

Video Companion: Preventing Black Bars

Print this document to follow along and take notes on the video.

Video Summary

Learn how to prevent black bars or borders within your exported video. This video covers:

- ▶ When black bars or borders appear
- ▶ Preventing black bars by scaling recording on the canvas
- ▶ Preventing black bars by changing the canvas size
- ▶ Preventing black bars by changing the screen resolution before recording

Black bars or borders often occur if the aspect ratio (Width/Height) is different from the dimensions you shared your video.

For example:

- ▶ If you recorded your video on a Mac Book Pro which is 1440 by 900 which has an aspect ratio of 1.6 ($1440/900=1.6$).
- ▶ And if you choose a canvas size of 640 x 480 which is an aspect ratio of 1.333 ($640/480=1.333$).

Black bars will appear on the top and bottom of the video in this example.

The example above is referring to the “recording aspect ratio” vs. the “canvas aspect ratio,” not “recording dimensions” vs. “canvas dimensions”.

For example:

- ▶ You could record at 1440 x 900 and have a canvas size of 720 x 450 (default canvas size at those recording dimensions).
- ▶ Black bars will not appear in your video in this example since the aspect ratio for both is 1.6 ($1440/900=1.6$ and $720/450=1.6$).

Prevent Black Bars by Scaling the Recording:

Drag the corners of the media on the canvas out until the black borders are not visible within the canvas area. This also works if you have a black border around the entire video.

Notes:

To resize multiple clips:

1. Select all the clips on a track by right-clicking or Control-clicking to the left of the track and select Select All On Track.
2. Drag the corners of the media on the canvas to scale the clips. You may still need to adjust individual clips.
3. Scaling your media does not allow you to see your entire screen video at a time. Check in the Properties pane to make sure that you do not scale the media beyond 100% because it will lower the quality of the final video.

Prevent Black Bars by Changing the Canvas Size:

To prevent black bars, change the canvas aspect ratio to match the recording's aspect ratio.

Changing the canvas size is best when you want to show your entire screen recording and do not have to export specific dimensions.

1. First find the dimensions of your video and full screen images. If your media has different dimensions, you will likely need to scale or recreate this media.
2. To locate the screen video's dimensions, select Edit > Adjust Canvas. From the Preset list, select Fit to Recording Size option. The dimensions displayed in the Width and Height fields are the dimensions for the screen recording. For example, the screen video is 1440 x 900.
3. To maintain the aspect ratio of the screen, but to export a smaller video such as a video 1/3 of the size, divide the width by 3 and the height by 3 (480 x 300).
4. Enter the new dimensions (480 x 300) into the Width and Height fields and click Apply.
5. To match what your media is already sized to center the clip on the canvas and select Fit to Visible from the Preset list.

Prevent Black Bars by Changing the Screen Aspect Ratio:

To prevent black bars, change the screen aspect ratio before you record to match the canvas aspect ratio.

If you need to export your video at specific dimensions (such as 800 x 600 and 640 x 480), change the recording aspect ratio to match the export aspect ratio.

1. You need to determine the dimensions to record at before starting the recording.
2. For example, if your video must be exported at 640 x 480 ($640 \times 480 = 1.333$ aspect ratio), you must record your video at 1024 x 768 or 1152 x 864 ($1024/768 = 1.333$ or $1152/864 = 1.333$).
3. Before you begin recording, set your display resolution. Select System Preferences > Displays.
4. Select the dimensions for the size you want to record at. For the example above, select 1024 x 768 or 1152 x 864.