

## Captioning Guidelines

- ✓ Arial, centre aligned, white text on black background.
- ✓ If the captions are open, or burnt in, make the video smaller and move it to the top of the screen. Then captions will be underneath and not cover the video.
- ✓ Captions should accurately reflect the audio.
  - They need to be in sync and coincide with the onset of the audio.
  - Do not correct speaker's words.
  - Don't add, delete or rearrange words.
  - Don't paraphrase.
  - Use correct spelling and punctuation and capital letters.
  - OK to remove "ums", "ahs", repeated words and false starts. If in doubt, leave it in.
  - Swear words should be left in. If it's in the audio, it's in the captions.
  - Slang contractions should be spelt as they are spoken, as long as readability is not compromised.
  - If a full stop (period) works, it is best to use one. Short, clear sentences make the best captions.
  - Localise spelling for your audience –e.g. 'color' for the US vs 'colour' for the UK/Australia.
  - If there is audible background chatter, no need to caption the words.
- ✓ Captions should break at natural linguistic breaks.
- ✓ If captions are over two lines, try and make the lines similar lengths (press SHIFT + ENTER to break a line). Preferably keep subjects and phrases together and break after a verb.
- ✓ Each time a speaker changes, precede their captions with >> and if a voiceover, have >> [Narrator] before the captions.
- ✓ Sound effects should be adequately described in square brackets if time between dialogue (prioritise speech over sounds), and [Music plays] where music can be heard.
  - If lyrics are audible, they must be captioned, starting each caption block with a #. The final caption block of the audible lyrics should end with a full stop followed by a hash.
- ✓ Numbers should be written as words from zero to ten, then as numbers except for 3 million, 1 billion, trillion etc. Write phone numbers as digits eg. 000.
  - Simplify dates and currency, eg. \$24 and 2 June instead of the second of June.
- ✓ If there is text on the screen, and is exactly the same as the voice, no need to caption it.
- ✓ Be consistent with the spelling of words. I keep a list of common words, like firefighter (one word) flood boat (two words) so I can be consistent across all videos. Or follow your organisation's style guide.

## Captioning Tips

I usually upload new videos to YouTube and edit the automatic captions that appear (go to 'Video Manager', select 'Subtitles' from the menu list under the title of the video you want). Then click on English, automatic, then 'Edit'. Type and edit the captions, moving the boxes under the video as you go so the audio matches up with the text. Then click 'Publish'. Click on the 3 dots next to automatic English and then 'Delete', so it won't appear. You may have to delete draft too. Then click on the new English one, and click 'Download', then '.srt'. Select 'Save File' and choose a folder and filename.

For burned in/open captions I use Camtasia:

Import the video and drag it down to Track 1. Click 'Captions', click the cog () , then 'Import' and select the srt file you just downloaded from YouTube. Make sure you are at the beginning of the timeline and click the video on track 1. Click 'Animations' and make the video 82% and drag it to the top of the preview screen. Check size of video by clicking the percentage box above and go to 'Project Settings'. It should be the same size as your original video. Change 'Canvas Dimensions' if required and click 'Apply'.

Click 'Captions'. If there is only one line of text it's usually at the bottom of screen, but it looks better as the top line, so press [shift + enter] to add a line after the text. Check each caption, adding lines if

text breaks over two lines, eg 

Department of Fire And Emergency Services,
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should be: 

Department of Fire and Emergency Services,
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You can merge or split captions if they are too long or too short (by right clicking the caption in the timeline), just play around with timing, and only have them change when there is a natural pause in the audio. Don't split text when going from one caption to the next, when they really should be together. In special circumstances you could change the size of the text, but it changes every caption, so you may have to edit lines of text previously edited.

All non-spoken audio (like laughing, music, coughs and sound effects) should be captioned in square brackets eg [Music plays]. If inaudible, like radio chatter with crackles, write [inaudible]

Every time a different person speaks, precede their text with >> to indicate a new voice.

Don't forget punctuation, including full stops at the end of one speaker and capital letter at the beginning of the next speaker.

I generally don't caption "um", unless they are on camera and there is a long pause between sentences.

Once finished editing captions, watch through one more time and make any changes. Add any effects to the video (like a fade to black transition) if required and click 'Share'. Select 'Custom production settings' and 'Next'. Then check MP4 is checked and click 'Next'. Then click 'Options' above and on 'Caption type' make sure 'Burned in captions' is selected. Click 'Next' twice, type a video name and choose a folder to save it to, and click 'Finish'. When finished rendering, view it and make any changes and share again if required. Save your project in case you want to make changes another day.

You can export captions by clicking the cog icon in captions view and choose 'Export captions' and save in your folder.

## Making Transcripts

After creating captions, a transcript of the video can be made.

1. Open the srt file in Notepad.
2. Select all and copy.
3. Paste in the INPUT box on this website: <https://toolslick.com/conversion/subtitle/srt-to-txt#>
4. Click CONVERT.
5. Click WITH OUTPUT button and choose LINE MERGER.
6. Click the Copy Output button (middle icon) 
7. Paste in a new Word Document.
8. Add a heading, eg **Video Transcript: name of video**
9. Take out any square brackets of music or irrelevant content.
10. Add lines in to make paragraphs (if needed) and identify who the speakers in the video are in square brackets before they talk.
11. If the video had text on the screen that you didn't need to caption, don't forget to add it in the transcript.
12. Make the document accessible.
13. Save as a PDF.
14. Upload both the Word and PDF versions to the web where people can download it.
15. Copy the urls of these documents and open Chrome browser.
16. Click on the Bitly extension in the top right corner. Or go to <https://bitly.com/>
17. Paste the long link in the Shorten Your Link box.
18. Click Copy.
19. Paste it in the Description box on YouTube after typing 'For a transcript of this video click here: '
20. Type '(PDF) or' after the link and copy and paste the Word doc link. Type '(Word)' after.
21. Click Save.