Quickstart Guide to OpenShot

OpenShot Video Editor (https://www.openshot.org/) is a free and open-source video editor for Linux, macOS, and Windows. The software offers all the basic tools necessary for editing video and combining videos into a finished project and is very easy to learn. The software is also not as resource-intensive as some other video editing software making it a good choice for those with little experience or with limited computing resources..
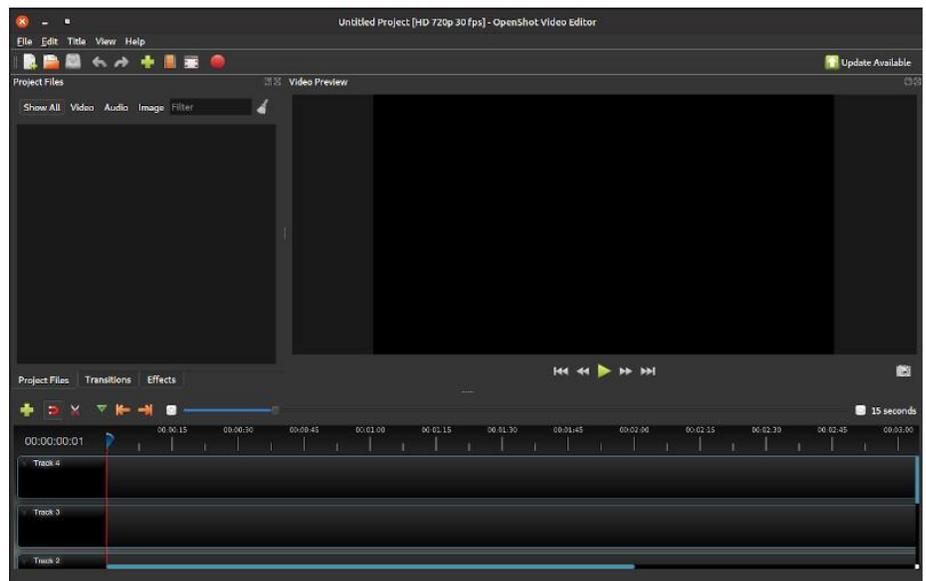
Downloading OpenShot

OpenShot is available for the Mac, Windows, and Linux operating systems and can be freely downloaded on the OpenShot project website at https://www.openshot.org/.

The OpenShot interface

Once OpenShot has been downloaded and installed, and you have started the software on your computer, the OpenShot interface will appear.

The interface consists of three main areas: the left-hand, **Project Files** area, the right-hand **Video Preview** window, and the lower **Timeline**.

The **Project Files** area is where one would import audio and video files for use in your project. The **Video Preview** area gives you a preview of what your finished video will look like. The **Timeline** is where you assemble and sequence your media files.

Chose a profile and create a project

Before importing any video files, you should create a profile for a new project. The profile determines the resolution and size of the finished product. Open the File menu in the upper-left hand corner of the screen and select **Choose Project.** You will find a dropdown menu with many typical video settings. You should also create a **new project** by clicking **New Project** in the same menu. Save the project somewhere on your computer.

Add media

Next, import media files into OpenShot by clicking the large green **+ sign icon** in the upper toolbar or by **dragging files** into the **Project Files** area. You may import video, audio, and image files. Any of these files may be previewed by right-clicking (Control+click on Mac) on the icon and selecting Preview File.

These files can then be dragged into the Timeline area to begin assembling them into the sequence you wish to have in your finished video.

The timeline

By default, the Timeline consists of 5 tracks, or layers. Media can be dragged into any of the tracks and dragged left or right to sequence media. Tracks can be added or removed by using the small arrow menu in the upper-left hand corner of any of the tracks. You can also zoom in and out of time timeline with the zoom control slider just above the timeline.

Media items may be dragged into any of the timeline tracks. The items in the higher tracks are positioned in front of lower tracks in the final video. Try dragging some media into the tracks and then preview the video in the upper-right **Preview Video** area. OpenShot is non-destructive. You can edit and modify the media items in the toolbar as much as you would like and it does not alter at all the original media element in the Project Files area.

Transitions

A transition is used to gradually fade or otherwise transition from one clip to the next. Transitions are represented in the timeline as blue, rounded rectangles. Transitions are automatically created when you overlap two clips (fading one out while the other fades in), and can be added manually by dragging one onto the timeline from the **Transitions** panel A transition must be placed on top of a clip. You will find many different transitions in the Transitions collection. Find the tab labeled **Transitions** to switch from the Projects Files area to the Transitions area. You can also find many options by right-clicking (Control+click on Mac) on the clip in the timelines and selecting from the resulting menu.

Titles

You can of course add titles to your film in OpenShot. In the main, top menu, select **Title** and then Title to select a title slide style and to add your own text, fonts, colors and other options. When complete, these titles slides are added to your Project Files from which you can add them to your timeline. Notice that with title slides in your timeline, as with images, you can drag the bounding edges to make the image appear for a longer or shorter duration.

Exporting

The final step to making a video with OpenShot is to render the project and export a single video file. Remember to save your project and then find the export button at the right-hand side of top-left icon toolbar or go to File -> Export Video in the main menu.

Getting help

An OpenShot User Guide is available on the OpenShot project website at
https://www.openshot.org/user-guide/