



Quick Start Avid

by
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This guide is not affiliated with Avid in any way. It was created by a reader just like you, who wished there were a guide like this when he was learning the software.

Quick Start Avid

Purpose: This manual is designed to help users unfamiliar with the Avid editing interface, Media Composer, to dive in and start cutting clips as quickly as possible. While the manual is broad in scope, covering the major subjects needed to work through an Avid project, it is not deep; only the most essential aspects of each topic will be covered in the interest of quickly familiarizing the user with the Avid interface. It is hoped that, upon working through this manual, the user will have enough understanding of Avid's basic functioning that he or she can independently dive deeper to discover the more sophisticated features of the software.

Why Quick Start? There are many other introductions to Avid out there. What makes Quick Start distinct is its paradoxical combination of brevity and comprehensiveness. This unique combination gives you *everything* you need to get started and *nothing* more.

Which Avid? This manual makes specific references to Avid Media Composer; however, due to the similarities in programs, it should equally serve as an introduction to (the now discontinued) Avid Xpress Pro.

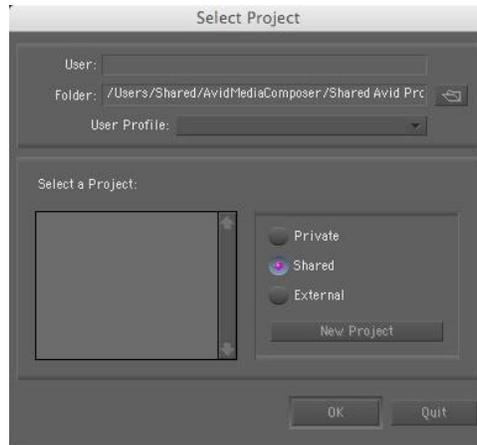
Overview: Quick start covers the following topics:

- Starting a project
- The Avid interface
- Capturing video
- Editing
- Audio
- Effects
- Titles
- Finishing up
- Backing up your work
- Recommended Resources

Let's get started!

Starting a Project:

Open the Avid application. The "Select Project" window pops up:



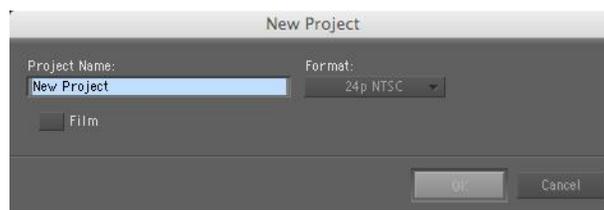
The "User" field displays the user currently logged in to your computer.

The path selected in the "Folder" field determines which projects appear in the "Select a Project" list below, and it will also determine where a new project will be created.

The three radio buttons (private, shared, and external) determine access settings to your new project:

- If you want your project to be available to only your personal log-in, select "private."
- If you want your project to be shared in the Avid shared folder (everyone who has access to the computer's drive), select "shared."
- If you want your project to be in a folder outside of the Avid private / shared folders, choose "External" and set the path in the Folder field above.

After selecting the access option for your project, click the "New Project" button. A "New Project" window opens.



Name your project and select the video format you'll be working in from the "Format" drop down menu. Click "OK" and your new project is added to the "Select a Project" list in the "Select Project" window. Double click the new project and it is launched.

Which video format should I use? With all of the different formats out there, determining the best format for your project can be tricky. The following list of format suggestions, borrowed from Sam Kaufmann's [Avid Editing: A Guide for Beginning and Intermediate Users](#), is useful:

Standard Definition:

NTSC is the standard definition video format used in North America, Central America, Japan, Taiwan, the Caribbean, and parts of South America. If you're working with NTSC, Avid offers three options:

- 23.976p NTSC: Canon XL2, Panasonic DVX100, or Panasonic DVX 900 *and* 24p "advanced" frame rate
- 24p NTSC: only for high-budget project, planning to finish on film
- 30i NTSC: Mini-DV or DVCAM, Beta SP cam, or DigiBeta at regular 30i setting; also for Canon XL2, Panasonic DVX100, Panasonic DVX900 and 24p (*not* "advanced" frame rate)

PAL is the standard definition video format used in Europe, Africa, India, and China. If you're working in PAL, Avid offers three options:

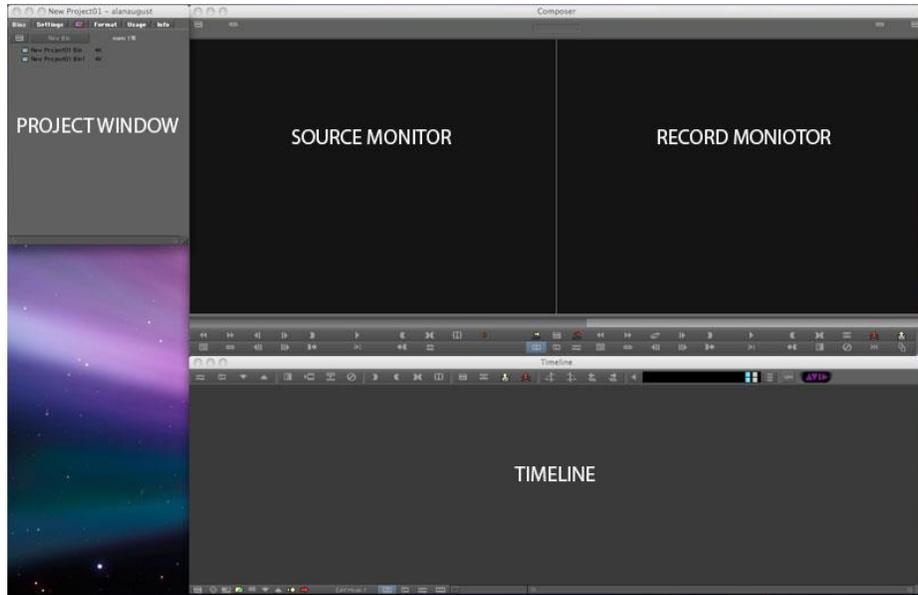
- 24p PAL: editing high-budget film
- 25p PAL: Canon XL2, Panasonic DVX100, or DVX900 with 25p setting
- 25i PAL: DV or DVCAM, Beta SP, or DigiBeta cam

High Definition:

If you are shooting with high definition footage, select the appropriate format (720p, 1080i/p) and a "raster type" that matches the kind of HD you're working with (DVCPPro, HD, HDV, etc.).

The Avid Interface:

Avid has four basic windows: the *project window*, the *source monitor*, the *record monitor*, and the *timeline*. If you ever get lost in a sea of sub-menus, simply go up to the "Tools" menu and choose "Source / Record." This will restore Avid's core layout.



Project Window

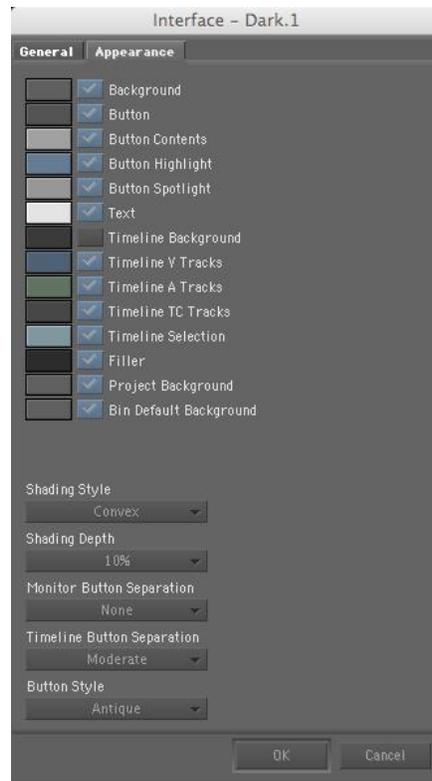
The project window contains the raw material, settings, and tools you'll draw from to create your edited video. Notice: the top of the project window tells you the name of the project that you're working on. There are three key tabs in the Project window: the "Bins" tab, the "Settings" tab, and the effects tab .

The **Bins** tab holds all of your sequences (clips sliced and arranged in the timeline are part of a sequence) and media clips (video files, music files, sound effects, still images, etc.).

Inside the bins tab, you can create bins, or folders, that help you organize all of your sequences and clips. Create new bins by going to the "File" menu and choosing "New Bin." To rename a bin, simply click once on the bin name and type in the new name, such as "Music files." To place a clip or sequence inside a bin, simply drag and drop.

The **Settings** tab contains innumerable settings for your project and for the Avid program in general. When changing settings, it's always a good idea to create a user profile. A user profile enables you to specify exactly how you want Avid to operate, while enabling others to do the same when they sign in to the program. To create a user profile, click on the drop down menu at the top of the settings tab and select "Create User Profile." Type in the name of the profile and select "OK." Now, whenever you change a setting from the list below, the settings will be assigned to your user profile. I recommend creating a "default" user profile first and then creating an additional user profile, so that when settings are modified, default settings can quickly be restored.

Let's try changing a setting. In the settings tab, scroll down to "Interface." You can quickly change the look of the interface between "Classic," "Dark," "Light," and "Medium" presets by clicking in the left column and creating a check mark next to your choice. Suppose we want to do more. Select Interface / Dark, go to the "Edit" menu, and choose "Duplicate." This duplicates the setting and now you have Interface / Dark.1 below Interface / Dark. Click once on "Dark.1" to give this new interface preset a unique name. Open this preset by double-clicking on its "Interface" listing. An Interface window pops up. Select the appearance tab, and you can customize the colors of your workspace.



The effects tab  in the project window is the effects tab, containing a variety of visual effects to apply to your edits. We explore this tab in the "Effects" section.

Source Monitor

The source monitor is the intermediary between your bins and your timeline. To edit clips, you double-click them from a bin to bring them into the source monitor. In the source monitor, you can view and listen to your clips to choose exactly what portion of the media you'd like to insert into the timeline (for how to do this, see the *editing* section).

Record Monitor

The record monitor plays the material that's in your timeline.

Timeline

The timeline is where your project comes together. Here, you add, trim, and rearrange media to create your video project.

Capturing Video:

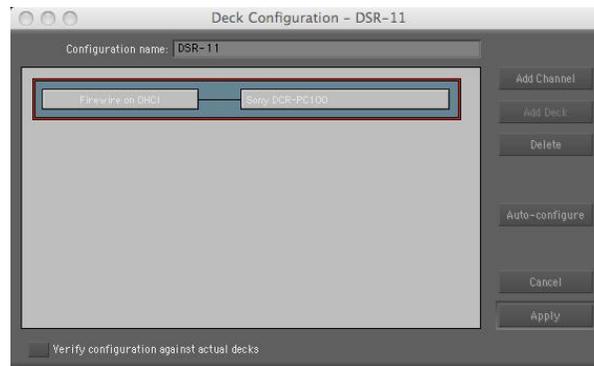
Unless you are working with a memory card or editing a pre-existing digital video file, you will need to capture media from tape.

Before capturing

1. If this is your first time capturing, or first time capturing with a particular device, you must configure your capture device (see below)
2. Always turn on the capture deck / camera before launching Avid -- otherwise the capturing device will not be recognized!
3. While you can capture media on tape from a camera or a capture deck, it is highly recommended that you use a capture deck. Capturing from a camera can quickly wear down the camera's VCR.
4. Audio settings:
 - Go into the project window / settings tab and double-click "Audio"
 - choose "all tracks centered" if working with dialogue or narration
 - choose "alternation L / R" if working with music

Configuring your capture device

- Go to the Project Window / Settings Tab / Deck Configuration
- Click "Deck Configuration," go to the "Edit" menu and choose "Duplicate." This creates a custom deck configuration, "Deck Configuration .1"
- Click the ".1" and rename the deck configuration to describe your capture device (e.g., "Sony DSR-11")
- Double-click your custom deck configuration to open the settings
 - click "Add Channel" and the software searches for the connection to the capture device (e.g. "Firewire on OHCI")
 - Avid will ask if you want to "auto-configure" the channel. Click "Yes."
 - click "Add Deck" and the software searches for the capture device. Once the device is found, click "OK."
 - you should now have a deck configuration window that looks something like this:



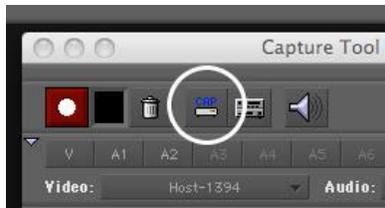
- click "Apply" and the window will close
- *Make sure you select the deck configuration you have just created by placing a check mark next to it in the settings tab.*

Using the Capture Tool

- In the project window, open the bin that you want the video clips to go into and make sure all other bins are closed
- Open the capture tool by going to the "Toolset" menu and choosing "Capture"



1. To capture media, make sure capture mode is toggled on:



2. Select the tracks that you want to capture (usually V, A1, A2, and TC [timecode]) (**note: any video or audio tracks not selected for capture will not be captured**)
3. Select the video channel (if DV or HDV deck or camera, this should be "Host-1394" [FireWire])
4. Select the audio channel (if DV or HDV deck or camera, this should be "Host-1394" [FireWire])
5. Under "Bin," choose the bin you would like the captured media to enter; make sure your selected bin is the only bin you have open
6. Select the capture resolution (if you're using a DV deck or camera, choose DV 25; if you're using HDV, Avid automatically sets the correct resolution)
7. Next to the drive icon , select a target drive where you'd like your media files to go:
 - Avid does not allow you to create a sub folder for an individual project's media. All media will go into an Avid-generated folder in the root directory of your target drive
 - It is recommended that you capture media onto a drive different from the drive that the Avid program is running from; this will keep things running faster when it comes time to edit
8. Insert your tape into the deck or camera
 - a prompt asks you to name the tape (**note: naming each tape is extremely important; if Avid knows what tape clips were captured from, clips can easily be recaptured if lost**)
 - name the tape and click on the name to tell Avid which tape you're using
 - click ok

Shuttling through the Tape

Unless you're capturing the whole tape, you're going to need to shuttle through your tape to select the clips that you'd like to capture. To move through a tape, Avid has VCR controls in the capture window. There are also keyboard shortcuts that enable you to zip through video. With the capture tool open:

- "J" rewinds the tape
- "K" stops the tape

- "L" plays the tape
- "spacebar" serves as a play / pause button
- For tiny adjustments, the "←" and "→" keys nudge the tape one frame backward and forward
- pressing "J" or "L" more than once will increase the speed with which the tape rewinds or plays.

Note: These same shuttle controls can be used to move through video in your source monitor, record monitor, and timeline.

At last, you're ready to capture. There are three methods of capturing in Avid: *Capturing "on the fly," Capturing with "In and Out,"* and *Batch Capturing.*

Capturing on the Fly

Capturing on the Fly is the simplest method of capture. It is best for capturing large chunks of media or entire tapes. The steps for capturing on the fly are:

- With the tape in the capture device, press the red capture button. This will start capturing from tape.
- When you reach the end of the segment you want, press the red capture button again.
- Name the clip in the "Name" field.
- A master clip appears in your bin once the capture is complete.

Capture with In and Out

When it comes to capturing one or more short clips from a tape, capturing with ins and outs is a more precise and efficient method than capturing on the fly. The steps for Capturing with In and Out are:

- Navigate the tape to the point where you would like the captured clip to begin. This is called the "In" point.
- Mark the in point by pressing the  button on the capture window.
- Navigate the tape to the point where you would like the captured clip to end. This is called the "Out" point.
- Mark the out point by pressing the  button on the capture window.
- Name the clip in the "Name" field.
- Press the red capture button. Avid automatically captures the media between your "In" and "Out" point.
- If necessary, abort the capture process by clicking on the  button next to the red capture button at the top of the capture window.
- A master clip appears in your bin once the capture is complete.

Batch Capturing

For the majority of your projects, you'll find that batch capturing is the most efficient way to work. You very quickly move through your tape and identify clips that you'd like to capture (logging clips), then capture your selected clips all at once (batch capturing). Here's how it works:

Logging clips:

- Switch the log / capture button at the top of the capture tool to "log" mode:



- Navigate the tape to where you want the clip to begin
- Mark an in point by pressing the  button on the capture window
- Navigate the tape to where you want the clip to end
- Mark an out point by pressing the  button on the capture window
- Name the clip in the "name" field
- Press the  button and the clip is logged
- Log another clip by repeating the steps above

Batch capturing:

- Select all clips in your bin
- Go to the "Clip" menu and choose "Batch Capture"
- In the "Batch Capture" window, check the "offline media only" box:



Checking "offline media only" captures the clips that have been logged and not captured (**note:** if the "offline media only" box is not checked, Avid will attempt to capture *every* clip in your bin, including those that have already been captured)

- Click "OK" in the "Batch Capture" window, and Avid goes to work capturing your logged clips

Editing:

Editing in the Avid interface is not intuitive--that's why this "Quick Start" guide is as long as it is. However, once you get used to it, you'll find that Avid editing is equally, if not more, capable as any other non-linear editing system.

To edit clips in the timeline, there are four primary tools: *splice / overwrite*, *lift / extract*, *segment mode*, and *trim mode*.

Splice / Overwrite

Splice / overwrite helps you get clips into the timeline. The splice / overwrite buttons are located in the middle of the composer window, just below the source and record monitors.



To work with splice / overwrite:

- Double-click a clip in the bin to bring it into the source monitor
- Set an "In" point in the source monitor by dragging the source monitor's playhead to where you want the clip to begin and pressing the source monitor's  button
- Set an "Out" point in the source monitor by dragging the source monitor's playhead to where you want the clip to end and pressing the source monitor's  button
- If you have clips in the timeline, move the playhead to where you want to insert the clip from the source monitor (if you have no clips in the timeline, the clip will be inserted at the beginning of your sequence)
- Press the **splice** button  if you want to **insert** your clip into the timeline. Splicing media into the timeline means that, like inserting a word into a document, *all material after the splice will be pushed forward*
- Press the **overwrite** button  if you want to put your clip into the timeline and **overwrite** whatever media is already there. Overwriting media into the timeline means that *the new clip replaces any media underneath it*

Video and Audio in the Timeline:

- In Avid, video tracks are above the audio tracks in the timeline. Video tracks are displayed as V1, V2, V3, etc.

- Audio tracks are below the video tracks in the timeline. Usually, a video clip comes with two audio tracks (A1 and A2), representing the left and right channels of a stereo pair.

Lift / Extract

Lift / Extract helps you take clips out of the timeline. The lift / extract buttons are located at the top-center of the timeline.



To work with lift / extract:

- Mark the beginning of the piece of media you want to remove by dragging the timeline's playhead to the desired position and pressing the timeline's  button
- Mark the end of the piece of media you want to remove by dragging the timeline's playhead to the desired position and pressing the timeline's  button
- Press the **lift** button  if you want to remove the media and leave blank filler in its place.
- Press the **extract** button  if you want to remove the media and delete the gap where the media once was. **Note:** *Be very careful when using extract. If you have clips on multiple tracks, extracting media can shift things out of sync.*

Segment Mode

Segment mode helps you move clips within the timeline. The segment buttons are located at the bottom-left of the timeline.



To work with segment mode:

- choose the yellow **extract/splice-in segment** button if you want a selected clip to be extracted from one part of a sequence and inserted into another part.
- choose the red **lift/overwrite segment** button if you want a selected clip to be lifted from one part of a sequence and dropped into (not inserted) another part of the sequence
- with one of the segment tools selected, simply select a clip to move it. **Note:** segment mode does not automatically select all layers of a clip. To select all tracks of a clip (audio and video), **shift-click** the tracks to select them as a group.

Trim Mode

Trim mode helps you make fine adjustments to the edges of clips in a timeline. For instance, suppose you have a clip in a timeline and discover that it's a few frames too short. Do you have to go back and select new in and out points from the original clip? No—trim mode enables you to add (or subtract) frames to a clip from inside the timeline.

To work with trim mode:

- In the timeline, drag the playhead over the edit point you want to work with.
- Press "u." Pink bars appear around the edit point. You are now in "trim mode."



- The composer window changes to a trim mode window. VCR controls appear, enabling you to add to or subtract from the length of a clip.
 - clicking the << button decreases the length of the clip by 10 frames
 - clicking the < button decreases the length of the clip by 1 frame
 - clicking the > button increases the length of the clip by 1 frame (if media is available from the original clip)
 - clicking the >> button increases the length of the clip by 10 frames (if media is available from the original clip)
- By default, when you enter trim mode, pink bars are on the end of one clip and the beginning of another. This is called *Dual-Roller Trim Mode* and means that modifications will be made to *both* the outgoing and incoming clip simultaneously.
- To modify only the end of one clip or the beginning of another, you'll need to activate *Single-Roller Trim Mode*:
 - enter *Dual-Roller Trim Mode* and click on either the left or the right monitor.
 - The dual pink bars now change to a single pink bar on the end or beginning of your clip in the timeline.
 - *Single-Roller Trim Mode* is activated and you can modify the end or beginning of a single clip.

To exit trim mode: press "u" again.

Editing Tips:

Selecting tracks

- The timeline tracks that your edits apply to are the record track symbols highlighted on the left of your timeline (V1, A1, A2, etc.)

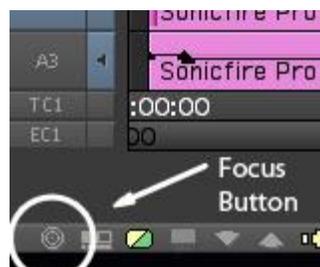


- To select or deselect tracks that a timeline edit applies to, simply click on the track symbol (e.g. V1)

Snapping—when selecting points to edit on the timeline, it can be helpful to "snap" the playhead to the edges of a clip. To get the playhead to the edge of a clip, hold down "Command" (CTRL on a PC) while dragging the playhead across the timeline.

Zooming in and out of the timeline:

- To zoom into the timeline, drag the timeline playhead to the position you want to zoom into and press the focus button at the bottom-left of the timeline.



- To get a full perspective on all clips in your timeline, press "CMD + /" ("CTRL + /" on a PC)
- To zoom in and out of the timeline, use the zoom slider at the bottom-center of the timeline

Subclipping—you might have a long clip that you'd like to split into several shorter clips. This is called subclipping:

- Double-click a clip from a bin to place it in the source monitor
- In the source monitor, set an in and out point
- Drag the image from the source monitor back into the bin and you will have a new sub clip

Adding filler—"filler" is Avid's term for blank video. Blank video is particularly useful to add at the beginning and end of your projects.

- To add filler to the beginning of your project, go to the "Clip" Menu and choose "Add Filler at Start"
- To add filler to the end or anywhere else on the timeline, click the "clip-name" menu in the Source Monitor and choose "load filler." Then, insert the filler from the source monitor into the timeline.



Timecode—it is helpful to start your sequence's timecode at 01:00:00, but Avid does not do this by default. To reset your timeline's timecode:

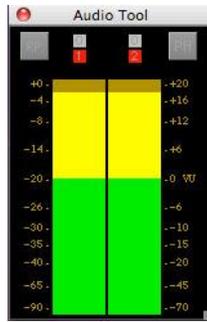
- select your sequence in its bin
- choose the bin's "text" tab and scroll over to the "start" column
- click on the start value and set it to "01.00.00.00"

Audio:

It is important to adjust the audio levels of your project so that, when you upload it to *Youtube*, play it on a television from a DVD, or enter it into a film festival, your audience can hear everything without having their ears blown out.

Three tools are key in mastering your audio: the *audio tool*, the *audio mixer*, and the *auto gain*.

Audio Tool



- The audio tool is a meter that tells you the audio levels of your project.
- Access the audio tool by going to the “Tools” menu and choosing “Audio Tool.”
- Play through clips on your timeline. The audio tool shows the audio levels of your clips.
- Refer to the read out on the *left* inside the audio tool (digital scale). Many production companies use -20db as their target audio level, meaning you want the levels of your primary tracks (often dialogue tracks) to fluctuate around -20db. Do not worry about setting your levels to exactly -20db; as long as they are within a 5db range (-25db to -15db) most of the time, your audio will sound normal.
- Background music and sound effects can go as low as -40db, and loud sounds can go up to -4db. Experiment with what sounds right to you.

The audio tool tells me my levels are good, but the volume sounds way too loud / soft to me. This is most likely because your computer volume is too high / low. To adjust the computer volume to match the audio output:

- Go to Project Window / Settings and double-click the "Audio Project" setting
- Select the "Output" tab
- Make sure "output gain" is set to 0 and drag the "monitors" volume up or down to match the 0-level of the output gain.

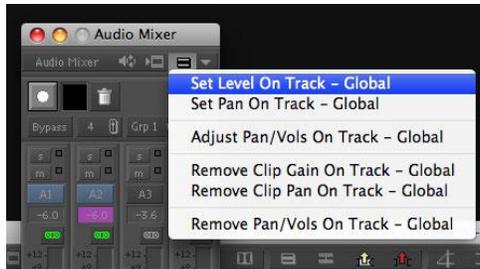
Audio Mixer



- The audio mixer is a tool that enables you to raise and lower the levels on your tracks.
- After determining if a level needs to be raised or lowered with the audio tool, open the audio mixer by going to the "Tools" menu and choosing "Audio Mixer."
- To raise or lower the audio levels on one clip:
 - In the timeline, move the playhead over the clip that you want to change.
 - In the audio mixer, make sure the track(s) that you want to change (A1, A2, etc.) is selected.
 - Adjust the track's volume slider up or down.
- To change multiple tracks at once:
 - In the timeline, move the playhead over the clip that you want to change.
 - Make sure the tracks (A1, A2, etc.) are selected in the audio mixer
 - Press the gang button for each track you'd like to link



- Adjust the volume slider on one of the tracks up or down and the sliders on multiple tracks change together
- To set levels for all clips on a track:
 - In the timeline, move the playhead over a clip on the track you want to change.
 - In the audio mixer, make sure the track that you want to change (A1, A2, etc.) is selected.
 - Adjust the track's volume slider to the desired level
 - In the Audio Mixer's fast menu, choose "set level on track - global"

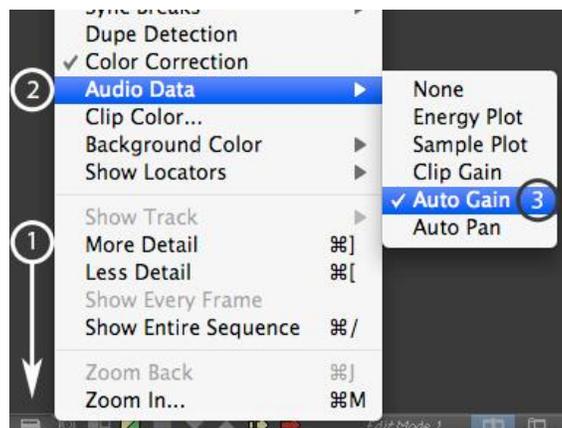


- All clips on the track are now adjusted

Auto Gain

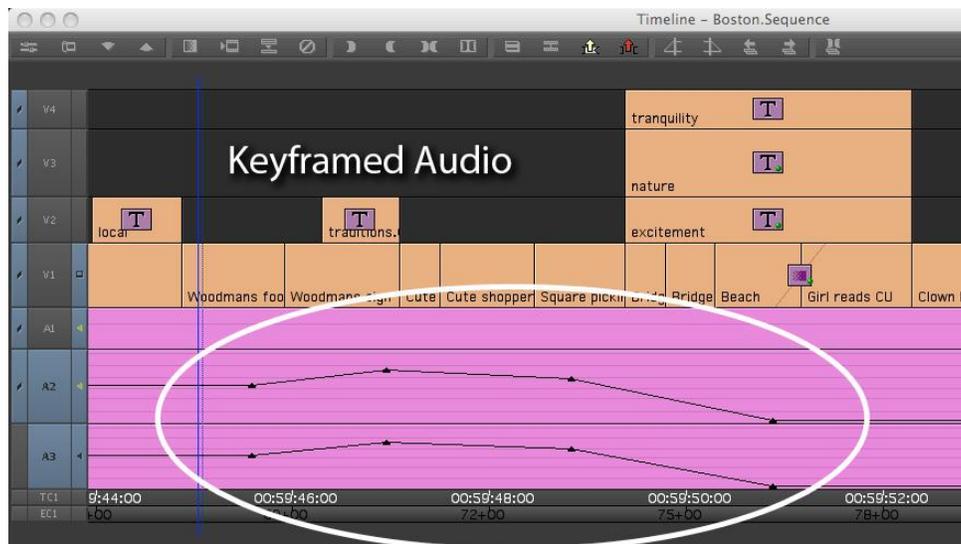
Auto gain is a mode that enables you to place dots, or key frames, on your audio tracks to make fine audio adjustments. Set key frames to make fine adjustments *after* you have used the Audio Mixer to make broad-scale adjustments to your audio levels.

- To turn on "auto gain," go to the timeline fast menu, select "Audio Data," then "Auto Gain"



- To use auto gain:
 - Make sure the audio track on which you want to add a key frame is highlighted in the list of record tracks (A1, A2, etc.) on the left of the timeline (if other audio tracks are highlighted, key frames will be added to them as well)
 - If you want to add a key frame to multiple audio tracks at once, make sure all tracks are highlighted in the list of record tracks
 - Move the playhead to the exact place on the timeline on which you want to add a key frame
 - Press the ["] key to set a key frame.

- Set another key frame before or after the point where you set your first key frame, and you will be able to drag the key frames up or down to change the audio levels over time.



- To *move* a key frame to the left or right, option-click (MAC) or alt-click (PC) and drag it across the timeline
- To *delete* a key frame, mouse over it until the pointer turns into a hand symbol; then, press "delete"

Effects:

Avid has effects that can be applied to a whole clip or effects that are only for transitioning between clips. This guide shows you how to apply a transition effect and edit some of its properties; with this knowledge, you should be able to explore the many other effects on your own.

To apply a transition effect:

- In the project window, choose the effects tab . This brings up a menu of Avid's many effects.
- In the effects menu, choose "Blend" in the left column, and "Dissolve" in the right column to select a standard dissolve transition.
- Drag the "Dissolve" transition straight from the effect menu onto a video edit point (where one clip ends and another begins) in the timeline
- If an "Insufficient Source" window pops up, click "size to fit" and the transition is applied
- *Make sure that the video track onto which you want to apply the transition is selected in the list of record tracks (V1, A1, A2, etc.) at the left of the timeline; if you attempt to apply a transition to a track that is not selected, nothing will happen*

- Once the transition is applied, you can watch it in the record monitor.
- To edit the duration of the transition:
 - move the playhead over the transition
 - select the "effects mode" button  at the upper left of the timeline and the effects window pops up (the effects window enables you to change the variables of any effect)
 - the duration of the transition is listed in the bottom of the effects mode; to change the duration, simply click the listed duration and change it (remember, 30 frames = one second; so, a 15-frame transition is half a second, and a 5-frame transition is one-sixth of a second)

Rendering

When effects appear in the timeline, they have a green dot on them, meaning they are "unrendered." "Unrendered" means that the computer needs some time to process them. More complex effects may not play properly in the record monitor if you leave them unrendered. To render an effect:

- In the timeline, move the playhead over the effect.
- Make sure that the video track containing the effect is selected in the list of record tracks (V1, A1, A2, etc.) on the left of the timeline.
- Click the render effect button  at the top of the timeline.
- A "Render Effect" window pops up; click "OK," and the effect is rendered.

Deleting an Effect

- In the timeline, move the playhead over the effect.
- Make sure that the video or audio track containing the effect is selected in the list of record tracks (V1, A1, A2, etc.) on the left of the timeline.
- Press the "Remove Effect" button  at the top of the timeline.

Titles:

The title tool in Avid is a powerful and easy way to create titles. To create a title:

- Select the "Title Tool" from the "Tools" menu. The Title Tool appears.



- The Title Tool automatically puts whatever video image your playhead was positioned at in the timeline in the Title Tool. *This does not mean your title will be connected to this image.* It means only that your title will be able to be layered on top of video or a graphic. If you do not want your title to be layered on top of video or a graphic, and you prefer that your title is over a black screen, deselect the "V" button at the bottom of the Title Tool.
- Avid has made creating your title very intuitive--it's almost like using a paint program. You can add text with the "T" tool, easily change the font and font attributes at the bottom of the window, and position text with the arrow tool.
- Adding shapes: rectangles, ellipses, and lines are also available at the bottom of the Title Tool Window. **Note:** If you'd like to add shapes *under* text, you must create a shape, select it with the arrow tool, go to the "Object" menu, and choose "send to back."
- Once you have the title looking the way you want it, go up to the "File" menu, and choose "Save Title." A Save Title window pops up. Name your title and click "save." The title is now available as a clip in your bin.

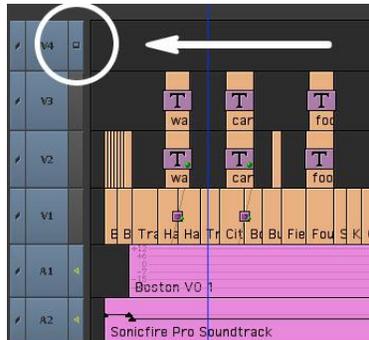
Title Safe: Televisions and projectors come in many dimensions; some show more video on the screen than others. How, then, can you be sure that the full text of your title will appear on all screens? Avid has a white box in the Title Tool window called "Title Safe" to help you. Make sure your all of your titles fall within the innermost white box of the Title Tool window. This way, you can be sure your titles will be seen on all screens.

Finishing up:

Once you've completed your edit in Avid, you'll want to **export** your project to make it a stand-alone video. You can then take this video and put it onto a DVD, upload it to *Youtube*, put it on a web site, or share it however you want.

Before you export

- Duplicate your main sequence. Select the sequence in your bin, then go to the "Edit" menu and choose "Duplicate." Now you can export a duplicate copy of your sequence without worrying about any freak export accident harming your original sequence.
- Save all of your bins by going to the "File" menu and choosing "Save Bin"
- Make sure the **video track monitor** on the list of record tracks at the left of your timeline is at the highest level of video; otherwise all video tracks will not be exported.



- If you only want to export a portion of your sequence, set "In" and "Out" points on the timeline and only the video from the "In" to the "Out" point will be exported.

Exporting (there are many ways to export; this tutorial walks you through creating a high-quality QuickTime movie file)

- Go to the "File" menu and choose "Export." An "Export As..." window pops up.
- In the "Export Setting" area at the bottom of the "Export As..." window, choose "Fast-Export QuickTime NTSC/PAL"
- Choose "Options" in the "Export Setting" area. An "Export Settings" window pops up.
- In the "Export Settings" window, make sure export as "QuickTime Movie" is selected. Then click "Same as Source." This will export your video in the highest resolution possible (the same resolution in which your media was captured); click "Save."
- Back in the "Export As..." window, name your project in the "Save As" field, choose the location where you would like the file to be saved, and click "Save."
- Your project is exported.

Backing up Your Work:

Editing programs, including Avid, can and do crash. To prevent devastation and stress-related hair loss, you will want to back up your project file at least once per day.

To back up your Avid project file:

- Locate your project file folder on your computer (the path to your most recent project is listed in the "Folder" field of the "Select Project" window when Avid first opens)
- Copy the project file folder onto a backup drive (flash drives work well for this purpose)

The Avid Attic

Avid has an "attic," or auto-save vault, that automatically backs up versions of your project file. The attic should not be used in place of daily project file back up to an external drive because if your hard drive fails, your "attic" will be wiped out with it. Still, the attic can come in handy if your computer crashes and you need to quickly restore a current version of your project file.

You can change how often the attic saves your project file (and other attic settings) in the "Bin Settings" menu. To find "Bin Settings," click on the settings tab in the project window and double-click "Bin."

NOTE: backing up your project file folder only backs up your Avid project (bins, timeline edits) and does not back up **any** of the media files within your project. The project file is only a shell, skeleton, or recipe for what your finished piece will ultimately look like. The *meat* of your project file comes from the *media*.

If your media is somehow lost or destroyed and you have it on tape, you can recover it by batch capture (see **batch capture** in the capturing video section). However, this takes some time. It is best to *back up all of your media* immediately after you capture it onto a hard drive (you only have to do this once, as captured media files never change as you work through a project).

Avid creates a media files folder (called "Avid MediaFiles") on whichever drive is set to receive captured media. Once you have captured all the media for your project, back up the Avid MediaFiles folder to an external drive to ensure that your project is secure and easily recoverable in the event of an accident.

Recommended Resources:

- Sam Kauffmann's [Avid Editing: A Guide for Beginning and Intermediate Users](#) provides a comprehensive, easy-to-follow introduction to Avid editing software (this guide owes a lot to Kauffman's book)

- Avid created a series of free video tutorials for Avid Xpress Pro at (<http://learn.avid.com/content/tutorials/>). While Avid Xpress Pro has been discontinued, its interface is similar to Media Composer.
- The Avid Community (<http://community.avid.com/>) is a forum for Avid users featuring video tutorials and expert users on hand ready to answer your questions
- Lynda.com is an excellent and economical site offering video tutorials on Avid and nearly any other software application you could want to learn
- Walter Murch's In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective in Film Editing provides excellent insight into the art of editing from one of the luminaries of the editing industry

Thank you.

Thank you for using Quick Start Avid. I hope this guide was useful for you.

About Quick Start: Quick Start Avid was produced under the auspices of an independent study at the University of Colorado, Denver. The project was supervised by Professor Marty Otañez, June, 2010.

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