Digitizing 8mm & VHS Tapes With Final Cut Pro

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Import from a VCR or 8mm camcorder on the workstation with an analog to digital converter box. This is available on workstations M8 and M16. Composite, S-video cables, and a cartridge for compact VHS (c-VHS) tape are available at the IMC service desk. Request use of the 8mm camcorder from the service desk. You are responsible for taking care of it. It will be stolen if left unattended.

**VCR**

**Set up for VCR importing on workstation M8** Plug the white firewire cable into Movie Box’s OUT port. Confirm that it is plugged into the back of the Mac. Insert the VHS tape and select channel L-1 on the VCR. The VCR must be in “VCR” mode. Select TV/VCR on the remote until you see “VCR” displayed on the VCR. Use the playback controls on the VCR to control movement of the videotape. [Note: The Pinnacle movie box’s green light displays above the IN video source line; confirm it is above composite (yellow) using the Select button].

**Set up for VCR importing on workstation M16** Confirm the black firewire cable is plugged into the Sony converter box and the back of the iMac. The composite cables should be plugged into the IN port behind the VCR and the top row of the SONY box. Turn on the SONY DV media converter; select Analog In and insert the VHS tape. Select channel L-1 on the VCR. The VCR must be in “VCR” mode. Select TV/VCR on the remote if, in Premiere you do not see video. Use the playback controls on the VCR to control movement of the videotape.

**8mm or Hi8mm tape with Camcorder [request at service desk]**

**Set up for 8mm camcorder importing on workstation M8** Plug the white firewire cable into Movie Box’s OUT port. Confirm that it is plugged into the back of the Mac. Plug the audio and video cables from the camcorder into Movie Box’s IN ports. [Note: The Pinnacle movie box’s green light displays above the IN video source line; confirm it is above video cable using the Select button]. Select channel L-1 on the VCR. Select TV/VCR on the remote until you see “VCR” displayed on the VCR. Put the camcorder in Player mode. Mute the sound on the camcorder. Use the playback controls on the camcorder to control the movement of the videotape.

**Set up for 8mm camcorder importing on workstation M16** Confirm the firewire cable is plugged into the Sony converter box and the back of the iMac. Plug the audio and video cables from the camcorder into the front of the VCR. The VCR must be in “VCR” mode. Select channel F-1 on the VCR. Put the camcorder in Player mode. Mute the playback volume. Use the playback controls on the camcorder to control the movement of the videotape.
**Pack the Tape** Using the controls on the VCR or camcorder fast forward the tape to the end, and then rewind to the beginning. This technique is called “packing the tape”; it helps minimize variations in tape tension that may cause problems.

**Open Final Cut**
Follow the prompts. If you see this message, select New. Name the library.

Confirm that the VCR and media converter box are powered on. Cue the tape to a few seconds before the start point of what you want to capture.

Select Import. Under Cameras select the Media converter box. In this illustration, the Sony converter box is selected on M16

When ready to capture, press Import in Final Cut and then press Play on the VCR or camcorder.

**NOTE:** If video does not display confirm that all cables are tightly connected. Frequently the thunderbolt to firewire adapter and the firewire into the adapter behind the Mac are loose.
The process is in real time.

When done, press Stop Import in Final Cut and then stop on the VCR or camcorder.

Close the Capture window. Your video is stored in Final Cut as an Event. To export it, you must create a project to drop the video on a timeline, to edit, trim etc., to create the digital video file you will Share the timeline.

Select New project. Give the project a unique name. Do not leave the project named “UNTITLED”. Note the location of the project. Select OK

Select part or all of the video and drag it to the timeline. After your clip is on the timeline it may require trimming and/or editing.

The blue area at the beginning of this clip indicates no video was recorded and may be removed.

After editing you are ready to create an Mp4 or QuickTime movie. See handout “Sharing/Exporting a Final Cut Pro Project.”

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