American Motion Picture Society
home of the world's longest-running non-commercial film festival

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Putting your video online - just do it!

If your movie is standard definition (4:3 or 16:9) and under 9 minutes long just ...

1
- Go to www.youtube.com.
- Click "sign up" and open a free account.
- Click "upload" to go to the upload page.

2
- Click "Upload Video" and point to the movie file on your computer.

3
- As uploading starts edit Youtube's title and description of the film.
- Wait possibly for a couple of hours while it uploads ... but you only have to do that once!

4
- When it is ready, click "Edit", choose the Youtube options about who can see the video, whether to allow voting and comments or not and select the thumbnail image you want.
- Note the URL and tell your friends to watch online!

For most of us that is all we need to do.

There are more detailed notes on Youtube uploading here. If your video is more than 2Gb in file size you will need to shrink it a bit - see our notes here.

It really is that simple. Just be careful about copyright.

You should make sure the copyright on all the contents of your video is cleared before uploading. For soundtracks that means in practical terms using royalty-free music from a supplier whose licence specifically allows it. For images it means obtaining permission from any third-party concerned. If it is all material you shot yourself that is fine.

This sounds ridiculous when YouTube has mountains of material that is clearly taken from television or professional material and echoes with songs from the music industry. Some artists, especially those whose main appeal is to younger audiences, turn a blind eye to it. Others have insisted that their work is removed. Automated systems process every uploaded video on Youtube and report any possible use of copyright music. Play safe.

On the other hand you should accept that once your work is out there, it is almost impossible to control what happens to it. People may download it - even in extreme cases re-edit it and put it online themselves. Our advice is to smile happily and take any such acts as a tribute to your movie.

Share your vision

Put your films online for the world to discover and get them embedded in webpages - your own, the club's or even here on the AMPS website.

A film which catches the public eye can be seen by an immense audience around the globe. How else would your work be enjoyed in Japan, Honolulu, Australia, Canada, Timbuktu, Ukraine and Iceland?

For dedicated film enthusiasts the biggest benefit is that your films can be showcased easily on websites like this one, without demanding new skills from the webmaster or costing a fortune in "bandwidth" surcharges.

This one is a 2004 AIFVF student award winner by Chase Holtman.

How is embedding done?

When your video has been uploaded to Youtube or another video host you can usually find under the "share" options some code for "embedding". Copy that and paste it into a web page. Voila ! It works like an oblong hole in the page, through which people see the video ... though it is actually running on the video host. Social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace have built-in linking systems for such videos.

Video Hosts

There are scores of websites which will host your video, most of them free. Some have optional subcription deals which let you upload more or get better quality. Those most commonly used by non-commercial film makers are:

Youtube	films up to 15 minutes* and files less than 2Gb	*No other service offered for non-commercial users.*
Vimeo	file size up to ½Gb a week †	*"Vimeo Plus" offers 5Gb a week for $60 a year.*
DailyMotion	films up to 20 minutes and files less than 2Gb	*"MotionMaker" - is free, allows unlimited length, but each movie is subject to approval by their staff.*
MotionBox	up to 300Mb per video †	*"Premium" service offers virtually unlimited file size $50 a year.*
RealinTime	up to 200Mb per video †	*Private viewing "vault" for a modest sum each year.*

* actually 15 minutes 59 seconds
† the lower the image quality you send them the longer the film can be.

Uploading longer or larger video files

Most video hosts accept a variety of file types. Internet connections bring files *to* you (**downloading**) much faster than sending them out *from* you (**uploading**). It can take several hours to send a movie up to a video host. Exact times depend on how fast your internet connection is and how busy the web happens to be.

Each video host lists its preferred file formats and those change frequently as their behind-the-scenes processing changes. Many sites - including YouTube - accept HD but may require special settings to be used. Check their upload instructions and FAQs. (Frequently Asked Questions).

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The 2Gb file size limit for YouTube and DailyMotion means you probably do not need to convert your films into another format - for up to 9 minutes of Standard Definition video just upload the AVI or MOV file.
(Many sites also accept VOB files from a DVD ... even if they do not say so.) The

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upload time may be several hours so you might like to stop your anti-virus program
updating itself while you are uploading in case that interrupts the load.

For films over 8m 59s on YouTube and DailyMotion; and for most films on other video hosts you may have to use a
converter to reduce the picture size, the quality of sound and picture in order to get your film into the file size they accept.

Converting Videos for the Web

All web hosts process all movies - shrinking them and making them into small files. Send them the best quality you can **as
close as you can to their maximum file size** - which often means doing some conversion work.

For example *DailyMotion* says that for standard definition movies its preferences are:

Video

1. Codecs (in descending order of preference):

   H.264, DivX, WMV9, progressive MPEG-2
2. Aspect: 640x480 (4:3) or 720x480 (16:9)
3. Bitrate: 1.2 to 3 Mbps (depends on the codec and the resolution)
4. Framerate: 25 fps (preferred)
5. 2-pass encoding, progressive (not interlaced, this is very important)
6. Square pixels

Audio

1. Codecs (in descending order of preference):

   AAC, MP3, WMA9, MPEG Layer 2
2. Bitrate: 256 Kbps AAC or 320 Kbps stereo MP3 (ideal)

   128 Kbps stereo AAC or 192 Kbps stereo MP3 (minimum); 44100Hz

Container (file format)

1. MP4, AVI, MOV

Don't worry about the technical jargon, but for the curious ...

A **codec** is a computer program which compresses a file before sending it across the web. It is important that the same **codec** is applied at the other end of the connection to decompress it.

Bitrate describes how many "bits" of computer data are allocated to carry the information about each second of video or audio. The higher the number the better the quality ... but also the larger the file.

2-pass encoding means the converter reads the video file once to note which parts have a lot of image changes (e.g. car chase) and which are relatively unchanging (e.g. talking head). It then reads the video a second time and allots a higher **bitrate** to the action-filled scenes and a lower one to the "static" scenes. This makes most efficient use of the file size and gives better quality results.

interlaced refers to pictures like those on a traditional television set where first all the odd-numbered lines (1, 3, 5 ...) are shown in a 50th of a second, then all the even-numbered lines (2, 4, 6 ...) in the next 50th of a second. In the early days of television broadcasting this system created less visible flickering than showing a complete picture every 25th of a second. *Dailymotion* prefers whole pictures each time.

square pixel - a pixel (picture cell) is the basic building block of an image on a computer or tv screen. They may be square or oblong. Generally computer systems prefer square ones for easier handling.

Container refers to the file format in which the data is carried.

How do you actually convert a movie?

A: Use Your Editing Package

Many computer editing programs have output options which do this for you. It is possible to use Windows Movie Maker and Apple iMovie which are free and may already be on your computer for this purpose.

Note: *Be careful about standard output settings marked "web". Standards change rapidly. What was appropriate when your editor was written a few years ago is probably out-of-date now. Until recently "web" settings were intended to create tiny, poor quality movies whose only advantage was they were small enough to watch on a dial-up internet connection. Look at the more advanced/custom/"cable" options offered.*

B: or Use a Specialised Program

You can do the preparation with a separate computer program. **Canopus ProCoder** will do a great job, but it costs a lot. **Super**© is a free compressor and here is our step-by-step guide to using it ...

- Downloading **Super**©
- Compressing your movie with **Super**©
- Uploading to YouTube in deetail & embedding