documentary shows a specific situation or talks about a unique topic without having an interviewee. In this case, the story can be followed by narration (voice-over). For example, if a documentary film presents the life of young circus acrobats who fled from Ukraine into the EU, we can only get to know the story with the help of effective visual images (recordings), figures and textual background information (narration).

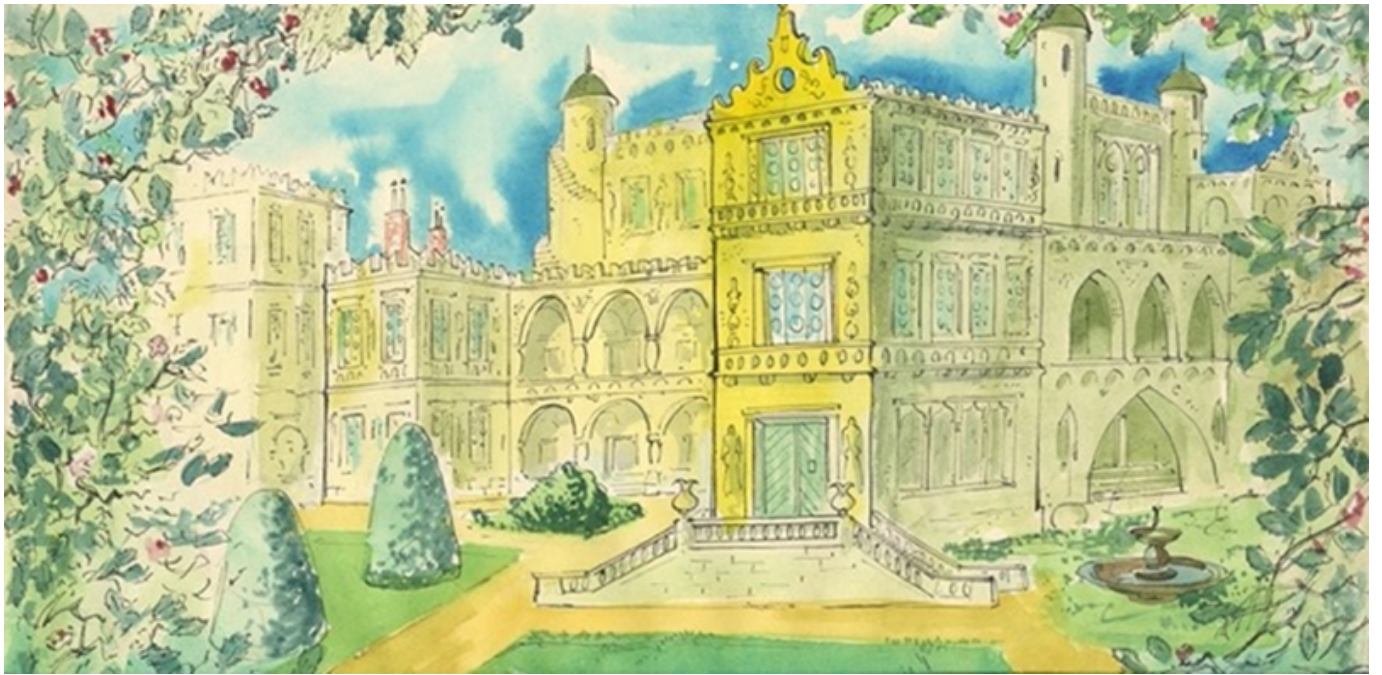
It is important that you think about the possible shooting locations, the required cuts, the music/sounds that you need to record, as well as all other details that you may need to shoot or obtain before the shooting.

## Shot list

Even before the shoot, make a simple shot and setup list so that you can plan the shoot, as well as collect the necessary personal and technical needs (cameras, lights, microphone, crew members, etc.). You save time if you already know in advance what shots and scenes you want to take and how. If you have the opportunity, visit the location before the shoot to familiarize yourself with it and be able to prepare for possible difficulties and arrange the location if necessary. The shot list (or technical script) also helps you to accurately follow the planned scenes and images, as well as their chronological orders. Try to plan the shoot in such a way that you can shoot (group) related scenes at the same time, even if you will use them far apart in time in the finished film.

We have shown some frequently used shot types as examples (camera framing).

Long shot



A Medium long shot



Mid shot



Close-up



Extreme close-up



# Filming

## Connection with the subject

Good communication and establishing a connection with the interviewee are the key to the progress of your work. If the subject of the report comes from a minority, treat them with due attention, because they may be more sensitive. Before shooting, talk to her/him to break the ice. Create an environment of trust where she/he can freely tell her/his story. If we had a question where the interviewee felt uncomfortable during the filming, it is better to leave it out of the final product. If you didn't get an answer to your question, ask the question again in a different wording at the end of the interview to see if you get the answer you expected. For example, if you're interviewing an artist with a minority background, ask primarily about her/his art, and she/he'll probably talk about her/his wider life in connection with that. Communication plays a significant role in minority communities. It is important to know the community and their culture. Different cultures have their own traditions and characteristics, which are very important to respect.

During the interview, if you notice that characters have wandered off, are talking off-topic, kindly interrupt them and ask them a new question. If that doesn't work either, give the interviewee a break. During the break, direct them to the main topic with an informal conversation, let them talk about it comfortably, without the camera. As you continue the casual conversation, take them back to their seat, continue the conversation with them while recording, and ask them the same question in a different way so that their answer appears on the recording.

## Scene setting/production processes

The setting of the scene is often determined by the attributes of the location. If you have an interviewee, you can record with either a smartphone or a video camera. It helps a lot if you use a tripod with the camera so that the image does not move. First, adjust the location of the interviewee based on the natural lighting of the location, then adjust the camera and extra light (if available).

Handheld camera shots are suitable for following moving characters, as well as showing their wider environment. Let the camera follow the movement of the character related to the subject. For handheld shots, try to hold the device as stable as possible, but it is okay if the image shakes a little bit sometimes. It helps a lot to hold the phone/camera with both hands with your elbows close to your body. When following the movement, don't just control the camera with your hands, but try with your whole body.

## Video recording devices

You can choose from various video recording devices to start recording. This can be a device suitable for recording any moving image, from mobile phones to high-definition video cameras.

Nowadays, the images of smartphones are often suitable for making a simple short film. The most important thing is to know the tool you want to work with.

### Some tips to take better photos with your phone:

- clean your camera lens.
- check what video settings your phone supports (aperture, exposure, frame rate, file formats, etc.). If you learn how to use the device manually, you can capture much more creative images.
- hold the phone horizontally so that the image will be "film-like" (16:9 ratio).
- if possible, secure the phone somehow so that it does not move during the interview.

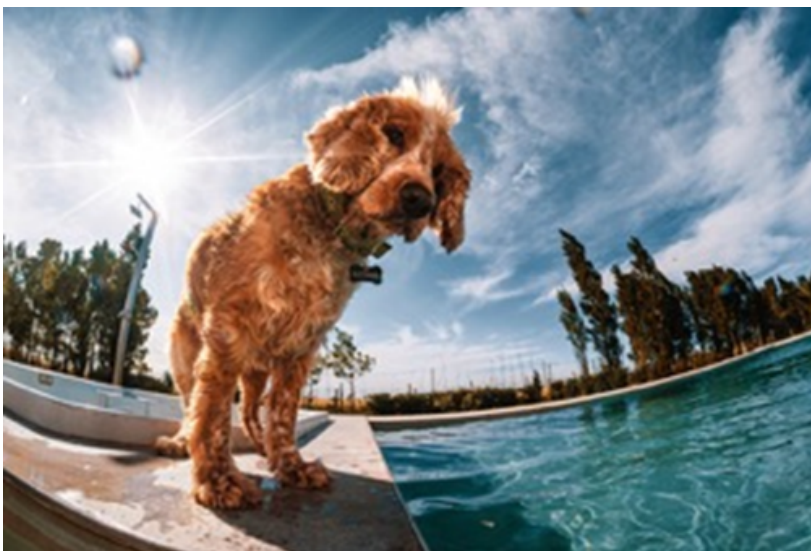
While recording, sometimes look at the camcorder and control the recording process and the picture.

When shooting video, we can usually only use two of the exposure triangles: aperture and ISO. The smaller the aperture number, the more you open the aperture to allow more light to reach the sensor, but the depth of field will be smaller, i.e. it will be more difficult to focus. The shutter speed is usually set to 50 when working in the PAL system (25p frame rate). If you see that the person's face is too bright, lower the ISO value. ISO is your camera's sensitivity to light. A lower ISO value reduce sensitivity to light, while a higher ISO means more sensitivity. Since we can only reduce the ISO value and raise the aperture number to a certain extent, for outdoor shots you may also need an ND (neutral-density) filter to further reduce the amount of incoming light.

When it comes to professional camcorders, there are many options on the market. There are camcorders developed for direct video production, but photo cameras capable of video are also widespread (DSLR, MILC). The lens on these systems is usually interchangeable. For example, the “50mm” lens is one of the most common lenses on the market and can be used for everything from portraits to landscapes and night shots. These devices are capable of capturing much more detailed images and offer much greater creative freedom, but their use also requires considerably more knowledge and preparation. But remember, your film will not be exciting because of the technical devices only, it needs your knowledge and creativity too.

A few types of camera lenses (sample of their images):

- Fisheye lens



- Macro lens



- Zoom lens



- Fixed lens (50mm)



- Wide lens



- Telephoto lens



## Sound recording

Many people forget that the sound is just as important as the picture in the finished film. In an interview, for example, the entire recording is worthless if you cannot hear the speech properly. Recording demanding sound sometimes requires additional devices (microphones). This is true for both smart phones and video camcorders.

If you're filming an interview with a smartphone, try getting a "lavalier" or "reporter" type microphone that's compatible with your phone. These are usually much more affordable than tools intended for professional use. These can be cable or wireless devices.

If you decide to use a DSLR camera or video camcorder, there are more options for recording audio. The easiest way is to record the audio directly on the camcorder. If possible, use headphones to check the sound.

Always check the sound level by asking the interviewee to say something (e.g. count from zero to ten) and check the sound through the headphones and on the device's display. If the indicator shows that the sound recording level reaches the red color on the display, the sound will be distorted. Reduce the volume until you reach the right point. While recording, occasionally look at the microphone indicator light to check if the device is recording. When you use a lavalier microphone to the interviewee, place it on top of the shirt, in line with the chest, to get a clear sound.

Some common types of microphones are:

- Shotgun microphone on camera



- Lavalier microphone



- Reporter microphone



- Built-in camera microphone

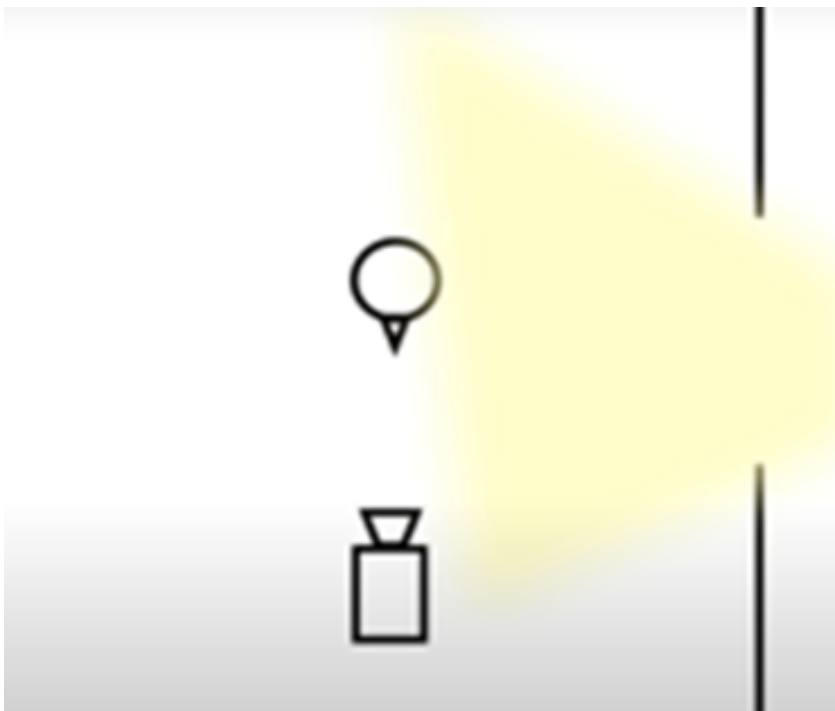


- "Boom" microphone

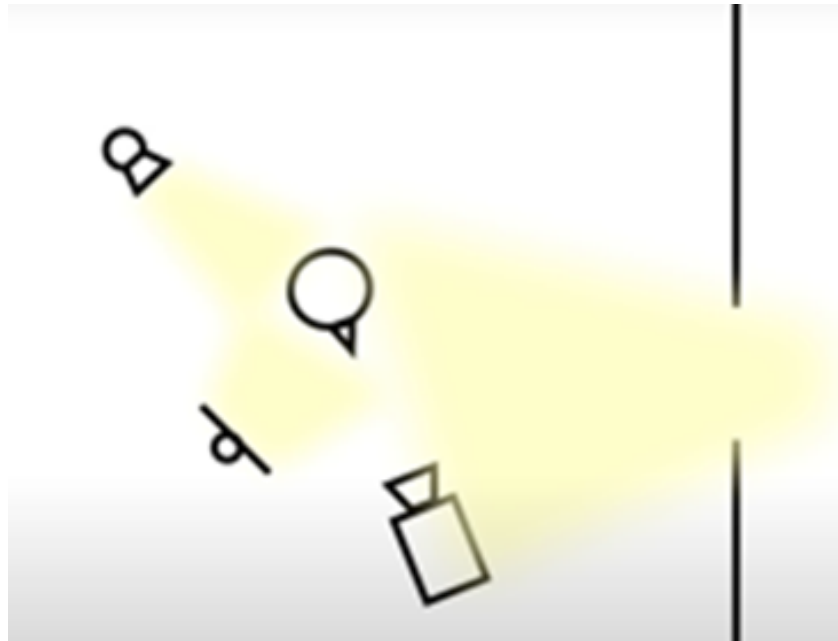


## Lighting

Documentaries are often shot in natural light. During the recording of the interview, the light (e.g. the Sun) should preferably not shine from behind the interviewee, because the interviewee's face will be dark. But it's also not ideal if the bright light comes directly from behind the camera, because the image can "burn out" (turning to white). It is best to set up the scene so that the light is coming from the side/above to make the whole shot brighter (a little cloudy sky is perfect). If you're shooting indoors and the location has a window, you can set up the scene so that the character is sitting where the natural light comes in from the side. If you are using a DSLR camera or camcorder, check the light using the camera's exposure indicator.



If the room is too bright, curtains can help reduce the incoming light. To avoid unwanted shadows, use aluminum foil or white sheets. Fix the aluminum foil to a stand, adjust it in the right place and try to reflect the light from the window so that it hits the shadow on the face (light reflector). However, keep in mind that sometimes a little shadow makes the shot more beautiful.



You can also create a simple lighting setup with a floor lamp. Place the floor lamp to the side of the character to spotlight the person. Also, using a table lamp behind the character provides an excellent background for the scene.

## Inserts and B-rolls

What are inserts? Any shot that draws viewers' attention to additional points of view in a given scene is called an insert or b-roll. Inserts are also used to supplement the storytelling with additional visual information and make the subject more enjoyable for the viewers. These extra shots can be taken of the location, objects, a hand, or characters in different positions, such as a thinking person, walking figures, etc. These b-rolls help unfold the story of the film. For example, if you are interviewing a sculptor, you can show pictures of the sculptures, the studio, or the artist at work during the conversation. These are all inserts.

Inserts have two main tasks. On the one hand, to help present the main storyline more smoothly or more accurately at certain points, and on the other hand, if any part of the main shot became problematic during the filming, for example, it was blurred or the focus was not good, the insert help to cover up the problem

## Organize files

Whether you record with a smartphone or a camcorder, organizing your files is essential when transferring material to your computer. Let's say the shoot lasts several days; create folders per day and import sounds and images in chronological order. Place the sounds, pictures, and other recordings in a separate folder. The orderliness of the shots and scenes will be a great help during editing. It can also be useful if you make notes to yourself during filming, which shots is good and which ones not. Also, be sure to make a copy of the recordings immediately after the shoot, so that nothing gets lost or damaged.

# Post-production

## Video editing platforms

There are many video editing platforms (software) on the market. Some are free to use, such as iMovie, HitFilm Express, or DaVinci Resolve, while others require payment, such as Final Cut Pro or Adobe Premiere Pro.

There can be big differences between software, but their basic operation is similar. These softwares are timeline-based and non-linear video editing applications. Nowadays, better and better applications are appearing for tablets and smartphones too. The biggest advantage of desktop video editing software is that you can work on a larger screen/display than on a tablet.

We now present the basics of how iMovie works as a sample.



Rough cut/ Fine cut/ Final cut

## Rough cut

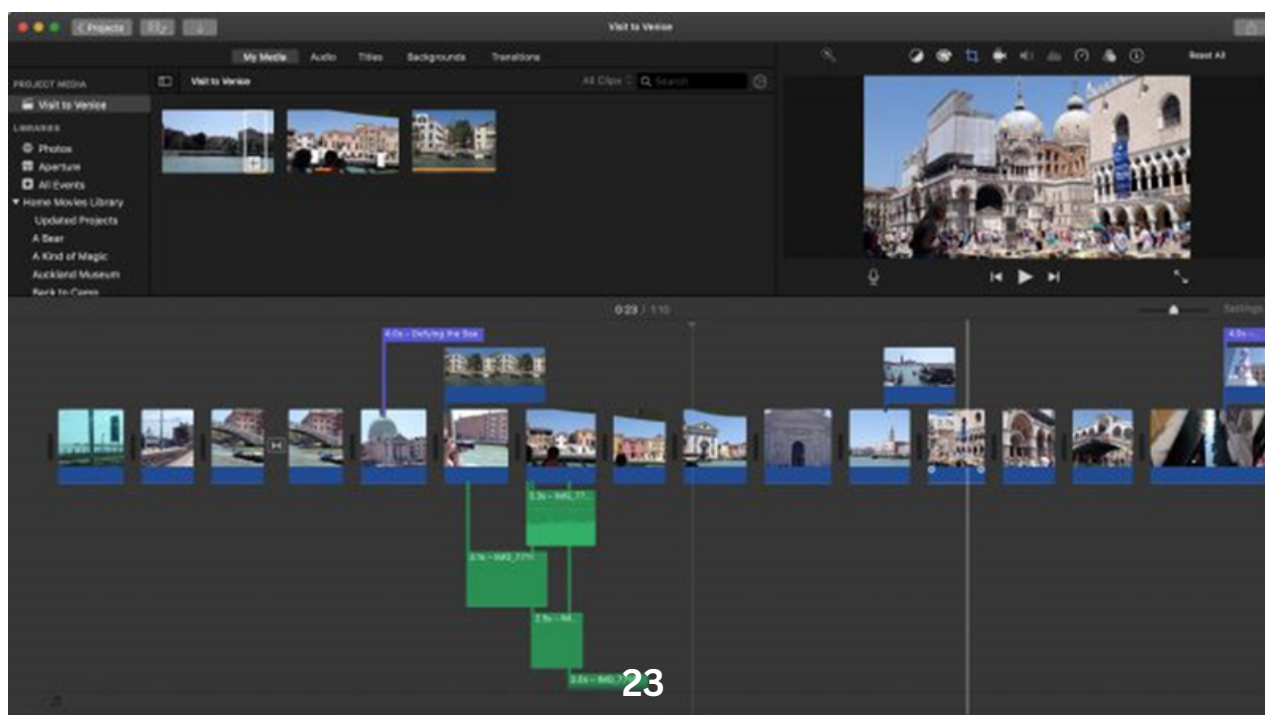
The rough cut is technically the first cut we start working with. This version will likely be longer than the finished film, have some errors, and be rougher overall than the final edited version. The rough cut must go through a series of cuts, edits and changes until the final version is the best it can be. A rough cut mostly focuses on the main plot of the film to give you a rough idea of how the film will look. The main storyline of the film is developed through the rough cut.

## Fine cut

Fine cut no longer focuses on the entire film, but on the details of each scene. The fine cut highlights and strengthens the rhythms and structures identified in the first cut. That's why it's worth paying a lot of attention to every detail of the editing, including cuts, transitions, and text animations. If you find any errors, all corrections should be made at this cutting phase. For fine editing, try to connect the shots as "smoothly" as possible, so that the scenes do not "jump" between each other, and the action of the film is continuous.

## Final cut

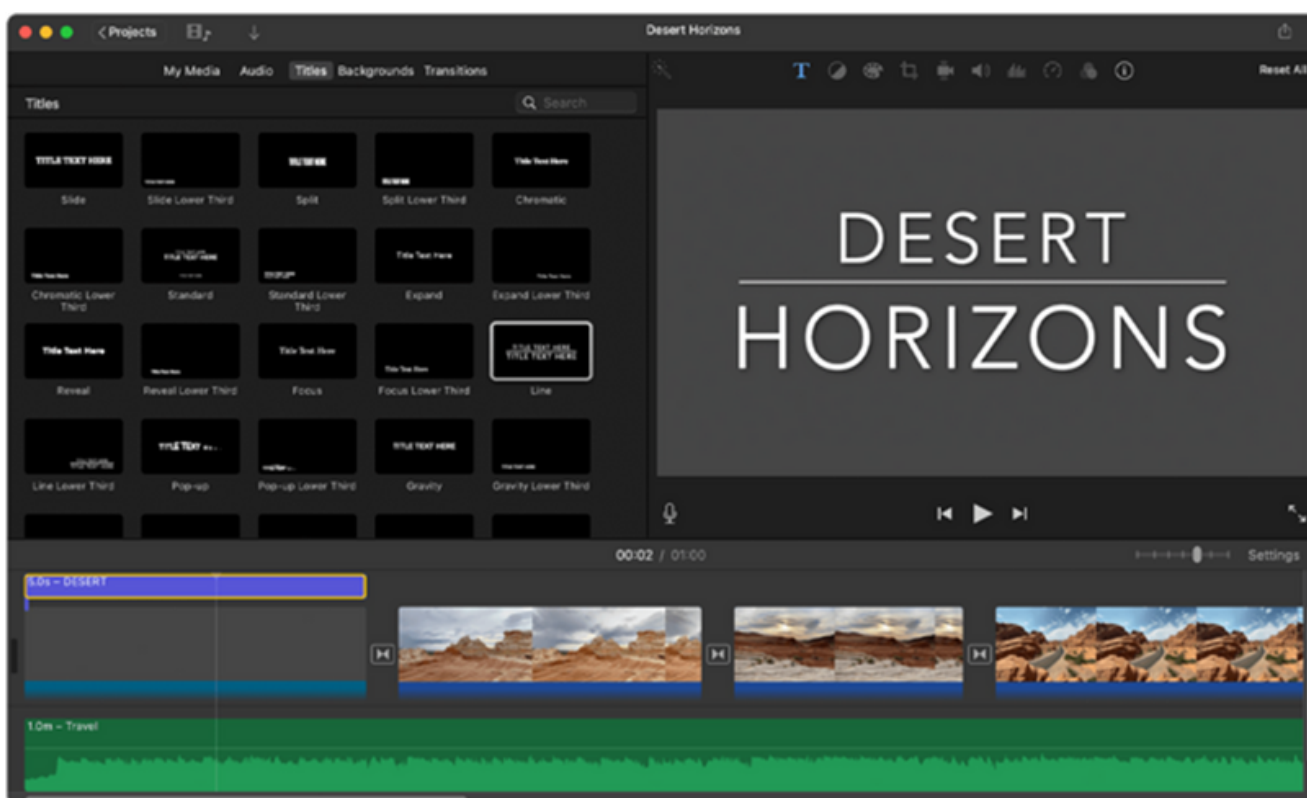
This is where you do all the color correction and insert the special visual and sound effects, add texts and voice-overs. These steps should only be done last, so that you don't end up working on shots that won't be included in the finished film.



## Text editing

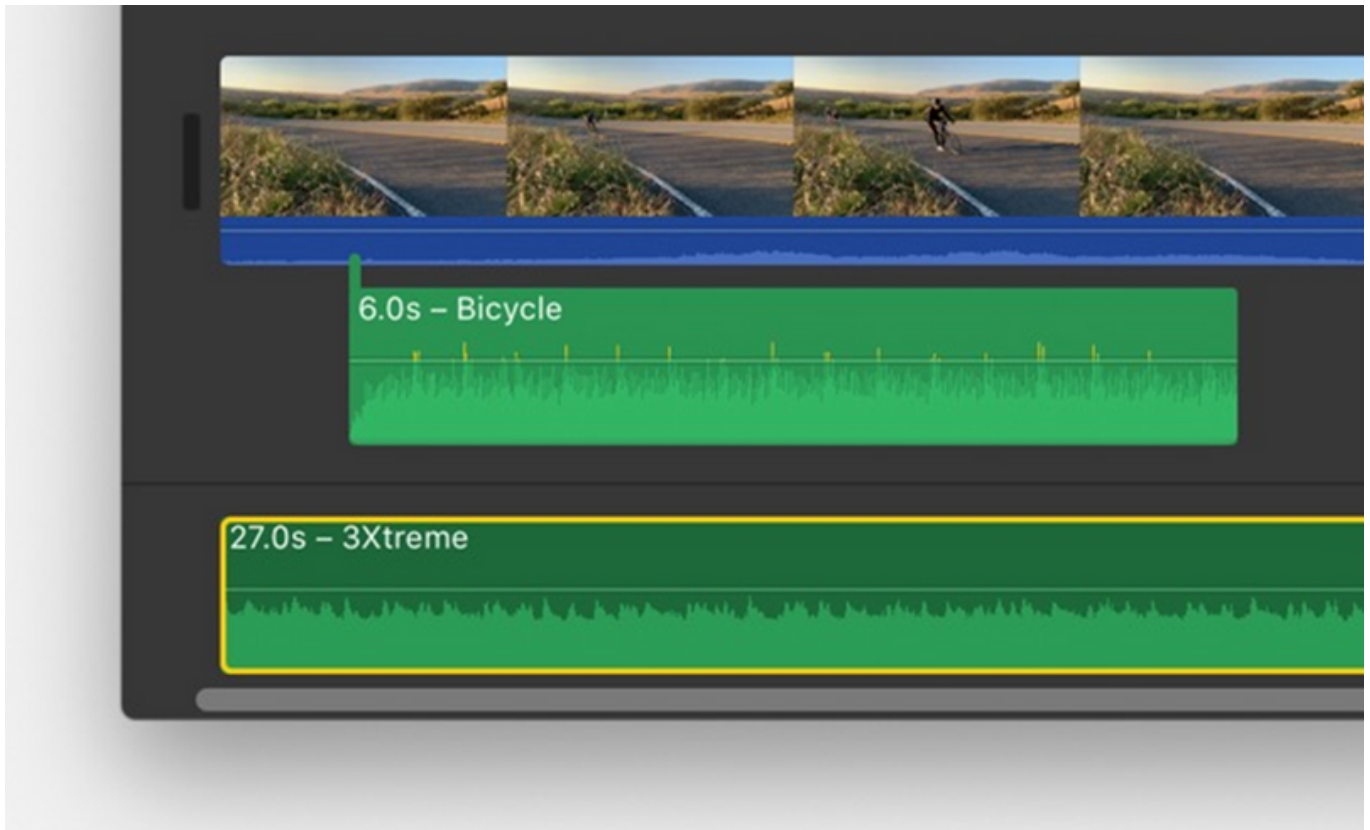
It is very easy to add text or subtitles to a clip, but for this you need to know the basic operation of the editing software. By clicking on the text box, you can access the size and style of the texts. You can change the font, size, position, spacing and other small settings. Only provide as much information as text that is absolutely important.

The font, color and size of the texts can be easily changed in the "Text" section.



## Sound editing

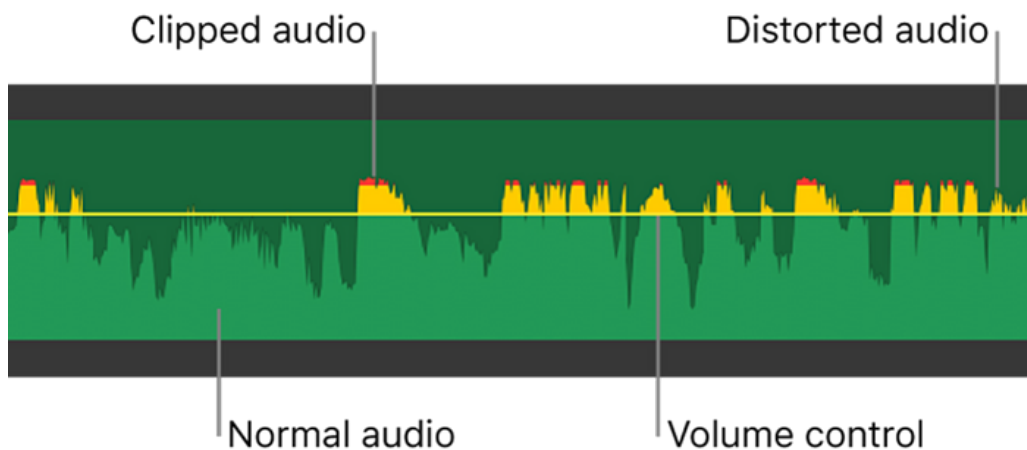
High-quality sound is just as important as aesthetic images. Basic audio editing, such as background noise removal, volume control, is available on all editing platforms. Here are some examples of editing on the iMovie platform. The existence of the sound wave is essential to control the volume. You can simply activate it in the settings on the right side of the timeline.



The Adjust button in the upper right corner gives you access to some basic audio editing tools to change the volume of the selected clip. The audio settings window also offers noise reduction and equalization tools, as well as a variety of effects, from robot to echo, that you can change the sound of your video.

## Fine tune and Audio

You can adjust the volume within the clips themselves. Each clip has a volume bar that can be moved up and down to increase or decrease the volume. There are also Fade In and Fade Out buttons at the beginning and end of the clips, which can be dragged to adjust the length of the transition. Adding a short fade in and out will make the sound much softer and less disturbing when a new clip starts.



By default, editing platforms manage the audio and video tracks together, so they can be easily handled and moved around the project. However, sometimes you want to use the audio and video parts of a clip separately. In iMovie, select the clip in the timeline, then go to the Modify drop-down menu and choose Detach Audio. You will now have two clips; one is the picture and the other is the sound.

You can do a lot of creative things after the audio is muted. For example, you can extend the audio recording so that it starts before watching the video or continues for a few seconds after the video fades out. You can also cut out pieces from the middle of the audio while leaving the video intact.

## Music/sound effects

In addition to the recorded soundtrack, you can easily add music, sound effects or narration (voice over) to the project. Any of these files can be imported using the import button in iMovie. You can also access the audio files via the Content Library (in the right corner of the screen).

As for the narration, you can pre-record the audio and then import it into the project. Or in iMovie, go to the Window drop-down menu and choose Record Audio. The voiceover tool allows you to watch the video while recording using the built-in microphone or a microphone that can be connected to a computer.

## Transition and Color Control

Select the clip and adjust the color scheme of your film simply by adjusting the color saturation and exposure. You can make some scenes in black and white if you find it more effective. In iMovie, you can make simple color adjustments by playing around with the arrow. You can also use the "Ken Burns" effect to move your photos. Make sure that the recorded image is not "too colorful" because it has an unnatural effect.



## Keyboard shortcuts

Knowing the keyboard shortcuts for the most common functions and commands will significantly speed up the editing processes. To access the keyboard commands, search the help menu of your editing software.

Hide iMovie	⌘ +H
Quit iMovie	⌘ +Q
New Project	⌘ +N
Open Project	⌘ +O
Save Project	⌘ +S
Export Movie	⌘ +E
Save Frame	⌘ +F
Import File	⌘ +I
Get Clip Info	⇧ + ⌘ +I
Undo (up to 10 levels of Undo)	⌘ +Z
Redo (up to 10 levels of Redo)	⇧ + ⌘ +Z
Cut	⌘ +X
Copy	⌘ +C
Paste	⌘ +V
Crop	⌘ +K
Split Video at Playhead	⌘ +T
Create Still Clip	⇧ + ⌘ +S
Select All	⌘ +A
Select None	⌘ +D
Extract Audio	⌘ +J
Paste Over	⇧ + ⌘ +V
Lock Audio	⌘ +L
Reverse Clip Direction	⌘ +R
Command Help	⌘ +?

## Export

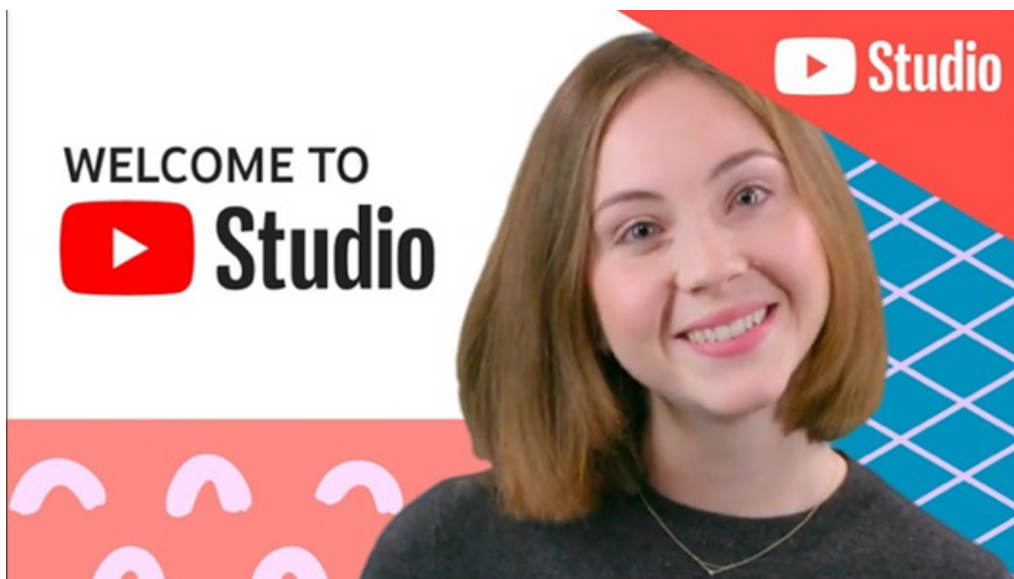
There are different video formats. If you want to archive your film, try to choose the best quality when exporting. Also pay attention to what you will use the finished product for, e.g.: YouTube, Facebook, etc. These online sites do not require the most detailed format because they take up too much space.

## Copyrights

If you want to publish your finished film on platforms such as Youtube or Facebook, all materials used, including still images, archive footage, music, must be royalty-free, otherwise they may be considered copyright infringement. If you decide to use images or music from the Internet, make sure they are copyright free. When it comes to music, there are a few places where you can get royalty-free music, such as YouTube Studio's music collection. Another good platform that provides royalty-free content is Pixabay or Unsplash. In addition, you can ask your friends to make music for your film.

## Dissemination

There are online platforms where you can post movies like Youtube and Facebook. With your gmail account, you can create a personal channel on YouTube, on which you can freely publish your films. You can also earn money on Youtube if you reach a certain number of subscribers and viewers. In this case, you need to activate the AdSense button on Youtube. Vimeo is another good platform where professional filmmakers mainly have accounts. Of course, you can also upload videos on Facebook, but you have more creative freedom on sites specially designed for video sharing.



Participating in festivals is one of the established methods of professional distribution of films, whether documentary or fiction. Many distribution companies attend film festivals to select films for distribution.

For online distribution of your film, you can find more information in the “IO5 – Public Awareness Campaign” document on the project's website.