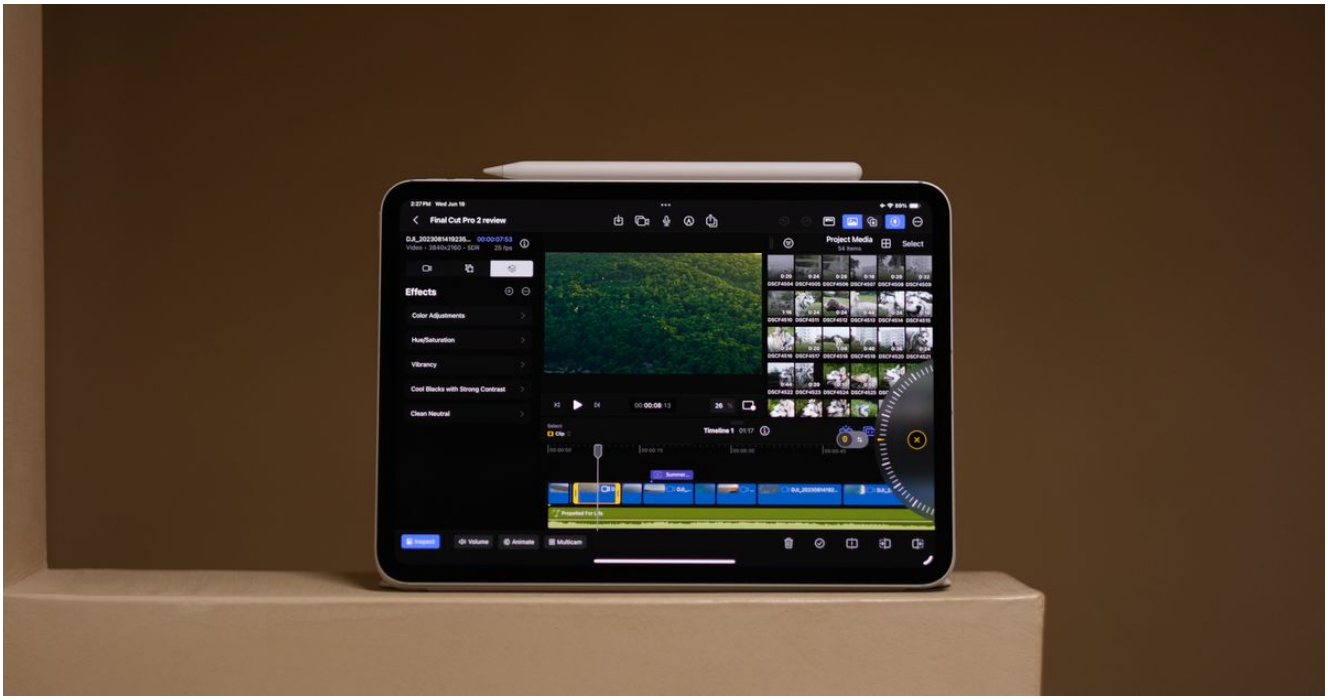
The new Final Cut Pro hooked me on iPad video editing



For the past two weeks, I've been editing in the newest version of Final Cut Pro for the iPad. For many professionals, the original release of this app last year missed the mark. Its tools have just been too limited to use on a daily basis. The new version doesn't necessarily change that — but despite my many frustrations, I'm finally discovering the joy of using it.

The new version of the app, confusingly named "Final Cut Pro for iPad 2" (it is for all current iPads, not the iPad 2), came out this week. And perhaps the biggest new feature in this year's release isn't entirely a Final Cut Pro feature: it's a brand-new app that integrates with it.

The new Final Cut Camera is a standalone app for your iPhone that offers advanced camera controls. If you've seen the Blackmagic app or the recently released Kino app, you'll know what to expect: peaking, manual focusing, and audio metering. You just won't be able to add custom LUTs like you can in the other two.

The Final Cut Camera app can be used in unison with Final Cut Pro on the iPad to record Live Multicam sessions with footage streaming in from up to four iPhones or iPads. In Final Cut on the iPad, you assume the role of director. You can monitor footage coming from iPhones, zoom in, and change the white balance, focus mode, and more on the fly. I can see this new feature being particularly popular for video podcasts.

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And there are other issues that haven’t changed from last year. For example, you still can’t import complete folders into Final Cut Pro, just individual files. And once they’re imported, you still can’t organize the files into separate folders or bins like “A-roll,” “B-roll,” “Music,” or “Graphics.”

Another new feature that’s unique to the iPad version of Final Cut Pro is Live Drawings. Using an Apple Pencil, you can draw animations directly onto your clips. Apple’s latest Pencil Pro tricks are supported here, but aside from that, there’s not much to do with the Pencil Pro itself. I wish there was a way to program the haptic squeeze to do something more on the editing front — maybe selecting multiple clips while hovering, or just make it a right-click. I feel like that would be useful and would speed up working with a pencil.

There are still a lot of serious video editing features that I’m waiting on Apple to add: compound clips, folders, adjustment layers, post stabilization, coloring tools like curves, project sharing between machines, the ability to add new LUTs, 360 video support, object tracking, linear keyframes — the list goes on and on. If you read my review from last year, you’ll find the exact same list there.

All of those missing things really catch you off guard when you are in the flow. Ultimately, I found myself making creative decisions based on bad software limitations.

Meanwhile, the market for mobile video editing apps is more competitive than ever. CapCut has been extremely popular among TikTokers. “Why I’m switching to DaVinci” videos are all over my YouTube feed. And folks still stan the OG iPad app Lumafusion. In fact, three of the features I desperately need are already on the DaVinci’s iPad app.