

Creating a basic video from separate clips using VSDC Free Video Editor

This process is by no means the only way to produce single, simple, videos from separate clips, although as an introduction to VSDC Free Video Editor, producing videos this way can form a starting point that leads to developing more professional-looking videos with countless special effects.

Steps to take before opening VSDC Video Editor:

- 1.1 Create a folder for the video files with a memorable name and location (e.g. on Desktop)
- 1.2 Copy only the video clips you want to use for the final video into this folder.
- 1.3 Ensure that the clips are named in the order you want them to appear in the video. For example, if you have the following clips:
DJI_0100_4
DJI_0100_5
DJI_0100_6
and you want the middle clip to appear at the end of the video, rename it (DJI_0100_5) to DJI_0100_7
- 1.4 Right click the clips individually to check file properties. If they have been recorded in 4K widescreen, they should have a resolution of 3840 x 2160 pixels and 59.940 FPS (Frames per Second, and the “interlaced field rate of NTSC video”). If the clip properties are otherwise, make a note of the minimum resolution and FPS for the clips – this will be used for the final video (in section 2.4 below).
- 1.5 Download a selection of YouTube friendly royalty-free MP3 audio clips for the background music. Example website to download music from:
<https://www.musikery.com/> - right click the videos, select save as... and save in appropriate folder. Make a note of the website address, music titles and artists (e.g. copy and paste info into a WordPad document). I found it useful just to save the audio files with the filename being that of the title and artist. Copy a selection of audio files into the video folder, alongside the video clips, ensuring total music duration \geq total expected length of final video.
- 1.6 For reasons of the software taking a while to process the video later on (e.g. one hour, depending on computer, video length and quality), make sure that if the computer is left for some time on its own, it won't automatically go into sleep mode or shutdown (to adjust power and sleep settings, go to Start, and select Settings, System, Power & Sleep).
- 1.7 Leave the window containing the video folder open, but not maximised, whilst closing down anything else (e.g. web browser), so as to maximise computer resources.


Definition:

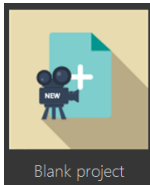
Project. Everything comprising the final video, including what the source files are for the video and sound are, timelines, transitions, cropped clips, special effects, and so

forth are saved as a “project”. It is best practice to store the project file and source files in a single folder.

Creating your video with VSDC Video Editor:

Note: The steps below may seem like there is a lot of information, but once you have created one or two videos and got the hang of it, it should seem a lot simpler and fairly intuitive than it may appear at first.

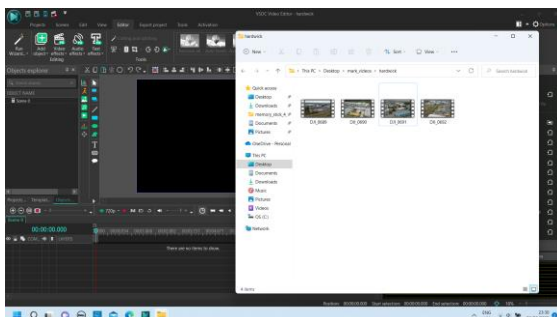
- 2.1 Open VSDC Free Video Editor, updating the software, if prompted.
- 2.2 Close the “How to get started in 3 easy steps!” dialogue box by clicking the  button (top-right). If not already, you can now maximise the VSDC Video Editor window to full screen.
- 2.3 Click on “Blank Project”



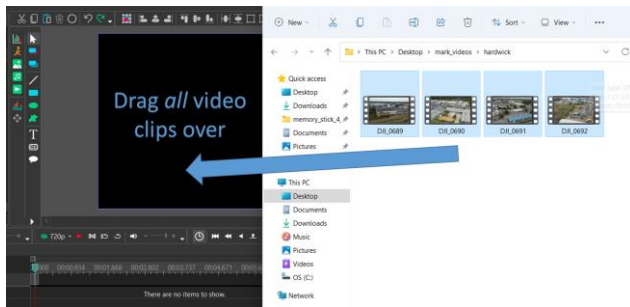
- 2.4 Now enter the following information:
 - Project Title: e.g. “Hardwick”
 - Author etc. is optional
 - Device: Select “YouTube”
 - Resolution: Unless otherwise noted in file properties of clips (section 1.4), for a 4K widescreen video, select the 2nd option down (“Ultra HD 4K 3840 x 2160 pixels (16:9)”).
 - Framerate: Again, unless otherwise noted earlier, select 59.940 FPS
 - Background: leave set at black, 100% opacity

Click “Finish”

- 2.5 Open or restore the video folder (containing the video clips and audio files), so that your computer screen looks something like this:

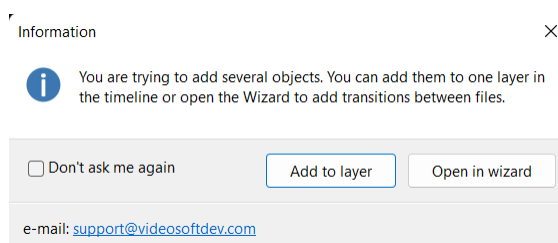


- 2.6 Select all of the video clips (*not* audio/music files) and drag them over onto the video editor’s black video preview screen:



Note: If you think it hasn't dragged the files over, be aware that it may take a few seconds for it to move them into the video editor.

2.7 Dragging over >1 file will then bring up this dialogue box:



This dialogue box may be partially obscured by the window containing the video files, in which case minimise that window, or click on the dialogue box shown above, where it reads "Information".

[Note: If you were now to click on "add to layer", all video clips will be added to the video "project", but without any form of transition taking place between them]

- Click on "Open in wizard"
- A new box will appear to inform you it is adding files to the video project. Wait until they have been added, and this box has automatically disappeared.


Now, you will see a window containing plenty of options for the type of transition to take place between video clips. [By selecting the type of transition effect from the list on the left, the different styles for that effect will appear to the right; when clicking a style, a preview of what the transition looks like then appears in a screen preview to the right of that – perhaps something to experiment with at a later date]

For simplicity, here, we will add a single effect to all transitions in the video, namely fading out into the next clip (a subtle transition).

- Scroll down on the list of transition types on the left and select "Fade"
- To the right of the list, select the first style (top-left one), "Fade out"
- Now, lower down, click on the first right-pointing arrow (which appears between the first two video clip thumbnails)
- Click on the "Select all" button
- Click on the "Add effect" button

All right-pointing arrows for the video will turn green and the transition effect is applied to all.

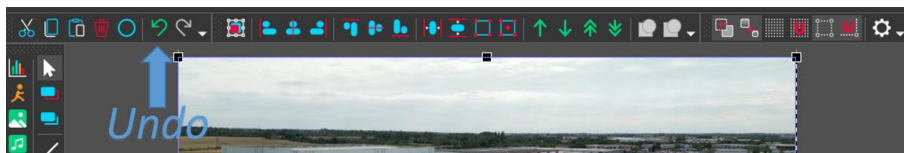
So, if no transition effect has been added, an arrow will look like this: 

If a transition effect has been added, the arrow will look like this:  (green)

- Click on the “Apply settings” option at the bottom of the Wizard window.

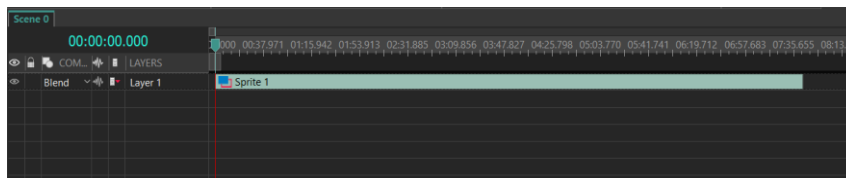
2.8 Now, as good practice, under the “Projects” menu at the top of the screen, click on the “Save project as...” button, and save the project into the same folder as the video clips and audio files that was created in 1.1

It is also maybe worth pointing out here, that whilst working with the video editor, above the video screen, there is an undo button, and to the right of it a redo button:



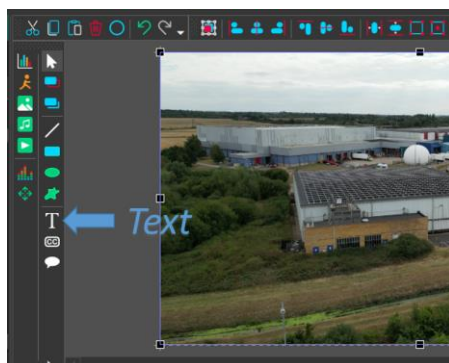
2.9 Adding title screen to start of the video:

- Firstly, ensure that under “OBJECT NAME” to the left of the screen, that “Scene 0” is selected. Towards the bottom of the screen, something like this should be visible:

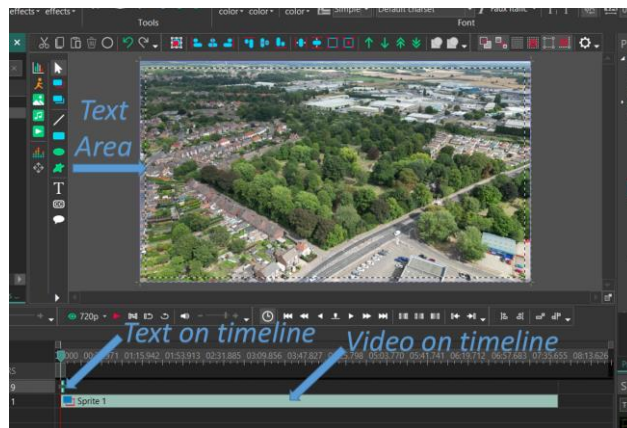


This is effectively a timeline of the video, with Sprite 1 containing all of the video content that has been added.

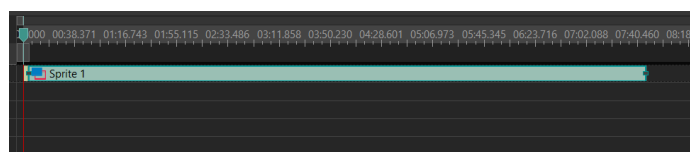
- Click on the Text (T) button, and select Text:



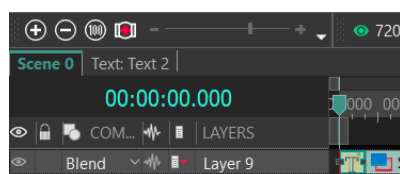
- In the dialogue box that appears, under “Object positioning settings”, select ☒ “From manual position”
Position should be set at 00:00:00.000 (Hours : Minutes : Seconds)
To make the title screen appear for e.g. 4 seconds, Duration should be set at 00:00:04.000
(Duration will depend upon how much text there will be to read on the title screen, and not having it displayed for longer than absolutely needed)
- Click on “Ok”
- Now, when the mouse/touchpad cursor is hovered over the large rectangular video preview screen (which shows a photo from the start of clip 1), the cursor will appear as a small crosshair. Carefully use this crosshair, holding down the left mouse button/bottom left touchpad click to draw a rectangular box, moving from the top left of inside the preview screen, to the bottom right – This rectangular box sets the area where the title screen text will go. Do not worry that the video still is still visible underneath. You should now see something like this:



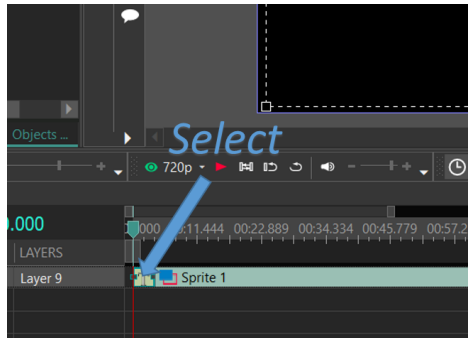
- On the timeline, drag Sprite 1 up, so that it appears on the same line as the text, and immediately after it, to look like this:



- Note here, that as the area representing the title text on the timeline is very narrow; whilst working with the video editor, it is possible to magnify the timeline if need be, using the + and - buttons (shown top-left, below):



- Select the text segment at the start of the timeline (you may need to magnify the timeline for this):

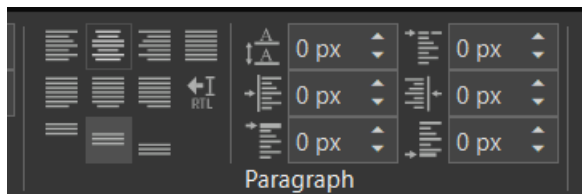


- Double left-click in the box on the video preview screen (which should now appear as a large black rectangle), and start typing the text for your Title Screen.

e.g. “Hardwick Industrial Estate [enter for new line]
 King’s Lynn

 Drone Footage, August 2022”

- Use the text tools in the toolbar (under the Editor menu) to, for example, change the text size from 96pt to 168pt, or to change the horizontal and/or vertical alignment, and the left horizontal indent:



Remember, if you make a change here that you are not happy with, there is always the option to click on the “undo” button.

- Click on the text segment at the start of the timeline again. In the “Editor” menu at the top of the screen, select “video effects”, “transparency”, “fade in”, “ok”. Then select “video effects”, “transparency”, “fade out”, “ok”. These two effects will now appear in the timeline (on their own).
- Under “OBJECT NAME” (left of screen), select “Scene 0” to return to the main timeline.

2.10 Next, for the video’s end screen, repeat the process from the start of 2.9 in a similar fashion, placing the text segment immediately after Sprite 1 (after the video) instead of at the start. Do not worry about initially entering the position for it at 00:00:00.000 in the dialogue box, as this value will change when you drag the item in the timeline. Also, make its duration slightly longer (e.g. 8 seconds). The text you add may read something like this:

“Thanks for watching...”

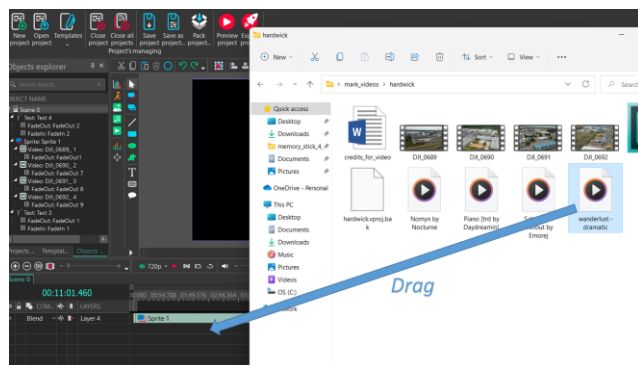
If you enjoyed this,
please subscribe below!”

Note: You may also wish to put a copyright (©) notice on this screen. © is typed either by using the key combination Alt+0169, or copying and pasting text after a Google search.

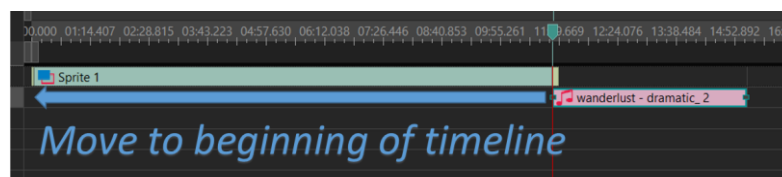
Double check the Title and End Screens for spelling errors, etc. This avoids processing the video, noticing a mistake afterwards, and then going back to correct it and having to process the video again.

2.11 Adding sound to the video:

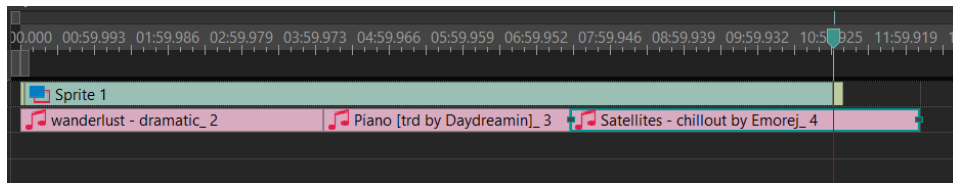
- Under “OBJECT NAME” (left of screen), ensure “Scene 0” is selected
- Bring up the video folder (containing the video clips and audio files) so that it appears over the video editor with the timeline visible, at least in part, and drag the first audio file onto the timeline on the line (layer) below your video layer:



- Using the mouse or touchpad, drag the segment on the timeline for the first audio file (track) horizontally leftwards to the start of the timeline:

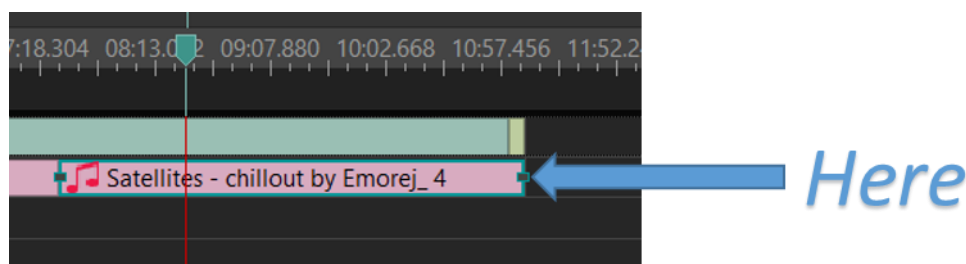


- If >1 track needed to cover the length of the video, drag over the next track onto the timeline as per the first track. Drag this second track on the timeline, so that it appears on the same line (layer) as the first track, starting immediately where the first track ends. Repeat, if necessary, until the total track length \geq length of video. In this example, 3 tracks are added (filenames=song/artist):

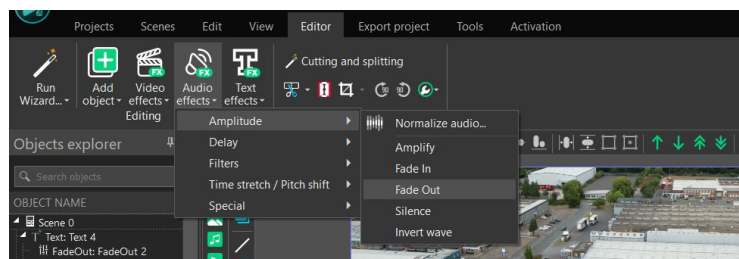


- Shorten (crop) the final track (so that it doesn't run on after the video finishes) by clicking on it and then positioning the cursor over the small square on the right of the track, with it appearing as a double-ended arrow (\leftrightarrow).

Keeping the left mouse/touchpad button depressed, drag the cursor to the left until the final track has been shortened to the end of the video, as per below:



- For each track in turn (especially the final one), click on the track in the timeline, then under the “Editor” menu, select “Audio effects”, “Amplitude”, “Fade Out”:



After clicking “Fade Out”, in the “Object position settings” dialogue box, click “Ok”, then to the left of the screen, under “OBJECT NAME”, click on “Scene 0” to return to the original timeline view, lower-centre of screen.

2.12 Now Save your project (Projects menu, save project button)

Side note: Under the “Projects” menu, there is always an option to preview the video with the “Preview project” (large) button. This, however, can be jumpy on many home computers.

2.13 Processing the video:

- Once the video, title and end text and sound has all been added, click on “Export project” in the top menu.
- The “For YouTube” button should be highlighted (do not press any options here)
- Further down, where it reads “Output file(s):”, click on the “Change name...” button to the far right, to confirm that the output file will be saved in the video files folder that was created in section 1.1, clicking on “Save” to confirm.
- Click on the large “Export project” button (right-hand most button at the top, looks like a white rocket on a red background)
- A dialogue box will appear (named “Export”), Here, the software is basically trying to sell the user the paid premium version of the VSDC Video Editor, which for the purposes here is not needed.
- Click on “Continue”, which appears below the upgrade option
- The video is now being created, and this may take a while (e.g. one hour), depending on the computer being used, video resolution, video length, and so forth.
- Let the computer run, closing down any other unnecessary applications that are also running, as they may slow the PC down (e.g. web browser, media player, Office apps.)
- Progress can be monitored by referring to the “Elapsed time (% complete)” and “Estimated time remaining” which are displayed towards the top-centre of the screen

Important side note: as mentioned in 1.6, ensure the PC is not set to go into sleep mode or shutdown during video processing. Also, because the computer is using a lot of resources during this time, ensure it is left on a flat surface such as a table, to avoid scenarios such as it shutting down automatically due to overheating. Also, if using a laptop, ensure it is plugged into a power source.

- Once video processing is complete, a message will appear, asking if you want to upload it or not. If “No” is selected (e.g. if you wish to check it before uploading), then the video can, of course, be uploaded at a later date. It should have been saved in the video folder, alongside the original clips, audio tracks, and project file.

Note: The final size of the final video may be smaller than the combined total of the original clips. This is not due to any loss in resolution (of the settings described have been used), but due to the way the file data is handled.

2.14 When uploading the video to YouTube, be sure to add to the video description the music credits, and a link to the website where the music was downloaded from. It may be useful to record this information by copy and pasting it into a WordPad document when downloading the music and

saving it into the video folder. If not included on the end screen of the video, it may also be worth putting a copyright notice in the YouTube description too, if desired.

- 2.15 Should any amendments to the video be required post-processing, this can be achieved by opening up the video's project file again in the video editor software.

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