FCPX: 1.1 INTERFACE

Final Cut Pro X is a video editing software created by Apple and can only be used on Apple devices. Its biggest competitor in the market is Adobe Premiere as they are both used for professional video editing. In this tutorial, you will be introduced to the interface of Final Cut Pro X to begin using its video editing features.

Sections

The Final Cut Pro X interface is divided into 5 sections; organizing, playback, tools, editing, and inspector.

1. Organizing

The top left side of the interface is the Browser/Event Library panel for organizing your media. Libraries contain Events, that contain Projects, and Projects are where you edit a single video. You cannot create a Project without creating a Library. When creating a Library, an Event is automatically created with the date as the name of the Event. You can change the name of any Library, Event, or Project by slowly double clicking on the name.

Create a new Library, Event, or Project by going to File > New > Project... / Event... / Library... or by right-clicking the libraries browser. You can also
create new folders and keyword collections by right-clicking the libraries browser.

Double clicking a Project will make it appear within the Playback Preview, and Timeline. Upload your media into your **Event**. See 2.1 IMPORT MEDIA to learn how to import media.

You can use media from any Event or Library in any Project. They’re purpose is just to keep you organized.

You can skim over media or preview it by clicking on it and dragging your curser over it. The preview will appear in the Playback section.

Rename your media by clicking on the name. You can add tags to your media in the Inspector panel, so that you can search for specific media files.

Use the search bar located at the top right corner of the Organizing panel to search for files.

Use the features across the bottom of the panel to alter the display of the content. You can remove the Libraries panel to only view the Events folder, you can change the display settings, you can change between filmstrip view and list view for your media, and you can zoom in and out to make the media icons larger or smaller.
2. Playback

The playback panel is where you can preview your media and Timeline. Whether you have selected video or audio footage in your Events folder, or are viewing content in your timeline, the Playback panel is where you can view this content.

Under the preview, there are buttons you can use to play and pause your media, or go to previous or next editing point.

Located at the bottom left corner of the Playback panel, you can find the Transform tool, and if you click on the triangle next to it, you can choose from **Transform**, **Crop**, and **Distort**. These tools are used to alter the appearance and possibly the aspect ratio of your footage. The tool will turn blue when selected, and you can click on the edges and corner of your video in the playback to Transform, Crop, or Distort. Note that these tools only work if your clip is selected in the **Timeline**. You cannot transform media that is not yet in your Timeline.
You can change how much of the clip is displayed by selecting a percentage or “Fit View” in the drop down of the Viewer zoom level located at the top right corner of the Playback panel next to “View”.

The Playback panel is set to view the preview of clips from the Organizing panel or the Timeline. However, you can change the use of the Playback to view Video Scopes, color channels, or change the quality and performance of the playback by clicking on the triangle next to “View”.

Finally, you view your preview in fullscreen by clicking on the two arrows located at the bottom right corner of the Playback panel.

3. Toolbar

Across the middle of the application, you will see a bar with a variety of tools on the left and the right, and the Playhead Timecode in the center.
**Import:** This button is a shortcut to import media from your computer, a hard drive, or a video or audio recording device.

**Ratings:** To help organize and quickly locate your media, you can favorite or reject media or parts of media. After making a selection, click the green star to favorite the selection, the empty start to remove a favorite, or the red X to reject a selection. In Filmstrip view of the Event Library, favorites will be identified with a green line across the top and rejects will be identified with a red line across the top. In list view, there will be a green star or a red X under the dropdown of the selected clips.

**Keywords:** Click this icon to add, remove, or edit keywords for a clip. Keywords are useful for organizing clips. If you add a keyword to a clip, a folder will be created in your event will all clips that have that keyword.

**Insert Media:** These tools are used to insert selected media to your Timeline. After selecting media or part of a clip, click on the first icon to insert it at the beginning of the Timeline, click on the middle icon to insert it wherever your playhead is positioned in the Timeline, and click on the last icon to insert it at the end of your Timeline. If the selected media has both video and audio, you can choose to insert one or the other by clicking on the triangle next to the last icon.

**Tools:** Click on the arrow to drop down the tools menu. **Select:** this is the default tool used to select and arrange clips. **Trim:** this tool is used to trim or extend clips in the Timeline. **Position:** This tool allows you to arrange tools freely without the default magnet feature. **Range Selection:** This allows you to select a range of clips and/or frames to make modification to only the selection.
Blade: This tool is used to cut your clips, splitting a clip into two clips.

Zoom: This tool allows you to zoom in and out of your Timeline, making your Timeline longer and shorter.

Hand: This tool is used to navigate left and right across your Timeline by clicking and dragging.

Playhead Timecode: This shows you the number of hours, minutes, seconds, and frames where you playhead is positioned, whether that be in your Timeline, or in your browser.

Background Tasks: To the left of the Playhead Timecode is the percentage of completion of Background Tasks. Background Tasks include exporting, importing, rendering, and applying effects and changes. Click on it to show the Background Tasks Window for a breakdown of the process.

Audio Levels: To the right of the Playhead Timecode is the preview of the audio levels. Green indicates that the audio is not distorted, while red indicates that the audio is too loud and is being distorted. For more detail, click on it to display the audio levels to the right of the Timeline. You should aim for around -12 db.

Enhancement Menu: Click on the triangle next to the wand icon to display the Enhancement Menu. This menu has a variety of shortcuts for Video and Audio enhancements.

Retime Menu: Click on the triangle next to the icon to display the retime menu. This menu offers a variety of tools to use to retime your video and audio.
Effects: Click on this icon to show or hide the Effects window. Here, you can choose from a variety of different Video and Audio Effects. To apply an effect, click and drag it to your video or audio clip.

Photos Browser: Click on this icon to show or hide the Photos Browser window. Here, you can browse your computer for images to click and drag onto your timeline.

Music and Audio Browser: Click on this icon to show or hide the Music and Audio Browser. Here, you can browse through Final Cut Pro X’s available music and audio, or browse your iTunes for music.

Transitions Browser: Click on this icon to show or hide the Transitions Browser. Here, you can browse through a variety of transitions for your video clips.

Titles Browser: Click on this icon to show or hide the Titles Browser. Here you can browse through the collection of titles including credits, nametags, and more.

Generator’s Browser: Click on this icon to show or hide the Generator’s Browser. Here you can browse through moving and still images that can be used as backgrounds for titles and more.

Theme’s Browser: Click on this icon to show or hide the Theme’s Browser. Here you can browse through themed transitions and titles.

Inspector: Click on this icon to show or hide the Inspector panel which will appear above, to the right of the playback. The inspector is where you can customize your video, audio, effects, transitions, titles, generators, and themes. The inspector will be talked about in further detail later in this tutorial.

Share: Click on this icon to show shortcuts to a variety of share options.
4. Editing

The lower half of the interface is dedicated to editing your video. Here you can use the tools you used above to add media to your Timeline, edit your video, and apply effects. With the Selection tool selected, you can arrange your clips by clicking and dragging on them, or trim/extend them by clicking on an edge of a clip and dragging it left or right.

On the bottom right corner of the Timeline, you will notice the zoom bar. Drag the circle left to zoom out and right to zoom in.

To the right of the Zoom bar, you will find an icon that allows you to change the display of media in your Timeline.

On the top right corner of the Timeline, you will notice four icons.

- **Video and Audio Skimming:** Click on this icon to turn video and audio skimming on and off. Skimming allows you to preview video and audio as you drag the cursor through a video or audio clip.

- **Audio Skimming:** Click on this icon to turn only audio skimming on and off.

- **Solo Selected Area:** Click on this icon to solo the selected area. This disables all media in your timeline that is not selected.

- **Snapping:** Click on this icon to turn Snapping on and off. When arranging media when snapping is turned on, clips will stick together perfectly like a magnet. For more precision with arranging media, turn this setting off.

On the bottom left corner of the Timeline, you will find the **Index** icon. Click on this icon to show or hide the Timeline Index, which is a list of everything in your Timeline.
If you have several projects, you can go from project to project by clicking on the arrows at the top left corner of the Timeline.

5. **Inspector**

The inspector panel can be found on the upper right side of the interface, next to the playback. You can show or hide the Inspector panel by clicking on the Inspector icon in the toolbar.

The Inspector is where you can transform and color correct/grade your videos, edit your audio, customize your effects, generators, and themes, and find information about the selected video or audio clip.