

Creating a Live Composite

A guide to exporting interactive web composites
with Class Photo Composite

Class Photo Composite

What is a Live Composite?

A Live Composite turns your finished class composite into a self-contained website that families can open in a browser. It includes:

- An animated preview (composite.mp4) where each student's photo slot plays a short video clip inside the composite layout.
- Clickable hotspots on each person - clicking opens their long presentation video.
- Optional background music (MP3).
- Optional "Find us online" button linking to your website or social page.

The export produces a folder you can upload to any web host or share via a link.

Before You Start

1. Finish your composite in the editor

- Import and arrange all student and teacher photos.
- Set framing (pan/zoom) for each person - short videos are cropped to match the photo shape and framing in the editor.
- Add background, text, and any overlays.

Note: Live Composite always exports the normal orla layout, even if Memory Mate mode is active in the editor.

2. Prepare your video files

You need two types of video per person (when available):

Type	Purpose	Requirements
Short video	Looped preview inside the composite	MP4 or MOV; at least ~7 seconds recommended
Long video	Full presentation when a person is clicked	MP4 or MOV; any length

File naming: Videos must match each person's original photo filename (without extension).

Examples:

- Photo imported as Garcia,Maria.jpg -> short video: Garcia,Maria.mp4
- Photo imported as Smith,John_001.jpg -> long video: Smith,John_001.mov

The app looks up videos using the person's originalFileName from the project. Teachers are processed first, then students (same order as in the web viewer).

Supported formats: .mp4 and .mov only.

Folder layout:

- You can use one folder for both short and long videos (check "Use same folder for long videos"), or
- Use separate folders for short and long clips.

Missing videos are handled gracefully:

- No short video -> that person appears as a static photo in the animated composite.
- No long video -> that person's hotspot is not clickable.

3. Subscription (optional but important)

- Trial / Standard plans: exports include a watermark on the MP4 and limited web viewer behavior. The contact link points to the Class Photo Composite site.

- Live plan: watermark-free exports and your custom contact link.

Opening the Export Live Composite Window

1. Open your project in the editor.
2. Go to File > Export Live Composite...

The "Export Live Composite" dialog opens. Settings are saved automatically in your project (project.json > liveComposite), so the next time you export the same orla, your folders and options are remembered.

The Export Live Composite Window - Field by Field

Short videos folder * (required)

Folder containing short MP4/MOV clips named after each person.

- Click Select and choose the folder.
- On macOS, the app stores a security bookmark so it can access the folder on future exports.

Use same folder for long videos

- Checked: the short-video folder is also used for long presentation videos.
- Unchecked: a separate Long videos folder field appears (also required).

Encoding method

Fast encoding (direct FFmpeg) - enabled by default.

- Combines videos with FFmpeg directly on the base composite image.
- Faster for medium-sized classes.
- For 100+ students, may require more RAM.

If unchecked, the app uses the classic method: extract JPG frames, compose in Dart, then encode. Slower but uses less peak RAM.

Output folder * (required)

Where the complete web package will be written. Choose an empty or dedicated folder via Select.

Website title * (required)

Browser tab title and page title (e.g. "Class Composite Example 2024"). This field must not be empty - Export stays disabled until it is filled in.

Contact link (Facebook, website...)

Optional URL shown as a button at the bottom of the web viewer (e.g. <https://www.facebook.com/yourstudio>).

- Leave as "https://" if you do not want a button.
- On Trial/Standard plans, this is overridden by the product site link.

Background music (optional, .mp3)

Optional MP3 played in the viewer. Select the file with Select. The viewer shows a mute/unmute control when audio is included.

Exporting

1. Fill in all required fields (marked with *).
2. Click Export.

The form is replaced by a progress panel showing phases such as:

- Finding videos...
- Extracting videos... (classic method)
- Rendering base composite...
- Composing frames... / Encoding composite.mp4...
- Copying long videos...
- Generating web files...
- Export complete

You can click Cancel during export to abort.

When finished, "Export complete!" appears in green. Click Close to dismiss the dialog (settings are saved on close).

macOS folder access

If macOS cannot access previously saved folders, you may see:

"Saved folders need macOS confirmation before export."

Click Confirm folder access and re-select the video and output folders. This is required due to macOS sandbox security.

What Gets Exported

The output folder is a ready-to-host website:

```
output-folder/
|-- index.html          # Main page - open in a browser
|-- lccscripts.js       # Interactive viewer logic
|-- lcc.css             # Styles
|-- images/            # UI icons (mute, speaker, Find us online)
`-- assets/
    |-- videodata.js    # Hotspot coordinates, titles, links, audio ref
    |-- spreads/
    |   |-- composite.mp4 # Animated composite (short video loops)
    |   |-- composite.jpg # Static fallback image
    |-- videos/
    |   |-- 0000000000.mp4 # Long videos (indexed by person order)
    |   |-- 0000000001.mp4
    |   |-- ...
    |-- your-music.mp3  # If background music was selected
```

How the web viewer works

1. Desktop: the page loads composite.mp4 and loops it with short video clips in each photo slot.
2. Click a person: their long presentation video plays.
3. Mobile: if video preview is not supported, a static composite.jpg is shown; taps still open long videos.
4. Contact link: if set, a "Find us online" button appears at the bottom.
5. Background music: optional; user can toggle mute/unmute.

Publishing Your Live Composite

1. Upload the entire output folder to your web server (keep the folder structure intact).
2. Share the URL to index.html, e.g. <https://yourstudio.com/composites/Class2024/index.html>
3. Test on desktop and mobile: click several students, check audio, and verify the contact button.

You can also open index.html locally in a browser for testing before uploading.

Tips & Troubleshooting

Issue	What to check
Export button disabled	Short videos folder, output folder, and website title must all be set. Long videos folder too if same folder is unchecked.
Person has no animation	No matching short video file - verify filename matches the original photo name exactly.
Click does nothing	No long video for that person - add the file or check naming.
Wrong crop/framing in video	Adjust pan/zoom in the editor before exporting; short videos follow each person's photo transform.
Export slow or high RAM	Try Fast encoding; for very large classes (100+), uncheck it if RAM is limited.
Watermark on video	Subscribe to the Live plan for watermark-free exports.
macOS "access denied"	Re-confirm folder access via the dialog button and re-select folders.
Browser shows static image only	composite.mp4 codec may be unsupported; the viewer falls back to composite.jpg automatically.

Quick Workflow Summary

1. Design your composite and frame each photo.
2. Record short loop clips and long presentation videos for each student.
3. Name video files to match photo filenames (LastName,FirstName.mp4).
4. File > Export Live Composite...
5. Set folders, title, optional link and music, then Export.
6. Upload the output folder and share index.html.