



DVDStyler User Guide

CREATED BY JAMES FOSTER

Table of Contents

Front Matter	5
Introduction	6
Getting Started	7
About this Manual	8
Installation and Quick Start	9
Installation	9
Quick Start	10
The Basics	11
Startup	12
Disc label	12
Disc capacity	12
Video bitrate	13
Audio bitrate	13
Default title post command	13
Call last menu	13
Call root menu	13
Play next title	13
Video Format	13
PAL	14
NTSC	14
Aspect Ratio	14
4:3	14
16:9	14
Audio Format	14

MP2 48 kHz	14
AC3 48 kHz	14
Open an existing project file	15
Don't show this dialog again	15
Building a Project	16
Adding Files	16
Customization and Completion	17
Customization	18
Menus	18
Backgrounds	18
Audio	19
Buttons	20
If using a button from the Buttons menu:	20
If using a video file:	22
Completion	25
Media Properties	25
Burning the DVD	27
Reference Materials	30
FAQs	31
What happens if I choose too many files/my files are too large?	31
Why don't the menu buttons work?	31
Why won't my DVD burn?	31
Additional Reading	32
Toolbar Key	33

Glossary	34
Index	36

Front Matter



DVDStyler was created by Alex Thüring and is licensed as [free software under GPL](#).

This document applies to DVDStyler Version 3.2.1 and is licensed under [GFDL](#).

Introduction

DVDStyler is a video DVD production authoring system. This software can be used to produce professional-quality DVDs, or to create polished DVDs with minimal effort. Example usages of this software include adding options for chapter and title selection, subtitle selection, audio track selection, and full, layered menus with many formatting options to allow for selection of chapters (of a feature film) or episodes (of a television programme).

Getting Started

This section details the preliminary information about DVDStyler and the basic knowledge required to use this manual and install and set up this software.

About this Manual

This manual enables users to perform multiple functions, all in the pursuit of creating a video DVD that is compatible with any DVD player, complete with a fully functioning menu and chapter selection.

The target audience for this document is any user wishing to create a video DVD who has never done so before and would like to learn the basics of a robust piece of software.

This manual is divided into sections which follow the chronological order of the process of video DVD creation.

DVDStyler is a cross-platform piece of software which can be used to create video DVDs compatible with any DVD player. There are many options for fine-tuning video and audio encoding, as well as adding menus, buttons, and additional features such as submenus and subtitles.

Installation and Quick Start

Installation

This section contains links to downloads of DVDStyler, as well as command line instructions for various operating systems.

[Download the installer](#) applicable to your operating system:

[DVDStyler-3.2.1-win32.exe](#) for 32-bit Windows (older systems)

[DVDStyler-3.2.1-win64.exe](#) for 64-bit Windows (newer systems)

[DVDStyler-3.2.1_1-MacOSX.dmg](#) for Mac OS X

[dvdstyler_3.3~b3-dmo3_amd64.deb](#) for Debian/Ubuntu (Linux)

[DVDStyler-3.2.1-2.11.i586.rpm](#) for OpenSUSE/Fedora/RHEL i586 (older systems, Linux)

[DVDStyler-3.2.1-2.11.x86_64.rpm](#) for OpenSUSE/Fedora/RHEL x86_64 (newer systems, Linux)

[DVDStyler-3.2.1.tar.bz2](#) for Linux (if installing from source code)

Alternatively, download from your desired package manager, or via command line:

Windows

```
winget install dvdstyler
```

Ubuntu

```
sudo add-apt-repository ppa:ubuntuhandbook1/dvdstyler  
sudo apt update  
sudo apt install dvdstyler
```

Debian

```
sudo apt install dvdstyler
```

SUSE

```
opi install dvdstyler
```

Arch

```
sudo pacman -S dvdstyler
```

Quick Start

This section is intended for either advanced users who want an overview of the best options, or beginners who do not want a detailed explanation of why and how everything works.

Upon startup, DVDStyler will display a welcome screen with some basic project options. A basic overview with recommendations for each option is as follows; for further information, see [Startup](#) or [Glossary](#):

Disc label: this will display as the volume name when the DVD is opened on a computer.

Disc capacity: most DVDs are 4.7 GB, though the capacity is usually etched on the disc.

Video bitrate: **Auto** is fine.

Audio bitrate: **192 Kbit/s** is fine.

Default title post command: what you want to happen when a video is done playing. **Call last menu** displays the most recent menu, **Call root menu** displays the main title menu, and **Play next title** plays the next video in the sequence (if applicable).

Video Format: NTSC if in North America, PAL if in Europe.

Aspect Ratio: 16:9 if using a modern wide screen for playback, 4:3 if using an older square screen for playback.

Audio Format: AC3 if using NTSC Video Format, MP2 if using PAL Video Format.

After selecting **OK**, the template selection screen will appear. Choose any desired template for Title/Chapter selection and select **OK**, or choose **No template** to customize a menu. There are backgrounds which can be chosen if a more static or simple menu is preferred.

The Basics

This section covers the initial steps associated with video DVD creation, from startup through to adding your first files. The various options for creating, editing, and saving a project, as well as adding video, audio, and subtitles, are all discussed.

Startup

This section details the options in the setup screen, an overview of their meanings, and why each option is best for specific scenarios.

Disc label

The title of the disc which will be displayed as the volume label when inserted into a computer (like the **C:** drive label on Windows). **Must be shorter than 32 characters**, which is the limit for most systems, but keep it shorter than 11 characters if possible as this will make the disc compatible with more systems.

Disc capacity

Disc capacity should be written on the package the disc came in, if not on the disc itself. Ensure that the correct size is being chosen so that the full extent of the storage can be used for optimal quality of video and audio. A simple rule to remember is that **2 GB stores approximately 1 hour of video**. The figures below are estimates and vary greatly depending on the size and quality of the video, audio, and other files or components. Many or advanced buttons, menus, and backgrounds will reduce the available capacity for audio and video and their related components such as subtitles.

CD (700 MB) – Approximately 80 minutes of video. Because it is an older format (precursor to Video DVD), compatibility is not as universal as with Video DVDs, so do not attempt to create a Video CD unless certain that it can be handled by the desired player(s).

DVD-1 (1.4 GB) – Approximately 30 minutes of video.

DVD-2 (2.6 GB) – Approximately 80 minutes of video.

DVD-5 (4.7 GB) – Approximately 120 minutes of video. The standard size for most commercially available blank DVDs.

DVD-9 (8.5 GB) – Approximately 240 minutes of video.

Unlimited – Any amount of video. Use only if manually monitoring video size compatibility with disc or if only intending to use on a computer, not a disc.

Video bitrate

Video bitrate is best left on Auto, as this allows DVDStyler to automatically fill the DVD with the highest quality video and audio possible. If desired, bitrate can be chosen manually, with higher bitrates meaning better quality and lower bitrates meaning lower quality.

Audio bitrate

192 Kbit/s (Kbps) is sufficient for most users. If adjusting, do not reduce below 90 Kbps as quality audibly diminishes at this point. The highest-quality lossless audio files are usually around 320 Kbps, and audio CDs are 1411 Kbps; the latter will not be noticeable unless using studio-quality equipment, and even 320 Kbps will likely be too high to create any noticeably difference other than reducing the available capacity of the disc. Most speakers and headphones/earphones are not able to convey the difference provided by higher bitrates.

Default title post command

Allows the user to choose the action to be completed when a file has finished playing:

Call last menu

Returns the user to the most recent menu that was used.

Call root menu

Returns the user to the main menu (also called VMGM).

Play next title

Plays the next file in the sequence; if there is no next file, returns the user to the desired menu (either most recent or main, as described above).

Video Format

Allows the user to choose the desired format, which is generally based on their geographic location:

PAL

Used primarily in Europe and supported by many other countries, a colour video format which requires the support of MP2 Audio Format as well as supporting AC3 Audio Format. DVD players which support PAL also support NTSC and both MP2 and AC3 Audio Formats.

NTSC

Used primarily in North America, a colour video format which requires the support of AC3 Audio Format. DVD players which support NTSC do not generally support PAL and are only required to support AC3 Audio Format, making them less likely to support MP2 Audio Format as well.

Aspect Ratio

Allows the user to choose the desired aspect ratio:

4:3

Fullscreen; primarily for older or lower-quality video due to the use of 35 mm film, this fell out of favour at the turn of the 21st century but is still supported by most screens.

16:9

Widescreen; primarily for newer and high-definition video due to the popularity of digital formats, ***this is the most used aspect ratio despite having extremely limited backwards compatibility.***

Audio Format

Allows the user to choose the desired audio compression format:

MP2 48 kHz

MPEG-1 Audio Layer II audio, primarily used for audio broadcasting.

AC3 48 kHz

Dolby Digital audio, primarily used for audio and video broadcasting, DVD and Blu-Ray video, and digital streaming.

Open an existing project file

Allows the user to open the file browser and choose a file which has previously been created to edit or burn.

Don't show this dialog again

Prevents the startup screen from displaying (can be undone via settings: **Configuration > Settings... > “Don't show again” flags:** and select **Reset All**).

Building a Project

This section explains the steps required to create a project and goes over some of the broader details associated with this task.

A template can be chosen for title/chapter selection. If desired, choose a **Caption** to act as the name of the disc when in menus. For maximum customization possibilities, the template menu can be bypassed by selecting **No template** or closing the window and choosing custom buttons, backgrounds, fonts, and actions as they arise (detailed further in **Customization**).

Adding Files

This section outlines the various ways that files can be added, and the uses and limitations of DVDStyler for different filetypes including video, audio, and subtitles.

Files can be dragged onto the white bar at the bottom of the window (highlighted in red below), or by right-clicking the bar and selecting **Add > File...** and selecting the target file(s).



Customization and Completion

This section covers the finer details associated with video DVD creation, from creating and customizing buttons, menus, and backgrounds, to the various ways that media can be edited and fine-tuned before finally burning the DVD so that it can be played for viewing in any DVD player.

Customization

This section provides an overview of the various customization options for menus, backgrounds, audio, and buttons, ranging from the selection provided by default in DVDStyler to the numerous ways the user can create and save their own.

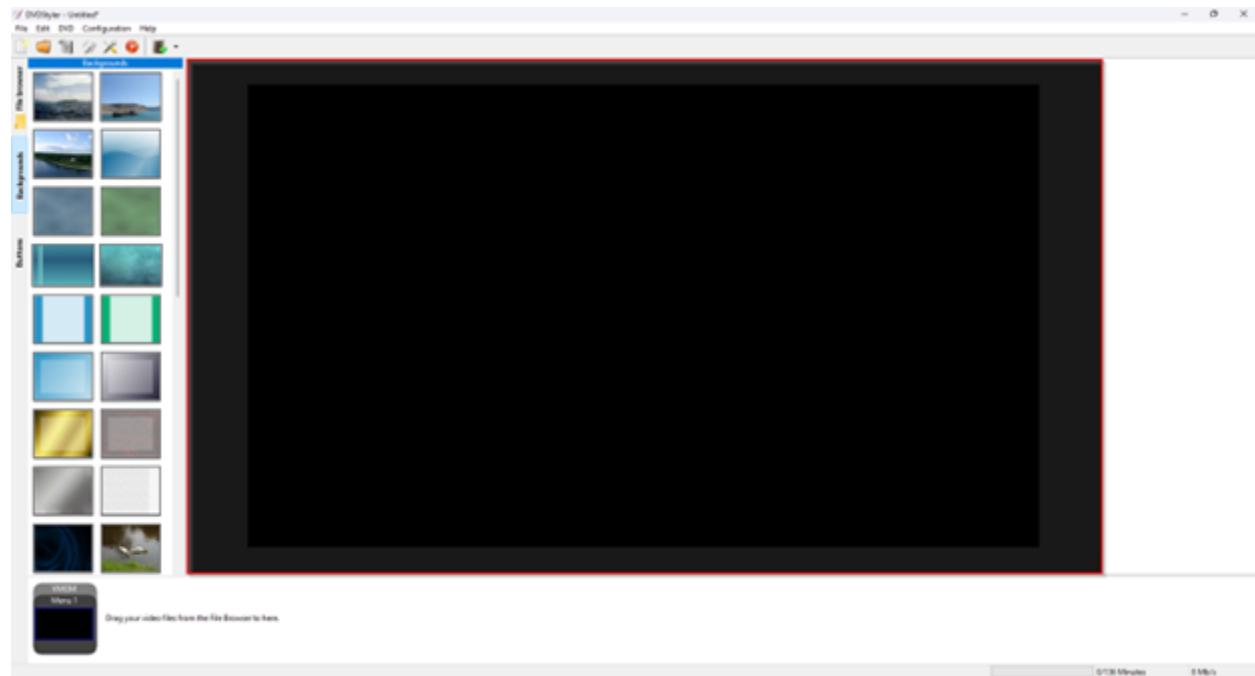
If a template is not chosen, the project will start with **Menu 1** nested in **VMGM**. **VMGM** is a required menu type, being the root/main menu which contains the primary branch of menus. Upon adding files, they will be nested in **Titleset 1**, a menu type reserved for grouping files.

Menus

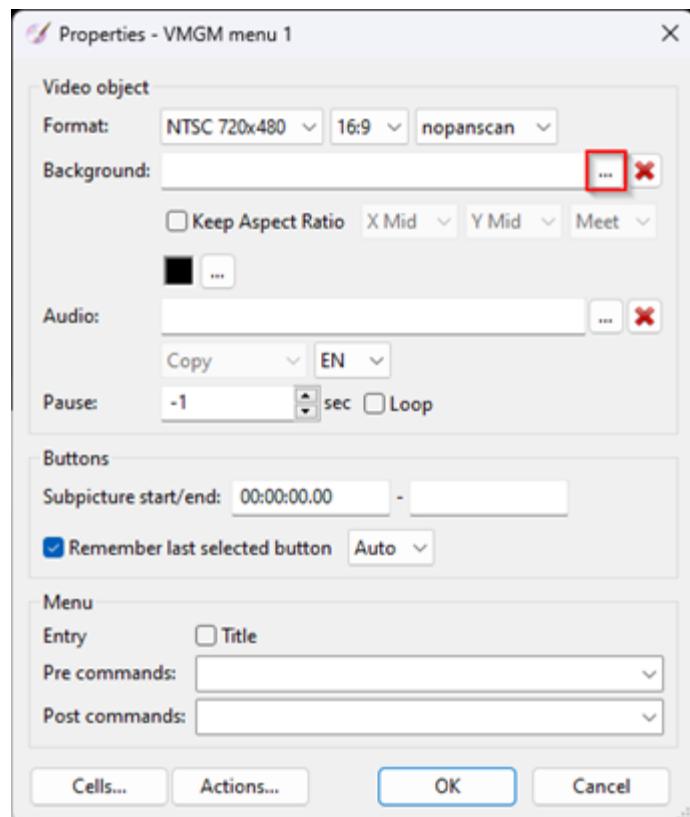
Menus can be clicked and dragged to rearrange them until they are in the desired order.

Backgrounds

To add a custom menu background, right click the visual preview of the menu in the window (highlighted in red below) and select **Properties...**



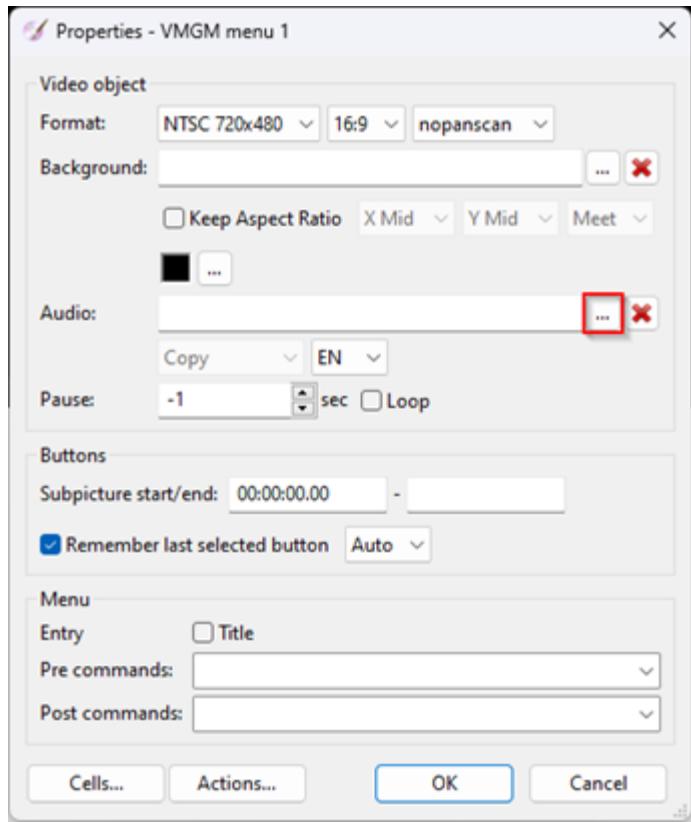
Then, select the ellipsis button next to the text box beside **Background:** (highlighted in red below) and choose the desired image, then select **OK**.



If the image is not the correct size to fill the screen, right-click the image and select **Properties...**, then check the box to the left of **Keep Aspect Ratio** and choose the desired position and action. The positions are labelled by axis (X/Y) and extremity (Min, Mid, Max), and the actions determine whether the image is shrunk to stay within the boundaries of the screen (Meet) or expanded to meet the outer edges of the screen (Slice) without distortion.

Audio

To add audio to a menu, right-click the background, select **Properties...**, select the ellipsis button next to the text box beside **Audio:** (highlighted in red below) and choose the desired audio file, then select **OK**.



Buttons

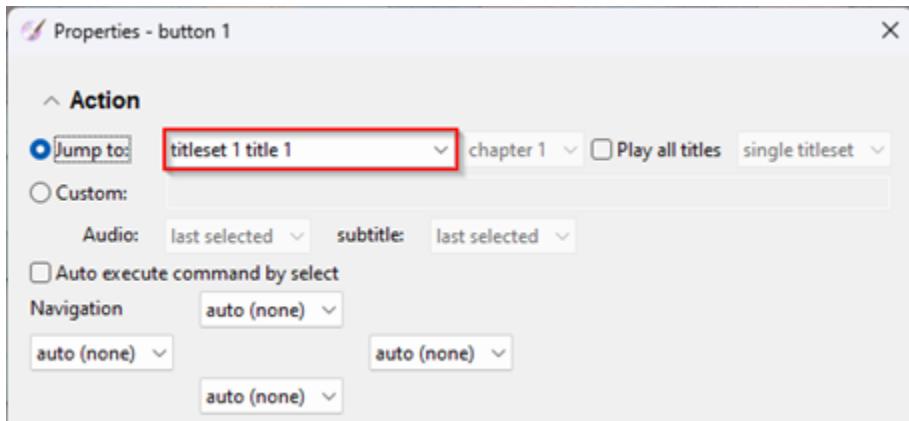
To add a custom button, either choose a button from the **Buttons** menu on the lefthand side of the window or drag a video file into the visual preview of the menu to get started.

If using a button from the **Buttons** menu:

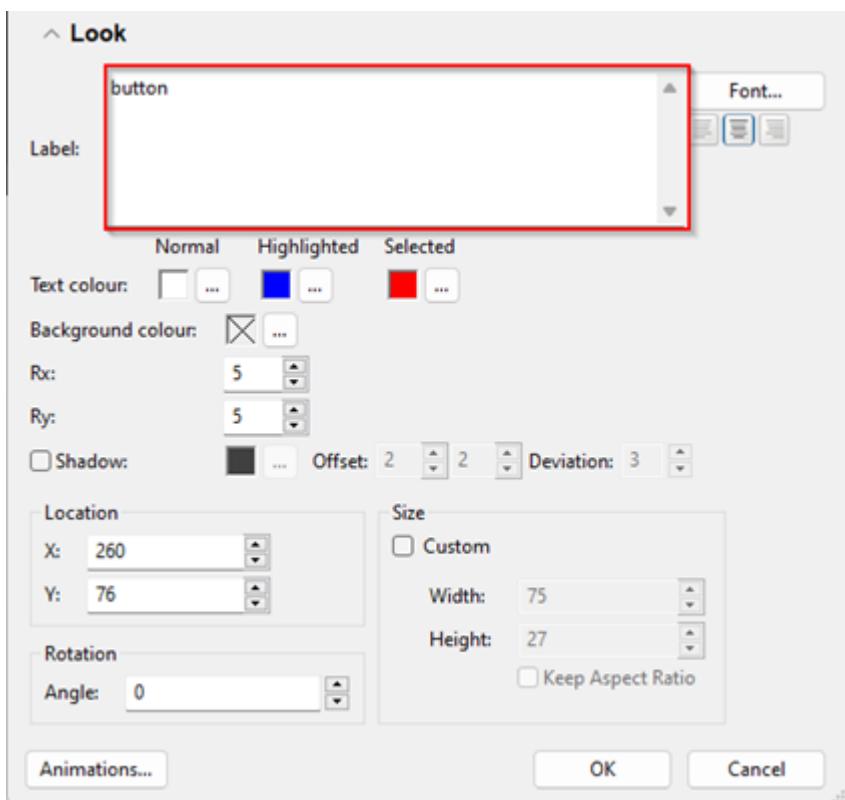
Choose the desired button, then select and drag it onto the visual preview of the menu in the window.

Right-click the button and select **Properties...** to see the available options for **Action** (what the button does) and **Look** (the appearance of the button).

Under **Action**, use the drop-down menu next to **Jump to:** (highlighted in red below) to choose what will happen when the button is selected on the DVD. By default, selecting the button will select the file that was dragged onto the menu.



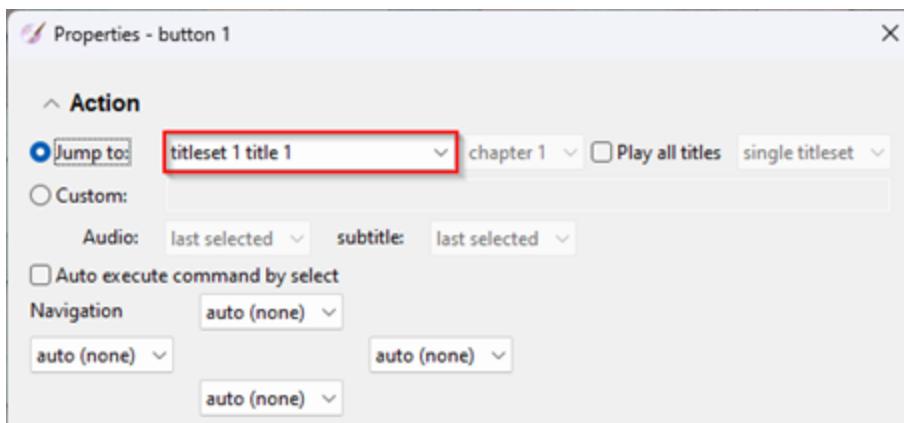
Under **Look**, enter custom text for the button (if desired) by typing in the text box next to **Label:** (highlighted in red below).



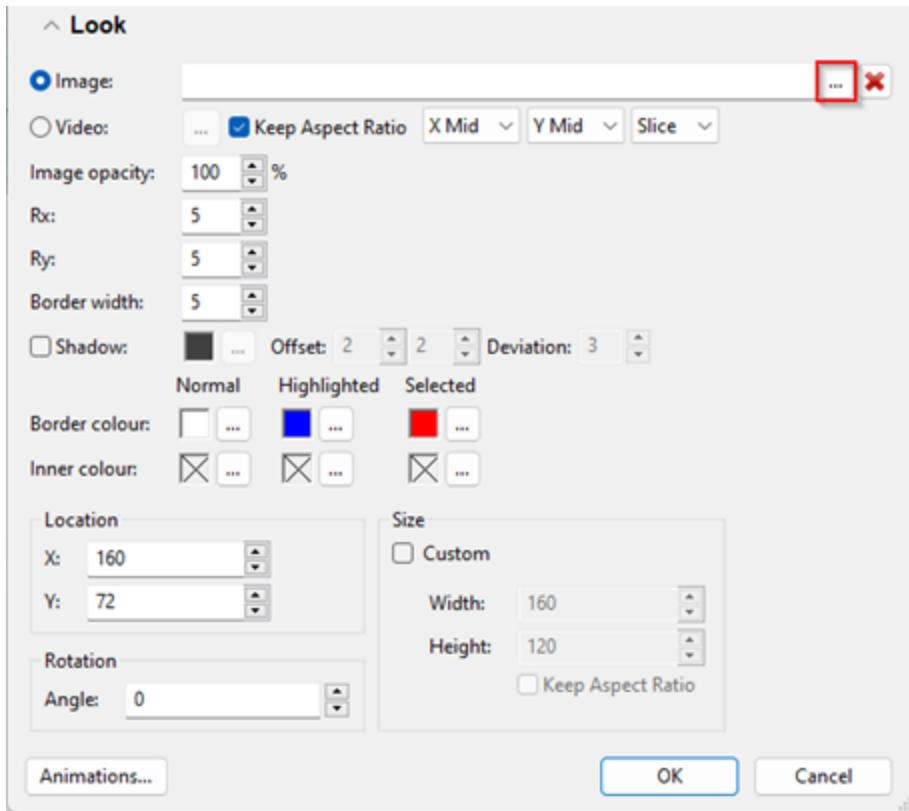
If using a video file:

Right-click the button and select **Properties...** to see the available options for **Action** (what the button does) and **Look** (the appearance of the button).

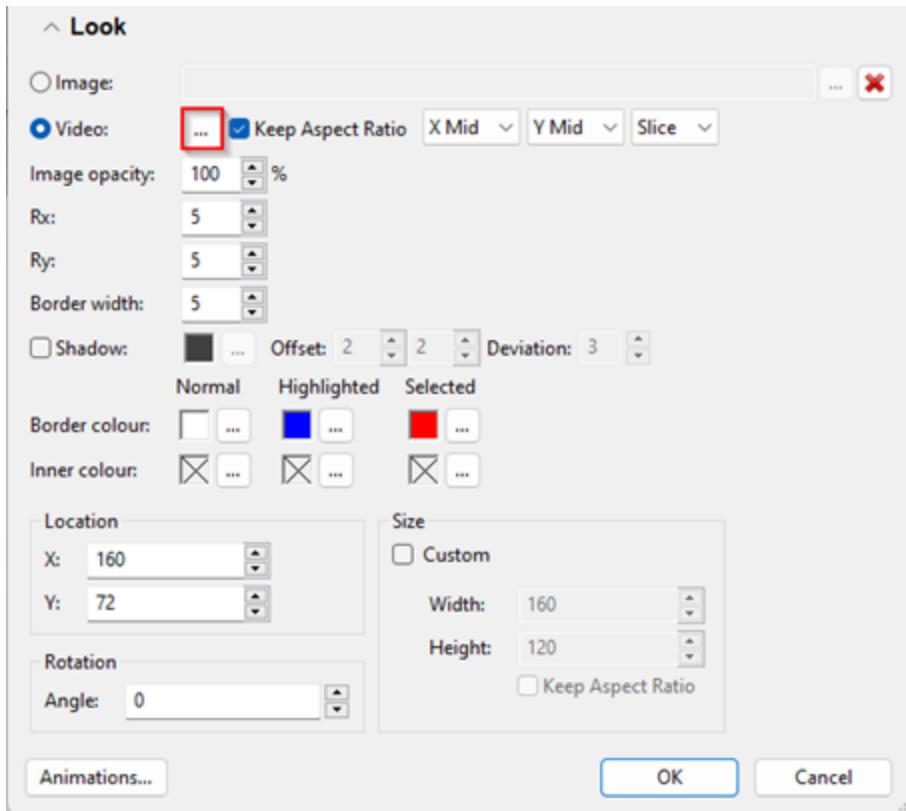
Under **Action**, use the drop-down menu next to **Jump to:** (highlighted in red below) to choose what will happen when the button is selected on the DVD. By default, selecting the button will select the file that was dragged onto the menu.



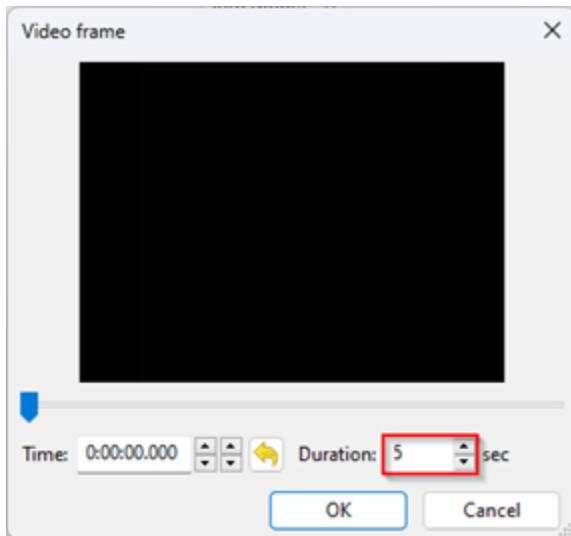
Under **Look**, choose an image if desired by selecting the ellipsis button next to the text box beside **Image:** (highlighted in red below).



If a thumbnail from the video is desired, select the ellipsis button next to **Video:** (highlighted in red below) and use the slider or the time stamp text box to choose the portion of the video that will act as the thumbnail.



Additionally, a duration can be chosen (highlighted in red below), which will allow the video to play for the selected number of seconds, allowing for an animated button taken from the designated video excerpt.



Completion

This section details the steps required to put on the finishing touches and burn the DVD so that it is playable.

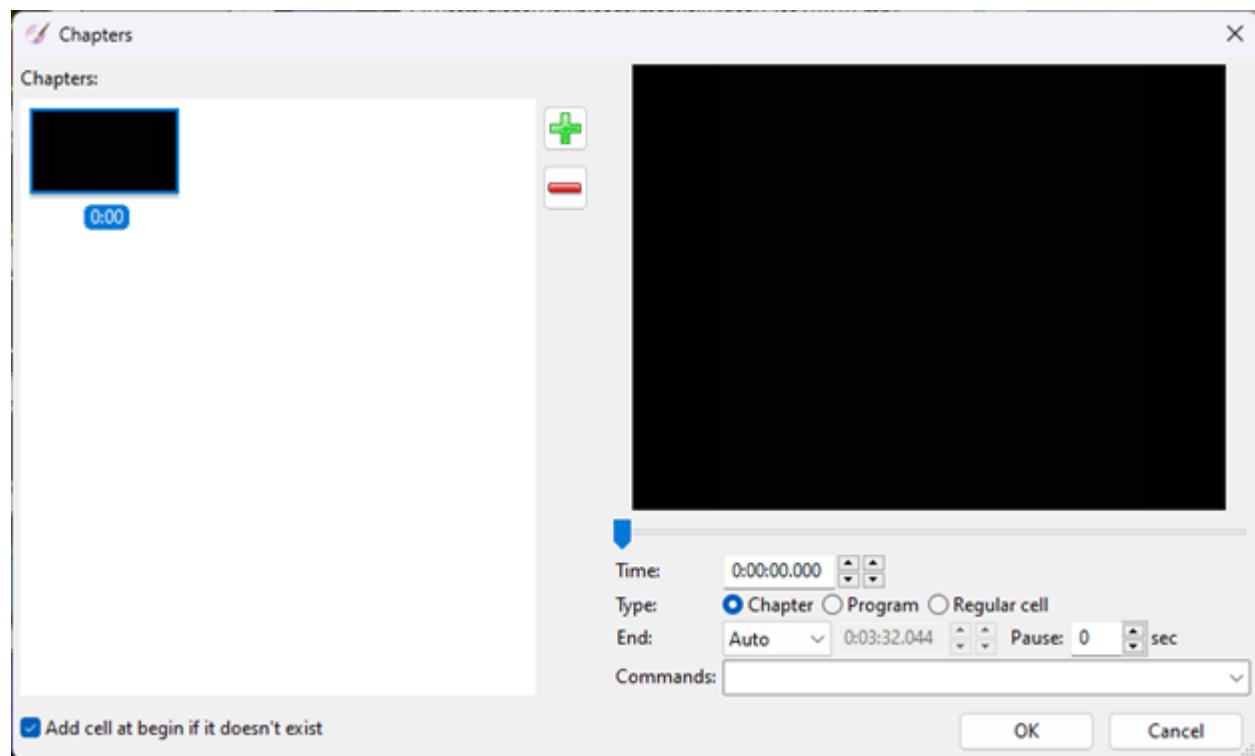
Media Properties

This section explains, in detail, the various ways that media can be manipulated and edited in DVDStyler.

There are multiple ways to edit video files in DVDStyler, ranging from simple to complex. To view these options, right-click the desired video file and select **Properties....**

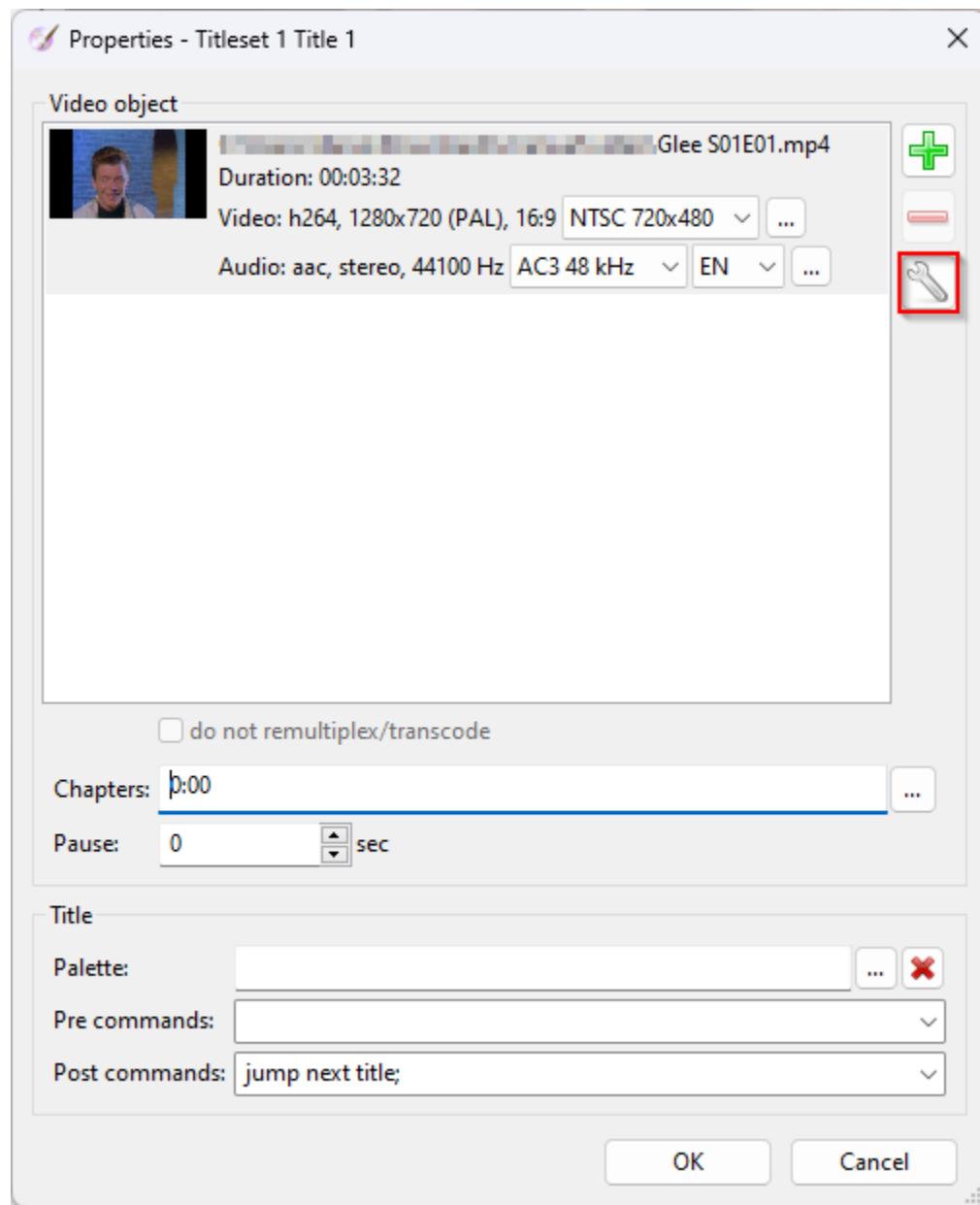
Here, there are two sections: **Video object** and **Title**.

Under **Video object**, the user can select **Chapters:** and the chapter selection menu will open, allowing the user to precisely select chapters, if desired.

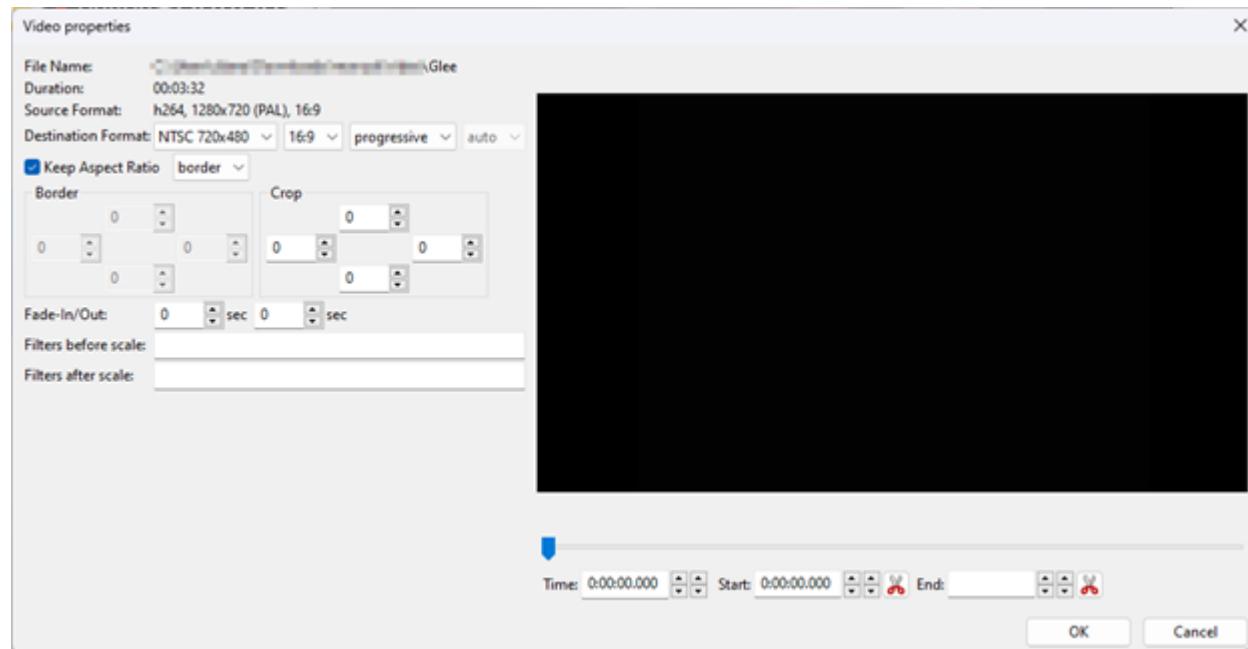


Additionally, the user can choose a number of seconds to enter in the **Pause:** text box, which will designate a timed break either before the next title in the sequence plays, or before returning to the menu (depending on what title post command the user has selected).

To the right of the **Video object** section, the user can select the **wrench icon** (highlighted in red below).



This opens the **Video properties** menu, which contains options for keeping or changing Aspect Ratio, Fade-In and Fade-Out, and adjusting the Start and End times of the video.

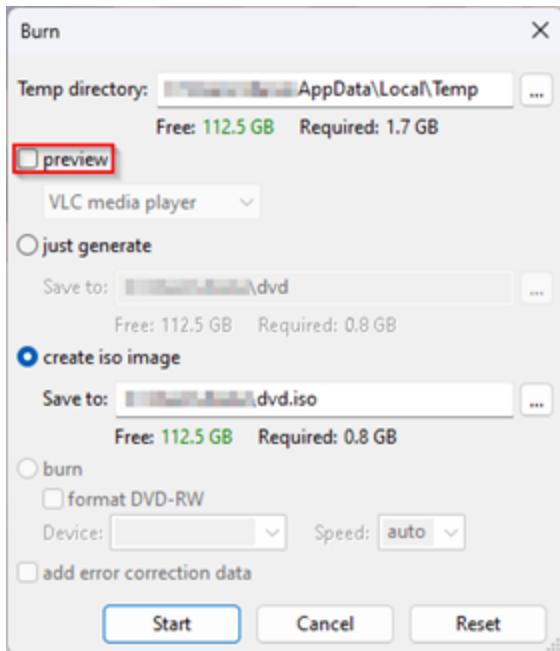


The **Title** section allows the user to choose a colour palette overlay for the video, or specify custom commands before (**Pre**) or after (**Post**) playing the selected title.

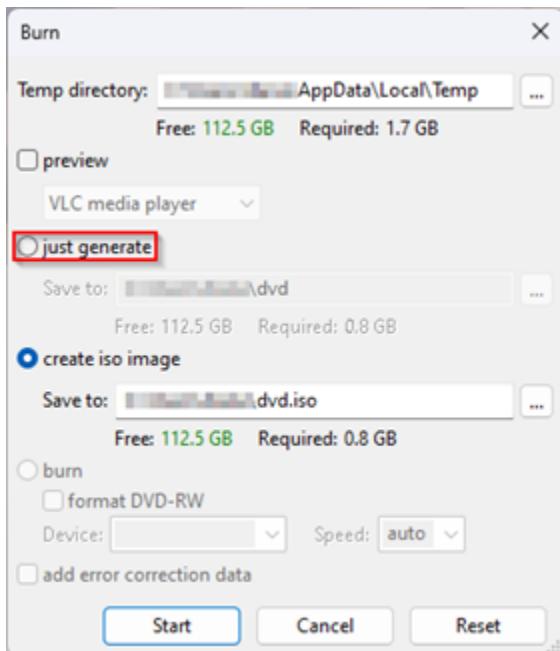
Burning the DVD

This section details how to burn the project to a DVD for viewing in any DVD player.

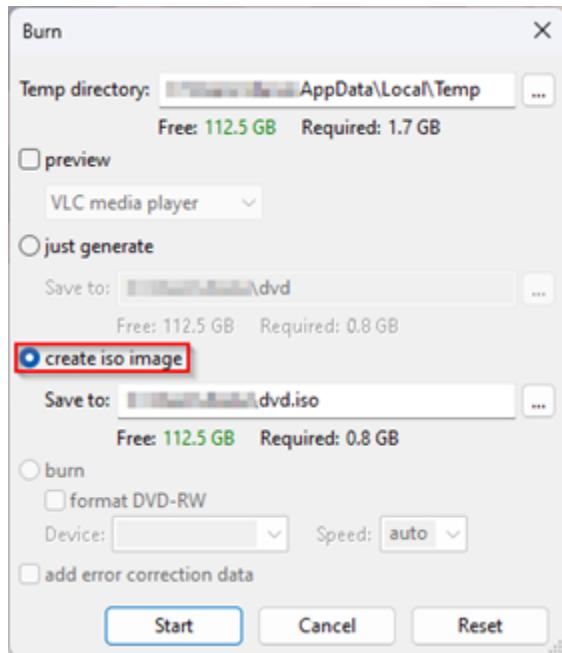
To preview the file before burning, select the **preview** check box (highlighted in red below) and choose the desired video player for viewing.



To generate the various files and menus, optimized for burning, and save them in a folder, select **just generate** (highlighted in red below) and choose where to save the files by selecting the ellipsis button next to the text box beside **Save to:**



To generate an ISO image which can be easily burned to a DVD, select **create iso image** (highlighted in red below) and choose where to save the files by selecting the ellipsis button next to the text box beside **Save to:**



To burn a DVD directly, without saving any files, select **burn** and, if using a rewritable disc, check the box next to **format DVD-RW**. Select the drive containing the blank DVD in the **Device:** dropdown menu. If unsure about write speed, either keep the default setting of **auto** in the dropdown menu next to **Speed:** or select 4x if using an older computer or if DVD burning has failed before.

Reference Materials

This section contains various reference materials including a glossary, FAQ, and explanation of the toolbar in DVDStyler, which can be confusing due to consisting primarily of icons.

FAQs

What happens if I choose too many files/my files are too large?

If **Video Bitrate** is set to **Auto**, DVDStyler will automatically resize the files (lessening video and audio quality) to ensure that everything fits on the chosen **Disc capacity**.

Why don't the menu buttons work?

Make sure that the button is linked to a video file by right-clicking and ensuring that **Jump to:** has a title selected. Be sure not to let buttons overlap, as this can become confusing quickly when navigating with a remote control.

Why won't my DVD burn?

Ensure that **burn** is selected and that the correct **Device** has been chosen. If the device is correct, lower the **Speed** to 4x. If this does not work, ensure that the disc is not scratched or dirty.

Additional Reading

DVDStyler / Wiki / Home. (n.d.). Retrieved April 11, 2024, from <https://sourceforge.net/p/dvdstyler/wiki/Home/>

DVDStyler Operators Manual, Program Version 1. (n.d.). 1.

DVDStyler—Free DVD Authoring Application. (n.d.). Retrieved April 11, 2024, from <https://www.dvdstyler.org/en/>

GNU Free Documentation License v1.3—GNU Project—Free Software Foundation. (n.d.). Retrieved April 11, 2024, from <https://www.gnu.org/licenses/fdl-1.3.html>

What is Free Software? - GNU Project—Free Software Foundation. (n.d.). Retrieved April 11, 2024, from <https://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.html>

Toolbar Key

What follows is an explanation of each button on the toolbar, accompanied by the respective buttons highlighted in red.



New: Creates a new project.



Open: Opens the file browser, allowing the user to choose an existing project to open and edit or burn.



Save: Saves the project either as a new file (if previously unsaved) or as an updated version of an existing file (if previously saved).



Properties: Allows the user to view and change the settings which are displayed in the **Startup** menu.



Settings: Allows the user to change **Interface** and **Core** settings, with **Interface** referring to the default settings for each new file, and **Core** referring to more advanced settings such as custom commands, custom bitrates, and encoding options.



Burn: Allows the user to preview the DVD if desired, generate a set of DVD files, create an ISO image for burning, or burn directly to a disc.



Add: Opens the file browser, allowing the user to choose files to add to the project.



Add dropdown: Opens a submenu allowing the user to choose **File** (does the same as **Add** above), **File as chapter** (same as **File** but as a chapter, making it act as part of a pre-existing file), or **Titles from DVD** (allows the user to add files from another DVD).

Glossary

1

16:9

A widescreen aspect ratio with a width of 16 units and a height of 9 units, used mostly since the start of the 21st century as a compromise between the older 4:3 and the European 15:9 aspect ratio and then as the new standard when digital formats became commonplace.

4

4:3

A fullscreen aspect ratio with a width of 4 units and a height of 3 units, used mostly by older films and television starting in the silent era and ending at the start of the 21st century when 35mm film fell out of favour and widescreen became preferred.

A

AC3 (AC-3; Dolby Digital)

A lossy audio compression format used primarily for broadcast audio and various video media such as streaming, DVD, Blu-Ray, and video games in conjunction with NTSC Video Format in North America.

M

MP2 (MPEG-1 Audio Layer II)

A lossy audio compression format used primarily for broadcast audio in conjunction with PAL Video Format in Europe.

N

NTSC (National Television System Committee)

A colour television standard for video used primarily in North America, as well as Central America and the Caribbean, parts of South America, and parts of Asia. DVD Players which support NTSC also support AC3 Audio Format.

P

PAL (Phase Alternating Line)

A colour television standard for video used mostly in Europe, as well as much of Asia and Africa, Oceania, and parts of South America. DVD Players which support PAL also support NTSC, as well as both MP2 and AC3 Audio Formats.

Index

1

16

9 10, 14

4

4

3 10, 14

A

AC3 10, 14

Arch 9

Audio bitrate 10, 13

C

Caption 16

D

Debian 9

Disc capacity 10, 12, 31

Disc label 10, 12

DVD 11-12, 17

E

End 27

F

Fade-In 27

Fade-Out 27

Fedora 9

Fullscreen 14

I

ISO 29, 33

L

Linux 9

M

MP2 10, 14

N

NTSC 10, 14

O

OpenSUSE 9

P

PAL 10, 14

Post 27

Pre 27

R

RHEL 9

S

Speed 29, 31

Start 27

T

Titleset 18

U

Ubuntu 9

V

Video bitrate 10, 13

VMGM 13, 18

W

Widescreen 14

Windows 9, 12