

Working with Video

You may be thinking, “I can work with video in Photoshop?” Actually, unless you’ve sprung for Photoshop CS5 Extended (page 5), you can’t—but you can still import video as still frames as discussed later in this box. Remember: Photoshop isn’t just for graphic designers and photographers; it’s used in many professions. For example, law enforcement officers use it to enhance surveillance footage, and TV-show editors use video clips as reference images when they’re designing text and logos in Photoshop.

If you want to work with a video clip in Photoshop or Photoshop CS5 Extended, you need to make sure you have the latest and greatest version of QuickTime. If you’re using a Mac, you’ve probably already got it; if you’re on a PC, you can download it free from www.apple.com/quicktime. You also need to save the video file in a format that QuickTime can play, like .mov, .avi, .flv, or .mp4.

You’ve got two ways to load video into Photoshop, and the best method depends on your particular needs and which version of Photoshop you have. If you’ve got Photoshop CS5 Extended, you can import video as a *Video layer*:

1. **Open the video file by choosing File→Open.** In the Open dialog box, make sure the Enable pop-up menu is set to “All Readable Documents” or “QuickTime Movies” (on a PC, the menu is called “Files of type” and the option you want is “All Formats”); otherwise, your computer won’t let you choose the video. Next, select a video file and then click Open, and Photoshop opens the file as a Video layer. If you want to import the video into an existing document instead, choose Layer→Video Layers→“New Video Layer from File” and the video appears on its very own layer inside the active Photoshop document.
2. **If you want to adjust the clip’s playback options, choose Window→Animation and tweak the settings to your liking.**

That’s it. If you want to *export* a video from Photoshop, choose File→Export→Render Video. You can export it as a QuickTime movie or a sequence of images.

Tip: Since video files are linked to your Photoshop document (meaning Photoshop *references* video files instead of embedding them in your documents), you need to keep the original files hanging around. It’s a good idea to put video files in the same folder as the Photoshop documents that reference them.

If you’re using Photoshop CS5 standard version, you can convert a video clip to still frames on individual layers. (Most video formats use between 24 and 30 frames per second.) This technique is a handy way to snatch an image from a video clip to use in another document, as a video link on a website, or to create a frame-by-frame animation (like an animated GIF—see page 725). To load video frames as images on individual layers:

1. **Choose File→Import→“Video Frames to Layers”.** Head to where the video clip lives on your hard drive and then click Load.

2. In the resulting Import Video To Layers dialog box, specify the range you want to import. You can load the whole clip or just a portion of it. If you like, turn on the “Limit To Every _ Frames” checkbox to load just a few frames of your video instead of the whole thing.
3. If you want to create an animation, leave the Make Frame Animation setting turned on; if you’re going to use the frames in a still project, turn it off.
4. Click OK to load the video.

Once Photoshop puts the frames on separate layers, you can edit them just like any other layer. If you’re creating an animation, you can see a preview by choosing Window→Animation and then clicking the play button.

Working with video in Photoshop can be a little tricky, but it gives you a ton of options for multimedia and video projects. To find out more, visit www.PhotoshopforVideo.com.