



## **Mac Youtube-dl Video Downloader**

**Version 1.11 – 28 September 2019**

# MacYTDL – Mac YouTube-dl video downloader

## Version 1.10 – 28 September 2019

What MacYTDL does .....	3
System requirements .....	3
How to install MacYTDL .....	4
Using MacYTDL.....	6
The Main Dialog .....	7
The MacYTDL Service – “Send-URL-To-MacYTDL” .....	9
macOS 10.14 Mojave (and Catalina) .....	11
How to uninstall MacYTDL .....	13
Settings.....	14
Functions.....	18
Downloading videos from ABC iView (in Australia).....	20
Batch functions .....	22
What if the download doesn’t work ? .....	24
Limitations .....	25
Future developments.....	25
Why use a video downloader ? .....	26
External components used .....	27
MacYTDL components.....	28
Any comments, suggestions or better code ?.....	29
Software Licenses .....	29
Acknowledgements.....	29

## What MacYTDL does

MacYTDL is a GUI front end for the [youtube-dl](#) python script. youtube-dl is able to download videos from a great many sites around the world including YouTube.

Features:

- Download individual videos and playlists.
- Works with YouTube and many other video sites including ITV and the Australian TV catchup sites ABC iView, SBS On Demand, 7Plus, TenPlay, 9Now.
- Can cancel downloads.
- Can choose the download file format from a range of video and audio formats.
- Can save URLs for later download (in a “batch” file).
- Optionally download and/or embed subtitles in four different formats.
- Optionally download a text description of the video.
- Optionally download or extract separate audio file in a range of formats.
- Can download many videos at one time – tested up to 5 concurrent downloads.
  - Note: Each download is a separate background process but each process can download any number of files in succession.
- URLs of multiple shows can be provided to MacYTDL separately or in one step.
- Options to embed thumbnail images, subtitles and metadata in downloaded videos.
- An optional macOS Service for use in web browsers which copies the current URL, switches to MacYTDL and sets the name of the video file to be downloaded.
  - Note: Assistive Access must be granted to the user’s web browser for this to work. [See below](#).
- No need to locate and install any components. All components downloaded and installed by MacYTDL, which can be controlled by the user.
  - Can check for updates to MacYTDL and components.
  - youtube-dl can be checked for updates automatically on startup.
- A separate log file is retained for each download enabling problem solving if a download fails.
- Has a built-in uninstaller which moves all components to Trash.

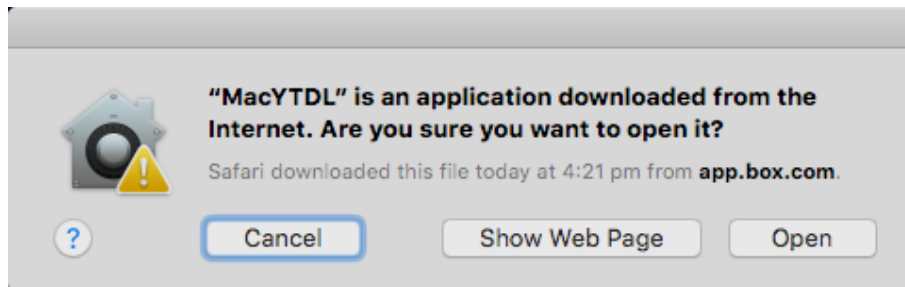
## System requirements

MacYTDL requires an Apple Mac running OS X 10.10 or later.

## How to install MacYTDL

Download and open the DMG file. Drag the MacYTDL applet to any location you prefer. Placing it in the *Applications* folder will make it available for all user accounts. It's best to delete old copies of MacYTDL. Just move old copies to the Trash then drag MacYTDL to your favourite location.

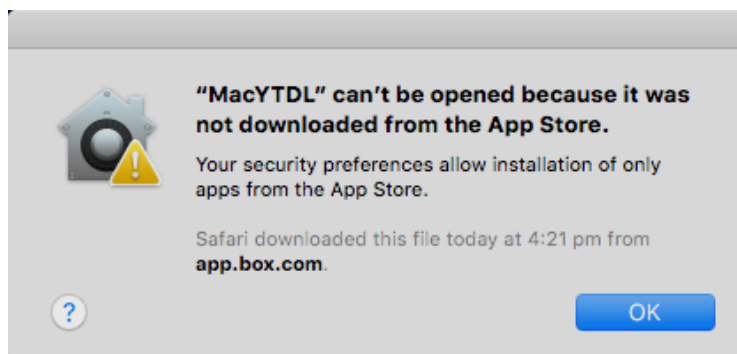
The applet is code signed and notarized so, you may see this message when you first run MacYTDL:



Exactly which message you see will depend on which version of macOS you are using.

Click on "Open". This message will appear when you run MacYTDL for the first time or after an update.

If you see this message instead ...



... you will need to change your Gatekeeper settings to allow applications from "identified developers". For information on Gatekeeper and how to change settings visit the Apple web site at: <https://support.apple.com/en-au/HT202491>.

Sometimes, MacYTDL copes poorly with other apps which are using the hard disk drive or CPU heavily (eg. some backup apps). On the first occasion it's best to close those apps, if feasible.

The first time you start MacYTDL you will be advised that various components used by MacYTDL need to be installed:

- A new folder called "MacYTDL" will be created in your "~/Library/Preferences" folder. It will contain a preferences file for MacYTDL and log files produced by youtube-dl.
- youtube-dl will be downloaded and saved in the folder "/usr/local/bin/". That folder will be created if it doesn't exist.
- Two utilities, FFmpeg and FFprobe, will be downloaded and saved in "usr/local/bin".

- A script library which provides code for MacYTDL's dialogs will be copied to "~/Library/Script Libraries". That folder will be created if it doesn't exist.
- MacYTDL will offer to install a Service in your "~/Library/Services" folder. The Service called "Send-URL-To-MacYTDL.workflow", is designed to be used in a web browser. This is not required for MacYTDL to function and can be installed later if preferred.
  - [More detail is provided below.](#)
- MacYTDL will offer to install a small executable, AtomicParsley, in your "/usr/local/bin/" folder. Atomic Parsley is used by youtube-dl to embed thumbnail images in downloaded videos. This is not required for MacYTDL to function and can be installed later if preferred.
  - [More detail is provided below.](#)

Please note: downloading the various components takes time. It can look as if MacYTDL is not doing anything. Also, the component downloads cannot be cancelled. Please just wait.

Zip files will be saved onto your Desktop during the process to install FFmpeg and FFprobe. Do not delete them. That will cause an error in MacYTDL. The two DMG files will be automatically moved to the Trash when the install is finished. Later updates will be stored in the user's downloads folder. On startup, MacYTDL will automatically look for and re-install any missing components.

When installation is finished, the MacYTDL main dialog will be displayed.

## Using MacYTDL

To download a video, first open your web browser and go to the web page which provides the video. Select and copy the URL of that web page, then start or switch to MacYTDL. When the main dialog is displayed, paste the URL into the text box where it says “Paste URL here” then click on “Continue” or press the [Return] key

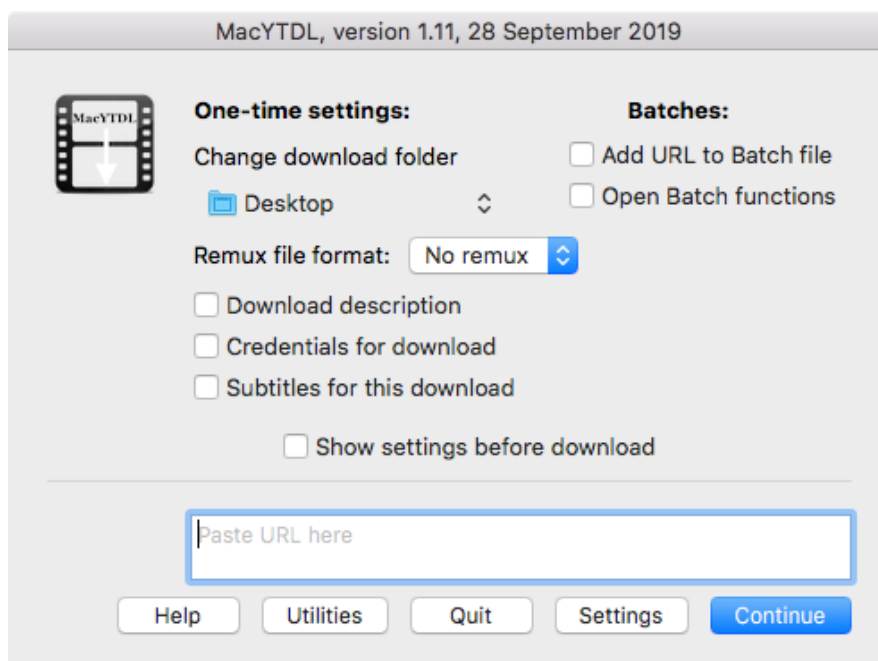
If you have installed the MacYTDL Service, in your web browser you can choose:

[application menu eg. “Safari”] => Services => Send-URL-To\_MacYTDL

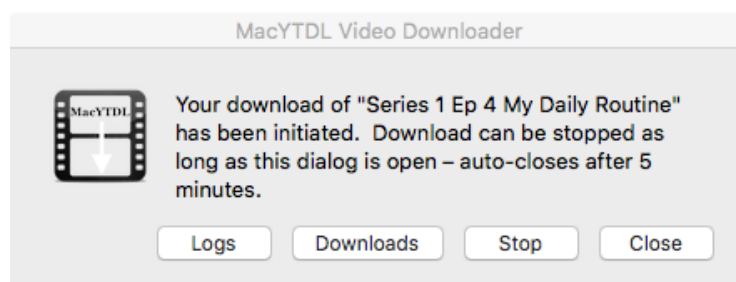
The MacYTDL service will launch MacYTDL. The main dialog will appear and the URL of the video to be download will be pasted into the box. Press the [Return] key or click on the “Continue” button to start the download.

Multiple URLs can be pasted into MacYTDL before downloading. They must be separated by a space. On selecting “Continue” MacYTDL will download each video in turn but in one process (and saving just one youtube-dl response log file). Alternatively, URLs can be pasted and videos downloaded in separate processes. Current settings can be displayed before starting download.

This is the main dialog:



After initiating the download, the main dialog will disappear for a short while. MacYTDL will check the URL and if it's OK, will redisplay the main dialog, start the download and then display a “Monitor” dialog:



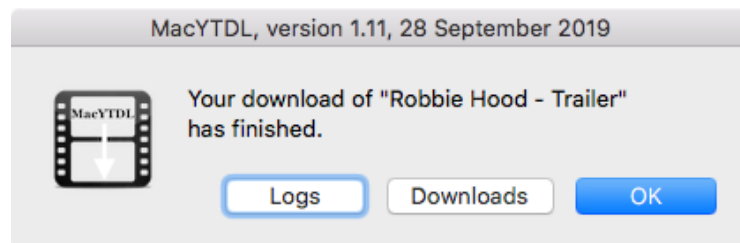
You can then open the log folder, open the downloads folder, stop the download or close the Monitor dialog to return to the main dialog.

To cancel a download, click on the “Stop” button. The download will cease and any partially downloaded files will be moved to the Trash. This will also cancel downloading multiple videos that are in one process (e.g. ABC iView show downloads). Completed downloads and partially completed batch downloads are not deleted.

Note, MacYTDL cannot cancel a download after this dialog has closed.

You can leave the Monitor dialog open and switch back to the Main Dialog to download another video. A separate Monitor dialog will be shown for each video. Each Monitor dialog will close automatically after 5 minutes. Each can be closed and the related downloads cancelled separately in any order.

MacYTDL shows a message when each download is finished:



Downloaded files are named as usefully as possible with series name and episode details for the Australian broadcasters ABC (iView), TEN (tenplay), SBS (On Demand), Nine (9Now), Seven (7Plus) and for ITV.

## The Main Dialog

The Main Dialog should be reasonably self-explanatory. Paste a web page address (or URL) into the text box and click on “Continue” or press the Return key.

Multiple URLs can be pasted into the box but must be separated by a space character. When “Continue” is selected, those videos will be downloaded in turn in one process.

Click on “Settings”, or press command-s, to change the MacYTDL settings. See [below for details](#).

Click on “Utilities”, or press command-u, to access a variety of functions. See [below for details](#).

To show this help file click on “Help”, or press command-shift-?

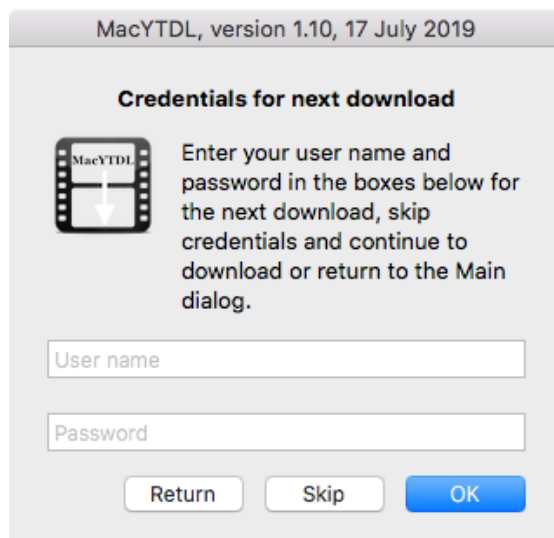
Click on “Quit” or press command-q to quit MacYTDL.

### *One-time settings*

Five options can be set for the next download.

- The download folder can be set for the next download in the same way as in Settings.
- The download file can be remuxed, that is, converted into another format. The choice of format is for videos: mp4, mkv, webm, flv, ogg, avi and the audio formats: aac, flac, mp3, m4a, opus, vorbis, wav. Remuxing is always done by FFmpeg. The original file is always deleted. This can be handy when the desired format is not available from the web site.

- A file containing a description of the video (if available) can be downloaded and saved with the video file. The file will be named “[the video name].txt”.
- Username and password credentials can be added for the next download:



- I have not be able to test this. If there are any problems with this function, please send a message to [macytdl@gmail.com](mailto:macytdl@gmail.com).
- A subtitles file can be downloaded (the subtitles format is taken from “Settings” or set to the youtube-dl default, “best”).

The one-time settings are not saved. They return to existing settings after the “Continue” button is clicked. Thus, the user may have set the usual download folder to “~/Movies/” but can use the runtime setting to download the next video to somewhere else eg. “~/Desktop/”. After that videos will be downloaded to “~/Movies/”.

### **Batches**

Instead of downloading immediately, URLs can be saved for downloading later. When the “Add URL to Batch file” checkbox is ticked and the “Continue” button is clicked, the URL is saved in a “batch” file. The batch file is stored in the MacYTDL preferences folder.

To access further batch functions, click on the “Open Batch functions” checkbox and click on “Continue”. See [below for more detail](#).



## **The MacYTDL Service – “Send-URL-To-MacYTDL”**

MacYTDL includes an optional utility, the Send-URL-To-MacYTDL service. Services are small program add-ons which provide extra functions. They are accessed using the “Services” item within the application menu for every program.

Send-URL-To-MacYTDL works inside web browsers. It makes downloading a video with MacYTDL a little quicker and easier. The procedure is:

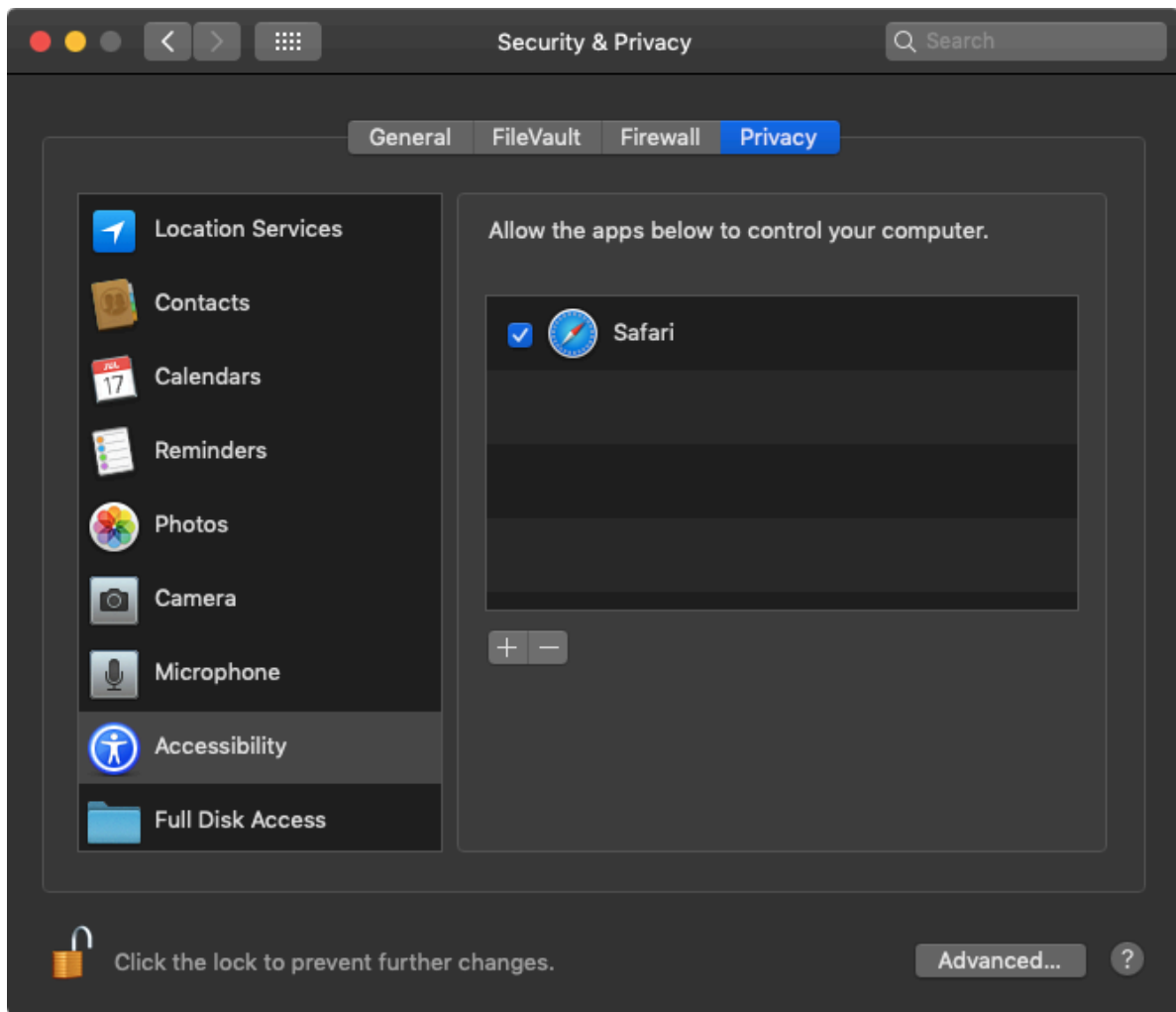
- in your web browser, go to the web page which has the video you want to download;
- go to the application menu (eg. the menu with the heading “Safari”);
- browse down to “Services”;
- choose “Send-URL-To-MacYTDL”.

Send-URL-To-MacYTDL will launch or switch to MacYTDL and set the URL of the video to be downloaded. If you don’t install Send-URL-To-MacYTDL when you first use MacYTDL, it can be installed later – see “[Utilities](#)” below.

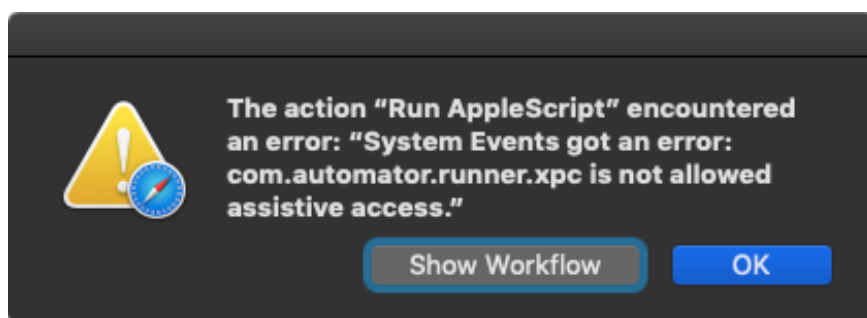
To use the Send-URL-To-MacYTDL service you will need to grant “Assistive Access” to your web browser:

- open “System Preferences”;
- click on “Security & Privacy”;
- click on “Accessibility”;
- click on the padlock and enter an administrator account credentials when asked;
- in Finder, navigate to your web browser application (usually in the Applications folder);
- click on the web browser application and drag it to the Accessibility preferences pane;
- make sure there is a tick beside the web browser application;
- click on the padlock to prevent further changes;
- close System Preferences;
- close the Finder window(s) open on MacYTDL.

When you’ve finished, you should see your web browser application with a tick next to it:



If you don't grant assistive access to your web browser, this dialog will show on the first occasion you use the Send-URL-To-MacYTDL Service:



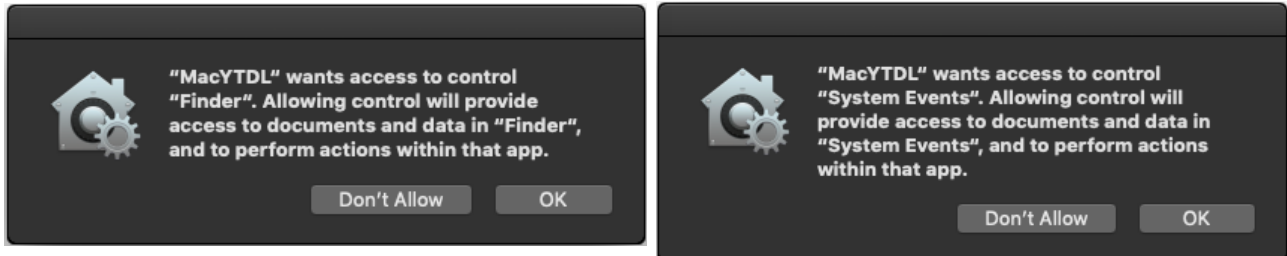
Click on "OK".

To grant assistive access, follow the steps given above.

## macOS 10.14 Mojave (and Catalina)

With Mojave Apple has introduced additional security measures to manage apps which try to control other apps. macOS will show a permission request dialog every time an app tries to control another app. AppleScript works by controlling other apps and so most AppleScript apps are caught by the new measures, including MacYTDL.

When starting MacYTDL one or both of these permission request dialogs may be displayed:



To give permission, click on "OK".

MacYTDL does work under macOS 10.14 but, the permission dialog can be repeated each time MacYTDL starts until the user logs off and on again. So, if you use macOS 10.14 Mojave and you get the permission dialogs every time you start MacYTDL, just logoff and logon again (or reboot). This procedure will be required every time a new version of MacYTDL is installed.

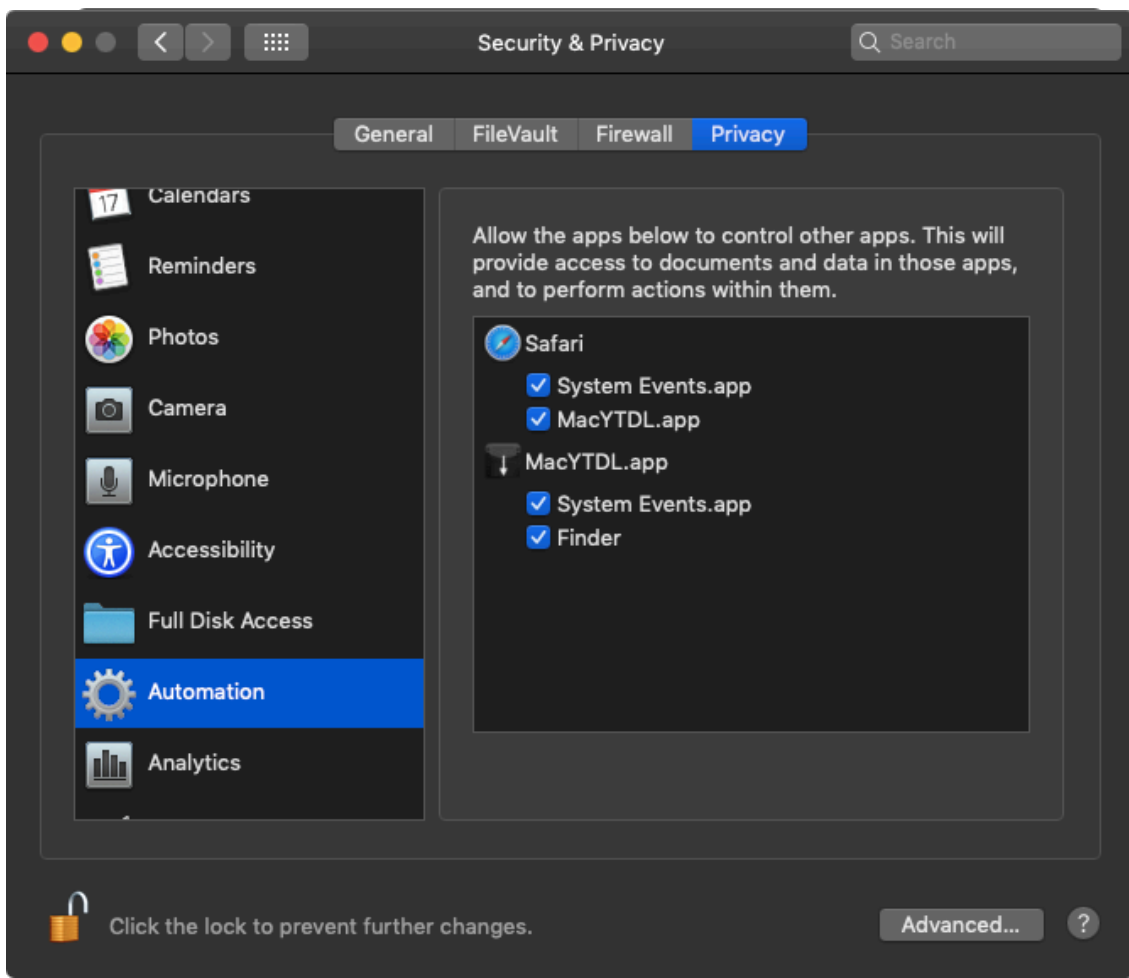
If you don't allow permission, MacYTDL will not work properly. After that, you will need to grant permission manually:

- go to *System* Preferences on your Mac;
- choose the "Security & Privacy" preference pane;
- choose the "Privacy" tab; and
- click on the "Automation" entry in the left hand sidebar.

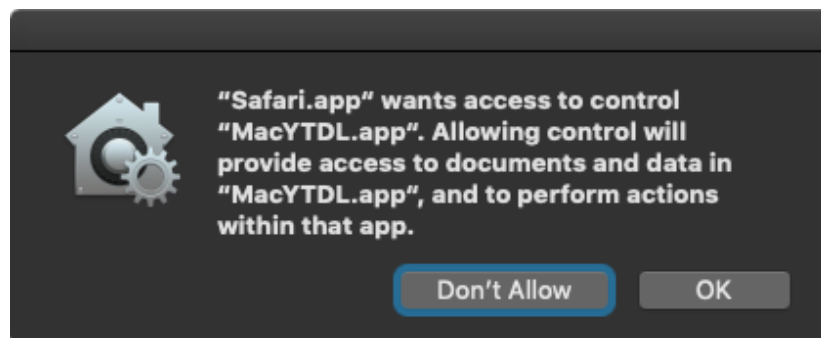
If the two boxes under "MacYTDL" are not ticked:

- click on the lock symbol;
- enter an administrator user name and password; and
- place a tick in each box.

Your permissions should look like those shown in the capture on the next page:



You will need to grant additional permissions to use the Send-URL-To-MacYTDL service. The first time you try to use the service you may see:



Click on OK. The new permission will be added to those listed in the Automation panel of the privacy preferences.

More detail on the new privacy measure is available here:

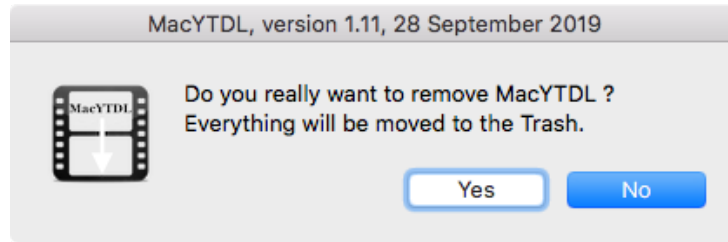
<https://www.computerhardwareinc.com/what-are-all-these-new-privacy-request-dialogs-in-mojave/>

<https://eclecticlight.co/2018/09/06/working-with-mojaves-privacy-protection/>

<https://eclecticlight.co/2018/08/06/mojaves-privacy-protection-can-be-thoroughly-confusing/>

## How to uninstall MacYTDL

To uninstall MacYTDL, click on the “Functions” button in the main dialog and click on “Uninstall”. There is an opportunity to reconsider uninstalling:

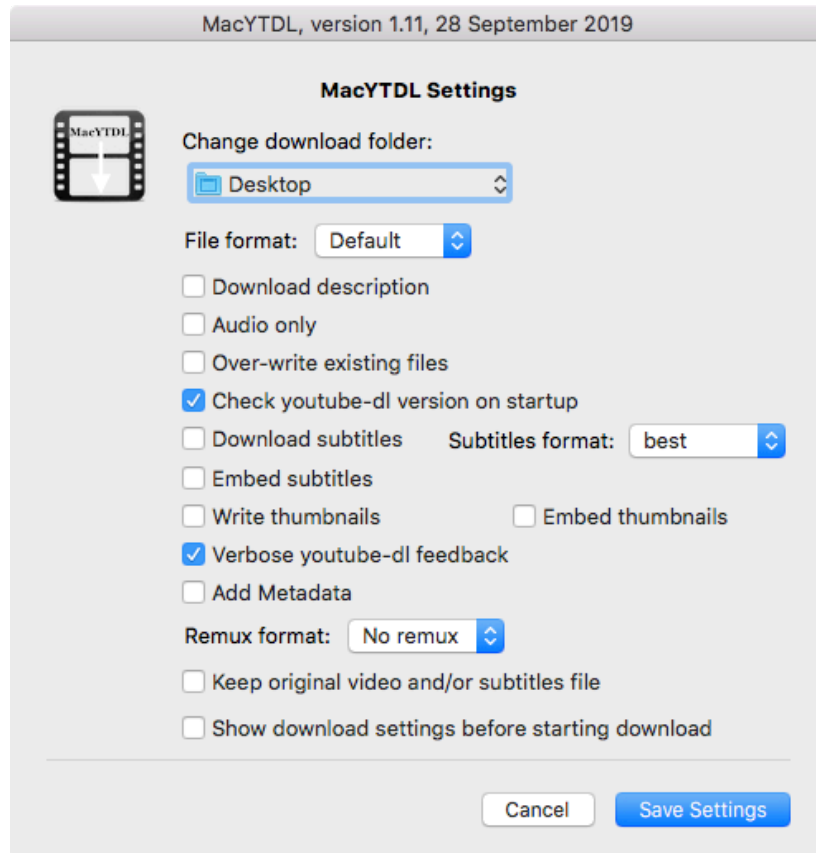


Confirm that you wish to remove MacYTDL and all related files will be moved to the Trash.

If you change your mind you can put back all those files individually or put back just MacYTDL and run it again. All components will then be downloaded and installed as before.

## Settings

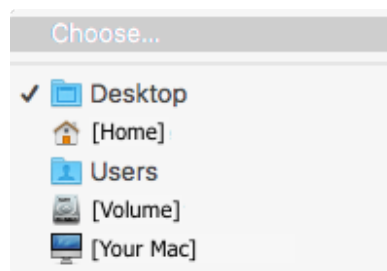
MacYTDL uses a number of options that are provided by youtube-dl. To access settings, click on the “Settings” button in the main dialog or press command-s. The Settings dialog will be displayed:



To save changes to options, click the “Save Settings” button or press the Return key. That will take you back to the Main dialog.

### ***“Change download folder:”***

To change the folder in which videos are saved, click on the drop-down box and click on “Choose...”. Choosing any of the other locations listed will not change the download folder.



A choose folder dialog is shown enabling you to select a folder in which downloaded videos will be saved.

Note: The download folder must be available for MacYTDL to be able to download videos into the folder. If the download folder is on an external volume, make sure that volume is mounted on your Desktop. Also, MacYTDL might not be able to save videos on an external volume which is password protected.

### ***“File format”***

By default, youtube-dl will try to download the file with the highest resolution video and best quality sound combination. This option forces youtube-dl to download the best file available in a different, chosen, format. The choices are: default, mp4, mkv, webm, ogg, avi, 3gp and flv. MacYTDL will revert to the best default if the chosen format is not available.

Note that some web sites do not provide all formats or formats with audio and video combined. If setting this option results in a failed download, reset to default or experiment with different formats.

### ***“Download description”***

Enables descriptive text provided by the video web site to be downloaded. The description is saved in a text file called “[the video name].txt”. It is saved in the downloads folder.

### ***“Audio only”***

Requests a download of just the audio part of the video. Some web sites offer separate audio files for download. If a separate download file is available, it will be downloaded in the best quality available. If a separate file is not available, the full video will be downloaded and converted to an audio file with the best quality. In either case, if a remux format is set the audio download will be remuxed to the desired format with the best quality. The original video file will be deleted.

### ***“Over-write existing files”***

Click on this option to force MacYTDL to over-write partially downloaded files without providing a warning.

MacYTDL will not over-write existing video files. Also, by default, it will try to continue a partial download. If a video has already been downloaded, MacYTDL will offer choices of overwriting (a partially downloaded video), renaming the download file or cancelling the download. The renaming function can be useful by providing two copies of the same video (which have the same name but might have different content).

Note that if a download is cancelled, partially downloaded files are moved to “Trash”. If you wish to continue the download, move those files back to your downloads folder.

### ***“Check youtube-dl version on startup”***

When this setting is on, MacYTDL will automatically check whether a new version of youtube-dl is available. If so, the user is invited to update. This option is useful as youtube-dl is updated as often as every week. Updates can improve downloading from some web sites, remove bugs from the youtube-dl core and add support for new sites.

### ***“Download subtitles”***

Enables subtitles file to be downloaded if they exist. Subtitles are saved in the chosen format and converted if the web site does not provide that format.

### ***“Subtitles format:”***

If subtitles are to be downloaded, the format can be chosen. Choices are: best, srt, vtt, ass, ttml.

### ***“Embed subtitles”***

Subtitles will be embedded in the video file instead of being saved in a separate file.

Note: The subtitles file will be downloaded, then deleted after embedding is finished. Embedding may remove custom formatting eg. text colour.

***“Write thumbnails”***

If it exists, a thumbnail image file will be saved with the video file.

***“Embed thumbnails”***

If it exists, a thumbnail image will be embedded in the video file. This option is only available if the *AtomicParsley* tool has been installed.

***“Verbose youtube-dl feedback”***

youtube-dl provides feedback on progress and what it did during the download. The feedback is stored in a file called “youtube-dl\_response-[the video name]-[date-time].txt” that is saved in this location: “~/Library/Preferences/MacYTDL”.

If there is a problem with the download, that file might provide clues on the cause. With the verbose option, youtube-dl provides more detail in its feedback. To open the folder containing the response files, use the “Open log folder” function in “Functions”.

***“Add Metadata”***

Any available metadata will be embedded in the video file in the correct variables.

***“Remux format”***

On occasion, the desired format is not available from a web site. This option will download the best quality available then convert the download into the chosen format. It can also extract the audio component of the download. The choice of video formats is: mp4, mkv, webm, ogg, avi, flv and audio formats: aac, flac, mp3, m4a, opus, vorbis, wav. Remuxing is always done by FFmpeg.

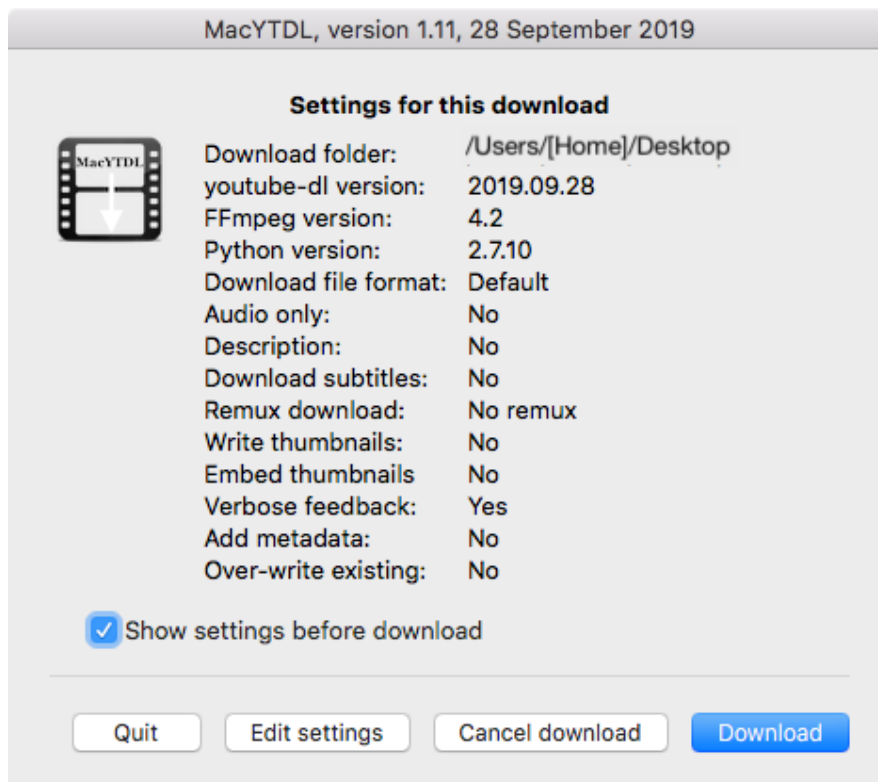
***“Keep original video and/or subtitles file”***

If a remux format is set, this option enables the original file to be retained or deleted (default). Similarly, it will retain the original subtitles file if a format other than “best” is set.

***“Show download settings before starting download”***

If ticked, current download settings will be displayed with the option to change settings:





***“Cancel” – command-c***

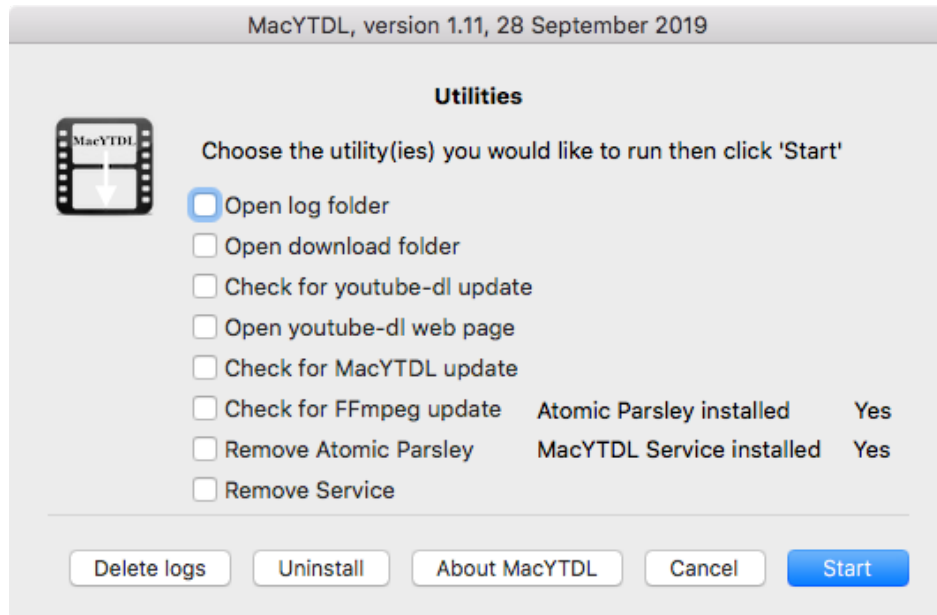
Exit and return to the main dialog without saving any changes. Keyboard shortcut is command-d.

***“Save Options” – Return***

Save all changes to options and return to the main dialog. Keyboard shortcut is return.

## Functions

A number of additional functions are available to help with using MacYTDL. Click on the “Utilities” button or press command-u in the main dialog:



Any combination of the seven checkbox options can be selected at the same time. They will be performed in order when the “Start” button is clicked.

### ***“Open log folder”***

This will open the folder where all the youtube-dl “response” or, log, files are stored (in “/Users/[your home]/Preferences/MacYTDL/”). A separate log file is saved for each download.

### ***“Open download folder”***

This will open the current download folder where all downloaded videos are saved.

### ***“Check for youtube-dl update”***

Checks whether a new version of youtube-dl has been released. If so, offers to download and install.

Note: The youtube-dl developers issue regular updates usually every 7-8 days. So, it is worthwhile checking for updates regularly or setting the option to automatically check on start-up.

### ***“Open youtube-dl web page”***

Opens the youtube-dl “Releases” web page in user’s default web browser. The Releases page provides detail on the changes made to youtube-dl in each release and the changes being prepared for the next release. The URL is: [github.com/rg3/youtube-dl/releases](https://github.com/rg3/youtube-dl/releases).

### ***“Check for MacYTDL update”***

Checks whether a new version of MacYTDL has been released. If so, offers to download the new version. Users can install them where they prefer.

### ***“Check for FFmpeg update”***

Checks whether a new version of FFmpeg and FFprobe has been released. If so, offers to download and install the new version.

### ***“AtomicParsley installed”***

This is an indicator. *AtomicParsley* enables thumbnail images to be embedded in video downloads.

### ***“MacYTDL Service installed”***

This is an indicator. The MacYTDL Service copies the current URL from a web browser, switches to MacYTDL and pastes the URL in the MacYTDL URL text box.

### ***“[Install/Remove] Atomic Parsley”***

This enables *AtomicParsley* to be installed if that was not done on the first startup. It enables *AtomicParsley* to be removed if it has been installed. *AtomicParsley* is needed if you wish to embed thumbnail images in video files. It is used automatically by youtube-dl.

### ***“[Install/Remove] Service”***

This enables the MacYTDL Service to be installed if that was not done on the first startup. It enables the Service to be removed if it is installed.

### ***“Delete logs” – command-d***

Moves to Trash all the youtube-dl “response” files.

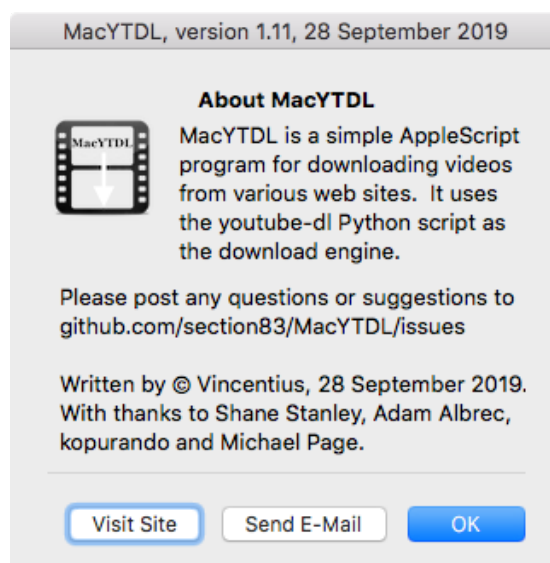
### ***“Uninstall” – command-shift-U***

Moves all files related to MacYTDL to the Trash. Keyboard shortcut is command-shift-U. Asks for confirmation before moving MacYTDL and all related files to the Trash. If you change your mind you can put back all those files individually or put back just MacYTDL and run it again. All components will then be downloaded and/or installed again.

### ***“About MacYTDL” – command-a***

Displays a dialog with information about MacYTDL.

The “Visit Site” button opens the MacYTDL GitHub page in the user’s default web browser. The GitHub page provides some detail on MacYTDL, a facility for logging issue or suggestions and links to downloads of the current and old versions. The URL is: <https://github.com/section83/MacYTDL/>. The second button opens a blank message in the user’s default e-mail programme addressed to MacYTDL developer.

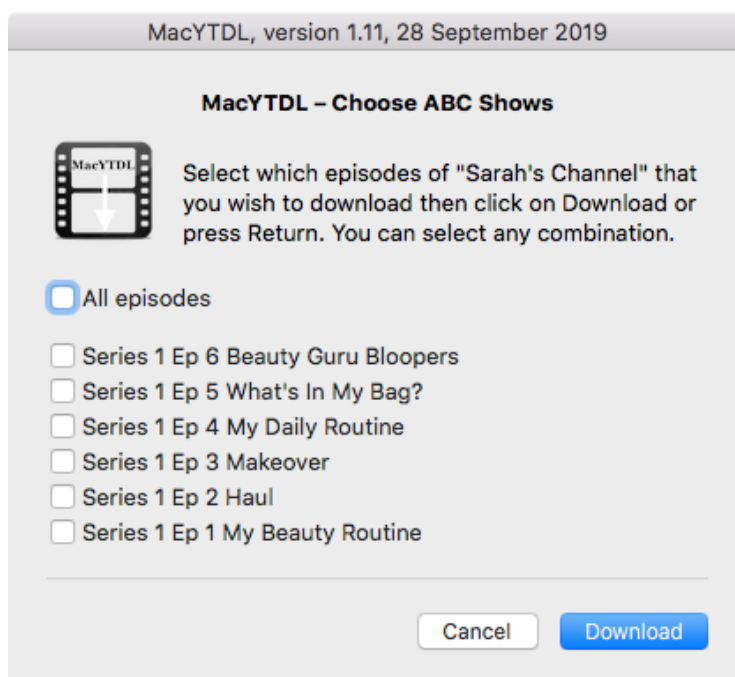


## Downloading videos from ABC iView (in Australia)

ABC iView changed the design of their web site during June 2018. One impact of the change was that individual videos are served from what can be called “Show” pages. Episodes are not available from their own web page. For example, all episodes of the show *The Book Club* are available on the one “The Book Club” page.

Downloads from iView now require youtube-dl version 2018.06.14 or later.

If the URL of a “Show” page is pasted into MacYTDL and there is more than one episode, a separate ABC iView dialog will be displayed listing all the episodes available on the page. The desired videos can then be chosen for download. There is an “All episodes” checkbox which will download all episodes. This is an example iView download dialog:



On iView the ABC has some shows for which there are a great many episodes (eg. 50-60). MacYTDL will try to show all the episodes in this dialog. On a Mac with a low screen resolution, however, the dialog may be too large to show all episodes. It is hoped that future version of MacYTDL will address that problem.

Notice that for some shows, episodes are shown in reverse order to match the order used in iView.

At present MacYTDL can download from only one show page in each download process. However it can download:

- from any number of show pages if each download is requested separately;
- any number of episodes from any series of a single show; and
- any number of separate episodes from any show pages in one process if the URLs of each episode are supplied manually.

To download a number of individual episodes from more than one show page:

- navigate to the particular episode desired;

- click on “Share”;
- click on “Copy link”;
- switch to MacYTDL;
- paste the URL then add a space;
- return to iView, navigate to the new desired show page and repeat the above steps.

If a show page has only one episode, MacYTDL will automatically commence to download that episode.

A separate destination folder can be specified in the “One-time settings” on the Main dialog. However, that must be done before selecting “Continue”.

Future versions of MacYTDL will have the same feature for other Australian free-to-air broadcasters.

Broadcasters and web sites outside Australia will be added on request if possible but, it will not be possible to test those which are geo-blocked.

## Batch functions

There can be situations in which the user will want to delay downloading a collection of videos to another time. For example, download speeds can be faster outside peak hour periods. The MacYTDL “Batch” functions enable URLs to be saved and downloaded at a later time. URLs are stored in a file called “BatchFile.txt” which is stored in:

/Users/[Home]/Library/Preferences/MacYTDL/

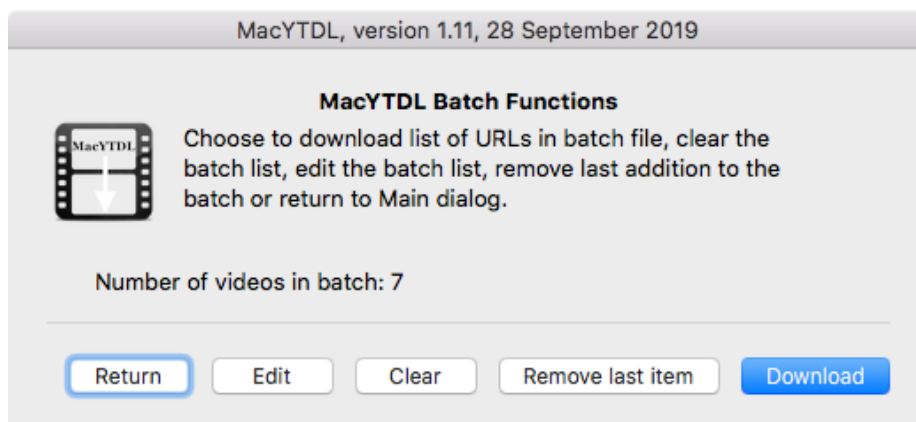
To add a URL to the batch file:

- in the Main dialog, click on the “Add URL to Batch file” checkbox;
- paste the URL into the text box (if you did not use the MacYTDL Service); and
- click on the “Process” button.

The URL will be checked to ensure it is valid then, added to the batch file and a message displayed accordingly.

The “Add URL to Batch file” checkbox will remain ticked until manually unticked or the user quits MacYTDL.

A separate dialog is provided to handle all other batch functions. To display the Batch functions dialog, in the Main dialog, click on the “Open Batch functions” checkbox then click on the “Process” button. This dialog will be displayed:



To download all the videos saved in the batch file, click on the “Download” button. The videos will commence to download one at a time.

Note: The URLs are NOT deleted from the batch file.

Clicking on the “Edit” button will open the batch file in the user’s default text editor. The batch file is a plain text file. There are restrictions on editing the file:

- the file must be saved as a plain text file – ie. not as rich text or word processing file;
- there can only be one URL per line – and no other text; and
- there must be a blank line at the end of the file – there can be no other blank lines.

The “Clear” button will remove all saved URLs from the batch file. That is handy after all the URLs have been downloaded.

The “Remove last item” button will delete the most recently added URL from the batch. That can be useful if a URL was added by accident.

The “Return” button closes the Batch Functions dialog and returns to the Main dialog.

There are a number of limitations with this batch function:

- URLs are not automatically deleted from the batch file after downloading – they need to be removed manually using the “Edit”, “Clear” or “Remove last item” functions.
- Download options applying when downloading a batch are shown in the Main dialog at that time – ie. options are not saved with each URL. Thus, if an option such as “Audio only” is set, then only the audio component of each video will be downloaded. It is usually safer to store URLs in the batch file that are all video files or all audio files rather than mixing them up.
  - Consequently, also, all videos will be saved in the same downloads folder.
- The batch function does not save the names of the videos.
- Invalid text in the batch file may cause youtube-dl to post an error. MacYTDL will ask youtube-dl to ignore errors and continue downloading but might not advise of that error.
- Incomplete downloads are not automatically deleted by the Monitor dialog.
- MacYTDL does not check for duplicates in the batch file. A URL which is saved to the batch file more than once will be downloaded again that many times – ie. if saved twice, it will be downloaded two times.
- It is not possible to choose which videos in a batch to download. However, lists of URLs can be saved in separate files and copied and pasted into the batch file for downloading.

Future version of MacYTDL will include improvements to the Batch function.

## What if the download doesn't work ?

There are many reasons why a download might fail or not produce the desired result. MacYTDL does do a test download and reports errors found (eg. because of invalid URLs or DRM limitations). But, that test cannot find all possible problems.

There is an option to attempt to download even when there is an error as well as some warnings. The download might well fail. If so, check the response file for possible reasons.

MacYTDL will report that there was a problem if the download was not 100% complete.

Note: An error with a video in a Youtube playlist will not prevent other videos in the list from being downloaded. If an error message is displayed, just click on "Download" to download the available videos.

A common problem is that a web site has changed and youtube-dl is no longer able to find the correct file to download. The best solution is to check regularly for and install updates to youtube-dl. Use the "Check for youtube-dl update" function or turn on the "Check youtube-dl version on startup" option.

Another common issue is AES-SAMPLE encryption or another DRM control. Many videos are encrypted with AES-SAMPLE and cannot be downloaded by youtube-dl. Sometimes, these issues are caught when MacYTDL checks the URL. In that case, what happened is noted in this file:

`/Users/[Home]/Preferences/MacYTDL/youtube-dl_simulate.txt`

Note that the simulate file is overwritten by the next download.

If MacYTDL proceeds to download the video, youtube-dl produces a detailed "response". If the download fails, that response might help to diagnose problems. MacYTDL saves the youtube-dl response in a separate file for each download. The file is saved here:

`/Users/[Home]/Preferences/MacYTDL/youtube-dl_response-[name of video].txt`

The "verbose" option will provide more detail to help diagnose issues.

Information on how youtube-dl functions is available at: [github.com/rg3/youtube-dl/blob/master/README.md](https://github.com/rg3/youtube-dl/blob/master/README.md).



## Limitations

MacYTDL has some limitations:

- Can't download encrypted or DRM protected videos from some sites – this is a limitation of youtube-dl and FFmpeg.
- Does not use specific options to overcome geo-blocking or employ proxies.
- Does not provide download options (eg. download rate, retries, archives, filters).
- Provides little control over the format of videos downloaded (eg. can't download and merge a video-only file with a video+audio file which enables higher quality audio with some downloads).
- Cannot download from more than one ABC iView show page at a time. MacYTDL will display an error message if the URLs of two or more iView web pages are entered. Note: two or more URLs for any individual episodes CAN be downloaded and downloads from two or more show pages can be downloaded at the same time if in separate processes.
- The Send-URL-To-MacYTDL service cannot work when the web browser is in full screen mode. Therefore, it takes the browser out of full screen before switching to MacYTDL.

## Future developments

MacYTDL is still in development. Functions to be added in the future include:

- Automatically provide episode choice for all seasons from “Show” pages for the Australian SBS, 7Plus, 9Now and TenPlay catch-up sites.
- Option to choose file format from a list of formats provided by the web site.
- A copy URL from web browser function.
- Improvements to the batch file functions.
- Use the youtube-dl config file for finer control over options.
- Added ability to use *Adobe Pass* credentials.
- Download progress reporting – with cancel option.
- Option to automatically download at a later time.

## Why use a video downloader ?

There is some controversy around the practice of downloading videos for local storage. Copyright owners are afraid people will copy and distribute videos and so reduce their revenue. That is a real fear although it may be exaggerated. But, there are ethical reasons for downloading videos.

The first is to avoid Adobe's Flash. The Flash video streaming standard has long been considered a security risk. Adobe have reduced that risk with regular updates. However, the risk remains and so, some companies have ceased using Flash (eg. YouTube) or have changed their products so that users must deliberately download and install it (eg. Apple). Adobe has announced that they will cease to support Flash in 2020. Here is a fairly recent report on Flash: <https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2017/07/with-html5-webgl-javascript-ascendant-adobe-to-cess-flash-dev-at-end-of-2020/>. Nonetheless, some sites still require Flash to view streaming video. Arguably, it is reasonable to download videos in order to avoid the security risks of Flash.

Another reason is particularly relevant to people in remote regions. In areas where download speeds are slow or unreliable it is just not feasible to watch videos online using streaming services. It could take 2 hours or longer to watch a 1 hour video. Even in urban areas, downloads can be unreliable, especially in peak periods, causing interruptions to viewing. Setting a download in motion and watching the full file later is much more feasible.

A third reason is that watching the downloaded video in a dedicated player is much more flexible than watching a frame inside a web browser window. For example, it is difficult to use a remote control (eg. a television remote) to control video playback inside a web browser window. Also, some web site streaming players do not offer consistent play/pause, fast-forward/rewind or skip functions.

## External components used

MacYTDL uses five tools to download and convert video files.

### *youtube-dl*

The youtube-dl developers description is best:

“youtube-dl is a command-line program to download videos from YouTube.com and a few [more sites](#). It requires the Python interpreter (2.6, 2.7, or 3.2+), and it is not platform specific. We also provide a Windows executable that includes Python. youtube-dl should work in your Unix box, in Windows or in Mac OS X. It is released to the public domain, which means you can modify it, redistribute it or use it however you like.”

youtube-dl works well and can download videos from many sites around the world. More detail on youtube-dl is available at <http://rg3.github.io/youtube-dl/>.

youtube-dl can be downloaded separately at: <https://github.com/rg3/youtube-dl/releases>

### *Python scripting language*

Python is a script-based programming language that works on most operating systems. More detail is available here: <https://www.python.org>

Every Apple Mac should have a workable copy of Python. However, if there are problems with Python, different releases are available from: <https://www.python.org/downloads/mac-osx/>

### *FFmpeg*

FFmpeg, to quote from the developers, is:

“A complete, cross-platform solution to record, convert and stream audio and video.”

It is used by youtube-dl for a number of functions including to convert downloaded videos into MP4 or MKV format.

FFmpeg can be downloaded separately at: <https://evermeet.cx/pub/ffmpeg/>

### *FFprobe*

FFprobe is a stream analyser. It is used by youtube-dl to collect details on the download video format etc.

FFprobe can be downloaded separately at: <https://evermeet.cx/pub/ffprobe/>

### *AtomicParsley*

*AtomicParsley* is a small utility that embeds thumbnail images in video files. It is the default tool required by youtube-dl for that function.

There is no generally available binary of *AtomicParsley* for macOS. Therefore, a new build was created on my iMac running macOS 10.13.4 using [HomeBrew](#). The build commands were:

```
sudo chown -R $(whoami) /usr/local/var/homebrew  
brew install atomicparsley
```

The source code was for version 0.9.6, dated 25 July 2014, prepared by user [dinkypumpkin](#) (who also created *Get iPlayer Automator*).

That executable is stored in the MacYTDL bundle resources folder. The installer copies *AtomicParsley* from there to “/usr/local/bin”.

More detail on *AtomicParsley* is available at: [atomicparsley.sourceforge.net](http://atomicparsley.sourceforge.net)

## **MacYTDL components**

MacYTDL includes a number of AppleScript components.

### ***DialogToolkitMacYTDL.sctpd***

This is an AppleScript library that must be installed for MacYTDL to work. It is stored in the MacYTDL bundle resources folder. The installer copies it from there to the “~/Library/Script Libraries” folder for each user who runs MacYTDL.

It is a customised version of the *DialogToolkitPlus* script library created by [Shane Stanley, AppleScript Guru Extraordinaire](#).

### ***Send-URL-To-MacYTDL.workflow***

This is a service created in Automator. It enables users to invoke MacYTDL from within a web browser. It is stored in the MacYTDL bundle resources folder. The installer copies it from there to the “~/Library/Services” folder for each user who runs MacYTDL. When running, the usual rotating wagon wheel icon will show in the “Status” menu bar.

### ***Monitor.scpt***

An AppleScript which handles downloads. Having a separate script enables users to use MacYTDL to download a number of videos at the same time. It is stored in MacYTDL bundle resources folder.

### ***adviser.scpt***

An AppleScript which tracks when a download has finished. If the download was 100% complete it pops a message accordingly. If not 100% complete, it pops a message advising that there may have been a problem. Has option to open the related log file.

## Any comments, suggestions or better code ?

MacYTDL is still early in development and I need all the help available. If you use MacYTDL please make contact especially if you have any ideas, comments, suggestions or better AppleScript code. Send an email to [macytdl@gmail.com](mailto:macytdl@gmail.com) or post an issue on the MacYTDL GitHub page:

<https://github.com/section83/MacYTDL> [logon required]

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*AtomicParsley* is protected by the [GNU General Public License version 2.0 \(GPLv2\)](#).

youtube-dl is released to the public domain, which means you can modify it, redistribute it or use it however you like.

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- “kopurando” (<https://github.com/kopurando>), author of the *Virga* downloader.
- “Tombs” (<https://forum.videohelp.com/members/235982-Tombs>) an active contributor to *Whirlpool* and author of the *URLDown Dropper* utility for Windows.
- “xplorr” (<https://forum.videohelp.com/members/268051-xplorr>), author of *TVDownloader*.
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- MacYTDL users Ted, Peter, Mike, “Dantha” and “upekshapriya”.