

Organizing your Footage

Proper organization of your footage will save you hours, days, or (if you're considering a career as a filmmaker or editor) possibly even months of frustration and heartache.

If you have just downloaded your footage onto your computer, there is a good chance the file names are long, non-sensical strings of letters and numerals that mean very little to you right now. **STOP.**

Before you do anything else with your project, take a few minutes to rename those files.

Things to consider when naming files...

Your Computer's Needs

Certain symbols are difficult for computers to understand while trying to read your file. If you use symbols like (.) or (') in your file name it is possible that your editing software will not be able to read it.

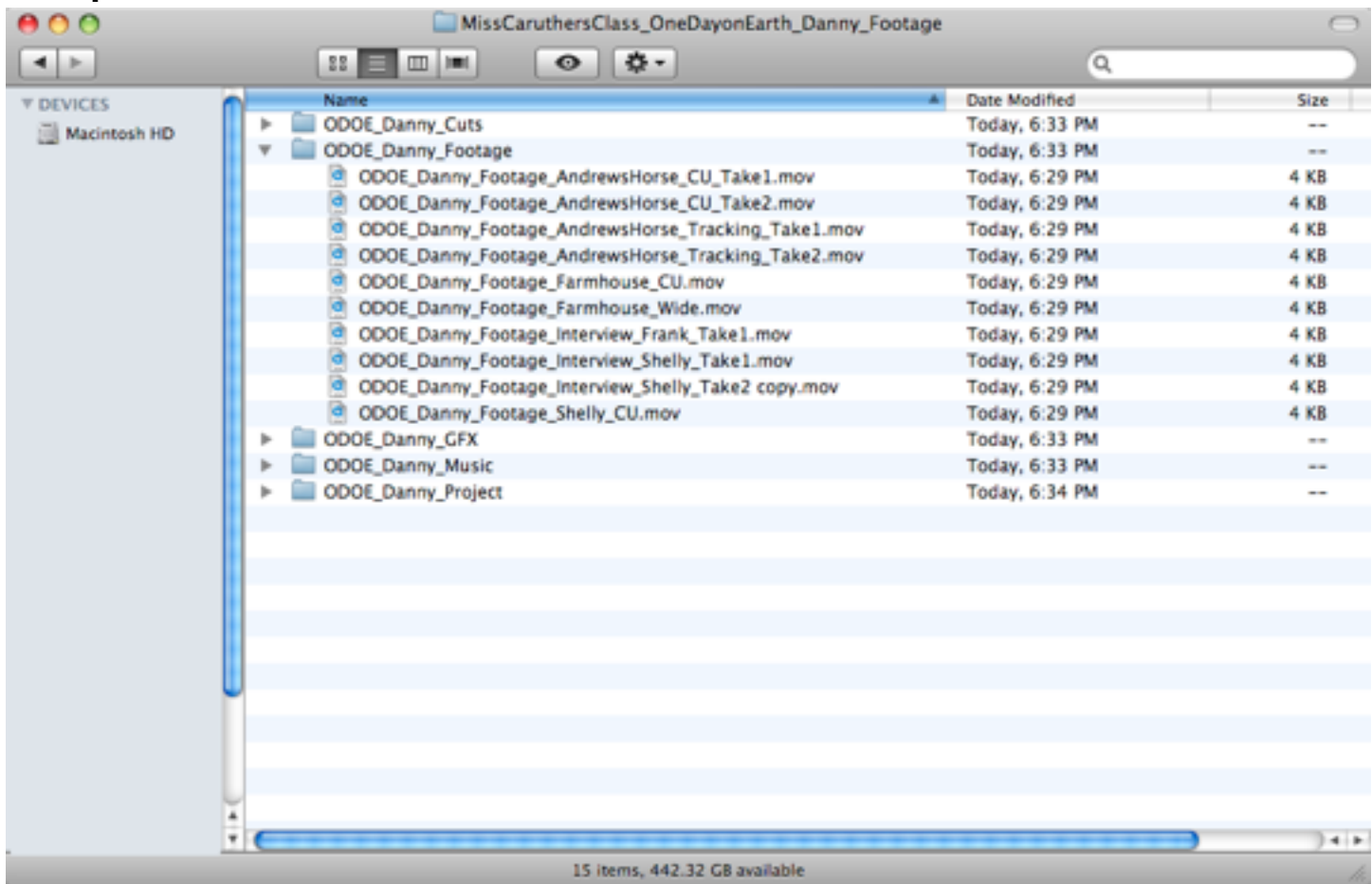
For this reason, when naming their files, professional editors stick to letters, numerals, and the underscore symbol "_": you can type it by holding "shift" and pressing the "-" found to the right of "0" on most keyboards.

Your Needs

To stay organized in post-production, you will want to be as consistent as possible while choosing your names. A standard best-practice among editors is to go from least to most specific in all of your file names.

Lesson 6 Worksheet

Example: Look at how these files are named.



In this example Danny is using the abbreviation 'ODOE' for One Day on Earth. This comes first because it is the name of the project, and therefore the least specific.

The next term is "Danny." This is the participant's name. Since Danny is sharing this computer with other students doing their own projects, this level of specificity defines which student created the clip.

Inside of Danny's folder, he has separate folders for the following file types:

Cuts - Every time you export a version of your completed piece, this is a cut. The first ones are typically called **rough cuts**, and your final version is called the **final cut**. There can be many cuts in between.

Footage - These are all of Danny's shots, also called *raw footage*. His **naming convention** starts: ODOE_Danny_Footage, and he continues to get more specific by listing the subject, then the shot type, and then the take. Notice that he has a separate category for interviews. Why do you suppose that is?

GFX - Graphics such as text overlays, photographs, or other images to be used in his piece should be stored in a separate folder.

Lesson 6 Worksheet

Music (or Sound) Any songs, voice over, or sound effects that Danny may want to use in his piece are kept here.

Project or Project files - When you are working within an editing program, all of your work will be stored as a file. This is where you will keep it. If you are participating individually, through a class, there should be one project file for each of your classmates.

Practice writing out name files, here's an example: ODOE_yourname_topic_shot

Write a file name here: _____

Now add low dashes between them so you can easily read it like this:

ODOE_DANNY_BIRDS_CU

Practice making more names and write them down here:

