

# BUYER'S guide

## BEGINNER

### Video Editing

It wasn't long ago that even playing high-quality digital video on a typical classroom computer was impractical. Actually creating and editing video simply wasn't an option. Digital video cameras; large, fast hard drives; and powerful processors have all become affordable, making video editing a compelling and practical classroom technology.

As the required hardware became common, a flood of video editing software also became available. In fact, the two dominant platforms in schools, Windows XP and Macintosh OS X, both now include basic video editing applications.

Although Windows MovieMaker and Apple's iMovie provide the ability to import, edit, and export video, they are both extremely limited in features and are best suited for casual experimentation. The selection of video editing programs is huge and deciding where to start can be daunting. It can help to break the choices into three levels, beginner, intermediate, and prosumer.

As you might expect, the beginner packages are in direct competition with the free applications; in fact, some no-cost freeware and open source video editors are available. Commercial video editing packages are typically quite affordable, most costing \$70 or less. Feature sets for the majority of beginner packages are pretty much the same—rather than features, these programs vary in work-style and prepackaged content. In other words, the main selling points of beginner packages are ease of use and clip media.

Intermediate-level video editing software is much more varied and is perhaps the most competitive section. With prices from \$80 to \$200, feature

Company	AM Software	Apple	Avid	Dazzle
Product	AVIedit	iMovie	Free DV	Dazzle MovieStar 5
Price	\$25 (Shareware)	Included with OSX	Free	\$49.99
Platform	Win	Mac	Mac/Win	Win
URL	<a href="http://www.am-soft.ru/aviedit.html">http://www.am-soft.ru/aviedit.html</a>	<a href="http://www.apple.com">http://www.apple.com</a>	<a href="http://www.avid.com">http://www.avid.com</a>	<a href="http://www.dazzle.com">http://www.dazzle.com</a>

## INTERMEDIATE

Company	Adobe	ArcSoft	Cyberlink	MainConcept
Product	Premiere Elements 2.0	ShowBiz DVD	PowerDirector 4	MainActor 5.5
Price	\$99	\$99.99	\$89	\$199
Platform	Win	Win	Win	Win/Linux
URL	<a href="http://www.adobe.com">http://www.adobe.com</a>	<a href="http://www.arcsoft.com">http://www.arcsoft.com</a>	<a href="http://www.cyberlink.com">http://www.cyberlink.com</a>	<a href="http://www.mainconcept.com">http://www.mainconcept.com</a>

## PROSUMER

Company	Adobe	Apple		Avid	
Product	Premiere Pro 2.0	Final Cut Pro 5	ShowBiz DVD	Xpress Pro HD	Xpress Pro
Price	\$849	\$999	\$299	\$2,495	\$1,695
Platform	Win	Mac	Mac	Mac/Win	Mac/Win
URL	<a href="http://www.adobe.com">http://www.adobe.com</a>	<a href="http://www.apple.com">http://www.apple.com</a>		<a href="http://www.avid.com">http://www.avid.com</a>	

Gromada	MainConcept	Microsoft	Pinnacle Systems	Roxio	SoftLab-NSK	VirtualDub
VideoMach 3.5	EVE 2	MovieMaker 2	Studio 10	Videowave 7 Pro	DDClip 3.51 LE	Virtualdub 1.6.11
\$29.95 (\$199.95 site license)	\$69	Freeware	\$69	\$49	\$48	Freeware (open source)
Win/Linux	Win	Win XP	Win	Win	Win	Win
<a href="http://www.gromada.com">http://www.gromada.com</a>	<a href="http://www.mainconcept.com">http://www.mainconcept.com</a>	<a href="http://www.microsoft.com">http://www.microsoft.com</a>	<a href="http://www.pinnaclesys.com">http://www.pinnaclesys.com</a>	<a href="http://www.roxio.com">http://www.roxio.com</a>	<a href="http://www.softlab-nsk.com">http://www.softlab-nsk.com</a>	<a href="http://www.virtualdub.org">http://www.virtualdub.org</a>

Muvee Technologies	Serious Magic	SoftLab-NSK	Sony	Ulead Systems
AutoProducer 5	Visual Communicator 2	DDClip 3.51 Pro	Vegas MovieStudio +DVD 6	VideoStudio 9
\$99.95	\$139	\$199	\$89.95 (\$129.95 w/HD)	\$99
Win	Win	Win	Win	Win
<a href="http://www.muvee.com">http://www.muvee.com</a>	<a href="http://www.seriousmagic.com">http://www.seriousmagic.com</a>	<a href="http://www.softlab-nsk.com">http://www.softlab-nsk.com</a>	<a href="http://www.sonymediasoftware.com">http://www.sonymediasoftware.com</a>	<a href="http://www.ulead.com">http://www.ulead.com</a>

	Canopus	Pinnacle Systems	Sony	Ulead
Xpress DV	Edius Pro 3	Liquid Edition 6	Vegas 6	MediaStudio Pro 8
\$495	\$599	\$499	\$599	\$399
Mac/Win	Win	Win	Win	Win
	<a href="http://www.canopus.com">http://www.canopus.com</a>	<a href="http://www.pinnaclesys.com">http://www.pinnaclesys.com</a>	<a href="http://www.sonymediasoftware.com">http://www.sonymediasoftware.com</a>	<a href="http://www.ulead.com">http://www.ulead.com</a>

sets can be quite varied. Included in this range are both “advanced” versions of beginner programs and scaled down versions of prosumer products. In fact, many companies offer products in each price point; some even have multiple products within each category. A few add prosumer-like features such as HD (high definition) and advanced DVD authoring.

Prosumer systems aren’t necessarily loaded with more features than lower-cost editors, but they do offer extreme levels of control and precision. For instance, most beginner programs enable transition effects from one clip to the next, but prosumer-level products enable you to create the 3D effect, choose its speed, duration, and so on.

The biggest advantage of the prosumer products is their ability to handle most if not all of the high-end equipment and formats used in professional television studios.

Video editing software, even the prosumer-level packages, are typically available in demo or limited versions that you can download. This can be an excellent way of checking to see exactly how much you should spend, and what you should be expecting for your video editing dollar.