

How to make your content accessible using Closed Captions



What is closed captions?

Closed captions (or Subtitles for the Deaf and hard of hearing) is a text version of the speech and other audio information needed to understand content. Captions include:

- the words that are spoken
- who is speaking when it is not evident
- sounds like music, laughter, and noises

Can you make sense of the following scenes without looking at the captions?



Why?

Have you ever felt frustrated when watching a video without hearing the sound, e.g. in a very noisy environment?

With captions, audio content is:

- **accessible** to people with hearing impairments
- easier to **understand**
- easier to **skim, explore and search**



Captions make access to audio information easier for everyone.



Who it helps?

People who....



are Deaf or hard of hearing



watch videos in silent mode, e.g. in the metro



have cognitive and learning disabilities and need to see and hear the content



want to easily search for information inside videos



are learning a language or are non-native speakers

How to

- You can use a subtitle editor to caption your videos. Often such tools are built into social media platforms.
- Captions are one or two lines. If possible, place each sentence on a different line.
- It is best to keep them under 32 characters per line.
- Captions have to be in sync with the speech.
- Captions need to stay on screen long enough for viewers to be able to read them comfortably.
- Voice recognition software can help create automatic captions for some types of videos, but their quality may be poor. Plan sufficient time for correcting them!

Test your knowledge! Solve the Captions Quiz!

TAKE QUIZ



References:

- <https://www.w3.org/WAI/perspective-videos/captions/>

This project is part of Alina Karakanta's thesis for the MA in Accessibility to Media, Arts and Culture, University of Macerata. Learn more at <https://github.com/fatalinha/accessibility-literacy>