

The Basics

Editing is a mighty big topic to be fitting into a small How To Guide, so consider this a bare bones, basic manual on editing your road films.

To edit your own footage, you need at least three things: a computer, video editing software, a firewire, and a willingness to learn. Different computers have different types of video editing software, so it's important you become familiar with particular program you use. Play around with it, make some junk films, and get used to its controls and functions. After you've all your footage captured onto your computer and you're ready to start editing, we've got some great tips for you:

1. Watch and log your footage. Before you start cutting anything, watch everything you filmed. Organize your footage into activities and times. Take note of great shots and awesome quotes. This will be a huge help once you start putting together your film.
2. Edit your interviews first. Consider your interviews the meat and potatoes of your indie roadtrip video. Everything else is simply secondary. Check below for more detailed tips on interview editing—because it's just a whole different ballgame!
3. Surround your interviews with b-roll. What's b-roll, you ask? In RTN language, b-roll is pretty much all the footage that is not an actual interview, (i.e. eating a hamburger,

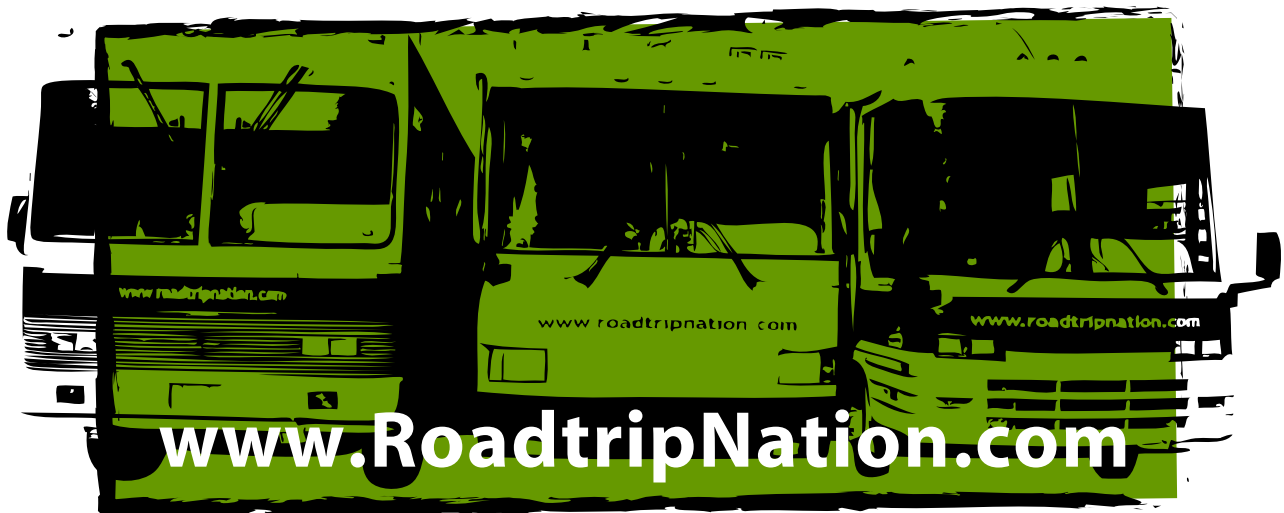
driving to an interview, brushing your teeth, etc). Once you have your interviews cut to the right length (anywhere from 1-5 minutes), use your b-roll to stitch your entire piece together. Your interviews are like the skeleton of your film, and your b-roll should build around that interview frame, creating transitions from interview to interview, and giving your audience a feel for your entire trip.

Keep in mind: though b-roll comes second to interviews, make sure to showcase those memorable moments on the road—when you changed your flat tire, when ate your first bowl of grits—because, in a way, those moments can be equally amazing for viewers who are thinking about hitting the road themselves.

Editing The Interview

So, you're back from your trip and staring at a few tapes worth of footage from your interviews. Let's get to editing!

1. Decide which interviews you want to focus on editing. Try to remember which interviews were great—and which interviews weren't. Editing an interview takes quite a bit of time, so you want to make sure the interview is worth editing in the first place. Most interviews are worth editing, because



even if they were off-topic for 95% of the time, that other 5% will make a great addition to your indie roadtrip video.

2. Map out their story. Now that you know which interviews you want to edit, pick one and start watching it carefully. Take note of what subjects and issues the person delves into, and try to form a rough storyline of their life road.
3. Begin cutting out parts of the interview that aren't essential to the storyline you've created. Be sure to keep any great bits of advice that relate to their story.
4. Think of it as a radio show. Don't worry about the visuals at this point, just make sure the parts of the leader's story come together to form a coherent whole.
5. Cut the interview down to the bare essentials. In most cases, each interview is going to end up a short 1 – 5 minutes max. An interview that was originally 30 minutes needs at least 25 minutes cut out. So, as you're thinning out the material, try to keep a fluid, compelling storyline using only the best quotes available. And don't do it all in one shot; it usually takes an editor several passes and screenings to be able to cut down the material.

Tip: if you're stuck or want feedback on your interview-in-progress, ask a friend or family member to watch it for you. Explain to them that it's not yet finished, and ask them for feedback: did the leader's story make sense? Which part was your favorite? Did it get boring in any particular area? Did the ending bring you closure? Having a different set of eyes look at your work can make all the difference!

6. After you've got each of your interviews down to an acceptable time, start adding in b-roll! You can use your b-roll to fill in the

gaps between the separate interviews and create smooth transitions.

Keep in mind: every interview has its own strengths and weaknesses. Some interviews offer only a few great quotes of advice, others maybe provide an inspiring story that lasts for five minutes. Each interview will require a different style of editing, so edit each in a way you feel showcases its best qualities.

How To Edit For Broadband

For the most part, indie roadtrip videos will be edited for the web. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Keep the visuals simple. Remember these videos will be running on a small part of the web page and won't have the clarity of a TV set.
- Close-ups work better than wide-shots.
- Sound can be a challenge (computer audio usually sucks), so make sure you're using the clearest audio possible.
- Use well-lit footage. Compressed video ends up looking darker, so it's important that the footage you use is light enough to be seen.
- Shorter is better. In the world of internet video, attention spans are like Oompa Loompas: they're short. So get to the point quickly!