Introduction to
Windows Movie Maker 2

1. Introduction

This tutorial is designed as a basic introduction to Microsoft's digital video editing program, Windows Movie Maker 2.1 (MM2) – for Windows XP Operating System. The goal of this tutorial is to provide learners with a guide for completing projects in MM2. **Other Movie Maker versions:** MM 2.6 was developed for Windows Vista and will work on the Windows 7 Operating System. Windows Movie Maker Live is the newest version of this program, for Windows 7.

Tutorial Contents

2. Overview

The process of creating a movie or a slide show in MM2 consists of importing media such as video, pictures, audio, or music into the program and then manipulating these to create a specific product. The interface is designed to provide visual access and management of imported media in the collection pane. Items from this area can be dragged into either a storyboard or timeline window and then edited. From the monitor window, changes or additions made to the project can be sampled through playback. Once the desired effect has been achieved the combined project can be saved to the computer, to a CD, or sent to e-mail, to the web, or a DV (digital video) camera.

At the right *(Figure 1)* is an image of the Windows Movie Maker interface—components of this interface are detailed in the following sections.
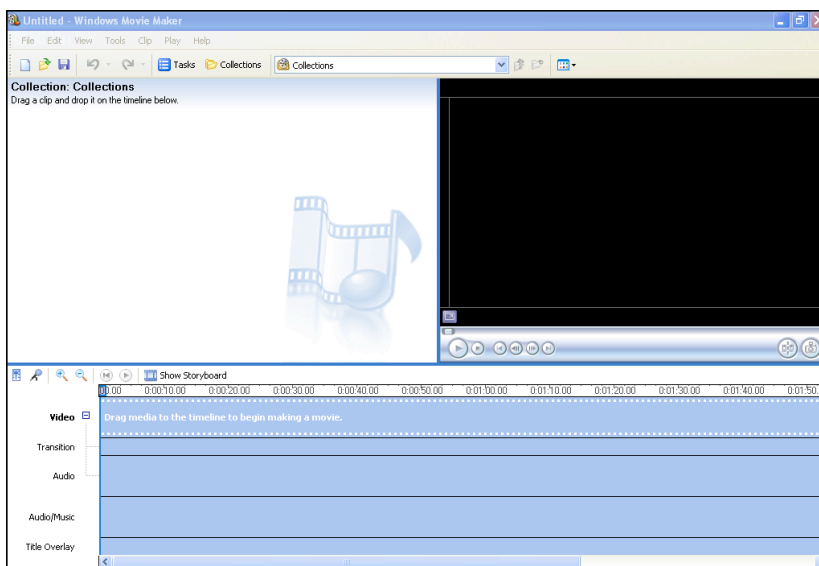

Figure 1

3. Interface

Menus

The menus in MM2 give access to important program functions. Below *(Figure 2)* is a graphic of the main menu header as well as six dropdown menus for file, edit, view, tools, clip, and play. In MM2, access to most program functions can be reached through more than one location.
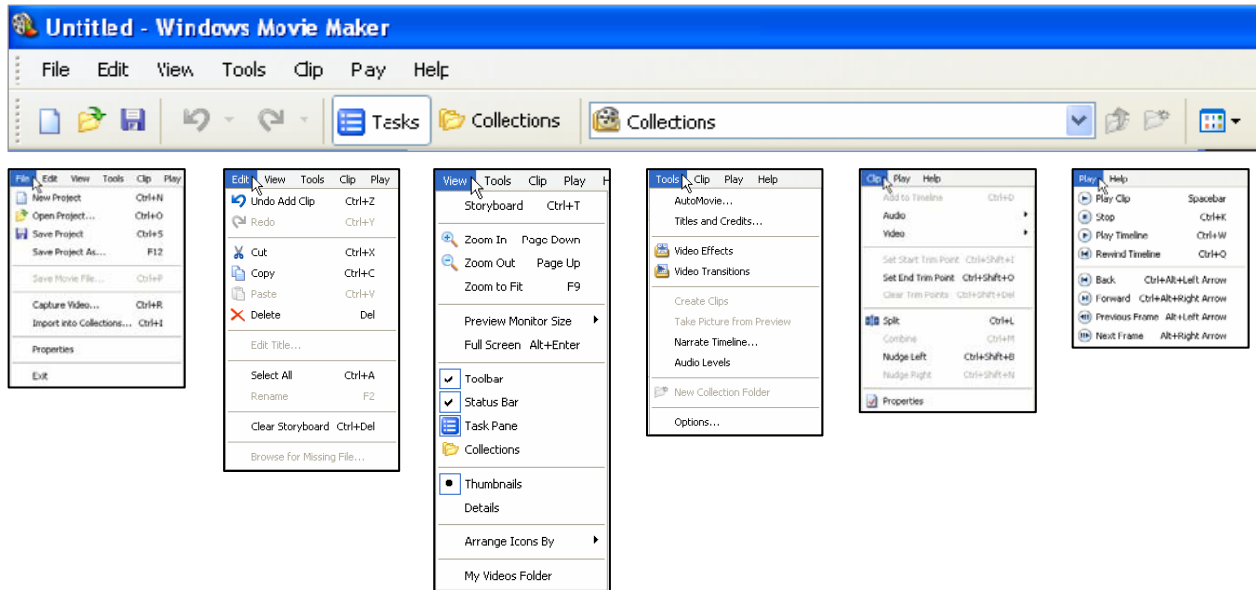

Figure 2

Timeline/Storyboard

In MM2, the storyboard and timeline windows are utilized for controlling placement of media. From the timeline window *(Figure 3)*, all of a project's elements can be viewed in their respective tracks along a linear (from left to right) layout. By selecting the plus (+) or minus (-) magnifying glass at the upper left of the timeline window, a project can be viewed from its extended length in minute increments or narrowly focused down to tenths of a second. The project can be played by clicking on play/stop buttons. To narrate a timeline: click on the microphone icon and to adjust volume, click on the volume control. To toggle between views *(Figure 4)*, click "Show Storyboard" or "Show Timeline."
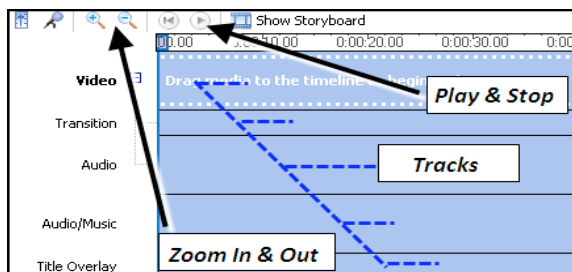
Timeline View   **Storyboard View**

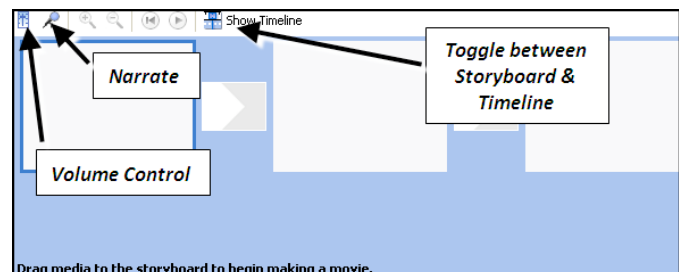*Figure 3*   *Figure 4*

Movie Tasks, Collections, and Monitor

Below *(Figure 5)* is a graphic of MM2's interface including the Movie Tasks pane, the Collection pane, and Monitor window.

The Movie Tasks pane provides an access point to capture video, edit your movie, and save your movie, as well as providing movie-making tips. The links in the pane are fairly intuitive and follow, from top to bottom, the basic outline of the movie making process from start to finish. **The Collections pane** provides a thumbnail view of videos, pictures, audio, and music that have been imported into MM2 for use on a movie project. From the Collections pane you select and drag clips into the storyboard or timeline to create a movie. As will be discussed later, clips can be manipulated to create a desired effect. You can test or preview your movie in **The Monitor window**. From the function buttons at the bottom of the window (also along the top of the timeline/storyboard) you can play, stop, forward, or rewind your movie (or manually use the seek slider), split a clip or capture a still image from video *(Figure 6)*.

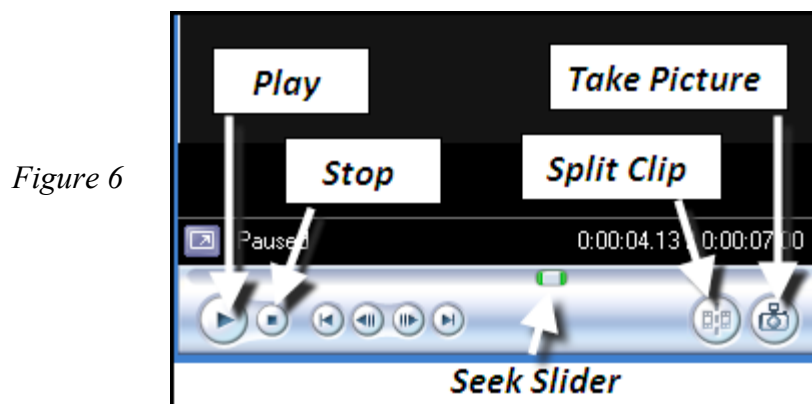| Movie Tasks	Collections	Monitor

Figure 5

Figure 6

4. Set-up

Before beginning any project, it is important to establish and set a number of program options, as well as save your project.

Step 1: Select the *Tools* menu from the menu bar at the top of the interface.

Step 2: Select *Options* at the bottom of the menu.

Step 3: From the *Options* window, select the *General* tab *(Figure 7)* and modify options accordingly. In the *Default author* box you may enter your name. You may also wish to designate the location where the computer stores a backup of your project. In the *Save AutoRecover* box you are given the option of having your project backed-up anywhere between one and sixty minutes. The program defaults to ten minutes; you may change this according to preference. (Note: This video editing program can consume a lot of computer processing power and is susceptible to "crashing." It is always important to manually save your project often and work with the smallest video file sizes whenever possible.)

Step 4: From the *Options* window, select the *Advanced* tab *(Figure 3)* and modify options accordingly. The picture duration and transition duration settings specify how long (in seconds) a picture or transition will last. This setting will be applied to the entire project. The editing section of this tutorial will show how to manipulate these settings on an individual frame-by-frame basis.

Step 5: From the same *advanced* tab, the video properties settings default to NTSC format and a either a 4:3 or 16:9 aspect ratio – depending on the format of the video clips you are importing.

Step 6: Now, before beginning, select *file* in the upper left-hand corner of the MM2 interface and select *save project*. The default location for saved movies is to MyVideos folder. Simply give your project a *file name*, and then select save.
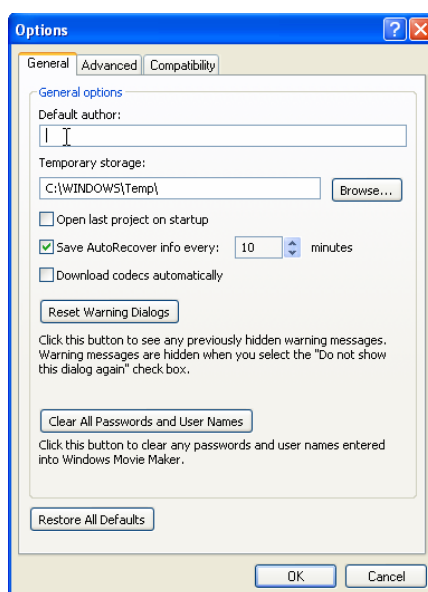(Note: If you are unsure about what settings to select, simply use the MM2 default settings.)
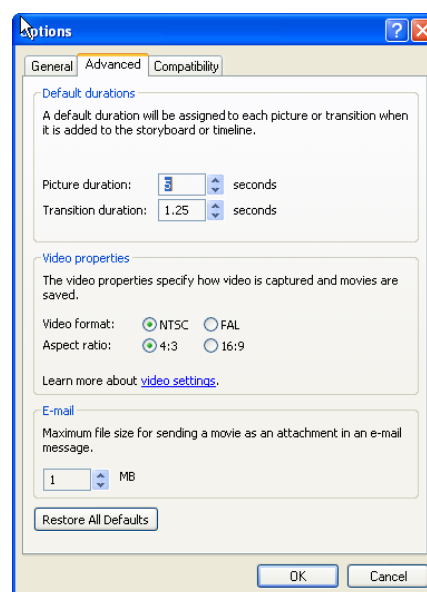

Figure 7   *Figure 8*

5. Import

To begin building your movie or slideshow project you must first import your video, picture, audio or music files into MM2. To do so, follow the steps below:

To Import Video, Photographs, Audio or Music

Step 1: From the *Movie Tasks* pane, under *Capture Video*, select the appropriate link to import video, photographs, audio or music into MM2 *(Figure 9)*. For this tutorial movie, we saved our files in a folder on the desktop "MM2ContentVideo" *(Figure 10)* — and imported them from "Videos" folder inside *(Figure 11)*. Files may be saved on your computer's hard drive, external drive or on disk. It is recommended that you establish a consistent storage location to avoid file association problems when you re-open a video project at a later time.

Step 2: From the *Import File* window *(Figure 11),* choose the desired directory and files, click *Import*, and the files will be inserted into your MM2 *Collections* pane.
MM2 will allow you to import the following file formats:
- Audio files: .aif, .aifc, .aiff .asf, .au, .mp2, .mp3, .mpa, .snd, .wav and .wma
- Picture files: .bmp, .dib, .emf, .gif, .jfif, .jpe, .jpeg, .jpg, .png, .tif, .tiff, and .wmf
-Video files: .asf, .avi, .m1v, .mp2, .mp2v, .mpe, .mpeg, .mpg, .mpv2, .wm, and .wmv
(Note: newer versions of Movie Maker support additional file formats.)

Step 3: You are now ready to begin the creation of your project.
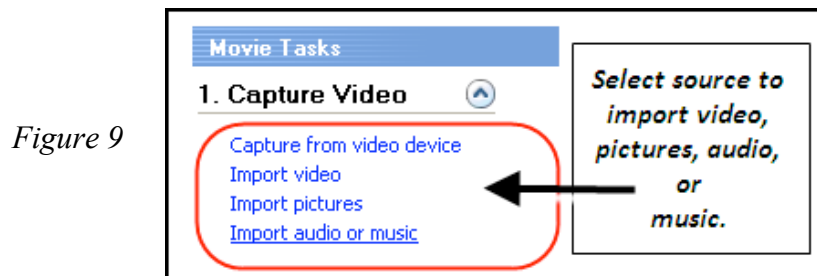
Figure 9

For today's session: All content is located in the "MM2VideoContent" folder on your desktop.
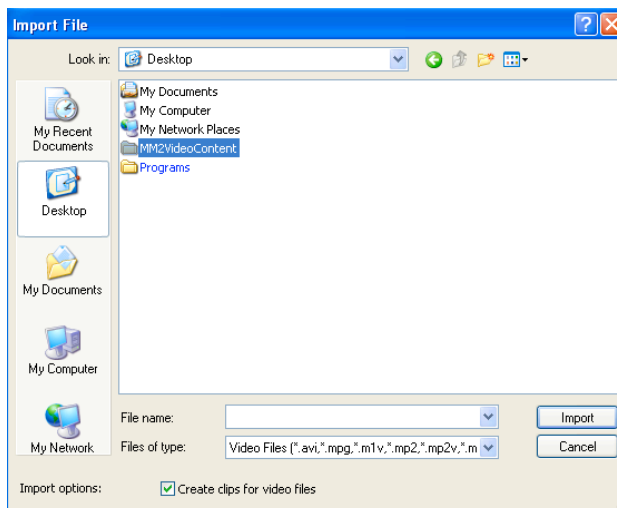

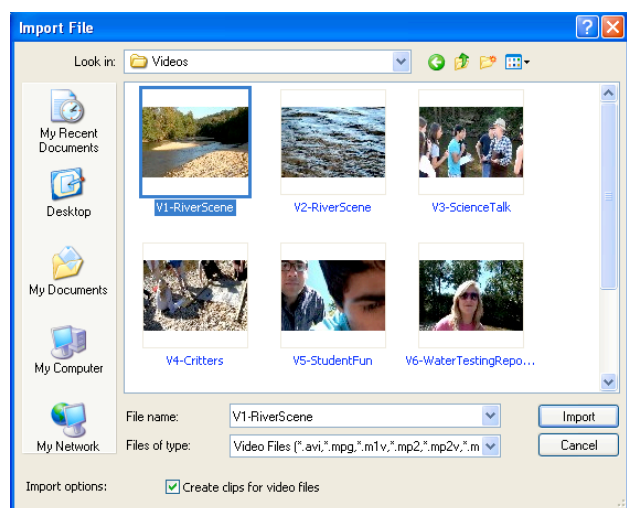<div align="center">

Figure 10   *Figure 11*

</div>

To Capture from Video Device

Step 1: To capture video from an external device (DV camera for example) you must first attach the device to the computer.

Step 2: From the *Movie Tasks* pane, select *Capture from video device*, then select *Capture from video device*.

Step 3: On the *Capture Video File* window, enter the name for your captured video, select the place to save your captured video (My Videos folder for example), and click *Next*.

Step 4: From the *Video Settings* window, select *Digital device format (DV-AVI)* for uncompressed capture (or choose *Best quality* for compressed capture) and then click *Next*.

(Note: Uncompressed capture will provide the highest quality capture of your video, but will also consume a large amount of file space.)

By selecting different file options, the *Video Settings* window will display the *setting details* and the *video file size* for that option. You must take into consideration the quality of video you want and file storage space available to you.

Step 5: From the *Capture Video* window you can choose to have MM2 turn your movie into video clips, mute speakers, or set a capture time limit. If you wish, you may also create clips after the video has been captured by right clicking on the video icon in the Collections pane and selecting *Create clips*, MM2 will randomly separate the video into segments.

Step 6: At the *Capture Video* window, click *Start Capture* and press play on your device and the program will begin capturing your video.

Step 7: When completed select *Stop capture* and *Finish*. Your captured video will be automatically inserted into the *Collections* pane.

6. Edit

Once you have imported video, music, or photographs into your collections, these items can be dragged from the Collections pane into either the storyboard or timeline to begin the creation of your project. Items can be adjusted or moved anywhere in the timeline or storyboard accordingly. Once you have positioned these elements where you want them, you can use MM2's edit functions to manipulate your project.

Split

One of the most useful functions in MM2 is the option of splitting a clip, either to adjust for effects or to remove undesirable elements. In the sample movie, splitting segments of clips was necessary to create a dynamic video of short length.

To split a clip, follow these steps:

Step 1: First, in the timeline window, move the blue vertical time marker over the desired location to split *(Figure 12)*.
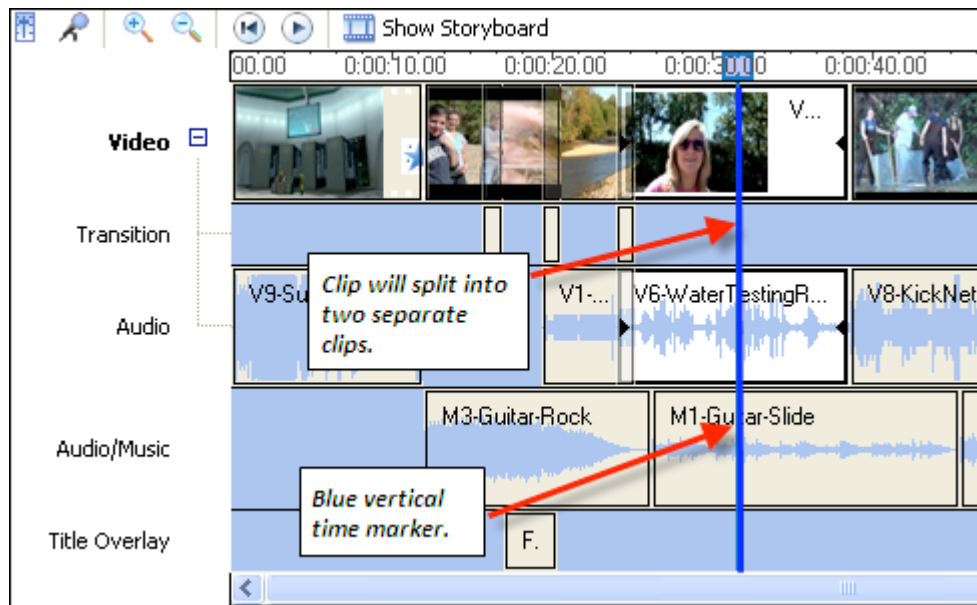

Figure 12

Step 2: From the *Clip* menu at the top of the interface, select *Split* and the clip will become two separate pieces. You can also split a clip in the *Monitor* by selecting the *Split* icon at the lower right of the window or on the keyboard with Ctrl + L.

Step 3: If you desire to delete one of the new portions, click on that portion (highlighted in white) and either right click and select *delete* or press *delete* on the keyboard. If you change your mind, you can undo/redo the action prior to any further changes *(see Figure 15)*.

Trim

The *Trim* function serves as a manual length editing tool. In the timeline window, you can manipulate the length (duration) of images, videos, audio or music. Trim works to primarily reduce the length of videos, audio or music, but for images, trim can also be used to extend or increase duration. Either end of a clip can be trimmed.
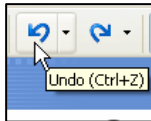
Step 1: Toggle to the Timeline window.

Step 2: Select the image, video, audio or music clip that you desire to manipulate.

Step 3: Place the arrowhead over the right end of the clip and a double red arrowhead will appear (*Figure 13*). Click and drag to trim the clip *(Figure 14).*
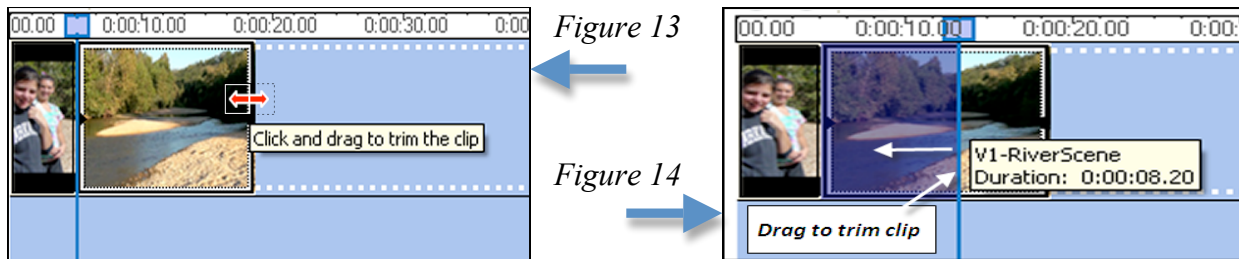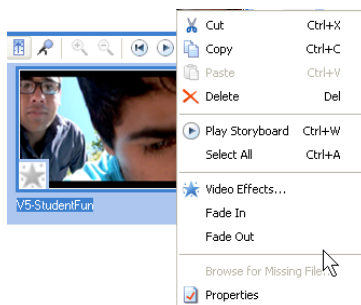

Figure 13

Figure 14

Undo/Redo and Delete

MM2 gives you the option of undoing and deleting actions. By clicking on the *Undo* or *Redo* icons at the top of the interface *(Figure 15)* you may remove or redo an action. By selecting the arrow at the right of the icon you may undo or redo a desired amount of actions.

Figure 15

By right clicking on a transition or clip you can *Cut*, *Copy*, or *Delete* specific items (*Figure 16).* In the timeline window, you can also select a set of clips or other elements to delete by placing the arrowhead at a specific point and, while holding down the left mouse key, draw a selection around your clips and then press delete.

Figure 16

Audio Adjustment

After inserting audio, MM2 provides a number of options for adjusting transitions between music clips, adjusting the volume of a clip, and adjusting the audio strength between video and music.

Step 1: Between the junction of two music clips, select the right clip, drag clip left over preceding clip and release. This will create a transition between the two clips, and as one clip ends the following clip will fade in *(Figure 17)*.
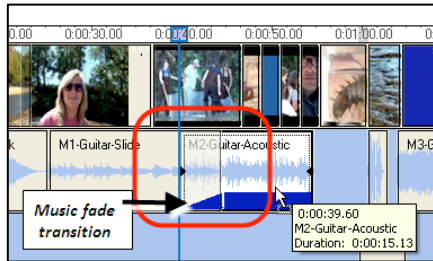

Figure 17

Step 2: To adjust audio levels, select the desired clip.

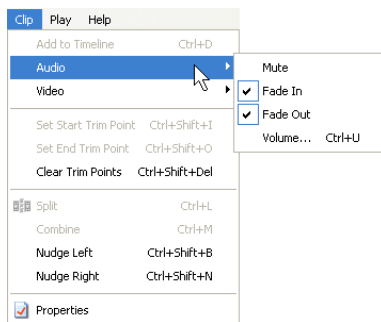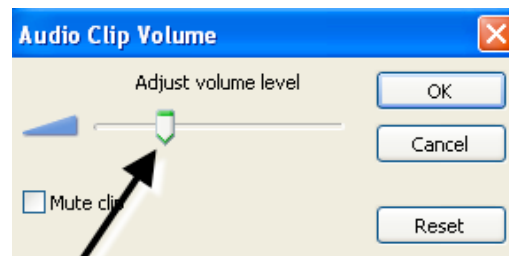**Step 3:** Select *Clip* menu *(Figure 18),* then *Audio*, and last, *Volume*.

Figure 18   *Figure 19*

Step 4: In the Audio Clip Volume window *(Figure 19),* move the slider left or right to increase, decrease or mute the volume, then select OK.

Step 5: At the top left of the timeline or storyboard windows, select the volume icon and the Audio Levels window will appear *(Figure 20)*.


Figure 20

Step 6: In the Audio Levels window, move the slider left or right to decrease or increase volume between video and music, then select OK.

Note: By splitting a clip you can adjust audio or music volume within a desired range. If you desire, you may also mute the audio from a video clip and allow only music to play.

Effects

In MM2 you can add various effects to a project to enhance the quality of your movie. Some of MM2's effects include; blurring, increasing or decreasing brightness, speeding up or slowing down frames, rotating images or video clips, fading in or fading out, and more.
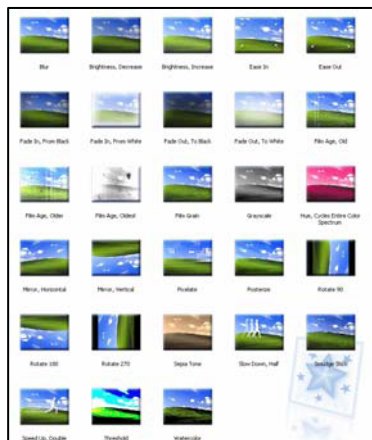
Effects can be added to a project both in the storyboard and timeline windows. In the timeline, effects can either be dragged into a specific track or by right clicking on a desired image, selecting *video effects*, and then adding or removing desired effects.

Figure 21

To add basic effects follow these steps:

Step 1: From the *Movie Tasks* pane, under *Edit Movie*, select *View video effects (Figure 21)*.

Step 2: Choose the desired effect, select and drag into the storyboard or timeline over the desired clips. On individual clips in the timeline you can also right click on a specific clip and add or remove effects. MM2 will allow you to add up to six different (or the same) effects on each clip. (Note: It takes time, especially when affects are applied to longer video clips, for MM2 to process your changes. Too many elements added in too short a period of time may cause the program to freeze up or crash.)
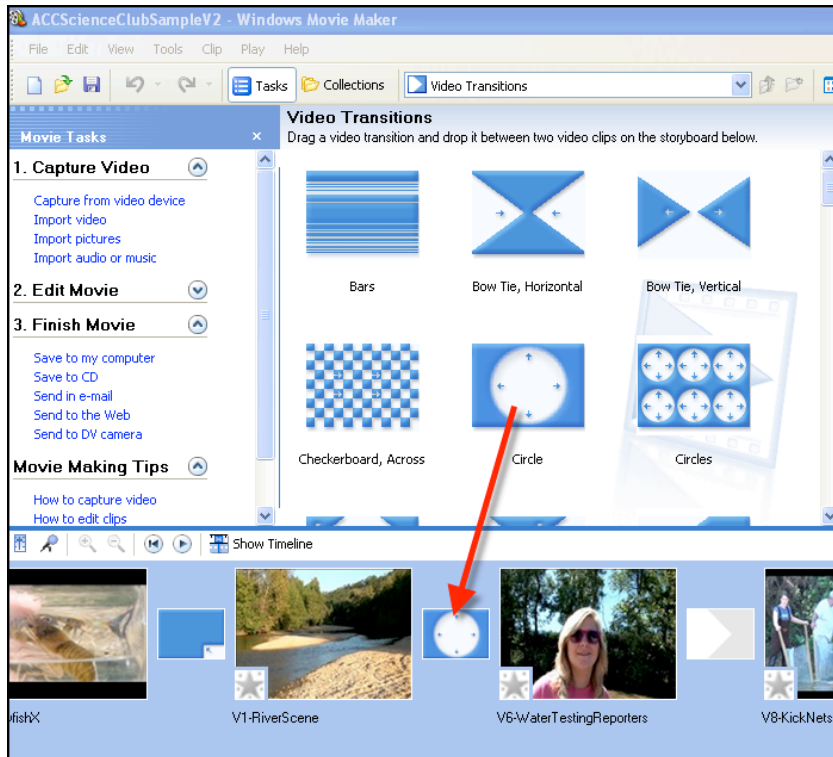
Step 3: After inserting an effect, sample the change in the preview screen to determine if the effect works in the way you desire.

Transitions

MM2 offers sixty different video transitions. Transitions provide a unique way to smooth the exchange between clips in your project. To insert a transition follow these steps:

Step 1: From the *Movie Tasks* pane, under *Edit Movie*, select *View video transitions (Figure 22.)*

Step 2: Choose the desired transition, select and drag into storyboard between desired clips.

Step 3: After inserting transition, sample the change in the Monitor window to determine if it works as desired.

Step 4: To change a transition you can either *Undo* the action *(Figure 15),* right click on the transition in the Storyboard and select *delete*, or simply drag a new transition over the old transition.

Figure 22

In the sample movie *(Figure 23),* the Fade transition and others were used to smoothly move from clip to clip. By adding the Fade transition you are also overlaying small segments of the beginning and end of adjoining clips. (Note: to allow for time to add a fade or other transition and not lose a key part of your clip, be sure not to trim clips too short.)
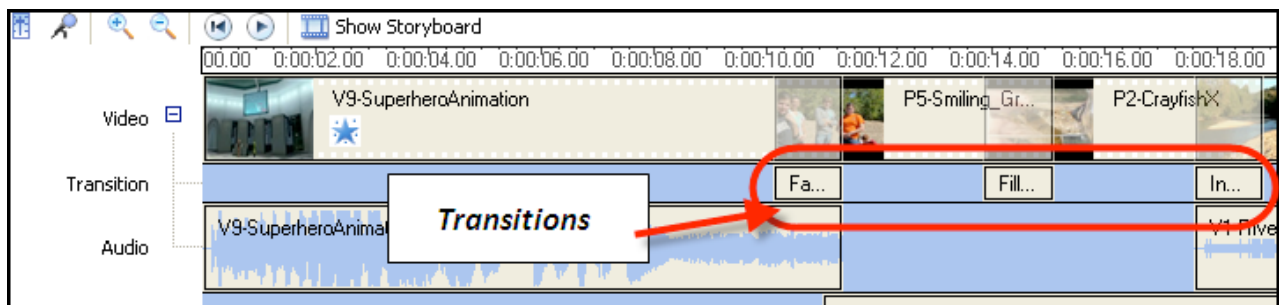

Figure 23

Titles & credits

To add titles or credits to your movie or slide show, MM2 provides a number of font and animation options. In the sample movie scrolling credits were used at the end.

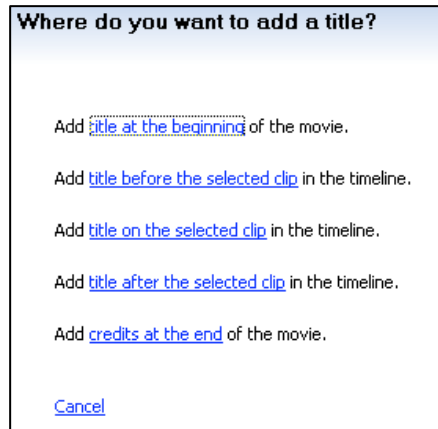**Step 1:** From the *Movie Tasks* pane, under *Edit Movie*, select *Make titles or credits*.

Figure 24

Step 2: Determine where you want to add a title and select that option *(Figure 24)*.

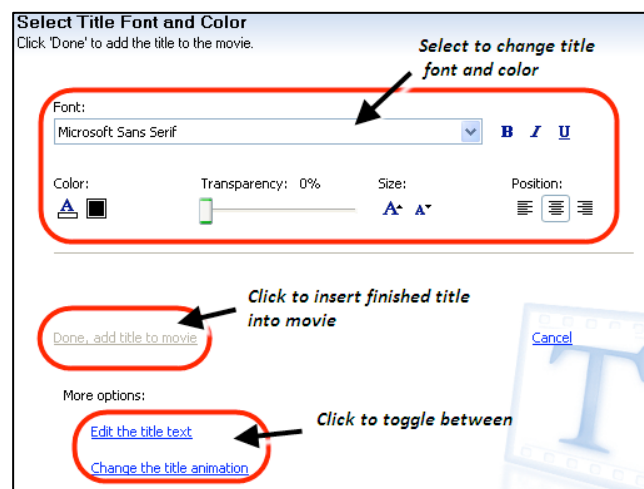**Step 3:** In the text box that appears, enter your desired text.

Step 4: At the bottom of the text box, MM2 provides options for changing text font style, size, and color (*Figure 25.)* Text animation can also be manipulated through clicking on *Change the title animation* and selecting the desired options.
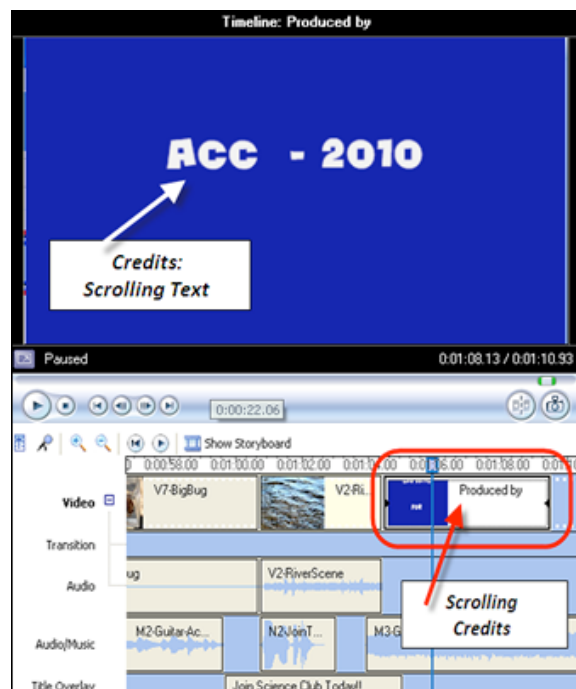
Figure 25

Figure 26

Step 5: As text additions are made, a sample of the changes can be seen in the Monitor. When completed, select *Done, add title to movie* and the text will be added to the timeline *(Figure 26.)*

Narration

To add an additional element to your movie or slide show, MM2 provides for recording and inserting audio into the timeline. The process of narration can be accomplished by:

Step 1: Built-in computer microphone or external mic can be used for recording narration.

Step 2: To narrate, either select the *Tools* menu and then *Narrate Timeline* or select the microphone icon at the top left of the timeline *(Figure 27.)*
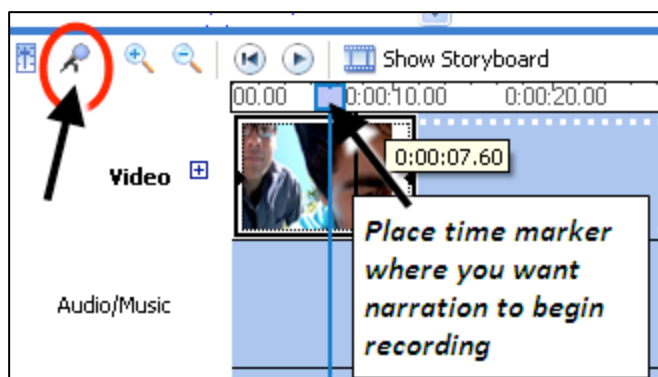
Figure 27

Step 3: From the *Narrate Timeline* window (*Figure 28),* select *Start Narration* and the program will begin recording. To stop the process, simply select *Stop Narration*. (Test the input level and adjust prior to recording.)
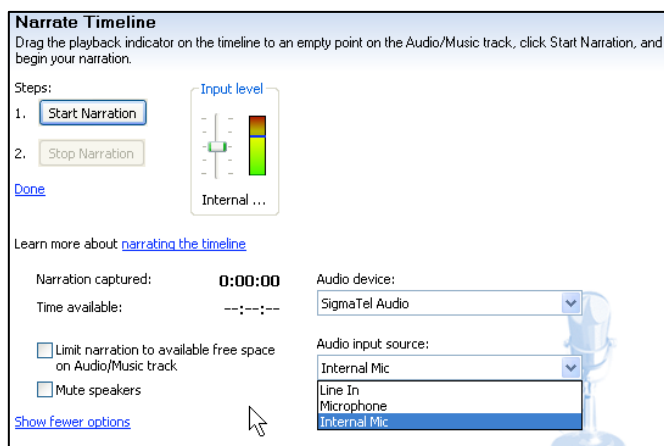

Step 4: Once stopped, you will be directed to save your narration. Give your narration a name and select *save*.

Step 5: On the *Narrate Timeline* window, select *Done* and the audio will be inserted into the Audio/Music track on the timeline. As with video, title, and photograph elements, your newly created narration can also be moved or edited within the timeline.

Figure 28

Step 6: Click *Play* on the Monitor (or top left of the timeline/storyboard) and sample your narration.

Troubleshooting: If your narration is not recording, check the settings on your computer – My Computer > Control Panel > Sounds and Audio Devices > Audio > Sound Recording > Volume (Recording Control) – make sure that "internal mic" is selected and volume adjusted correctly, if you are using the built-in computer microphone. If you are recording properly but can't hear the playback, check your computer's volume control on the task bar.

7. Save

Once you have completed your project, depending on what type of finished movie you select (save to my computer, save to external drive or CD, etc), there are a number of options to choose from. From this point some consideration must be given to the file size of your project, as well as your intended media application. CDs typically hold up to 700 megabytes of data, while standard DVDs can hold 4.7 gigabytes (double layer DVDs up to 8.5 gigabytes). On average, one hour worth of imported video can consume 12 gigabytes (uncompressed) of storage space.

Windows Movie Maker has a list of twenty different settings for saving your movie. Each setting has some combination of different bit rates, display sizes, and frames per second. If you are planning on sending your project in email or to the web, consider first the size of the project and the limitations of transmitting and opening large files. (Note: preferred web-based format .mp4 is not available as an option in MM2.)
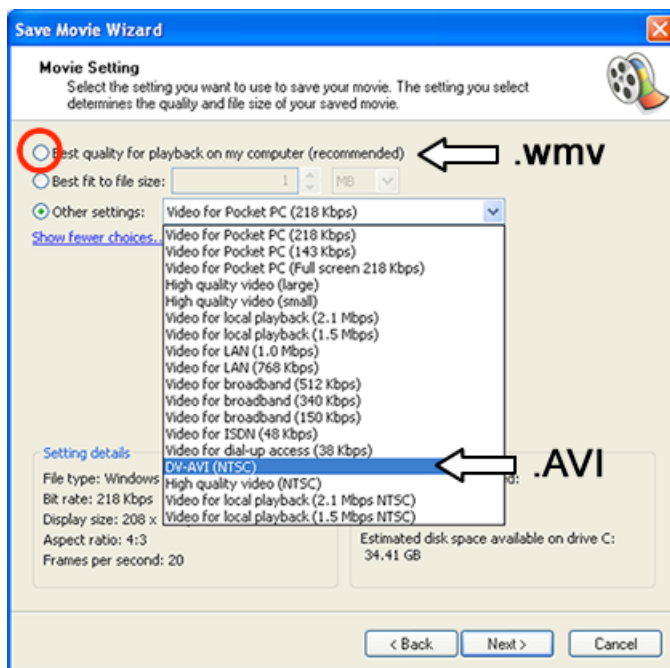

Step 1: From the *Movie Tasks* pane, under *Finish Movie*, select *Save to my computer*.

Step 2: In the *Save Movie File* window, enter a name for your completed movie, and select the destination that the file will be saved.

Step 3: At the bottom right of the window select *Next*.

Step 4: In the *Movie Settings* window, select S*how more options* and then *Other settings*. (Figure 29)

Step 5: From the drop down menu you are given the option of selecting one of the settings.

Figure 29

Note: all of the settings except one will compress the file size to varying degrees as indicated at the bottom left of the *Movie Settings* window. All of the settings options, except one, will save your project as a proprietary Windows Media Version (.wmv) file. *(See Figure 29)* If you choose, you may select the non-proprietary AVI (NTSC) file. This option will save your project as an uncompressed file, 720 x 480 pixels, 30 Mbps bit-rate, at 30 fps (frames per second). If you are unsure which option to select, under *Settings Details* at the bottom right of the *Movie Setting* window, you can review the estimated file size of your project. By selecting different file options, the file size will change accordingly. Newer versions of Windows Movie Maker have different file format saving options, beyond MM2's (.avi) or (.wmv) formats.

Note: Some DVD burning software will not support the (.wmv) file format. In such a case, you must save your project as an AVI file.

Step 6: Once you have made your selection, select *Next* and the file will be saved.

Step 7: Once you have saved your project as a finished movie, you will not be able to make changes. You can, however, reopen your Windows Movie Maker project file, make additions or changes and then save the project again as a finished movie. This is where another reminder on establishing a consistent file storage system is important. A Movie Maker project file (.MSWMM) is an association of all of the original files imported into your movie and their locations. If you move or change the location of any of your files after saving your project, you will find missing elements (frames with a red "x") in your project when you reopen it for further editing.