

# The WebVTT format

The [W3C Web Media Text Tracks Community Group](#) is working on the "[WebVTT: The Web Video Text Tracks Format](#)" specification, a format used for defining files that will contain text for captions and subtitles, and much more... The WebVTT files are used with the `src` attribute of the `<track>` element, that can be used inside a `<video>...</video>`.

In the example presented in the previous section (located at <http://jsbin.com/luyazi/2/edit>), we used a file called `sintel-captions.vtt`:

```
<video height="272" width="640"
  poster="http://content.bitsontherun.com/thumbs/q1fx20VZ-640.jpg"
  crossorigin="anonymous"
  controls>
  ...
  <track src="http://demo.jwplayer.com/html5-report/sintel-
captions.vtt"
7.    kind="captions" label="Closed Captions" default>
</video>
```

And here is an extract of the corresponding `sintel-captions.vtt` file:

```
WEBVTT
00:00:01.000 --> 00:00:02.042
(drumbeat)
00:00:07.167 --> 00:00:12.025
(plaintive violin solo playing)
00:00:15.000 --> 00:00:18.183
10. (wind whistling)
00:00:24.167 --> 00:00:27.025
(orchestra music swells)
00:00:43.033 --> 00:00:43.192
(weapons clash)
00:00:44.000 --> 00:00:44.175
(gasps)
20.
00:00:44.183 --> 00:00:45.158
(grunts)
00:00:45.167 --> 00:00:47.058
(groaning)
```

```

00:00:54.192 --> 00:00:55.150
(blade rings)
30. 00:00:55.158 --> 00:00:57.008
(bellowing)
00:00:57.017 --> 00:00:58.067
(grunting)
00:00:59.075 --> 00:01:00.133
(panting)
00:01:05.108 --> 00:01:06.125
40. (cries out in agony)
00:01:08.050 --> 00:01:09.058
(panting)
00:01:12.092 --> 00:01:13.142
(panting)
00:01:14.017 --> 00:01:18.125
(orchestra plays ominous low notes)
50.
00:01:31.058 --> 00:01:35.133
(plaintive violin solo returns)
00:01:46.158 --> 00:01:49.058
This blade has a dark past.
00:01:51.092 --> 00:01:54.108
It has shed much innocent blood.
60. 00:01:57.083 --> 00:02:00.000
You're a fool for traveling alone
so completely unprepared.
00:02:01.100 --> 00:02:03.033
You're lucky your blood's still flowing.
00:02:04.183 --> 00:02:06.075
Thank you.

```

This format is rather simple, but we still recommend reading [this excellent article from Mozilla Developer Network](#) that explains in detail all the different options.

Each "element" in this file has a starting and ending time, plus a value (the text that will be displayed), followed by a blank line (blank lines are separators between elements).

**Each element is called "a cue"**, and may optionally have an ID that will be useful when using the track element JavaScript API, in particular the `getCueById()` method of `TextTrack` objects. How to use these will be taught in the "advanced HTML5" course, soon on W3Cx

Example of numeric IDs:

```
9
00:00:21.000 --> 00:00:22.000
to hear from <u>you</u>
10
00:00:22.500 --> 00:00:25.000
We want to hear what inspires you as a developer
```

IDs may also be defined as strings, and values can use HTML as well:

```
Opening
00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:30.000
Welcome to our <i>nice film</i>
```

The displayed text can span multiple lines, but blank lines are not allowed, as they would be interpreted as a separator:

```
00:01:57.083 --> 00:02:00.000
<p>You're a fool for traveling alone</p>
<p>so completely unprepared.</p>
```

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## KNOWLEDGE CHECK 2.3.2 (NOT GRADED)

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What is a CUE in a WebVTT file?

- ☐ A timestamp
  - ☐ The name of the subtitle or caption text displayed at a given time
  - ☐ A starting time, an ending time and a textual value
  - ☐ A subtitle
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