

# ffmpeg VBR modes for DVDStyler

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This small utility allows 1-pass and 2-pass VBR encodes under DVDStyler. There also are optional High Quality (HQ) and Extreme High Quality (XHQ) modes. Custom Quant Matrices are supported, a few of my favorite matrices are included. Also fixes a CBR padding issue for VCD frame sizes in ffmpeg versions starting from October 2014.

## Installation:

The plugin is automatically installed and uninstalled with DVDStyler.

## Usage:

To enable the plugin start DVDStyler and select "Configuration -> Settings -> Core". Set the Encoder to "ffmpeg-vbr". Then pick one of the four available modes:

"auto" will automatically switch between the encoding modes depending on the video bitrate. The bitrate thresholds must be specified in the file "ff\_vbr.ini" which is located in the "DVDStyler\bin" folder. In this mode the HQ settings are also automatically selected according to the specified HQ thresholds in the INI file.

"CBR" will force Constant Bitrate encoding. This is basically the same as the DVDStyler default encoding mode, but with a few small differences. HQ parameters and Custom Quant Matrices are supported in this mode by the plugin.

"1-pass VBR" forces 1-pass Variable Bitrate encoding.

"2-pass VBR" forces 2-pass Variable Bitrate encoding.

When using the last three modes the HQ mode is also selected here. All threshold based HQ settings specified in the "ff\_vbr.ini" file will be ignored.

Setup of the tool is done by editing the file "ff\_vbr.ini" in a text editor. First you have to specify Custom Quant Matrices for high, medium and low bitrates. Next you must select the bitrate thresholds for the VBR, 2-pass and HQ modes. The XHQ mode provides extremely high quality (at an extremely low speed). It can only be used in 2-pass VBR mode, and the MPEG Adaptive matrix is forced in this mode.

Then enter the bitrate thresholds for the matrix selection. In the next step you have to specify the ffmpeg parameters which should be added to the command line for HQ encoding. And finally you must specify if a new log file should be created upon every start of a new project, or if the log file should be appended to the previous one, plus you can specify a folder where the log file should be created.

If your bitrate is lower than the VBR threshold, VBR will be used instead of the default CBR mode. A value of 6500 to 7000 is recommended.

If your bitrate is lower than the 2-pass threshold, 2-pass VBR encoding will be used.

If your bitrate is lower than the HQ threshold, the HQ parameters will be added to the command line.

Set the threshold values to 0 to disable and to 1 to enable the respective modes unconditionally.

This only applies if the plugin mode is set to "auto" in the DVDStyler configuration. Otherwise the selected encoding mode and the HQ mode will be forced regardless of the video bitrate.

### **Advanced:**

This tool supports using Custom Quant Matrices. ffmpeg uses the MPEG Standard matrix by default. For this matrix all non-intra coefficients are set to 16. For DVD encodes the MPEG Adapted matrix is usually more suitable. For very high bitrates the Fox Home Theater matrix has a good reputation, lower bitrate encodes work better with a matrix like the Manono1 matrix.

A couple of matrices are included in the distribution. To select your preferred matrix just edit the file "ff\_vbr.ini". Specify the desired matrix for high, medium and low bitrates by removing the "#" character for the matrices you want to use.

You can easily add your own preferred matrix by creating a text file in the correct format with the matrix name as the file name. Then add this matrix to the matrix selection part of the "ff\_vbr.ini" file.

### **Known Issues:**

The ffmpeg console output is not added to the DVDStyler log file. Instead a separate log file with the name "ff\_vbr.log" is created.

I only tested the plugin using DVDStyler version 3.0 and higher under WinXP and Win7. The portable versions should also work.

### **Credits:**

Many thanks to Alex Thüring, the author of DVDStyler. Thanks to JMJ from the DVDStyler forum for testing and debugging and many useful tips. Also thanks to Fishman0919 from the Doom9 forum for providing and testing the XHQ parameters. And of course a big thank you to the ffmpeg development team.

### **License:**

The script is Public Domain. No strings attached, do with it whatever you like. No guarantee whatsoever.

For DVDStyler and ffmpeg licensing terms see the original distributions:  
[www.dvdstyler.org](http://www.dvdstyler.org)  
[www.ffmpeg.org](http://www.ffmpeg.org)