

A Short Introduction To Video Editing  
*(and several other film disciplines besides)*

For Musicians

*by Bryan J. Lackey*

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*Special thanks to Mr. David Huber, drama teacher at Herbert Hoover High School in Glendale, CA for his invaluable assistance, and to Jason Yadlovski and Casey Faris for creating amazing video tutorials for Resolve.*

## Lesson 1-Introduction And Terminology

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*Video editing* can be a very expansive term; specifically it just refers to the process of taking video footage and rearranging it to tell a visual story. However in our context, where we'll mostly be working on our own, it will cover many aspects of filming-directing, audio editing, camera work and cinematography, set design, and even craft services if you stop for lunch during one of your projects. Understand that this is no small task-on even a low budget film this would be the work of 5-10 people, while on a full budget Hollywood, Bollywood, or Chinese production literally hundreds of people can be needed, with many specialists for every job, to turn an idea into a finished reality. But-with some patience, time, and practice you can learn the basics of how to put together a compelling video to showcase your musical talents.

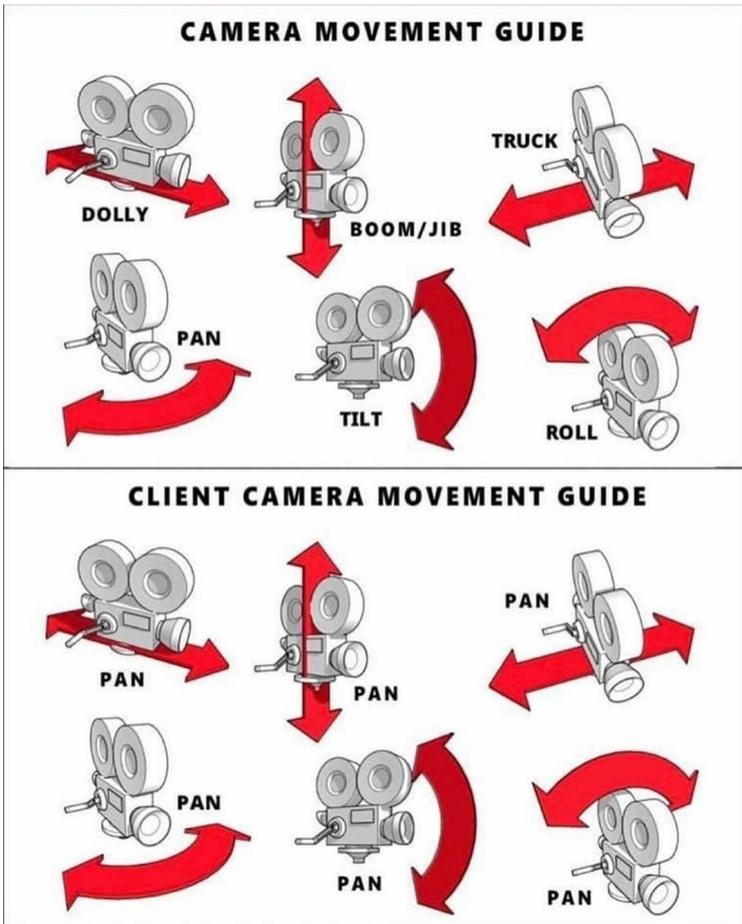
These lessons assume that you know how to take video with your phone or camera of choice and, if you're using a laptop or desktop to edit, copying that video to your computer.

Over the course of these lessons we'll cover terminology, basic techniques, integrating audio, and specifics of software for a few programs.

### Terminology!

Please note that most of these definitions are very brief summaries of very large concepts, and I encourage you to explore further on your own.

- *director*-the person in charge of the overall visual realization of a story or idea. Roughly analogous to the author of a text work
- *cinematography*-briefly, how something is filmed. This can include camera angles, particular points of focus in a scene, lighting, coloration, and many more visual artistic choices.
- *camera operator*-the person who actually uses the camera to film something, usually according to the instructions of the director, cinematographer, and/or director of photography on larger productions
- *scene*-action that takes place in the same location and timeframe
- *cut*-changing from one piece of footage to the next, without any effect in between. This can be used to show different perspectives in the same scene, or to change from one scene to another. Cuts that are very abrupt are often referred to as *jump cuts*.
- *transition*-changing from one piece of footage to the next with an effect in between, such as a blur, dissolve, wipe, etc. Usually transitions are used to change from one scene to a next, although sometimes they are used in scene.
- *in frame/out of frame*-whether a particular object or person is visible on camera or not
- *audio editing*-editing the dialogue, sound effects, music, etc. together to give the desired result
  - *Foley editing*-adding sound effects after filming for ambient sound, such as footsteps, impacts with environmental objects, etc. Foley effects are beyond the scope of these lessons, but they are important to know about if you want to create more advanced videos.
- *camera movement types*-There are many different camera movement types, often incorrectly referred to as "panning" by laypeople.



- *dialogue*-words spoken by people on screen
- *narration*-words spoken off screen, usually to describe the visuals
- *handles*-in image and video editing software, the dots around an image or video used to resize it

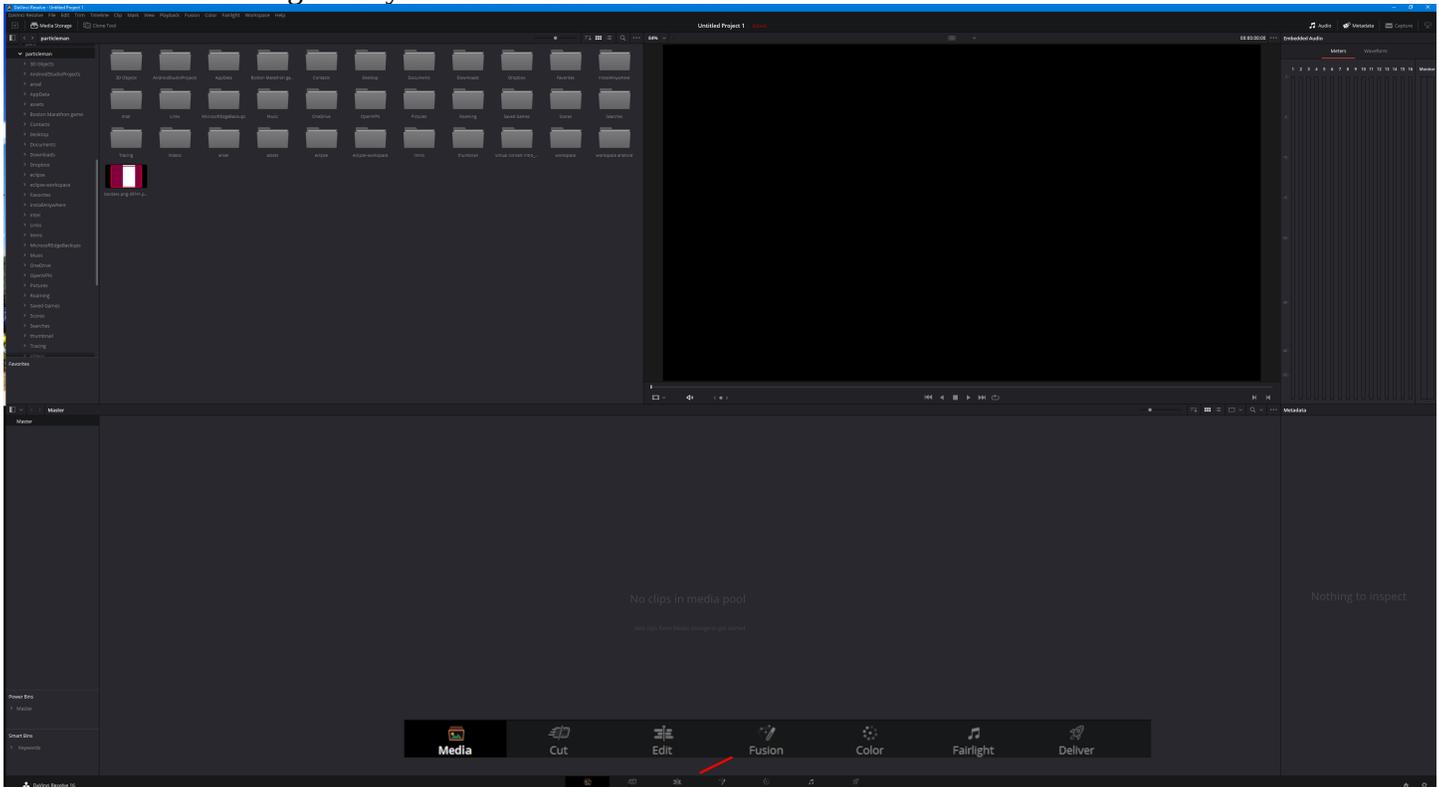
## Video editing software basics

There are many video editing software programs, including Adobe Premiere, OpenShot, DaVinci Resolve, Blender, iMovie, Windows Movie Maker, a host of mobile programs, and several web based services, including Kapwing and WeMovie. Some are paid, some are free, and all of them offer different feature sets and approaches to constructing a final video. For these lessons, I will provide instructions for DaVinci Resolve, which is cross platform, though not for mobile devices, and Kapwing

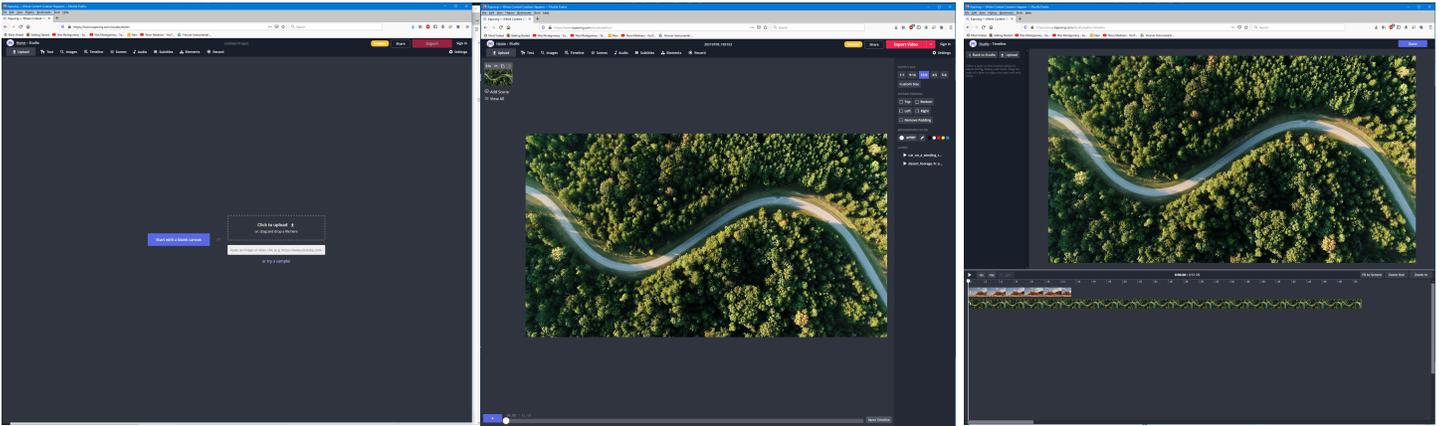
( <https://www.kapwing.com/studio/editor/>). I *strongly* recommend DaVinci Reosolve, as it is both free and incredibly powerful, and is the choice of *many* professionals. However, please feel free to complete the assignments in the software of your choice.

To get DaVinci Resolve, go to  <https://www.blackmagicdesign.com/products/davinciresolve/> and click on "Download Now". Download and install DaVinci Resolve, NOT DaVinci Resolve Studio, which is the paid version. At press time both version 17 beta and version 16 are available; both will be fine for completing these assignments.

Resolve's own documentation will give you a far better overview of its tools and setup than can be provided here. Clicking on Edit, Cut, Fusion, etc. on its website will take you to the documentation for that section of the software. The main thing that I want you to be aware of is how the program is organized. The menu bar at the bottom of the screen takes you to different parts of the program and different ways of looking at the same data. Media is where you load in files, Cut is primarily for switching between different clips, Edit is for adjusting clips, Fusion is for special effects, Color adjusts the colors of your video, Fairlight is for audio editing, and Deliver is for rendering all of your edits into a final video.



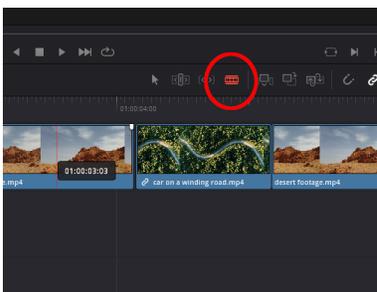
Kapwing will start you at a simple introduction screen asking you to upload files. After you do you'll see the main Studio screen, where you can adjust many of the visual properties of your video. For actually cutting videos together, however, you'll need the Timeline view.



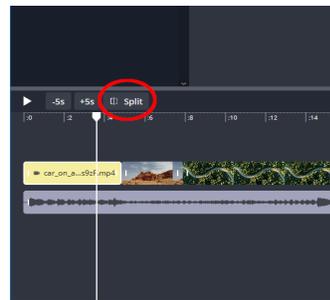
There are many tools and options available in any video editor, but the main ones we're concerned with are how to import new files into a project, the cut tool, and how to export your final products.

You may want to use the cut tool on just one video, usually to trim unwanted bits at the beginning or end. Mostly, however, we'll want to take multiple videos (and often audio as well, such as music, voiceover, sound effects, or all of the above) and put them together.

The basic way of creating a cut is to split a video into segments, and then dragging to rearrange those segments. Usually the tool is called split, razor, blade edit, or something along those lines. Most of the time you'll need to create two splits, one at the beginning and one at the end of the section you wish to rearrange. In Resolve it's the razor blade icon in the Edit tab, and can also be quickly accessed by hitting B. Once the tool is selected, clicking anywhere on a clip in the timeline will create a split. In Kapwing the split tool is in the timeline view, and is used by moving the white playhead line to where a cut is desired, selecting a clip by clicking on it, and then clicking the Split button.



*Blade Edit tool in Resolve*



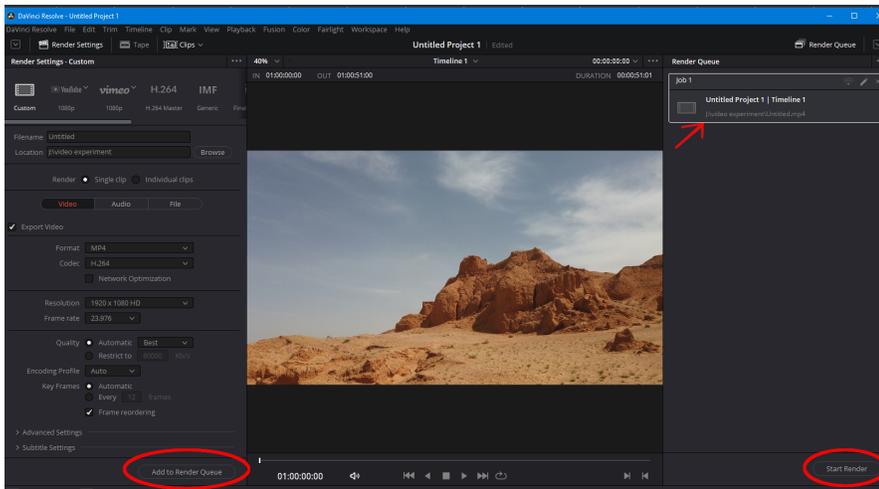
*Split tool in Kapwing*

Audio files can be added to both Resolve and Kapwing projects like video files, and cut and manipulated in the same manner. Resolve also features extensive audio editing capability, although as you get more advanced you may wish to do detailed editing of your audio in another DAW before bringing the polished sound back to Resolve.

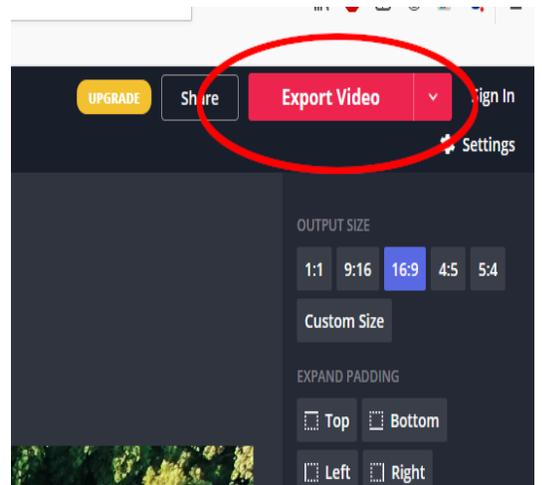
Once you've created a video you're happy with, you'll need to render and export it so people can see it. In Resolve, this all happens on the Deliver tab. On the left is all of the options for your final video (usually the defaults are fine for now) and a button that says Add to Render Queue. When you click that you'll see a job listed over on the right side of the screen; select it and click Start Render to generate your video.

In Kapwing, simply click Export Video in the upper right hand corner of the main studio page.

In either case, rendering video can be time and processor intensive, even in the modern age-especially for longer videos. But eventually you will have a final product that you can watch locally, upload for an assignment, share on YouTube, etc.



*Exporting a video on the Deliver tab in Resolve*



*Export Video button on Kapwing*

## *Project 1*

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Download the two videos in Video Editing Project 1 on Google Classroom and open them in the video editor of your choice. Cut the two videos together as you see fit; you must use at least three cuts. Add music of your choosing to your video. Save and export the video as [your name] project 1-video 1

Repeat the process, but cut the video in different places and use different music. Save and export the video as [your name] project 1-video 2

## Lesson 2-The basics of camera work and cutting dialogue

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Now that we understand the basics of how to use our video editing software of choice, the next task is to learn how to use those tools to tell an effective story. We'll give an overview of the whole language of film, and then use creating a simple two character scene as our introduction to "speaking" that visual language for ourselves.

We live in a visual culture, and really we live in a video culture. Our popular and artistic entertainment has been shaped by the visual language of film for over 120 years now. We know many of the details of it even when we don't know we know the details of it. We expect a wide, expansive overhead shot when we see a new place on screen. We "know" that when people are speaking to each other the one that's speaking is the one that's on screen-until it jumps to another person on screen for their response. We know that when we suddenly see something really close up it's important. All of this is part of the visual language of film that's been developed over the last century. A full discussion of this language is well beyond the scope of these assignments, but start to become aware of what you see and how it's put together. Experiment as you shoot video with different camera placements and movements, different lighting, and different ways of arranging things. And watch these two videos put together by Mr. David Huber, which do a great job of explaining the basics:

-  Cell phone filming tips (and some basics): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TSFOHdZVJg>
-  Film techniques basics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vB4723bMQvk>

In addition to Mr. Huber's tips, if you will mostly be filming yourself you'll need to think about how you're going to steady your phone or camera while you're filming. You can use books or boxes to stabilize your phone if necessary, however if possible (and if your parents don't already have these) please invest in a tripod and a cell phone clip/adaptor. While professional versions can be very expensive, cheap tripods can be had for \$25 or less, and good quality cell phone tripod clips are available for about \$10. You may even want to consider the small tripod style with the flexible legs that can wrap around things for flexibility and space concerns.

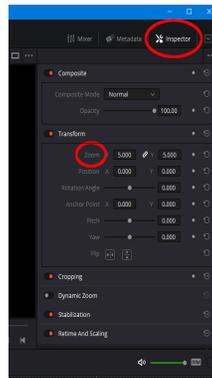
Good editing gives scenes an internal rhythm that helps create an emotional effect in the viewer. Bad editing, while subjective, usually is when the editing makes the scene hard to follow, obscures the important subjects of the shot, or doesn't serve the needs of the story. Multiple cuts in rapid succession creates energy, or tension in a scene. Long shots that either don't cut at all or change focus by moving the camera rather than cutting can create calm, introspection, or a sense of fluid motion.

Now let's look at dialogue specifically. Usually in filming dialogue, rather than showing everyone in the conversation at once the camera will alternate between whoever is speaking at the moment. In addition to these alternations, the camera will often zoom in on a speaker if their line or reaction is particularly important. Sometimes the camera will stay on the person listening, rather than speaking, if their reaction will create a greater visual impact. And, if multiple cameras are available, sometimes the scene will cut to a view of all speakers to help convey the emotion of that point in the conversation, or to otherwise help with the rhythm of the scene.

To simulate this effect with one person and one camera, you'll need to record two separate videos-one for each speaker's dialogue-from separate angles, and cut them together. You'll also need to use the software zoom in feature when appropriate. And as Mr. Huber said, don't forget the rule of thirds.

Software zoom in Resolve in its simplest form is activated by clicking on a clip, then opening the Inspector, and then adjusting the Zoom parameters under Transform, as well as turning Dynamic Zoom on or off. You can also

do more complicated zooms; Casey Faris has an excellent tutorial video at  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xjzNtaPDKo>

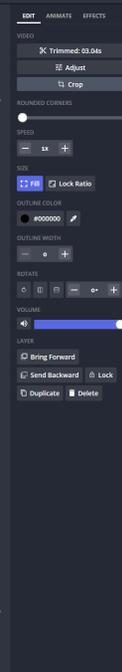


*Inspector and zoom settings in Resolve*

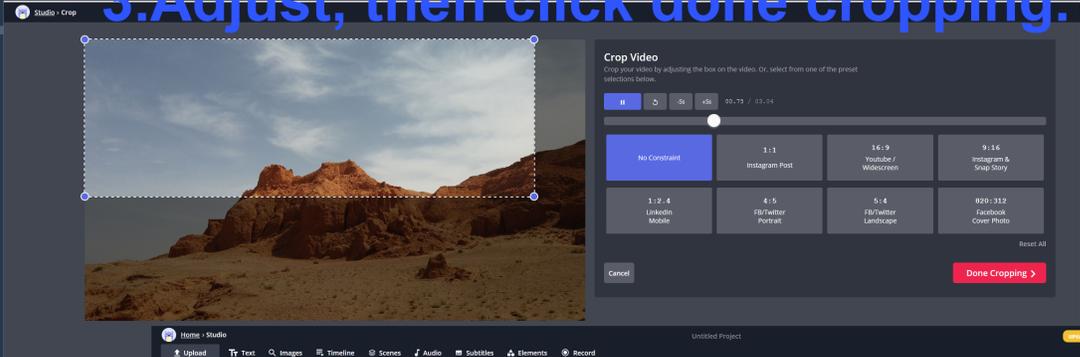
# 1. Slice the clip you want to zoom in



# 2. Scroll to that clip, click the playback, and then click Crop.



# 3. Adjust, then click done cropping.



# 4. Finally, resize your cropped video to fill the entire screen.



Software zoom in Kapwing is a slightly more complicated process. Once you've cut the clip you want to zoom in on in the timeline, return to the main studio page. Scroll the playback bar to the clip that you want to zoom in on, click the playback window, and then select Crop from the right hand menu. Adjust the handles until you have the desired area visible, then click Done Cropping. This will return you to the main editing screen, and probably your cropped video on top of another video. Drag the lower right handle of the cropped video until it fills the screen to complete the zoom.

Choose a script from 30 Scenes And Scripts For Two Actors at  <https://monologueblogger.com/30-scenes-and-scripts-for-two-actors/>, Scenes For Teens at

 <http://www.mtgilead.k12.oh.us/userfiles/1083/Classes/20749/scenesforteens.pdf>, or any other school appropriate script for two actors of roughly 1-2 pages in length. Record each character's dialogue as a separate video with the camera pointed in separate directions. You may wish to record each character's audio first to help with your timing.

Once you have your completed videos, edit them together in two ways:

- First, cut every time the speaker changes, and only show the speaking character on screen. Save and export this as [your name] project 2-video 1
- Second, cut where you think the impact points in the conversation are. Also, use at least one zoom in. Save and export this as [your name] project 2-video 2

## Lesson 3-Filming music performance and simulating multiple camera angles

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One of the best ways to make a video more interesting is to have multiple viewpoints of the same action. In professional productions this is accomplished by having multiple people and multiple cameras filming the action as it happens. However for our purposes most of us will have to simulate that with one camera. This lesson will have you make a simple music video using multiple camera angles.

When filming dialogue, usually you can use the audio from each separate video without major issue. When filming music, usually it's best to get a clean audio track first, then film the playing to go with it. This avoids weird level jumps or acoustic shifts, and gives the impression that you're watching the same performance. And, when you know you're recording music for video, add a count off or metronome clicks at the beginning to make it easy to sync the videos later.

When choosing where to cut to a different angle in a music video there are a number of possibilities:

- cutting every measure
- cutting on downbeats
- cutting at different sections (think changing at double bars in written music, or between verses and choruses)
- cutting when the emotion of the music changes

Along with simply cutting when it "feels" right.

As you film yourself from each different angle, let the audio track play. Even though you'll only use your clean audio, having the audio on every video will help sync your videos properly when you edit.

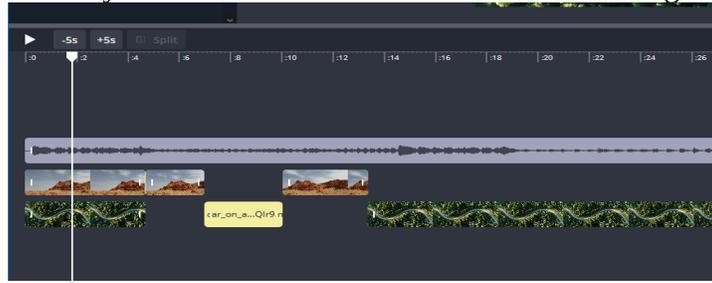
In Resolve, working with a multicamera setup (or simulated one) is very easy. Load all of your videos into your project's Media Pool, select them, right click to bring up a menu, and click on "Create New Multicam Clip Using Selected Clips". When the dialog box comes up most of the default options are fine except for Angle Sync. You'll want to change that to "Sound" so it syncs your videos by their audio. You may also want to change the name to something you'll recognize. This will create a new video clip with all of your footage.

Next, you'll want to add your audio. Add your audio file to the Media Pool and drag it onto the timeline. Go to the Edit tab. You should see three separate tracks-your multicam video, the audio for the multicam video, and your master audio. Both audio tracks should be big enough for you to see their waveforms. Drag your audio file until the waveform from your audio track lines up with the waveform from your video track. Hit the spacebar or click the play icon to play the video; if the audio has a slight distortion nudge your audio track forward or backward by clicking on the track and hitting the , and . keys. Once the video plays with no audio delay you're ready to begin cutting video.

Continuing on the Edit tab, the icon menu on the lower left corner of the first viewing window should be set to Multicam. Select Blade Edit mode by hitting B or clicking on the razor blade icon. To change angles, scroll the red playhead line to where you want to change and either click on the angle you want or use the number keys. You can even do this while the video is playing to change angles in real time.

A much more detailed tutorial by Jason Yadlovski is available at  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzPZe36RdkU>, and while it isn't strictly necessary to complete the assignment I do strongly recommend watching it.

Unfortunately Kapwing doesn't provide an easy way to automatically sync things, so you'll have to line things up manually. Load your videos and clean audio track into the timeline-you may want to do this one or two at a time to make things easier-and drag the videos until they can play at the same time with no audio delay or distortion. Once you have all of your footage synced, split your videos where you want cuts, and delete all of the clips in that area except the one you want. Your timeline will look something like this in the process-



Record the following piece for your instrument (adapted from First Book Of Practical Studies by Robert W. Getchell), or the instrumental solo of your choice (it should be about one minute or slightly more in length). Play two bars of quarter notes at the beginning of your piece or count yourself in with a metronome to use for audio sync later and delete from your final video. Edit your audio in any ways you deem necessary before proceeding on to the next part of the video. Save your work and export it as a wav file.

Next, you will play the audio from your computer or device and pretend to play (playing softly or fingering along to your own playing) while filming yourself from several different angles. For each of these shots, film yourself playing along to the entire recording from each angle.

- First, place your camera looking straight at you and with most of your body and your entire instrument in frame.
- Next place the camera to your left.
- Next place the camera to your right.
- Finally, film yourself with the camera focused close up on you.

Once you have created your audio, and four angles of footage, load everything into the video editor of your choice. You will create three different videos of your performance from the same footage, and submit three different videos. **For all of the videos cut to whichever angle you feel fits that section of the music best, however you must use all four angles at least once in each video.**

- First, cut/change angles every 4 bars. Save and export this as [your name] project 3-video 1
- For the second version of your video, cut at the dynamic changes. Save and export this as [your name] project 3-video 2
- For the final version of your video, cut as you feel appropriate. Save and export this as [your name] project 3-video 3

C instruments

♩=100

Musical score for C instruments, consisting of four staves. The music is in 2/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is marked as ♩=100. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second staff is marked *mf*. The third staff features a dynamic crescendo from *mf* to *f*. The fourth staff concludes with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score includes various chordal textures and melodic lines, with some passages marked by slurs and hairpins.

Bb instruments

♩=100

Musical score for Bb instruments, consisting of four staves. The music is in 2/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is marked as ♩=100. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second staff is marked *mf*. The third staff features a dynamic crescendo from *mf* to *f*. The fourth staff concludes with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score includes various chordal textures and melodic lines, with some passages marked by slurs and hairpins.

E♭ instruments

♩=100

Musical score for E♭ instruments, measures 1-4. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The tempo is marked as ♩=100. The dynamics are marked as *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* (forte). The first staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a crescendo hairpin. The second staff starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and features a decrescendo hairpin. The third staff starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and features a crescendo hairpin leading to a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth staff ends with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a decrescendo hairpin.

F instruments

♩=100

Musical score for F instruments, measures 1-4. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B♭) and a common time signature (C). The tempo is marked as ♩=100. The dynamics are marked as *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* (forte). The first staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a crescendo hairpin. The second staff starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and features a decrescendo hairpin. The third staff starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and features a crescendo hairpin leading to a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth staff ends with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a decrescendo hairpin.

BC instruments

♩=100

First musical staff in bass clef, key signature of two flats, and common time. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes, with a slur under the final two measures.

Second musical staff in bass clef, key signature of two flats, and common time. It begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking. The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes, with a slur under the final two measures.

Third musical staff in bass clef, key signature of two flats, and common time. It begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking, which then transitions to a forte (*f*) dynamic marking as indicated by a wedge-shaped hairpin.

Fourth musical staff in bass clef, key signature of two flats, and common time. It begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking, which then transitions to a forte (*f*) dynamic marking as indicated by a wedge-shaped hairpin. The staff concludes with a double bar line.

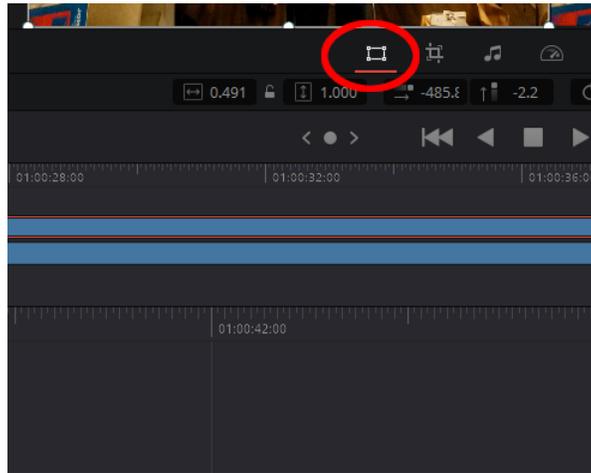
## Lesson 4-Split screen video

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Our final lesson in this set is how to create split screen videos. They're especially useful for musicians, as they allow us-especially if we're the only performer-to showcase all the parts of a piece of music on screen at once.

In their simplest form, each component video doesn't strictly need to be shot from multiple angles, although they can be. Most of the time you can probably use the videos' audio directly, rather than clean recording separate audio, although again, you can take more time to edit the audio if you wish.

Split screen videos can be created easily in both Resolve and Kapwing. In Resolve, load your clips into your project, and then into the timeline. Sync your videos by audio in the Edit tab as in Lesson 3, and then go to the cut tab. When you click on each video in the timeline, handles will appear in the right viewer window. Make sure the Transform icon is selected (the rectangle with dots at each corner), and then resize the selected clip. Repeat with each video until they all fit on screen in a way that you like.



*transform tool, handles, and timeline in Resolve*

For Kapwing, click on "Start editing", click on "Click to upload", and then upload your videos for each part. All of your videos will be uploaded on top of each other, but they'll all have handles for resizing. Drag the handles for each video until all of your parts are visible on screen. Once you can see all of your videos, then you'll need to sync your audio. You will probably want to click on Settings and turn "Snap to grid" OFF. After that, click on Timeline and you'll see all of your videos lined up on top of each other. Play your video, listen for what isn't lining up, and drag your videos slightly to the left or right until the audio matches, much like you did in Lesson 3. When you're happy with the results, click on Export Video and it will generate a video for you to download.

## *Project 4*

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Film yourself playing each part of this trio, or a trio or quartet (3-4 parts) of your choice. You will need one video for each part. Make a split screen video that showcases all three (or four) parts of your performance. You do not need to cut extensively, however your final video should not have any introductory audio used to sync the videos, nor should it have any extraneous footage of you stopping recording at the end of your performance. Save (or download and save, if you use a web video editor) your video as [your name] project 4.

# Twinkle Twinkle trio

$\text{♩} = 100$

The score is arranged in 15 staves, grouped into six sections:

- C instruments part 1, 2, 3:** Treble clef, B-flat key signature, 4/4 time. Part 1 and 2 play a melody of eighth notes, while part 3 provides a harmonic accompaniment of chords.
- Bb instruments part 1, 2, 3:** Treble clef, B-flat key signature, 4/4 time. Part 1 and 2 play a melody of eighth notes, while part 3 provides a harmonic accompaniment of chords.
- Eb instruments part 1, 2, 3:** Treble clef, E-flat key signature, 4/4 time. Part 1 and 2 play a melody of eighth notes, while part 3 provides a harmonic accompaniment of chords.
- F instruments part 1, 2, 3:** Treble clef, F key signature, 4/4 time. Part 1 and 2 play a melody of eighth notes, while part 3 provides a harmonic accompaniment of chords.
- Alto clef part 1, 2, 3:** Alto clef, B-flat key signature, 4/4 time. Part 1 and 2 play a melody of eighth notes, while part 3 provides a harmonic accompaniment of chords.
- BC instruments part 1, 2, 3:** Bass clef, B-flat key signature, 4/4 time. Part 1 and 2 play a melody of eighth notes, while part 3 provides a harmonic accompaniment of chords.

## Challenging these assignments

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If you wish to challenge these assignments in whole or in part you are very welcome to do so. Please have previous work to show that demonstrates and be prepared to discuss the following:

- basic functionality in the video editor of your choice
- how to cut and why/when to cut in a scene
- multiple camera angles
- basic camera work
- creating split screen videos
- audio sync between multiple sources
- adding background music or narration to pre-existing video
- examples of what you consider good editing, and why

## Final thoughts

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This is just a brief, brief introduction to a vast field of study and a whole separate art form, which often overlaps with our work as musicians. I hope that you will build on this and explore on your own. There's many great tutorials out there, and of course a whole slew of professionally produced movies, tv, and internet video content to be inspired by. More importantly though is the fact that you probably have a camera in your pocket right now-go film something! As James Cameron said-

*"Pick up a camera. Shoot something. No matter how small, no matter how cheesy, no matter whether your friends and your sister star in it. Put your name on it as director. Now you're a director. Everything after that you're just negotiating your budget and your fee."*

Happy shooting!