

OFFICIAL COURSE STUDY GUIDE

DaVinci Resolve: Edit, Color, and VFX for Free

Professional editing, color grading, and effects in free software, with a deep track from a certified trainer.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO · BEGINNER · 3 MODULES · 16 HR 55 MIN

Course by Kevin Stratvert · Curated and published by MegaCourse

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DaVinci Resolve: Edit, Color, and VFX for Free: The Complete Study Guide

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INTRODUCTION

About This Course

Welcome to the official study guide for "DaVinci Resolve: Edit, Color, and VFX for Free." This course equips you with professional skills in video editing, color grading, and visual effects, all within DaVinci Resolve's powerful, free software. You will learn to produce high-quality video content without investing in expensive tools.

DaVinci Resolve is an industry-standard application used by professionals worldwide. Mastering its core functions opens doors to creating compelling visual stories, whether for personal projects, social media, or professional clients. This guide supports your learning as you build practical expertise.

Our curated learning path provides a clear, step-by-step approach across 3 modules and 22 lessons. Certified trainer Kevin Stratvert leads the core instruction, supplemented by bonus lessons from Casey Faris. This combination offers a comprehensive foundation, ensuring you gain a deep understanding of each critical area.

Course Facts

FORMAT	3 modules · 22 lessons
VIDEO INSTRUCTION	About 16 hr 55 min
LEVEL	Beginner
CATEGORY	Photography & Video
INSTRUCTOR	Kevin Stratvert
CERTIFICATE	Included with course completion on MegaCourse
COURSE HOME	megacourse.app/courses/davinci-resolve-edit-color-and-vfx-for-free

What You Will Learn

- Edit complete videos with Resolve's cut and edit pages.
- Color grade footage on the color page with nodes and scopes.
- Add effects and motion graphics with the Fusion page.
- Clean up and mix audio inside Resolve.
- Deliver finished videos with the right export settings.

Who This Course Is For

This course is designed for individuals new to video production or those seeking to master DaVinci Resolve. If you aspire to edit, color grade, or add effects to videos professionally, this guide is for you. No prior experience with video editing software is necessary to begin.

You should be comfortable using a computer and navigating software interfaces. The course provides all the foundational knowledge needed to work effectively within DaVinci Resolve.

Before You Start

- A computer capable of running DaVinci Resolve. The free version of the software is fully sufficient.
- Basic computer literacy, including file management and software installation.

How to Use This Guide

This study guide is your companion to the video lessons. We recommend watching each video lesson first, then using this guide to review key concepts, reinforce techniques, and complete practice exercises. Active engagement with both resources will solidify your understanding.

Pace yourself through the 3 modules and 22 lessons, totaling approximately 16 hours and 55 minutes of instruction. Take notes, experiment with the software, and do not hesitate to revisit sections as needed. The included review questions and glossary terms will help you assess your progress and recall important definitions.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to DaVinci Resolve and Core Editing Concepts

Welcome to Chapter 1 of your official study guide for 'DaVinci Resolve: Edit, Color, and VFX for Free'. This chapter lays the groundwork for your path into professional video production. We begin by understanding why DaVinci Resolve is a powerful choice for editors and guide you through its installation.

From there, we explore the fundamental interface and essential tools within Resolve's Cut and Edit pages. You will learn how to import media, assemble a basic sequence, add text, and manage multi-camera footage. This chapter also introduces you to the intelligent AI-powered features that streamline complex tasks, preparing you to create compelling videos without cost.

Choosing and Installing DaVinci Resolve

Covers: 3 BEST FREE Video Editing Software for PC · BEST FREE Video Editing Software for PC · How to Download DaVinci Resolve for FREE

Selecting the right video editing software is a critical first step for any creator. DaVinci Resolve stands out as a professional-grade solution available completely free of charge. Unlike many other free options, Resolve offers a comprehensive suite of tools for editing, color grading, visual effects, and audio post-production. It is used by Hollywood professionals and independent creators alike, making it an excellent choice for learning industry-standard workflows.

To begin, you need to download and install DaVinci Resolve on your computer. The free version, often called DaVinci Resolve Studio Free, provides almost all the features of the paid Studio version, with very few limitations for most users. You can find the download on the official Blackmagic Design website. Navigate to the 'Support' section or directly to the DaVinci Resolve product page. You will see options for different operating systems: Windows, macOS, and Linux.

Downloading DaVinci Resolve

1. **Visit the Blackmagic Design website:** Go to blackmagicdesign.com/products/davinciresolve.
2. **Select your operating system:** Choose the correct version for your computer (Windows, macOS, or Linux).
3. **Fill out the registration form:** Blackmagic Design requests basic information. This is standard practice for software downloads.
4. **Download the installer:** The download will begin after submitting the form. The file size is substantial, often several gigabytes, so ensure you have a stable internet connection.

Installing DaVinci Resolve

Once the download is complete, locate the installer file in your downloads folder. The installation process is straightforward:

1. **Run the installer:** Double-click the downloaded file.
2. **Follow on-screen prompts:** Accept the license agreement. You can typically choose the default installation location. Resolve may also install supporting components like PostgreSQL database servers or control panel drivers. Allow these to install.
3. **Restart your computer (if prompted):** A restart ensures all components are correctly configured.

After installation, you can launch DaVinci Resolve from your applications folder or desktop shortcut. The first launch might take a moment as the software initializes. Ensure your computer meets the minimum system requirements, especially regarding RAM (16GB recommended) and a dedicated GPU (graphics processing unit) for optimal performance. Many common issues, such as slow playback or crashes, are often related to insufficient hardware specifications. Always update your graphics drivers to the latest version for the best experience.

Understanding the DaVinci Resolve Interface and Basic Editing Workflow

Covers: DaVinci Resolve 18 Tutorial for Beginners · DaVinci Resolve 17 Tutorial for Beginners

DaVinci Resolve organizes its powerful features across several dedicated pages, each designed for a specific part of the post-production workflow. For beginners, the most important pages are Media, Cut, Edit, and Deliver. Understanding these pages is crucial for efficient editing.

The Pages of DaVinci Resolve

- **Media Page:** This is where you import and organize all your video, audio, and image files. You can create bins (folders) to keep your project tidy. This page also allows you to preview clips and apply metadata.
- **Cut Page:** Designed for speed, the Cut page offers a streamlined interface for quick edits. It features dual timelines, smart editing tools, and fast review capabilities. It is ideal for assembling rough cuts or making quick adjustments.
- **Edit Page:** This is the traditional non-linear editing (NLE) environment. It provides precise control over your timeline, allowing for detailed trimming, multi-track editing, adding effects, and fine-tuning transitions. Most of your detailed editing work will happen here.
- **Fusion Page:** For advanced visual effects and motion graphics.
- **Color Page:** Dedicated to professional color grading and correction.
- **Fairlight Page:** For audio editing, mixing, and sound design.
- **Deliver Page:** This is where you export your finished video in various formats and resolutions.

Basic Editing Workflow

Let us walk through a fundamental editing workflow using the Media, Cut, and Edit pages.

1. Import Media (Media Page):

- Open the Media page. On the left, navigate to your media files using the 'Media Storage' browser.
- Drag and drop your desired clips into the 'Media Pool' area at the bottom of the screen. You can also right-click in the Media Pool and select 'Import Media'.

2. Create a New Timeline (Media or Cut Page):

- In the Media Pool, select the clips you want to start with. Right-click and choose 'Create New Timeline Using Selected Clips'. This automatically generates a timeline with your clips in order.
- Alternatively, you can drag a single clip from the Media Pool directly onto the timeline area in the Cut or Edit page to create a new timeline.

3. Rough Cut (Cut Page):

- Switch to the Cut page. You will see your timeline. Use the 'Source Tape' view or the individual clip viewer to quickly find the best parts of your footage.
- Drag clips from the source viewer to the timeline. Use the 'Smart Insert' or 'Append' tools to add clips efficiently. The 'Ripple Delete' tool is useful for removing unwanted sections and closing the gap.

4. Refine and Detail Edit (Edit Page):

- Move to the Edit page. Here you have more precise control. The timeline features multiple video and audio tracks.
- **Trimming:** Use the selection tool (arrow icon) to click and drag the ends of clips on the timeline to shorten or extend them. This is called a 'trim' edit.
- **Cutting:** Use the 'Blade' tool (razor blade icon) to make cuts within a clip. Select the blade tool, click on the clip where you want to cut, then switch back to the selection tool to move or delete the separated segments.
- **Arranging Clips:** Click and drag clips to reorder them on the timeline. If you want to insert a clip without overwriting others, hold down Shift while dragging, or use the 'Insert' edit function.
- **Adding Transitions:** Navigate to the 'Effects Library' (top left of the Edit page). Open 'Video Transitions'. Drag a transition, like a 'Cross Dissolve', between two clips on the timeline. Adjust its duration by dragging its edges.

Common mistake: Forgetting to save your project regularly. Use **Ctrl+S** (Windows) or **Cmd+S** (macOS) frequently. Resolve also has an auto-save feature, but manual saves provide peace of mind. Practice importing various media types and assembling short sequences to get comfortable with these core editing actions.

Adding Text and Using Multicam for Dynamic Storytelling

Covers: How to Add Text in DaVinci Resolve · How to use Multicam in DaVinci Resolve

Beyond basic cuts, adding text and managing multiple camera angles are essential skills for creating engaging videos. DaVinci Resolve provides robust tools for both.

Adding Text (Titles)

Text elements, also known as titles, are crucial for conveying information, branding, or creative expression. Resolve offers various types of titles, from simple text overlays to complex animated graphics.

1. **Open the Effects Library:** On the Edit page, look for the 'Effects Library' in the top left panel. Expand 'Titles'.
2. **Choose a Title Template:**
 - **Text:** This is a basic text overlay, good for simple labels or lower thirds.
 - **Text+:** This is a more powerful title generator, offering advanced controls for animation, styling, and 3D effects. It uses the Fusion page's capabilities without requiring you to leave the Edit page.
3. **Add to Timeline:** Drag your chosen title template from the Effects Library onto a video track above your main footage on the timeline. Position it where you want the text to appear.
4. **Customize Text Properties:**
 - Select the title clip on the timeline. Go to the 'Inspector' panel (top right). If it is not visible, click the 'Inspector' icon (three sliders).
 - In the 'Video' tab of the Inspector, you will find controls for 'Title' (the actual text content), 'Font', 'Size', 'Color', 'Position', 'Tracking' (letter spacing), 'Line Spacing', and 'Background'.
 - For 'Text+' titles, you will see even more options, including 'Shading', 'Layout', and 'Transform' for advanced animations.
5. **Animate (Optional):** Keyframing allows you to animate text properties over time. For example, to make text fade in, set an 'Opacity' keyframe at 0% at the start of the clip, then another keyframe at 100% a few frames later. This creates a smooth fade. Practice adding a simple lower third with your name and title.

Common mistake: Using too many fonts or colors. Keep text consistent and legible. Simple is often best.

Using Multicam

Multicam editing is invaluable when you have recorded an event or interview with multiple cameras simultaneously. Resolve simplifies the process of synchronizing and switching between camera angles.

1. **Synchronize Clips:**
 - In the Media Pool, select all the clips from the different cameras that belong to the same multi-camera shot. Ensure they have clear audio, as this is the most common method for synchronization.
 - Right-click the selected clips and choose 'Create New Multicam Clip Using Selected Clips'.
 - In the dialog box, select 'Audio' for synchronization method. You can also use 'Timecode' or 'In Points' if available. Give your new Multicam clip a descriptive name.
2. **Edit with the Multicam Clip:**
 - Drag the newly created Multicam clip from the Media Pool onto your timeline on the Edit page.

- With the Multicam clip selected on the timeline, open the 'Inspector' and navigate to the 'Multicam' section. You will see a preview of all your camera angles.
 - Start playback of your timeline. As the video plays, click on the camera angle in the Multicam viewer that you want to be active at that moment. Resolve will automatically cut to that camera. You can also use keyboard shortcuts (1, 2, 3, etc.) to switch cameras.
3. **Refine Multicam Edits:** After making your initial cuts, you can go back and adjust the edit points between camera angles just like any other cut on the timeline. You can also right-click the Multicam clip on the timeline and choose 'Open in Timeline' to access the individual camera tracks for further adjustments.

Practice setting up a simple two-camera interview. Record yourself talking to an imaginary person from two different angles. Then, synchronize and cut between them.

Exploring DaVinci Resolve's AI Tools for Enhanced Production

Covers: DaVinci Resolve AI Tools Tutorial

DaVinci Resolve integrates powerful artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning capabilities through its DaVinci Neural Engine. These tools automate complex and time-consuming tasks, allowing editors to achieve professional results more efficiently. Understanding how to use these AI features can significantly enhance your video production workflow.

Key AI-Powered Features in DaVinci Resolve

1. **Magic Mask (Color Page):** This tool allows you to quickly isolate and track specific objects or people in your footage. Instead of manually rotoscoping frame by frame, you simply draw a line over the subject, and Magic Mask intelligently identifies and tracks it. This is invaluable for targeted color grading, applying effects to only a part of the image, or replacing backgrounds.
- **Procedure:** On the Color page, add a new Serial Node. In the 'Window' palette, select the Magic Mask icon (a person with a magic wand). Draw a rough stroke over your desired subject. Click the 'Track Forward' button. Resolve will analyze and create a mask. You can then adjust the mask's properties or apply corrections to only that isolated area.
2. **Object Removal (Fusion Page):** This AI tool helps eliminate unwanted objects from your shots. It analyzes the surrounding pixels and intelligently fills in the removed area, making the object disappear as if it were never there. This is perfect for removing stray microphones, wires, or distracting elements in the background.
- **Procedure:** On the Fusion page, add an 'Object Removal' node. Connect your media to it. Draw a mask around the object you want to remove. The node will then analyze and fill the area. Fine-tuning may be required for complex scenes.
3. **Face Refinement (Color Page):** Specifically designed for portraits and interviews, Face Refinement automatically identifies faces in your footage and provides controls to smooth skin, brighten eyes, whiten teeth, and even reshape facial features. This saves hours of manual touch-ups.

- **Procedure:** On the Color page, add a new Serial Node. In the 'OpenFX' library, search for 'Face Refinement'. Drag it onto your node. Resolve will detect faces. In the Inspector, you will find sliders to adjust various facial features.
4. **Scene Cut Detection (Edit Page/Media Page):** This feature automatically analyzes a single, continuous video file and identifies all the individual cuts within it. It then creates separate clips for each cut, allowing you to easily edit footage that was delivered as one long file.
- **Procedure:** Right-click a long clip in the Media Pool or on the timeline. Select 'Scene Cut Detection'. Resolve will analyze the clip and display detected cuts. You can then 'Add Cuts to Media Pool' or 'Add Cuts to Timeline'.
5. **Voice Isolation (Fairlight Page):** This audio AI tool isolates dialogue from background noise. It is incredibly effective at cleaning up recordings where unwanted sounds, such as traffic or hums, are present, making voices clearer and more prominent.
- **Procedure:** On the Fairlight page, select an audio clip. In the Inspector, navigate to the 'Audio' tab. Under 'FX', add 'Voice Isolation'. Adjust the 'Amount' slider to control the level of isolation.

These AI tools are not just for advanced users. They are designed to simplify tasks for everyone. Experiment with Magic Mask to isolate a subject and change its color, or try Voice Isolation on a noisy audio clip to hear the difference. The DaVinci Neural Engine is continuously improving, making these features more powerful with each update.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- DaVinci Resolve is a free, professional-grade software for video editing, color grading, visual effects, and audio post-production.
- The software is organized into dedicated pages (Media, Cut, Edit, Fusion, Color, Fairlight, Deliver) for different stages of post-production.
- The Cut page offers fast, streamlined editing, while the Edit page provides precise, detailed control over your timeline.
- Adding text involves selecting a title template from the Effects Library and customizing its properties in the Inspector panel.
- Multicam editing allows you to synchronize footage from multiple cameras and switch between angles smoothly on the timeline.
- DaVinci Resolve's AI tools, powered by the DaVinci Neural Engine, automate complex tasks like object tracking (Magic Mask), object removal, and audio cleanup (Voice Isolation).

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Answer these before moving on. Model answers are in the Answer Key at the back of this guide.

1. What are the primary advantages of using DaVinci Resolve for video editing, especially for beginners?

2. Briefly describe the main function of the Cut Page versus the Edit Page in DaVinci Resolve.
3. How do you add a basic text title to your video in DaVinci Resolve, and what is the difference between 'Text' and 'Text+'?
4. Explain the purpose of Multicam editing and how you would typically synchronize clips to create a Multicam clip.
5. Name two AI-powered tools in DaVinci Resolve and describe a practical use for each.

CHAPTER 2

Editing, Color, and Effects Fundamentals

This chapter guides you through the core functionalities of DaVinci Resolve, building a strong foundation for professional video production. You will learn to navigate the software's key pages, master essential editing techniques, and begin your path into color grading and visual effects. The material also covers practical aspects like adding voice-overs, generating subtitles, and optimizing your system for smooth playback.

By the end of this chapter, you will be proficient in handling various media types, applying creative adjustments, and preparing your projects for efficient workflow. This knowledge is crucial for anyone aiming to produce high-quality videos using DaVinci Resolve's powerful, free features.

DaVinci Resolve Essentials: Interface and Basic Editing

Covers: DaVinci Resolve Tutorial for Beginners (video, 39 min) · DaVinci Resolve Beginner Tutorial (15 Minutes) (video, 16 min)

DaVinci Resolve organizes its powerful features across several dedicated pages, each designed for a specific part of the post-production workflow. Understanding these pages is the first step to mastering the software. The primary pages you will use for basic editing are the Media Pool, Cut Page, and Edit Page.

The **Media Pool** is where you import and organize all your project assets: video clips, audio files, images, and graphics. To import media, you can drag and drop files directly into the Media Pool window or use the File > Import menu option. Good organization here saves significant time later. Create bins (folders) to categorize your footage, such as 'Video', 'Audio', and 'Graphics'.

The **Cut Page** is designed for fast, assembly-style editing. It features a dual timeline, allowing you to quickly review source clips and add them to your main timeline. You can perform quick cuts, append clips, insert them, or overwrite existing footage. The Smart Indicator helps you snap clips precisely. This page is ideal for initial rough cuts and swift edits.

The **Edit Page** offers a more traditional and detailed editing experience. Here, you have multiple video and audio tracks, giving you granular control over your timeline. To add a clip, drag it from the Media Pool onto a video track. Trimming clips involves dragging their edges on the timeline. You can split a clip by positioning the playhead and pressing Ctrl+B (Windows) or Command+B (macOS). Deleting a segment and closing the gap is achieved with a ripple delete, often by selecting the clip and pressing Shift+Delete.

Transitions smooth the change between two clips. To add a transition, go to the Effects Library, select 'Video Transitions', and drag your chosen transition onto the edit point between two clips. The duration of the transition can be adjusted by dragging its edges on the timeline. Common transitions include Cross Dissolve and Dip to Color.

The **Inspector** panel, usually on the top right, is crucial for adjusting clip properties. Select a clip on the timeline, and the Inspector will display its settings. You can modify parameters like position, scale,

rotation, opacity, and composite mode. For audio clips, you can adjust volume, pan, and apply basic effects. Familiarize yourself with these controls, as they are fundamental for refining your edits.

Practice Cues

1. **Import and Organize:** Create a new project. Import 5-10 video clips and 2-3 audio files. Organize them into separate bins within the Media Pool.
2. **Rough Cut on Cut Page:** Use the Cut Page to quickly assemble a sequence of your imported video clips, focusing on the order and main content. Do not worry about perfection.
3. **Refine on Edit Page:** Switch to the Edit Page. Trim the beginning and end of several clips. Split a clip in the middle and delete a section using ripple delete. Add a Cross Dissolve transition between two clips and adjust its duration.
4. **Adjust Clip Properties:** Select a clip on your timeline. Use the Inspector to change its scale, position it slightly off-center, and reduce its opacity to 75%. Observe the changes in the viewer.

Color Grading Fundamentals

Covers: DaVinci Resolve Color Grading for Beginners - Master the Basics (video, 30 min)

Color grading is the process of enhancing the aesthetic appeal of your footage, correcting color inaccuracies, and establishing a consistent look across your project. DaVinci Resolve's **Color Page** is a professional-grade environment for this task.

At the heart of the Color Page workflow are **Nodes**. Nodes are like layers or steps in your color correction process. Each node can hold a specific adjustment, allowing you to build complex corrections in a non-destructive, modular way. To add a new node, right-click in the Nodes panel and select 'Add Serial Node'. You connect nodes in a chain, with the output of one flowing into the input of the next. Common node types include Serial Nodes for sequential corrections, Parallel Mixers for combining multiple inputs, and Layer Mixers for stacking effects.

Scopes are essential tools for objectively analyzing your image's color and luminance values. They provide data that your eyes might miss. The most commonly used scopes are:

- **Waveform:** Shows the luminance (brightness) levels from left to right across your image. It helps identify overexposed or underexposed areas.
- **Vectorscope:** Displays color information, showing hue and saturation. It indicates color balance and skin tone accuracy.
- **Histogram:** Illustrates the distribution of pixels across different brightness levels, from shadows to highlights.

Primary Corrections involve adjusting the overall color and brightness of your image. These are typically done using the Color Wheels or the Primaries Bars. Key controls include:

- **Lift (Shadows):** Adjusts the darkest parts of your image.
- **Gamma (Midtones):** Affects the middle range of brightness.
- **Gain (Highlights):** Controls the brightest parts of your image.

- **Offset:** Shifts the entire image's color and brightness uniformly.
- **Contrast:** Increases or decreases the difference between light and dark areas.
- **Saturation:** Controls the intensity or vividness of colors.

Secondary Corrections allow you to target specific areas or colors within your image without affecting the rest. This is where the real magic happens for targeted adjustments.

- **Qualifiers:** These tools let you select a specific color (Hue, Saturation, Luminance or HSL) or a range of brightness (Luma Key) from your image. Once qualified, you can adjust only that selected area. Use the eyedropper tool to pick the color you want to isolate.
- **Power Windows:** These are shapes (circles, squares, custom polygons) that allow you to isolate and apply corrections to specific regions of your image. You can track these windows to follow moving subjects.

A typical color grading workflow might involve: first, primary corrections to balance exposure and white balance; second, secondary corrections to refine specific colors or areas (like skin tones or sky); and third, adding creative looks or styles.

Practice Cues

1. **Analyze with Scopes:** Load a video clip onto the Color Page. Open the Waveform, Vectorscope, and Histogram. Observe how they change as you make adjustments.
2. **Primary Correction:** Using the Color Wheels or Primaries Bars, adjust the Lift, Gamma, and Gain to balance the exposure of your clip. Aim for a balanced waveform that does not clip at the top or bottom. Adjust saturation to a pleasing level.
3. **Secondary Correction with HSL Qualifier:** Select a distinct color in your clip (e.g., a red shirt, a blue sky). Use the HSL Qualifier eyedropper to select that color. Turn on the 'Highlight' button to see your selection. Adjust the hue, saturation, or luminance of only that selected color without affecting the rest of the image.
4. **Secondary Correction with Power Window:** Add a new node. Draw a circular Power Window around a subject's face. Apply a slight increase in gamma or saturation only within that window to make the face stand out. Try tracking the window if the subject moves.

Visual Effects and Motion Graphics with Fusion and Green Screen

Covers: DaVinci Resolve Fusion Tutorial, Learn Motion Graphics & VFX (video, 33 min) · Green Screen in DaVinci Resolve 20 (FREE): Fast and Pro Shooting and Keying Tips (video, 14 min)

DaVinci Resolve's **Fusion Page** is a powerful node-based compositing environment for creating visual effects (VFX) and motion graphics. Unlike layer-based editing, Fusion uses nodes connected in a flowchart-like structure, offering immense flexibility and control.

To access Fusion, select a clip on your Edit Page timeline and click the Fusion icon at the bottom of the interface. You will see a default setup with a **MediaIn** node (your clip) and a **MediaOut** node (the output back to the Edit Page). All effects and operations are performed by adding nodes between these two.

To add a node, press Shift+Spacebar to open the 'Select Tool' dialog, type the name of the tool you need (e.g., 'Text+', 'Merge', 'Transform'), and press Enter. Connect the output of one node to the input of another. For example, to add text, insert a **Text+** node between **MediaIn** and **MediaOut** by dragging it onto the connection line, or by connecting its output to a **Merge** node's foreground input, and your **MediaIn** to the **Merge** node's background input. The **Merge** node combines multiple inputs into a single output.

Motion graphics often involve animating properties of text or shapes. Select a **Text+** node. In the Inspector, find properties like 'Size', 'Position', or 'Rotation'. Right-click on the parameter name and select 'Animate' or 'Modify With' > 'Keyframes'. This adds a keyframe at the current playhead position. Move the playhead, change the value, and another keyframe is automatically set, creating an animation.

Green Screen Keying, also known as chroma keying, is a fundamental VFX technique for removing a solid color background (typically green or blue) to replace it with another image or video. DaVinci Resolve offers robust tools for this on the Fusion Page.

Shooting Tips for Green Screen

1. **Even Lighting:** The most critical factor is even lighting on the green screen itself. Avoid hot spots or shadows, as these make keying difficult.
2. **Subject Distance:** Keep your subject a few feet away from the green screen to prevent green spill (the green color reflecting onto the subject).
3. **Proper Exposure:** Expose your subject correctly. The green screen should be evenly lit, but not necessarily overexposed or underexposed.

Keying in Fusion

1. **Add Delta Keyer:** On the Fusion Page, select your green screen clip's **MediaIn** node. Press Shift+Spacebar and search for 'Delta Keyer'. Add it after your **MediaIn** node.
2. **Pick Screen Color:** In the Delta Keyer's Inspector, use the eyedropper tool next to 'Background Color' to sample the green screen color directly from the viewer. Pick a mid-tone green area.
3. **Refine the Key:** Adjust the 'Threshold', 'Clean Black', and 'Clean White' parameters to remove the green background completely while preserving your subject's edges. Use the 'Matte' output view to see a black and white representation of your key, where white is opaque and black is transparent.
4. **Spill Suppression:** Green spill can appear as a faint green outline on your subject. The Delta Keyer often has a 'Spill Suppression' control. Increase this value carefully to remove the green tint without desaturating your subject.
5. **Garbage Matte:** If there are objects or crew visible outside the green screen area, add a **Polygon Mask** node before the Delta Keyer. Connect its output to the Delta Keyer's mask input. Draw a shape around your subject to 'garbage matte' out unwanted areas before the keyer processes the image.

After keying, you can connect your keyed subject to the foreground input of a **Merge** node and your desired background image or video to the background input of the same **Merge** node. This composites your subject onto the new background.

Practice Cues

1. **Simple Text Animation:** On the Fusion Page, add a **Text+** node. Animate its position to move from off-screen to the center. Add a second animation to change its color over time.
2. **Green Screen Key:** Import a green screen clip and a background image. Apply the Delta Keyer to the green screen clip. Use the eyedropper to select the green. Adjust 'Threshold' and 'Clean Black/White' to get a clean matte. Add a background image and composite them together.
3. **Refine Key and Add Mask:** With your keyed green screen clip, experiment with 'Spill Suppression'. If your green screen footage has elements outside the main screen, add a **Polygon Mask** to remove them before keying.

Audio and Text: Voice-overs and Subtitles

Covers: How to Add Voice Over to a Video in DaVinci Resolve (video, 10 min) · Automatic Subtitles in the FREE Version of DaVinci Resolve (video, 3 min)

Audio is half the story in video production. DaVinci Resolve provides robust tools for recording voice-overs and managing audio. The **Fairlight Page** is dedicated to audio post-production, but basic voice-over recording can also be done directly on the Edit Page.

Recording a Voice-Over

1. **Setup Audio Input:** Before recording, ensure your microphone is properly connected and recognized by your computer. In DaVinci Resolve, go to DaVinci Resolve > Preferences > System > Video and Audio I/O. Select your microphone as the input device.
2. **Prepare a Track:** On the Edit Page, add a new audio track by right-clicking in the track header area and selecting 'Add Track' > 'Mono'. Name it 'Voice Over'.
3. **Arm for Recording:** On your new voice-over track, click the 'R' button (Record Enable) in the track header. This arms the track for recording. You should see audio input levels in the meters.
4. **Monitor Audio (Optional):** To hear yourself as you record, enable monitoring. This usually involves clicking the speaker icon next to the 'R' button. Adjust your microphone gain to avoid clipping (audio distortion).
5. **Start Recording:** Position the playhead where you want the voice-over to begin. Click the record button in the transport controls (or press F9). Speak clearly into your microphone. Click the stop button (or press F10) when finished.
6. **Basic Adjustments:** After recording, your voice-over clip appears on the timeline. You can adjust its volume by dragging the horizontal line on the clip. Add fades by dragging the small fade handles at the top corners of the clip. For more advanced adjustments, switch to the Fairlight Page.

Adding Subtitles

Subtitles make your videos accessible and can improve viewer engagement. DaVinci Resolve offers both manual and automatic subtitle generation.

Manual Subtitle Creation:

1. **Add Subtitle Track:** On the Edit Page, right-click in the track header area and select 'Add Subtitle Track'.
2. **Create Subtitle:** Place the playhead where you want the subtitle to appear. Press Alt+C (Windows) or Option+C (macOS) to create a new subtitle clip. Double-click the subtitle clip to open the Inspector. Type your text into the 'Text' field.
3. **Adjust Duration and Positioning:** Drag the ends of the subtitle clip on the timeline to match the duration of the spoken dialogue. Use the Inspector to adjust font, size, color, background, and position of the subtitle. Consistency in style is important.

Automatic Subtitle Generation (Speech to Text): DaVinci Resolve's free version includes a powerful speech-to-text feature for automatic subtitle generation.

1. **Select Clips:** Select the audio or video clips on your timeline for which you want to generate subtitles.
2. **Generate Subtitles:** Go to the 'Timeline' menu at the top, select 'Create Subtitles From Audio'.
3. **Review and Correct:** DaVinci Resolve will analyze the audio and create a subtitle track. This process is highly accurate but not perfect. Carefully review the generated subtitles for any errors in transcription, punctuation, or timing. Double-click any subtitle clip to edit its text in the Inspector.
4. **Export Subtitles:** Once satisfied, you can export your subtitles as a separate file (e.g., SRT) from the Deliver Page or burn them directly into your video.

Practice Cues

1. **Record a Voice-Over:** Prepare a short video clip. Set up your microphone. Record a voice-over describing the actions in the video. Adjust the volume of the voice-over to blend with any existing background music.
2. **Manual Subtitles:** Create a short video with some dialogue. Manually add two or three subtitle clips, typing out the dialogue. Adjust their duration and position. Change the font and color of the subtitles.
3. **Automatic Subtitles:** Take a video clip with clear speech. Use the 'Create Subtitles From Audio' feature. Review the generated subtitles and correct any inaccuracies. Adjust the timing of one subtitle to better match the speech.

Optimizing Performance in DaVinci Resolve

Covers: How to Fix Laggy Playback in DaVinci Resolve (video, 11 min)

Laggy playback is a common frustration, especially when working with high-resolution footage, complex effects, or on less powerful hardware. DaVinci Resolve offers several strategies to improve performance and ensure a smooth editing experience.

Common Causes of Laggy Playback

1. **High-Resolution Footage:** 4K, 6K, or 8K footage requires significant processing power.
2. **Codec Complexity:** Heavily compressed codecs (like H.264/H.265 from DSLRs or mirrorless cameras) are harder for computers to decode in real-time than less compressed, editor-friendly codecs.
3. **Multiple Effects and Color Grades:** Each effect or node adds to the processing load.

4. **Insufficient Hardware:** Limited RAM, a slow CPU, an older GPU, or a slow hard drive can all contribute to poor performance.

Solutions for Smoother Playback

1. **Proxy Media:** This is one of the most effective solutions. Proxy media are lower-resolution, editor-friendly versions of your original high-resolution clips. You edit with these lightweight proxies, and DaVinci Resolve automatically links back to your original full-resolution media for final export.
 - **Generate Proxies:** In the Media Pool, select your clips. Right-click and choose 'Generate Proxy Media'. DaVinci Resolve will create optimized versions in the background.
 - **Toggle Proxies:** On the Playback menu, select 'Proxy Handling' > 'Prefer Proxies' (or 'Prefer Camera Originals' to switch back). You can also set 'Proxy Resolution' to a lower percentage like 25% or 50% for even lighter files.
2. **Optimized Media:** Similar to proxies, Optimized Media converts your original footage into a more efficient codec (like DNxHR or ProRes) that is easier for your computer to process in real-time. This is useful if you want to work with higher quality intermediate files than typical proxies, or if you prefer to keep all media within the project folder.
 - **Generate Optimized Media:** Select clips in the Media Pool or on the timeline. Right-click and choose 'Generate Optimized Media'.
 - **Toggle Optimized Media:** In the Playback menu, select 'Optimized Media' > 'On' or 'Off'.
3. **Render Cache:** DaVinci Resolve can pre-render sections of your timeline that are computationally intensive (e.g., clips with many effects or complex color grades) and store them as temporary files. When you play back that section, DaVinci Resolve uses the pre-rendered cache instead of processing it in real-time.
 - **Enable Cache:** Go to Playback > Render Cache. Choose 'Smart' (Resolve automatically caches areas that cause slowdowns) or 'User' (you manually select clips to cache).
 - **Cache Indicators:** A red line above a clip on the timeline indicates an unrendered section. A blue line means it is cached and ready for smooth playback. A green line means it is currently being cached.
4. **Playback Settings Adjustments:**
 - **Timeline Proxy Mode:** In the Playback menu, set 'Timeline Proxy Mode' to 'Half Resolution' or 'Quarter Resolution'. This reduces the resolution of the playback viewer, easing the load on your GPU.
 - **Render Speed:** In DaVinci Resolve Preferences > System > Performance, you can adjust settings related to GPU processing. Ensure your GPU drivers are up to date.
5. **Hardware Considerations:**
 - **GPU:** A powerful graphics card with sufficient VRAM is crucial for Resolve's performance.
 - **RAM:** 16GB is a good minimum, 32GB or more is recommended for complex projects.
 - **Storage:** Fast SSDs (Solid State Drives) are highly recommended for your project files and media, especially NVMe SSDs for optimal speed. Avoid editing directly from slow external hard drives.

By combining these techniques, you can significantly improve your DaVinci Resolve experience, even on moderately powerful systems.

Practice Cues

1. **Generate Proxy Media:** Open a project with some high-resolution clips. Select a few clips in the Media Pool and generate proxy media for them. Toggle 'Prefer Proxies' on and off in the Playback menu to observe the difference in playback performance.
2. **Use Render Cache:** Add a complex effect or several color grading nodes to a clip on your timeline. Enable 'Smart' Render Cache. Observe the timeline cache indicator turning blue. Play back the cached section and notice the smoother performance.
3. **Adjust Playback Resolution:** While working on a project, set 'Timeline Proxy Mode' to 'Half Resolution'. Compare the playback smoothness with 'Full Resolution'. Note the slight reduction in viewer quality versus improved performance.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- DaVinci Resolve's workflow is organized across dedicated pages for media, editing, color, Fusion, and audio.
- The Edit Page provides precise control over clip placement, trimming, and the application of transitions.
- Color grading uses nodes for modular adjustments and scopes for objective analysis of image values.
- The Fusion Page enables node-based visual effects and motion graphics, including powerful green screen keying.
- Voice-overs can be recorded directly on the Edit Page, and subtitles can be generated automatically from audio.
- Optimizing playback performance involves using proxy media, optimized media, and the render cache.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Answer these before moving on. Model answers are in the Answer Key at the back of this guide.

1. Describe the primary functions of the Cut Page and the Edit Page in DaVinci Resolve.
2. What role do nodes play in color grading, and name two types of scopes used on the Color Page.
3. Explain the concept of green screen keying and two best practices for shooting green screen footage.
4. How can you add a voice-over to your video in DaVinci Resolve, and what is a key benefit of automatic subtitles?
5. Name two methods to improve laggy playback performance in DaVinci Resolve.

CHAPTER 3

Full Courses by Casey Faris: Deep Track for Edit, Color, and Fusion

This chapter builds on your foundational knowledge of DaVinci Resolve by providing a deep track into its core functionalities. Curated from comprehensive courses by Blackmagic-certified trainer Casey Faris, this guide offers detailed instruction on advanced editing techniques, professional color grading, and powerful visual effects with Fusion. It is designed to equip you with the skills to produce high-quality videos entirely within Resolve.

You will learn to navigate Resolve's diverse pages with confidence, apply precise color corrections using nodes and scopes, and create compelling visual effects through Fusion's node-based compositing. This chapter emphasizes practical, step-by-step procedures, ensuring you can apply these techniques to your own projects.

Getting Started with DaVinci Resolve

Covers: 1. Introduction to DaVinci Resolve - [Full Course] for Beginners (2026) · 2. Making Videos in Resolve 21 - Full Course for Beginners · 6. RESOLVE 18 CRASH COURSE - Davinci Resolve 18 Walkthrough [BEGINNER]

Chapter 3 focuses on practical application within DaVinci Resolve, building a strong foundation for video production. This chapter consolidates essential beginner courses by certified trainer Casey Faris. It provides a comprehensive guide to navigating Resolve's interface, mastering fundamental editing techniques, and understanding the core workflow from media import to final export.

Setting Up Your Project

Before any editing begins, you must create a project. Open DaVinci Resolve and click "New Project" on the Project Manager screen. Give your project a descriptive name. Once inside, the first step is to configure your project settings. Go to "File" > "Project Settings" (or Shift+9). The Master Settings tab is crucial. Here, set your Timeline Resolution (e.g., 1920x1080 for HD, 3840x2160 for 4K) and your Timeline Frame Rate (e.g., 24, 25, 30, or 60 frames per second). These settings should match your source footage and your intended delivery format. Inconsistent frame rates can cause playback issues or jerky motion. Always save your project frequently using Ctrl+S (Windows) or Cmd+S (Mac).

Importing and Organizing Media

The Media page is your gateway for bringing footage into Resolve. You can drag and drop files from your computer's file explorer directly into the Media Pool. Alternatively, use the Media Storage browser on the left to navigate to your folders and drag clips into the Media Pool. Organize your clips into bins, which function like folders. Right-click in the Media Pool and select "New Bin" to create one. Name your bins logically, such as "Video," "Audio," "Music," or "Graphics." This organization becomes vital in larger projects.

Basic Editing on the Cut and Edit Pages

DaVinci Resolve offers two primary editing pages: Cut and Edit. The Cut page is designed for speed, ideal for quick assembly and basic trimming. It features dual timelines and intelligent editing tools. You can quickly add clips to your timeline by dragging them from the Media Pool or using insert and append functions. Trimming is intuitive, often done by dragging clip edges.

The Edit page provides more precise control. It is a traditional non-linear editor.

- **Adding Clips:** Drag clips from the Media Pool to your timeline.
- **Trimming:** Use the selection tool (A) to drag the start or end of a clip. For more advanced trimming, use the Trim Edit Mode (T) to perform ripple, roll, or slip edits.
- **Cutting:** Place the playhead where you want to cut and press Ctrl+B (Windows) or Cmd+B (Mac) to split a clip.
- **Moving Clips:** Drag clips along the timeline to reorder them.
- **Transitions:** Access the Effects Library (upper left) and drag a video transition (like a Cross Dissolve) between two clips. Adjust its duration by dragging its edges on the timeline.
- **Audio Adjustments:** Each clip has an audio waveform. You can adjust clip volume by dragging the horizontal line on the audio track up or down. For more detailed mixing, the Fairlight page offers professional audio tools.

A common mistake for beginners is to confuse the Cut and Edit pages. The Cut page is for rapid assembly, while the Edit page is for detailed, fine-tuned adjustments. Understand their distinct purposes. For example, if you need to perform a precise three-point edit or use multiple video tracks with complex layering, the Edit page is the better choice.

Exporting Your Video

Once your edit is complete, the Deliver page is where you render your final video.

1. **Select Export Preset:** Choose a common preset like "YouTube" or "Vimeo" for easy configuration.
2. **File Name and Location:** Give your video a name and choose where to save it.
3. **Video Settings:** Ensure your format (e.g., MP4), codec (e.g., H.264 or H.265), and resolution match your project settings and desired output quality. For social media, H.264 is a widely compatible choice.
4. **Add to Render Queue:** Click "Add to Render Queue."
5. **Start Render:** On the right panel, click "Start Render" to begin the export process.

Always review your exported video to check for any errors before sharing. Pay attention to the file size and quality.

Mastering Color Grading

Covers: 3. Full COLOR Page Tour for DaVinci Resolve Beginners

The Color page in DaVinci Resolve is a powerful environment for enhancing the visual appeal of your footage. It allows you to correct color imbalances, create specific moods, and ensure consistency across your entire project. Understanding its layout and primary tools is fundamental to achieving professional-looking results.

Navigating the Color Page

When you switch to the Color page, you will see several key areas:

- **Viewer:** Displays your current clip.
- **Nodes Panel:** This is where you build your color correction chain. Nodes process information sequentially.
- **Color Wheels/Sliders:** Tools for adjusting primary color and luminance.
- **Curves:** Fine-tune specific color ranges or luminance levels.
- **Qualifiers:** Select specific colors for secondary correction.
- **Power Windows:** Isolate areas in your image for localized adjustments.
- **Scopes:** Essential monitoring tools (Waveform, Vectorscope, Parade, Histogram) that provide objective data about your image's color and luminance values.

Understanding Nodes

Nodes are the building blocks of color grading in Resolve. Each node represents a step in your grading process.

- **Serial Node:** The most common type. It processes the image sequentially. To add one, press Alt+S (Windows) or Option+S (Mac).
- **Parallel Node:** Allows you to combine multiple grades simultaneously, useful for blending different effects.
- **Layer Node:** Stacks grades on top of each other, similar to layers in image editing software.

The power of nodes lies in their non-destructive nature and flexibility. You can easily reorder, disable, or delete nodes without affecting other parts of your grade. A typical workflow involves a primary correction node, followed by secondary correction nodes for specific adjustments.

Primary Color Correction

Primary corrections adjust the overall image. These are typically performed using the Color Wheels or the Primaries Bars.

- **Lift (Shadows):** Adjusts the dark areas of your image.
- **Gamma (Midtones):** Controls the mid-range brightness.
- **Gain (Highlights):** Affects the bright areas.
- **Offset:** Adjusts the entire image's brightness and color equally.
- **Temperature and Tint:** Correct white balance issues. Temperature adjusts blue/amber, while Tint adjusts green/magenta.

- **Contrast and Pivot:** Adjusts the difference between light and dark areas and where that adjustment pivots.
- **Saturation:** Controls the intensity of colors.

Procedure: Basic Primary Correction

1. Select a clip on your timeline and switch to the Color page.
2. Ensure you have a serial node selected (or create a new one with Alt+S).
3. Look at your scopes, especially the Waveform and RGB Parade.
4. Adjust the **Lift** wheel to bring your shadows down to an appropriate level without crushing blacks (aim for the bottom of the waveform).
5. Adjust the **Gain** wheel to bring your highlights up without clipping whites (aim for the top of the waveform).
6. Adjust the **Gamma** wheel to set the overall brightness and mood of your midtones.
7. Use the **Temperature** and **Tint** controls to correct any color casts. For example, if your image looks too warm, move the Temperature slider towards blue.
8. Adjust **Saturation** to make colors pop, but avoid over-saturating.

Secondary Color Correction

Secondary corrections target specific colors or areas.

- **Qualifiers (HSL, RGB, Luma):** Select a specific color or luminance range. Use the eyedropper tool to pick a color in the viewer. Refine the selection using the Hue, Saturation, and Luminance ranges. Once selected, you can adjust only that specific color.
- **Power Windows:** Create shapes (circles, squares, custom polygons) to isolate parts of your image. You can then apply a grade only within that window. These windows can be tracked to follow moving subjects.

Procedure: Using a Power Window

1. Add a new serial node (Alt+S).
2. Go to the Window palette (the square icon with a circle inside).
3. Select a shape, for example, a Circular Window.
4. Position and resize the window over the area you want to adjust (e.g., a face).
5. Make color adjustments within this node. Only the area inside the window will be affected.
6. To smooth the edge, increase the "Softness" control.
7. If the subject moves, use the Tracker palette (the crosshair icon) to analyze motion and automatically animate the window.

A common mistake is to over-correct. Subtle adjustments often yield better results. Always use your scopes to guide your decisions, as they provide objective data that your eyes might miss, especially in an uncalibrated viewing environment. Regularly toggle nodes on and off (Ctrl+D or Cmd+D) to see the impact of each adjustment.

Introduction to Visual Effects with Fusion

Covers: 4. DaVinci Resolve - The Fusion Crash Course [Perfect for Beginners!] · 5. The Art of Invisible VFX in DaVinci Resolve - Full Fusion VFX Course for FREE!

The Fusion page in DaVinci Resolve is a powerful node-based compositing environment for creating visual effects and motion graphics. Unlike layer-based editing, Fusion's node system allows for complex effects chains and precise control over every element. This section introduces the fundamental concepts and practical applications of Fusion, from basic compositing to invisible VFX.

Understanding the Fusion Interface

When you switch to the Fusion page, you will see:

- **Viewers:** Typically two viewers, allowing you to see the output of different nodes.
- **Nodes Editor:** The central workspace where you connect nodes to build your effect.
- **Tools Panel:** Contains various categories of nodes (e.g., Masks, Effects, Generators).
- **Inspector:** Displays parameters for the currently selected node, allowing you to adjust settings.
- **Keyframe Editor/Spline Editor:** For animating parameters over time.

The core principle is that data flows from left to right. Each node performs a specific operation, and the output of one node becomes the input for the next.

Essential Fusion Nodes

Several nodes are fundamental to almost every Fusion composition:

- **MediaIn:** Imports footage from your timeline into Fusion.
- **MediaOut:** Sends the final processed image back to your timeline.
- **Merge:** Combines two or more images. It has a Foreground (green input), Background (yellow input), and Effect Mask (blue input). The Foreground is placed over the Background.
- **Transform:** Moves, scales, or rotates an image.
- **Background:** Creates a solid color background.
- **Text+:** Generates text with extensive formatting and animation options.

Procedure: Basic Compositing with Merge Node

1. Drag a clip from your Media Pool onto the Fusion timeline (or select a clip on the Edit page and switch to Fusion). This automatically creates a **MediaIn** and **MediaOut** node.
2. Drag another clip (e.g., a background image) into the Nodes Editor. This creates another **MediaIn** node.
3. Add a **Merge** node by pressing Shift+Spacebar and typing "Merge," then pressing Enter.
4. Connect the first **MediaIn** (your foreground subject) to the green (Foreground) input of the **Merge** node.
5. Connect the second **MediaIn** (your background) to the yellow (Background) input of the **Merge** node.

6. Connect the output of the **Merge** node to the **MediaOut** node.
7. To view a node's output, drag its output square to one of the viewer windows (indicated by small circles 1 and 2 below each viewer). For example, drag the **Merge** node's output to Viewer 1.
8. Select the **MediaIn** node connected to the Foreground input of the **Merge** node. Use a **Transform** node (add it between **MediaIn** and **Merge**) to scale or position the foreground element.

Keying and Invisible VFX

Keying is the process of removing a solid color background (like green screen or blue screen) to make it transparent, allowing you to composite the foreground subject onto a new background.

- **Delta Keyer:** A powerful node for chroma keying.

Procedure: Green Screen Keying

1. Ensure your foreground clip (the green screen footage) is connected to a **MediaIn** node.
2. Add a **Delta Keyer** node (Shift+Spacebar, type "Delta Keyer"). Place it between the **MediaIn** (foreground) and the **Merge** node's foreground input.
3. Connect the output of **MediaIn** to the **Delta Keyer**'s input.
4. Select the **Delta Keyer** node. In the Inspector, use the eyedropper tool next to "Background Color" and click on the green screen in your viewer.
5. Adjust the "Threshold," "Clean Plate," and "Spill Suppression" settings in the Inspector to refine the key, removing green spill and cleaning up edges.
6. Connect the output of the **Delta Keyer** to the green (Foreground) input of your **Merge** node.
7. Connect your desired background image to the yellow (Background) input of the **Merge** node.

Tracking and Rotoscoping Basics

- **Tracker:** Used to follow the motion of elements in your footage. This data can then be applied to other nodes (like Power Windows in the Color page or Transform nodes in Fusion) to make effects stick to moving objects.
- **Rotoscoping:** Manually creating masks around moving objects frame by frame to isolate them. This is often used when chroma keying is not possible. Shape nodes (e.g., Polygon) can be connected to the blue (Effect Mask) input of other nodes.

A common mistake in Fusion is not understanding the node flow. Always follow the connections to see how data is being processed. Disconnected nodes will not affect your final output. Use the viewers to inspect the output of individual nodes to debug your compositions. Fusion requires patience and a systematic approach.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- DaVinci Resolve's workflow integrates media management, editing, color grading, VFX, and audio mixing into a single application.
- The Cut page offers speed for assembly, while the Edit page provides precision for detailed adjustments.
- Nodes are the foundation of color grading and visual effects, allowing for non-destructive and flexible adjustments.
- Scopes are essential tools for objective analysis in color grading, preventing subjective errors.
- Fusion's node-based system enables complex visual effects and motion graphics by defining a clear data flow.
- Keying and tracking are powerful Fusion techniques for compositing and integrating elements into your footage.
- Consistent project settings and organized media are crucial for an efficient and error-free production workflow.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Answer these before moving on. Model answers are in the Answer Key at the back of this guide.

1. What is the primary difference between the Cut page and the Edit page in DaVinci Resolve, and when would you choose one over the other?
2. Explain the concept of nodes in DaVinci Resolve's Color page. Why are they beneficial for color grading?
3. What are scopes, and why are they important in the color grading process? Name two common types of scopes.
4. Describe the basic workflow for compositing two images in the Fusion page using a Merge node.
5. What is keying, and what Fusion node is commonly used for green screen removal?
6. Before exporting your final video, what are three critical settings you should verify on the Deliver page?

REFERENCE

Glossary

Chroma keying

A visual effects technique (often called green screen or blue screen) used to remove a solid color background from footage, allowing it to be replaced with another image or video.

Cut page

A streamlined editing interface in DaVinci Resolve designed for rapid assembly and quick edits.

Davinci neural engine

DaVinci Resolve's advanced AI and machine learning engine that powers intelligent features like Magic Mask, Face Refinement, and Scene Cut Detection.

Davinci resolve

A professional video editing, color correction, visual effects, and audio post-production software suite, available in both free and paid versions.

Edit page

The traditional non-linear editing (NLE) environment in DaVinci Resolve, offering precise control over clips, tracks, effects, and transitions.

Keying

The process of removing a specific color (like green or blue screen) from footage to make it transparent, allowing for compositing.

Media pool

The area within DaVinci Resolve where all imported media files (video, audio, images) for a project are stored and organized.

Merge node

A fundamental Fusion node used to combine multiple images, typically placing a foreground element over a background.

Multicam clip

A special type of clip created in DaVinci Resolve that combines synchronized footage from multiple cameras, allowing for easy switching between angles during editing.

Node

A fundamental building block in DaVinci Resolve's Color and Fusion pages, representing a single operation or adjustment in a visual workflow chain.

Primary correction

Global adjustments to an entire image's color and brightness, typically using controls like Lift, Gamma, Gain, and Saturation.

Proxy media

Lower-resolution, editor-friendly versions of original high-resolution clips, used during editing to improve playback performance without affecting final output quality.

Render cache

A system that pre-renders computationally intensive sections of a timeline and stores them as temporary files, enabling smoother playback of complex effects or color grades.

Scope

Visual tools on the Color Page (e.g., Waveform, Vectorscope, Histogram) that objectively display image characteristics like brightness, color, and contrast data.

Scopes

Visual monitoring tools (e.g., Waveform, Vectorscope, Parade) that provide objective information about the color and luminance values of your video signal.

Secondary correction

Targeted adjustments to specific colors or areas within an image, often achieved using Qualifiers or Power Windows.

Timeline

The horizontal representation of your video project, where clips are arranged, trimmed, and edited in sequence.

REFERENCE

Answer Key

Chapter 1: Introduction to DaVinci Resolve and Core Editing Concepts

1. What are the primary advantages of using DaVinci Resolve for video editing, especially for beginners?

DaVinci Resolve offers professional-grade editing, color grading, VFX, and audio tools all within a single application. Its free version provides extensive features, making it accessible to beginners without compromising on industry-standard capabilities. This allows new editors to learn comprehensive workflows without upfront software costs.

2. Briefly describe the main function of the Cut Page versus the Edit Page in DaVinci Resolve.

The Cut Page is designed for speed and efficiency, ideal for quickly assembling a rough cut with its dual timelines and smart tools. The Edit Page provides a traditional, more granular non-linear editing experience, offering precise control over trimming, multi-track editing, and detailed adjustments.

3. How do you add a basic text title to your video in DaVinci Resolve, and what is the difference between 'Text' and 'Text+'?

To add text, go to the Effects Library on the Edit page, then drag a title template onto a video track above your footage. 'Text' is for simple text overlays with basic customization. 'Text+' offers more advanced controls, including animation, 3D effects, and deeper styling options, using Fusion page capabilities.

4. Explain the purpose of Multicam editing and how you would typically synchronize clips to create a Multicam clip.

Multicam editing is used to manage and switch between footage recorded simultaneously by multiple cameras. You typically synchronize clips by selecting them in the Media Pool, right-clicking, and choosing 'Create New Multicam Clip'. The most common synchronization method is 'Audio', where Resolve analyzes the sound from each clip to align them perfectly.

5. Name two AI-powered tools in DaVinci Resolve and describe a practical use for each.

One AI tool is **Magic Mask**, found on the Color page. You can use it to quickly isolate a person or object by drawing a line, then apply a color correction only to that specific element. Another is **Voice Isolation** on the Fairlight page, which effectively removes background noise from dialogue, making speech clearer in noisy recordings.

Chapter 2: Editing, Color, and Effects Fundamentals

1. Describe the primary functions of the Cut Page and the Edit Page in DaVinci Resolve.

The Cut Page is designed for rapid assembly and rough cutting, featuring a streamlined interface and dual timelines for quick source clip review. The Edit Page offers a more traditional and detailed editing

environment with multiple tracks, granular control over clip properties, and precise manipulation of transitions and effects.

2. What role do nodes play in color grading, and name two types of scopes used on the Color Page.

Nodes serve as individual steps or layers for color corrections, allowing for a modular and non-destructive workflow. Two types of scopes used on the Color Page are the Waveform, which displays luminance levels, and the Vectorscope, which shows color hue and saturation information.

3. Explain the concept of green screen keying and two best practices for shooting green screen footage.

Green screen keying is a VFX technique to remove a solid color background, typically green, to composite a subject onto a different background. Two best practices for shooting green screen footage are ensuring even lighting across the green screen to avoid shadows or hot spots, and maintaining sufficient distance between the subject and the screen to prevent color spill.

4. How can you add a voice-over to your video in DaVinci Resolve, and what is a key benefit of automatic subtitles?

You can add a voice-over by arming an audio track for recording on the Edit Page, selecting your microphone as the input device in preferences, and then pressing the record button. A key benefit of automatic subtitles is that they significantly improve video accessibility for viewers with hearing impairments or those who prefer to watch content without sound, while also saving time compared to manual transcription.

5. Name two methods to improve laggy playback performance in DaVinci Resolve.

Two effective methods to improve laggy playback performance are generating proxy media, which creates lightweight versions of your clips for editing, and utilizing the render cache, which pre-renders complex sections of your timeline for smooth playback. Adjusting the timeline proxy mode to a lower resolution is another helpful technique.

Chapter 3: Full Courses by Casey Faris: Deep Track for Edit, Color, and Fusion

1. What is the primary difference between the Cut page and the Edit page in DaVinci Resolve, and when would you choose one over the other?

The Cut page is designed for speed and quick assembly of clips, featuring dual timelines and intelligent tools for rapid editing. The Edit page offers more traditional, precise control over individual clips, multiple tracks, and detailed adjustments. You would use the Cut page for initial rough cuts or short-form content, and the Edit page for fine-tuning, complex layering, and intricate edits.

2. Explain the concept of nodes in DaVinci Resolve's Color page. Why are they beneficial for color grading?

Nodes are individual processing steps in the Color page's workflow. Each node performs a specific color adjustment or effect. They are beneficial because they allow for non-destructive grading, meaning you can easily modify, disable, or reorder adjustments without affecting other parts of your grade. This modular approach provides flexibility and control.

3. What are scopes, and why are they important in the color grading process? Name two common types of scopes.

Scopes are analytical tools that provide objective, quantifiable data about the color and luminance of your video signal. They are crucial because they help you make accurate color decisions, identify issues like clipping or color casts, and ensure broadcast compliance, even when your monitor might be uncalibrated. Two common types are the Waveform (shows luminance and color distribution vertically) and the Vectorscope (shows color hue and saturation).

4. Describe the basic workflow for compositing two images in the Fusion page using a Merge node.

To composite two images with a Merge node, you first import both images as **MediaIn** nodes. Then, you add a **Merge** node. Connect the image you want as the foreground to the **Merge** node's green input and the background image to its yellow input. Finally, connect the output of the **Merge** node to the **MediaOut** node to send the composite back to the timeline.

5. What is keying, and what Fusion node is commonly used for green screen removal?

Keying is the process of isolating a subject from a solid color background (like green or blue) by making that background transparent. This allows the subject to be placed onto a different background. The **Delta Keyer** node is commonly used in Fusion for efficient and high-quality green screen removal.

6. Before exporting your final video, what are three critical settings you should verify on the Deliver page?

Before exporting, you should verify the **File Name and Location** to ensure your video is saved correctly. You must also check the **Format and Codec** (e.g., MP4, H.264) for compatibility and quality. Finally, confirm the **Resolution and Frame Rate** match your project settings and intended delivery platform.

CLOSING

Where to Go Next

Upon completing this course, continue practicing your skills regularly. The best way to consolidate your knowledge is by working on your own projects. Create short videos, edit family footage, or produce content for social media. Each new project offers unique challenges and learning opportunities.

Experiment with different types of footage and explore advanced features within DaVinci Resolve. Consider specializing in a particular area, such as advanced color grading or complex visual effects. The software offers extensive possibilities for continued growth.

To expand your expertise further, explore courses on advanced cinematography, sound design, or storytelling techniques. These subjects complement your technical skills in DaVinci Resolve, helping you become a more well-rounded video professional.



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