

Broadcast Journalism Final Cut Pro Editing Basics

Introduction:

The concepts and techniques described in this document are geared specifically to working with Final Cut Pro and DV tape formats as used in the University of Minnesota's School of Journalism & Mass Communication.

Final Cut Pro is capable of working with virtually all existing tape formats including advanced television standards (commonly referred to as HDTV). Such environments require more hardware than that which comes with an out-of-the-box Macintosh G4 or G5 computer. Nor is this document an exhaustive explanation of all of Final Cut Pro's capabilities. For instance, no attempt is made to discuss compositing and effects. The goal is to provide users with enough information to begin basic projects requiring editing fundamentals.

DRAFT 1

Final Cut Pro Tutorials Outline

Day One - Project Setup, Capturing from Tape, Basic Edits

Starting Final Cut Pro

Creating Bins

Logging and Capturing

Preparing the Bin for Editing

Basic Three-point Edits, Overwriting and Inserting

Deleting Material

Day Two - Refining the Edit

Trimming

Adding Edits

Re-arranging Segments within the Timeline

Alternative Bin Views

Storyboard Editing

Day Three - Finishing and Final Output

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LAUNCH FINAL CUT PRO

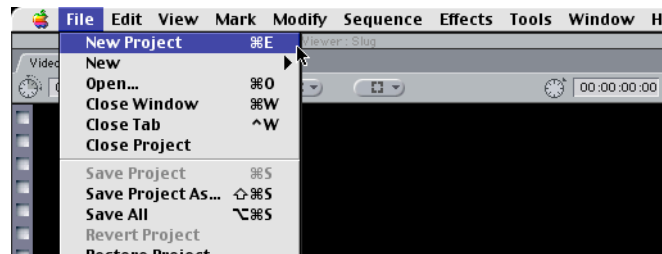
Locate the Final Cut Pro application icon on the Macintosh hard drive.



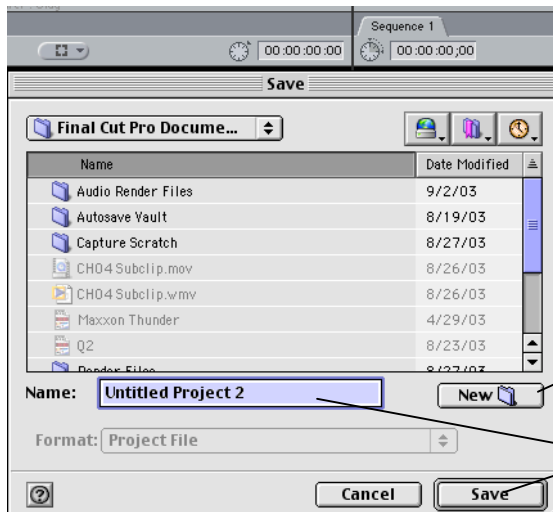
Typically, it will be in the Final Cut Pro folder within the Applications folder. It may also be located on the desktop as an alias; in the Apple menu from the finder (System 9); or located in the dock (System 10).

Double click the icon to launch Final Cut Pro application.

CREATING A NEW PROJECT



After launching Final Cut Pro, create a new project by selecting **New Project** from the **File** menu. Name the project and save it to a desired location. You may wish to create a parent folder in which you will keep all material related to your project.



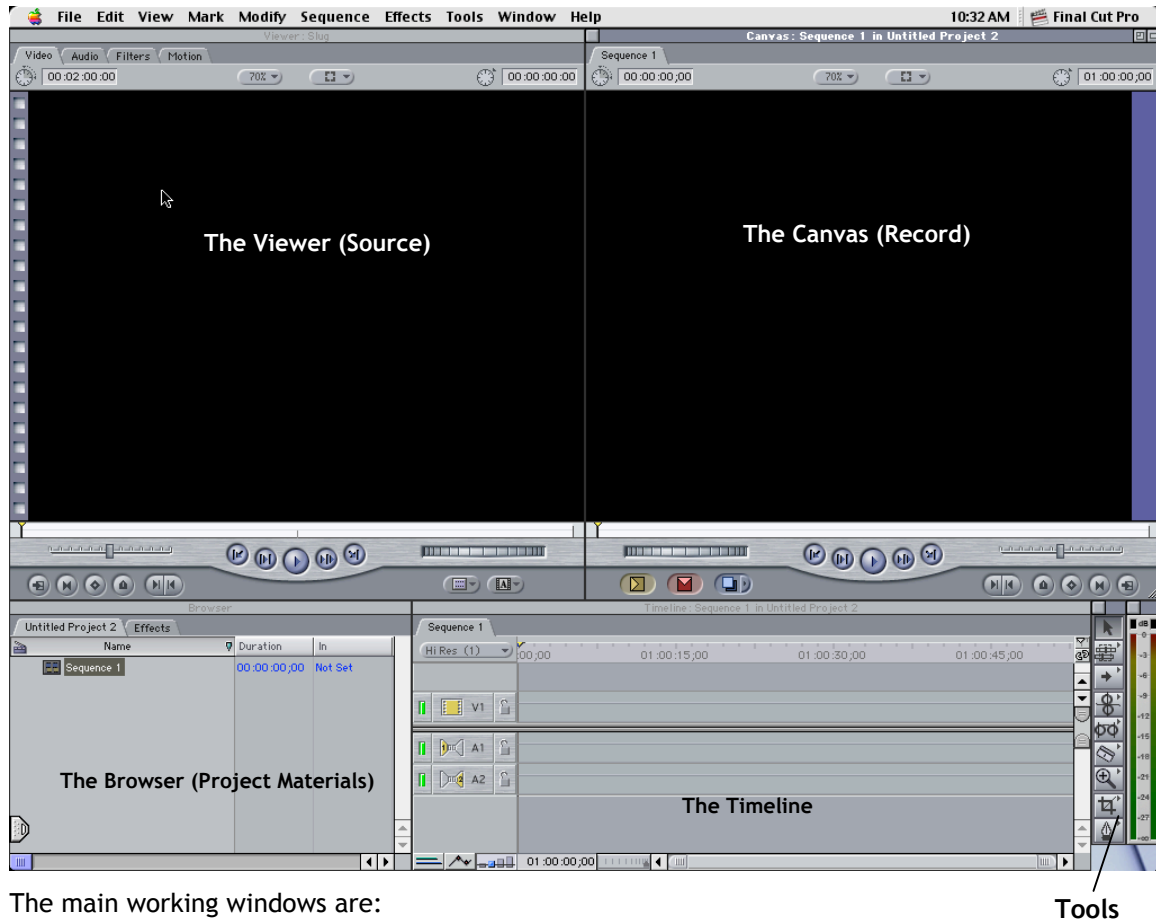
If desired, press the New Folder button to create a new

Name the project and save it.

IMPORTANT: The project file and its contents should not be confused with media files. Media files are the actual audio and video files used to create your program. The project file is a collection of pointers and descriptors about how those media files are used. Programs are easily re-created from the project file by simply re-capturing the audio and video files as described by the clips and sequences in your bins. This is a common practice for long-form projects, especially for television series and films. Media can be captured at a low resolution (more about that later) for the offline or rough edit. When the final program is ready to be assembled, only material actually used for the final version can be re-captured at full resolution.

Organization of the Editing Interface

Final Cut Pro will open to a standard window arrangement and to the last project being worked on. Close any open projects when you begin work on a new project.



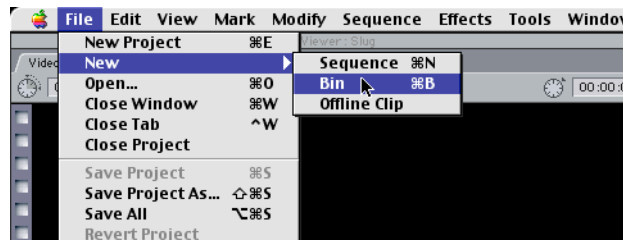
The main working windows are:

- **Browser:** the storage area where clips and bins are kept and organized and from which many effects are accessed.
- **Viewer:** the monitor for viewing and marking source material .
- **Canvas:** the monitor for viewing the edited program as well as the working area for selecting types of edits.
- **Timeline:** a graphic representation of the program. It also allows for manipulation of the program with a number of tools.
- **Tools Palette:** a palette for accessing tools used to manipulate material once it is in the timeline.

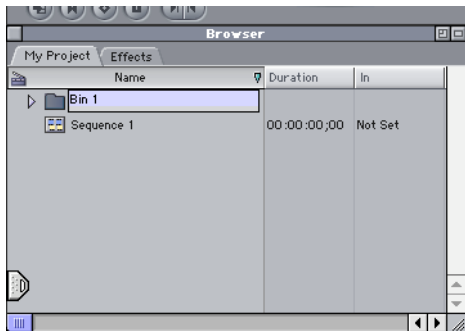
Working in the Browser

Creating a New Bin

Before you can capture material, you will need to create a bin in which clips will be kept. Bins are like folders, but the terminology of “bin” has carried over from the bins used to store cuts of film in motion picture editing.



1. Choose **New Bin** from the **File** menu or enter **⌘B**
2. A new bin appears in the browser window
3. Type in a name for the bin and press <return> or <enter>.



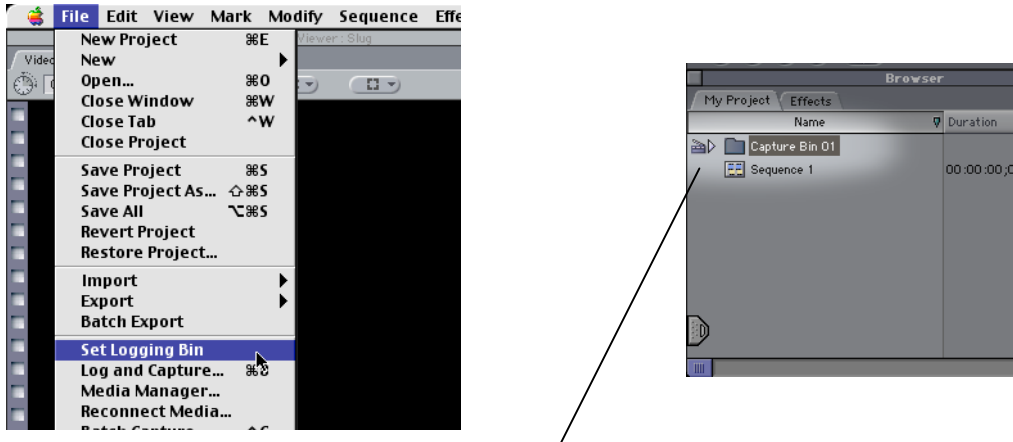
Once you have a bin, you can begin logging and capturing material for your project.

LOGGING AND CAPTURING

Choose the bin in which you want to keep your clips and mark that bin as the Logging Bin.

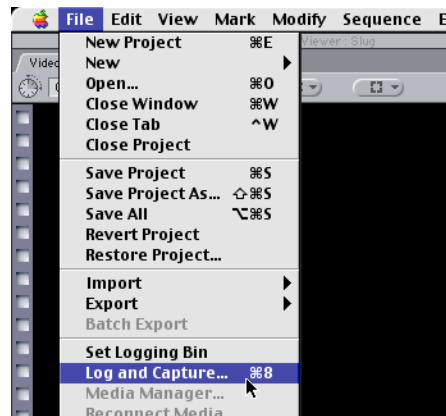
To set the logging bin:

1. Click once on the bin to highlight it.
2. Select **Set Logging Bin** from the File Menu.



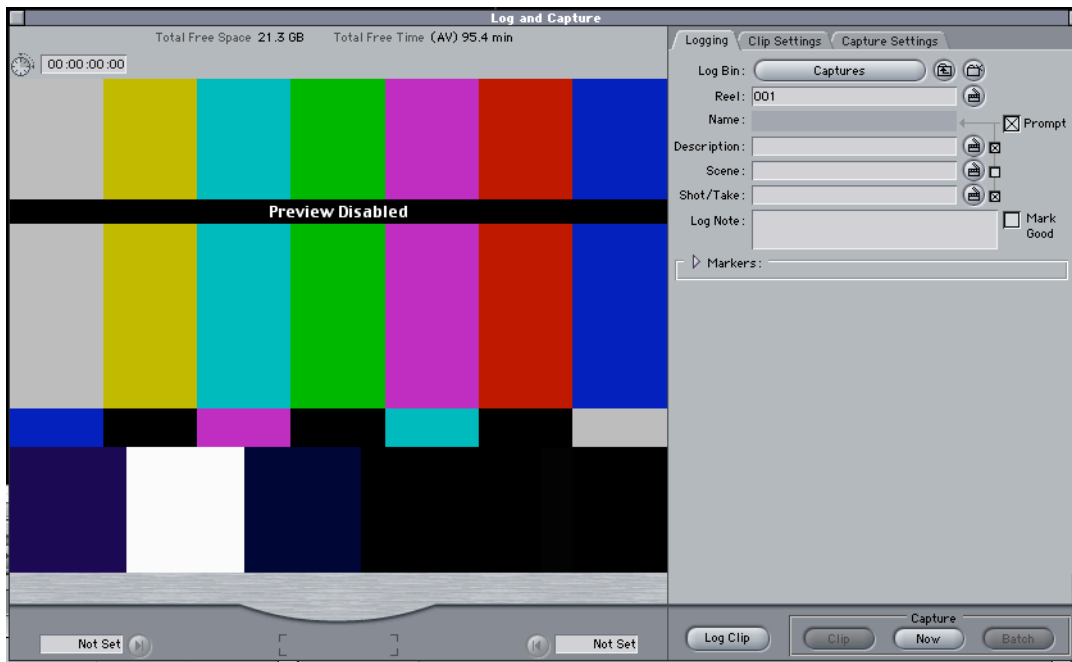
A slate icon now appears to the left of the selected bin in the browser window, indicating that the bin will be the destination for clips you create when logging and capturing.

With the bin still highlighted, select **Log and Capture** from the File Menu or enter <⌘8>.



The Log and Capture window will now open. You are ready to begin the process of transferring your material from tape to hard drives via a connected firewire camera or video tape recorder (VTR).

Establishing Clip Settings

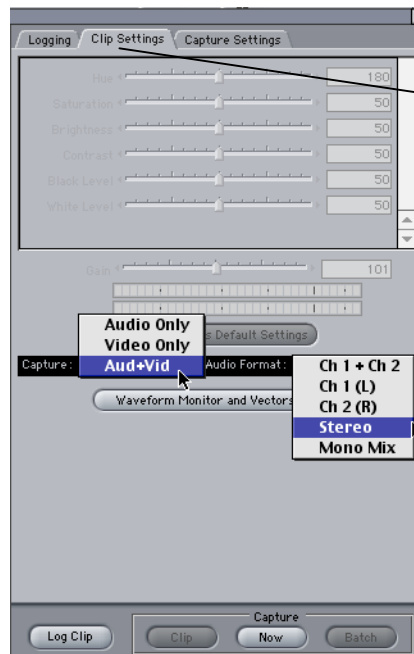


The Log and Capture Window

Clip Settings: Selecting Tracks

Before capturing material, you must identify which tracks you wish to capture from your tape.

1. Click once on the Clip Settings Tab

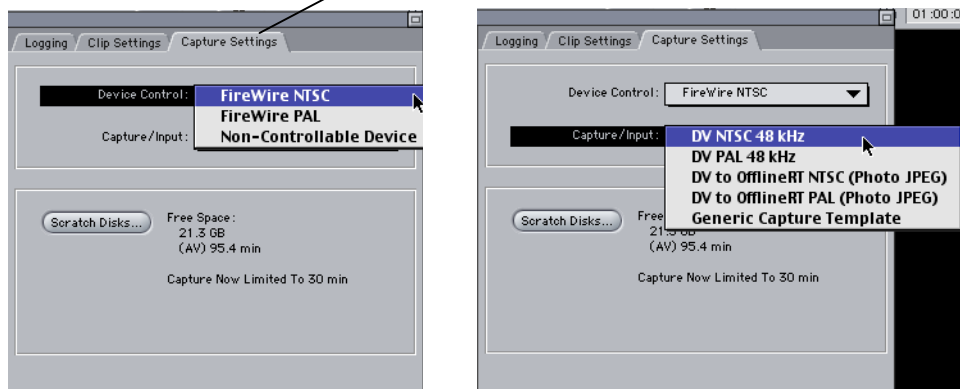


Clip Settings Tab

2. From the pop-up menus, identify which tracks you want: audio, video or audio and video.
3. Identify how you wish to capture your audio tracks (channel 1, 2 or both) and how you want them grouped. If you capture channels 1 and 2 as a "Stereo" pair, any change made to one while editing will automatically be applied to the other (such as levels). Capturing channels 1 and 2 as "Ch 1 + Ch 2" maintains separate identities for the two tracks. These options can be changed later from within the timeline.

Capture Settings: Choosing Resolution and Format

Click once on the Capture Settings tab.



For our purposes, you will want to verify that :

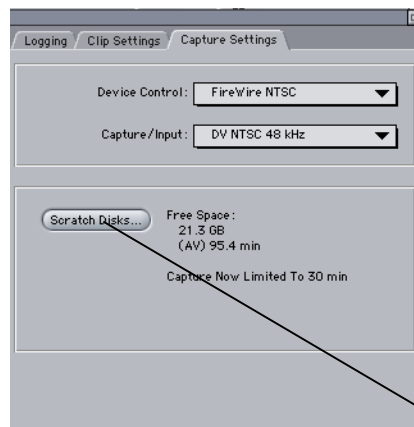
4. Your device control is set to Firewire NTSC. [Other options are available for different types of deck control protocols (such as RS-422) or decks with no remote control connection.]
5. Capture/Input is set to DV NTSC (the American standard for DV tape formats) and 48 kHz audio. On systems with additional encoding cards, other options will appear. Video from Mini-DV or DVCAM uses an MPEG-2-based compression scheme of approximately 5-to-1.

For very long format programs or programs with a great deal of material, you may wish to work at the DV Offline resolution of DV NTSC Photo JPEG. This increases the total number of minutes of material that can be stored on your drives. Later you will be able to re-capture material at full resolution.

Selecting the Storage Device for Your Media Files and Related Files

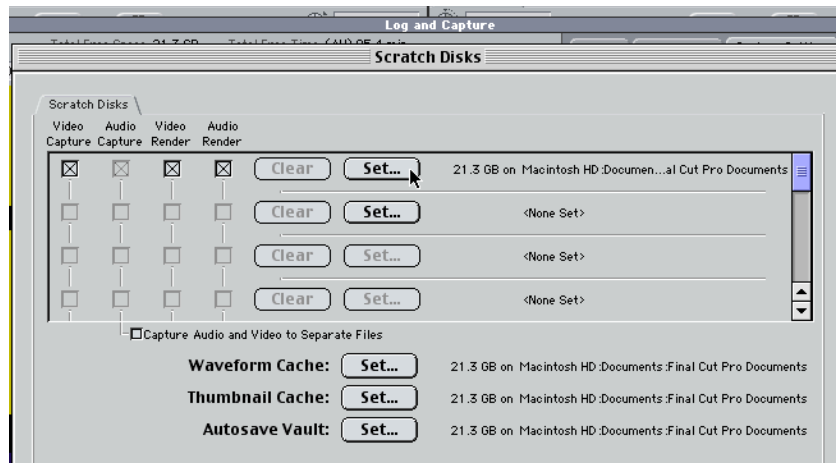
When you transfer your taped material to hard drives, you typically want to use a separate drive or drives for storing your digital video and audio files. DV files transfer readily to firewire drives that run at a minimum speed of 7200 rpm. (Note: You may partition your computer's hard drive to create a section for storing media files that is separate from the system and application files; though this method is generally not recommended).

The drive - or partition of a drive - where your actual video and audio files will be stored is referred to as the "scratch disk" in Final Cut Pro.



Capture Scratch: Setting the Destination Drive for Captured Media

1. Click on the **Capture Settings** tab.
2. Click on the **Scratch Disk** button.
3. Click on the **Set** button



4. Browse to the desktop where you should find your storage drive's icon. Click once on your drive and then click on **Choose**. If you desire, you may create a parent folder with a name convenient for your organizational purposes.

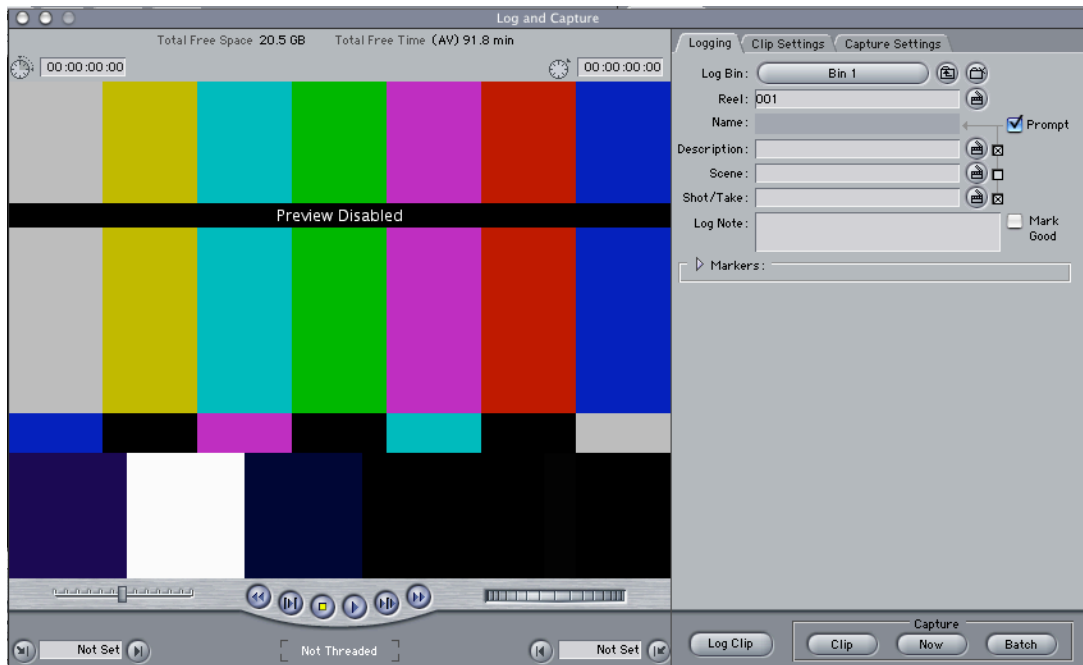
If you wish to separate your scratch disk preferences for audio, video and render files, you may do so by checking or unchecking the boxes for each and setting the scratch disk preferences individually. Do the same for the Cache and Autosave Vault settings.

CAUTION: When you select your capture scratch disk, Final Cut Pro creates a folder named "Capture Scratch" on that disk and a folder within that folder with the current project name. If you need to refresh your capture scratch disk preferences, do not choose the folder called "Capture Scratch" or Final Cut Pro will nest a new folder within it also called "Capture Scratch" with a folder inside it for your project. This leads to a chain of nested folders all called "Capture Scratch," making it difficult to locate your media.

Scratch disk settings will be retained from the last user. In a multi-user environment, re-set your scratch disk settings at the beginning of every edit session, or your media may end up stored in an unexpected place.

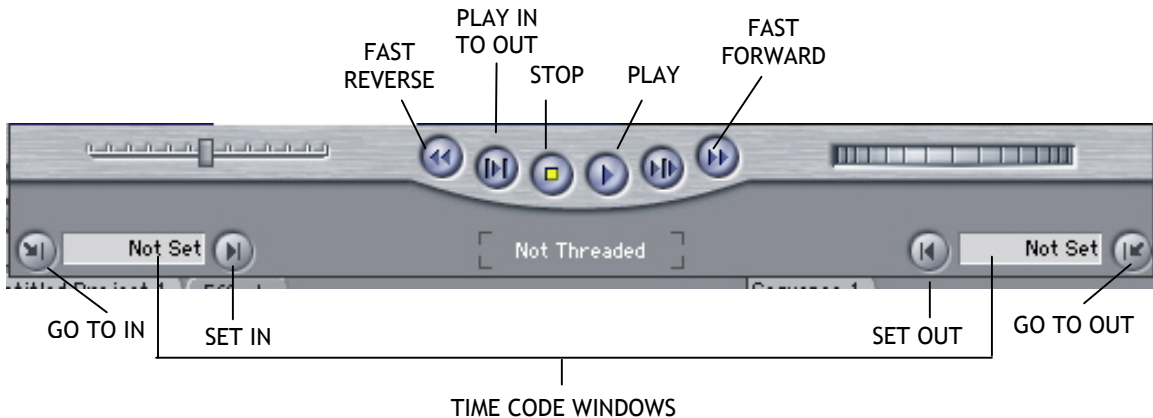
Capturing Material to Drives: Logging and Capturing

Now that you have identified where your material is to be stored, you can begin the process of creating clips and transferring your material from tape to hard drives.



The Log and Capture window is pictured above. The left side of the window provides remote control of a deck connected via a firewire connection.

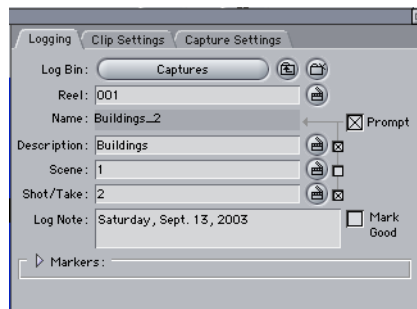
Deck and motion controls in Final Cut Pro.



Insert data in appropriate fields for the logging info.

1. Enter the reel name or number. Name and label your tapes carefully. (You may use fairly lengthy text descriptors as well as numbers, but you should be careful with names if you never need to generate an EDL for an actual tape suite. Most EDL formats require numbers only.)
2. Enter a description. This name will be applied to your clip. Until you change the description, each succeeding clip will be named the same with a numeric identifier appended.

Additional data is elective but may be helpful for identifying clips more specifically.



Automatic Titling Using the Clip Fields

By checking the boxes to the right of the various fields, you can affect automatic naming properties for your clips in Final Cut Pro.

If you check the "Prompt" box, you will be prompted to verify the assigned name for the clip or to give the clip a different name. With the Prompt box unchecked, FCP automatically names the clip according to the boxes you have checked and the information entered into each field. Each field that you check is made a part of the default name with each item separated by an underscore as shown below.

The image shows two screenshots from Final Cut Pro. The top screenshot is the 'Clip Settings' dialog box, with the 'Logging' tab selected. It contains fields for 'Log Bin' (Footage), 'Reel' (001), 'Name' (Park Shots_1_12), 'Description' (Park Shots), 'Scene' (1), and 'Shot/Take' (12). To the right of these fields are checkboxes for 'Prompt' (checked), 'Mark Good' (unchecked), and several other icons. An arrow points from the text 'Automatic naming preferences' to these checkboxes. The bottom screenshot is the 'Log Clip' dialog box, showing the 'Name' field with 'Park Shots_1_12' and a 'Log Note' field. It also has a 'Mark Good' checkbox and 'Cancel' and 'OK' buttons. An arrow points from the text 'Prompt box' to this dialog. Below these is a screenshot of the 'Browser' window showing a list of clips in the 'Footage' bin. The clips are: Interview (00:00:15:16, Not Set), Office Interior (00:01:15:01, Not Set), Park Shots (00:02:50:01, Not Set), Park Shots_1_11 (00:00:00:01, Not Set), and Park Shots_1_12 (00:00:00:01, Not Set). A red diagonal line is drawn through the 'Park Shots_1_12' clip. An arrow points from the text 'Clip with name in bin (when a clip is logged but not captured, a red diagonal line appears through the clip)' to this clip.

Capturing on the Fly: the Capture Now button

The Capture Now feature is typically used either when a deck source cannot be controlled remotely (for instance, most VHS decks) or when an entire tape needs to be transferred without taking time to search for or log timecode for individual clips. News assignments with tight deadlines frequently require the transfer of entire field tapes.

To use the Capture now method:

1. Start playing your tape either remotely or by hitting <Play> on the deck
2. Click the Capture Now button. Your material is now being transferred to your drive.



3. At the desired end point, press <esc> on the keyboard.

Your clip appears in a new window. You can use the controls to review the material. To create and save a clip for the new media file:

1. Click and hold in the middle of the new clip's monitor.
2. Drag the ghost image of the clip into a bin in the browser window.
3. You will be prompted to save and name (or re-name) the clip.

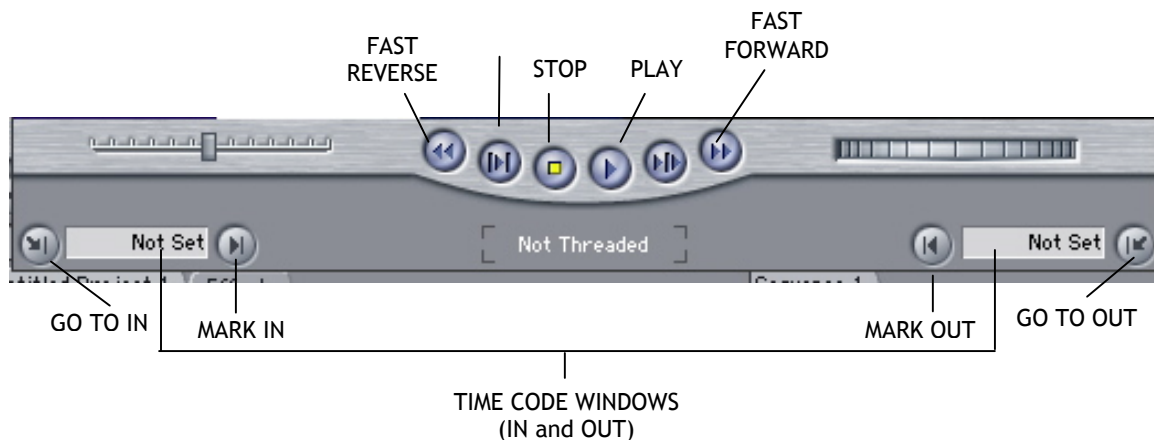
Logging and Capturing

The Log and Capture method allows you to pre-select and capture only the material you think you will be using from your source tapes. By logging, you first create clips and then capture the related footage.

This method is most useful when:

- You have far more material on tape than you will actually use, e.g. multiple takes or a great deal of unscripted b-roll.
- You have logged your tapes in the field or by reviewing your tapes before beginning the actual edit. (A sample log is at the end of this document)

If you have not created a paper log before you begin, you can use the deck controls to find the in and out points for your clips:

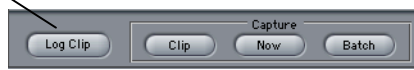


1. Play or shuttle to the spot on the tape from which you want to begin capture. [Always allow yourself a little extra head and tail for your clip.]
2. Press <i> on the keyboard to mark an in point or <o> to mark an out point or use the Mark In and Mark Out buttons beneath the preview screen...

or

Type in the 8-digit timecode number in the IN or OUT timecode windows.

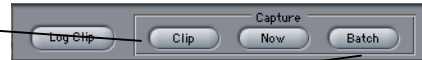
3. Click on the **Log Clip** button.



4. A clip appears in the logging bin in the browser. The clip has a red diagonal line through it, indicating that the related video and audio media have not been captured yet.

You may capture media for logged clips either individually or in a batch. Log and capture is most effectively used in conjunction with batch captures. When you are ready to capture the video and audio files for your logged clip, do the following:

5. To capture only the clip you just logged, click on the capture **Clip** button.
6. To capture all clips in a bin or a group of clips you have selected, click on the capture **Batch** button.



7. If you select capture Batch, a prompt appears asking whether you want to capture all items in the bin or only selected items. Choose whichever is appropriate.