

ReelChest

v1



MEDIA BROWSER

PAPER EDIT

MOSAIC EDITOR

CAPTIONS

Welcome

Welcome to ReelChest. We built it for the part of the edit nobody else handles well: the slow, expensive hour or two before you cut your first frame. Logging interviews. Hunting for the take. Writing a paper edit on a notepad and then chasing those words through hours of footage.

ReelChest collapses that work. Drop a folder of footage in. We transcribe it on your Mac, no cloud upload. You read what was said and click words to mark in and out. The clips you build land in Final Cut Pro, Premiere, or DaVinci Resolve as a real timeline, not a list of suggestions.

This manual is short on purpose. The app is small on purpose. We'd rather you spend your reading time on the edit itself than on the tool. If something here is wrong, vague, or missing, write us. We rewrite this when readers tell us where it dragged.

Thanks for trying it. Let's make the pre-edit hour shorter.

The ReelChest team
reelchest.app

Getting started

- 1 Install ReelChest
- 2 Your first project

START

MEDIA

Media Browser & Transcripts

Drives, tags, search, and the transcribe queue. coming soon

PROJECTS

PAPER

Projects

Bundle the assets that belong together. Send the whole bundle to Final Cut Pro. coming soon

MOSAIC

CAP-
TIONS

EXPORT

Paper Edit

Add a clip, trim its words, stack segments into a script. coming soon

LOOK

TIPS

Mosaic Editor

Write a cut. The mosaic finds the words across your clips. coming soon

FIXES

Captions

Animate captions. Export as FCPXML or bake them in. coming soon

Exporting

- 3 Send to Final Cut Pro

Look & Feel

Themes, color labels, and the transport bar. coming soon

Tips & shortcuts

Keyboard reference and power-user moves. coming soon

Troubleshooting

Transcription, missing media, and FCP relinks. coming soon

Install ReelChest

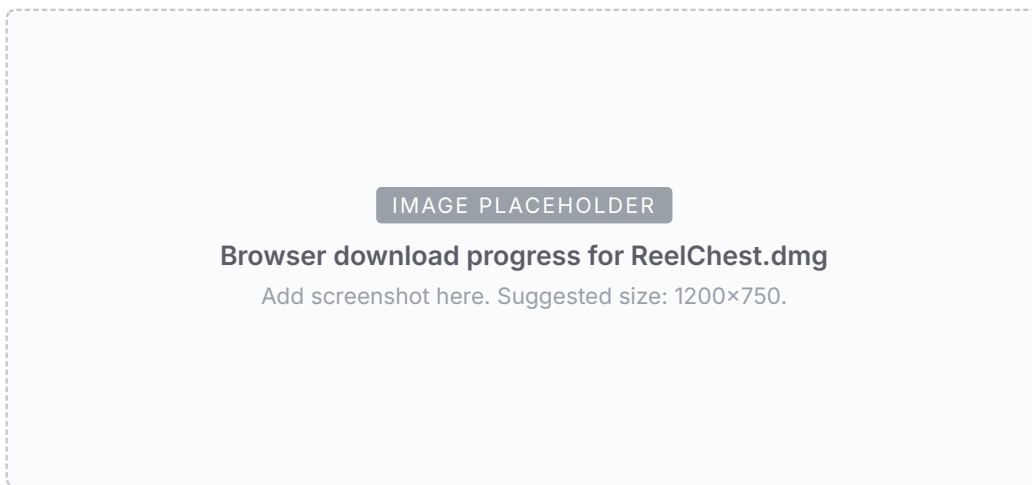
Download, drag to Applications, open. The shortest install in your editing day.

ReelChest is a Mac app, Apple Silicon and Intel both. We'll walk through the install in about thirty seconds.

Download

Grab the latest build from the website. The file is a `.dmg`. Open it.

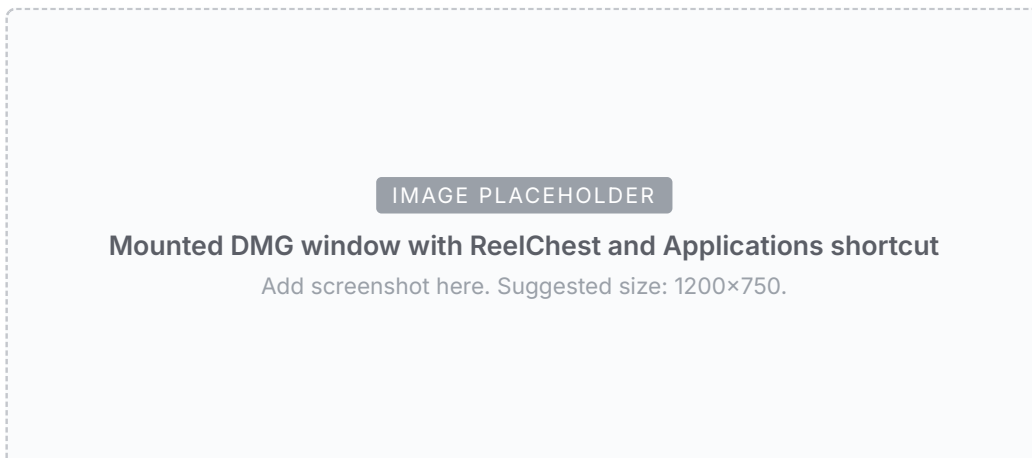
START



The download progress in your browser. The `.dmg` file lands in Downloads.

Drag to Applications

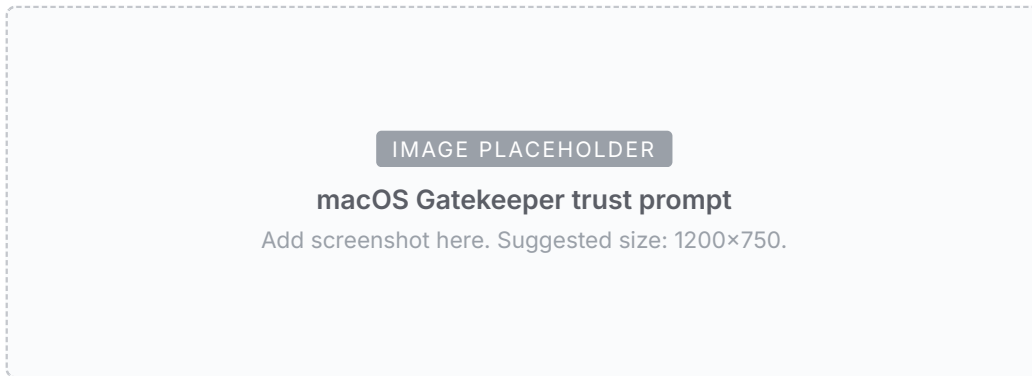
When the disk image opens, drag the ReelChest icon onto the Applications folder shortcut next to it. That's it. Eject the disk image.



The disk image, with the ReelChest icon on the left and the Applications shortcut on the right.

First open

Find ReelChest in Applications. Right-click, choose "Open." macOS will ask if you trust this developer. Say yes once. Every future launch is just a click.

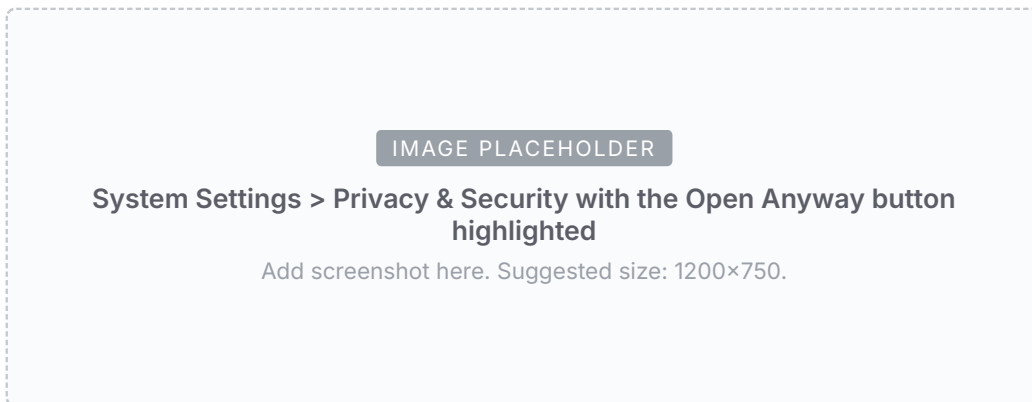


The first-launch trust prompt. Click Open to authorise ReelChest.

START

If macOS blocks the first launch:

- 1 Open System Settings, then Privacy & Security.
- 2 Scroll to the bottom. You'll see a line about ReelChest being blocked.
- 3 Click "Open Anyway," then confirm with your password.



The "Open Anyway" button in System Settings > Privacy & Security.

We're working on a notarized build that won't need this dance.

Where projects live

ReelChest doesn't lock your files into a special database. Projects are folders on disk. Pick a fast drive (SSD is happiest) and remember where you put it. We'll use that location in the next chapter when we make a first project.

Project folder: Any folder on disk you point ReelChest at. ReelChest writes a small index file alongside your media; nothing moves, nothing copies.

START

Your first project

Open ReelChest, point at a folder, transcribe the first hour. We'll be editing in about ten minutes.

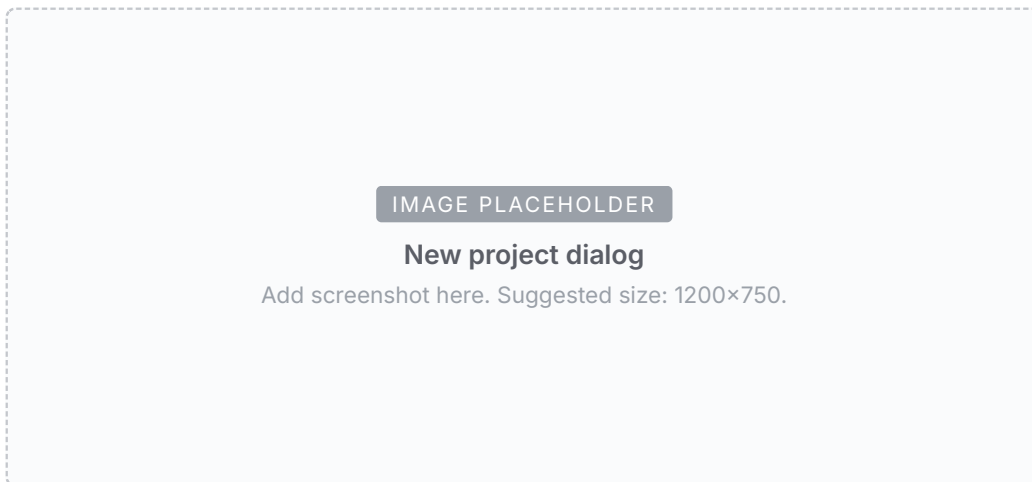
A ReelChest project is a folder. We don't lock your media into a database. Pick a folder where your footage already lives, or make a new one. Either works.

Make the project

START

To create a new project:

- 1 Click **New Project** on the start screen.
- 2 Pick the folder where your footage lives, or make an empty one.
- 3 Name it. ReelChest scans what's inside and builds an index in a hidden file alongside your media.



The new-project dialog. Pick any folder; ReelChest doesn't move or copy your files.

Drop in your footage

If your clips are already in the folder, you're done. If they're not, drag them in now. ReelChest watches the folder, so anything you add later just shows up.

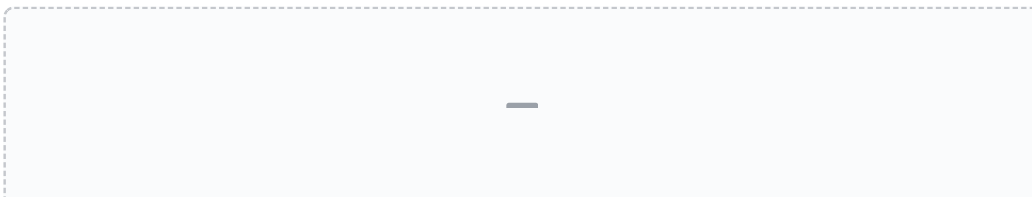


IMAGE PLACEHOLDER

ReelChest Media Browser populated with a folder of clips

Add screenshot here. Suggested size: 1200×750.

The Media Browser after the first scan. Clips show duration, format, and a transcribe status pill.

Transcribe

START

Select the clips you want transcribed and click **Transcribe**. Long footage takes a minute. We run it on your Mac, not in the cloud, so no upload, no per-minute fees, and your footage doesn't leave the room.

IMAGE PLACEHOLDER

Toolbar with the Transcribe button highlighted

Add screenshot here. Suggested size: 1200×750.

The Transcribe button in the toolbar. Selected clips are queued and processed locally.

Transcribe: Generates a word-level transcript locally on your Mac. Click any word to jump the playhead to that moment in the clip.

And we're editing

Once the first hour is transcribed, the words are clickable. Click any word, the playhead jumps. We'll cover paper edits properly in the next chapter. For now: poke around, click words, get the feel.

IMAGE PLACEHOLDER

Transcript pane with words highlighted, clip player on the right

Add screenshot here. Suggested size: 1200×750.

A finished transcript next to the player. Click any word to jump the playhead.

A note we owe you: long-form transcripts can take real time on older Macs. If you're on an M1 or newer, you're fine. On Intel Macs, give it patience and pick a single clip to start.

START

Send to Final Cut Pro

One click and your paper edit, alternates, and captions land in your FCP library as a new event.

This is the tightest export ReelChest has. Final Cut Pro gets a real FCPXML with our paper-edit clips, alternates, and any caption tracks you've made.

Before we export

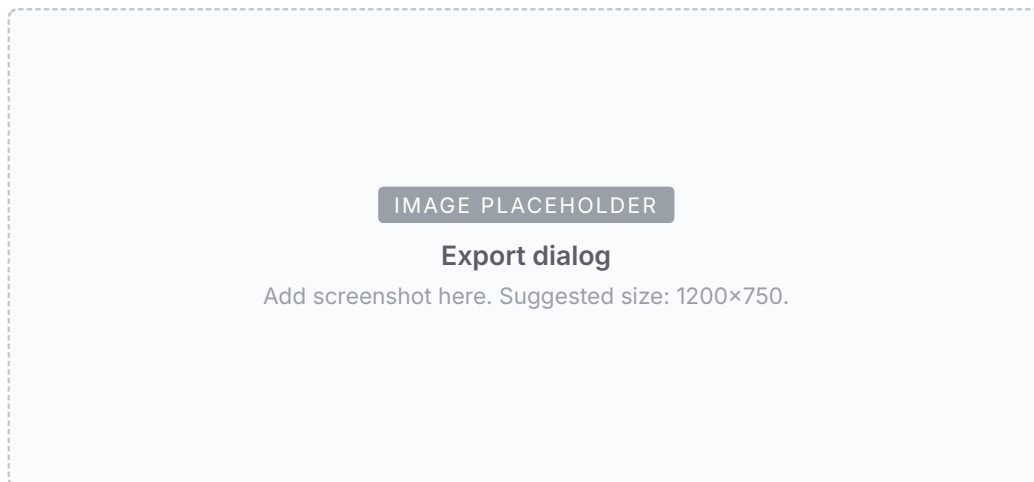
A few things to confirm so the import isn't messy:

- The project's frame rate matches your FCP library. Mismatched rates mean retiming, and retiming means quiet bugs later.
- Your media is in a stable location. FCP relinks by file path. If you move clips after exporting, FCP will need help finding them.
- You've actually committed your draft picks. Anything still marked draft won't make the export.

Export

To send a project to Final Cut Pro:

- 1 Click **Export**, then **Send to Final Cut Pro**.
- 2 Pick the FCP library and event on the dialog that appears.
- 3 ReelChest writes the FCPXML, opens FCP for you, and imports it as a new event.

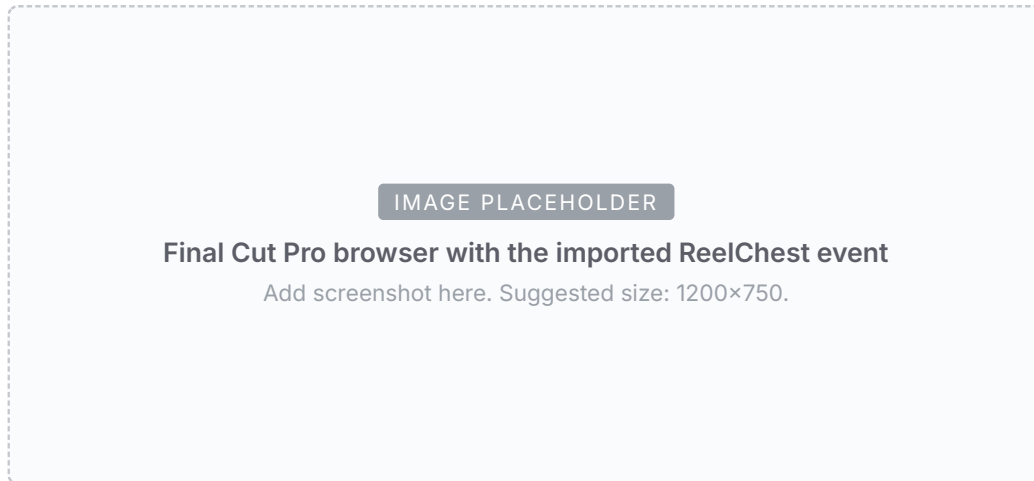


The Send to Final Cut Pro dialog. Library and event are remembered between exports.

EXPORT

After it lands

In FCP, drag the new event into a project. Your clips arrive as a connected timeline matching the paper edit. Alternates come along as compound clips, so you can swap them in without re-importing.



The new event in the FCP browser. Drag it onto a project to drop the timeline in place.

If a clip is offline, FCP will tell you. Right-click, **Relink Files**, point at the folder. ReelChest writes paths it expects to be stable; if you've moved things, this is the place to fix it.

Compound clip: FCP's container for a group of clips treated as one. ReelChest exports alternate takes inside compound clips so you can swap them without breaking the timeline.

Premiere and Resolve

We export FCPXML for both. They each interpret the format slightly differently, so the integration is less polished than FCP. We're working on it. For now: same flow, same dialog, pick your editor at the top.