



# Creating Captions from an Existing Transcript

**Question this document is addressing:** How do you generate a caption file for a video if you've got a transcript?

**To accomplish the tasks in this document, you'll need:**

- An active YouTube account
- A copy of the video
- A copy of the transcript of the video, in .txt format

## Introduction

To meet accessibility standards, a video included in a course must include captions if an equivalent alternative for the video isn't available to students. An "equivalent alternative" is considered to be a piece of instructional material that contains the same educational material as the video (such that students have an option to either watch the video *or* consume the alternative).

Caption files are documents that contain the text of what's being spoken in a video along with specifically-formatted timecodes. The structure of the timecodes and arrangement of the text vary depending on the type of caption file. The timecodes expressed throughout caption files are expressed as a range, indicating the time period during the video when the text should be onscreen.

Creating captions manually isn't easy. Professional transcriptionists use specific software and can type extremely fast. So how can you do this yourself? Well, if you've got the script, luckily you can leverage YouTube's sophisticated audio analysis algorithms to generate caption files for you. The instructions below walk you through the process.

```
5
00:00:14,970 --> 00:00:16,885
This is the agenda for this lecture.

6
00:00:16,885 --> 00:00:20,320
We'll talk a little bit about the
syllabus, course logistics information
and

7
00:00:20,320 --> 00:00:21,530
requirements.
```

*Figure 1. A sample caption file with an .srt extension.*



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## Instructions

1. **Log into your YouTube account** by going to <https://www.youtube.com>.
2. **Upload the video.**

In the upper right corner of the main YouTube page, locate the icon that looks like a camera with a plus sign in the middle of it. Click it and select “upload video.”

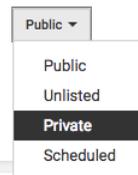


On the upload page, elect to make your video “private” by selecting that option in the pulldown menu in the middle of the upload box. (Technically, you don’t have to do this, but if you have concerns about your intellectual property being public, this is a good practice.) Then drag and drop your video into the upload box.



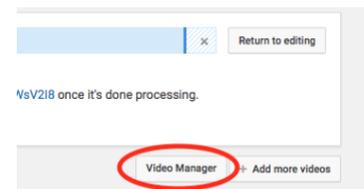
Select files to upload

Or drag and drop video files



3. **Upload the transcript.**

Once the video is uploaded, click the “Video Manager” button.



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Your video will need to “process” on Google’s servers for a little while. Wait until the video indicates that it’s no longer processing, then click the little triangle next to the button labeled “Edit” and select “Subtitles/CC” from the pull-down menu.

Click “Add New subtitles or CC,” and, when prompted, select “English” as the language.

Click “Upload a File.”

Ensure that the radio button for “Transcript” is selected, and then click “Choose File.”

Locate your transcript. Note that this file should be in .txt format. If your transcript is in another format (say, .docx), you’ll need to copy all the text in your document, open up a text editor (WordPad on Windows or TextEdit on a Mac), paste the text, and save the file with a .txt extension. (Note that you can also elect to save a file with a .txt extension in Word with the File > Save As command.)

Once you’ve selected your transcript file, click “Upload.”



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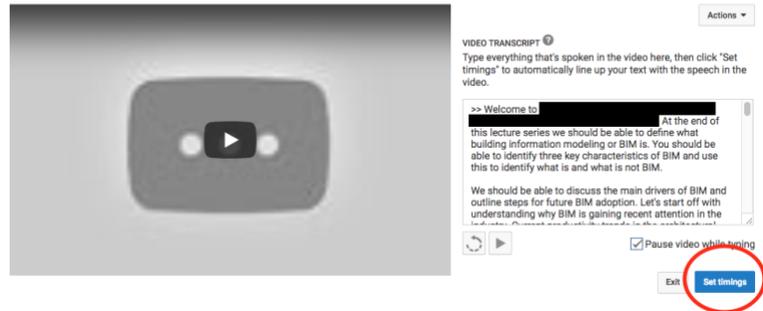


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On the subsequent page that opens, click “Set Timings.”

After clicking this, you’ll have to wait for YouTube to analyze your video and attempt to match up the audio with the text.

Transcribe and auto-sync



After clicking this, you’ll have to wait for YouTube to analyze your video and attempt to match up the audio with the text. The caption file you’re attempting to create will be within the “My Drafts” section. Keep refreshing the web page periodically until the draft no longer says “(setting timings...)” and instead indicates how long ago it was completed.

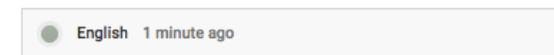
Note that YouTube by default attempts to create a caption file purely based on its audio analysis algorithm, so you may see a caption file within the “published” area labeled “Automatic.” Ignore it.

MY DRAFTS

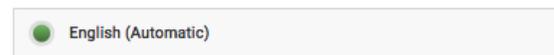


...

MY DRAFTS



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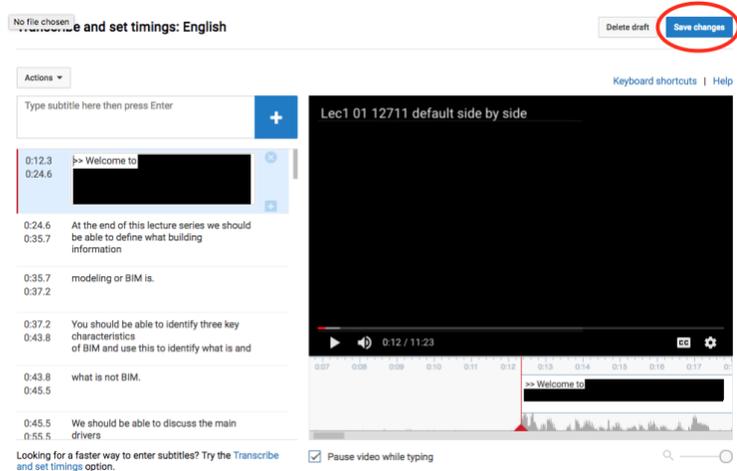
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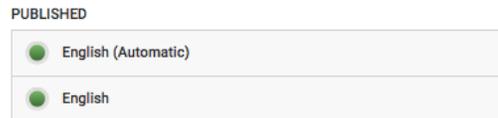
# Creating Captions from an Existing Transcript

## 4. Download the captions.

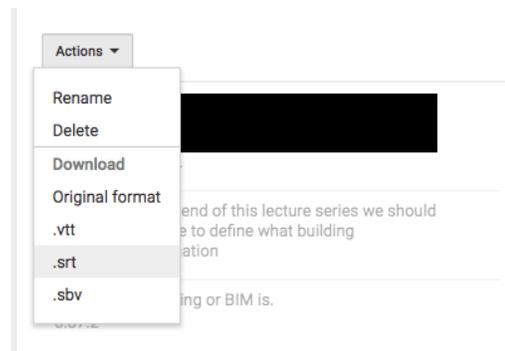
Click on the draft you've created (again, the one that indicates how long ago it was completed). In the screen that opens, click "Save Changes" near the top right of the screen.



You'll return to the screen that shows your caption files, and your captions will now show up in the "published" category. Click the caption file you created.



In the subsequent screen, click the "Actions" button near the top left of the screen and select ".srt" from the pull-down menu. The caption file will download to your computer as "captions.srt."



Now you've got a properly time-coded caption file! All that's left is to upload it to your video delivery service. If you wish, you can watch your video on YouTube with the captions on to ensure that the timecodes are accurate. You should also feel free to delete the video from your YouTube account using the Video Manager if you feel confident that your captions are accurate.



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