

## Choosing Video Editing Software For a Computer

If you are going to use a laptop or desktop computer for video editing, the choices for software increase exponentially compared to handheld devices.

Not many YouTube commenters ask the village video author what video editing software they use. Here is a short list of what I know some of my favorite YouTube village video makers use.

TheBigCrabCake	Adobe Premiere Pro
pammyj100	Windows Live Movie Maker
Steve F	Final Cut Pro on Mac
bosmailman	iMovie on Mac
Madastiville	Final Cut Pro on Mac
Dan Kuzma	iMovie on Mac
Jim Peters	Windows Live Movie Maker

No matter what you choose, there will be some “learning curve” involved. If you’re patient enough to add details to your Christmas village, you may also have enough patience to learn video editing software:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtTUsOKjWyQ>.

If you developed the “chops” during the pandemic to use Zoom to connect with the outside world, learning a video editing program might not be so daunting.

## Apple Mac Video Editing Software

There are basically two great choices if you’re a Mac user – the full-fledged desktop/laptop version of iMovie and Final Cut Pro X.

If you just want to get started editing videos on your Mac, then the easiest way is to get Apple iMovie. This is Apple’s FREE video editing software, and it runs on both Mac OS and iOS platforms, so you can do your video editing just about anywhere you go.



For hobbyist and amateur filmmakers, Apple iMovie will have approachable tools to help you easily take your footage and edit a video with a clear flow. You’ll be able to combine multiple video files, layer different video and audio tracks, and add title screens to your video without much fuss.

The latest version of Apple iMovie keeps up with the trends in video, supporting 4K video editing. So, all that 4K video you capture on your iPhone can be turned into a movie in iMovie. If you haven’t done video editing before, this is a good place to get started before moving on to more serious software.

Here is a good link for starting to use iMovie on your Mac:

<https://www.macworld.co.uk/how-to/imovie-mac-tips-3652888/>.

And there will be no shortage of how-to tips on YouTube for iMovie for Mac desktops – just type “iMovie How To” in the YouTube Search bar.

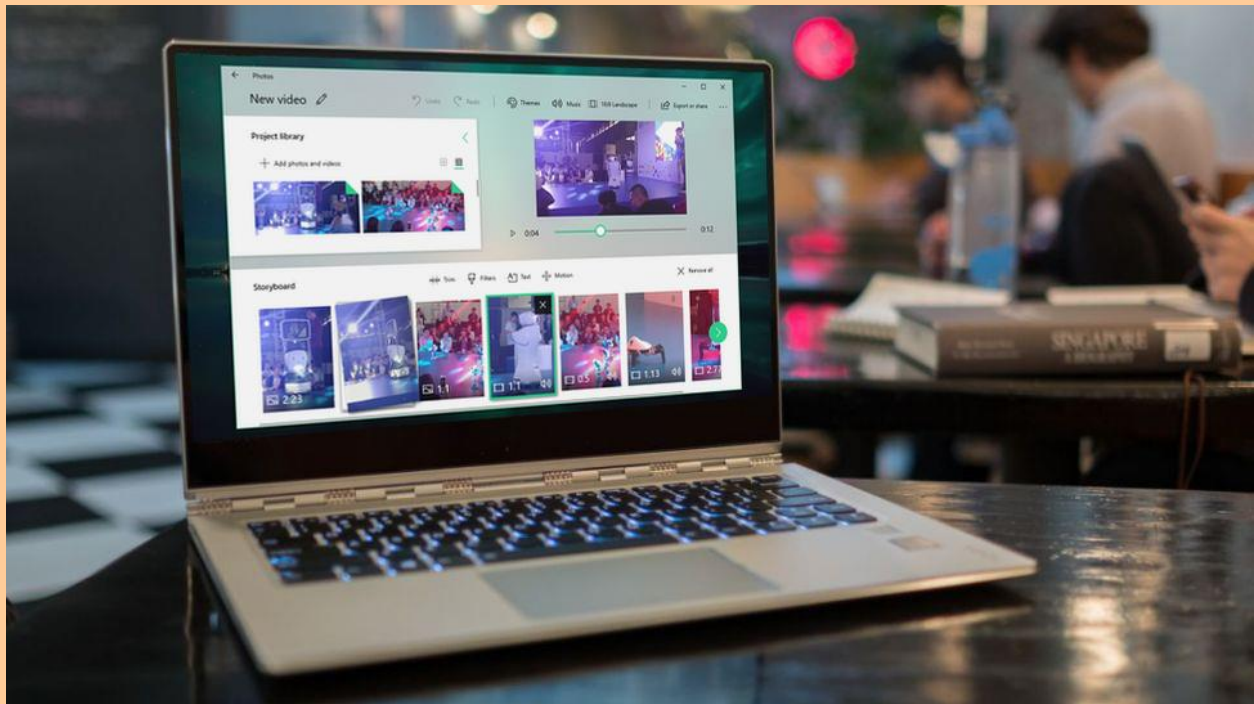


The big Kahuna of video editing with a Mac is **Final Cut Pro X**. This may be well worth your consideration. It may take a few tutorial videos to really get yourself ready to start doing much, but once you get your feet wet, you can do basic editing and learn more and more advanced tricks over time.

While Final Cut Pro X is a professional video editing tool, it's approachable enough for hobbyist videographers to get on board with. And it has a reasonable price (\$299.99 one-time charge, about the cost of two expensive Dept 56 buildings), compared to some of the other serious pro video editing software.

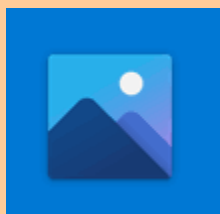
Apple offers a free trial so you can see if this one is up your alley before you dive all the way in.

## Windows 10 Video Editing Options



If you use a PC with Windows for your computer, the video editing world opens to a bewildering array of possibilities. Let's start with the simplest options and work our way upward in complexity and learning curves.

### Photos



The very simplest and most lame video editing you can do is using Windows Photos, an app embedded for FREE in Windows 10. I think it's a good place to learn story-boarding – the arranging and re-arranging of photos and clips in sequence – and to practice your initial attempts at making very short videos.

Windows Photos accepts both still photos and video clips which you can arrange in a sequence. You can drag-and-drop to rearrange to your heart's content. You can even add background music from a short Windows list or import your own Custom music choices from music files on your computer. Photos is, however, a no-frills app that lacks Transitions from slide to slide.

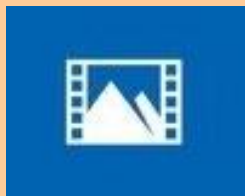
I use Photos for what it does best – touch up still photographs – before I import them in my video editing software Windows Live Movie Maker. In Photos I can crop to the 16:9 aspect ratio, and then I improve the look of each photo by adjusting the Light, Color and Clarity.

A really cool feature is that you can take a still photo and add 3D effects to create a short video clip, but it will default to 5 seconds in length. Sometimes 5 seconds is all you need for effect in a village video. I have had good experiences using 3D Effects of Campfire, Glow, Fireworks, Raging Fire, Smoke Column (from chimneys) and Snow.

Here is a pretty good Windows 10 Photos Tutorial (17:40):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWqt7Ya5-ec>.

## **Video Editor**



One step up from the Photos app is Windows 10 Video Editor app (FREE). This app is contained within Windows 10 Photos. It is an extremely rudimentary editor which is purported to “replace” Windows Live Movie Maker (at one time also included FREE). You can mix photos and video clips, can decide the length of time for each photo, can make a simple title “card”, and can add caption text to any photo or video clip as well as control the length of time the text shows. Video Editor has a barely noticeable pan/zoom feature for individual photos and doesn't have any transitions to choose from. I highly recommend Video Editor for practicing making your first short videos, about the length of one song.

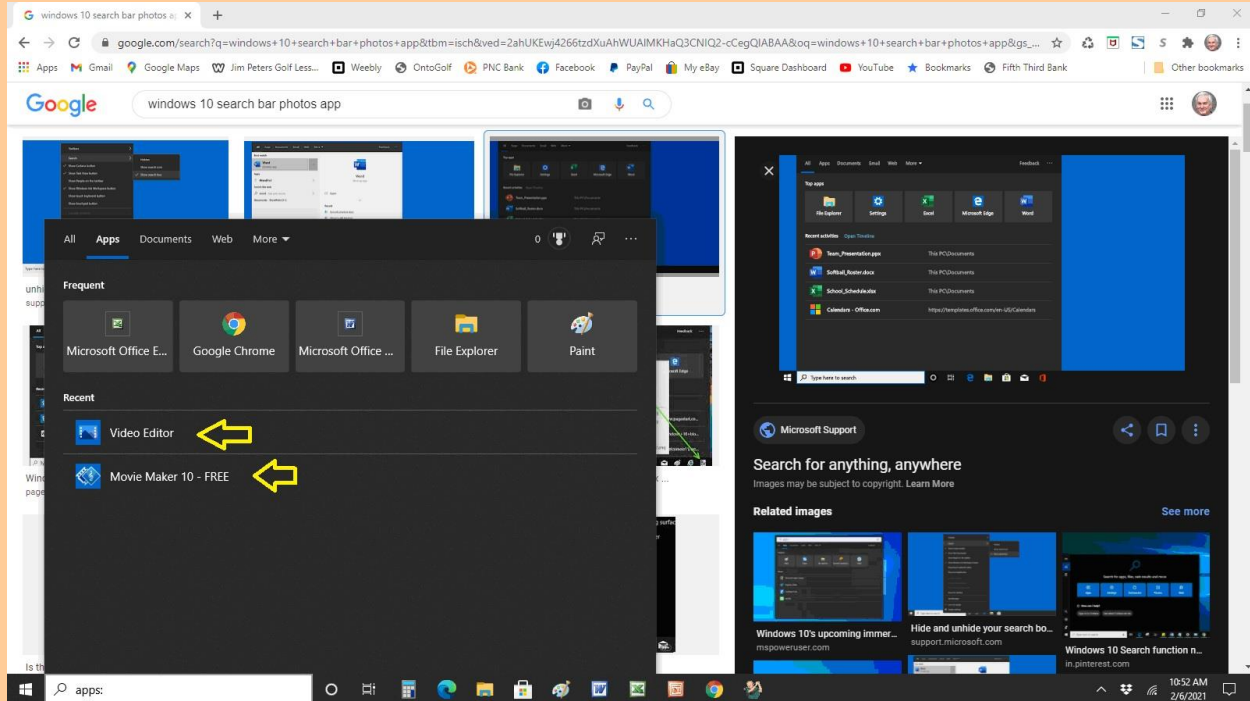
Here is a good tutorial for How to use Free Windows 10 Video Editor (28:01):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6yQwLuoO3w&t=204s>.

However, the Video Editor app is great for taking a single photo and adding 3D Effects like Campfire, Glow, Fireworks, Raging Fire, Smoke Column and Snow which then turns that single still photo into a short video clip, ***any length of time you desire***. I made a short video showing what the addition of 3D effects can have on a photo turned into an animated video clip.

Photos App 3D Effects (1:02):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPNf0on-CjY>



That saved video clip can be imported into a more robust video editing program. To create the same animated effect within more robust video editing software program would be far more complicated and frustrating (KISS).

Here is the step-by-step procedure for adding 3D Effects:

To open a still photograph in Photos

- Right click on the photo in File Explorer
- Choose "Open with"
- Choose "Photos"

After Photos opens:

- Choose "Edit & Create"
- Choose "Create a video with music" (this gets you into Windows 10 Video Editor)

- Name your video
- Choose "Duration" and set the time in seconds (try 7 to 12 seconds), and hit Enter
- Choose "3D effects"
- Choose the effect you want to try
- Place and size the effect rectangle (e.g., fire, smoke column, glow – if you choose snow or rain, it will be everywhere automatically)
- If you can, adjust the handles on the Play to lengthen or shorten the duration of the effect (depends on 3D effect chosen)
- Adjust the volume of the effect (I usually turn volume off)
- Click the play button to preview your 3D effect
- If you're satisfied, choose Done
- To finalize, choose "Finish video" and save the new video clip with a filename into the folder you want.

This photo-now-video-clip can be imported into your village video using whatever more robust and useful video editing program you have.

## Free Video Editing Programs



I looked for FREE video editing programs for Windows PC and tried several. You would think that FREE would give you a simple-to-use platform for making a video, but that is usually **not** the case. Nearly every FREE program except VSDC and DaVinci Resolve is a "lite" version of the full program and will not contain all the bells and whistles.

Here is what I downloaded and tried to use:

- Lightworks – too complicated, watermarked unless you purchase their Pro version
- HitFilm Express – too complicated
- DaVinci Resolve – amazing but way too complicated (it has a 3,588-page user guide!)
- VSDC Free Video Editor – couldn't get it to work
- OpenShot – too complicated

- Blender – way too complicated
- WeVideo – too complicated
- Shotcut – complicated but learnable
- VideoPad – complicated but learnable.

VideoPad Video Editor is free for non-commercial use, and unlike some free video editing software, it **won't apply watermarks** to your finished projects when you export them. Both the free version and paid version of VideoPad is available. You can go to YouTube and type "VideoPad editor tutorial" in the Search bar and choose from quite a few how-to videos. I wouldn't call it easy to use.

Here is a link to a YouTube video about FREE software recommendations:

The 3 Best FREE Video Editing Software FOR WINDOWS PC In 2021

Naturalvita Tutorials (8:01)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQBVCHdzmM8&t=325s>

And here is a recent article that has a good summary about free computer software for video editing.

<https://clark.com/save-money/free-video-editing-software/>

If you are a beginner to video editing, there are easier and more intuitive video editing apps and programs than VideoPad.

## Movie Maker 10



Movie Maker 10 is a FREE app you can download from the Microsoft store, and it's a giant step up from the shortcomings and limitations of Windows 10 Video Editor. It helps you make movies from your photos, video clips, and music. It provides basic video editor functions including trimming, splitting, joining, adding text, as well as more advanced movie maker features such as visual effects, video stabilization, green screen effect, transition effect, photo and video overlay, and voice over. The FREE version has advertisements on the sides.

Movie Maker 10 is a stripped down and simplified Windows Live Movie Maker with fewer features and fewer choices within a feature like Transitions or Pan/Zoom. The Pan/Zoom (Ken Burns effect) is quite good! There are more than enough Transitions to choose from. Many Transitions are too fancy and distracting when used too heavy-handedly in a village video.



In Settings you can choose any video aspect ratio, even the super-wide screen 21:9. You can choose Save Project (save your working version before exporting to a final version) but only if you purchase the Pro version. Otherwise, you must go directly to Save Video, creating a final version movie file you cannot edit or change. Being unable to Save Project as an interim file that you can edit later is severely limiting to the creative process.

I highly recommend the MM10 Pro version which costs \$14.99 plus sales tax. The app price is **a one-time payment**, and you will get free future updates. There is no recurring cost or subscription fee for using the MM10 Pro app.

There are extra features like 4K Save Video in the Pro version. Other features you can unlock in the Pro version are crop video, trim video, split video, join videos, visual effects, slow motion, video collage, enhance video, record screen, green screen capability, overlay video, and extract photos. All of these add up to a rather robust video editor for a one-time charge of \$14.99 (about half the cost of a new D56 figurine).



Here are a few highly watchable tutorials for Movie Maker 10.

HD Movie Maker for Windows 10 - Getting Started Tutorial (5:24):

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9\\_kzRJBXOw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9_kzRJBXOw)

HD Movie Maker for Windows 10 - Working with Photo clips (6:47): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBxuesklOFM>

HD Movie Maker for Windows 10 - Working with Video clips (5:44):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dipUG8Yai2g>

HD Movie Maker for Windows 10 - Working with Soundtrack (7:03): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxPp3tlKjvk>

## Windows Live Movie Maker



Windows Movie Maker is video editing software created by Microsoft. This software was first released as a part of Windows ME in 2000.

Next two versions of Windows both included Windows Movie Maker as a default application, and both versions saw many improvements and new features.

In 2009 Microsoft changed the name of the application to **Windows Live Movie Maker** 2009, and it added it to the Live Essentials suite. It was much more user-friendly than its predecessor. It's worth mentioning that Windows Live Movie Maker was brand new software, and you couldn't use it to work with projects created by previous versions of Movie Maker.

Windows Live Movie Maker was officially discontinued on January 10, 2017, and it was replaced by Video Editor (formerly Microsoft Story Remix) which is built in with Microsoft Photos on Windows 10. At the very end of 2017, Microsoft issued Movie Maker 10 which builds extra features above Video Editor.

Of all the Movie Maker versions, ***I think Windows Live Movie Maker is in the sweet spot between raw beginner and expert with the greatest number of usable features.*** If you

are not experienced in video editing, Windows Live Movie Maker is a **good choice** for you.

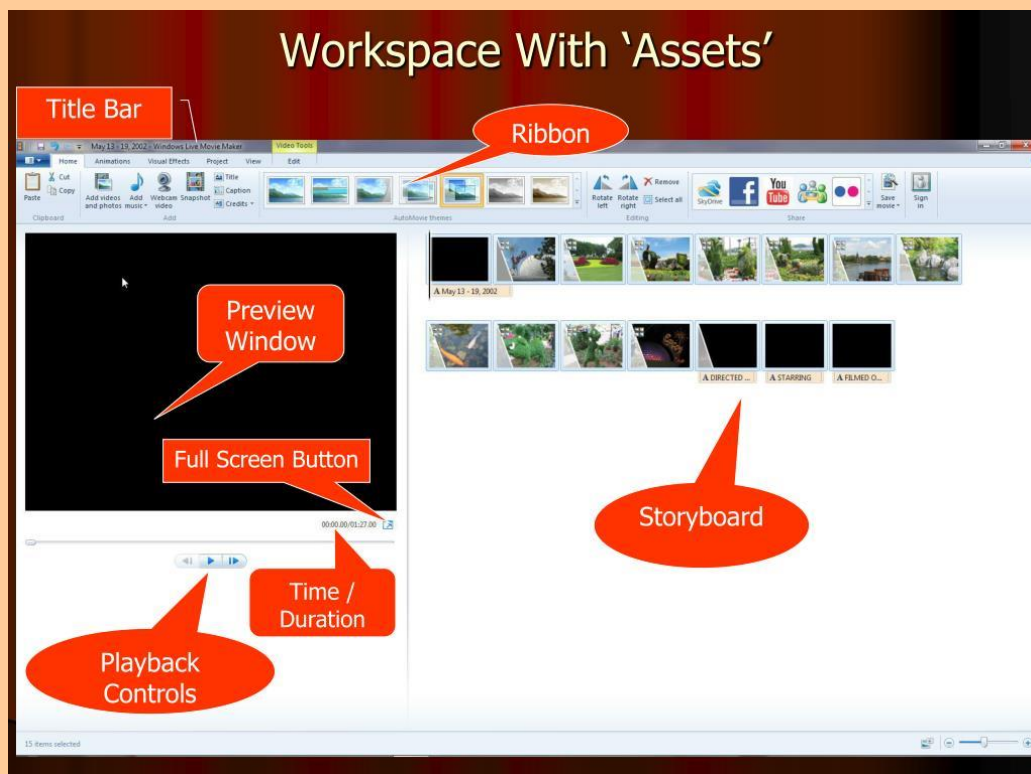
It is very easy to learn, quite straightforward and intuitive. Besides, this video editing software offers a surprising number of effects and transitions to work with.



Here's the best part – Windows Live Movie Maker is **still available for FREE to download**. Watch How to Get Windows Live Movie Maker For Free | For All Windows (3:51):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wb3zv1XPqBo>.

If you learn by watching, this YouTube link is a good one:

How To Use Windows Movie Maker In 2021 | STEP BY STEP For Beginners (22:13):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bu7UUBZX7nU>.



If you would rather read than watch, try this link:

<https://moviemaker.minitool.com/moviemaker/use-movie-maker.html>.

Here is a good YouTube link that compares Windows Video Editor to Windows Live Movie Maker.

Windows 10 Video Editor BETTER THAN Windows Movie Maker?  
Beginner's Comparison (10:42)

NaturalVita Tutorials

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYLSPFs7wcQ>

## **Store-Bought Video Editing Software**

Adobe Premiere Pro – \$20.99 per month or \$239.88 per year subscription with auto-renewal.

Adobe Premiere Elements – \$99.99 or \$69.99 from Amazon (more for beginners)

Movavi Video Editor – is \$39.95

Wondershare Filmora 9 – \$39.99 per year (\$99.87 full version)

Cyberlink PowerDirector – \$99.99

## **So, Jim, What Is Your Recommendation?**



If you're confused, I don't blame you – so many choices! Start with something simple to use and read or watch the how-to's. Import a set of 10 or less video clips or photographs (all 16:9 aspect ratio) to start. Go slow and try a couple things each session. All the choices have a way you can preview your work, so use that preview feature often. Don't forget the **third-party assistance** option!

Quick story: At my granddaughter Claire's Boyd Elementary School (BES) the students and parents wanted to make a short video with music thanking the teachers for their work during the 2020 Spring pandemic shutdown. They had classmates make video clips with signs and short dance moves, which they collected from everybody via text messenger. The parents supervising thought, "Let's get a high-schooler to assemble the video." Well, why use a high schooler when a second grader can do the job! Her mom Meredith posted Claire's video on YouTube.

BES Staff Appreciation 2020

Meredith Niese (4:27)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEQpU8EC6cg>



Be sure to check out all the other topnotch and timely columns on TheVillageCollector.com – "Just So You Know (JSYK)!" by David Spears, Larry Treadwell, Brian Vaill's *The Train Station*, and "Coach is Here" by webmaster Bill Channell. Please keep visiting

the Village Videos page and watch, watch, watch. There is a new batch of village videos on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. So many ideas, so little time... and not enough money.

In my next column on The Village Collector, we'll cover how to prepare before video editing. I'll try to do better next time.

Questions, comments and/or suggestions are always welcome. You can contact me at: [jpetersgolfpro@gmail.com](mailto:jpetersgolfpro@gmail.com), 419 Washington Avenue, Newport, KY 41071.

