Larry's Final Cut Pro Newsletter

Editor: Larry Jordan
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Welcome to the seventeenth edition of my Final Cut Pro newsletter!

The goal of this newsletter is to provide information helpful to the professional user of Final Cut Pro. This newsletter publishes around the middle of each month. Past issues are not archived, however, key articles are posted to my website for your future reference. Starting this month, all software references are to Final Cut Pro 5 unless otherwise noted.

Also, please invite your friends to visit my web site -- www. larryjordan.biz. We are working to make it a great Final Cut resource!

Newsletter Contents

Sigh...

My apologies for the delay in this month's issue. About midnight last night, I finally wrapped all the principle writing for my latest book for Lynda.com and Peachpit Press: *Hands on Training for Final Cut Pro 5.* Peachpit scheduled it for release in August, so I figured I better get it done. Getting it written took all my available time for the last couple of months. This issue of the newsletter was supposed to be the June issue. It just wasn't possible. Thanks for your patience.

Seminar Report:
Supercharge Your Productivity with Final Cut Pro in Boston

Our Final Cut seminars in Chicago and Los Angeles were great. 98.5% of all attendees were delighted with the information and all but one want to attend another seminar.

So, our latest seminar is **July 16 in Boston** -- at the Doubletree Suites Hotel. This is the Saturday after MacWorld - Boston, so if you are going to the Expo, stay for one more day and take your editing skills to the next level.

This eight-hour seminar will give you productivity secrets that can make your editing fly! There are ten sessions in total, and the LA seminar considered these five to be the most valuable:

- File Organization and media management
- Answers to audience questions
- Solving output problems
- Editing Power Tips
- Working with Multiclips
- New features in Final Cut Pro 5

Registration is $195 and we only have
50 seats available, so when those are filled, the seminar is closed.

Larry's Guarantee

> For those of you who haven't heard me teach, I've decided to put my money where my mouth is. I'm so confident that you'll discover Final Cut techniques that will benefit you immediately that all my seminars are **FULLY 100% guaranteed**. If you are not satisfied, for any reason, let me know and I'll refund your registration fee.

See you there!

Looking for Seminar Partners

I've had a lot of requests to bring my seminars to Europe and Australia -- which we would love to do. So, we are looking for seminar partners to help us with location planning and marketing. Our current plans call for events in London and Sydney, ideally in the fall.

If your organization would be interested in working with us, please contact us for more details: seminars@larryjordan.biz

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New Polls -- Tiger, FCP 5 and FCP HD

I have two new polls in need of your opinions.

The first poll asks whether you are having problems running FCP 5 on either 10.3.9 or Tiger. I want to know whether things are running smoothly or not for you. There's a lot of conjecture, I'd like to get closer to the facts.

The second poll asks whether you are having problems running FCP HD on either 10.3.9 or Tiger. There have been a lot of reported problems and I'm trying to see how extensive these issues may be.

Poll results are displayed immediately after voting, or by going to my home page. Once you vote, the polls always show you current results. Based upon voting so far, I think you will find the poll results interesting.

Your responses to these monthly polls are extremely helpful. They help me determine what material to put in my books, seminars, training, and web site. I use them constantly and I'm grateful that you take the time to complete them.

Click to see past survey results: http://www.larryjordan.biz/surveys.html

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Upgrading to FCP 5 -- Revisited

Well, we've had over a month with FCP 5 in the market and I promised to keep you informed about what I've learned.

The Executive Summary

- I think Final Cut Pro 5 is as stable and effective on OS X 10.3.9 as FCP HD.
- I think Tiger (OS X 10.4.1) is not stable, nor should it be used for serious production unless you have no alternative.
- Running Final Cut Pro HD on 10.3.9 is fine, provided you do not upgrade to QuickTime 7.
- I think Final Cut Pro HD should not be used on Tiger.
- I think Final Cut Pro HD should not be used with QuickTime 7.

More Details

A couple of weeks ago, I sent emails to ten friends, trainers, forum masters, vendors, and FCP gurus asking their opinion of the new operating system and Final Cut. What I failed to do was ask their permission to use their names along with their comments in this newsletter. And, as these folks make their living selling their opinions, I've decided to summarize their comments without attribution. (Sigh…, next time I'll remember to ask.)

First, and most important, there is general agreement to NEVER upgrade

in the middle of a project. Finish your project first, then upgrade. I have several very unhappy editors who ignored this advice and are now sadly wiser.

Of the nine people that responded to my request, all but one said that running FCP 5 on OS 10.3.9 was stable. Only one commented that he had run into problems with FireWire and capturing.

As one wrote: "I have not seen any stability problems with FCP 5. There are some bugs that are rearing their heads, some things that have been broken, other things that have been fixed. I guess it's always a trade-off."

Another wrote: "I concur. FCP 5 seems as stable on OS 10.3.9 as FCP HD and seems to be one of Apple's better .0 releases for FCP. Unlike FCP 4, this one seems to have been ready for release."

A much bigger issue is running FCP HD under OS 10.3.9. Here the key factor is QuickTime 7. If at all possible, don't upgrade to QT 7 if you are running FCP HD. There are just too many reported problems for me to be comfortable recommending this solution.

If you have installed QT 7, and are having problems, go to Apple's website and download the QT 6.5 reinstaller. Use it to remove QT 7 and re-install QT 6.5. This has solved a number of problems for a variety of clients.

All third-party capture cards (except Cinewave) now support OS X 10.3.9 so making the move to FCP 5 should be OK.

SoundTrack Pro, though, is a different issue. As one wrote: "FCP 5's biggest problem seems to be SoundTrack Pro, which is so broken it's kind of sad."

And, again, "we are waiting for a dot rev of Soundtrack Pro, and, perhaps of FCP 5, before we would advise our facility clients to move forward. Then, again, our opinions are extremely conservative."

Things change with Tiger, however.

Though one person wrote: "I've been running FCP 5 and Tiger since before NAB and it has been extremely stable. I've been very happy with it." Other chimed in on the opposite side: "I would still recommend against running FCP 5 on Tiger. Perhaps things will improve with an upgrade to 10.4.2, but until then, I'd be cautious."

Another said, "Tiger has issues, but none fatal that I've found."

A capture card vendor wrote: "I'd say you are OK with 10.4.1," but make sure you are running the latest versions of all your software. Especially, "make sure you run the X-RAID software update to get the proper drive performance." A good safety net is to run a dual-boot setup, where you can easily revert back to the earlier version of the OS and FCP in the event of major problems.

The people that are in a hard position are folks that just bought a new

computer which comes with OS X 10.4.1 pre-installed and no way to downgrade to OS 10.3.9. If you are in this position, as a number of my clients are, don't panic. I'm seeing a variety of bugs which I believe are due to 10.4.1 problems. Apple is already working on a significant bug-fix to Tiger, which will be a free upgrade to 10.4.2. This should make Tiger a lot more useable for all of us.

HOWEVER, when 10.4.2 is released **DON'T UPGRADE!** Wait a week or so and make sure it works OK. It is better to wait a week and have everything work great than to update immediately, only to discover things got much worse.

Patience is a virtue -- though that's easier for me to say than to do.

One last comment. I have two principal computers that I use constantly: a laptop for training and a G-5 for editing and production. My laptop is running FCP 5 and OS X 10.3.9. My G-5 is running FCP HD and OS 10.3.2. I've decided that I'm satisfied with the reliability of 10.3.9 that I'm upgrading my main production system to FCP 5 on 10.3.9. And, when 10.4.2 comes out, I'll upgrade my laptop to FCP 5 on 10.4.2.

FCP 5 isn't perfect, but it looks safe enough to use.

I'm always interested in your comments. Let me know your opinions and I'll share them with the everyone.

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Update: Based on several emails, I want to clarify two points:

- FCP 5 requires QuickTime 7
- Tiger requires QuickTime 7

So, in these two cases, be sure you are running the latest version of QuickTime, which is version 7.01 as of July 4, when this was updated.

Also, there are a number of reported problems when people down-grade from QT 7 to QT 6.5. If your system is working OK with FCP HD and QuickTime 7, then leave it alone. Only consider down-grading to QT 6.5 if you have problems.

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Tutorial - Setting FCP 5 Preferences

As we move into Final Cut 5, I get lots of questions about how to configureyour system. So this is a tutorial that explains new FCP 5 preference settings and gives you the settings I use on my system. (This does not cover all preferences, for that you'll need to read the manual, just those that are either new or really important.)

There are three groups of preferences in Final Cut:

1. Those that configure Final Cut to your audio and video

gear.
2. Those that configure Final Cut to your computer system
3. Those that configure Final Cut to you.

And, when I'm configuring a system, I work in that order. All the screen shots show the settings I use on my system. And, with few exceptions, these screens are the same for both FCP HD and FCP 5.
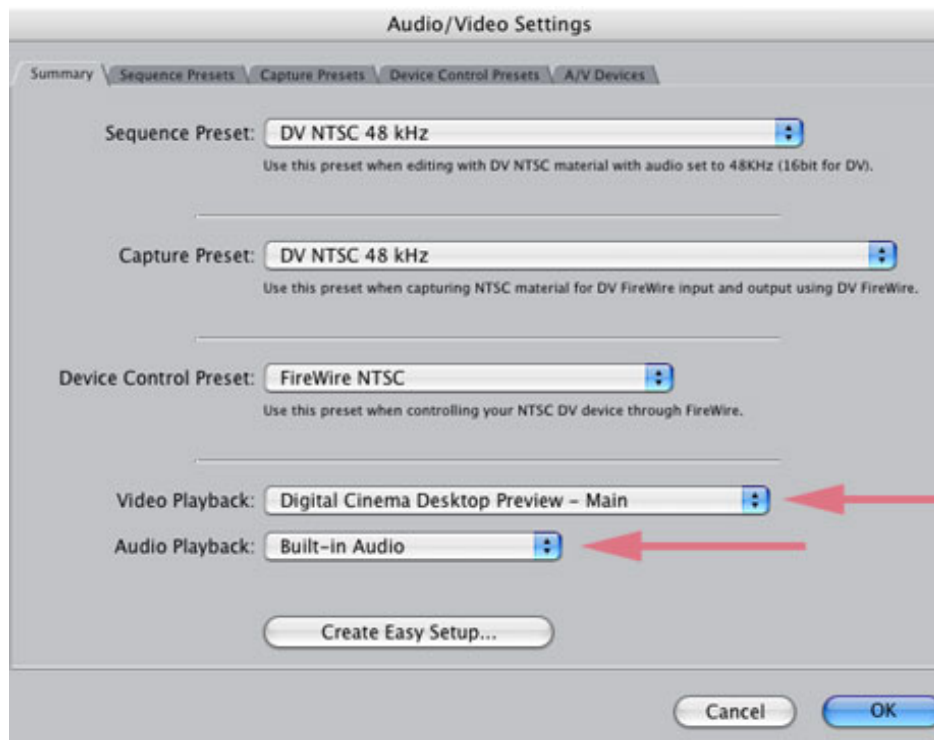
Configure your audio/video gear

If you are using DV, **Final Cut Pro > Easy Setup** should be your first choice.
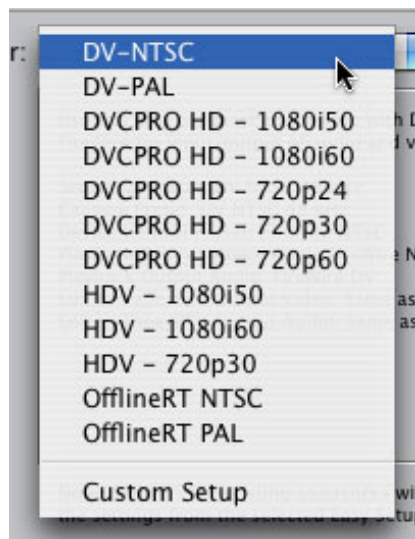
Select **DV - NTSC** if you are in the US, or other NTSC country. Select **DV - PAL** if you are working with PAL format video. Notice that new with FCP 5 are selections for the various sizes of HDV. Again, HDV-PAL users should select **1080i50**, and HDV-NTSC users should select **1080i60**. 720p runs only at 30 frames per second.

Audio/Video Settings

Summary \ Sequence Presets \ Capture Presets \ Device Control Presets \ A/V Devices \

Sequence Preset: DV NTSC 48 kHz
Use this preset when editing with DV NTSC material with audio set to 48KHz (16bit for DV).

Capture Preset: DV NTSC 48 kHz
Use this preset when capturing NTSC material for DV FireWire input and output using DV FireWire.

Device Control Preset: FireWire NTSC
Use this preset when controlling your NTSC DV device through FireWire.

Video Playback: Digital Cinema Desktop Preview – Main

Audio Playback: Built-in Audio

Create Easy Setup...

Cancel   OK

If you need to change individual A/V setups, select **Final Cut Pro > Audio/Video settings**.

My general recommendation is to leave these alone if you are new to FCP. The default settings are usually OK. However, the two settings at the bottom are important. Be sure you are monitoring your audio and video from the same place.

If you are watching your video on your computer screen, where Video Playback is set to either **None** or **Digital Cinema Desktop Preview**, then be sure you are listening to **Built-in Audio**.

If you are watching your video via FireWire on an external monitor, then be sure you are listening to your audio **via FireWire DV**.

If you watch your video via FireWire and listen to your audio on your built-in computer speakers, your audio and video will be 3-9 frames out of sync. This is due to the delays caused by converting to and from DV. This delay will drive you nuts, so, remember to always watch and listen to your audio and video from the same point: both on an external monitor or both on the computer, never mixed.

Configure your computer system
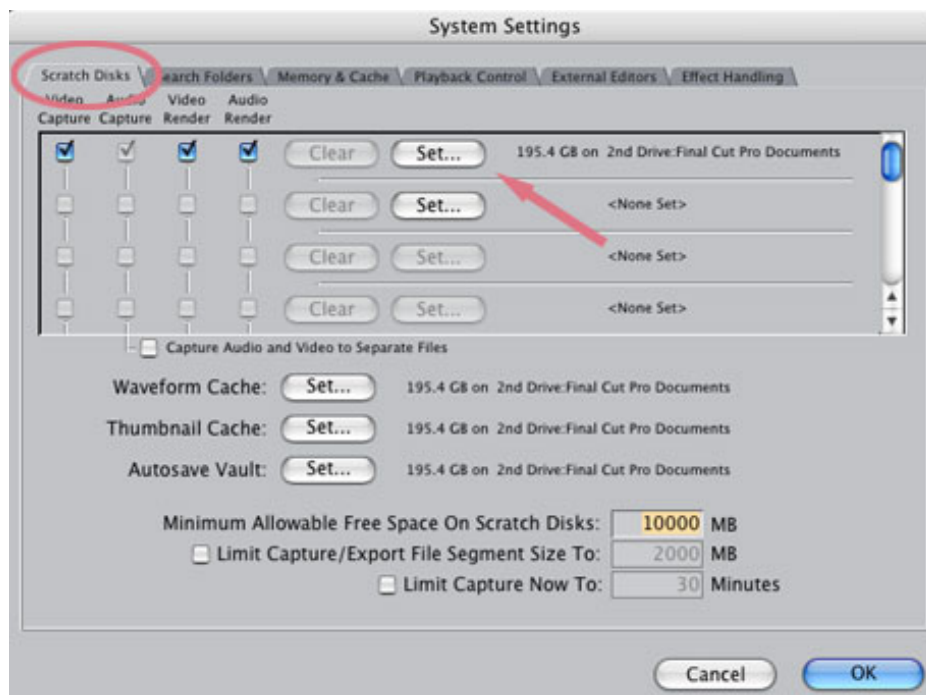
Final Cut Pro > System Settings > Scratch disk tab is, without a doubt, the most important preference screen in Final Cut. If this is not setup properly, you'll never get the performance or reliability you need from Final Cut.

Here's what I do: I create a folder on each drive I want to use to store media (I never store media on my boot disk). I name the folder **Final Cut Pro Documents**. Then, I "point" my scratch disk to this folder using the **Set** command at the top of this screen.

If I have more than one media drive, I create one **Final Cut Pro Documents** folder on each drive.

Final Cut automatically records media to the drive that's the emptiest. This means your media will be stored fairly evenly across all your media drives. This decreases the playback demands on each drive.

Here are some other tips to use with this dialog box:

1. You should always use a second hard drive (either internal or external) to store all your media. The drive that holds your operating system and applications will be too busy doing other tasks to playback media fast enough to edit.
2. I used to capture media to one drive and render files to a different drive. But, now, I capture everything everywhere. Final Cut can easily keep track of it, and it simplifies my setup.
3. Never capture audio and video to separate drives.
4. Set the minimum free space setting to 10,000. This makes sure your hard disks don't get too full, which slows down both recording and playback.
5. While it isn't necessary to store your Waveform, Thumbnail and Autosave files to the second disk, I like doing it for the symmetry of it. It keeps everything in one place and decreases the load on my boot disk.

6. I am NOT a fan of Capture Now -- I find it to be inaccurate and unreliable in FCP HD. However, if you are using it, be sure to check the bottom box and give it a value equal to your longest tape. That way, FCP won't capture black when a tape runs out and you've left the room for a meeting.
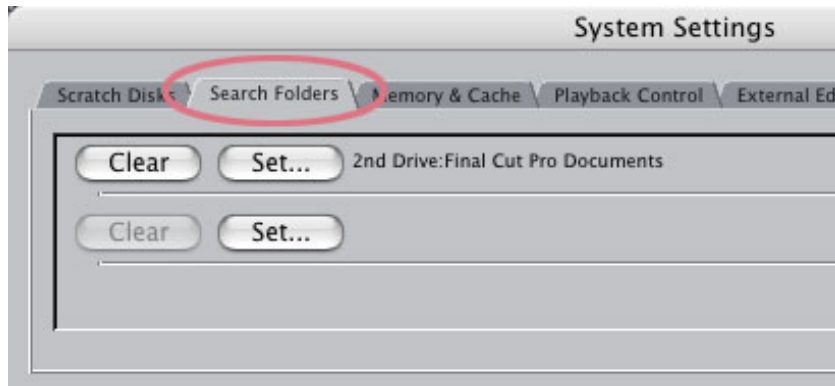
The **Search Folders tab** is new with FCP 5. This allows you to specify where FCP will search when it needs to reconnect new files. This is a very useful setting because it makes finding and reconnecting media much faster.

If you created the Final Cut Pro Documents folder that I just mentioned, then set a Search Folder for each occurrence of Final Cut Pro Documents on each of your media drives. In other words, if you have one drive, there would be one line listed. If you have two drives, there would be two lines, and so on.

Here, you see I've set a search folder to the Final Cut Pro Documents folder on my second drive.
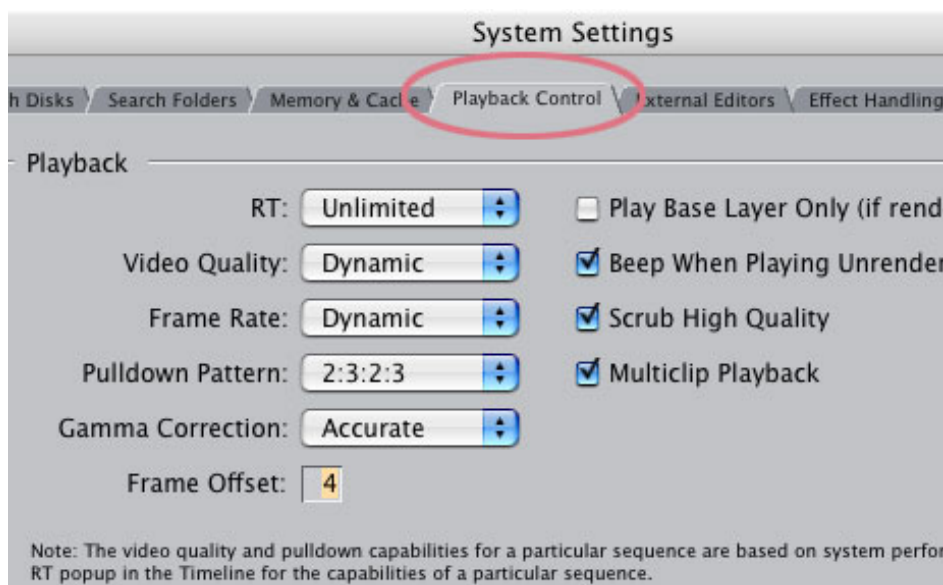

System Settings > Playback Control tab was revised for FCP 5. New in this version is Dynamic RT, which allows Final Cut to vary playback quality during editing based on the complexity of your effect and the speed of your system. Dynamic RT is what Unlimited RT should have been, because it dramatically decreases the time you need to spend rendering during editing.

With **FCP HD**, I set RT to **Safe**, because for me this works the best.
With **FCP 5,** I set RT to **Unlimited**, with both Video Quality and Frame
Rate set to Dynamic. This allows me to see a wide range of effects in
real-time, without waiting for rendering.

I still need to render before final output, but, now, I don't need to render
nearly as much during editing.

The rest of the settings in this dialog are system defaults, which I leave
alone.
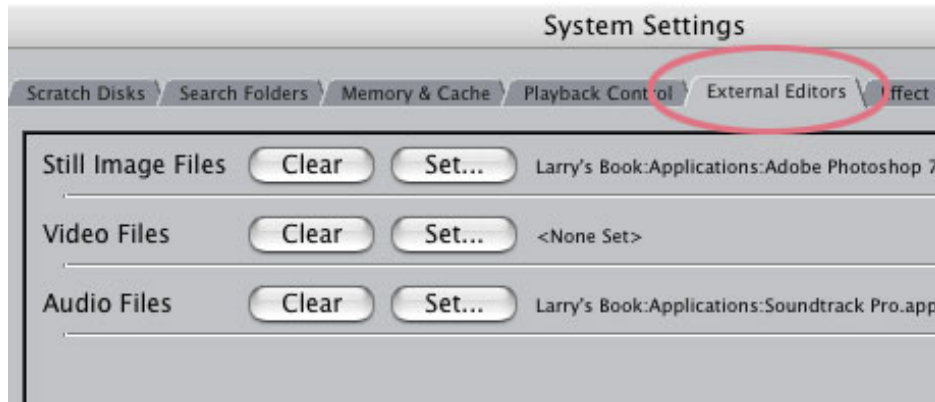
The **System Settings > External Editors** tab caused a lot of confusion
in FCP HD, because it changed depending upon whether you bought the
retail package or the upgrade.

This dialog allows you to configure FCP to open an external application to
edit a clip in the Browser or Timeline. I've found this to be a tremendous
timesaver. However, in this version, LiveType is hard-wired so that
control-clicking on a LiveType clip automatically opens Livetype, so you
don't need to set the preferences here.

In my case, I set this to open **PhotoShop** to edit my still files and
Soundtrack for my audio files.

Configure Final Cut for you
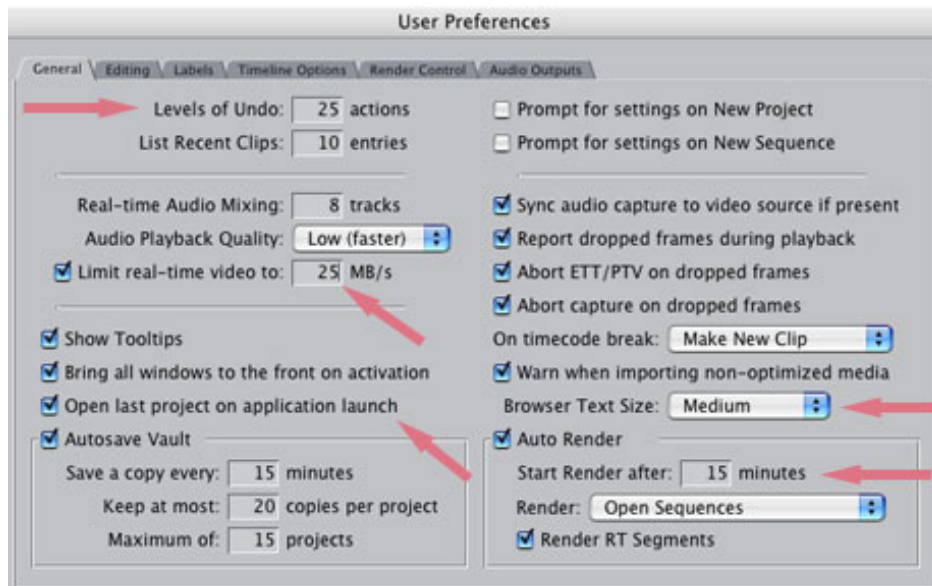
Select the **Final Cut Pro > User Preferences > General** tab to configure FCP to your method of working.

First, I like all the default checkbox settings. So, in general, I leave them alone.

Limit Real-time video to # MB/Second is new with FCP 5. Apple writes, "Final Cut uses this number to limit how many video streams can playback from your scratch disk in real time. This is useful when … you have a scratch disk with a limited data rate" such as a Firewire drive.

The key benefit is that this attempts to reduce the number of times you see the dreaded "dropped frames" error message.

For instance, if you create an effect that requires a lot of clips playing back at once from your hard disk, if this is not turned on, Final Cut will attempt to play your effect, but fail, because your hard disk isn't fast enough.

If this is turned on and set to about the data transfer rate of your hard disk, Final Cut will realize your effect exceeds the ability of your hard disk, so it puts a red render bar over the effect, requiring you to render it.

Because rendered effects always play smoothly, this setting is very useful in improving performance when you are using slower FireWire drives, or XSAN volumes.

I use a setting of **22** for an external FireWire drive on my G-4 laptop, and **36** for an external SATA drive on my G-5. If you have a RAID, you can leave this alone.

Here are the other changes I make to this screen:

1. I set Undo to **25** -- this take a lot of RAM, so if you have 1 GB of RAM or less, don't change this.
2. I tend to work on one project at a time, so I leave Open Last Project" checked. If I'm always switching between projects, I leave this off.
3. I increase the size of text in the Browser and Timeline to Medium (this is FCP 5 only)
4. I decrease the Auto-Render setting to **15**. I'll write an article about this feature in next month's issue.
5. I change the defaults in the Auto-Save Vault so that it saves sooner and keeps fewer backups.
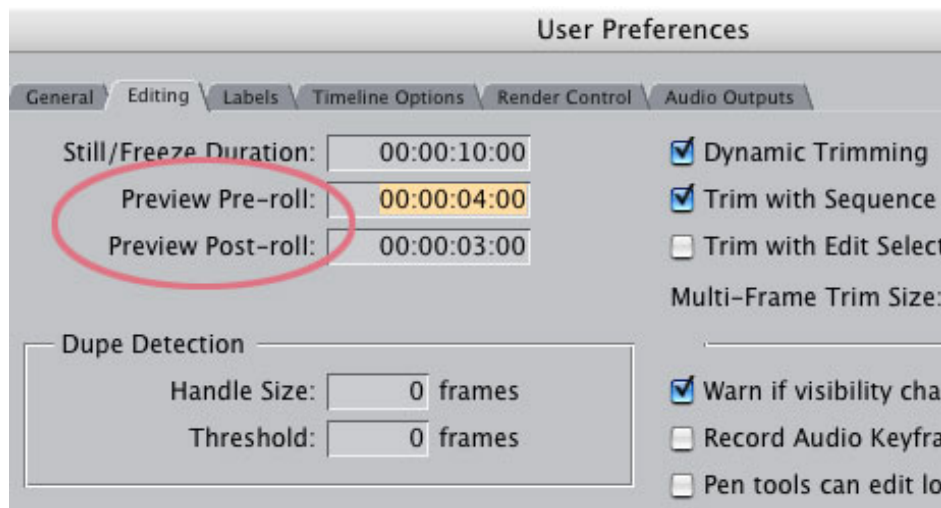
There's one last preference screen I want to mention -- the **User Preferences > Editing** tab.

Here, I change the default Preview pre-roll and post-roll to **4:00** and **3:00**, respectively.

Why? Because when I want to preview an edit, I press the backslash key (****). The Playhead backs up the amount of seconds specified in the Pre-roll, plays through the edit the number of seconds specified in the Post-roll, then stops and resets back to its original position.

I use this preview method constantly -- and have never liked the default settings. So, I changed them and, now, you can too.

That's an overview of the preference settings in FCP 5 and how I suggest you set them up. I've found these to be reliable with excellent performance characteristics.

You can keep this as a record in case your system gets trashed and you need to reset them yourself.

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Tips on Working with HDV

There's no doubt that HDV has made an impact on our industry. However, HDV is not DV. In fact, there are significant differences to working with HDV, especially when compared to the video we've traditionally worked with.

The big issue is that HDV uses a compression system called *Long-GOP MPEG-2*. What this means in English is that a group of images, 15 in this case, are all grouped together and treated as a single frame (a GOP, or Group of Pictures). So, instead of one picture per frame, which we are used to in DV and film, we have 15 pictures to one frame. This makes for really great compression, but it's almost impossible to edit. The reason is that MPEG was designed to only allow edits at the start of one of these Groups of Pictures. This boundary is called an "I-frame."

DVD's use a similar compression structure, which is why it is often difficult to edit video which has been compressed into MPEG-2 for DVD use.

However, Apple has figured out a way to edit HDV natively, without converting it into a different file format. However, this native editing is not without trade-offs. So, here is a list of the ways HDV is not the same as DV:

1. HDV needs serious CPU power. You need a minimum 1 GHz processor and 1 GB RAM.
2. You can't monitor HDV thru FireWire while editing, you can only watch HDV on your computer screen.
3. You can only output to tape using Print to Video. You can't Edit to Tape.
4. There is no HD-SDI deck for high-end output.
5. You can't up-rez HDV to HDCAM.
6. The native resolution of HDV is 1440 x 1080. However, HDV only outputs at 1920 x 1080 interlaced using line-doubling, or 1280 x 720 progressive using down-sampling.
7. HDV takes significantly longer to render than DV, because the image size is four times larger.
8. FCP only renders HDV frames that changed during editing. A frame is changed if an edit occurs anywhere within the GOP, except on the I-frame boundary, or if you've applied an effect or transition.
9. There are timecode accuracy and frame-rate issues in capturing and outputting HDV.
10. When capturing HDV, you can't control the deck or camera as precisely as you can with DV. So, in general, capture with larger handles than you would normally use.
11. HDV only supports 2 channels of audio in or out/
12. HDV is already in MPEG form, so you don't need to compress it again.
13. If you want to export an HDV sequence to include on a DVD, be sure to export it using File > Export > QuickTime Movie and make it SELF-contained. Reconform all I-frames to match the HDV compression structure

To help with some of these problems, Apple has created an Intermediate codec which converts HDV from it's long-GOP MPEG-2 structure into a frame-based video format. There are several benefits to using the Intermediate codec and one disadvantage:

1. You can monitor editing using the intermediate codec thru FireWire.
2. The intermediate codec is better for editing on slower computers.
3. The intermediate codec creates files that are four-times larger than native HDV.
4. There are reported quality issues with the intermediate codec.
5. Converting between HDV and the intermediate codec is not loss-less, however, Apple says it's testing shows

that the conversion quality is better than competitive products.

Tips from the Classroom

Every month I learn something new while teaching Final Cut. Here are the latest tips discovered by my students. These should work the same in both FCP HD and FCP 5.

Cathleen

Set an In and an Out in the Timeline. Press Shift+X to do a Ripple Delete from the In to the Out.

Marlin

When I copy a clip from the Viewer to the Timeline (**Edit > Copy** and **Edit > Paste**) the *Patch Panel* determines to which track the clip gets pasted.

When I copy a clip from the Timeline to elsewhere on the Timeline, the *AutoSelect*buttons to the right of the track locks, determine the track where the clip gets pasted.

Antonio

Option++ (meaning hold down the **Option** and the **plus** keys) and **Option+-** (**Option** and **minus** keys) zooms the Timeline, regardless of whether it is selected or not.

Command++ or **Command+-** zooms whatever window is selected (Timeline, Viewer, or Canvas).

New FCP Filters

Mattias Sandström has been creating Final Cut filters for a long time, I, um, just never knew it until recently.

If you are looking for a wide range of plug-in filters for Final Cut, check out his website:

Too Much Too Soon: http://www.mattias.nu/plugins/

There are a lot of color correction and technical improvement filters, such as:

- Smart Anamorphic converts between 16:9 and 4:3
- Black Restore
- Fast Deinterlace

- Chroma Resampler
- Noise reduction

Best of all, Mattias only asks for a donation. (Which is more than fair, given the amount of work that goes into creating these. If you decide to use his filters, please respect his time and send him some money.)

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Compressor Tutorial

Roy Close, with the Harvester Baptist Mission, sent me a PDF file of a tutorial he wrote on how to improve video and audio quality using Compressor I (the version shipping with FCP HD).

If you are new to the whole field of compression, this offers a cook-book approach to improving the quality of your work. (If you've been compressing since before MPEG, this will be too basic for you.)

Remember, the only time you need to use Compressor is when you need to prepare a file to move into DVD Studio Pro, iDVD handles compression internally.

To get a copy of this free report, send Roy an email to: glenroyhbm@pineland.netYou'll find the step-by-step instructions useful and, as I said, the report is free.

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Tutorial: Multi-clip Trimming

This tutorial grew out of a question in one of my classes: How can I trim several clips at the same time?

His specific request came when we were talking about the need, for instance in a documentary, to trim clips on several tracks at once. There are a variety of ways to do this, so here are some examples.

Multi-track Rippling

This technique is a good choice when you need to ripple the In, or Out, of a talking head, while still keeping the B-roll in sync. A Ripple adjusts the In or the Out, but not both. I use this to adjust the timing or placement of a clip.

1. Turn Snapping **off** (press **N**)
2. Select the Ripple tool (press **RR**)
3. Click the **In**, or **Out**, of the linked clip on **V1** to select it. In this example, I used the **In**.
4. Hold the Command key and click the **In** of the clip on **V2** to select it.
5. Drag the Ripple tool to trim your edit. This adjusts the audio and video In of all selected cilps at once.

Multi-track Rolling

This technique is a good choice when you need to adjust the Out of the first clip and the In of the second clip at the same time. Most often, I use this to adjust the timing of when an edit point occurs.
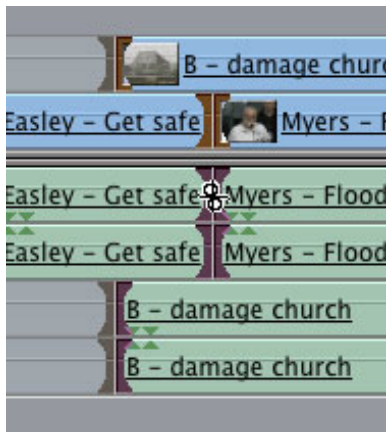
1. Turn Snapping **off** (press **N**)
2. Select the Roll tool (press **R**)
3. Click the edit point to select both the **In** and the **Out** of the linked clip on **V1**.
4. Hold the **Command** key and click the edit point of the clip on **V2**. Again, because the audio and video are linked, both the audio and video edit points are selected.
5. Drag the Roll tool to adjust the timing of where the edit point occurs.

**Rolling Just Audio, or Just Video**

You can't ripple trim just the audio or the video, it would throw everything out of sync, so Final Cut prevents it. (If you do find yourself confronting a whole flock of red "out-of-sync" flags, **Control+click** on a red flag and select **Move Into Sync**.)

However, you can Roll just the audio or video. In fact, this is the trimming technique that I use the most. This allows me to change picture without affecting audio, or tweak the audio without changing video. However, doing this for clips on multiple tracks is a bit tricky, so follow closely.

1. Turn Snapping off (press **N**)

2. Select the Edit Selection tool (press **G**). This allows you to easily select edit points across multiple tracks.
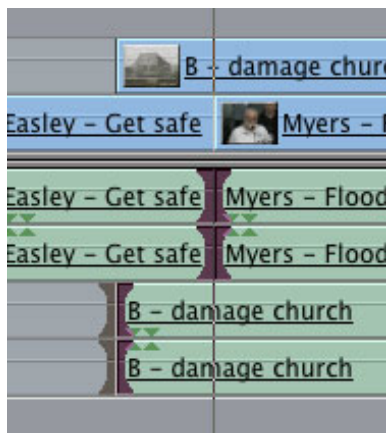
3. Hold the **Option** key and drag the **Edit Selection** tool around the edits you want to change, in this case, just the audio. The Option key allows you to select just the audio, or just the video, of a linked clip.
4. Select the Roll tool (type **R**).
5. Drag the Roll tool to adjust your edit points.

This technique works equally well at adjusting video, audio, or both. The key is using the **Option** key with the **Edit Selection** tool.

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Technique - Using Markers in a Multiclip

I got a call late in the evening from a prime-time network show asking about how to use markers in a Multiclip. They weren't working the way the editor was expecting. So, I did some research and here's what I found.

Multiclips are new with Final Cut Pro 5 and allow you to see multiple camera angles at the same time. Apple did a really great job in implementing this feature and I'm looking forward to writing a tutorial on how it works for a future issue. What a multiclip does is combine a series of related shots into a single new clip where you can see all the images at once.

However, the editor that called me was puzzled, because what he wanted to do was add a marker to a source clip and have that marker travel wherever the source clip went. But that's not how multiclips work.

A multiclip is a totally different clip from the source clips it contains. So, any markers in a source clip are ignored when you create a multiclip.

However, any markers you put in the multiclip itself, by typing **M** in the Viewer, are retained as clip markers when that multiclip is edited to the Timeline. This allows you to indicate particular shots, or music beats, or whatever else you want to flag when the multiclip is edited into your sequence.

Any clip markers in a multiclip in the Timeline show up in the Viewer when the multiclip is loaded back into the Viewer.

Markers are a great way to flag specific locations in a clip, or the timeline. I use them constantly -- they are like my yellow sticky notes in Final Cut Pro. So, to summarize:

- Markers existing in source clips are not added into a multiclip when the multiclip is created
- You can't put a marker in a multiclip angle, only in the multiclip itself
- Markers in a multiclip appear on the timeline as clip markers
- Timeline markers for a sequence containing a multiclip behave exactly the same as markers for any other clip

[ ]

Reader Mail

Well, the summer has started, because the mail has significantly

decreased. Still, there are a number of good questions, so let's get started.

Duane Codrington writes:

> Love your work - I think I must have introduced almost 40 people to your website. Here's a topic which I would really like to see covered in a future article if possible:
>
> I am shooting Sony HDV side by side with a Sony PD 170 set to 16:9.
>
> 1. In FCP 5, how do I work with HDV and DVCAM footage in the same sequence, or what is my best alternative?
> 2. How do I work with anamorphic and squeezed 16:9 footage in the same sequence?

Larry replies: Wow! That's like mixing oranges and kumquats. The short answer is that something has to render. But, before we get to that point, you need to make a decision: is your sequence DV or HDV. You can output one or the other, but not both.

In researching the answer to your question, I loaded DV and HDV footage into the same DV sequence. The DV played normally and the HDV needed to render. However, this meant that the HDV was down-sampled to a DV image size.
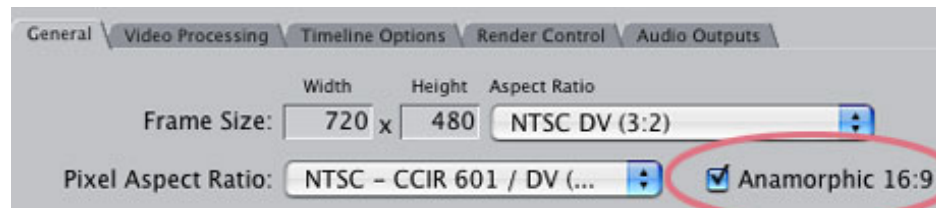
To try to match the native 16:9 with DV's 4:3, I created a new sequence and turned on the Anamorphic check box in **Sequence > Settings**. I did this BEFORE adding any video to the sequence. Then, adding HDV looked normal. However, DV was squeezed into an anamorphic shape, which distorted the image.

Hmmm.... this was no good. Trash that idea.

So, I then created a new DV 4:3 sequence and added my DV clips and HDV clips as before. Then, I selected all the DV clips and applied an **Effects > Video Filter > Video > Wide Screen** filter and set it 1.78:1 (which is 16:9).

Now, everything looked fine playing back.

IF, on the other hand, you want to put DV into an HDV sequence, then you'll need to create a new HDV sequence, add your HDV and DV footage as before, then go to the Motion tab and scale your DV footage to 300%.

When you use an HDV sequence, your 16:9 aspect ratio is handled automatically within the sequence.

- - -

King Dexter wrote in:

I was having a problem with Final Cut not displaying images properly. After talking with an especially well-informed Apple Tech, it was, as you suspected, a QuickTime 7 glitch which Apple declares as "Random." Sometimes, says Apple, QuickTime causes a "partial performance" issue where some things still work and others don't. As you know, I had firewire device control but no video on my external monitor and no preview in the log & capture window....

The fix:

1. Go to **HD>Library>Receipts** and trash anything that says QuickTime with a bunch of numbers after it (i.e. QuickTime65.pkg, QuickTime70.pkg, QuickTime701. pkg, QuickTime652.pkg, etc.)
2. Go to the Apple web site. Click the QuickTime tab and download the Free, QuickTime 7 and install it. It is the 7.0.1 version and will recognize your pro key if you have one.
3. Re-launch FCP5 and you should be good to go.

Apple said this should be a one-time fix. It should hold for good. This rep said they are not exactly sure why this happens on a random basis although the senior systems people probably have a better idea than he.

Interesting that he said it probably won't be a specific fix in a future version of QT but couldn't be sure. Also said that this seems only to pertain to Quicktime and Tiger. Also, this issue presumably hit (or will hit) the Apple Knowledge base as we speak.

Larry replies: Yup, sounds pretty random to me. Thanks for sending back the info.

- - -

Tony Luzzi wrote:

As you know, FCP 5 supports external control surfaces, which allow you to mix audio on something more like a mixer than a computer screen. However, I was having a problem using a Tascam control surface. It would start working, then quit for no apparent reason.

After discussions with both Apple and Tascam, we discovered that in order to use a Tascam control surface with FCP 5, the Final Cut mixer window must be open.

Now that I've got this Tascam mixer thing working, it is very cool because you have 3 modes:

1. **Monitor MIX** -- That allows me to use a standard type mixer with feeds my decks to the AJA I/O. It has 8 inputs-4 can be use as eith mike or line. So i can use it to record V/O's too.
2. **Computer** -- It allows me to mixer in FCP with its control surface----with 4 banks to control 8 tracks at a time inside FCP 5.
3. **Midi Control** -- Not sure its use yet-been too busy figuring out 1 and 2.

All this for $799.00

Larry replies: Tony, this is a known issue with Tascam control surfaces and your solution is perfect. Also, if the FCP mixer gets in your way, just minimize it.

- - -

Torrey Loomis, President of Silverado Systems, sent out an email with the following information:

Just a quick update for those wondering how much RAM to get in a new Mac. Bare Feats has a great overview of why maxing out your RAM on a Tiger-equipped Mac makes sense with new Apple and Adobe apps:

Running Motion 1.0 under Tiger, loaded and rendered RAM PREVIEWS of 4 templates. Motion gobbled up 2.4GB in the process. (Same result under Panther.)

Running Motion 2.0 under Tiger, loaded and rendered RAM Previews of 4 templates. Motion 2.0 grabbed only 287MB but total memory use of Tiger "pounced" to 5.5GB. So just as with Photoshop CS 2, the OS is handling the caching instead of the app. And maxing out your memory to 8GB makes more sense than ever, now that Tiger is "on the loose."

Larry replies: Final Cut does not take advantage of any memory above 4 GB. So, if FCP is your main app, don't bother with the extra memory. Motion, however, can take advantage of up to 8 GB of RAM.

For my purposes, 2.5 GB of RAM works fine for what I do. The additional RAM in Motion allows you to work with longer projects. However, most effects projects tend to be short, so I consider it a toss-up whether to recommend getting the extra RAM.

Motion requires two types of RAM -- system RAM and video card RAM. The system RAM controls how much of your project is kept in memory at one time. The video card RAM determines how many objects can move around the screen at once in real time. If I were spending the money, I'd spend it on getting as much video RAM as possible.

- - -

Send in your comments and questions -- sharing your ideas, questions and discoveries helps us all to learn.

In closing...

If you are near Boston for MacWorld, please consider spending a day improving your Final Cut skills by attending my seminar.

_____

And don't forget **this month's polls**:

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_____

Wrap-Up

Well, that's it for this edition of the newsletter. Let me know what you think, and tell your friends to subscribe. I love reading your comments and sharing them with others.

Or, send in some ideas of what you'd like us to talk about.

Even better, send in some tips of your own. I'm happy to publish everyone's ideas. That way, we all learn!

Thanks -- and have fun editing!

Larry

[Go to top.]

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