How to create a storyboard in the Project panel

During pre-production planning, film directors and animators frequently use *storyboards*—walls of photos and sketches to visualize story flow and camera angles.

Storyboards also help in post-production. When you're using Adobe Premiere Pro CS4, you can arrange video clip thumbnails in storyboard fashion in the Project panel to get a feel for how your finished video will work.

This approach can come in handy by revealing gaps in your story—places that need fleshing out with more video or graphics. In addition, when confronting dozens of clips, using the Project panel as a storyboard can help you see the big picture.

After creating your storyboard, you can place the entire ordered collection of clips or a subset in a sequence in the Timeline panel.

To complete this activity you need about 10 video clips, preferably a sequence with some action.

Setting up a storyboard bin

1. Start Adobe Premiere Pro and start a new project.
2. Select File > Import and import all the video clips you'll need for this activity.
3. In the Project panel, click the New Bin button to create a new bin and name that bin Storyboard (**Figure 1**).
4. In the Project panel, select all the video clips.
5. Select Edit > Copy to copy the entire collection of clips.
6. Click the Storyboard bin to select it and select Edit > Paste to place all the clips in that bin.

   All the video files appear in the Storyboard bin. They remain in the main Project panel as well.

   Note: You copied and pasted the video files into the Storyboard bin because you might choose not to use some in your final storyboard. Even if you delete files from the Storyboard bin, they will remain in the Project panel.
7. Double-click the folder icon for the Storyboard bin.

   The Storyboard bin appears in a separate floating panel

   Note: If you hold down Ctrl (Windows) or Command (Mac OS) while double-clicking, the bin opens in place in the Project panel.

   Note: If first-frame thumbnails of the clips do not appear, open the panel menu in the upper-right corner, click Thumbnails, and deselect Off **(Figure 2)**.

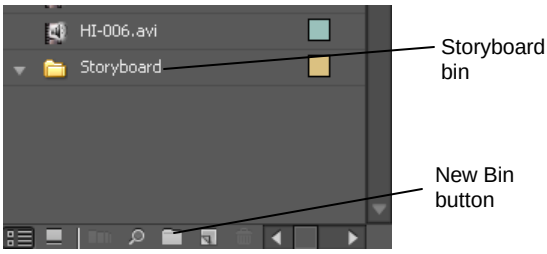

Figure 1 Project panel with a new bin

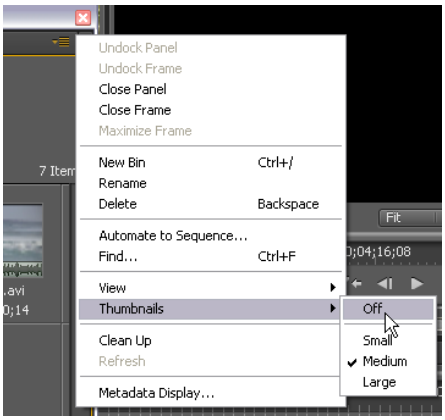

Figure 2 Panel pop-up menu with thumbnails set to display

8. Click the Icon View button to switch from the default list view to a grid layout (**Figure 3**).

9. Adjust the size of the Storyboard bin to display the icons for all your clips.

Note: When you expand the view, the thumbnail images do not move to fill the empty placeholders in the grid. Use the Clean Up menu command in the next step to remedy that.

10. Select Clean Up in the Storyboard panel menu.

Your Storyboard should look something like **Figure 3**.

Note: By default, the thumbnails are small. You can make them larger by selecting Thumbnails > Medium (as shown in **Figure 3**) or Large in the Storyboard panel menu.

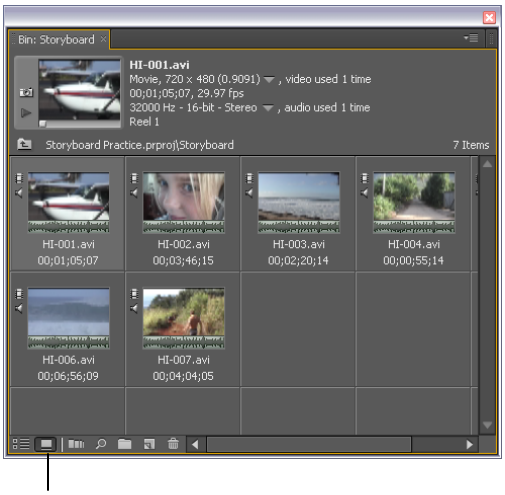

Figure 3 Storyboard bin in a floating panel

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Arranging the storyboard

The purpose now is to arrange the thumbnails in a logical order, keeping in mind that you can trim clips later in a sequence to make the edits from one clip to the next work more smoothly.

You can view each clip in the Project panel thumbnail viewer, remove clips that do not work in your sequence, and then arrange the remaining clips in their playback order.

1. To view a clip, select it and then click the Play button next to the thumbnail viewer at the top of the Storyboard bin (**Figure 4**).
2. To delete an unwanted clip, select it and then press Delete.

   To delete more than one clip at a time, hold down Ctrl (Windows) or Command (Mac OS) as you select the clips.
3. Drag the remaining clips into the order that works for your project.

   A vertical black line indicates placement (**Figure 5**).

   Note: Notice that removing or dragging clips leaves empty placeholders, newly added clips generally run past the right side of the panel, and resizing the panel does not move the clips to accommodate the change. To remedy these issues as they arise, open the Storyboard panel menu and select Clean Up.

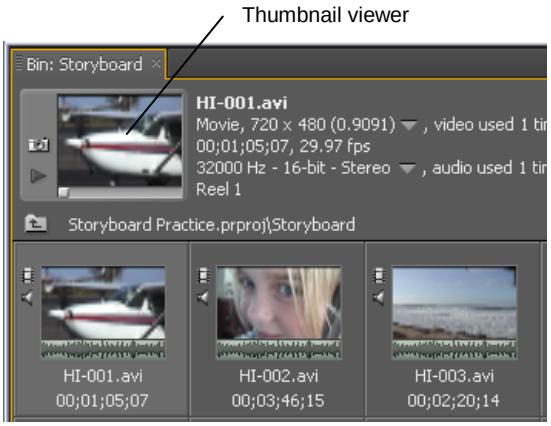

Figure 4 Storyboard bin thumbnail viewer

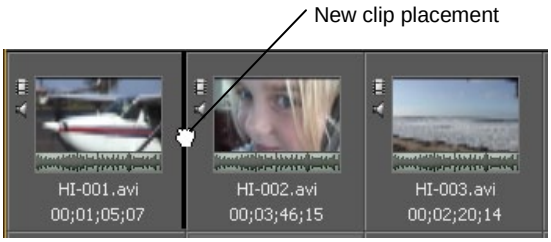

Figure 5 Vertical black clip-placement line

Automating your storyboard to a sequence

Now you need to move your storyboard clips to a sequence in the Timeline panel, placing them contiguously, in sequential order. Adobe Premiere Pro calls this *automating to a sequence*. Here's how you do it.

1. Your storyboard should still be open with the clips sorted. In the Timeline panel, make sure the current-time indicator (CTI) is at zero (**Figure 6**).

If not, drag the CTI to the beginning of the sequence.

Note: Automating to a sequence places the clips in sequence in the Timeline panel, starting at the CTI location. You want this project to start at the beginning of the sequence.

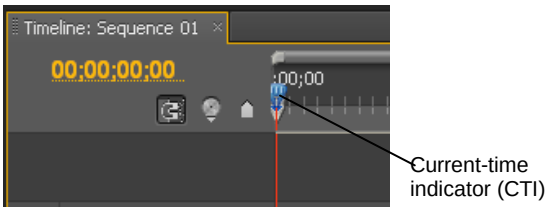

Figure 6 Timeline panel

2. Select Edit > Select All to select all clips in the Storyboard bin.

3. Click the Automate To Sequence button at the bottom of the Project panel (**Figure 7**).

Note: You can also open the bin panel menu and select Automate To Sequence.

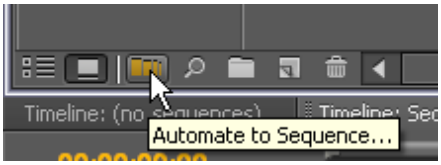

Figure 7 Automate To Sequence button

4. In the Automate To Sequence dialog box (**Figure 8**), select the following options:

- Ordering: Sort Order
- Placement: Sequentially
- Method: Insert Edit

Note: If you were adding these clips within a project that already had clips in the sequence, Overlay Edit would cover the clips in the sequence and Insert Edit would slide those clips over to the right to make room for the storyboard clips.

- Clip Overlap: 0 Frames
- Transitions: Deselect both options
- Ignore Options: Make sure both boxes are deselected

5. Click OK.

Your clips appear in order in the Timeline panel**.**

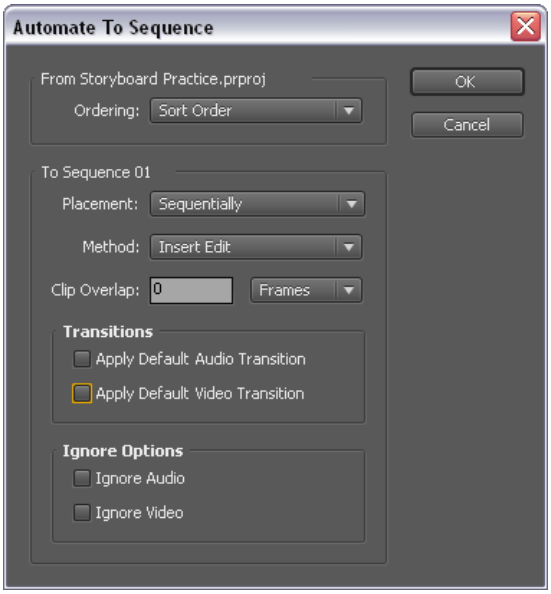

Figure 8 Automate To Sequence dialog box

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6. Close the Storyboard bin.

7. Play the sequence by clicking inside the Timeline panel to activate it and using the VCR-style controls in the Program Monitor (**Figure 9**).

View the sequence critically. Note if there are any jump cuts or awkward edits. Some clips will probably be too long. You can fix those flaws by using methods explained in the guides titled “How to work with clips in the Timeline panel” and “How to trim clips in the Timeline panel.”

Figure 9 Program Monitor