



Use iMovie 11's animatics as a tool to aid your filming schedule

Animatics are the lynchpin that makes it so quick to make short trailer-style videos in iMovie 11. They can also help keep complex projects on track.

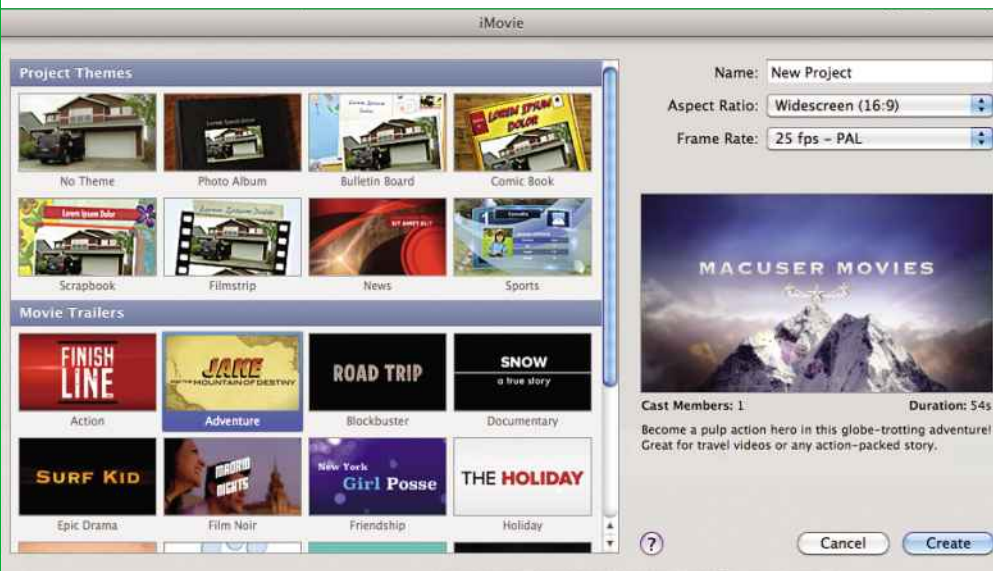
One of the most exciting features in iMovie 11 is the ability to put together a professional-looking movie trailer that contains your own footage and text, and to do so in a matter of minutes. Trailers are a new type of project in iMovie 11.

Choose File > New Project and you'll see a group of templates that are tailored to different genres. When working with trailer templates, you work in a guided way to build a short movie, as opposed to the free rein you are given in a normal timeline.

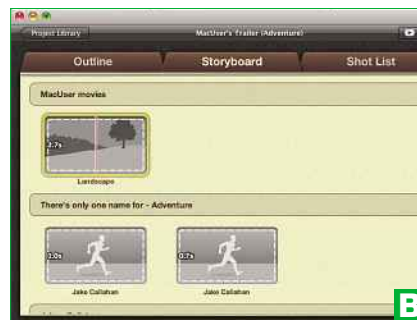


Alan Stonebridge spends his working life in front of Macs – and they've taken over his free time, too.

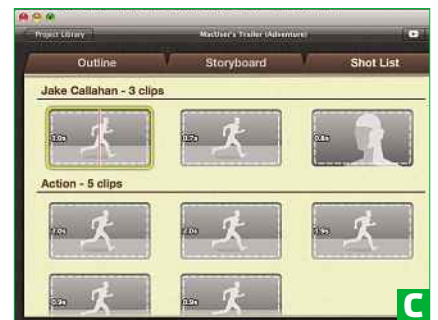
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Under Outline [A], you can customise the text that would appear in title and credits sequences. Roll over one of the groups of text fields to see a live preview in the Viewer pane.

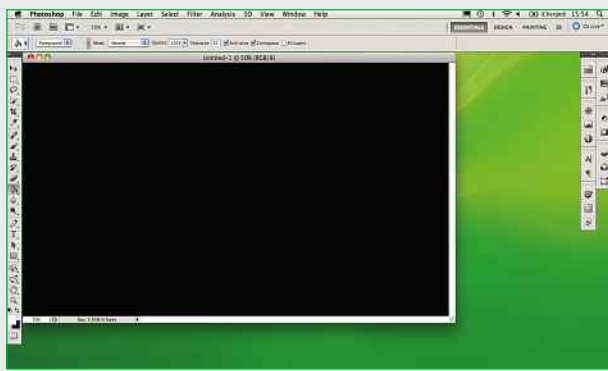


The Storyboard [B] is essentially the timeline of your trailer, listed in a highly organised manner. Shots are shown in an order and with a duration that builds the atmosphere for an effective trailer. Each desirable shot type that's required is indicated by an animatic. Clips in the Event Library can be dropped into these placeholders. iMovie trims them to a suitable length and uses face recognition to choose good footage.



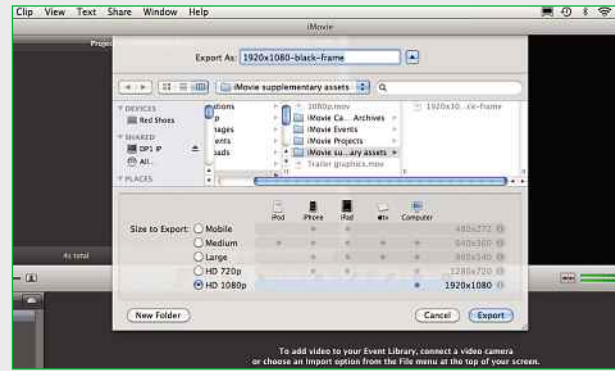
The Shot List [C] shows only the animatics, organised by actor and type, so you can instantly see what is missing from your trailer. You can print this or the other two tabs using File > Print. That's helpful if you aren't taking your Mac on the shoot. This workflow includes the fantastic graphics that Apple provides, which you might want to use in freeform projects. However, they are only available along with the workflow in trailers. This can be worked around so you can make use of animatics in longer storyboards, print them and even use the fantastic graphics that aren't directly accessible in the Title Browser for regular projects.

USE TRAILER GRAPHICS SEQUENCES IN OTHER MOVIES



1. Create a solid frame to fade through

To use the graphics seen in Apple's trailer templates in your other projects, start by creating a document in Photoshop or similar, with dimensions of 1920 x 1080 pixels. Fill it with black and save it somewhere as a PNG file.



2. Turn the still frame into a movie

In iMovie, create a regular project, call it Fade Through Black, and drag the PNG file from the Finder into the project's timeline. It will default to five seconds long, enough to fill a trailer's brief animatics. Choose Share > Export Movie, choose a suitable resolution to match the main movie you want to edit, then save the file in your Movies folder.



3. Import the movie

Choose File > Import > Movies, import the file and it will appear in the Events Library. We'll use this to replace the animatics with a solid colour, otherwise exporting the project treats the animatics as real clips and you'll get a messy fade.



4. Fill animatics with a solid colour

Create a trailer project and click its Storyboard tab. Select the first animatic, click the black clip in the Events Library to place it, press Tab to skip to the next animatic and repeat until all are filled. iMovie trims the clip to fit each animatic's length. This technique allows you to fade through a colour into your video clips.



5. Export the trailer

Switch to the Outline tab and customise the text, then choose Share > Export Movie and use the same dimensions you'll use for your main project. Exporting may take a while.



6. Import the graphics for reuse

When it's done, choose File > Import > Movies to bring the file into the Event Library. Now the trailer graphics can be re-used in other projects, though you'll have to lift out the bits you need from the single clip. Once dropped into a project timeline, the Precision Editor will help you trim the ends more carefully.



USE ANIMATICS TO STORYBOARD FULL-LENGTH MOVIES



7. Create a storyboard project

You can use animatics to storyboard longer movies, too. Create a new project using one of the non-trailer templates. In the centre toolbar, click the far-right button to reveal a pane for browsing maps and backgrounds. In iMovie 11, you'll also find the animatics there by scrolling to the bottom of the pane.



8. Add animatics

In the same way you can print the storyboard for a trailer (File > Print), you can print regular project timelines to give you a visual overview of what you are aiming for. And since you are only placing animatics here, you end up with a storyboard. To place an animatic, just drag it from the browser into the timeline as you would any other video clip.



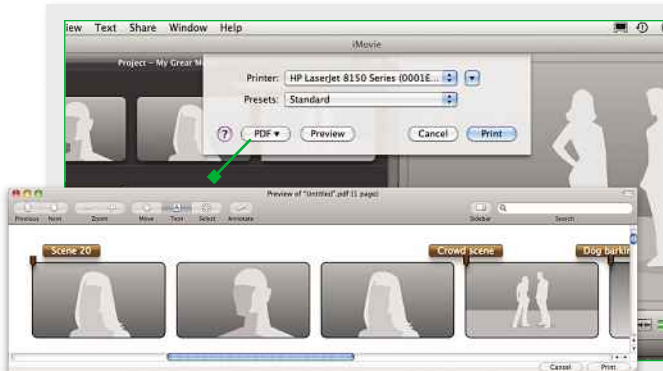
9. Animatics durations

Animatics placed in the timeline are treated like any other video clip. Since you're storyboarding, don't change the duration of animatics from the default of four seconds or your printed storyboard might stretch to many pages (as shown). Similarly, applying Ken Burns-style effects might trim the useful bit of text that tells you what type of shot or angle is required.



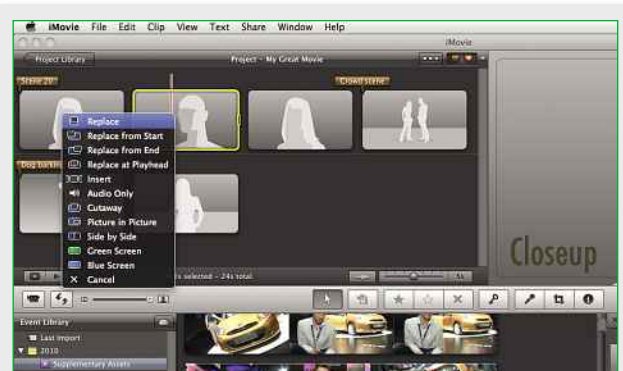
10. Add production notes

You might want to add short notes to another document to the storyboard. Do it with markers. Open iMovie's preferences and turn on the Show Advanced Tools option. Close the dialog and look at the top right of the timeline. Drag the brown marker to the timeline to add a comment marker. You can add more than one. Double-click a marker's head to change its text, but keep it short.



11 Print your storyboard

Now you have laid out a storyboard in your timeline, you can print just as you can from other Mac applications. Choose File > Print Project to put it onto paper or turn it into a PDF. If the preview shows the Events Library instead of your project, click a clip in the project timeline and attempt to print again.



12 Editing your footage

Organise imported footage in events according to scenes and you'll be able to use the animatics to pick out the right type of footage from the Events Library. With a clip selected, drag it onto an animatic and choose Replace from the pop-up menu. iMovie replaces the animatic with whatever length of clip you selected.