

Step 4: Editing

Of all the steps involved in creating a high-quality video, the editing process is likely to pose the biggest challenge. It's not that it's inherently difficult or requires some special talent. It's just unfamiliar and forces you to use some tools that may not be part of your daily routine.

If you feel like you're up to the editing challenge, the assignment is straightforward.

- Make sure you have video editing software available (chances are you already do)
- Take advantage of the existing training and sample editing resources to give yourself a base of understanding
- Start working with your editing software to produce videos, simple at first, but keep refining your techniques over time

Video Editing Software

You may not be aware of it, but if you've purchased a computer in the past five years, you already own video editing software. MovieMaker is the pre-installed video software on Windows computers, while iMovie is the Mac software included in their iLife suite. Each offers the ability to import videos from files (either on a computer or directly from a camcorder), make simple edits (including splicing videos or adding a soundtrack), and incorporate image, title screens and overlay text.

If you've chosen to use a Flip Cam, you may have noticed that it comes embedded with some basic editing software. Our recommendation is to use MovieMaker or iMovie instead. They're less limiting and more user friendly. On the opposite end of the spectrum, more robust movie editing software like Final Cut Pro is available, but unnecessary for the types of videos you'll be producing. For the right blend of capability and ease-of-use, we suggest sticking with MovieMaker or iMovie.

Video Editing Resources

If you're familiar with Microsoft Office or image editing software, it shouldn't be difficult to pick up the basics of MovieMaker or iMovie. Here are a few handy resources to help get you started: results.

Guided Tour of iMovie '09
<http://www.apple.com/ilife/imovie/>

Getting Started with MovieMaker
<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/Getting-started-with-Windows-Movie-Maker>

How to Edit a Video
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOx2Dk_tk_s

Voice & Background Music

While it adds some work to the editing process, you'll quickly find that including voiceover and background music makes a huge difference in the overall viewing experience. The extra energy and flow it gives to your video makes it much more engaging to your viewer.

Stock music:

You'll find an abundance of online providers for stock music, ranging in price from free up to hundreds of dollars per track. For our purposes, the lower-cost options usually work fine.

Here's a collection of stock music sites to get your search started, but feel free to search on your own. New sources of stock music crop up all the time:



Track selection:

Here are some additional thoughts that may help guide your music search:

- When evaluating the musical selections, remember that this is “background” music, so you don’t want a track that distracts from the footage.
- It’s also a good idea to match the track to the feeling of the home – a richly layered symphonic track might work for a luxury home, but will seem out of place for 2-bedroom starter home.
- If you can find them, it helps to use tracks that feel contemporary.

Voiceover/background music mix:

Here are a few things to keep in mind when editing your footage and your voiceover together:

- Avoid wall-to-wall voiceover narration in your Listing Videos. The pacing of your video will feel much more comfortable to the viewer if you build-in pauses for effect.
- Adjust the level of your background music during the video. You can set the background music at a higher level during B-roll footage, and then bring it down for voiceover. If you keep background music at a constant high level, it’ll drown you out.
- Spend some time learning about audio leveling and try to incorporate the lessons into your edits.

Other Considerations

Contact information:

While you can speak your phone number and email address as part of your voiceover, it’s a good idea to include a title card at the end of your video that displays your contact information.

Creating an MLS edit:

We mentioned this briefly during the filming discussion. You may want to create an MLS version of your Listing Video – one that has no identifying brokerage or agent information visible on screen.