

Time-Lapse Help

Time-Lapse will turn a sequence of images into a QuickTime movie.

Image Files:

All the images must be the same size and should logically form a time lapse sequence. You can select JPEG, TIFF, PNG, Canon CR2 or Nikon NEF images. You can drag all the image files or folders to the image list area or push the List Images button to select the files or folders from an open files panel. The image files will be listed and processed in alphabetical order. If you want to sort the files by their modification date check the Sort checkbox before you list the files.

Create Movie:

The Create Movie button starts the creation of the movie. You need to select the image files before you create the movie. When you push the Create Movie button a panel will open where you can enter the movie name and where you want the movie file to be saved.

FPS:

The movie will use the frames per second (FPS) value to time each image frame. You can select a standard value from the popup menu or enter a custom value.

Scale:

The Scale value will change the size of the movie frame. A scale of 100% will create a movie the same size as the images. You can select a scale from the popup menu or enter a custom value. The scale value will not alter the aspect ratio of the images.

You can also select HD 1080p (1920X1080) and 720p (1280X720) formats and VGA (640X480), QVGA (320X240), SVGA (800X600), UVGA (1024X768), XVGA (1152X864), WVGA (1280X768) and SXGA (1280X1024). These formats may crop your images. If your images need to be cropped you can use one of the cropping options.

Codec and Quality:

The Codec selection sets the movie format and the Quality value sets the compression quality. Not all codecs can apply all the quality settings. Some combinations of large image files, codec, quality and sizing options will not work and an alert is issued if this happens. This is a QuickTime limitation.

Skip:

If you have a large number of images and need to speed up the time lapse movie you may not want to process every image. The Skip option allows you to jump past any number of images in the list as the images are being processed. In other words, if the Skip value is 1 you will process every other image. If the Skip value is 2 you will process every third image, and so on. To process all the images in the list make sure the Skip value is zero.

Crop:

You can select how to crop the images if the movie format does not match the image format. You can keep the middle of the image or crop to include the top/left or bottom/right of the image.

You can also create a custom crop. Select Custom from the Crop popup menu and the first frame of your selected images will appear in a new window. The green outline will be in the scale format you have selected. Place the cursor in the center circle and you can drag the outline to the position you want. Once placed select the Create Movie button in the Time-Lapse panel and the movie will be generated.

You can also use the custom crop to change the scale of the crop rectangle. Place the cursor outside of the center circle and drag left or right to change the scale of the outline. If you zoom in past the resolution of the source image the outline will turn red. Again, once the outline is scaled and placed in the image the way that you want it hit the Create Movie button.

The custom crop allows you to animate the crop throughout the movie generation. Form the outline the way that you want to start off the movie, make sure the frame slider at the bottom of the window is at frame one, and hit the Enter button. Now move and/or scale the rectangle, move the frame slider to a new value, and hit the Enter button. The movie generation will smoothly transition the crop from the first crop at frame one to the second crop at the second frame number. You can add as many transitions as you want, just make sure that each change is at a greater frame number and you have hit the Enter button for each transition.

The frame slider, once placed, will draw that image frame in the window. If you need to find an exact frame you can use the keyboard arrow keys to move the frame slider one frame at a time. If you need to start over select Custom from the Crop popup menu again and all your animation settings will be reset. If you want a larger crop window you can resize it by dragging on the bottom right corner.

Animation File:

When you create an animation sequence in the custom crop window all of your frame data is saved in a file named "Time-Lapse Animation.txt". This file is located in the <home>/Library/Application Support/Time-Lapse folder. If you are running Lion this

Library folder is hidden so you need to hold down the option key and use the Finder Go menu to open it. You can also open this file from the File menu. This file lists all your setup and animation data. You can create a new movie with this file! List your images, go to the Custom Crop window and hit the Enter key while holding down the option key. All your animation sequence data will be loaded into Time-Lapse from this file and you can then create a new movie with this animation sequence.

Once you start a new animation sequence this file will be deleted and a new one started, so if you want to save a particular animation sequence you must move this file out of the Time-Lapse folder or rename it. To re-run this file again you must put it back into the Time-Lapse folder or change the name back to Time-Lapse Animation.txt".

Not only can you rerun an animation sequence, you can also modify the file. For example, you could change the scale (although it doesn't make much sense to do so), codec, FPS, skip or quality settings. The individual frame data is a bit more difficult and you need to make changes there with caution. You can alter the frame number to adjust when an animation change starts to take place. The CVRect rectangle definition (x, y, width, height) represents the size of the crop window and unless you resized the crop window during an animation session those values will be the same. In any case Time-Lapse needs those definitions and you should not change them. The cropRect definition lists the placement (x,y) and size (width, height) of the cropping rectangle you moved and resized to form the animation sequences. You can adjust those values but very carefully! If, for example, you resize a cropRect so that the scaling moves outside of your image Time-Lapse will probably crash. If you want to add additional frames you can do that as well, but again only with extreme caution. Good Luck!

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