
BIAS Peak DV & Final Cut Pro Tips

Welcome!

This document provides useful tips for using BIAS Peak DV to enhance the audio tracks of Final Cut Pro video projects. For further information on Peak DV, please consult the program's documentation.

Tips for Using Peak DV with Final Cut Pro

Final Cut Pro has audio manipulation tools built into the application, however, there are instances where using an external sound editing program can be helpful. Peak DV provides a tailored set of audio processing features that assist the Final Cut Pro user in creating the best quality audio for video production.

With Peak DV, users can perform a series of complex audio processing operations on a soundfile. All changes in that file will be permanently encoded. This can help offload the amount of real-time processing that Final Cut Pro must perform when playing back sound clips in a project, resulting in better performance.

All Final Cut Pro audio clips appear as files on your Macintosh. Peak DV will extract the audio from these files. If the clip contains both audio and video, users can view the video frames while working with the audio. When audio work in Peak DV is complete, saved files are easily imported back into Final Cut Pro for placement and synchronization.

Preparing Video Clip Audio Prior to Editing

Peak DV allows users to manipulate audio associated to a video clip prior to editing in Final Cut Pro. Once a clip has been captured in Final Cut Pro, the movie file is loaded into Peak DV. Peak's QuickTime movie viewer allows users to view the synchronized video track while simultaneously applying audio processes. To ensure audio and video synch, processes that affect the overall media timing are not recommended. Some useful common operations include:

1. **Normalize:** This will automatically adjust the audio levels of a clip to use the maximum dynamic range available and minimize level differences between different clips.

2. Silence: Used to remove unwanted audio segments such as coughs in dialog. Unlike Delete, this function will not disturb the synchronization timing. To maintain continuity of background audio, copy a segment of ambient sound from another area and use Mix to add it to the silenced area.
3. Pencil Tool: The Pencil Tool can be used to redraw segments of audio and is especially useful for repairing clicks and spikes in the audio source material. Zoom far into the wave display and use the pencil tool to smooth the unwanted transients.

Using CD Audio Tracks

Use Peak DV to import whole tracks or excerpts from audio CDs. The high-quality Change Sample Rate function can be used to upsample 44.1kHz CD audio to 48kHz prior to saving the file and importing into Final Cut Pro DV projects. By setting up a batch processing script, these operations can be automated to affect many files at once.

Slice and Dice

With Peak DV, you can take long audio segments and edit just the parts you want into separate soundfiles. Using the “Auto Snap to Zero” setting will insure that edits occur on zero-level samples in the audio signal, thus preventing clicks which might otherwise occur at the beginning and end boundaries of the segment. Using the Fade In/Fade Out controls will instantly produce smooth transitions in and out of clips. Use Cut/Copy to clipboard and the Mix function to layer multiple audio segments into a single soundfile.

Batch File Processing

One of Peak DV's most powerful features is its ability to process multiple files. Peak DV's Batch Processing mode can perform a set of operations on multiple files with a minimum of user interaction. For example, you

might want to normalize and sample rate convert soundfiles before using in Final Cut Pro.

Special Effects and VST Plug-Ins

Peak DV supports usage of one VST-compatible audio plug-in per session and a handful of plug-in modules are included in the package. Besides the standard equalization and gain tools, there are also special effects such as Leslie and Overdrive that can be used to produce unusual sound effects from source material, from subtle to radical. See the Peak DV documentation for a full description of these effects.

Hundreds of VST plug-ins are available from other software vendors that can be used with Peak DV, providing an almost limitless set of audio processing capabilities. As an example for video production, a noise reduction plug-in may be employed to reduce ambient room noise, pops and hum. For more information, visit Ray Gun from Arboretum Systems at www.arboretum.com.

Fit Audio to Video Segment

The Change Duration function can be used to time-stretch an audio clip to a new length without changing the pitch. For example, use this to make a music clip fit the duration of an accompanying video segment. See the Peak DV documentation for important options that affect the operation of this feature.

More Power

While Peak DV offers a robust set of features for preparing audio for video, users may want to upgrade for additional power and functionality. The full version of Peak includes pitch shifting, automated click repair, DC offset removal and the ability to activate multiple VST plug-ins at once for even better sounding videos!