

# **The Art of Photo Slideshow: Professional Secrets**



## **Seven Simple Steps to Terrific Slideshows**

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## Introduction

All of us have thousands of impressions gathered throughout our lives. Many of them are captured in pictures we keep in photo albums and on our computers. Those pictures may be buried so deep that we almost forget them, rarely showing these moments of our lives – the best moments! – to friends and family. To enliven your memories, we suggest creating a picture slideshow with music and animation effects.

Generally, a slideshow is a presentation that consists of preliminarily selected pictures alternating in the specified order and complemented with music and transitions between the slides. However, to turn a set of photos into a spectacular slideshow, it is not enough to just combine pictures and audio tracks. You need to experiment and use your imagination in order to make a slideshow truly ingenious and evocative!

Making a beautiful slideshow with photos and music is easy with SmartSHOW 3D. This professional-level software helps prepare magnificent films from a collection of photos. Read along to learn the basics of working with this app as well as numerous secrets that will help you create spectacular photo movies of outstanding quality!



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<http://smartshow-software.com>

## Step One

### *Idea is the key to success*

How to come up with an original theme for a slideshow?



Before you start, you should define the theme of your slideshow. Often, you don't have to think hard – the theme is rather obvious. For instance, you took a good vacation overseas and made a lot of great shots. You must admit that an eye-catching movie of your own photos will certainly impress your friends and relatives. And the best part is that you can make such a movie by yourself, without hiring a professional.

You can prepare a wedding or engagement slideshow, an original prom video, a film devoted to university graduation, a corporate party and so on. Then you can send the movie by e-mail or upload it to YouTube and share it with family and friends.





To summarize everything we said above, virtually *any* event of your life can become a reason for a great slideshow. Here are some of the most popular themes for photo slideshows:

- Wedding slideshow
- Family holidays and anniversaries
- Slideshow of children photos
- Love Story slideshow
- Office party slideshow
- Travel and vacation slideshow
- Slideshow of various school events (graduation, party, prom and so on)
- Presentation slideshow for exhibitions, lectures, or sales promotions



## Step Two

### *A story told by pictures*

How to pick photographs for a slideshow?

How to turn usual photo browsing into a showy performance bringing only positive emotions and a sincere interest of the viewers? First of all, you must choose only *high-quality* photos for the show.

Often we have a bulk of interesting photographs taken hastily and now requiring a bit of post-processing in a photo editor. Conveniently, you can edit a photo directly in SmartSHOW 3D. The app is equipped with a slide editor that allows cropping and rotating photographs, applying special masks, choosing a background, and so on.



No surprise that photos made with a digital camera look much better in a slideshow than those taken with a cell phone camera. If you are planning to make a slideshow in HD quality, you must use images that are at least 1920×1080 pixels wide, and about 1.5 times higher resolution if pans & zooms are planned.



When you've added the photos to the timeline, pay attention to their edges: make sure there are no black borders. To position the photos in the frames, click the **Photo Position** button in the top right corner of the main SmartSHOW window and select *Fill Frame* to stretch photos and remove black borders.

The *Fill Frame* option usually works fine for landscape-oriented photos. A portrait-oriented photo will be cropped if it is stretched to fill the frame. Therefore select *Fit to Frame* for portrait photos to fit the whole image into the slide. In most cases, the best thing to do is to open *Settings* under **Photo Position** and choose the option "Stretch landscape-oriented photos only". You can always adjust the position of a certain photo since the *Fill Frame* / *Fit to Frame* settings can be accessed by right-clicking on the chosen slide in the storyboard.

### Step Three

#### *Sounds and emotions*

How to choose an ideal soundtrack?

Music is a no less important part of a slideshow. A properly chosen music background can make your movie touching and unforgettable, while improper selection can easily ruin the overall impression of the show. If you ever watched professionally made slideshows, you surely noticed that it was music that created the corresponding mood.

The audio tracks that you use in your movie should be meaningful for your audience or be closely connected with the theme of the slideshow. For example, if you are going to prepare a movie devoted to your recent trip, it's a good idea to use the national music of the country you visited.

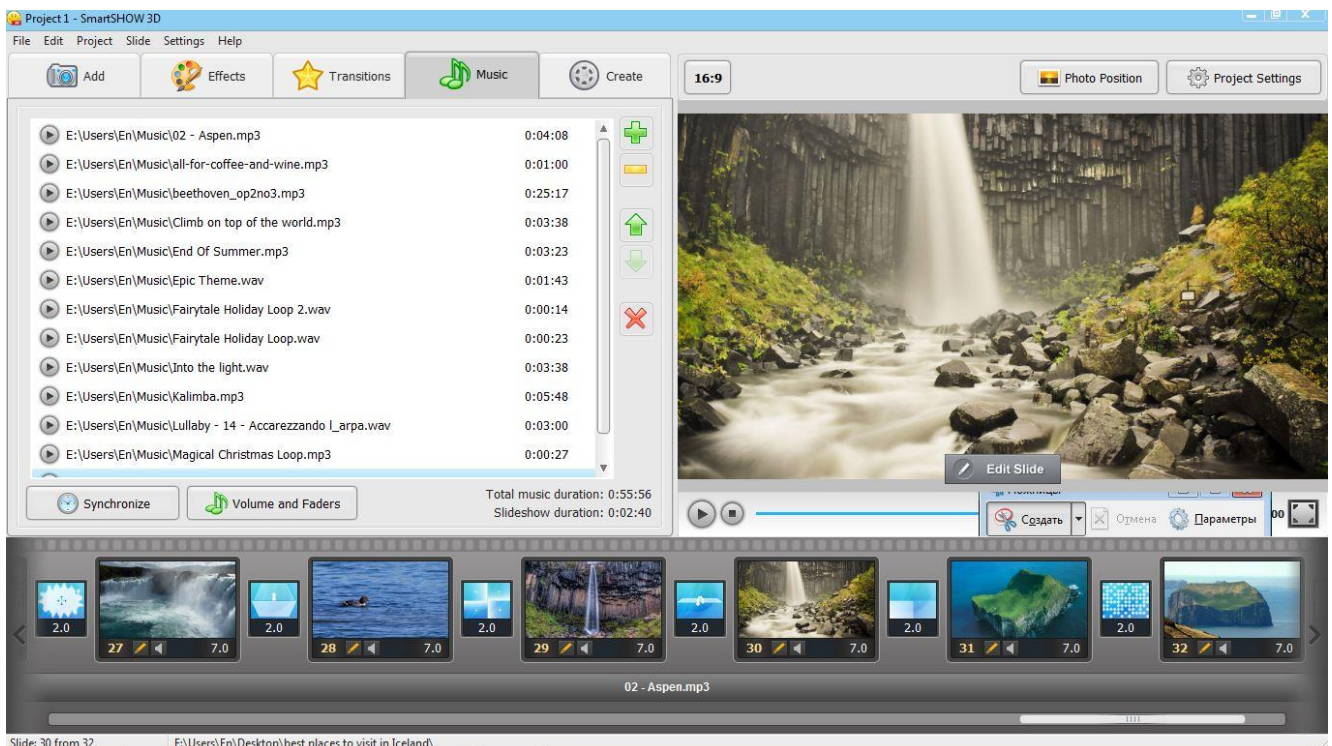
The slideshow music should also be closely related to the emotions you would like to share with the spectators. That is why you should consider the music choice beforehand, even before you start montage.







In SmartSHOW 3D you can add multiple audio tracks, use fade-ins and fade-outs, and even cut the music file if necessary. To do this, open the **Music** tab and then click on the red scissors image next to the chosen track to open the cut dialog. It is easy to create a perfect mix of soundtracks this way.



You can combine different musical fragments in one slideshow. However it is important that they correspond to the main idea of the show and reflect the mood of the photos on the screen. So, experiment a bit and make your slideshow sound great!



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## Step Four

### *Beauty is in details*

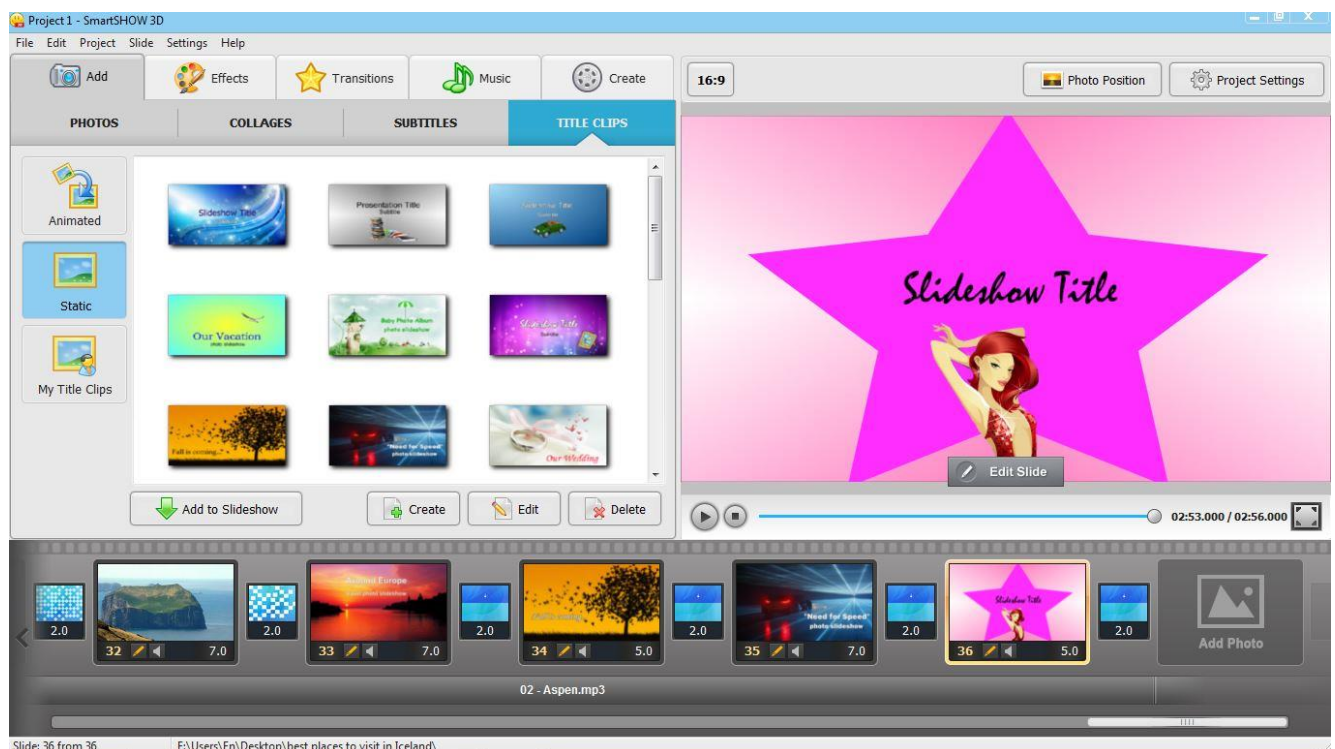
How to decorate a slideshow?

The more imagination and effort you put into decorating the show, the more captivating it will be. Use a number of art techniques available in SmartSHOW 3D.

**Subtitles** and **Title Clips** will help making a movie more interesting to follow. In these sections you can select ready-to-go slide templates, or create your own if you wish.

**Title Clips** allow you to divide a project into themed parts. For example, you can put the title of the show, the name of the author and other important information on the intro slide, use title clips to split the story into chapters, and so forth. SmartSHOW 3D offers a collection of static and animated title clips. You can create your own title clip design starting from a blank slide or editing the templates available.

**Subtitles** are a special type of title clips. They display comments and notes for the slide currently shown on the screen. Let us say your project is about your recent vacation trip. It's good to add comments to help viewers easily grasp what is happening on the screen. Try to add subtitles to the most important scenes only to avoid overloading the show. Same as title clips, subtitles are easy to change in the slide editor.





You can decorate a slideshow with picture collages. SmartSHOW 3D offers a collection of **Collages** with predefined settings. All you need to do is to select the one you like best and add your images. Besides, you can create a custom collage by adding a blank slide to the storyboard and filling it with content: background, pictures, and clipart.

Collages can also be animated. You need to add a certain number of keyframes and apply dynamic effects. For example, you can make your photo collages move in a certain way or mystically dissolve which will definitely impress viewers. Read on to learn more about adding animation effects to your slides.

## Step Five

*Become the director of your own movie!*

What is “montage” and how to deal with it?

Surely, you briefly know what montage is. It plays a significant role while making a photo movie. Typically, slideshow montage is not only placing slides in certain order, but also adjusting the duration of every frame, and selecting transition effects. It is crucial to remember that any photo slideshow is always a story, and it is proper editing that helps to tell that story in the most interesting way.



The **Transitions** tab contains a lot of various effects: standard, double, gradients and fanciful 3D transitions. Any effect can be added easily with drag & drop. When you have chosen an effect you like, you should make sure it matches the overall theme of the slideshow. This allows you to retain the same style throughout the clip, for instance, when you make a wedding or anniversary photo slideshow.

You should pay special attention to 3D transitions. They also transform each individual photo in a very special way. 3D transitions are a stylish and original solution - photos will be rotating in space taking you to virtual reality for a second.

Getting back to the art of montage, here are several useful suggestions.

First of all, don't neglect the order of the photos. For a maximum effect, try to mix wide shot, midshot and close shot photographs.



Secondly, use a so-called comparative montage. This means you should interchangeably use photographs that differ in a certain way. Pick images that are both artistically and emotionally different, because this endows the slideshow with very special dynamics and expression.

Finally, master the linear editing – a set of slides related to each other in some way or united by the same story. For example, let's say you are making a slideshow about your kid. A good idea would be to place photos so that they followed the stages of kid's growth, from the very first days of his or her life to the first steps and so on.

Comparative and linear editing are your best helpers in making a slideshow. And which one you should focus on depends on the theme of your photo clip.



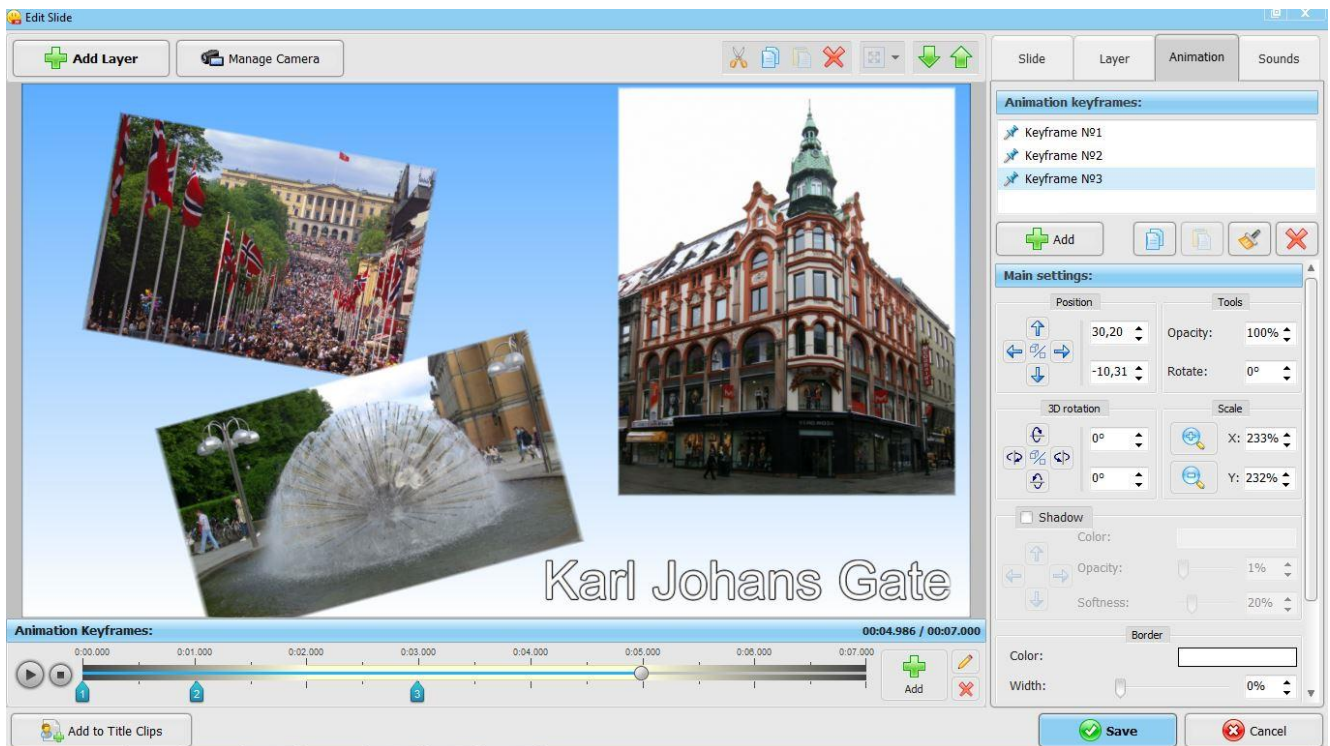
## Step Six

*Say "no" to sameness!*

How to brisk a photo slideshow?

A dynamic photo clip with music and special effects is always a bright and funny show. You would like to watch such clips over and over, demonstrate them to your friends and loved ones, and upload to the Internet. In order to "ginger up" your slideshow, we suggest using an array of animation effects.

The SmartSHOW 3D program allows you to edit every slide in the project. You can adjust the slide duration, pick a background and **Add layers**: photos, clipart, captions and various shapes. All of this is available in the integrated slide editor.



You can apply animation to every object on the slide. To do this, you should first decide which object (layer) you would like to animate. This could be one of your photographs, a clipart image, a text caption, or a shape. Then, select the object, switch to the **Animation** tab and add one or more new **keyframes**. Now you can add animation effects for the chosen layer.





In the “Main settings” section it is possible to change the position and the scale of the object, apply simple or 3D rotation, add border or shadow, and adjust the transparency level. With all these tools at hand, you can make the picture move and rotate in 3D, add shadow to a text caption, or scale up the best photo. As soon as you are done adjusting keyframes and layers, click the “Play” button and watch the result. The slide revives right before your eyes!

The program also offers a collection of ready-made **Effects**. This tab features multiple animation effects: 3D-flight, horizontal panorama, zoom-in, light beam and so on. In order to apply any effect to the slide, simply drag the template to the timeline. The program offers a convenient way to preview special effects, so you can check them out before applying to the slide. Don’t hesitate to experiment - try every effect yourself and watch the result in action!



When adding animation effects, keep the slide duration in mind. Make sure the last keyframe appears before the transition starts so the show runs smoothly. At the same time, the duration of the slides should be in good concordance with the pace of the soundtrack. A fast-paced rousing melody requires minimum slide duration, while for a slow and relaxing composition it’s better to set longer slide duration. The viewers should have enough time to have a good look on the slide and read the comments, but make sure they don’t get bored waiting for the next slide.



## Step Seven

### *Making a video from photos*

How to create a video slideshow?

With SmartSHOW 3D you can create a fascinating photo movie telling a story about a certain event, a person or a pleasant scene from your memory. To turn it into video, you simply need to convert the slideshow project to a video file.

When you are done with editing, it's time to save the project. To do that, click **File > Save Project as....** Note that you can reopen and edit the project later. Next, switch to the **Create** tab and choose one of the options to save your clip. SmartSHOW 3D lets you choose among several ways to export the video.



Here are the export options offered by SmartSHOW 3D:

- ✓ **Create a video slideshow.** SmartSHOW 3D allows you to save your project as a video file in any popular format: AVI, MP4, 3GP, MKV, and others. Besides, the app supports creating high-definition slideshow videos including the Full HD format. An HD video slideshow will look best on large plasma screens.
- ✓ **Create a mobile video.** SmartSHOW 3D can create video for tablets, game consoles and media players including the cutting edge models. There are hundreds of video presets with all the necessary settings for various mobile devices – simply choose the make and model, and the program will convert the slideshow to a compatible video clip. The clip can be uploaded to the memory of the gadget off the bat to watch it later at any time!
- ✓ **Create a video for the Internet.** The program creates a slideshow ready for uploading to the bulk of video hosting sites and social networks: YouTube, Facebook, Vimeo and others. Simply select a website you want to upload the video to, the desired format, and the wizard will create a slideshow video with all the necessary settings applied the right way.
- ✓ **Create a DVD slideshow.** The DVD format offers a nice opportunity to watch the slideshow on TV. In fact, this seems to be the most popular way to showcase photo movies to friends and relatives. SmartSHOW 3D allows you to choose the style of the DVD interactive menu and to create a DVD folder on the hard drive.

After you chose the option you need, click the **“Start”** button to convert the slideshow to the chosen format. The conversion may take a while depending on project duration, the size of the photographs used and the encoding settings.





## **Conclusion**

We have discussed the basic rules of making a slideshow from photographs. We are sure you'll discover many exciting features while working with SmartSHOW 3D. Add picturesque photos and bright subtitles, insert spectacular transitions, special effects and animation, and then enjoy the perfect result!

With SmartSHOW 3D you can make photo movies for every occasion: magnificent wedding slideshows, captivating wild nature tour stories, charming video greeting cards, sweet movies about your baby – the list goes on and on. We hope working with SmartSHOW 3D will bring you a lot of positive emotions, valuable experience and unbelievable feelings. Turn on your imagination and start making creative slideshows!

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