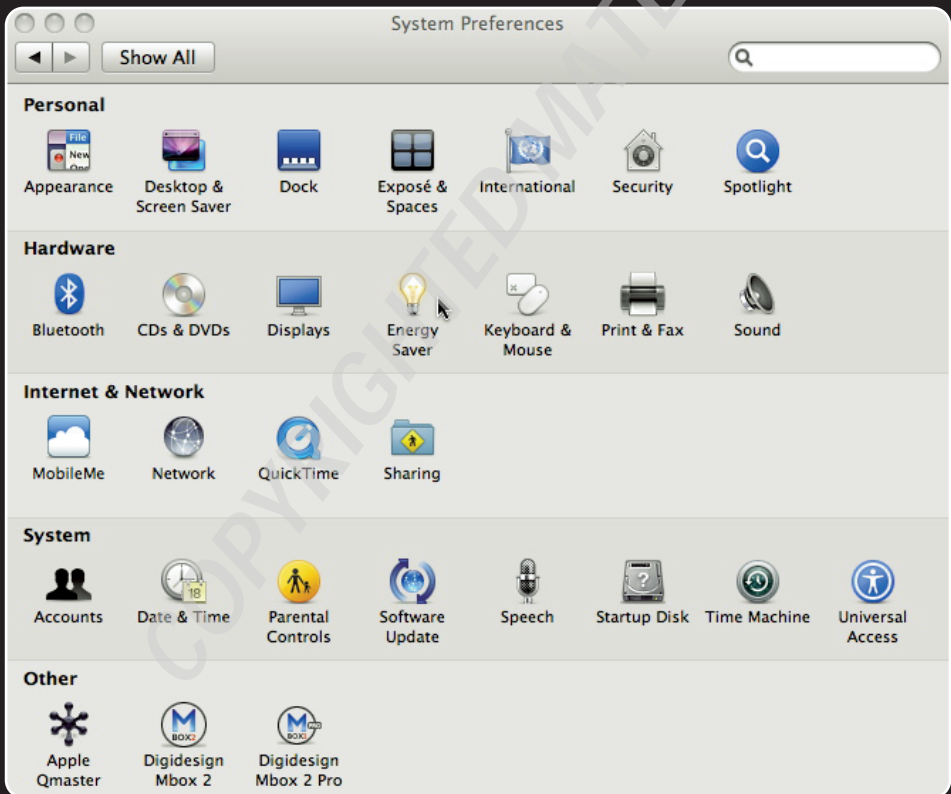


# What Should My Mac Preferences Be?



There are several settings you should check before you begin capturing and editing. This includes setting up your Mac OS X preferences, a particular necessity before you begin capturing your video.

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Check Your Mac OS X Preferences</b> .....                 | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Hardware Configuration</b> .....                          | <b>12</b> |
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## Check Your Mac OS X Preferences

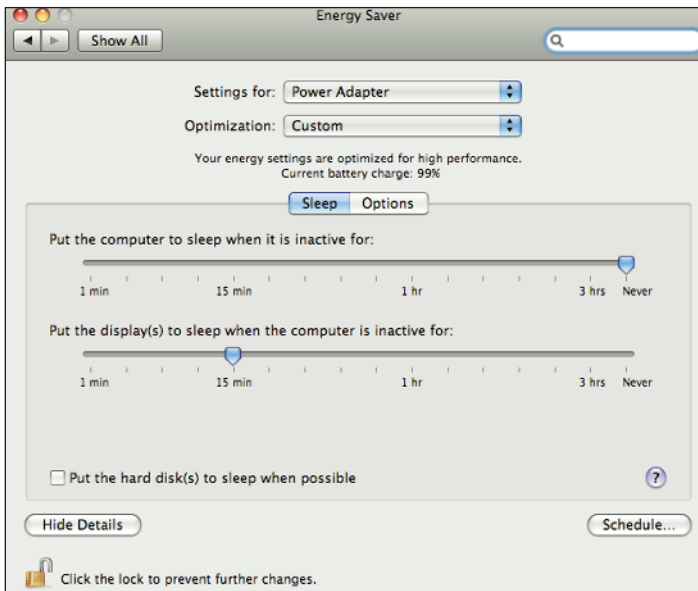
It's important to check the Mac OS X preferences before launching Final Cut Pro. With Mac OS X, you can disable the energy saving settings that can cause you problems. For example, if your computer is in the middle of a long rendering process, you may not want it to fall asleep. There are other settings that may interfere with Final Cut Pro, such as for Exposé and the Dock.

### Configuring the Energy Saver

To configure the Energy Saver preferences with Mac OS X, navigate to the Apple Menu → System Preferences. The System Preferences window appears. Click the Energy Saver preferences icon.

I recommend that you set the sleep mode to Never. Of course, allowing your monitor to sleep is not known to have any adverse effects, so you can leave the monitor sleep setting at your individual preference.

There is a check box in the Energy Savings settings that will allow external hard drives to go to sleep when not in use (see figure 1.1). For the purpose of video editing, you don't want to have this box checked. If you allow your hard drives to go to sleep while editing, Final Cut Pro may temporarily lock up while the drives spin up again.

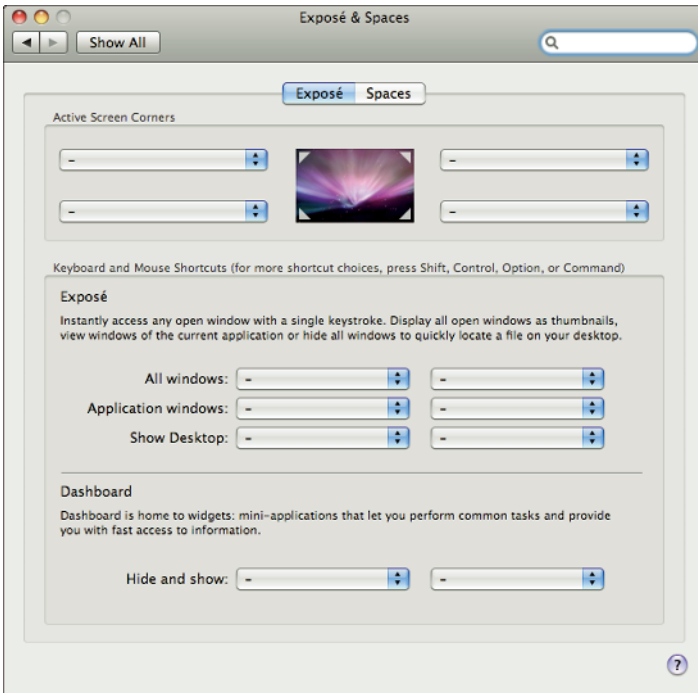


1.1 Energy Saver preferences.

## Exposé settings

Exposé is a function within Mac OS X that provides easy access to application windows, the Desktop, the Dashboard, and the screen saver. The Exposé feature can be a useful tool, but it tends to conflict with the applications within the Final Cut Studio, which make use of the entire workspace of your monitor. It is very easy to accidentally activate the Exposé function when working too close to the corners of your screen. This can become annoying. You can avoid this by deactivating the active screen's corners (or *hot corners*) within the Exposé preferences window.

To access the Exposé settings, navigate to the Apple menu → System Preferences. Click the Exposé preferences icon. The Exposé dialog box appears, where you can make adjustments to the parameters (see figure 1.2).



1.2 Disabling Exposé shortcuts.



The hot keys F9 to F11 that are configured within Exposé interfere with the Insert, Overwrite, and Replace key commands within Final Cut Pro. When there is a conflict over the same key, Exposé overrides the Final Cut Pro commands. Either the Exposé or the Final Cut Pro functions can be reassigned, and you are much more likely to use the assigned Final Cut Pro functions than Exposé. Plus, there are specialized keyboards for Final Cut Pro that have the Final Cut Pro functions printed right on their keys. Therefore, you'll definitely want to change those functions that do not match the keyboard. To disable the active screen corners and Exposé functions, use the drop-down menu for each parameter and select a dash (-) to disable the function.

## Turning off the Dashboard

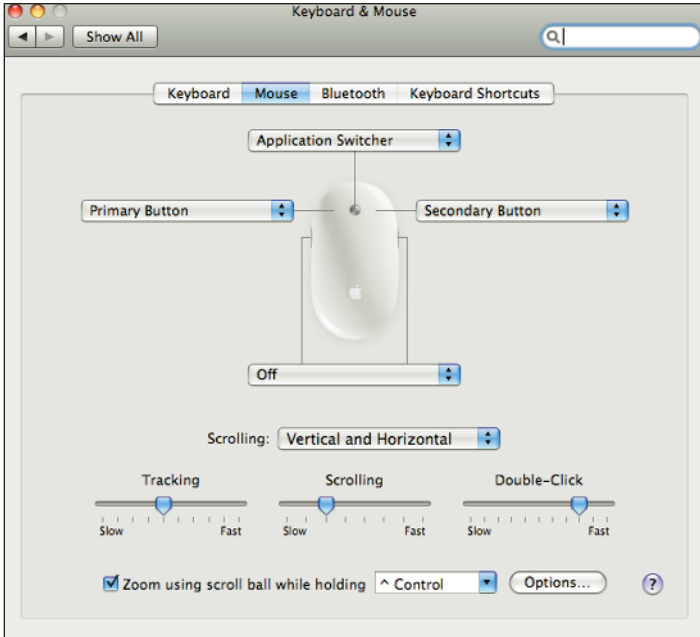
The Dashboard is a pop-up window that provides access to mini-applications called widgets. Although this is a great feature, the Dashboard is assigned to the same key as the Superimpose feature of Final Cut Pro, which is F12. I recommend that you assign the Dashboard to a different function key or keep the Dashboard in the Dock, which should be adequate to use this feature.

## Configuring the Mighty Mouse

At first glance, the Apple Mighty Mouse appears to only have one button, but in fact, it is right- and left-sensitive. There is also a scroll ball in the middle of the mouse, which also functions as a button by depressing the scroll wheel ball. In addition to the right and left buttons, the Mighty Mouse has two additional touch-sensitive areas on the top of both sides of the mouse (see figure 1.3). These touch-sensitive areas only require that you tap on one side of the mouse to activate a particular function.

You can configure the Mighty Mouse to have as many as four different functions. Navigate to the Apple menu → System Preferences, click the Keyboard & Mouse preferences icon, and click the Mouse tab. This is where you can assign functions to all of the mouse areas (see figure 1.3).

Throughout this book, I will refer to *right clicking*, which refers to clicking on the right side of the Mighty Mouse, or its secondary button. Final Cut Pro makes extensive use of right clicking on various items within the interface. If you are using your Mac for the very first time, the default configuration for the Mighty Mouse has both sides of the mouse configured as the primary button. It is extremely important to configure the right side of the Mighty Mouse as the secondary button. Otherwise, the Mighty Mouse will only function as a single button mouse.



### 1.3 System preferences for Apple's Mighty Mouse.

Some users simply don't like using the Mighty Mouse. Fortunately, you can use any third-party USB mouse with Final Cut Pro. Just plug in the third-party mouse, and it will automatically work.



#### Genius

If you have a third-party mouse that has a mouse wheel, you cannot configure the mouse wheel as a third button. The menu options to configure the mouse wheel disappear when your Mac does not detect a Mighty Mouse. However, you can trick the Mac OS X into configuring the wheel by plugging in your old Mighty Mouse first and then configuring the mouse settings. Unplug the Mighty Mouse, and you can continue to use your third-party mouse with the mouse wheel configured as a third button.

Video editing can require a very precise touch. Having your tracking speed calibrated to your individual comfort level is very important. You can also adjust the Tracking slider within the Keyboard and Mouse preferences until you have a comfortable tracking speed. With the same mentality as adjusting the tracking speed, you can adjust your Double-Click speed.

## Disabling software updates

Software updates are very important but can cause problems if you are in the middle of a project. In the System Preferences of your Mac, you can assign the frequency at which your Mac checks for software updates. Your Mac needs to be connected to the Internet for this to work properly.



### Caution

Consider waiting until you finish a Final Cut Pro project before installing updates to Final Cut Pro.

## Adjust Spotlight settings for finding media and sound elements

You can use the Spotlight feature to search for files to use in a Final Cut Studio project. For example, I often use it to search for sound effects, telling Spotlight to only search for audio files. This causes the search to go more quickly and display more manageable results.



### Genius

Because Final Cut Studio installs thousands of Soundtrack Pro audio files, you already have an extensive music and sound effects library sitting on your hard drive. If you configure Spotlight to only search for audio files, you will have easy access to those files directly within a Finder window. This provides an easy way to import those files directly into Final Cut Pro.

To configure Spotlight preferences, follow these steps:

- 1. Click the search icon in the upper-right corner of the Mac OS X menu bar.** Or, you can use the keyboard shortcut **⌘+Space bar**.
- 2. Type a word into the spotlight search field.** For example, type the word **camera shutter**. Available files containing the search word *camera shutter* appear within the search list.
- 3. At the bottom of the search list, click the Spotlight Preferences (see figure 1.4).** Configure the Spotlight preferences to only search for music.

4. **Go back and redo your search.** This time, only music files that contain the word *camera shutter* appear within the search results.
5. **Click Show All at the top of the search list to reveal the relevant items within a separate Finder window.**

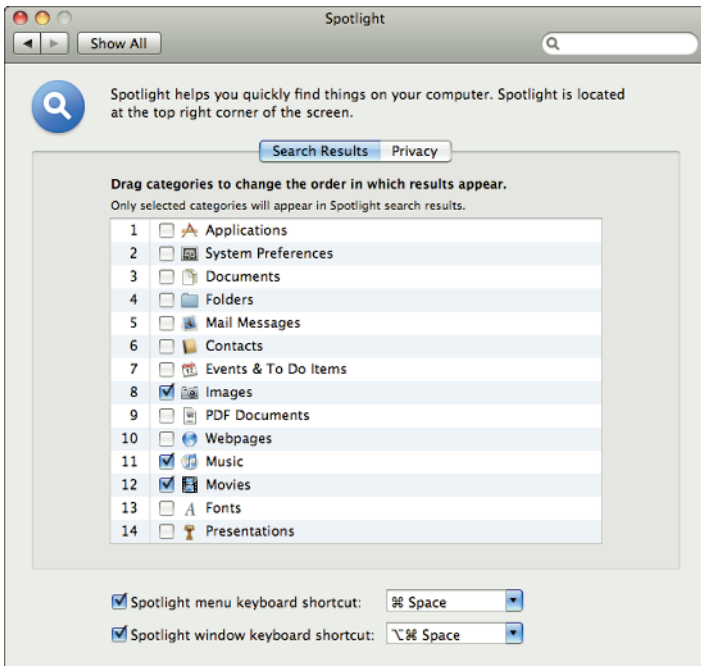
## Configuring the character map

The character map is a critical function that you'll frequently use with Final Cut Pro. It is part of the International settings within the System Preferences (see figure 1.5). The character map allows you to copy and paste characters that are not readily available within each font set. In some cases, it's almost like having a miniature clip art library of various symbols and icons. Common uses include the copyright symbol, trademark symbol, or languages that require the tilde symbol above a particular letter. You can find all these elements within the Character Palette.

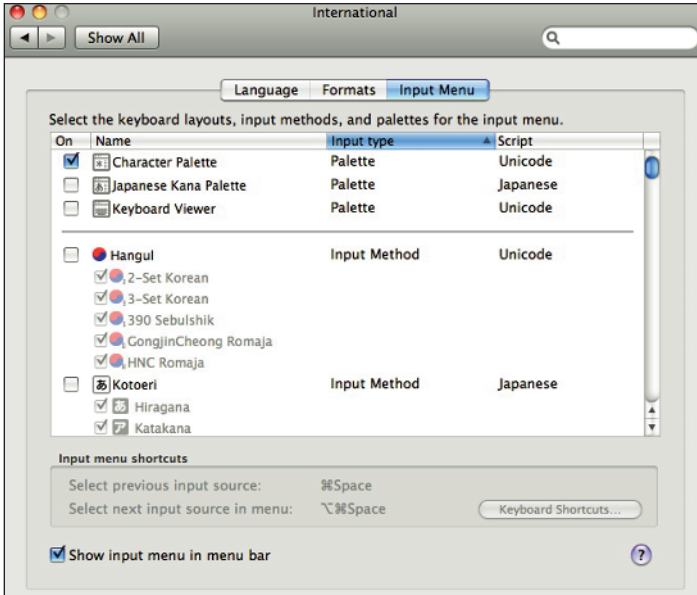


### Genius

You can use the character map to place shapes and various clip art into programs like LiveType or Apple Motion. You can further manipulate these shapes to create special effects.



1.4 Configuring the Spotlight preferences.

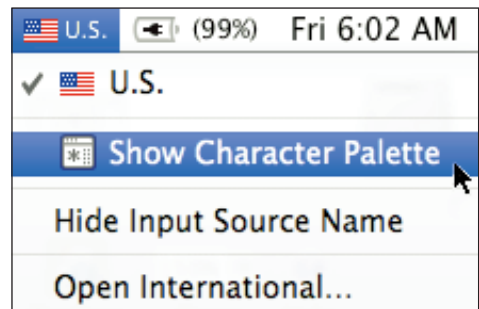


### 1.5 The character map.

To configure the character map, follow these steps:

1. Click the International icon within the System Preferences.
2. Click the Input Menu tab at the top.
3. Place a check mark for the Character Palette option.
4. Place a check mark for the Show input menu in menu bar option, which is located at the bottom of the dialog.

When you are finished with these steps, you should notice a flag in the upper-right corner of the Finder's menu bar. Doing this allows you to use the Character Palette by right-clicking the flag on the menu bar (see figure 1.6).



1.6 Character map flag at the top of the Finder menu bar.

## Using a MobileMe account

If you are not familiar with MobileMe, it is a service provided by Apple that allows you to publish a Web site and share files. You can configure a MobileMe account by clicking on the MobileMe icon within the System Preferences dialog box. Type in your MobileMe username and password to sign in. If you do not have a MobileMe account click on the Learn More button within the dialog box for a free trial or to sign up.

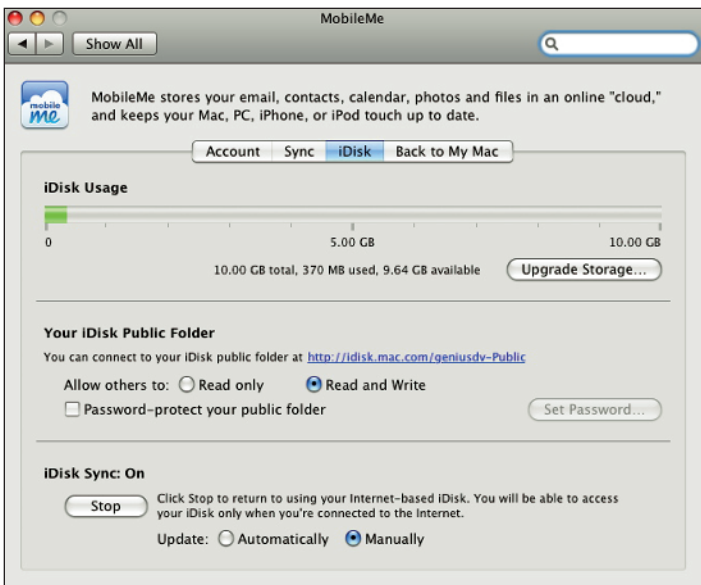
## Configuring the iDisk

The iDisk allows you to easily share files with others through your MobileMe account. After you are signed into your account, you can configure your iDisk by clicking in the iDisk tab within the MobileMe dialog window (see figure 1.7). Click on the Start button to sync the iDisk and an iDisk icon appears on your desktop.



**Genius**

If you have multiple Macs synchronized to the same MobileMe account, you can simply drag a file into your iDisk, and it becomes available to be dragged off the iDisk of another Mac synchronized to the same MobileMe account.



1.7 Configuring and syncing the iDisk.

Think of the iDisk as an Internet-based jump drive that you can use to transfer files. The iDisk functions just like a regular disk drive where you can add or remove files. From a practical point of view, the iDisk provides an easy way for you to send and receive files from other individuals. Quite often, you may need to send copies of your finished product to someone over the Internet. The iDisk makes this process very easy.

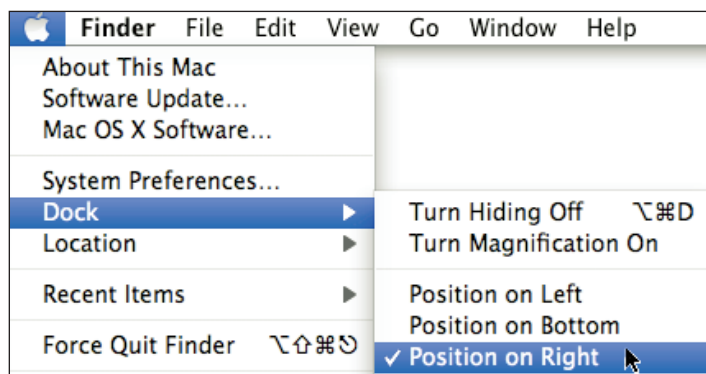


### Caution

Since the iDisk is a remote disk drive that uses the Internet for storing files, the transfer process for large files can be slow.

## Configuring the Dock

The Dock is an area where aliases to various applications may be stored. By default, it is located at the bottom of the screen. This tends to interfere with Final Cut Pro when attempting to navigate within the Timeline window. I recommend that you position the Dock off to the right-hand side of the screen (see figure 1.8), where it will be out of the way of critical interface windows.



1.8 Configuring the Dock.

## Hardware Configuration

Inspecting and understanding how your hardware is configured is very important. This is particularly critical when you make additional purchasing decisions pertaining to new peripherals such as hard drives, cameras, tape machines, and transport devices.

## Video-editing keyboard

One of the best things that you can do for your editing development is to purchase a video-editing keyboard (see figure 1.9). Video-editing keyboards have the functions of every key printed right on them. Many also display the icon that represents the function on the key. There are also overlays available that can be placed over a standard keyboard.



1.9 A video-editing keyboard.

## Research storage options

The specifications of different external storage devices can play a big role in deciding which one is best for you. The three main specifications to consider are size, speed, and interface.

With storage having gone from over a \$1,000 per gigabyte 12 years ago, to as little as 30 cents in 2008, it is much easier to allocate additional space for a project. You have the choice of using separate storage devices for each project or going with a larger drive for multiple projects. Terabyte external hard drives have become rather common.

The next specification to consider is the speed at which the drive spins. Drives with speeds of 5400rpm, 7200rpm, 10,000rpm, and even 15,000rpm are available. There is a direct association between hard drive speed and processor performance. This isn't hard to believe because the faster the drive spins, the faster the processor is able to read from it.

The last specification to consider is the interface. The way that your drive is connected to the computer affects its performance. The most common interface types are FireWire, USB 2.0, and serial ATA.



## Cable length limitations

It is important to realize that there are cable length limitations. Table 1.1 shows the various limitations for each type of connection. Longer cables can cause a variety of problems when you're working with digital video. Extremely long FireWire cables simply will not work when transferring data from your DV camera into Final Cut Pro. In my experience, anything over 6 feet doesn't perform properly. The shorter the cable, the better off you are.

**Table 1.1 Commonly Used Connections on Storage Devices**

| Connection          | Max Speed | Max Devices            | Max Cable Length |
|---------------------|-----------|------------------------|------------------|
| USB 1.1             | 1.5MB/s   | 1 device per connector | 5m               |
| USB 2.0             | 60MB/s    | 1 device per connector | 5m               |
| FireWire 400        | 50MB/s    | 63                     | 4.5m             |
| FireWire 800        | 100MB/s   | 63                     | 4.5m             |
| Serial ATA (SATA 1) | 150MB/s   | 1 device per connector | 2m               |
| Serial ATA (SATA 2) | 300MB/s   | 1 device per connector | 2m               |
| SCSI Ultra-320      | 320MB/s   | 16                     | 12m              |

## Shielding on cables

The shielding on cables is very important, particularly when dealing with FireWire cables. Less-expensive cables may only have a small amount of shielding. A bad FireWire cable will act like an antenna and pick up all sorts of rogue transmission signals.

In some cases, this interference can become embedded into your digital video clips during the transferring process. You certainly wouldn't want to end up with a conversation between two truck drivers in the middle of your imported video. Use cables that have a heavy wire shielding that is visible beneath the rubber coating.

## FireWire devices

FireWire is also known as IEEE 1394. FireWire 400 transfers at a data rate of close to 50 MB per second. When using the Log and Capture tool within Final Cut Pro, you must use a FireWire cable to capture media. Most video cameras and decks attach to drives and computers through a 4-pin to

6-pin FireWire cable. When dealing with a camera or deck that uses a 6-pin to 6-pin cable, you want to be careful, because those extra two pins carry current.

FireWire 800, also known as IEEE1394b, transfers at a data rate of close to 100 megabytes per second. Whenever possible, you should certainly choose a FireWire 800 connection over a FireWire 400 connection. Most modern hard drives have connections for both.

One advantage of using FireWire devices is that you can loop them together. You can chain up 63 devices together that all connect to just one FireWire port. Other devices that use USB or Serial ATA connections require a separate port for each device.



### Caution

If you loop a FireWire 800 device through a FireWire 400 device, the entire chain only runs at 400Mb/s.



### Caution

If a USB 2.0 device is hooked into a USB 1.1 device, (for example, by plugging into a port on the keyboard or monitor) the USB 2.0 device will be limited to the speed of the USB 1.1 device.

## USB devices

USB has two speeds: USB 1.0 and USB 2.0. Technically speaking, USB 1.0 has been replaced with USB 1.1 to rectify early problems with USB 1.0. Both specifications use the exact same cable. USB 1.1 is designed for low-power devices, such as a mouse or a keyboard. Some jump drives work in a USB 1.1 port, but with a very slow data transfer rate.

USB 2.0 drives support a data rate of 60MB per second. In general, USB drives are cheaper than drives that have FireWire 400/800 connections. The one drawback of USB devices is that you cannot loop them together in a chain; each USB device requires its own dedicated connection. This is problematic if you are editing on a MacBook Pro, because of the limited number of USB ports.

## Serial ATA devices

External serial ATA devices are relatively new to the marketplace. Before purchasing one of these drives, make sure your computer has an external serial ATA connector to accept this type of drive. Otherwise, you may need to invest in a serial ATA card that provides the necessary interface connection.

## What are some critical camera settings?

Before you begin editing, make sure your camera settings are correct. This is particularly important when it comes to setting audio data rates and video frame rates within the camera.



1.10 Setting the audio bit rate in a camera.

### Audio bit rate

It is important to set the audio to 16 bit in order to achieve 48 kHz audio. Most cameras are preset to record with 12-bit audio, so this is a setting you will most likely have to change (see figure 1.10). If 12-bit audio is imported into Final Cut Pro, there is a chance that the video clips will drift out of sync from the audio clips on sequences that exceed 3 minutes.

### Video frame rate

Take note of the video format setting in your camera. The most popular formats include DV and HDV. Also take note of the frame rate. Popular frame rates for North American users include 29.97 and 24p. For European users, 25 fps is the standard frame rate.

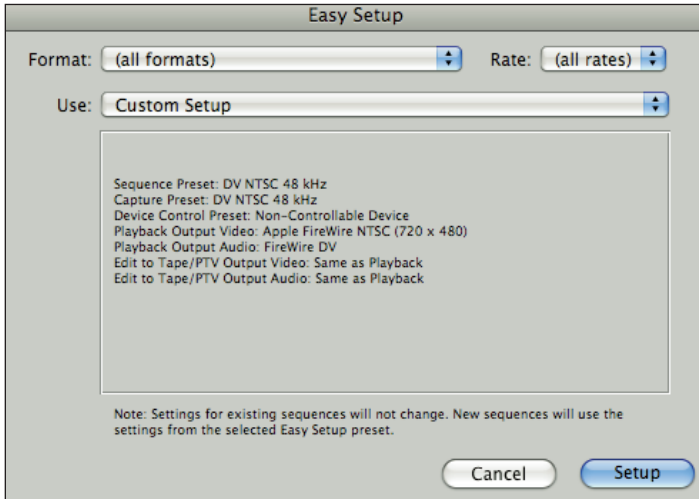


#### Caution

In order to correctly capture footage, it is important that you match the Audio/Video Settings within Final Cut Pro to the correct format you are ingesting.

To configure the capture settings for Final Cut Pro, navigate to the Final Cut Pro menu → Audio/Video Settings. The Audio/Video Settings dialog appears. You can adjust the capture preset by using the Capture Preset drop-down menu. Select the appropriate preset that matches the video format you have recorded.

If you are receiving media from a third party, it is sometimes difficult to figure out which video format was used to record the footage. There are over 80 different video presets within Final Cut Pro! Fortunately, if you configure the Easy Setup preferences (see figure 1.11) to use (all formats), and (all rates), Final Cut Pro will automatically adjust your sequence settings to the first clip that is edited to the timeline.



1.11 Configuring Easy Setup.

For more information on how to record or ingest media into Final Cut Studio, refer to Chapter 3.

## Final Cut Studio Installation Options

Final Cut Studio is a massive install, requiring 59GB of space to install all the applications! This can be problematic for laptop users.

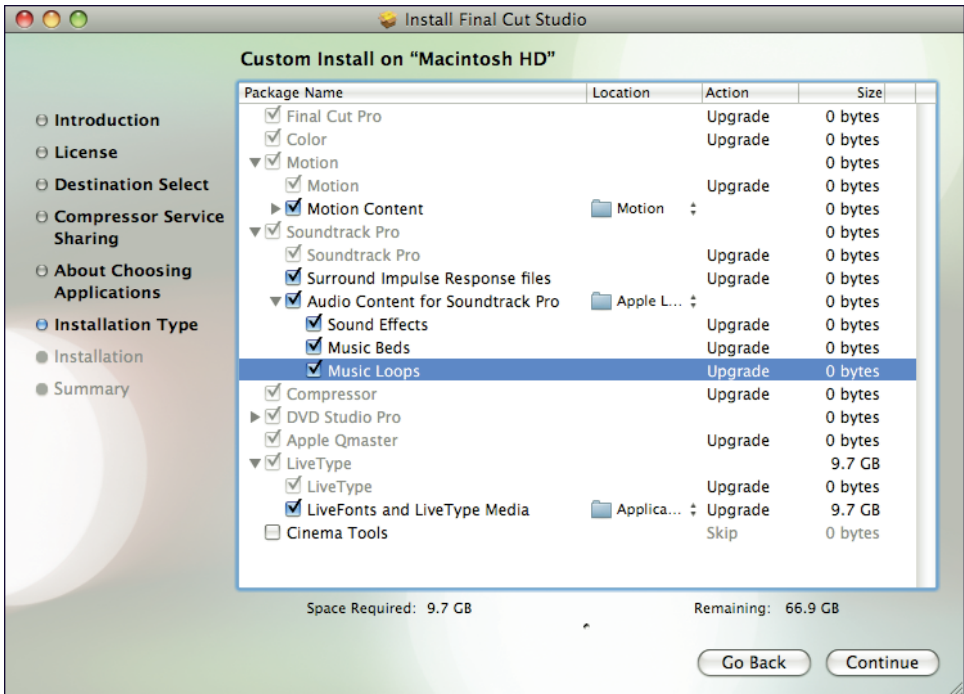


### Caution

The Final Cut Studio software package ships with eight DVDs that contain all the install files. Installation can take up to three hours, and then you need to install all of the available Final Cut Studio updates.

When installing Final Cut Studio, you may want to deselect some options if you do not plan on using them. For example, you may not want to install Cinema Tools if you are not producing physical motion picture film prints.

The files that take up the most space are the Soundtrack Pro music loops, Motion media, and LiveType media. If you are limited on disk space, you may want to consider deselecting these items (see figure 1.12).



1.12 Customizing your Final Cut Studio installation.

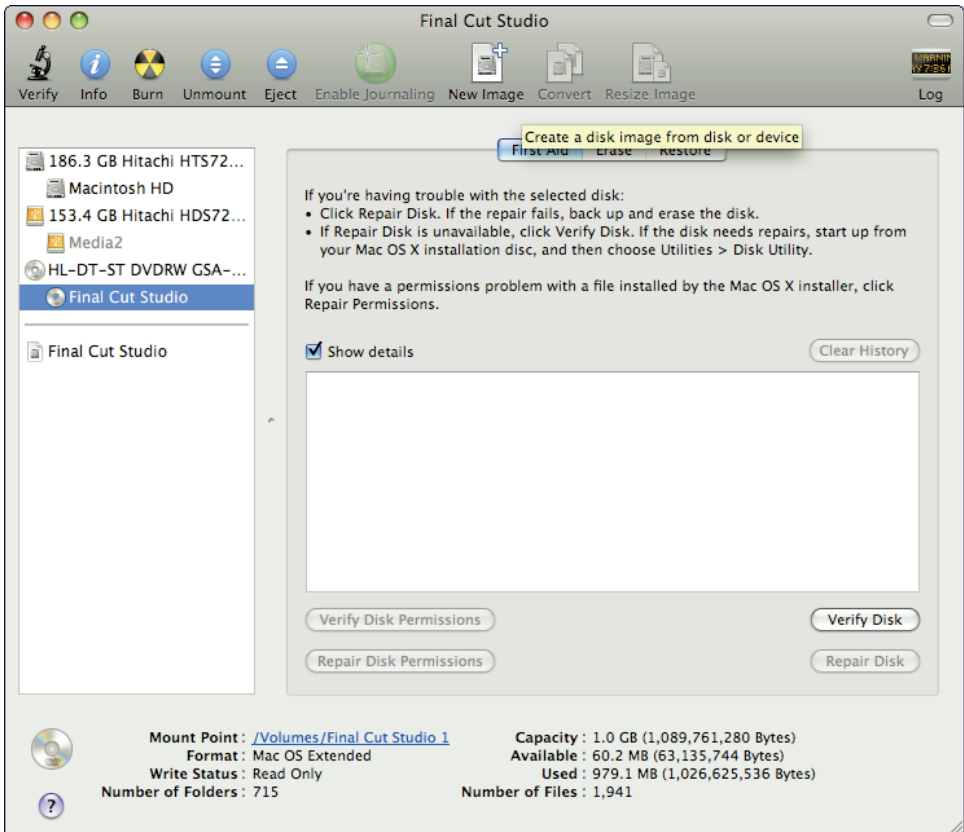


**Genius**

If you are installing Final Cut Studio onto several computers or workstations, you may want to create disk images of the Final Cut Studio installation DVDs. Installing Final Cut Studio from a disk image will install the entire program in about 45 minutes. Also, you won't have to sit and switch out individual disks. As long as all the disk images have been mounted, the install will proceed all the way through to the end.

To create a disk image, follow these steps:

1. **Launch the Disk Utility program.** This utility is found within Mac HD → Applications → Utilities → Disk Utility.
2. **Insert the first installation disk for Final Cut Studio.** The Installation disk appears on the left side of the Disk Utility window. Highlight the disk.
3. **Click the New Image button (see figure 1.13).** Choose a location to save the disk image.
4. **Repeat this step for each of the installation disks.** If you have extra space on your hard drive, change the image format to read/write instead of compressed. This increases the speed of installing the files from a disk image because they are not compressed.



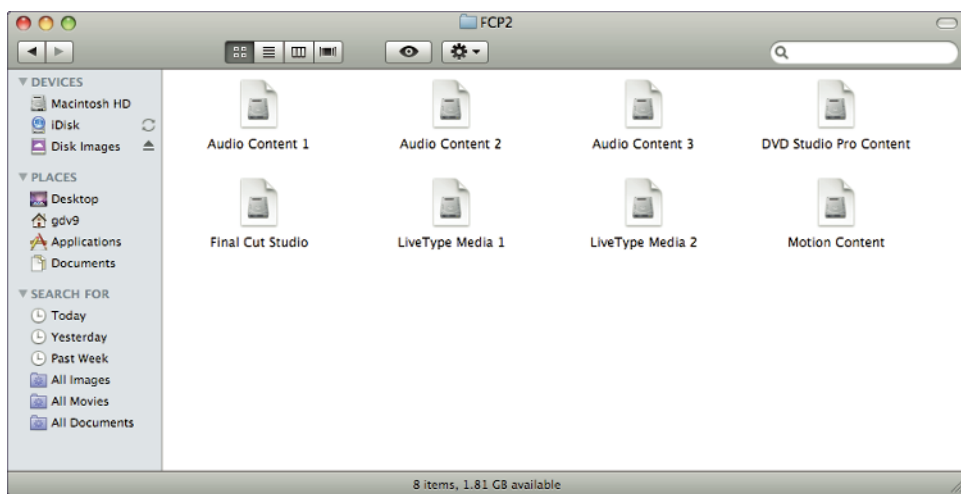
1.13 Creating a disk image.

It will take awhile to create all the disk images. Once the disk images are saved to your hard drive (see figure 1.14), you can take them to another computer, and the entire installation process will move much faster.

To install Final Cut Studio from a set of disk images, follow these steps:

1. **Double-click each disk image.** You'll repeat this step eight times. I recommend skipping the verification process. This mounts eight virtual disks to the Mac OS X desktop.
2. **Open the first disk image, which should be from the first Final Cut Studio disk.** Double-click the Install Final Cut Studio icon.

After installing Final Cut Studio for the first time, it is important that you check for additional updates. You will need to check for updates more than once to complete the entire update process. Generally, the first time you perform an update, you will see a pro applications updater. Run the update a second time to reveal the updates for each Final Cut Studio application.



1.14 Mounted disk images.



### Caution

Although it's important to update the Final Cut Studio software, I do not recommend updating the software while you are in the middle of a job. Always finish any critical jobs before performing the update process.

To run the software update, navigate to the Apple menu → Software Updates. Then check the updates that you want to install.

## Troubleshooting Final Cut Pro Hardware Problems

Troubleshooting problems can be a frustrating experience. Here is a short list of common problems that you may experience and how to solve them.

### Check your cables

If you are experiencing problems capturing video, always check the cables that connect your tape machine to Final Cut Pro. Most users will be using a FireWire cable that connects directly from the tape machine to the computer. Defective FireWire cables can wreak havoc on the capturing process.

### Deleting the Final Cut Pro preferences file

A common fix for unexplained issues relating to Final Cut Pro is to delete the Final Cut Pro preferences file. For example, let's say that your system is working perfectly fine one day, and then you come in to the office the next morning to find that Final Cut Pro will not capture anything. It's possible that the Final Cut Pro preferences file has become corrupted. You can find the Final Cut Pro preferences file at the following location:

Mac HD → Users → *Username* → Library → Preferences → Final Cut Pro user data → Final Cut Pro 6.0 Prefs

If you choose, you can safely delete the entire Final Cut Pro user data folder. Upon relaunching the software, Final Cut Pro automatically rebuilds this entire folder.





### Caution

Although deleting the Final Cut Pro preferences file is harmless, it resets any preferences that you have adjusted back to the original default settings. When you launch Final Cut Pro, the software will act like it's a new installation with a new set of default preferences.

## Rebuilding permissions

Occasionally, the file permissions within Mac OS X can become corrupted. You can safely rebuild the file permissions using the Disk Utility. The Disk Utility is located in the Mac HD → Applications → Utilities folder.

