



***Download  
videos from  
the web with  
youtube-dl***



*a do-it-yourself guide  
from Iffy Books*



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# youtube-dl, an easy-to-use tool for downloading video and audio from the web

Have you ever followed an old YouTube link and noticed the video has been taken down?

Have you ever seen a YouTube video and thought, “I wish I could download this and use it in a project”?

Have you ever wanted to watch a video 100 times in a row without an advertising algorithm knowing?

Have you ever found an obscure remix on YouTube and wished you could save it as a WAV or MP3?

youtube-dl is for you. It’s super simple to use, even if you’re new to the command line.

A basic youtube-dl command has two parts: ‘youtube-dl’ and a video URL. That’s it!

```
youtube-dl https://whatever
```

## ★ Install youtube-dl on macOS ★

1

First, you'll need to install the Homebrew package manager. If you already have Homebrew, skip to step 4.

A package manager is a program that installs other programs, while maintaining a web of dependencies among different programs.

Go to <https://brew.sh> and read a bit about Homebrew. When you're ready to install, highlight the line of code under "Install Homebrew" and copy it. Here's what it looks like:

```
/bin/bash -c "$(curl -fsSL https://raw.githubusercontent.com/Homebrew/install/HEAD/install.sh)"
```

2

Open a new window in Terminal. If you haven't used Terminal recently, you can find it in the directory `/Applications/Utilities/`. Or press `command+space` and search for "Terminal."

Paste the line of code from the previous step into your terminal window and press enter. You'll need to enter your password.

3

You may be asked to install "XCode Command Line Tools" (~3GB). Follow the prompts to install it. Then follow the prompts to finish installing Homebrew. This will take a while, at least 5 minutes.

4

To install youtube-dl using Homebrew, type the following command in your terminal window and press enter. This will take a while, maybe 20 minutes or more.

```
brew install youtube-dl
```

5

*Optional:* Installing the A/V conversion program FFmpeg will help youtube-dl work with a wider range of video formats. Run the following homebrew command to install FFmpeg:

```
brew install ffmpeg
```

You can also install FFmpeg as a binary, which may give you better support for proprietary A/V formats. To download an FFmpeg binary, go to the following URL and follow the instructions under “64-bit FFMPEG for Mac OS X”:

```
https://lame.buanzo.org
```

6

To upgrade youtube-dl in the future, run the following two commands:

```
brew update  
brew upgrade youtube-dl
```

## ★ Install youtube-dl on Windows ★

1

Open the Windows search box and type “PowerShell.” Right-click “Windows PowerShell” and select “Run as administrator.” Enter your password at the prompt.

2

Open your browser and visit the the following URL. Follow the steps to install Chocolatey, a package manager for Windows:

```
https://chocolatey.org/install/
```

3

To install youtube-dl and ffmpeg, type the following command in your PowerShell window and press enter:

```
choco install -y youtube-dl ffmpeg
```

Press “y” at the prompt to confirm and the programs will be installed.

4

You can update youtube-dl with the following command:

```
youtube-dl --update
```

# ★ Install youtube-dl on Ubuntu ★

1

Open a terminal window and update your package manager:

```
sudo apt-get update
```

2

Run the following command to download youtube-dl and move it to the right place. (All one line.) You'll need to enter your password.

```
sudo curl -L https://yt-dl.org/downloads/latest/youtube-dl  
-o /usr/local/bin/youtube-dl
```

3

Next you'll enable read and execute permissions for the program you just downloaded:

```
sudo chmod a+rx /usr/local/bin/youtube-dl
```

4

Now install the Python 3 pip package, which you'll use later to update youtube-dl:

```
sudo apt install python3-pip
```

Now you can run the following command to update youtube-dl:

```
pip3 install --upgrade youtube-dl
```

## ★ Download a YouTube video ★

Type the following command and press enter to change your current directory to the desktop.

```
cd ~/Desktop
```

Let's download a video! Type 'youtube-dl' followed by a space, then paste a video's URL. Press enter and your download will begin.

```
youtube-dl https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IcCKPAnArsw
```

youtube-dl should download the highest quality video by default. If you get an error, ask for help or paste the error message into a search engine.

If your URL contains a space (or some other weird character), try putting quotes around it:

```
youtube-dl "https://www.examplesite.com/*$~@MK L%)$"
```

## ★ Choose a video format ★

Enter a command like this to get a list of possible video formats:

```
youtube-dl -F https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYI-58bc-DU
```

The output will look like this:

```
[youtube] IcCKPAnArsw: Downloading webpage
[info] Available formats for IcCKPAnArsw:
format code extension resolution note
249 webm audio only tiny 56k , webm_dash container, opus @ 56k (48000Hz), 1.69MiB
250 webm audio only tiny 71k , webm_dash container, opus @ 71k (48000Hz), 2.12MiB
140 m4a audio only tiny 95k , m4a_dash container, mp4a.40.2 @ 95k (44100Hz), 2.82MiB
251 webm audio only tiny 99k , webm_dash container, opus @ 99k (48000Hz), 2.96MiB
278 webm 192x144 144p 64k , webm_dash container, vp9 @ 64k, 15fps, video only, 1.91MiB
160 mp4 192x144 144p 106k , mp4_dash container, avc1.4d400c @ 106k, 15fps, video only, 3.17MiB
242 webm 320x240 240p 134k , webm_dash container, vp9 @ 134k, 15fps, video only, 4.00MiB
133 mp4 320x240 240p 238k , mp4_dash container, avc1.4d400d @ 238k, 15fps, video only, 7.08MiB
18 mp4 400x300 240p 477k , avc1.42001E, 15fps, mp4a.40.2 (44100Hz), 14.18MiB (best)
```



FORMAT CODE COLUMN



To download a specific version of the video, use the '-f' flag with a format code from the left column .

```
youtube-dl -f 18 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IcCKPAnArsw
```

## ★ More youtube-dl commands ★

Download an entire video channel:

```
youtube-dl https://youtube.com/c/magicalmotionmuseum/videos
```

Download audio only as a WAV (all one line):

```
youtube-dl --extract-audio --audio-format wav  
https://some/video
```

Download audio only as a 320Kbps MP3 (all one line):

```
youtube-dl --extract-audio --audio-format mp3  
--audio-quality 320k https://some/video
```

Download a video and convert it to MP4 (also supports flv, ogg, webm, mkv, avi):

```
youtube-dl --recode-video mp4 https://some/video
```

Download a video with a new output filename:

```
youtube-dl -o "filename.mp4" https://some/video
```

Download a password-protected video from Vimeo:

```
youtube-dl -p password https://some/video
```

Learn more here:

```
https://github.com/ytdl-org/youtube-dl
```

## ★ Some sites that work with youtube-dl ★

Archive.org

Bandcamp

CNET

CNN

C-SPAN

Dailymotion

Dropbox

eHow

Facebook

Flickr

Instagram

KhanAcademy

KickStarter

Library of Congress

Lynda.com

Mixcloud

MySpace

National Film Board of Canada

SoundCloud

TikTok

Tumblr

Vimeo

WorldStarHipHop

YouTube

And many more! If you're not sure whether youtube-dl works with a video site, give it a try. There's a good chance it will be able to find the video.

## ★ Install VLC to play A/V files ★

1

Go to the following URL and download VLC for Mac, Windows, or Linux:

**<https://www.videolan.org/vlc/>**

2

Follow the installation instructions.

3

Open VLC and play an audio/video file.

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