The interface for Premiere Elements has been designed by Adobe to be as simple and as intuitive as possible. It is also remarkably customizable, with a wealth of powerful tools in obvious and, once in a while, not so obvious places.

There have been major changes to the interface in the last few versions of the program. But you’ll quickly find that, for the most part, it makes for an improved editing experience all around – for the newbie as well as for the veteran.

Elements Live

The first time you launch any of the Elements programs, the interface will default to eLive, a link directly from the programs to an exclusive website full of exciting ideas, tutorials (including a number created by yours truly!) and other content especially for Elements users.

eLive (Elements Live) can be accessed from any computer with a live internet connection by clicking the eLive link at the top center of the program’s interface.
The Premiere Elements Interface

Get to Know Premiere Elements 15

CHAPTER 1

The Premiere Elements Interface

Panels, pop-ups and the Toolbar

The Premiere Elements interface has been designed with efficiency and readability in mind.

The interface is bright and clean with big, easy-to-find buttons and text throughout.

Its tools are tucked out-of-the-way – but easily retrievable with just a click or two.

Many of the tools are hidden away in pop-up panels that snap open with just a click on a tab or button.

The bulk of the tools can be accessed through buttons on the Toolbar, which runs along the right side of the Premiere Elements interface.

When it comes to the actual editing, the program offers two separate (though connected) workspaces – Quick View and Expert View – workspaces that allow you to go as deeply into the process as you’d like. (More on them on page 4.)

Additionally, the program includes a Guided Edits library, available in both Quick and Expert View. Guided Edits take you step-by-step through a number of key editing tasks – like having your own personal teacher built right into the program! (For more information on Guided Edits, see Chapter 3.)

The Monitor panel

The Monitor is the panel on which you’ll preview your movie as your work. It usually rests in the top center of the interface – though it can change position to accommodate the Adjustments and Applied Effects panels when necessary.

The Timeline

Both Quick View and Expert View (discussed on the following page) share a similar workspace for assembling your video: The Timeline.

Your timeline is really where the bits and pieces become a movie.
Get to Know Premiere Elements 15

Customize your workspace

The sizes and the arrangements of the various panels in the interface are easily customizable. Panels can be resized by dragging on the seams between them.

Feel free to experiment and resize the panels by dragging on the borders between them.

Many of the pop-up panels also allow you to stretch them longer so that you can see more of the assets, effects, templates, etc., at once.

And, if you ever find the program misbehaving or if you just feel like you’ve lost control of your workspace, you can easily get back to the default look by simply going to the Window drop-down menu and selecting Restore Workspace.

Minimum screen resolution

Because of the size of the panels and the number of tools that Adobe fits into some rather tight spaces, we recommend that this program not be used on a computer with a monitor with less than 1280x1024 resolution.

There’s simply no room for it all to fit otherwise! And, on a smaller screen, you’ll spend a lot of time scrolling and resizing panels, trying to get to all the tools.

Quick View and Expert View

Premiere Elements offers you two somewhat different workspaces in which to edit your video project: Quick View and Expert View. In both views, you edit on a timeline. However, the timeline, and its features, vary a bit from view to view.

Quick View and Expert View aren’t so much totally different interfaces as they are two different ways to approach the same project. In fact, you can switch between them as you work on your project, taking advantage of the best aspects of each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quick View</th>
<th>Expert View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media clips are added directly to the timeline from your computer, camcorder or recording device.</td>
<td>Media clips are gathered into the Project Assets panel before they are added to your timeline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The timeline consists of four tracks: Titles, Video, Narration and Audio.</td>
<td>The timeline can include up to 99 video and 99 audio tracks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only the Video track can include video. Only titles and text can be added to the Title track.</td>
<td>Multiple tracks of video can be combined to create effects, including Videomerge, Chroma Key and Picture-in-Picture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio levels can be set using tools available in Smart Mix, on the Audio Mixer and on the Adjustments panel.</td>
<td>Audio levels can be controlled at specific points using keyframes created right on the timeline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A limited number of effects and titles are readily available in Quick View.</td>
<td>The complete set of effects is available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customizing the Premiere Elements Interface

What’s a CTI?

Vital vocabulary alert! That thin, vertical, red line that moves along the Timeline as you play your video? It’s called a CTI, which stands for “Current Time Indicator.”

That’s an all-important vocabulary term that you’ll definitely want to know as we continue to work.

Trust us on this. Especially since there’s no other word that comes close to describing this thing – and we’re going to use the term often throughout this book.
CHAPTER 1

Basic editing moves

No matter what you plan to do with your video and no matter how creatively you plan to do it, the video editing process itself will still fit the same basic structure.

Here’s a brief walkthrough of the steps you’ll take for creating any video project in Premiere Elements.

1 Gather your media

The assets, or media, you gather to create your movie can come from a variety of sources. It can be video, audio, music, photos or graphics. If you are working in Quick View, any media you gather will go directly to your timeline. If you are working in Expert View, it will go into your Project Assets panel.

To import your media into your project, click on the Add Media tab on the upper left of the interface.

There are basically three ways to get your media into your project, all accessed by one of the six buttons on the Add Media panel (illustrated below). We show you how and when to use each in Chapter 5, Add Media to Your Project.

- Download your video from a hard drive camcorder, flash based camcorder or other video recording device.
  Video clips from hard drive and flash drive recording devices, including high-definition AVCHD and Go Pro camcorders as well as smart phones, are downloaded into your Premiere Elements project when you select the Videos from Cameras & Devices option. Media can also be downloaded from other sources, including DVDs, using the DVD Camcorder or PC DVD Drive option. Photos can be added from cameras and other devices by selecting the Digital Still Cameras & Phones option.

- Stream, or capture, your video into your project.
  If you’ve got a Webcam or other WDM (Windows Device Model) video or audio device attached to your computer, you can use Premiere Elements to capture the live video directly into your Premiere Elements video project.

Premiere Elements 15 does not include tools for capturing tape-based video, including video from HDV and miniDV camcorders. However, video from digital tape camcorders can be captured as Premiere Elements-compatible video data using various third-party software and then added to your Premiere Elements project. We show you how to capture this type of video in our Premiere Elements Appendix, on page 275.

- Browse to gather and import media files that are located on your computer’s hard drive(s).
  When you select the option to Add Media from the Organizer, you can locate the photos, video and audio files already on your computer using the Organizer’s management tools and import it into your project.

Add Media options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Add Media</th>
<th>Project Assets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Launches the Elements Organizer</td>
<td>Elements Organizer&lt;br&gt;View videos and photos from Elements Organizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opens Explorer or Finder</td>
<td>Files and folders&lt;br&gt;Get video, photos, and audio file from your computer's hard drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launches Photo Downloader</td>
<td>Photos from cameras or devices&lt;br&gt;Get photos from digital cameras, phones, or removable drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launches Video Importer</td>
<td>Videos from cameras &amp; devices&lt;br&gt;Get video from camcorders, phones, or other removable devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opens Capture screen</td>
<td>Webcam or WDM&lt;br&gt;Capture video from webcam or WDM compatible device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launches Video Importer</td>
<td>DVD camera or computer drive&lt;br&gt;Get video from a DVD-based AVCHD camera or your computer's DVD drive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

Get to Know Premiere Elements 15

We discuss how to assemble your movie in both Quick View and Expert View in Chapter 2 and Chapter 7 respectively. We also show you how to use multi-track editing in order to create a variety of effects and take advantage of several key storytelling techniques. We’ll also show you how to use both automatic and manual tools to work with your audio clips.

2  Assemble the clips on your timeline

Once you’ve imported your media clips into a project, you can begin the process of assembling your movie. If you are working in Quick View, any media you add to your project will be loaded directly to your timeline. If you are working in Expert View, the clips will be added to your Project Assets panel. Editing this video is as simple as dragging these clips from this panel to your timeline. Once you add your files to your timeline, you’ll have a number of options:

- **Trim your clips.** Trimming means removing footage from either the beginning or the end of a clip. To trim a clip, click to select the clip on your timeline and then drag in from either its beginning or end, as in the illustration on the following page.

- **Split your clips.** Splitting means slicing through your clips so that you can remove footage from the middle or delete a sliced-off segment completely. To split a clip, position the CTI (playhead) over your clip at the point at which you’d like the slice to occur and then click on the scissors icon on CTI.

- **Place your clip on an upper video or audio track.** An important feature of editing in Expert View is the ability to place your video or audio on tracks other than Video 1 and Audio 1. The use of multiple tracks of video is, in fact, key to the creation of many of the more advanced video effects, including Chroma Key and Videomerge.

3  Add and adjust effects

Premiere Elements comes loaded with dozens of video and audio effects as well as hundreds of preset effects for working magic on your movie.

Adding an effect in Premiere Elements is very easy, as we show you in Chapter 13, Add Video and Audio Effects. We discuss how to assemble your movie in both Quick View and Expert View in Chapter 2 and Chapter 7 respectively. We also show you how to use multi-track editing in order to create a variety of effects and take advantage of several key storytelling techniques.

We’ll also show you how to use both automatic and manual tools to work with your audio clips.

1  As illustrated on the next page, click the Effects button on the Toolbar along the right side of the program.

This will open the Effects panel.

2  Locate an effect.

Go to any category of video or audio effects by clicking the title bar (The bar along the top of the panel) and selecting from the list that appears. You can also quickly locate any effect by clicking the Quick Search magnifying glass button at the top right of the panel and typing in the effect’s name.
Get to Know Premiere Elements 15

We’ll discuss Effects in detail in Chapter 13.

3 Apply the effect.
To apply an effect, drag it from the Effects panel onto a clip on your timeline.

4 Adjust the effect’s settings.
Once you’ve applied your effect, you may or may not see an immediate change in your video clip. To intensify or fine tune your effect, ensure the clip is selected on your timeline, then open the Applied Effects panel by clicking its button on the Toolbar.

The Applied Effects panel is a tremendously powerful workspace. Not only can you use it to change the settings for individual effects but also as the main workspace for creating and adjusting keyframes, Premiere Elements’ tool for creating animations, motion paths and effects that change over the course of the clip’s playback.

On the Applied Effects panel, locate your effect’s listing, then click on it to open the effect’s settings.

In Chapter 14, we’ll show you how to customize and fine tune your effects in the Applied Effects panel.

Then, in Chapter 15, we’ll show you how to use keyframes to animate effects and motion paths.

Add and adjust transitions
Transitions are the effects or animations that take your movie from one clip to another. Some are gentle and nearly invisible – others are showy and draw attention to themselves. Most transitions are added to your timeline and adjusted similarly to effects:

1 Click on the Transitions button on the Toolbar. The Transitions panel will open.

2 Locate a transition.
Select any category of video or audio effects by clicking the title bar (The bar along the top of the panel) and selecting from the pop-up list that appears.
You can also quickly locate any effect by clicking the Quick Search magnifying glass button at the top right of the panel and typing in the transition’s name.

3 Apply the transition.
Apply a transition by dragging it from the Transitions panel onto the intersection of two clips on your timeline.

4 Customize your transition.
Nearly all transitions include a number of properties that can be customized, depending on the nature of the transition.
Virtually all transitions include options for designating where the transition centers and the duration of the transition as well as an option for setting the transition to reverse its movement (i.e., wiping from right to left rather than left to right).

We'll show you just about everything there is to know about adding and customizing transitions – including why they sometimes seem to behave in very strange ways – in Chapter 11. And, as a bonus, we'll even show you how to use the Gradient Wipe, a tool for creating your own custom transition effects!

Add titles

Titles are text, and sometimes graphics, placed over your clips to provide additional visual information for your video story. Once you've selected a title template, you'll create and customize your titles in Premiere Elements' Title Adjustments workspace.

To add a title or text to your movie:

1. Click the Titles & Text button on the Toolbar.
   The Titles & Text panel will open.

   As with Effects and Transitions, the panel has several categories of title templates. Among these are text-only stationary titles, titles with graphics and rolling and animated titles.

   In addition to standard title templates, the library includes a collection of Motion Titles, animated tiles with several customizable elements.

2. Add the title to your timeline.

   Drag the title from the Titles & Templates panel to your timeline.

   The Title Adjustments workspace will automatically open.

3. Customize your title's text.

   Type your custom text over the placeholder text.

   With your text block selected, you can customize the text's attributes – including the font, size, style and alignment. You can also apply a style to your selected text by clicking on one of the Text Styles listed on the panel.

4. Customize your title's look and animation.

   The Title Adjustments workspace has tools for customizing the look and style of your text, adding and placing graphics and adding very cool text animations. You can also create rolling and crawling titles.

   When you want to return to the regular editing workspace, click on the timeline.

We'll show you pretty much everything you could want to know about using Premiere Elements’ tools for creating and customizing your titles and text in Chapter 12.
Export & Share your movie

When you’re happy with the movie you’ve created, you’ll find a number of options for publishing and sharing it, as we discuss in Chapter 21. We’ll show you how to output your movie to:

- **Devices.** The program will save your finished project as an AVI file, MPEG, QuickTime (MOV) file, AVCHD video, Windows Media (WMV) file or an audio file on your computer’s hard drive. Once the output is complete, you can then use these files any number of ways, including posting them online or using them as segments in a larger video project.

- **Disc.** Built into Premiere Elements are tools for creating menus and scene markers so that you can produce great-looking DVDs and BluRay discs.

- **Online.** The program comes complete with tools for loading your finished video to a social media site like YouTube, Vimeo or Facebook.

- **Audio or Image.** Premiere Elements also includes tools for outputting an audio file or a still photo from your movie.

And that’s basically it!

You gather your assets; you assemble them on your timeline; you add effects, transitions and titles; then you share your masterpiece with the world.

But between the lines of this simplicity are the countless variations that can elevate your movie project from the realm of a basic structure to something truly amazing!

And that, of course, is what this book is all about.

What’s new in version 15?

Adobe has added a number of interesting new features in its latest version Premiere Elements. It’s also done some fine-tuning of the interface to make it easier to locate effects and to focus on the audio aspects of your videos.

**The Toolbar**

The most noticeable change in Premiere Elements 15 is that the interface has been greatly simplified. All of the program’s effects and tools can now be accessed by clicking a button on the Toolbar that runs along the right side of the program, as illustrated above.

On this Toolbar, you’ll find one-click access to Adjustments, Tools, Effects and Effects Adjustments, Transitions, Titles & Text, Music Scores and Graphics.

**Video Collage creator**

A new tool that makes a fairly complicated effect very easy to produce, the Video Collage creator offers a library of grid patterns for creating a split screen effect of up to seven clips at once. Clips are added to the grid with a simple drag-and-drop, and the program even adds an introductory animation to each clip.

We show you how to use this very cool tool on page 90 of Chapter 8, Create an InstantMovie, Video Story or Video Collage.
Get to Know Premiere Elements 15

**Haze Removal effect**
A cool new effect for removing haze and fog from your videos has been added to its library of Video Effects.

Haze Removal has both automatic and manual settings. We discuss it in more detail on page 156 of Chapter 13, Add Audio and Video Effects.

**Music Remix tool**
A sophisticated new addition to version 15 is the Music Remix tool, a tool for creating musical clips at custom lengths from virtually any existing music.

The tool works automatically. All you need to do is trim your music clip to a custom length and the program will automatically remix it so that it has a natural beginning, middle and end. We show you how to use this cool tool on page 193 of Chapter 16, Mix Your Audio and Add Music.

**Face Recognition**
Sophisticated Face Recognition tools have also been added to the program.

Smart Trim identifies segments of your videos that include faces as part of its Auto Analysis.

And, as we show you on page 102, the Pan & Zoom tool will even automatically create motion paths that pan from face to face.

**Organizer improvements**
Adobe also continues to improve the file management and search tools in the Elements Organizer. Improvements in the Auto Analyzer mean that the program not only identifies and recognizes faces in your photos, but it also creates very intuitive Auto Tags based on the content and subject matter of your pictures!

Its upgraded Search feature gives you the ability to filter your media searches based on a variety of data. And the program includes even more integration with social media and cloud-based storage sites like OneDrive and Google Photos.

We explore all the amazing tools in this powerful little program in Chapters 17, 18 and 19 of this book.