Overview of Adobe Premiere Pro CS4 workspace

This guide shows you how to start a new Adobe Premiere Pro CS4 project, select project and sequence settings, change workspace preferences, navigate around the workspace, and create custom workspaces.

How to start a new project and configure project settings and preferences

For every project you create, Adobe Premiere Pro creates a project file. This file contains the settings you select for the project, as well as crucial data about the assets, edit decisions, and effects used in the project. Adobe Premiere Pro doesn't store video, audio, or still image files in the project file—it stores only a reference to each of these files based on its filename and location at the time you imported it.

A project can contain one or more sequences. Within a single project, you can edit individual segments as separate sequences, and then combine them into a finished program by nesting them into a longer sequence. Similarly, you can store multiple variations of a sequence in the same project.

Every time you start a new project in Adobe Premiere Pro, you need to configure the project and sequence settings. To preserve the quality of your video, you should select settings that match your video source material.

1. Start Adobe Premiere Pro.
2. In the Welcome dialog box, choose New Project.

   The New Project dialog box appears with the General tab displayed (**Figure 1**).

   Note: You can also start a new project by selecting File > New > Project.

   - *Action and Title Safe Areas:* Action and title-safe indicators define the areas on the outer portion of the video frame that could potentially be cut off by some displays. You should always keep titles within the title-safe area. As you edit, be sure to use shots where important action is occurring predominately within the action-safe area.
   - *Video Display Format:* Adobe Premiere Pro can display several formats of timecode. For example, if you are editing footage captured from film, you may want to see the timecode in a file format, or in simple frame numbers if your assets were imported from an animation program. Changing the Display Format option does not alter the frame rate of clips. It only changes how their timecodes are displayed in the project.
   - *Audio Display Format:* Your audio track can be measured and edited using milliseconds or audio samples. There are several samples in a millisecond, making it more granular and allowing for more precise audio editing.
   - *Capture Format:* Capture format controls how Adobe Premiere Pro transfers video and audio directly from a video deck or camera. The default options are DV and HDV. Other options appear only if you install specialized video-capture hardware or software.

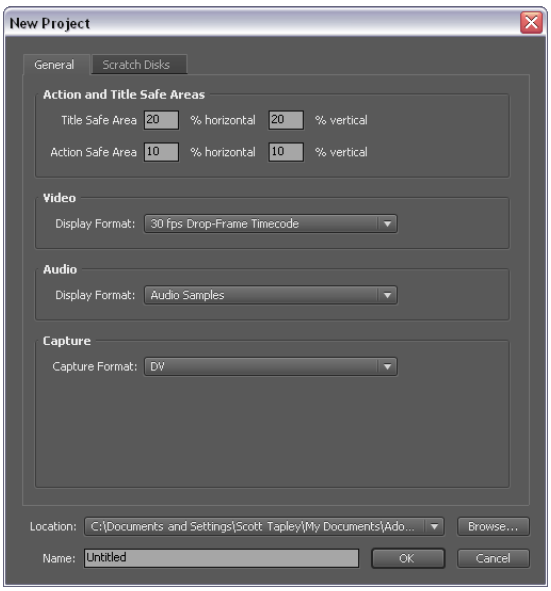

Figure 1 New Project dialog box, General tab

- *Scratch Disks:* Use the Scratch Disks tab (**Figure 2**) to specify locations where captured and edited project files are stored. By default this is the same location as the project file. However, you may want to store your captured video on a larger external hard drive designed specifically for storing and retrieving rich media.

3. At the bottom of the General tab, make note of the storage location for your project. To choose a different location, click Browse and then navigate to the appropriate folder or make a new folder in the Browse For Folder dialog box (Windows) or Destination Path For Your New Project dialog box (Mac OS).

4. At the bottom of the General tab, double-click in the Name field, enter a name for the project, and click OK.

The New Sequence dialog box appears with the Sequence Presets tab displayed (**Figure 3**). Adobe Premiere Pro comes with several bins (folders) of presets.

- *AVCHD:* Advanced Video Codec High Definition is a high-definition recording format for use in digital tapeless camcorders. It is offered as the means of creating and recording home videos in high definition.
- *DV-24P:* This typically is film shot at the film-standard 24 frames per second and transferred to DV.
- *DV-NTSC:* National Television Standards Committee. The TV display standard for North and South America and Japan.
- *DV-PAL:* Phase Alternating Line. The TV display standard for most of Western Europe and Australia.
- *DVCPRO50 and DVCPROHD:* Professional digital videotape formats.
- *HDV:* Consumer-level compressed high-definition video.
- *Mobile & Devices:* For editing video solely for delivery to mobile phones, portable media players, and other portable devices.
- *XDCAM EX* and *XDCAM HD:* This is an optical disc-based professional video system used for tapeless optical disk recording.

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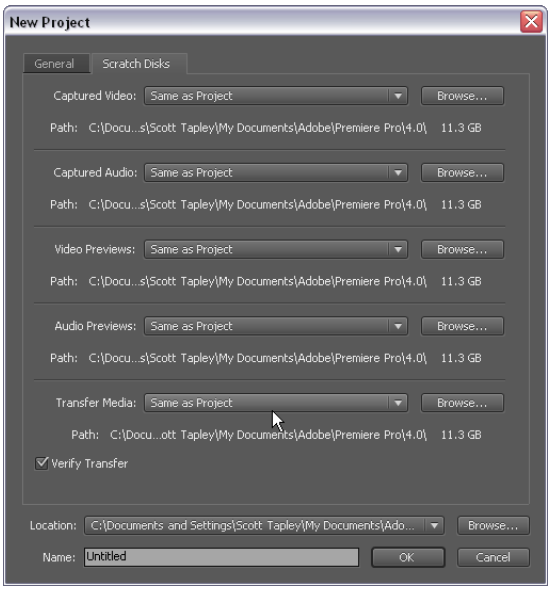

Figure 2 New Project dialog box, Scratch Disks tab

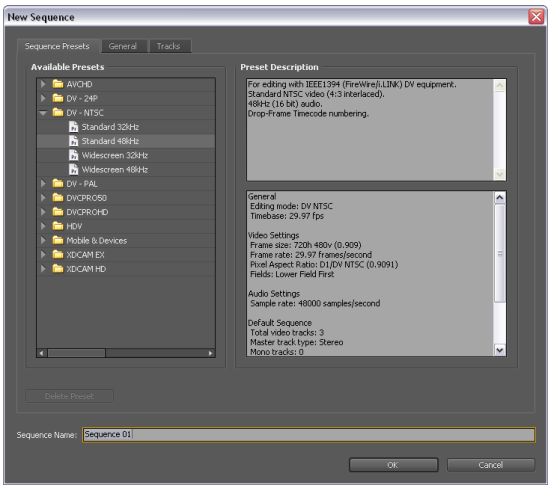

Figure 3 New Sequence dialog box, Sequence Presets tab

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Note: To create a custom preset, select one of the presets as a starting point, and then change to the General tab (**Figure 4**). Make adjustments to the settings on the General tab and click Save Preset. Enter a name and description for the new preset and click OK. Your customized preset is added to the Custom bin on the Sequence Presets tab (**Figure 5**).

5. On the Sequence Presets tab, open a preset bin that matches your project footage and click the preset that matches your video aspect ratio and audio sample rate (kHz). Most likely that is DV-NTSC > Standard 48kHz.

Take a look at the information in the right side of the dialog box. These are the default settings for the selected preset.

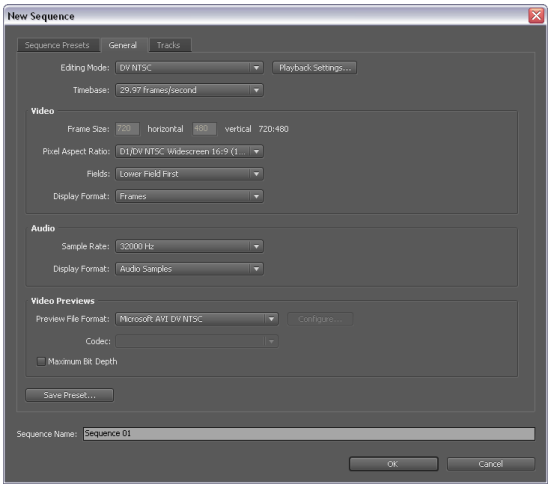

Figure 4 New Sequence dialog box, General tab

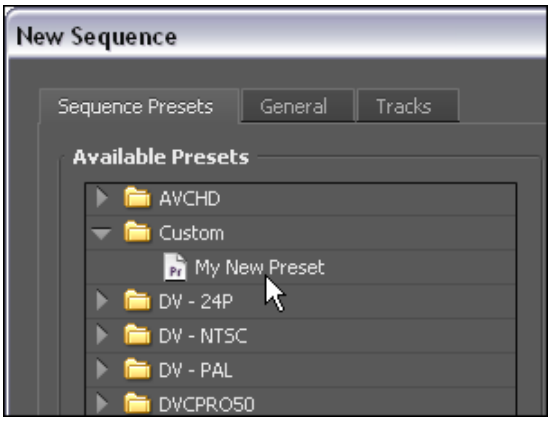

Figure 5 Custom preset

6. At the bottom of the New Sequence dialog box, enter a name for the sequence, and click OK.

The Adobe Premiere Pro workspace appears **(Figure 6)**.

The main window of Adobe Premiere Pro is the *application window*. Panels are organized in this window in an arrangement called a *workspace*. The default workspace contains groups of panels as well as panels that stand alone..

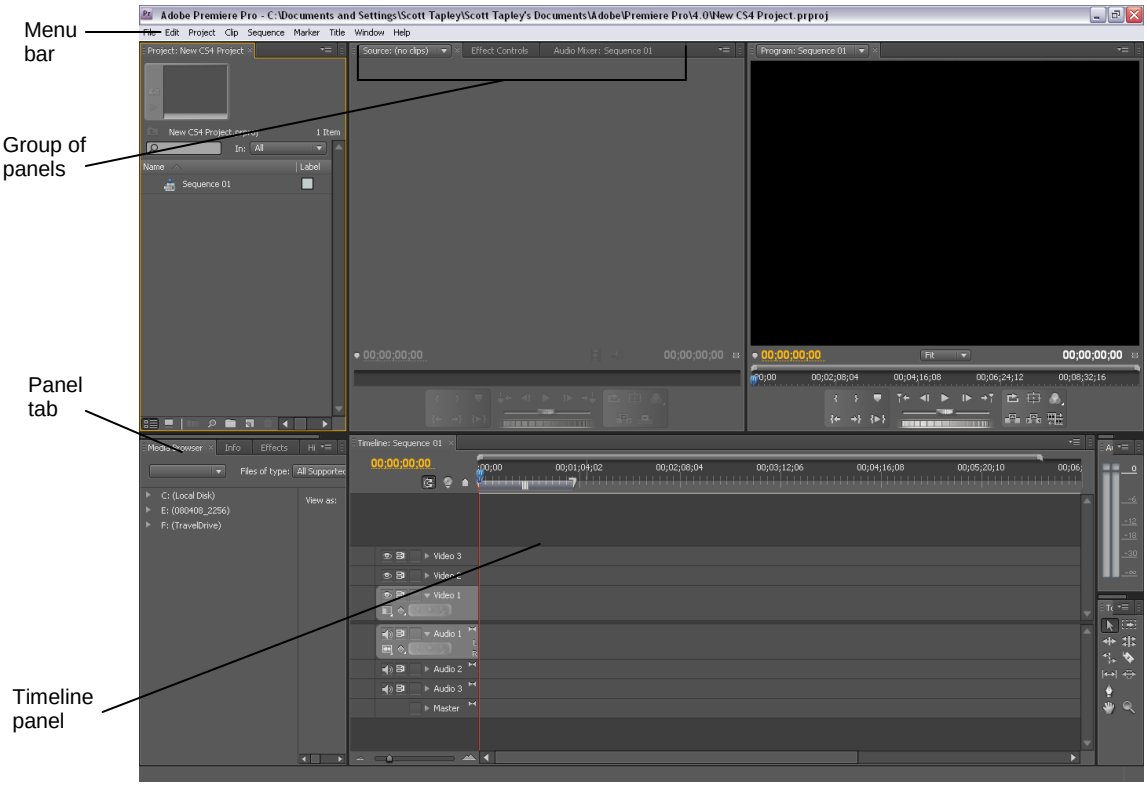

Figure 6 Adobe Premiere Pro workspace

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Even after opening a new project, and selecting project and sequence settings, you can make adjustments to several project preferences. These are located in the Preferences dialog box.

7. In the main menu bar, select Edit > Preferences > General (Windows) or Premiere Pro > Preferences > General (Mac OS).

The Preferences dialog box appears (**Figure 7**).

Note: You can select any of the Preferences submenus. All choices take you to the main Preferences dialog box, displaying the submenu you selected. You can easily move from one submenu to another by clicking the submenu name on the left side of the dialog box.

9. Click each submenu name in turn to check out the Preferences options.

You rarely need to change these preferences when you're first using Adobe Premiere Pro. Most of the preferences are self-explanatory. Any changes you make in the Preferences dialog box take effect immediately and remain in effect the next time you start Adobe Premiere Pro. You can change them at any time. For information about a specific preference setting, see Adobe Premiere Pro Help.

10. Click Appearance, and adjust the Brightness slider to suit your needs (**Figure 8**).

11. Click OK to close the Preferences dialog box and return to the Adobe Premier Pro workspace.

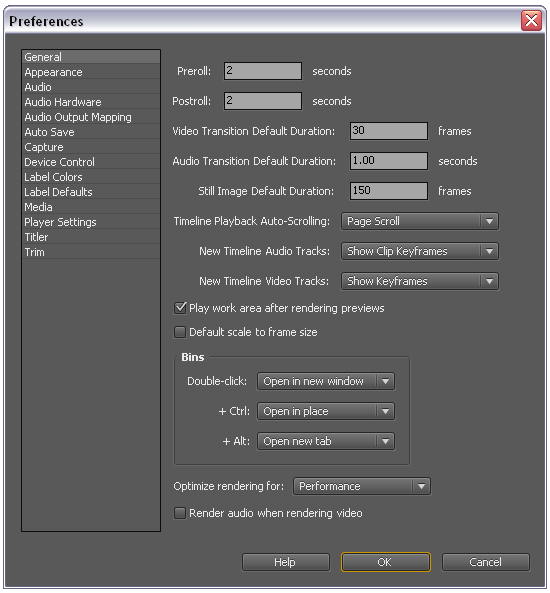

Figure 7 Preferences dialog box, General submenu

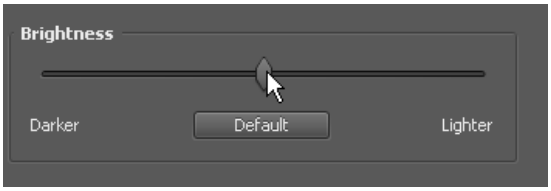

Figure 8 Brightness setting

Touring the Adobe Premiere Pro workspace

Adobe Premiere Pro and all other Adobe video and audio applications have consistent, customizable workspaces. You can easily move from one product to another.

The workspaces are divided into frames that contain one or more panels. Although each Adobe video and audio application has its own set of panels (such as the Timeline, Project, and Effect Controls panels), you move and group panels in the same way across products.

You customize a workspace by arranging panels in the layout to best suit your working style. You can create and save several custom workspaces for different tasks—for example, one for editing and one for audio mixing.

You can drag panels to new locations, move panels into or out of a group, place panels alongside each other, and undock a panel so it floats in a new window above the workspace. As you change a panel, the other panels resize automatically to fit the workspace.

Adobe Premiere Pro panels

To view panels that are in groups within frames, you might have to click their tabs to bring them to the front. Because a new project does not have any assets, some of the panels in your project will be blank. We have added figures here to show you how those panels look with assets present.

- *Project panel* (**Figure 8**): The repository for links to project assets: video clips, audio files, graphics, still images, and sequences.
- *Effect Controls panel* (**Figure 8**): When you click a clip or transition in the Timeline panel, its properties are displayed in the Effect Controls panel. You can apply and adjust video and audio effects in this panel. You do most of your editing in the Effect Controls panel and the Timeline panel.
- *Audio Mixer* (**Figure 9**): Click the Audio Mixer tab to the right of the Effect Controls tab to display the Audio Mixer. This interface looks a lot like audio production studio hardware with volume sliders and panning knobs—one set of controls for each audio track in the Timeline, plus a Master track.
- *Monitors:* Use the Source Monitor to view and trim your original footage (**Figure 9**). Double-clicking a video clip in the Project panel opens the clip in the Source monitor. Use the Program Monitor (**Figure 10**) to view your project in progress and to perform some video-effect and sequence editing.

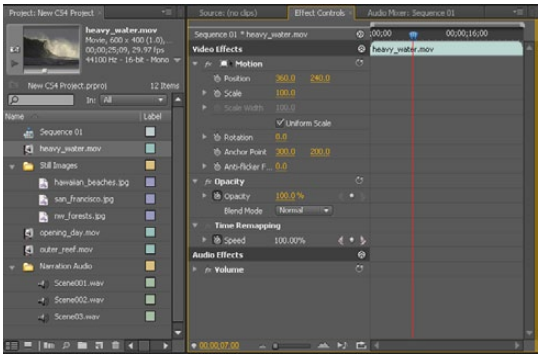

Figure 8 Project and Effect Controls panels

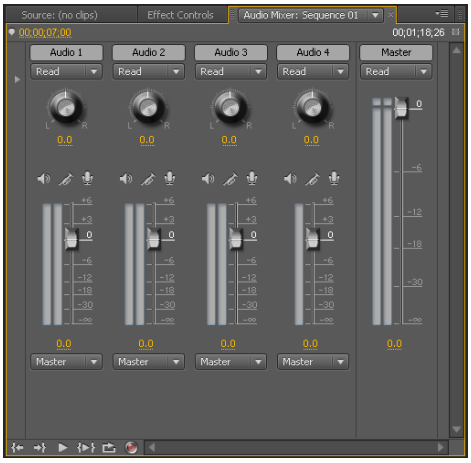

Figure 9 Audio Mixer panel

Figure 10 Audio Mixer panel

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- *Effects panel* (**Figure 11**): Not to be confused with the Effect Controls panel. The Effects panel is the repository of video and audio effects as well as transitions and effect presets, organized into bins.
- *Info panel* (**Figure 12**): Presents a data snapshot of any asset currently selected in the Project panel or any clip or transition selected in a sequence.
- *History panel* (**Figure 12**): Tracks every step you take in your video production and lets you back up if you don't like your latest efforts. When you back up to a previous condition, all steps that came after that point are also undone. You cannot extract a single misstep buried within the current list.
- *Timeline panel* (**Figure 13**): You do most of your actual video editing here. You create *sequences* (edited video segments or entire projects) in the Timeline panel. One strength of sequences is that you can *nest* them—place sequences in other sequences—to break up a production into manageable chunks. You can layer—*composite*—video clips, images, graphics, and titles in up to 99 tracks. And you can have up to 99 audio tracks.
- *Audio Master Meters panel* (**Figure 14**): To the right of the Timeline panel, this panel displays the volume level of the audio master track. This is a mini-version of the master track VU (volume unit) meter in the Audio Mixer.
- *Tools panel* (**Figure 14**): Each icon in this small panel (on the lower-right side of the workspace) represents a tool that performs a specific function, typically a type of edit.

Note: Each panel has a *panel menu* you can display by clicking the triangle in the upper-right corner of the panel (**Figure 14**).

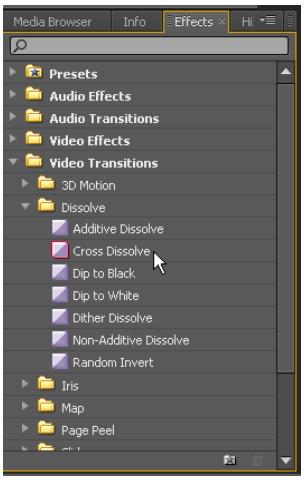

Figure 11 Effects panel

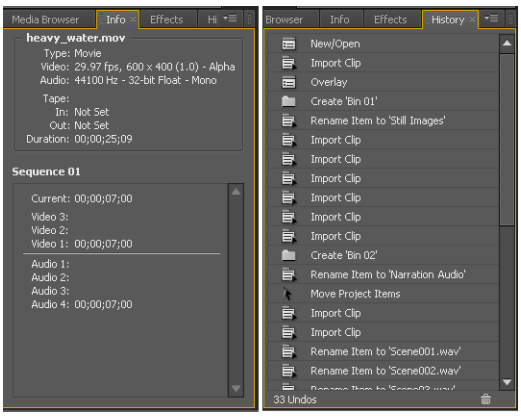

Figure 12 Info and History panels

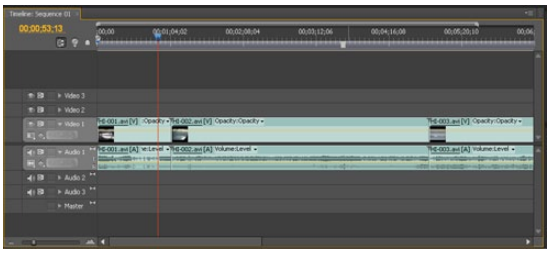

Figure 13 Timeline panel

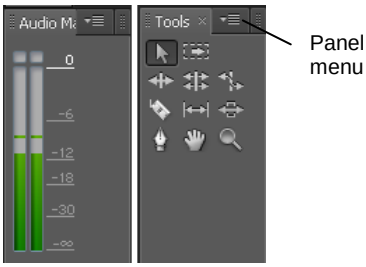

Figure 14 Audio Master Meters and Tools panels

How to customize the workspace

Changing the size and placement of panels in Adobe Premiere Pro and other Adobe video and audio products is a simple matter. For example, you can temporarily expand a panel to do some detailed work, such as adding keyframes to animate an effect, and then reduce the panel. You can change to a different preset workspace or create custom workspaces to suit your editing style or hardware setup (for example, perhaps you want to spread your workspace into two monitors). Here is a rundown of the workspace features:

- As you change the size of one frame, other frames change size to compensate.
- You can access panels within frames by clicking tabs.
- You can dock panels; that is, you can drag a panel from one frame to another.
- You can peel away a panel into its own separate floating window.

1. Select Window > Workspace > Audio.

   The panels rearrange to provide better access to audio editing features. Selecting any of the other workspaces (Color Correction, Editing, Effects, or Metalogging) has a similar effect.

2. Position the pointer at the junction of four frames.

   The pointer changes to a four-arrow pointer (**Figure 15**).

3. Drag that pointer in any direction and note how all four frames change size in concert.

4. Position the pointer on the vertical divider between two panels or panel frames (groups of panels).

   The pointer changes to a double-arrow pointer (**Figure 16**).

5. Drag that pointer left or right and note how the panels change widths without changing the size of the panels above them.

6. Position the pointer on the handle at the left edge of the tab **(Figure 17),** and then drag the Effect Controls tab to the left-inner edge of its frame (it's grouped with the Audio Mixer and Source Monitor) until you see a light-blue trapezoid drop zone (**Figure 18**).

Figure 15 Four-arrow pointer

Figure 16 Double-arrow pointer

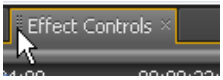

Figure 17 Tab handle

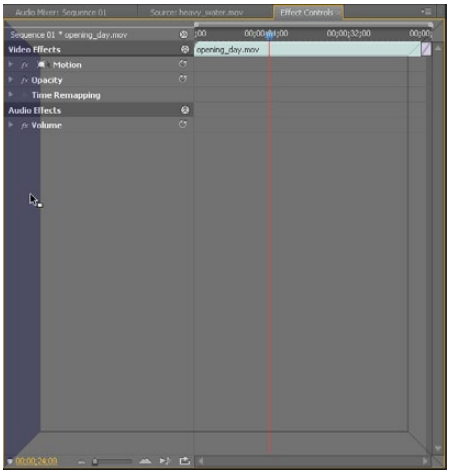

Figure 18 Panel drop zone

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The Effect Controls panel appears in its own frame to the left of the Audio Mixer/Source Monitor frame (**Figure 19**).

Note: As you move any panel, Adobe Premiere Pro displays a drop zone, a light-blue ghost image that shows where the panel will go when you release the mouse button. Trapezoid drop zones along the edges of a panel indicate the panel will appear in its own frame. If the drop zone is a rectangle in the center of a frame, the panel appears within that frame.

7. Drag the Effect Controls panel until its drop zone is centered in the Project panel's frame (**Figure 20**).

8. Drag the right edge of the Project panel's frame to the left to reduce its width.

   A scroll bar appears at the top of the frame because the frame is not wide enough to display all its panel tabs. You can drag the scroll bar to access hidden panel tabs (**Figure 21**).

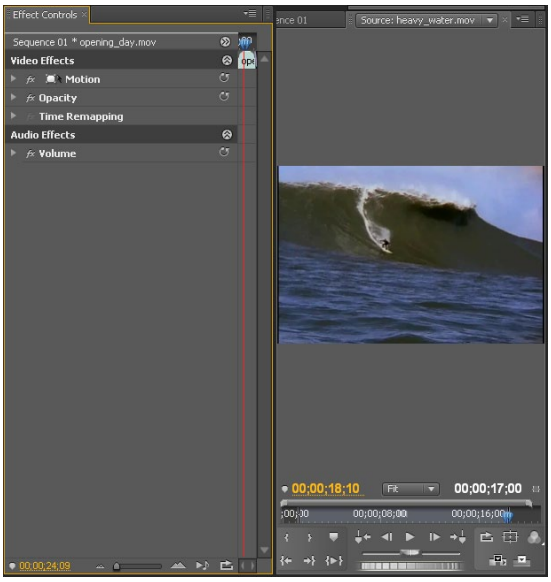

Figure 19 Effect Controls panel in separate frame

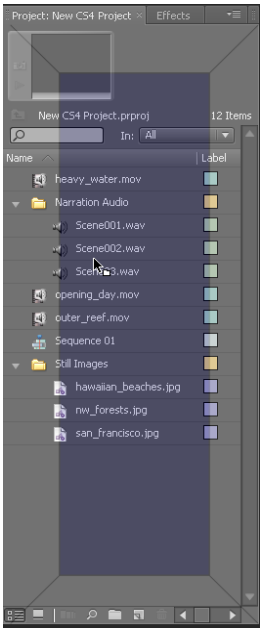

Figure 20 Panel drop zone

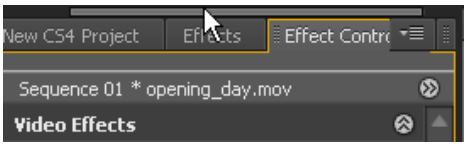

Figure 21 Panel scroll bar

9. Press Ctrl (Windows) or Command (Mac OS) and drag the Program Monitor's drag handle to move the Program Monitor out of its frame.

The Program Monitor appears in its own floating panel window and the Source Monitor frame widens to fill the space the Source Monitor used to take up. You can now expand the Program Monitor's floating-panel window without changing the size of other panels (**Figure 22**).

10. Return the Program Monitor to its original position by dragging its drag handle to the right side of the Source Monitor frame until you see a drop-zone trapezoid on the right side of the frame (**Figure 23**).

The Program Monitor appears in its own frame, to the right of the Source Monitor.

11. To save a customized workspace:

- Select Window > Workspace > New Workspace.
- In the New Workspace dialog box, give your workspace a name (**Figure 24**).
- Click OK.

12. Select Window > Workspace > Reset Current Workspace.

13. Click Yes to reset the current workspace.

This returns you to the default workspace—an easy way to get your workspace back to square one.

14. Select Window > Workspace> Editing to return to the Editing workspace.

Figure 22 Floating panel

Figure 23 Panel drop zone

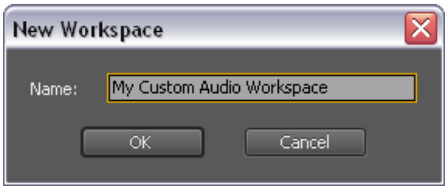

Figure 24 New Workspace dialog box

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