

Windows Movie Maker

Chapter 1

Introducing Windows Movie Maker

In this lesson, you'll learn about Windows Movie Maker, a fun program that lets you create your own movies from videos, pictures and sound. You'll learn how you can connect a video camera to your computer so you can create custom movies from your home videos. You'll also learn to import existing content so you can create slide shows from your favorite photos, or video that you've acquired from a source other than a video camera. You'll learn how to embellish your movies with background music, narration and special effects. Finally, you'll learn how to create custom movies that anyone who has Windows Media Player can watch on their own computer screens.

Things you do, and things you work with in Movie Maker are all defined by a vocabulary of their own, as summarized below:

- **Playback device:** Any device that's capable of playing audio or video such as a VCR, a video camera, or a Web cam.
- **Capture:** To copy information from a playback device into the computer.
- **Capture device:** A device that allows the computer to capture content from a playback device. Also called a *capture card*.
- **Content:** In the media biz, this general term refers to audio, video, text and images that make up your production or movie. Also called *source content* or *source material*.
- **Frame:** A video is composed of many still images played in rapid succession. Each one of those still images is a frame.
- **Clip:** A small segment of audio or video content, much like a single scene in a regular movie.
- **Collection:** A folder in Movie Maker for organizing the clips.
- **Project:** A collection of clips that have already been assembled into a movie, although not necessarily a completed movie. Think of a project as a movie work in progress.
- **Movie File:** The end result of combining clips into a movie; the final, produced movie.

- **Player:** Unlike playback device, the term player generally refers to some kind of software that can display content on a computer. For example, Microsoft Media Player is the player for movies that you create in Movie Maker.

Starting Windows Movie Maker

If you have a digital video camera, simply connecting your camera to the computer and turning on the camera might start Windows Movie Maker automatically. But like any program, you can also start Movie Maker from the **Start** menu. Click the **Start** button and choose **All Programs>**

Accessories>Windows Movie Maker. The Movie Maker program will open as shown in figure 11.1. The names of main components that make up the Movie Maker program are also pointed out in figure 11.1.

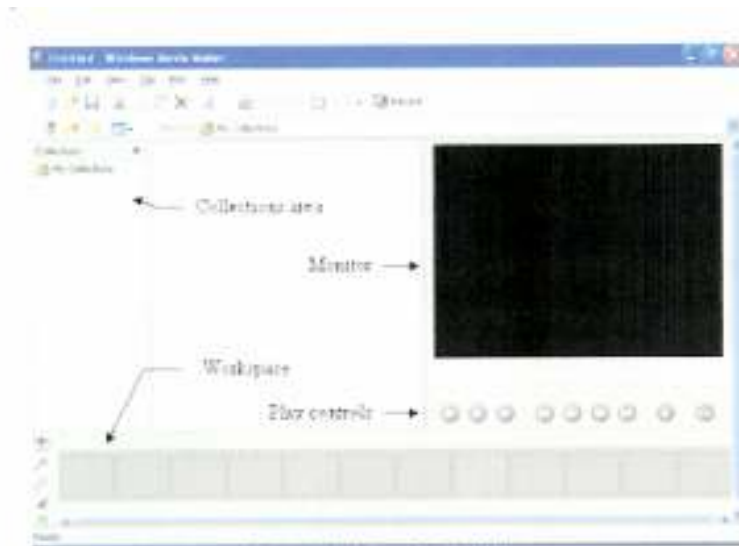


Fig. 11.1. Windows Movie Maker.

Connecting a Video Camera or Other Device

Movie Maker can copy video from your video camera, Web cam, or VCR into the computer, but you need a way to connect that device to the computer. Many digital video cameras allow you to connect using an IEEE 1394 FireWire cable. To make such a connection, your computer needs an IEEE 1394 port. Other devices, such as standard video cameras, TVs and such can be connected to capture cards. Some graphics cards, such as the ATI All-in-Wonder product, have capture capabilities ports right on the graphics card. You can also purchase capture cards for your system.

Finally, you'll need a cable to connect the device to the computer. With a FireWire device, you need a FireWire cable. For all other devices, you need to find a cable that can connect the Video Out and Audio Out jacks on your player to the Video In and Audio In jacks on your computer. If your camera has an AN Out or SVideo port, you can connect that port to corresponding ports on the computer, if available. It's all mainly a matter of finding a cable that can connect the *Out* ports on the device you want to record from, to the *In* ports on your computer's capture or graphics card.

Incidentally, you can also use Movie Maker to record sound only from most devices. Windows Media Player is your best bet for copying music from audio CDs, but you can use Movie Maker to capture music from a phonograph, tape player, or radio. In that case, it's usually a matter of connecting the Line Out jack on the device to the Line In

jack on your computer's sound card.

If you're fortunate enough to have a digital video camera that connects via a FireWire cable, and your computer has a FireWire port, the connection will be simple. As a rule, you should be able to just leave the computer running, connect the camera to the computer with the cable, and turn on the camera. Once you've connected the playback device to your computer, you can start capturing content from that device, as discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

Getting Content into Movie Maker

Once you've connected the playback device to the computer, you're just about ready to start capturing content. If you're capturing from a video camera, make sure you turn the camera on in VCR mode, as opposed to Camera mode. Of course, you'll need to insert the tape from which you want to record into that playback device as well. If necessary, rewind the tape to where you want to start recording. Now you're ready to roll.

Capturing Content

To start capturing content, click the **Record** button in Movie Maker's toolbar or choose **File>Record** from its menu bar. The **Record** dialog box opens. (With a digital video camera, the **Record** dialog box might open automatically). To test your connection, hit the **Play** button on your video camera so it starts playing the tape. If the connection is right, you should be able to see the video playing in the preview window, and hear the tape coming through your computer speakers.

If you don't see or hear anything, take a peek through your camera's viewfinder to make sure it's playing the tape. If it is, but you still can't see or hear anything from your computer, make sure **Video and Audio** is selected in the **Record** drop-down list. If you still get nothing, click the **Change Device** button and try selecting other devices from the Video, Audio, and Line drop-down lists in the **Change Device** dialog box that appears, as shown in figure 11.2. Then click the **OK** button to test your current selections.

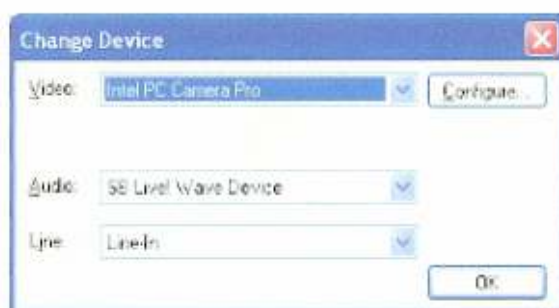


Fig. 11.2. Change Device dialog box

Once you can see the content that's coming from the camera, you can rewind the tape again to where you want to start recording. Now you're ready to choose your recording options.

Recording Options

Before you actually start recording, you can make some additional selections from the **Record** dialog box, as below

- **Record time limit:** If selected, recording will stop automatically once the amount of time you set in the drop-down list to the right of the check box has passed. If you just want to keep recording to the end of the tape, you can clear the check box.
- **Create Clips:** If selected, Movie Maker will automatically divide the recorded video into *clips*, small scenes that are easier to work with.
- **Setting:** Allows you to choose a quality for the material being recorded. As usual, the higher the quality setting, the larger the resulting files.

After you choose a quality setting, a description of that setting will appear below the drop-down list. In figure 11.3, for example, I selected High Quality. As you can see, the Record dialog box tells me that the video will be displayed at 320x240 pixels at 30 frames per second. At that quality, there's enough free space on my hard disk (drive C:) to record 206 hours and 20 minutes of video

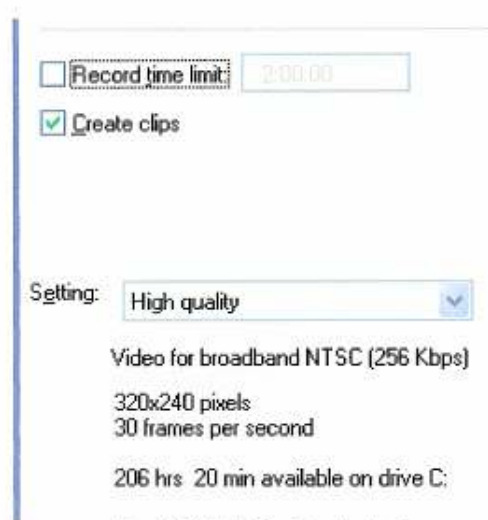


Fig. 11.3. High Quality selected

Unless hard disk space is very tight, I suggest that you record at High Quality, the reason being that you can always create lower quality movies from that content for situations where smaller file sizes are required. However, you can't produce high quality movies from content that's been recorded at a low quality.

The **High Quality** setting isn't really the highest possible quality. If you choose **Other** from the **Setting** drop-down list, a second drop-down list will allow you to choose a quality up to *Video for Broadband (NTSC) 768Kbps*. Basically, the higher the Kbps (Kilobits per second) selection you make, the better the quality of the video, and the larger the resulting file. If you have sufficient hard disk space, you may want to go ahead and record at the highest setting possible.

Now you're ready to record. Click the **Record** button on your screen, then hit the **Play** button on your camera. You should be able to see, and hear, the content as it's being recorded. Don't worry about stopping recording every time there's a scene change. Movie Maker does a great job of dividing the incoming content into separate scenes (clips) all on its own.

If you're recording from a digital video camera, you might see camera control buttons right the **Record** dialog box, as shown in figure 11.4. You can work the camera by

clicking those buttons rather than the buttons on the camera itself. The camera is sometimes slow to respond to those mouse clicks though, so you'll need to be patient and not start madly clicking away at those buttons.



Fig. 11.4. Camera control buttons

When you reach the end of the tape, or the point at which you want to stop capturing, click the **Stop** button in the **Record** dialog box. A dialog box titled *Save Windows Media File* will open, as shown in figure 11.6. You can navigate to the folder in which you want to store the recorded Video. Then enter a file name and click the **Save** button.



Fig. 11.5. Save Windows Media File dialog box

It might take a few seconds for the content to be *saved*. When that's finished, the content will be displayed in a collection that has the same name as whatever you named the file, divided into clips as shown in figure 11.6.

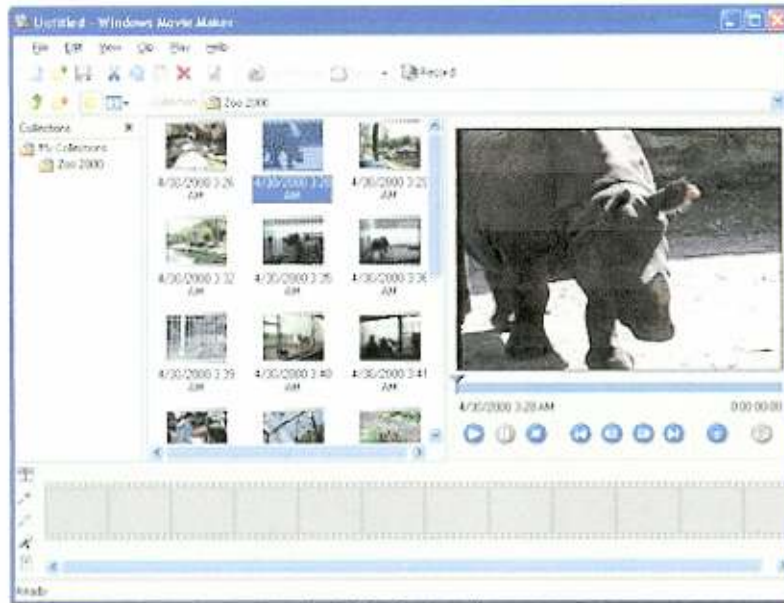


Fig. 11.6. Content clips

Before we get into producing your movie, I need to point out that capturing content from a camera or other playback device isn't the only way to get content into Movie Maker. If you already have video or audio files on your hard disk, you can *import* them into Movie Maker, as discussed next.

Importing Existing Video

If you already have some video or audio files on your hard disk, whether that's content you've downloaded from the Internet or captured using some program other than Movie Maker, you can import that into a collection in Movie Maker. In fact, Windows XP comes with a sample video that you can import and play around with. To import content, close (or Cancel) the Record window, if it's open. Then follow these steps:

1. Choose **File>Import** from Movie Maker's menu bar.
2. In the **Select the File to Import** dialog box that appears, use the Look In dropdown list to navigate to the drive and directory that contains the file(s) you want to import. The sample clip is stored within the **My Videos** subfolder within your **My Documents** folder.
3. If you want to import several files from the current folder, select their icons. If you want to import the sample video, select the **Windows Movie Maker Sample File** icon.
4. If you want Movie Maker to automatically create clips from the imported content, make sure the **Create Clips for Video Files** check box near the bottom of the dialog box is selected.
5. Click the **Open** button to import the selected files.

The video is imported to a collection and divided into clips.

Importing Music and Photos

If you have some music or other audio that you plan to use with your movie, you can use the same technique as above to import audio. Your movie can also contain photos, each of which appears on the screen for five seconds. In fact, your movie can be comprised of only a series of photos in slide show fashion. Add some background music and/or narration to that slide show, and you have yourself a nice presentation, even without any video.

You import music and photos the same way as you do video. You may want to put photos and audio in their own collections, just to stay better organized. To create a new collection, right click the **My collections** icon at the top of the list and choose **New Collection**. Type in the new name, such as *Audio Only* or *Photos* and press **Enter**.

Before you import any photos, be aware that each photo will appear within your movie for five seconds. If you want them to display for more or less time, choose **View>Options** from the Movie Maker menu bar. Then set the **Default imported photo duration** (seconds) option to however long you want each photo to be visible. Finally, click the **OK** button. Note that changes you make to the default photo duration apply only to photos you import after you've changed the setting. They don't apply to any previously imported photos.

To import photos or music into the new collection, first click the collection name to select it. Then choose **File>Import** from Movie Maker's menu bar and navigate to the folder that contains the music or photos you want to import. Select their icons and click the **Open** button.

Photos and audio won't be split into clips. Instead, each will just be represented by a single icon in its collection. In figure 11.7, for example, I've created a collection titled *Audio only*, and have imported some songs into it. The songs are ones I previously copied to my hard disk using Windows Media Player.

ed to my hard disk using windows media player.

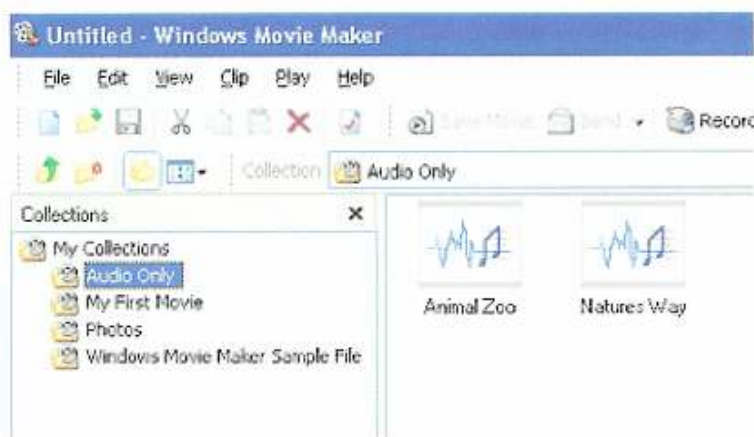


Fig. 11.7. A collection

Making Photos from Video

You can convert a frame in a video to a still photo. If you've already created a separate collection for still photos, go ahead and click in the collection name first, so the photo will be placed in that collection. Then, choose **File>Record** from Movie Maker's menu bar, to get to the **Record Video** dialog box, but don't click the **Record** button within the **Record** dialog box. Instead, use the controls on your camera (or the digital controls in the **Record** dialog box) to get to the frame you wish to save as a photograph. Then click the **Take Photo** button. A **Save Photo** dialog box will appear, most likely opening to the My Pictures folder. If you want to place the photo in some other folder, just navigate to that folder normally. Enter a file name for the photo and click the **Save** button.

The photo will appear in the current collection. There will also be a copy stored in whatever folder you specified in the **Save Photo** dialog box.

Once you have some clips to work with, you're ready to start producing your movie. You'll learn how to do that in the next chapter. Before we get into that though, I should point out that you can manage and rearrange clips, if you think doing so will help you produce a better movie. In other words, what I'm about to tell you in the rest of this chapter isn't *necessary* to create a movie. Rather, these are just optional techniques for managing clips and collections.

Playing Clips

As you know, the movies you create with Movie Maker can contain any combination of clips from any combination of collections. You can preview a clip before putting it into a movie by clicking it in the Collections area. If it's a video clip, the first frame will appear in the preview area. You can then use the play controls beneath the preview window to view the clip. Here's what each button does:

- **Seek bar:** Drag the pointer on the seek bar to the left and right to move frameby-frame through the video. The buttons at each end of the bar move to the first and last frame.
- **Play:** Plays the clip, or resumes play if the video is paused.
- **Pause:** Pauses playback at the current frame.
- **Stop:** Stops playback and removes the clip from the monitor.
- **Back:** Moves back to first frame within the clip.
- **Previous Frame:** Moves back one frame in the clip.
- **Next Frame:** Moves forward to next frame in the clip.
- **Forward:** Moves to the last frame in the clip.
- **Full Screen:** Hides Movie Maker and displays the video full-screen. Click anywhere on the screen to return to Movie Maker.
- **Split Clip:** Tells Movie Maker to split the clip into two clips at the current frame. More on this tool in a moment.

Managing Clips and Collections

You can work with clips and collections using many of the same techniques you use to work with folders and files in Windows Explorer. For example, to rename a clip or collection, right click it and choose **Rename**. To delete one, right-click its icon and choose **Delete**. To move or copy a clip to another collection, right-drag the clip to the collection to which you want to move or add it, then release the mouse button and choose **Move** or **Copy**. You can view clips as thumbnails, a list of icons, or a detailed list by choosing the appropriate option from the **View** menu, or the **Views** button in the Collections tool bar.

Clips, like files, have properties. To keep better records about each of your clips, you can also add an author, date, rating and description to the clip's properties. Just rightclick the clip's name and choose **Properties** to get to its **Properties** dialog box. Clip

don't have filenames though, because they're not files. Rather, they're more like *pointers* to the larger underlying video file that contains the entire captured or imported file.

You can also combine two clips into one, or split one clip into two. Again, neither technique is required to produce a movie. Rather, these capabilities are just *offered* as conveniences in case you want to have more, or fewer, clips to work with. For example, if you want to insert a scene into the middle of an existing clip, you split the one clip into two so that later, when you're arranging your clips into a movie, you can insert the third clip between the two parts. To split a clip, make sure it is selected in the Collections area so you can see it in the Preview area. Then, play the clip to about where you want to split it, and click the **Pause** button. You can then use the **Previous Frame** and **Next Frame** button to get to the exact frame where you want to make the split. Then click the **Split Clip** button or choose **Clip>Split** from the menu bar.

Now there are two clips in the collections area where there was once only one. Everything up to the split point has the original clip name. Everything beyond the clip point has the original name followed by a number, such as (1). You can rename any clip by right-clicking its icon, choosing **Rename**, and typing in a new name for the clip.

While it's not necessary to combine clips to produce a movie, there may be instances where it's convenient to combine clips. For example, if one of your clips is only a couple of frames long, you might want to combine it with some other clip just to reduce the number of clips in the collection. To combine two clips into one:

1. In the **Collections** area, click the first clip.
2. Hold down the **Ctrl** key and click the clip that you want to append to the first one.
3. Choose **Clip>Combine** from Movie Maker's menu bar.

The icon for the second clip disappears and the original clip now contains the content of both clips. You can click the clip, then click the **Play** button, to verify.

OK, so now you have some clips to work with. Whether or not you've done anything to manage those clips, you're ready to start producing your movie.

Chapter 3

Producing Your Movie

In Movie Maker, you assemble your movie in the workspace down near the bottom of the Movie Maker window. There are two ways to view the contents of the workspace:

- **Storyboard:** Shows the contents of the workspace as a series of clips without regard to the duration of each clip, as in the top example shown in figure 11.8.
- **Timeline:** Shows the contents of the workspace as a flow of content along a timeline where the size of each clip is proportional to the amount of time it takes up in the movie, as in the bottom example shown in figure 11.8.



Fig. 11.8. The Workspace in Storyboard view (top) and Timeline view (bottom).

You can switch views at any time by clicking the Storyboard or Timeline buttons at the left of the strip. Or, right-click the workspace and choose an option, or choose View>Storyboard or View>Timeline from Movie Maker's menu bar. When you're in the Timeline view, you can click the + and - magnifying glass icons at the left side of the workspace to expand and contract the view.

Adding Clips to the Workspace

Initially you might find it easiest to build your movie in the Storyboard view. To add a video clip or picture to the movie, do whichever of the following is most convenient for you at the moment:

- Right-click the clip that you want to add to the movie and choose **Add to Storyboard** or **Add to Timeline**.
- Or click the clip you want to add to the movie and choose **Clip>Add to Storyboard/Timeline**.
- Or drag the clip to where you want it to appear in the Storyboard/Timeline and drop it there.
- Or select several clips and then drag the selection to the workspace.

That's all there is to it. If you make a mistake, you can delete a clip from the storyboard or timeline just by right-clicking it and choosing **Delete**. Doing so only removes the clip from the workspace and doesn't remove the clip from its collection. To change the order of clips in the storyboard, just drag any clip to a new location in the workspace and drop it there.



Fig. 11.9. Play indicator

Previewing Your Movie

You can view your entire movie at any time. Just keep in mind that there's a difference between playing a movie and playing a clip. To view the entire movie, click the first frame in the storyboard or timeline. (If you don't, the movie will start playing from the current scene or position in the timeline.) Then choose **Play>Play Entire**

Storyboard/Timeline from Movie Maker's menu bar. The entire movie plays in the preview window. The Play, Pause, Stop, and other buttons beneath the preview window then control the action of the entire movie, not just a specific clip.

If you switch to the Timeline view while playing your movie, the *Play Indicator* shown below will move across the movie to show which part of the movie is currently being played in the monitor. You can drag that triangular button on the Play Indicator to the left or right to move quickly to any place within the movie.

Saving Your Work

The collection of clips you're currently working with, and the movie you're currently working on, are called a *project*. For all intents and purposes, your project is a document like any other. As such, you'll want to save your work from time to time, just to play it safe. To save your project, choose **File>Save Project**. In the **Save As** dialog box that appears, you can navigate to any folder in which you'd like to store the project. Then enter a file name and click the Save button. Your project is saved as a Windows Movie Maker Project (.MSWMM) document file.

If you end up producing several movies (projects), you can open anyone project at any time in the future to resume work on it. Just choose **File>Open Project**, navigate to the folder that contains the project you want to open, if necessary, then open the project's icon. Optionally, if you're in Windows Explorer, you can just click (or doubleclick) the project's icon to open the project in Movie Maker.

Chapter 4

Embellishing Your Movie

Once you've assembled some clips into a basic movie, there are many things you can do to embellish the movie. For example, you can have one scene fade out as the next scene fades in. You can insert still photos into the movie. You can add your own background music or narration. You'll learn how to do all of this cool stuff in this chapter.

Trimming Scenes

If you decide that a scene is running too long, you can trim frames off the front and/or back to shorten the scene. To do so, you set starting and ending trim points within the scene. Only content between the two scenes will be played when you view the movie. Here's how to set the trim points:

1. Set your workspace to **Storyboard** view (choose **View>Storyboard** from the menu bar or click the **Storyboard** button).
2. In the storyboard, click the frame that represents the scene you want to trim.
3. Click the **Play** button to start playing the current clip.
4. If you want to trim some material off the beginning of the clip, click the **Pause** button when you get to about where you want to set the trim point. You can use the **Seek** bar, **Previous Frame**, and **Next Frame** buttons to zero in on a frame.
5. Choose **Clip>Set Start Trim Point** from the menu bar to set the starting trim point. Content to the left of the trim point will be excluded from the movie.

6. To trim some content off the end of the scene, use the same buttons to zero in on the last frame you want the movie to show.
7. Choose **Clip>Set End Trim Point** to set the trim point. Content that follows that trim point will not be included in the final movie.

Clicking the **Play** button below the Preview window will now play the trimmed scene. If you change your mind or want to set different trim points, choose **Clip>Clear Trim Points** from the menu bar. Note that trimming the scene in the movie has no effect on the original clip. Rather, it simply sets the length of the clip within the movie you're working on at the moment. If you want to see the clip again without the trim points, play the original clip from the Collections Area rather than the movie. (Or just clear the trim points.)

Adding Transition Effects

You can add cross-fade transitions between clips in your movie, where one scene fades out while the other fades in. This eliminates the abrupt changes between scenes within your movie. To add a transition:

1. Go to the **Timeline** view in the workspace (View>Timeline).
2. Optionally click the **Zoom In** and **Zoom Out** buttons to the left of the timeline to expand or contract the size of the scenes in the timeline.
3. Decide which two clips you want to place a transition effect between, and then click the clip on the right side of the two. It becomes surrounded by a blue frame and its portion of the timeline is highlighted.
4. Drag the selected scene to the left so that it partially overlaps the scene that precedes it. The larger the overlap, the longer the transition between the frames.

To watch the effect, choose **Play>Play Entire Storyboard/Timeline**. Remember that in **Timeline** view you can drag the **Play** indicator to any spot in your movie. You need not wait for the indicator to reach the transition effect you're trying to view. If you decide the effect is too long or too short, just repeat steps 1-4 to reposition the scene on the right side of the effect.

Adding Still Photos to Your Movie

As mentioned, you can insert a photo into your movie, or your movie could just be a collection of photos. You might find it easiest to use the **Storyboard** view in the Workspace to add photos. To add a photo to your movie, just click the name of the collection that contains the photo and drag the photo's icon into the Storyboard. Position the icon at the point where you want it to be played in the movie.

In **Storyboard** view, the photo looks like any other clip. If you need to reposition the photo, just drag it to the left or right within the Storyboard. To see how your photo looks in your movie, play the entire movie by choosing **Play>Play Entire Storyboard/Timeline**. Use the **Play** indicator in the **Timeline** view, if necessary, to jump to near the start of the photo.

As with video, you can add transition effects between photos by overlapping the photos slightly in the **Timeline** view. If the photos are too narrow to see within the current **Timeline** view, click the + magnifying glass icon to get a better look and better feel for the amount of overlap.

3. Adding Background Music

To add imported background music to your movie, make sure the workplace is in the **Timeline** view. Open the collection that contains the background music, then drag the song's icon to the timeline to the point where you want it to start playing.

The audio track appears below the timeline as a bar that contains the clip's name, as shown figure 11.10. I've added the sound clip titled *Animal Zoo*. You can drag the blue bar to the left or right to control exactly when the audio clip will start to play.

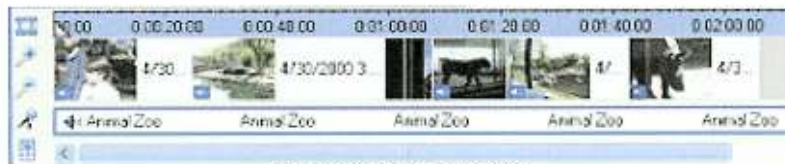


Fig. 11.10. Sound clip added

To try it out, choose **Play>Play Entire Storyboard/Timeline**. You can also drag the timeline bar to the start of the music. If your movie already has audio, you'll hear the original audio as well as the new clip. To adjust the relative volumes, click the **Set Audio Levels** button down near the timeline, or choose **Edit>Audio Levels** from the menu bar. Use the slider in the **Audio Levels** dialog box to give more volume to the audio track, or the audio that's coming from your recorded video. In figure 11.11, for example, I've given audio from the video more volume than the audio track.



Fig. 11.11. Audio Levels dialog box

If the audio clip is longer than the movie, the clip will actually play after the video has stopped. If this is the case you'll probably want to limit the length of any audio track to the length of the movie. You can get an accurate measure of the movie's length by going to the **Timeline** view and dragging the **Play** indicator to the end of the movie. The timer beneath the monitor will show the duration of the movie up to where the **Play** indicator is resting. In figure 11.12, for example, I can see that my movie is about 0:02:05.73 (2 minutes, 5.73 seconds) long, so I'd want my audio soundtrack to be about the same length or a little longer.

4.

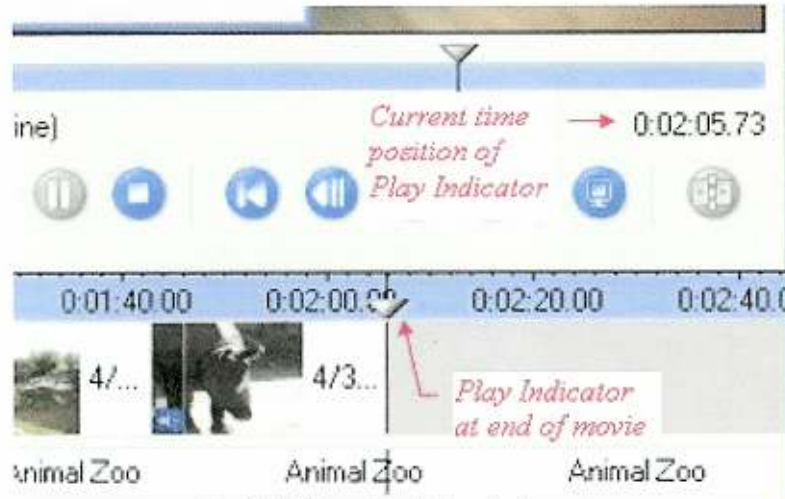


Fig. 11.12. Determining the length of a movie

6.

To create a shortened copy of your sound clip, first copy the original sound clip. To do so, right-click the song's icon in the **Collections** area and choose **Copy**. Then rightclick some empty space in the Collections area and choose **Paste**. The copied clip will have the same name as the original clip, followed by the number 1 in parentheses (for example, *Animal Zoo (1)*). I suggest that you rename that copy to include the word *shortened* (for instance, *Shortened Animal Zoo*), so that you don't confuse it later with the original full-length clip. Just right-click the icon and choose **Rename** to rename the clip.

Now, to actually shorten the clip, you need to split it into two clips. Click the clip's icon and then click the **Play** button under the Monitor. The music will start playing. Drag the Seek bar to about where you want the song to stop and click the **Pause** button. Then click the **Split Clip** button under the monitor or choose **Clip>Split** from the menu bar.

Now your copied clip becomes two clips. The copy that has the original file name (for instance, *Shortened Animal Zoo*) contains all music up to the split point. So that's the one you'll want to add to your movie. The new icon (*Shortened Animal Zoo (2)*) is the rest of the song after the split point. You probably will never need that one. So if you like, you can right-click its icon and choose **Delete**.

Finally, to replace the original long sound track in your movie with this shortened one, make sure you're in the **Timeline** view. Right-click the existing music clip beneath the timeline and choose **Delete** to delete it. Then drag the new shortened clip to the timeline and position it where the original clip was placed. In figure 11.13, you can see that my *Shortened Animal Zoo* music clip is just a few seconds longer than the movie.



Fig. 11.13. A shortened clip

Narrating Your Movie

You can also narrate a movie as it's playing. You'll need a microphone or headset plugged into your sound card to record your voice. If you wish, you can create a new collection for storing your narration. As usual, right-click **My Collections** at the top of the Collections list, choose **New Collection**, and type in the name of the collection (for example, *Narration*). Click the new collection's icon to store your narration in it. To begin recording your narration:

1. Switch the workspace to the **Timeline** view (choose [v]View>**Timeline** from Movie Maker's menu bar).
2. In the Timeline, drag the Play indicator to where you want your narration to begin within the movie.

Choose **File>Record Narration** from the menu bar. **The Record Narration Track**

3. dialog box, shown in figure 11.14, appears.



Figure 11.14. Record Narration Track dialog box

4. If necessary, click the **Change** button to choose the device you'll be narrating from (Telex USB Microphone in my example.) Then click OK.
5. To prevent any audio from the movie's existing soundtrack from being played while you're narrating, choose the **Mute Video Soundtrack** option.
6. Speak into the microphone and watch for a reaction on the **Record level** indicator. If necessary, drag the slider up or down to increase or decrease the microphone sensitivity. You want Only the loudest noises should reach the top of the bar. The rest should fall below it.
7. To start narrating, click the **Record** button.
8. As the movie is playing in the monitor, speak into the microphone and narrate the movie.
9. When you get to the end of the movie, or whenever you want to stop narration, click the **Stop** button in the **Record Narration Track** dialog box.
10. When prompted, choose a folder to save the narration in and enter a filename with the .wav extension. Then click the **Save** button. (If you're not happy with your narration, you can just click the **Cancel** button and try again

The narration appears as a clip in the current collection, and is also added to the movie automatically beneath the timeline. If there's already an audio track there, the narration track is inserted to the left of it. To test the narration, click the **Start** button and choose **Play>Play Entire Storyboard/Timeline**. As with a recorded sound track, you can adjust the relative volumes of your voice and the sound coming from the video by clicking the **Set Audio levels** button near the lower left corner of Movie Maker's window.

As with video clips and photos, audio clips can also be overlapped. To make two audio tracks overlap one another, first drag them both to the workspace. Initially, the audio clips will not overlap, but you can drag the clip on the right to the left, so that it covers the first audio track, either entirely or partially. Wherever the two tracks overlap, the audio from both will be played simultaneously. In other words, your movie can have both a custom music track and your voice narration playing simultaneously.

Don't forget to save your work from time to time by choose **File>Save Project** from the **Movie Maker** menu bar. When you've completed your movie, you're ready to create the final product, as discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Creating the Final Product

The true final product from a movie is a Windows Movie File (.wmv) that can be played by anyone who has Windows Media Player on his or her computer. As with most things multimedia, you'll be able to control the size of the resulting file by controlling the quality of the movie. You might want to save copies of the movie at different quality settings, just to see the results. Here are the steps:

1. Choose **File>Save Movie**, or click the **Save Movie** button in the toolbar. The **Save Movie** dialog box appears, as shown in figure 11.15.



Fig. 11.15. Save Movie dialog box

2. Choose a quality from the **Setting** drop-down list. When you do, the information below the drop-down list changes to show you the specs of your selection, including frame size, frames per second, and download time at various modem speeds.
3. You also have the option of adding a Title, Author, Date, Rating, and Description to the dialog box.
4. Click the **OK** button. A **Save As** dialog box appears.
5. Choose a folder from the **Save In** drop-down list and enter a filename for the movie as shown in figure 11.16.
6. Click the Save button.

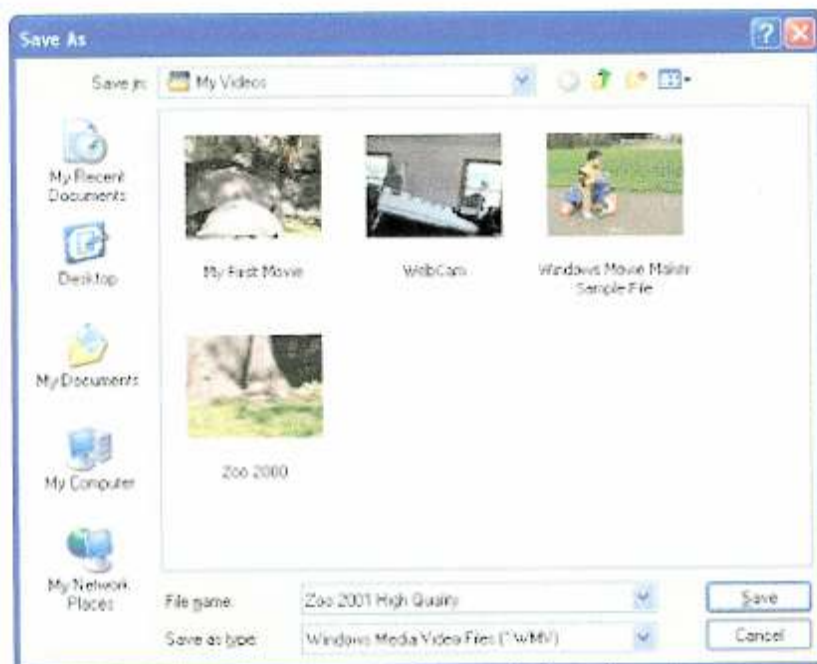


Fig. 11.16. Entering a filename for the movie

You'll be given the option to watch the movie on the spot. Click **Yes** if you want to view the movie now.

To try out your movie at different qualities, repeat the steps. Choose a different quality for each save in step 2 and enter a unique filename for each in step 5 (for example, *My First Movie Low Quality*, *My First Movie Ultra High Quality*, and so forth).

As with any document, you (or anyone else who has Windows Media Player) can watch the movie by clicking its filename in Windows Explorer.

Sharing Your Movie

There are many ways that you can share your finished movie with friends and family. To e-mail the movie to someone, choose **File>Send Movie To>E-mail** from Movie Maker's menu bar. At that point, you can choose a new quality setting for the copy of the movie you're about to send. Remember, the higher the quality the larger the file; the larger the file the longer it will take to send to your e-mail server, and the longer it will take for the recipient to download from their Web server. You can also add or change the Title, Author, and/or other information. Click the **OK** button when you're done. You'll be prompted to enter a file name for the movie. Just type in a brief file name and click the **OK** button.

It will take a few moments for Movie Maker to create the new copy of the movie. Then you may be prompted to choose your e-mail program. Choose your program and click the **OK** button. A partially-filled e-mail message will appear. Type in the recipient's name in the **To** box. You also have the option to change the subject and body of the message if you wish. The movie itself will be an attachment to the message, its file name visible in the **Attach** box as shown in figure 11.17. As you can see, I named the movie *ZooTrip*.

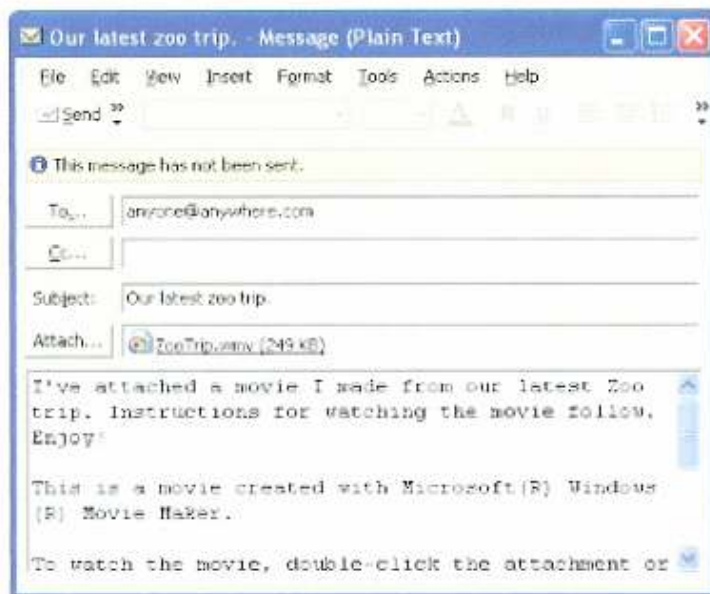


Fig. 11.17 Attaching a movie file to an e-mail message

Click the **Send** button and your message will be sent. Don't forget, however, if your email program is set up to send outgoing messages to an Outbox rather than immediately, you'll need to open that e-mail program and click its **Send/Receive** button if you want your message to be sent immediately.

You'll eventually come to a dialog box titled *Send to Web*. If you don't already have an account with a service that's capable of hosting your movie on the Web, click on the **Sign Me Up** button that appears in the **Send to Web** dialog box. You should be taken to a Web page that will help you choose a provider and set up an account. (Just in case the **Sign Me Up** button doesn't take you to the appropriate page, you can replace the URL in the **Address** bar of your Web browser with

<http://www.microsoft.com/WINDOWSXP/home/using/howto/moviemaker/moviemaker1.asp> to get to the appropriate page.)

If you do already have an account with such a service, choose its name from the Host Name drop-down list and enter your User/login name and password. Then click the OK button.

More on Movie Maker

Like most programs, Windows Movie Maker has its own extensive Help system which you can use to learn more about the program, and to troubleshoot any problems that arise. As you might expect, you can get to Movie Maker's help by choosing **Help>Help Contents** from its menu bar. You can also visit the Windows Movie Maker Web site by choosing **Help>Windows Movie Maker** on the Web.

Conclusion

Hopefully you'll be able to have some fun with Windows Movie Maker, whether it

be to create movies from your home videos, or to create slide shows from your favorite photos. Reviewing what you've learned in this lesson, you can use the Record dialog box in Windows Movie Maker to capture content from a camcorder, VCR, TV, Web Cam, or virtually any other playback device that can plug into your computer's graphics card and/or sound card. You can also import existing content, such as photos and music, using the File>Import options from Movie Maker's menu bar.

The content that you bring into Movie Maker is stored in Collections. Each collection contains one or more clips. A clip might be a single scene from a video, a song, or a picture. You create a movie by dragging clips into the workspace at the bottom of the Movie Maker window.

Once you've arranged all your clips into a movie, and added any embellishments such as transition effects or narration, your movie is just about complete. To create a copy of the movie that can be played in Windows Media Player, choose **File>Save Movie** from Movie Maker's menu bar, and fill in the prompts that appear on the screen.

In the next lesson we'll look at something totally new and different—the ability to connect two or more computers into a local area network (LAN) so that they can share resources, such as an Internet account, printer and folders.

Supplementary Material

Create and Share Memories

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/moviemaker>

This site is Microsoft's Windows Movie Maker Web page. The last time I visited, the site was light on useful information, but I include it here as things may change by the time you read this.

How to Shoot Good Video

<http://www.camcorderinfo.com/info/goodvideo.htm>

This site has tips on shooting great videos from www.camcorder.com. You'll also find links to other pages dealing with digital video tools and techniques.

Recording Video into Windows Movie Maker

http://www.microsoft.com/mspress/books/sampchap/4_786.asp Sample chapter from Microsoft Press's *Microsoft Windows Movie Maker Handbook* provides detailed instructions on how to connect a video camera, Web cam, or VCR to your computer, and how to make appropriate selections in Movie Maker's **Record** dialog box.

ATI All-in-Wonder 128

http://www.ati.com/na/pages/products/pc/aiw_128

ATI's all-in-one video graphics card is capable of capturing video from non-digital video cameras. This page offers a thorough description of the product. I use the All-in-Wonder 128 to capture video from my analog (non-digital) video camera.

OrangeMicro

<http://www.orangemicro.com>

OrangeMicro, Inc. manufactures IEEE 1394 (FireWire) cards that you can install in your computer for attaching a digital video camera. I use the OrangeLink FireWire PCI board to capture from my digital video camera.

POPcast.com

<http://www.popcast.com>

This is one of the sites that you can use for posting your Movie Maker movies to the Web.

Spotlife.com

<http://www.spotlife.com>

This is another site that you can use in posting your Movie Maker movies to the Web.

Videoshare.com <http://www.videoshare.com>

This site is a third option for publishing your Movie Maker movies to the Web.

YesVideo.com <http://www.yesvideo.com>

Here's a fourth option for publishing your Movie Maker movies to the World Wide Web. This site can also copy your movies to CD and DVD disks.

Assignments

Keeping Up with Movie Maker

Windows Movie Maker is a tool for creating professional-quality video from home videos. As such, its appeal is limited to video enthusiasts who have video cameras and video footage to work with. Obviously, that's going to be a relatively small percentage of students in this course. So, it really wouldn't be appropriate for me to try to devise a hands-on assignment for this lesson.

However, anyone who is interested in using Windows Movie Maker should definitely be aware that the new-and-improved Movie Maker 2 has replaced the version of Windows Movie Maker that comes with Windows XP. The newer program has all the same capabilities as the original, plus some added capabilities. The newer version is also somewhat better designed than the original version. So if you are into making movies, you'll definitely want to get up-to-speed on what's happening in Movie Maker land. To do so:

- Start Windows Movie Maker as you normally would, then choose **Help > Windows Movie Maker on the Web**.
- Or, just use your Web browser to go to www.microsoft.com/moviemaker/

Either way, you'll end up at the Windows Movie Maker Web site, where you'll find lots of information on using Windows Movie Maker 2, as well as other products that you can use to enhance your movies.

You can download Movie Maker 2 from that same Web page. Just look for a link that reads **Get Movie Maker 2**. When you click on that link, you'll come to a page describing what Movie Maker 2 is all about, along with instructions on how to download program to your computer.