# First steps in constructing a sequence:

## Preparatory steps:

This series of guidelines assumes that you have ready and available in a single folder (or in subfolders within a single folder):

1. The images you have selected for your sequence, all correctly cropped and sized to your chosen aspect ratio and pixel count.

2. Sound files of any music, voice over, and sound effects that you intend to use. These should preferably have been recorded as wav files (an uncompressed format)

3. Any video files you wish to incorporate in your sequence.

You also need to have decided on a title for your sequence.

## Setting preferences for PTE

If this is the first time you have used PTE, or you have not set preferences before, then now is good time to adjust the appearance of the program's window to your liking. Open PTE and select **Settings – Preferences** and work though the various tabs paying particular attention to the toolbar in which you can adjust which of the PTE menu options appear and their position on the toolbars.

## Setting options for this sequence.

Open your copy of Pictures to Exe and select File – New. When the new file box opens enter your chosen title.

We now need to set the **project options** for your project to ensure that it shows to its best advantage:

### Main Tab:
Set the aspect ratio to 16:9 (or other ratio you have selected for your images).

### Audio Tab:
If you have voice over, music and sound effects available, create three tracks. Add your music to track 2 using the add audio file button.

If your music/voice over tracks are wav files then also select the option to convert tracks to mp3 for exe file as this keeps the size of the exe file down.

### Control tab:

For a normal sequence (i.e. NOT a menu etc.) Then ensure that the selections are like this:

The control of the sequence using keyboard selection allows us to pause the AV using the space bar during testing which can be useful.

Other Project option tabs may be left at their default settings.
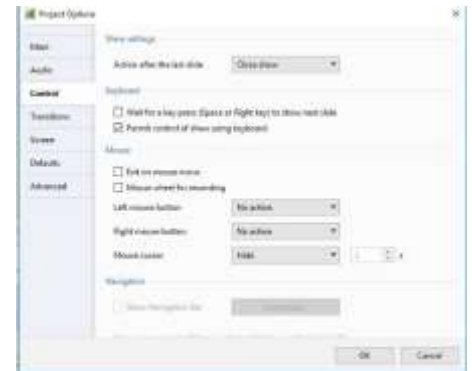
## Adding Images and music track:

Now begin your sequence construction by choosing **File – New** and give the sequence your chosen title.

In **project options – audio tab**, create three sound tacks for the voice over, music and any sound effects. Use this tab to add the music to track **1** (or track of your choice).

Now we have a choice of how to proceed and let us start with a quick method of moving to a sequence.

### 1. Quick Method
Now select all your images in the slide and list and right click; from the options choose add selected files to project.

Now in slide view go to your first image and right click and add a blank (black) slide and set its timing to 2 seconds. This avoids an abrupt start to your sequence.

Go to the final slide and perform the same process but this time drag the black slide to after the final image so that your show ends with a blank slide that we can use to fade the final image.

Now swap to timeline view and from the menu below the slide list choose fit all slides to soundtrack.

This gives a starting point from which we can adjust slides to match the changes in the music.

### 2. Step by step process
I personally work by building up my projects in step by step fashion and so add a few slides at a time and usually work on the sound track, voice over etc. for this section before adding more images. I

drag my selected images one by one in to my project. The choice is yours.

## Objects and animations:

Objects and animations can be regarded as PTE's method of allowing you to add extra layers to a slide. The extra layer can be a piece of text, a second image, etc.

Choose the first slide and open it in objects and animations using the toolbar or double click if you set that option in preferences.

Using the Text tool in O & A add your title (Text button – T) and your chosen font and position it to your liking – it is best to keep the title simple and avoid cursive scripts. It may help if you don't reveal too much with your title, so as to keep the audience slightly guessing about your sequence.

Use text shadow to add emphasis to your title.

In the timeline view adjust the slide positions to match your music.

## Adding voice over:

(If you have not split your voice-over in to clips do so now using Audacity – see manual audio tracks and clips.)

In timeline view in PTE drag the first clip (phrase) of your voice over to audio track 2 under the slide(s) to which it refers. Use the envelope tool to reduce the volume of the music track under the voice over (deluxe version only).
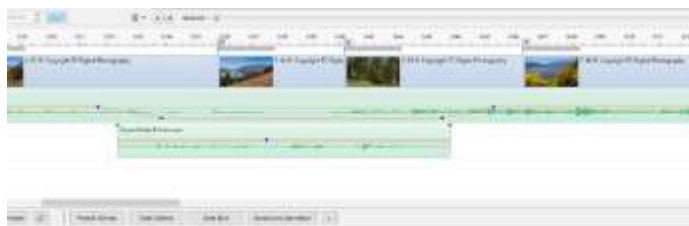


Change the volume gradually or it may sound too abrupt a change.

Continue to build your sequence as above but steps for dealing with three different types of inclusion are worth noting.

## Adding a portrait format image.

If you add a portrait format image as above then its appearance on the screen will be like this:

The sidebars will be in the colour of the background you have chosen in Project Options which is black by default. Such a change in aspect ratio from slide to slide is not visually pleasing and is best avoided.

The best option is to add the portrait image to a blurred copy of the previous slide thus:

1. Add a second copy of the image forming the previous slide to your sequence.
2. Open the image in Objects and Animation and add the portrait image to it – the add image icon is on the top tool bar and is a representation of a landscape image.
3. Adjust the size of portrait image if you do not want it to fill the full height of the slide
4. Now select the background image and in the animations tab use blur and opacity (to darken) to make the background less distracting

Your portrait image should now look like this:



You can enhance the separation using a text shadow and (thin) border. You may prefer to prepare such a composite image in Photoshop.

## Sound effects:

A sequence can often be brought to life using sound effects and there are three obvious ways of obtaining suitable sound effects:

1. Record our own using a digital recorder or even your camera to take a video using either the built-in microphone or a suitable external mike.
2. Buy a disc (CD) of sound effects from suppliers such as Amazon
3. Download from free sites such as [www.freesfx.co.uk](http://www.freesfx.co.uk)

To extract an audio file, mp3, from your video I would suggest the excellent (free) VLC media player.

If you choose 2 or 3 respect the royalty conditions of the source.

Add these to a sound track just like music but the volume is best kept low, a hint of ambient noise is often the most effective.

## Video

To add video, you first need to convert your video in to an avi file with which PTE works best. See

[https://docs.picturestoexe.com/en-us/9.0/video/main?s[]=video&s[]=conversion](https://docs.picturestoexe.com/en-us/9.0/video/main?s[]=video&s[]=conversion)

basically, **right click on the video you wish to insert and choose convert video clip**.

Refer to the link above for the meanings of the various settings. It is often best to trim off the start of a video as it may include jerkiness owing to the act of pressing the record button before you steady the camera. Like images you have a limited scope for adjusting the brightness etc. of a video using the animation tab. With the video (or image selected) go to the foot of the animation section and click colour correction and a range of options present themselves, including levels, brightness, contrast etc.

In properties select mute video and if you want the sound from the video in a controllable form then we need to add it using the **add audio or voice button**.

With the video selected, click the above button and change the import box from audio file to video file and click OK. Select the same video file and the sound of the video is now added, linked to the video, and you can control it in the same way as any other audio track. Because it is linked, if you move the video along the timeline, the sound file will move with it.

## Publish

When you have finished your sequence, it is time to publish it so that it can be viewed.

The **Executable File for PC** will generally give you the best quality, its built-in media player runs at 60 frames per second. It runs on a double click or from a menu (as in the showcase).

The **HD video** option has a series of possible uses:

1. The mp4 video produced can be uploaded to social media such as YouTube if you wish to share your work.

2. Currently, especially when running shows on a Laptop, there can be issues with the smooth running of exe files which contain video clips. The current advice is that an mp4 video of the sequence containing video clips will run more smoothly than the exe file.

3. Dragging the mp4 video file on to a memory stick and inserting this in the USB socket on the back of your Smart TV will allow you to view it on your large TV screen. (Alternatively copy the file to a network drive that your TV can access).

## A few final hints:

These are not complete but may help with ideas to produce an attractive sequence.

1. Finish the sequence with the end of your piece of music do NOT fade out music. The composer had a better idea of how to finish the music than we do. If your music is too long use audacity to chop a section from the middle, done carefully it can be undetectable or even fade the music in at the start of your sequence.

2. Try to place slides next to each other that allow visually pleasing transitions from one to the other. Please do not overdo the number of different types of transition you use, dissolve is the best fall-back option. An occasional slow soft-edged wipe (page left to right) may work well especially if adjacent slides do not dissolve in to each other well.

3. Keep horizons, shore lines etc. horizontal and if at all possible at the same height up the slide. See the Leeds AV Group website galleries page for an example of mine (Autumn reflections) of how effective this can be.

   http://leedsavgroup.co.uk/galleries/gallery_av_youtube.html

4. Avoid frequent and exaggerated zooms and pans, if you have some decent images let your audience see them to their best, i.e. held still.

5. Fade the sequence out to a back slide. Do not add the words "The End" to a sequence, its ending should be obvious.

6. If you used any royalty free music or sound effects then respect any requirement to mention at the end of your sequence these sources.

7. If you used someone else to speak all or part of your voice over or provide you with "missing images" then acknowledge their help.

8. Use the create template selection in the file menu to form a template of your sequence for future modification. Basically, a template includes all images, videos, sound files etc. in a single folder allowing you to reconstruct the sequence.


Please do not use other people's images from the 'net or elsewhere without acknowledgement and if you use commercial music and are aiming to show your work to clubs or organisations then join **the IAC (film and video institute) and take out their Copyright Clearance**.

Use the PTE help file on line it is your best source of help in the absence of a manual. It can be accessed through the help menu in PTE. The forum also provides some useful support material.

Please enjoy AV and find your own way of using it to tell stories which matter to you, **the best of luck**.

Above all (only partially with tongue-in-cheek) join Leeds AV group as either a full or associate member so that we may continue to support your enjoyment of, and development in AV.

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