

CREATE ACCESSIBLE VIDEOS GUIDE

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Use Captions

Closed Captioning for recorded videos provides access to Deaf and Hard of Hearing audience members who cannot rely on the video's audio only. Closed Captioning also benefits everyone – think about people watching a video in a noisy classroom or a student watching an instructional video with the sound turned off because their child is asleep next to them. Quality captions have accurate spelling of words and acronyms, use correct grammar and punctuation, and do not display more than 2 or 3 lines of text on the screen.

- [WCAG Technical Standard](#)
- [Section 508 Standard](#)
- The [Captioning Key](#) by Described and Captioned Media defines components of good captioning.

Professional Captioning

SBCTC contracts with 3Play Media for professional closed captioning, transcript, and audio description services.

3Play Media creates a caption file, such as an .SRT file, with timestamps that can be edited by the customer if needed. Once the file is ready, first you download it as a local file onto your computer, and then upload the file to accompany your video on platforms such as YouTube or Panopto.

If you have integrated your 3Play Media account with your YouTube account, then it is even easier. After the caption file is ready, then you select “Post Back to YouTube” from the drop-down menu options under the “Publish” tab.

To learn how to use the Post Back option, follow instructions for [YouTube: Link Accounts and Enable Postback Captions](#).

To estimate the cost of your project, you can use the [3Play Pricing Sheet](#).

Lastly, [the Described and Captioned Media Program](#) maintains a list of useful [tools and services to create video captions](#) if you want to explore options other than 3Play Media.

Auto-Captioning (use with caution!)

If you don't want to use professional services, then you can create DIY captions. Both YouTube and Panopto have auto-captioning features built into their platforms. Essentially, first you upload your video to either platform and then it uses AI to create captions for your video. **Then, review the auto-captions before publishing your video, and manually make corrections as needed to ensure accuracy.** This option is best for videos that are 15 minutes or less. *(The time required to create/edit your own captions generally requires 4x the length of your video.)*

- [How to add and edit auto-captions in Panopto](#)
- [How to add auto-captions in YouTube](#)
- [How to edit captions in YouTube](#)

Provide a Transcript

“A transcript is a text version of the media content. A transcript should capture all the spoken audio, plus on-screen text and descriptions of key visual information that wouldn't otherwise be accessible without seeing the video. Transcripts make video content accessible to everyone, including people who are unable to view the video due to accessibility problems or technical limitations. They are also helpful for people who want to quickly scan or search a video's content but do not have the time to watch the entire video.” (University of Washington, [Creating Accessible Videos](#))

- [WCAG Technical Standard](#)
- Note: [Able Player](#) is an accessible open source media player developed at the UW, and generates an interactive transcript automatically using the caption tracks.

If you already have a Closed Captioning file created by a free or professional service, then a transcript text file should also be available as an output/download option that you can then upload as a file or link to when posting your captioned recorded video. Alternatively, you can save your Closed Captioning file as a text file (.TXT) and use that as a transcript, too.

If you need to remove the timestamps from your Closed Caption file, you can use this open-source tool called [Convert Subtitles to Plain Text](#). This is helpful if the timestamps of your Closed Caption file do not match your video. You can strip the timestamps first, and then after uploading to YouTube, it will auto-sync the captions to your video. (This process can take several hours.)

If you recorded an event in Zoom and saved the recording to your Zoom cloud, you have the option to download a transcript file generated by Zoom. It is possible to use this file as your Closed Captioning file for your video by uploading the file to YouTube along with your video. You will likely need to edit the file first for accuracy and this can be time consuming.

If you hired a professional transcriptionist (also known as CART or TYPEWELL) at your live Zoom event, then the transcriptionist's work will become the transcript file available for download after saving to your Zoom cloud. It is possible to use this file as your Closed Captioning file for your video by uploading it to YouTube along with your video. You may still need to edit the file first for accuracy and this can be time consuming.

Use Audio Descriptions or Descriptive Transcript

Audio Descriptions (AD) are a separate audio track added to your video, similar to a caption file, and they help create access for people who are blind and low-vision. AD provides brief explanations of key information or actions presented visually on screen that are not obvious from the video's other audio or dialogue. (Typically, AD tracks can be turned on or off by the viewer.) Things described in AD may include key on-screen actions, transitions, or close-up shots of important images. Critical information must be described for people who are unable to see it on screen. If an on-screen visual is decorative and does not provide critical meaning or context, then it may not require Audio Description.

Note: If you are creating a video tutorial that shows multiple steps on-screen, then it is best to include a text-based document with each step clearly written out in sequential order. If using screenshots or other images, make sure to include Alt-Text.

3Play Media provides Audio Description services that can be ordered at the same time video captions are ordered.

Lastly, the American Council for the Blind maintains a [list of companies that provide AD services](#).

- [WCAG Technical Standard](#)
- [Section 508 Reference](#)

Contrast, Text Size, and Flashing Images

1. Use appropriate color contrast for text and images. (At least 4:5:1)

2. Use appropriate font size for on-screen text. (A least 14px.) Small text and low contrast are hard for anyone to read, especially people with low-vision.
3. Don't use flashing images. This can trigger people with seizure disorders and other disabilities.
4. Avoid Gifs or other multi-media that automatically play on a continuous loop.
 - [WCAG Technical Standard for Flashing Images](#)
 - [WCAG Technical Standard for Color Contrast](#)
 - [WebAIM Color Contrast Checker](#) (Tool)
 - [TPCi Color Contrast Analyzer](#) (Tool)

Accessible Media Players

The accessibility features of your chosen media player is important to consider for viewers with disabilities. You want to select a media player that supports as many accessibility features as possible such as captions, transcripts, toggling on and off Audio Descriptions if used, and keyboard operability.

1. Learn about [YouTube's accessibility features](#). Read about [YouTube's integration with 3Play Media](#). The integration feature allows you to post back your caption file to your YouTube video directly from inside 3Play Media's platform.
2. [Able Player](#) is an open source media player developed at the UW. It supports captions, transcripts, Audio Descriptions, and the buttons and controls can be operated without a computer mouse.
3. Learn about [Panopto's accessibility features](#). Read about [Panopto's integration with 3Play Media](#). The integration feature allows you to post back your caption file to your Panopto video directly from inside 3Play Media's platform.

Presenter Considerations

These are tips to use when recording a video to ensure an accessible experience for your audience.

1. When speaking on camera, remember to enunciate clearly and talk at a slower pace than you would off camera.
2. Avoid crowding your screen with too much text or too many images. (A little blank space for breathing room is OK!)
3. Remember to describe what is on your screen. For example, if you are giving instructions or referencing things on your screen, rather than saying, **“As you can see here...”** or **“Then you click right here...”** you want to say something like this instead, **“Next you will click the submit button that is located on the right side of the screen under the form title.”**

When You Don't Own the Video

If you are using a video that you did not create yourself or do not own, then you will NOT be unable to upload a caption file directly to that video because it is not your content to edit. The good news though is that you still have options.

Submitting a Request to 3Play Media

You have two options to order captioning services from 3Play Media for a video that you do not own.

1. If possible, download the video onto your computer and save it as a movie file. Then you can [upload the video to 3Play directly from your computer.](#)
2. Or, Upload the video to 3Play Media by [using a Public URL address.](#)

Publishing/Sharing the Video

After you have ordered captioning services for a video you do not own, you now have a few options to share the video.

1. You can choose to order the video with [Encoded \(burned in\) captions](#). The result is a MP4 movie file output with captions included right “burned” into the movie file. Then you can upload the video to your desired location.
2. Or, you can use the [YouTube One Line Embed Code](#). This is most useful for videos you do not own and allows you to publish the video with captions to a webpage that you have editing permissions for. To do this, copy the **“One Line YouTube Embed”** code provided by 3Play Media and publish the code to your webpage.
 - If you don't want to publish the video to a web page, then you can simply copy the **“Hosted Embed Code”** provided by 3Play Media and that creates a shareable link.
3. Finally, you can use the [3Play Plugin](#). This allows you to add captions, interactive transcripts and/or Audio Description (if AD was ordered) to the video and *then publish the video to your own web page or LMS, such as Canvas*. To do this, you will use the [iFrame Embed Method](#). First, copy the iFrame embed code, then paste the copied iFrame Embed Code below your video embed code within the HTML code on your Canvas page or website.
 - **VIDEO DEMO:** Watch [how to embed your captioned video into a Canas page](#) using the HTML editor. (**Note:** This recording is a little outdated and the exact steps may look different, but the general workflow still applies. An updated video tutorial will be shared when available.)
 - If you don't want to publish the video to a web page or Canvas page, then you can simply copy the **“Hosted Embed Code”** provided by 3Play Media and that creates a shareable link viewers can paste and open in a web browser.

3Play Media and Canvas Integration

You can integrate your Canvas account with your 3Play Media account if you have an instructor or admin status.

Note: Videos must first be hosted on either the YouTube or Vimeo platforms. Audio Description (AD) plugin will be added only if AD services are ordered for the video at the time you order captioning services.

1. First, complete [the 3Play Media and Canvas Integration set-up](#).
2. Then, follow the [Canvas: Embed the 3Play Plugin](#) instructions to publish the video to your Canvas page.

3Play Media and Panopto Integration

You can [integrate your Panopto account with your 3Play Media account](#) with an instructor or admin status. (Instructor accounts may require college admin approval to complete the set-up.)

The integration with a Panopto account allows you to submit an order for captioning services from within your Panopto account and to post back the completed services from 3Play Media directly to your Panopto video. Essentially, this feature allows you to skip the step of uploading your video to an external platform, such as YouTube or Vimeo.

Note: Videos must first be hosted on either the YouTube or Vimeo platforms. Audio Description (AD) plugin will be added only if AD services are ordered for the video at the time you order captioning services.

1. First, complete [the 3Play Media and Panopto Integration set-up](#).
2. Then, [request captions for a Panopto video using the integration](#).
3. Next, you can [track the status of your request](#).
4. Finally, 3Play Media automatically sends the completed captions to your Panopto video.
5. If needed, you can [edit your 3Play captions directly from your Panopto account](#).

If you can't set up the Panopto integration with 3Play Media, don't worry!

1. First, [manually submit a caption request](#) for your Panopto video.
2. Then, [manually upload your caption file to your Panopto video](#).
 - Before you upload captions to your Panopto video, you need to make sure any existing (auto) captions on the session are deleted first. (If you have not imported automatic captions in Panopto, then you may not need to worry about this step).

Learn More!

1. [WebAIM Accessible Media Article](#)
2. [UW Accessible Video Tutorials](#)
3. [W3C Media Accessibility FAQ](#)
4. [Described and Captioned Media Program](#)