

CAPTIONING & SUBTITLING VIDEOS WITH YOUTUBE

It's standard accessibility practice to create captions even for English-language videos, for the benefit of the hearing impaired. For digital stories that have a multi-lingual audience, you will also want to create captions in the language of key audiences.

The easiest way to caption a digital story is to upload it to YouTube and use their captioning tools. If you do not want the video to be visible to a potentially wide audience, designate it as "Private" or "Unlisted" in the Info & Settings area of the video.

Note that captioning on YouTube means that to see the captions, you must either watch the video on YouTube, or, download the caption file and store it in the same local folder as your video file, where a media player (Windows Media Player, VLC) can access the captions on playback.

A. To Add English Captions to an English-Language Video

1. Before you begin, be sure you have the following:
 - a. a YouTube account: a personal account is fine: you can download the caption files that you create in YouTube and later upload them with the video to another, organizational account.
 - b. an .mp4 (video) file of your digital story, **with the music turned off**. To get this mp4 file, you will need to mute the music tracks in the video (hit the three-line 'hamburger' menu icon to the left of the music track, and select "Mute track") and export it using the FINISH command. When you get an email message from WeVideo that your video is complete, go to the VIDEOS area of WeVideo, click on the video you want to caption, and hit the download button directly below the player. Don't forget to later unmute the music track(s) in WeVideo, before you re-export the video for distribution.
 - c. an MS Word file with the text of the story script.
2. Upload your video to YouTube using the UPLOAD button on the site. Designate it as Private using the dropdown menu at the center of the upload screen.
3. Once the video is uploaded, click on the icon that represents your username at the top-right of the screen, and click the Creator Studio button.
4. This will take you to your VIDEOS list. Next to the video you wish to caption, click the dropdown menu arrow next to Edit, and select Subtitles & CC.
5. Click button that says Add New Subtitles or CC.
6. Select your language.
7. The easiest method is to "Transcribe and autosync."
8. Open the MS Word file that contains your story script. Select all of the text that was spoken by the narrator (not the title), copy it, and then paste it in the text box on YouTube.
9. Hit "Set timings." This will take you back to the video, and YouTube will try to automatically set the timings. You can see its progress by watching the grey bar at the bottom of the video advance.

10. Click on the “Set timings” button. You’ll now see your captions in a column on the left, and on the right, under your video, a timeline with adjustable blocks that you can shorten and stretch as you would media in a video-editing timeline. The captioning workflow is to verify that the words in the transcript on the left match the words spoken, and that the timing is correct in the timeline blocks. There are often a few errors, which require you modify the text on the left or adjust the timing on the right.
11. When you’re done, click “Publish.” You should see a verification, “√ Subtitles published” in a blue box next to your video. You should also, at this point, open the “English (Automatic)” subtitles and “Unpublish” them (this deletes the terrible, auto-generated YouTube captions from the list of user options).
12. Verify that everything works by hitting the CC button in the video player and playing the story. You should now see your captions play atop the story.

B. To Add Captions in Another Language to an English-Language Video

Option 1: Translate it, During Playback, Yourself, or With the Help of a Speaker of the Target Language

1. Follow steps 1-6 above, selecting the target language.
2. Check “Transcribe and set timings.”
3. Hit play on the video, and type what you hear in the “Type subtitle here then press Enter” box. When you start to type, the video will pause. When you get to the end of a phrase or a sentence, hit ENTER, which will create a moveable block in the timeline below the video. It’s best to generate *all* of the text in the target language first, without worrying about timing. When you’ve got that done, you can work in the timeline to adjust the clips, so that the text is synched with the speaker’s voice.
4. When you’re done, hit the blue PUBLISH button on the top right of the screen. The translated captions should now be a second option for users to select when they hit the CC button.

Option 2: Give a Target-Language Speaker the English Caption File, and Have This Person Retype the English in the Target Language

1. Once you have created your English captions, you can download the caption file by opening the video in the Video Manager, selecting Captions & Subtitles, opening the English captions, and in the Actions dropdown-button menu, selecting Download .srt (if it’s going right back to YouTube, .sbv is also an okay file type).
2. The .srt file can be opened with a text editor (don’t use MS Word: use a simple text editor). This file contains both timecode and the caption text. The native speaker can then replace the English text with the target language and save the file with a new name.
3. Go back into the Subtitles & CC area, select “Add new subtitles or CC” and select the target language. Click “Upload a file” and upload your target-language .srt file.

4. Verify that the captions look correct, then hit Publish. The new language will now be an option when users hit the CC button in YouTube.

Option 3: Pay for a Translation

1. In the “Info & Settings” section of the Video Manager space for your video, click on “Translations” just below the video.
2. Scroll to the bottom, and click “Buy translation.”
3. Select what you’d like translated (probably the title, description, and captions), into what language.
4. Pay up! When I submitted a 4:30 second story for English-to-Spanish translation, the cost options ranged from \$38-\$108.
5. I’m not sure if those subtitles are automatically uploaded or if the file is delivered to you. If the later, you will need to follow Option 2, steps 3 & 4, above.

C. To Add English Captions to a Video in Another Language

If you have a speaker of the video’s language available to help...

Option 1. Auto-Transcribe and Then Translate into English

1. Have your language-speaker follow the instructions in Section A to auto-transcribe the video in their language.
2. Next, follow the instructions in Section B, Option 2, opening the caption file in their language, replacing the captions with English, and re-uploading them.

Option 2. Transcribe into English During Playback

1. Have your language-speaker follow the instructions in Section B, Option 1, translating their language into English and adjusting the timings.

If you do not have a speaker of the video’s language available to help, your options are limited. Here’s one that may work, but only if you have a script written in the language spoken...

Option 3. Auto-Transcribe and Then Pay for a Translation into English

1. Follow the instructions in Section A to auto-transcribe the video using the text of the script in another language.
2. If you have some knowledge of the language, try to adjust the timing so that the captions are in sync.
3. Once the piece is captioned in its language, follow Section B, Option 3, to buy an English translation.