

## PHOTO MONTAGE FAQs

### **Can I use my favorite Beatles tune in my Photo Montage Video?**

Generally no. Due to potential legal issues, we do not use copyrighted music and virtually all popular music is copyrighted. Click here for more details

### **What music do you use?**

We have a selection of "royalty free" music that we are licensed to include in our productions and you can legally copy (within our productions) at will. With the exception of some classical pieces, this is not music you will recognize, but it is designed specifically for these types of productions and works very well to create the right mood. We have sentimental or romantic selections as well as fun party selections, country instrumentals, swing, and others. If none of what we have suits your needs, we can look into acquiring other individual "royalty free" songs, as needed.

### **Will my pictures fill the entire screen?**

For most pictures, yes. However, tall "portrait" mode photos sometimes will have black bars on either side, and very wide "panoramic" pictures may be shown in "letterbox" mode with black along the top and bottom to avoid losing important parts of the picture. Some, we may crop to best fit the screen, but we never crop out people or important content. We use our judgment on what makes most sense for each picture. The goal is an emotionally powerful presentation. And you'll never see a sloppy background or distracting reflections in photos we capture -- as you will in some inexpensive productions.

### **What size photos can you work with?**

Any size bigger than about an inch and smaller than about 18 inches is fine.

### **What if the photos are old and in poor condition?**

Most photos transfer without difficulty and the process we use is not stressful on them. However, if one or more of your photos is damaged, washed out, or the color is bad and you want it retouched or enhanced, we can do minor digital photo editing for a small additional fee. Brightness, contrast, and color corrections can typically be done for a couple dollars, while tears and scratches can cost anywhere from a couple dollars to five or ten dollars to cover up. We cannot guarantee they'll look perfect, but we can rid the photos of the worst distractions at those prices. We do not typically retouch photos unless requested. So please indicate if you want this service.

### **What type of transitions do you use between photos?**

We avoid overuse of fancy transitions and other "gee-whiz" effects because they detract from a properly made presentation. We use a proven approach that creates a very elegant feel to the video. If you have special requests, or want to create a certain mood or theme for your video, we would be happy to discuss options.

### **How many pictures should I include?**

Photo montage videos should be kept to between 5 and 20 minutes. Any less is over too quickly - any more and people get distracted. Most are between 10 and 15 minutes. At a normal speed of 10 pictures per minute, a typical size is 100-150 pictures. However, we have made some with as few as 30 photos and some with as many as 250.

### **Is there a particular organization that works best?**

We generally recommend breaking the video into segments or "sections" of 20 to 40 photos. Our standard package accommodates this approach. You can contact us for ideas of what might work best for your particular situation when you are ready to get started.



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**Do I need to number the photo prints before I give them to you?**

It is better if you do – just in case the pictures get out of order. A simple penciled number or sticky note on the back will avoid the risk of mishaps. This is more critical if you are mixing different size pictures. It is very easy for smaller ones to slide around between the big ones and get out of place. If the pictures are all of similar size and adequately bundled, numbering may not be as important.

**Can I save money by scanning the photos myself?**

You can save a little but it may not be worth the effort. When we receive digitally scanned photos, they still must be electronically altered before they are suitable to be used in a professional video editing system. Therefore, we still charge a per photo fee even if pictures are provided electronically. The difference is currently only about 50 cents per photo. So on a 100-photo video, you can save about \$50.00 but it may take the better part of a weekend for scanning at a typical home scanner set-up.

**How much time do you need to create a photo montage video?**

We generally ask that people give us two weeks. This ensures that we will be able to give your video the time it deserves even if we are very busy.

**What other information do you need?**

When you are ready to get started, we can send you a form that will help you organize your material and ensure we have all the information that we need.

**How do I get started?**

Complete our Photo Montage Request Form. Once it is complete, we will provide you a price estimate. See our ordering section for information on placing an order.