Necessary Equipment

1. A camera that can shoot video
2. A tripod
3. A model and/or props
4. Adobe Photoshop
5. Video editing software

Step 1: Scene Design

First, plan out the scene you'd like to record. For your first round of cinemagraphs try to keep things simple. Remember, you want parts of your photo to exhibit stillness while other parts are moving. Try to think of a scene that would be fairly easy to loop. Some quick ideas we came up with include:

- Tree leaves moving in the breeze
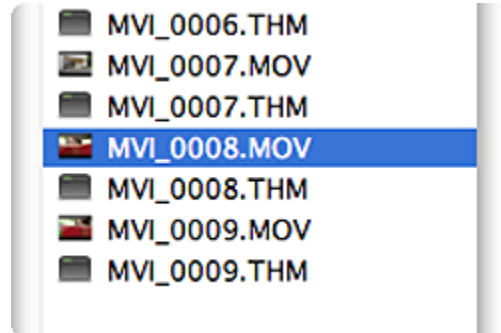- Eyes blinking
- Water spraying out of a fountain

Step 2: Film Shoot

Once you've designed your scene you can set it up with your necessary characters and props in place. Set your camera on your tripod and you're all ready to start filming! You don't have to film your scene for very long. 10-20 seconds of footage is more than enough to make a cinemagraph.

Step 3: Video Conversion

To edit your video in Photoshop you need to have it in the right format. Adobe Photoshop can only open MOV and AVI files. If your video file isn't in that format, then you'll have to open up your file in any standard video editing program and convert it.

Step 4: Video Framing
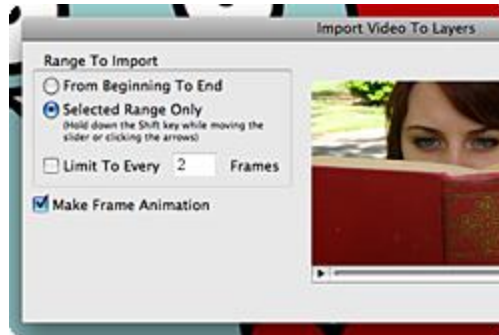
To open and edit your video in Photoshop, go to File > Import >Video Frames to Layers. A window will then pop up where you'll be given the option to import your entire file or a selected portion into frames. More frames generally results in a smoother GIF, but it also slows down Photoshop's processing. The best practice is to aim for 100 frames to start.

Step 5: Layer Framing
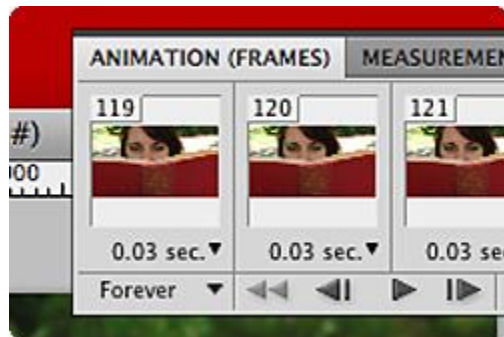
Once your video has been imported find your layers window. You will see that each frame of your video has been turned into a layer. To view these layers as frames, go to Windows > Animation. In the animation window, click on the bottom right icon of the film reel to view the animation as frames.

Step 6: Capturing Movement
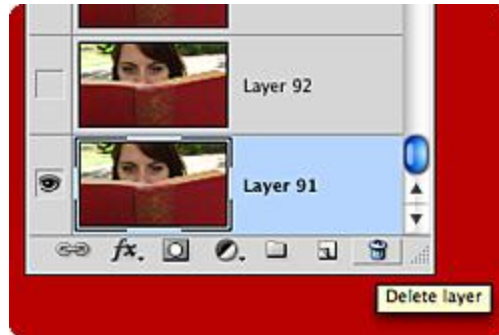
Now that you can see all of the frames in your video you'll want to find the frames that capture the movement you want in your cinemagraph. Hit the space bar to play your video and look for the movement you desire. Once you've identified your frames isolate them by deleting all of the other frames.

Step 7: Choosing an Alpha Layer
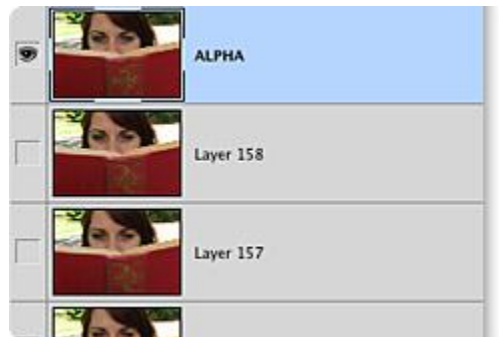
Within your now shortened video file, choose one layer to show the non-moving elements of your cinemagraph. Duplicate this layer, rename it "Alpha" and place it on top of all of the other layers.

Step 8: Masking

Now that your alpha layer is situated, it's time to work on the movement of your GIF. You'll be editing your alpha layer to show movement by using a vector mask. Mask out the parts of the image that should be moving. For our cinemagraph, we masked out the eyes, part of the hair, and the bushes since these are the areas we wanted to exhibit movement.

Step 9: Testing
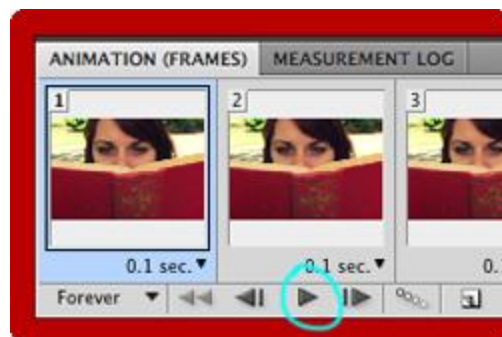
Once your alpha layer is properly masked it's time to run a test. In your animation window make sure that your animation is set to loop "Forever." From this test run you should be able to see what further edits you need to make to your layers/frames for the final GIF.

Step 10: Smoothing
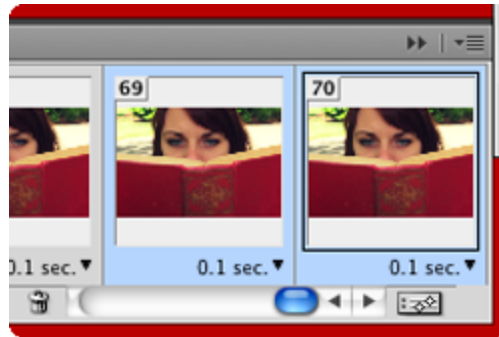
One of the challenges you may encounter is in getting your GIF to loop smoothly. You can fix your looping issues by duplicating your very last frame and changing the layer of that frame to the very first layer in your animation. You can then tween the last frame and the added frame to help ease the transition that takes place in the loop.

Depending on the movement you're featuring in your GIF, you may also want to add reversed frames. You can do this by first duplicating all of your frames. Once your frames are duplicated, you can reverse them by selecting them all and clicking on the down arrow in the top right of the animation frames window.

Step 11: Resize
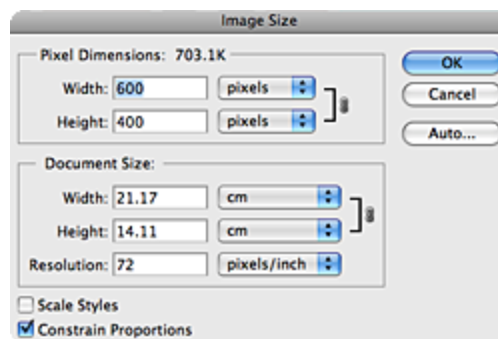
The internet does not take kindly to large GIFs, being that they do create a rather large file size. To help optimize your GIF you'll want to resize it. You can resize your GIF by changing your settings in Image > Image Size. While you're playing with your settings make sure your resolution is also set to 72 pixels/inch. That's the highest resolution needed for images on the web.

Step 12: Enjoy

Congratulations! You've created a cinemagraph. Share your new creation with the digital world and watch the likes, shares, and comments roll in.