

5 Tips for Successful Windows Movie Maker Projects

This is the second in a series of articles from the Student Multimedia Studio intended to help faculty and students with their multimedia project assignments. For more information about Windows Movie Maker projects visit the SMS tutorials pages on our website at www.kent.edu/library/sms.

1. Create a project folder

Create a folder for your movie project and put all of the pictures, video and audio files that will be used in your Movie Maker project into that folder. Then **immediately** open and save the WMM project into the same folder before importing media into the project. This will help assure that you have all the media available for your project if you move from one computer to another.

2. Start and finish your WMM project on the same computer

When you move a WMM project from one computer to another, 3 problems might occur:

- **Compatibility issues.** Windows Vista and Windows XP versions of WMM are not compatible.
- **Collections disappear.** WMM projects saved on one computer will not reopen on a different computer with the collections you imported into the project. You will have to re-import all media if you reopen your WMM Project on a different computer.
- **Red X = missing files.** Sometimes red X's will appear on clips on the timeline. To fix this, right-click on one of the Red X'd clips and choose "Browse for Missing File". If you followed Tip #1 above, after finding just one missing file all of the rest will open.

3. WMM can only edit WMV and most AVI format videos

Quicktime movies (.MOV or .MP4), Real Media movies (.RM), and most MPEG movies (.MPG) are not supported by Windows Movie Maker. If you have this type of video, you must **convert** it to .WMV before you can import it into WMM. Free software for converting video formats to .WMV is **Prism Video Converter**, available on the web from www.nchsoftware.com/prism

4. Want BOTH narration AND music?

WMM only has one audio track for either music or narration, not both simultaneously. The work-around is to **save the movie** as a .WMV video file with either the narration or music, then start a new WMM project, import the **movie** you just saved into the new project then add the narration or music to the now empty music/narration track. Finally, resave the movie again with all of the audio.

5. Know the difference between saving a .mswmm "project" file and a .wmv "video" file

This may seem like a "duh" moment but there are literally hundreds of students and faculty who contact the SMS wanting to know why the .mswmm file they saved or were sent won't play the video that was created. Emphasize that, after saving their video, they need to try to play it. If the file opens and plays in Windows Media Player it's a "video". If the file reopens Windows Movie Maker, it's NOT a video... it's a "project"!