How to use a greenscreen with Premiere Pro CS3- CS5

Chroma key green screen lighting tutorial

Color Correction Techniques for Greenscreen Compositing

In case anyone here doesn't know what **green screen** (or **chroma key** to give it it's technical name) is, it is a technique for shooting an actor or presenter against a green background, and then later replacing the green background with a video, animation or image during the video editing stage.

Why this colour **green**? In theory, any colour can be used, but this colour **green** (and **blue**) is the least like the colour of human skin tones (Any similar colour on the foreground subject or presenter to the chroma key green back-drop colour will also show the video or image added in the editing stage).

It is used widely in Hollywood blockbusters and on TV shows to create sets and backgrounds that would be too costly or even impossible to build. Some movies, like 'Sin City' and '300' were shot entirely using this technique (Film makers actually use a blue screen as it better suited for that medium).

The weather person on TV performs in front of a green screen, pointing to the large map behind them. They are actually pointing at a blank wall, and looking at the image you see on the TV through a monitor (Which is why you often see them looking to the side off screen, when pointing at the map, to make sure their hands are in the right place).

Chroma key is actually quite easy to do. However, it is not easy to do well.

There is a lot of very poor chroma key videos out there, and as we say in my industry "Poor video is worse than no video at all" (You'll hear me say that a lot). This picture shows the most common error of a 'green' edge around the subject or presenter, caused by poor lighting, back-drop and chroma key editing skills.

So if you plan to use this effect in your videos, make sure you follow this green screen tutorial, use the right equipment and take your time to do it well, because bad chroma key does not look professional, and you don't want to give your viewers or visitors the wrong impression.

Green Screen Tutorial - Part 1

The first thing you need to have is a green background, and there are several ways to achieve this.

The best (and most expensive) option is to buy a green screen cloth or 'pop up' type back drop. For this option, you will also need to get a frame to hang them on (although the 'pop up' type green screen can be lent against a wall).

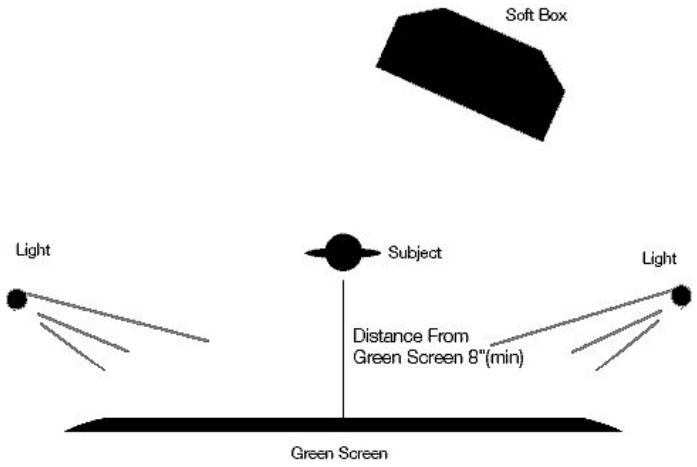
You can also paint a wall with special 'chroma key' green paint and shoot your video in front of that, but make sure you use matte paint, as you don't want a shiny surface that will reflect lights etc.

The cheapest way to create a green screen is to buy large sheets of green card and stick them together on a wall. I recommend using a proper chroma key cloth or a 'pop up' back-drop if you want the best results.

Green Screen Tutorial - Part 2

The next thing you will need is the one thing most people tend to forget and try to do without. And it always results in very poor results.

Lighting. You will need at least three light sources, preferably **soft boxes** or '**umbrella' reflector lights**. Two of the lights will be on the green screen (One either side at 45 degrees facing the back-drop), and one will be on your subject or presenter directly behind the camcorder (Ideally two lights for this as well, but you can get away with just using the one).



The **presenter** needs to be at least **three feet** from the **back-drop**, so they do not cast any **shadow** onto the chroma key background (Shadows and creases in the back-drop will make it harder to get a good chroma key effect when we start using the video editing software later on).

So the trick to great chroma key is to fill the back-drop with soft even light that is twice as bright as the light on the foreground object or presenter and avoid any shadows (or creases) on the back-drop.

Green Screen Tutorial - Part 3

Your are now ready to start shooting, but the last very important thing to remember is NOT to wear anything that is similar in colour to the green back-drop.

If you do, when you add the chroma key effect in your video editing software later, the background video or image you add will be seen on that item of clothing as well.

This can be used to good effect, if you want something to disappear for instance, just cover it with another piece of green cloth, and the background image will appear on it making it seem like it has just disappeared.

This is where I add a note of caution to this green screen tutorial. If all this sounds like a bit of fun (and it is!) and something you'd like to play around with, then by all means go ahead.

But there is the danger of using chroma key just because it seems cool to do, and the results can often look very poor and gimmicky. Chroma key is very hard to do really well, and I recommend just using plain coloured back drops (black, white etc.) or a simple background set (Like a desk, computer and plant for example) for most videos, as they look much more professional and don't require as much technical input as chroma key.

You only require two lights for a set or plain back-drops, and the video editing doesn't require any special techniques or software.

This content came from http://www.webvideofordummies.com/greenscreentutorial.html

My lesson - Greenscreen

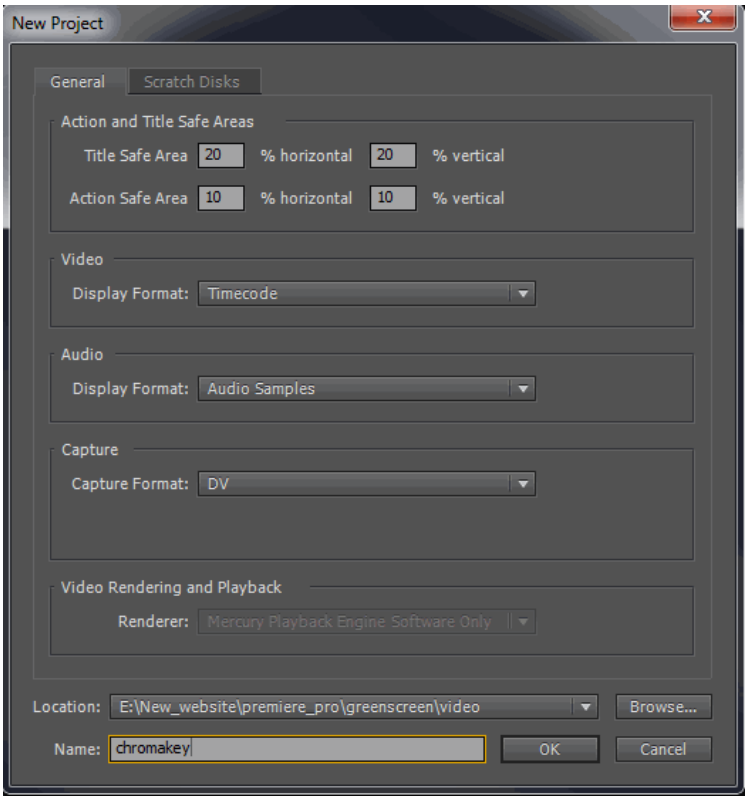
Now that you have some background information about chroma key, let's try working with Premiere Pro.

I have an example of a teacher with a greenscreen back drop video for you to work with. Video Example New back drop image

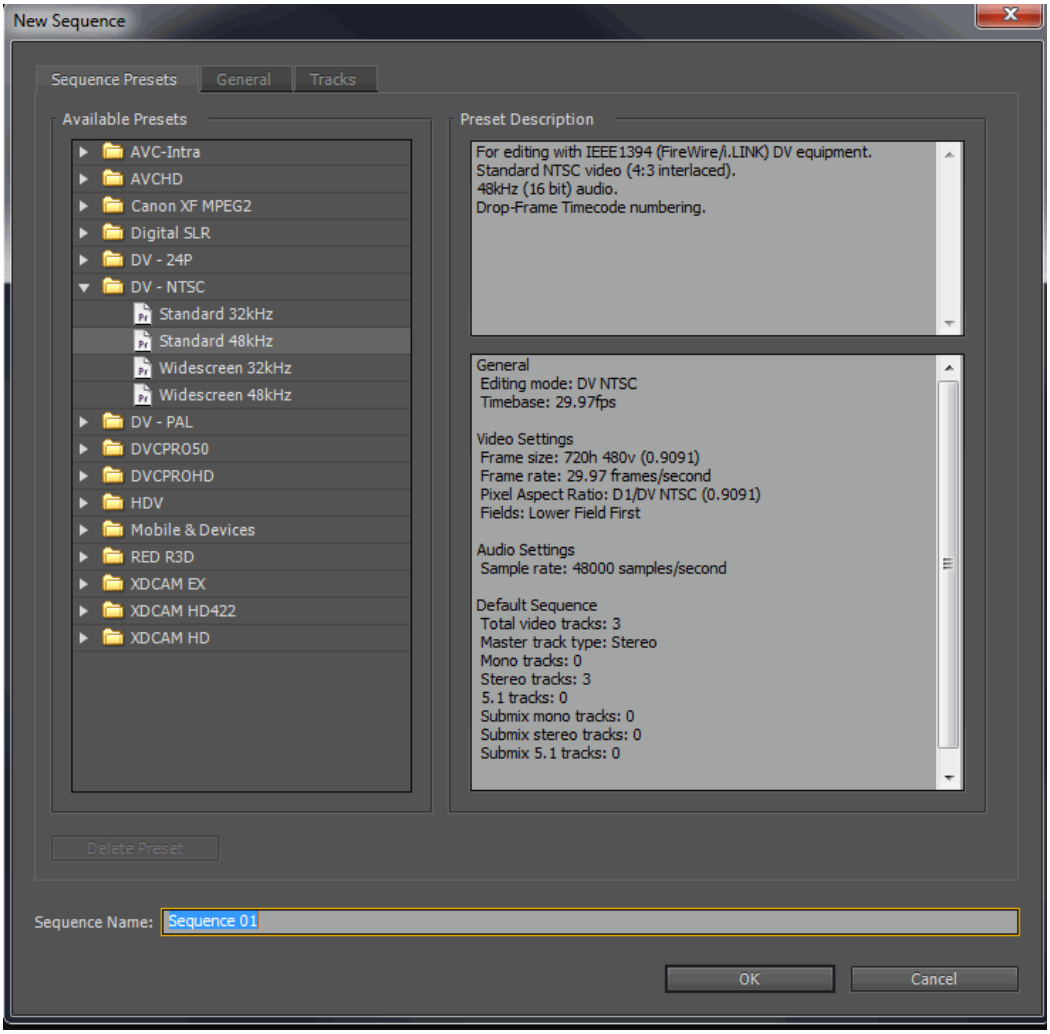
Create a new folder called "**Chroma key lesson**", then create your **sub folders** and download the video to your **video** folder.

Now launch **Premiere Pro** and select a new project.

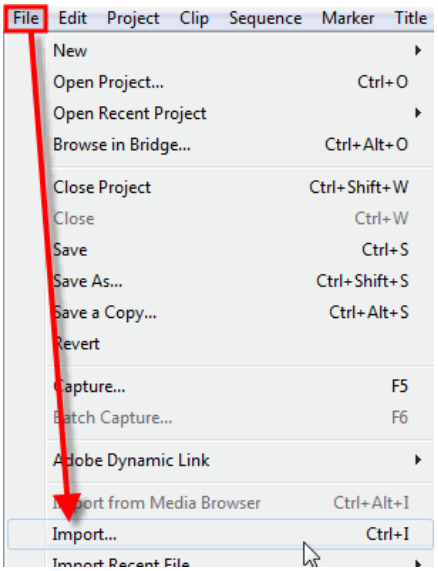
Select your **chroma key folder** as your location, and name the file " **chroma key.**"



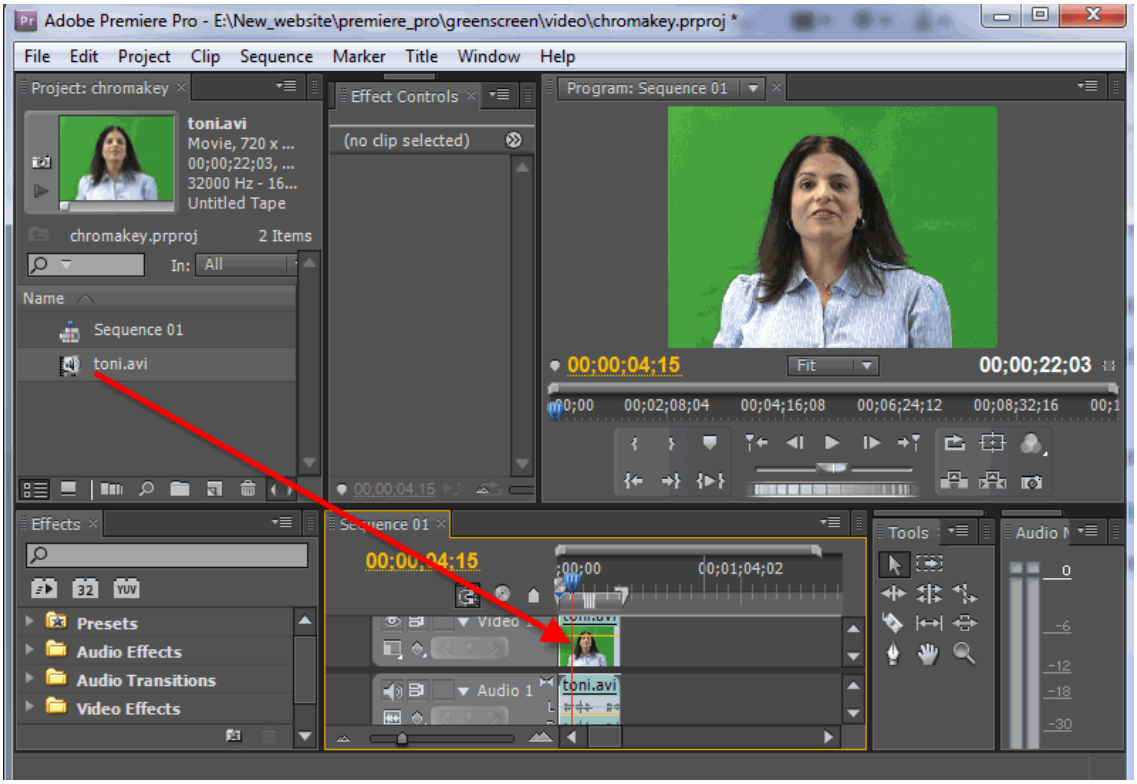
Choose preset - **DV - NTSC - Standard 48kHz** - Sequence Name: **Sequence 01** the default name is fine.



Next import the video clip by choosing > **File** > **Import**.(or drag and drop it in)

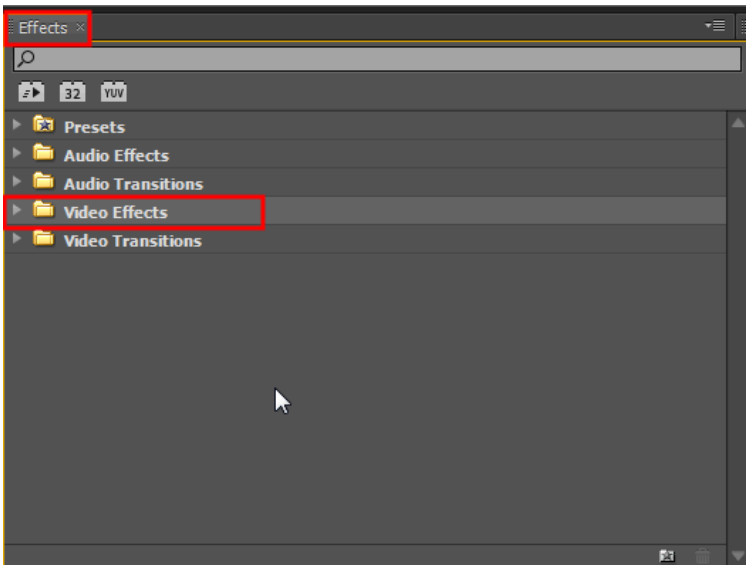


Now **drag** the **video file** from the **bin** to the **timeline**.

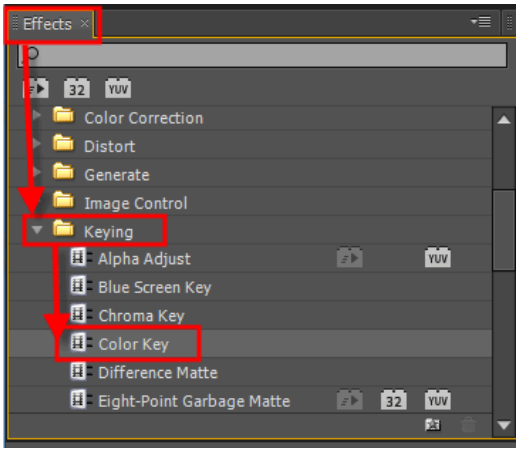


Now we need to get rid of the green background so it will become transparent so we can a different background to it.

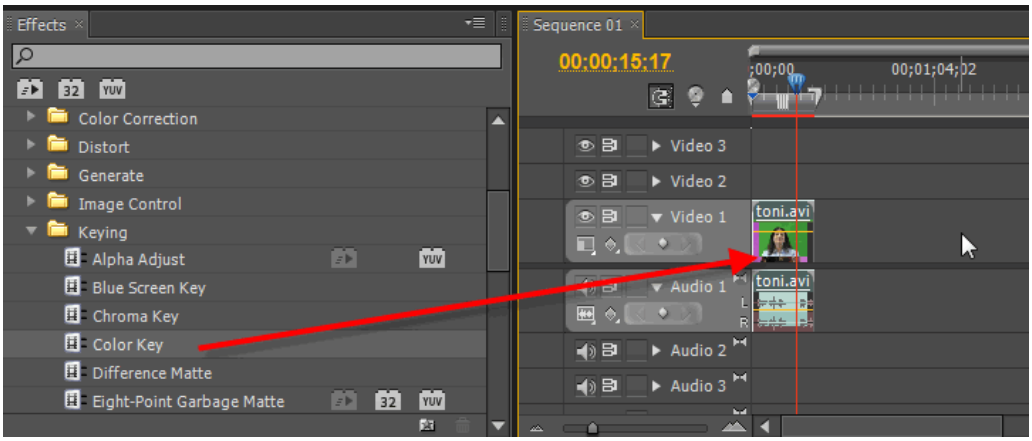
Next go to the **Effect panel** in the **bottom left hand corner** and choose the **Video Effects folder** by clicking on the **small triangle** to the left of the folder. This will expand the sub folder to see the categories that are available.



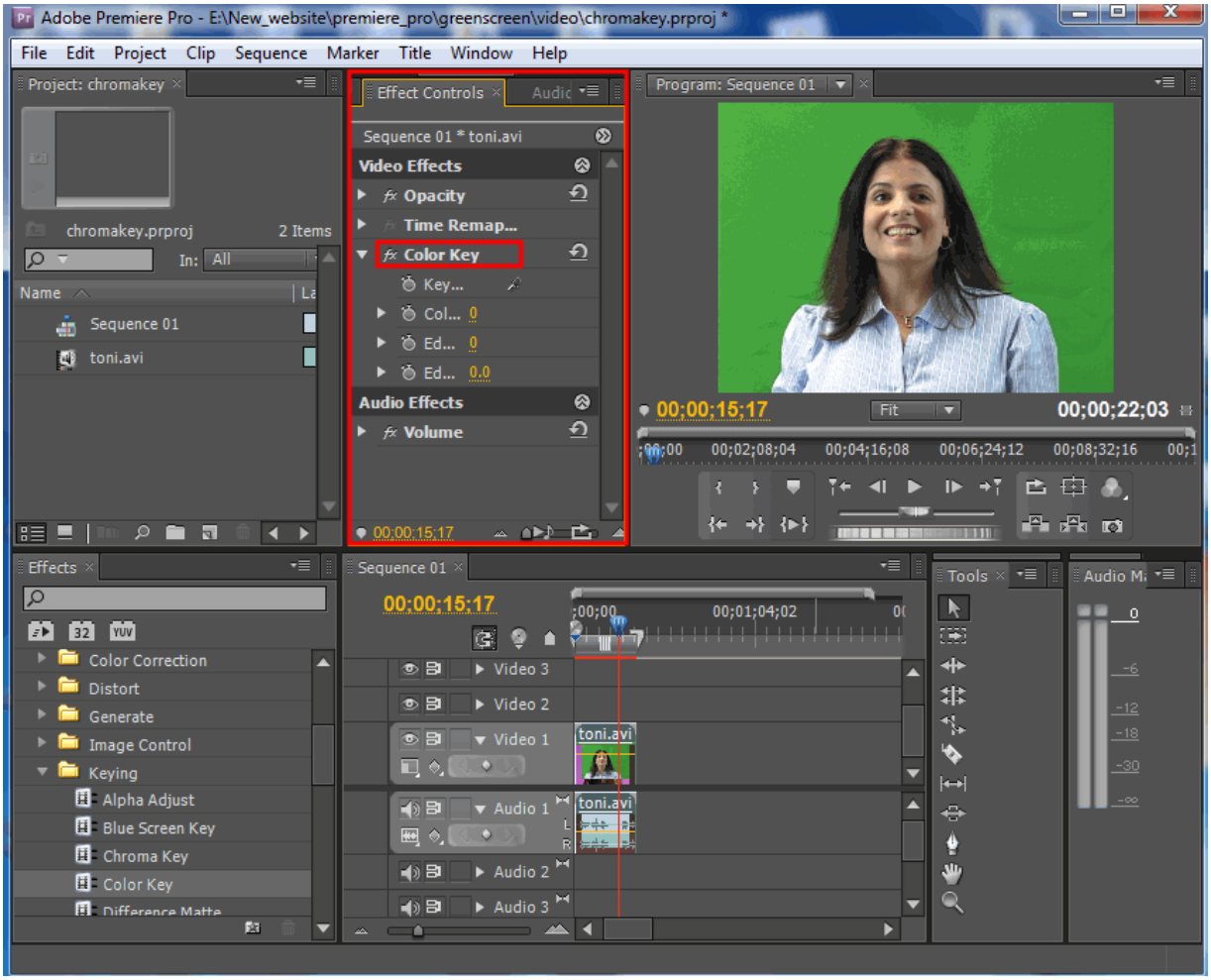
Looking at the sub folders choose "**Keying folder**" and choose the **little triangle** again to **expand** the viewing of the contents within the folder. Find the **Color Key** effect. Not the Chroma Key effect.



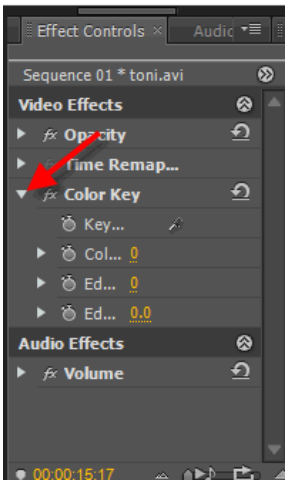
Drag the **effect** by **left clicking** and **dragging** it to the **clip** on the **timeline**.



Now that the **Color Key effect** has been added to the timeline. To make **adjustments** to the effect go to the **Effect Controls panel** to make the adjustments.

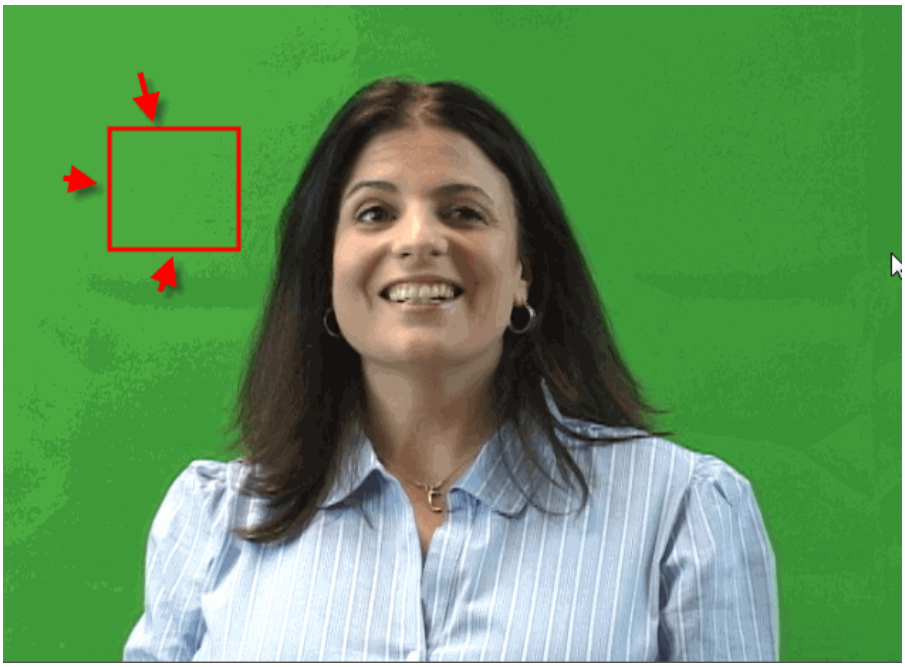


Expand the **Color Key Effect** in the **Effects Control panel** to see the adjustments tools that are available.

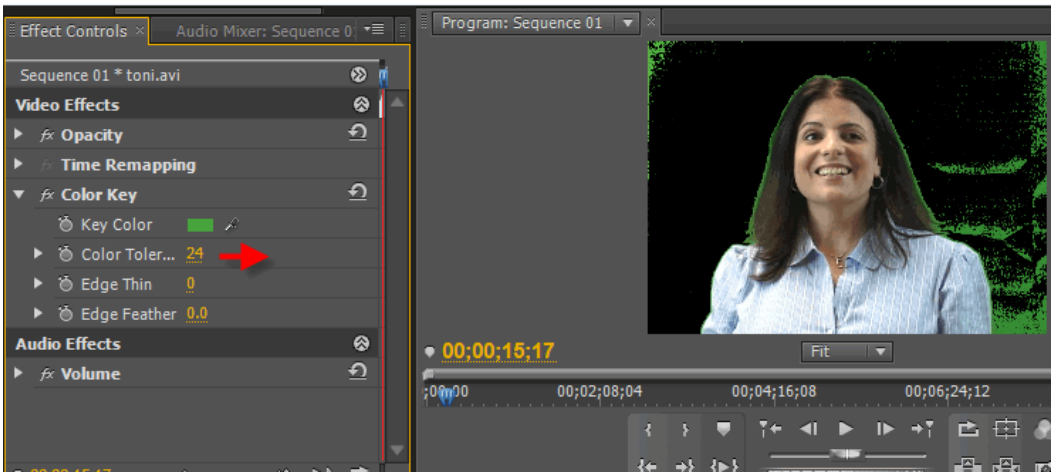


Select the **Eye Dropper tool** to take a sample of the color.

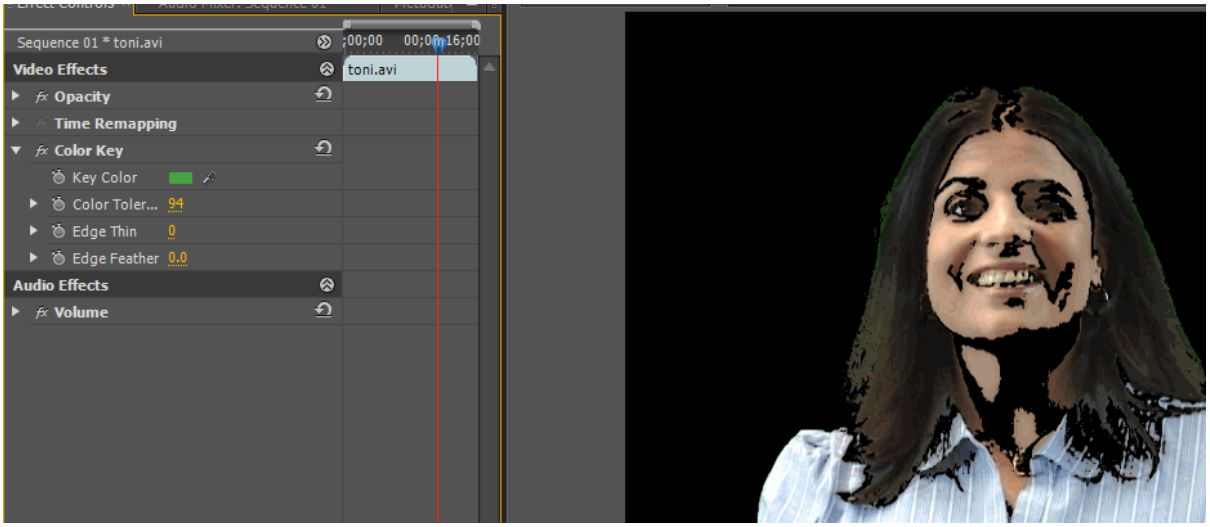
Choose the **Average** of the **green hues** you can find as long as it not to close to the subject. I choose the right side because that was more of the average green.



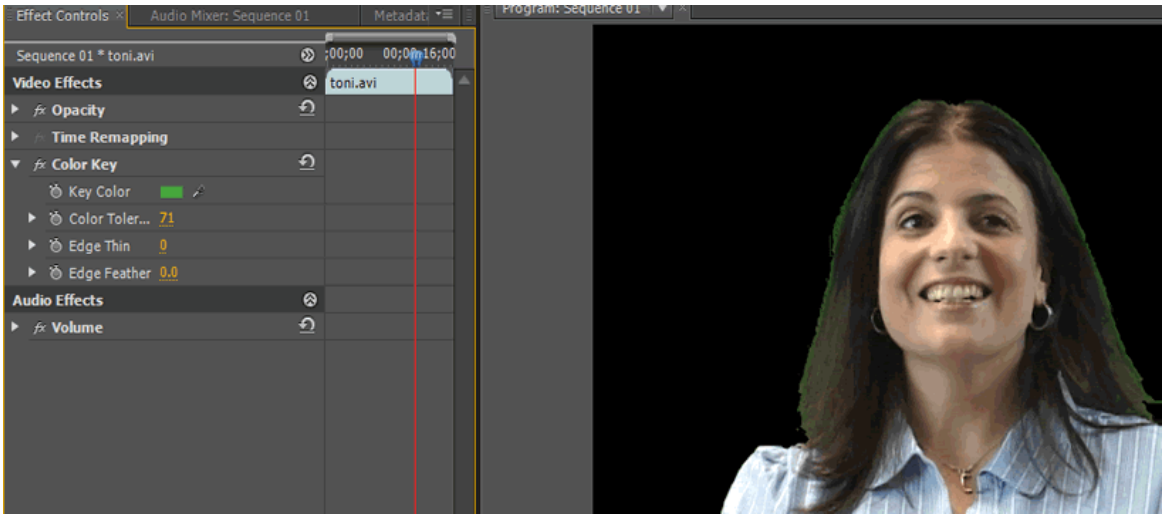
As you increase the **Color Tolerance** adjustment, you'll see the green disappearing.



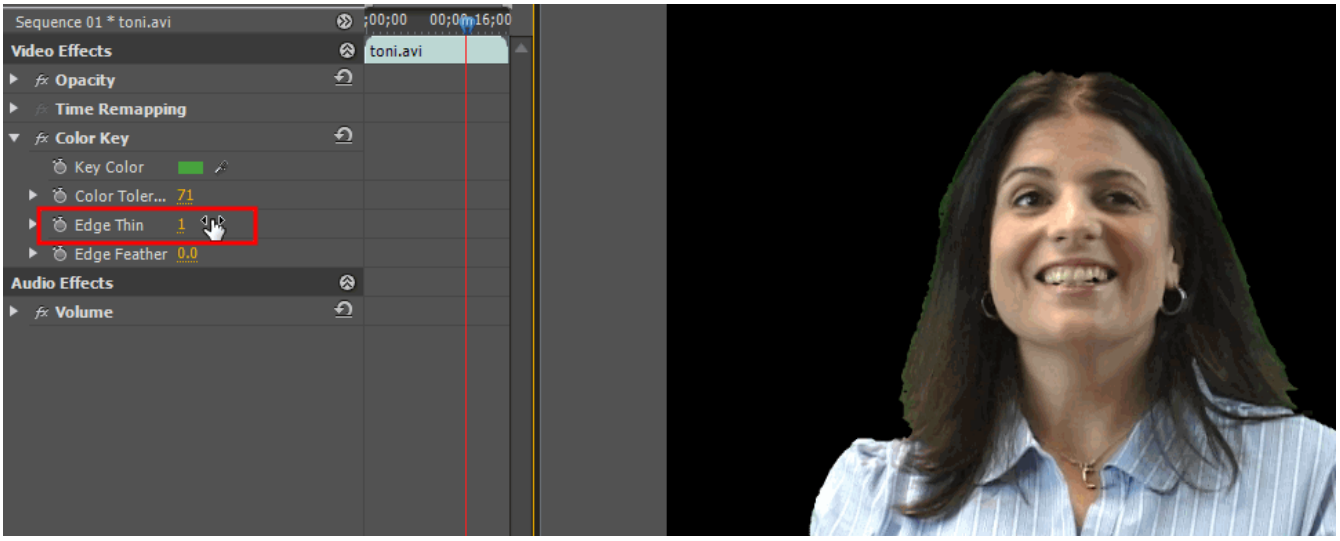
But don't take it to high or you'll make the person start to fade away.



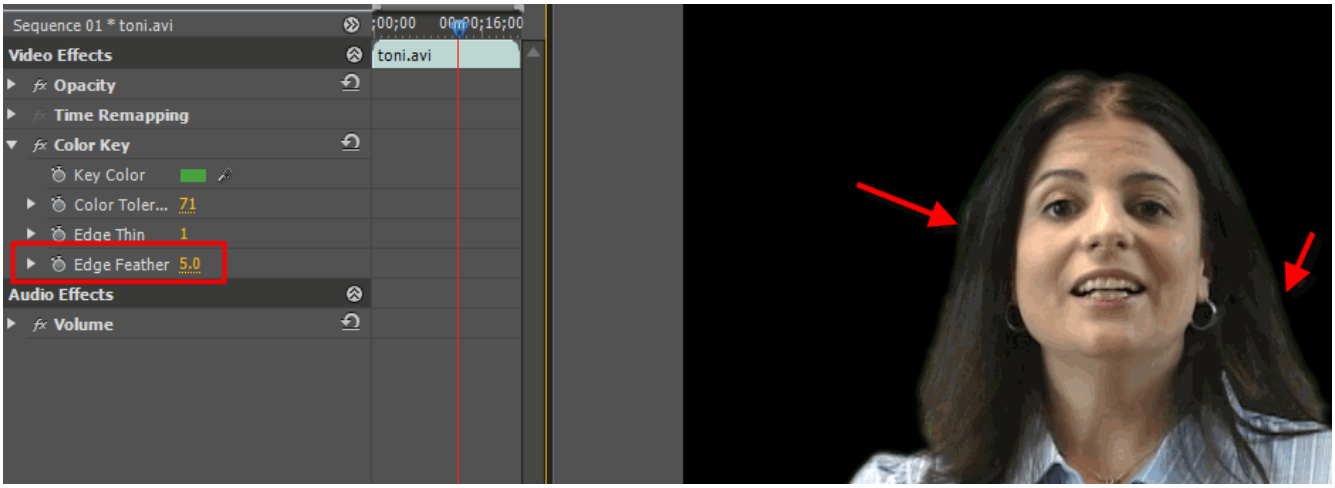
Get the so there's just a little green left around the person and this is because of lighting. Remember the better the lighting the easier it is to get rid of the green.



Now be very careful with the next adjustment "**Edge Thin**," I was only able to use a setting of "**1**." Or you'll take too much away from the person.



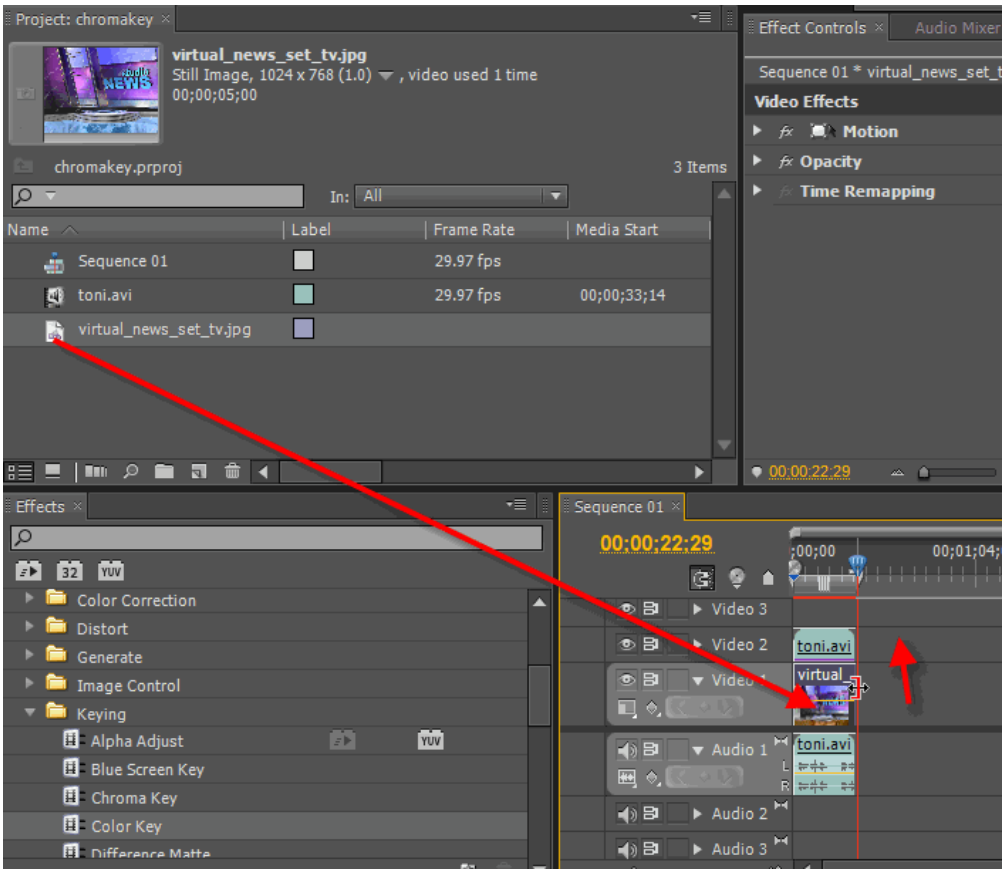
Next is "**Edge Feather**" this has to be used sparingly as well.



Now import the background image into Premiere if you haven't done that yet and let's add it to the timeline.

Before you add the background image (virtural_news_set_tv.jpg) to the timeline you need to move the "**toni.avi**" clip onto **layer 2**. **The background image needs to be below the video clip**.

You're going to have to extend the background image to the length of the video clip.



It should look something like this when you're finished.

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