YouTube to WordPress Auto-Importer - Installation Guide

What This Plugin Does

✅ Automatically imports your YouTube videos as WordPress posts

✅ Sets YouTube thumbnail as the featured image

✅ **Refreshes old posts with updated video details**

✅ **Updates featured images and metadata for existing posts**

✅ Creates beautiful customizable galleries with 7 layout options

✅ Includes video title, duration, date, and description

✅ Fully customizable styling (cards, hover effects, spacing, borders)

✅ Responsive carousels with touch/swipe support

✅ Set it once and forget it - runs automatically

Installation Steps

1. Create Plugin Folder

1. Connect to your WordPress site via FTP or file manager

2. Navigate to `/wp-content/plugins/`

3. Create a new folder called `youtube-wp-importer`

2. Upload Files

Upload these three files to the new folder:

- `youtube-wp-importer.php` (the main PHP file)

- `style.css` (the CSS file)

- `script.js` (the JavaScript file for carousel)

Your folder structure should look like:

```
/wp-content/plugins/youtube-wp-importer/
    ├── youtube-wp-importer.php
    ├── style.css
    └── script.js
```

3. Activate Plugin

1. Go to your WordPress admin panel

2. Navigate to **Plugins** → **Installed Plugins**

3. Find "YouTube to WordPress Auto-Importer"

4. Click **Activate**

Getting Your YouTube API Key

Step 1: Create Google Cloud Project

1. Go to <u>Google Cloud Console</u>

2. Sign in with your Google account

3. Click **Create Project** (top bar)

4. Name it something like "WordPress YouTube Import"

5. Click **Create**

Step 2: Enable YouTube Data API

1. In your project dashboard, click **Enable APIs and Services**

2. Search for "YouTube Data API v3"

3. Click on it, then click **Enable**

Step 3: Create API Key

1. Go to **Credentials** (left sidebar)

2. Click **Create Credentials** → **API Key**

3. Copy your API key (save it somewhere safe!)

4. Click **Restrict Key** (recommended for security)

5. Under "API restrictions," select **YouTube Data API v3**

6. Click **Save**

Step 4: Find Your Channel ID

Method 1 - From YouTube Studio:

1. Go to <u>YouTube Studio</u>

2. Click on **Settings** (bottom left)

3. Click **Channel → Advanced settings**

4. Your Channel ID is displayed there

Method 2 - From Your Channel URL:

1. Go to your YouTube channel

2. Look at the URL - if it looks like:

   youtube.com/channel/UCxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

3. The part after /channel/ is your Channel ID

4. If your URL has a custom name (like youtube.com/@yourname), use Method 1

Plugin Configuration

1. Access Settings

Go to **WordPress Admin → YouTube Importer**

2. Configure YouTube API Settings

- **YouTube Channel ID**: Paste your channel ID

- **YouTube API Key**: Paste your API key

- **Check Frequency**: How often to check for new videos
  - Hourly (recommended)
  - Twice Daily
  - Daily

3. Configure Post Settings

- **Post Status**: Publish automatically or save as draft

- **Default Category**: Choose which category videos go into

- **Default Tags**: Add tags (comma-separated)

- **Title Format**: Customize post titles
  - Use {title} as placeholder
  - Example: [Video] {title} or New Upload: {title}

- **Embed Video in Post**: Automatically embed the video

- **Include Description**: Add video description to post

- **Set Featured Image**: Set YouTube thumbnail as featured image

- **Update Existing Posts**: Refresh old posts with latest data

- **Update Featured Images**: Replace old featured images when refreshing

- **Update Metadata**: Update title, description, duration when refreshing

4. Configure Gallery Display

- **Gallery Columns**: 2-5 columns

- **Videos Per Page**: How many videos to show

- **Show Title**: Display video title in gallery

- **Show Duration**: Display video length

- **Show Date**: Display upload date

- **Show Description**: None / Excerpt / Full

- **Description Length**: Character limit for excerpts

5. Configure Layout & Style

Layout Type (Choose one):

- **Grid**: Classic grid layout with uniform cards

- **Gallery**: Pinterest-style masonry layout

- **List**: Horizontal list with larger thumbnails

- **Cards**: Enhanced grid with card styling

- **Carousel**: Auto-scrolling carousel with navigation

- **Showcase**: Featured video + grid of others

- **Showcase Carousel**: Featured video + carousel below

Style Customization:

- **Card Style**: Default / Minimal / Elevated / Bordered

- **Hover Effect**: Lift / Zoom / Fade / None

- **Thumbnail Aspect**: 16:9 / 4:3 / 1:1 (Square)

- **Spacing**: Compact / Medium / Spacious

- **Border Radius**: None / Small / Medium / Large

Carousel Settings (if using Carousel layout):

- **Autoplay**: Enable/disable automatic scrolling

- **Autoplay Speed**: Time between slides (milliseconds)

Showcase Settings (if using Showcase layout):

- **Featured Video ID**: Leave empty for most recent, or specify a video to feature

6. Save Settings

Click **Save Changes**

Using the Gallery

Method 1: Shortcode (Easiest)

Basic usage:

```
[youtube_gallery]
```

With custom layout:

```
[youtube_gallery layout="carousel"]
[youtube_gallery layout="cards"]
[youtube_gallery layout="list"]
[youtube_gallery layout="gallery"]
[youtube_gallery layout="showcase"]
[youtube_gallery layout="showcase-carousel"]
```

Override settings:

```
[youtube_gallery columns="4"]
[youtube_gallery posts_per_page="20"]
[youtube_gallery layout="cards" columns="3" posts_per_page="9"]
```

Method 2: PHP Template

Add this to your theme template file (like `front-page.php`):

```
php
```

```php
<?php echo do_shortcode('[youtube_gallery]'); ?>

// Or with parameters
<?php echo do_shortcode('[youtube_gallery layout="carousel"]'); ?>
```

Method 3: Gutenberg Block

1. Edit your page

2. Add a **Shortcode Block**

3. Type: `[youtube_gallery]` or `[youtube_gallery layout="cards"]`

Testing the Import

Manual Import

1. Go to **YouTube Importer** settings page

2. Scroll to bottom

3. Click **Import New Videos** - checks for new videos only

4. Or click **Refresh All Existing Posts** - updates all previously imported videos

Import vs Refresh

Import New Videos:

- Checks for new videos from your channel

- Only creates posts for videos not yet imported

- Respects your "Update Existing Posts" setting

Refresh All Existing Posts:

- Updates ALL previously imported videos

- Updates featured images (if enabled)

- Updates metadata like titles, descriptions, durations (if enabled)

- Use this when you want to refresh thumbnails or update changed video details

Automatic Updates

If you enable "Update Existing Posts" in settings:

- The automatic cron job will refresh existing posts

- Useful for keeping featured images and metadata current

- Only applies to videos checked during the scheduled import

What Gets Imported

For each video, the plugin creates:

- A WordPress post with the video embedded

- Featured image (YouTube thumbnail)

- All video metadata (title, description, date, duration)

- A featured thumbnail from YouTube

- Links between the gallery and individual posts

Common Use Cases

Scenario 1: Initial Setup

Goal: Import all your videos for the first time

- Set "Update Existing Posts": OFF

- Click "Import New Videos"

- Your videos import once

Scenario 2: Keep Everything Fresh

Goal: Automatically update posts when you change video details on YouTube

- Set "Update Existing Posts": ON

- Set "Update Featured Images": ON

- Set "Update Metadata": ON

- Plugin automatically refreshes posts during scheduled checks

Scenario 3: One-Time Refresh

Goal: You changed thumbnails/titles on YouTube and want to update WordPress

- Leave "Update Existing Posts": OFF (for normal operations)

- Click "Refresh All Existing Posts" button once

- All posts get updated immediately

Scenario 4: Only New Videos

Goal: Import new videos but never change old posts

- Set "Update Existing Posts": OFF
- Use "Import New Videos" button or let cron run
- Old posts remain untouched

Scenario 5: Update Thumbnails Only

Goal: Refresh featured images but keep titles/descriptions

- Set "Update Existing Posts": ON
- Set "Update Featured Images": ON
- Set "Update Metadata": OFF
- Only featured images get updated

Troubleshooting

Videos Not Importing?

Check API Key:

- Make sure you copied it correctly (no extra spaces)
- Verify it's enabled for YouTube Data API v3
- Check your Google Cloud Console for quota limits

Check Channel ID:

- Verify you're using the Channel ID, not channel name
- Make sure there are no spaces or extra characters

Check Cron:

- Some hosting providers disable WordPress cron
- Try clicking "Import Videos Now" manually
- Contact your host about enabling `wp-cron`

Gallery Not Displaying?

- Make sure you've imported at least one video first

- Check that the shortcode is spelled correctly: [youtube_gallery]

- Clear your site cache if using a caching plugin

- Make sure the style.css file uploaded correctly

API Quota Limits

Free YouTube API has daily quota limits:

- You get 10,000 units per day (very generous)

- Each video check uses about 100 units

- This allows hundreds of checks per day

- Refreshing all posts uses more quota (100 units per video)

- If you hit limits, wait 24 hours or request increase from Google

Featured Images Not Updating?

- Make sure "Set Featured Image" is enabled

- If refreshing, enable "Update Featured Images"

- Check that your server has the GD library installed (for image processing)

- Verify file upload permissions in /wp-content/uploads/

- Try clicking "Refresh All Existing Posts" manually

Posts Not Refreshing?

- Enable "Update Existing Posts" in settings

- Make sure "Update Metadata" or "Update Featured Images" is enabled

- Use "Refresh All Existing Posts" button for immediate refresh

- Check that the video still exists on YouTube (not deleted/private)

Layout Options Explained

Grid Layout

Classic responsive grid with uniform card sizes. Best for clean, organized displays.

- Perfect for: Most use cases

- Responsive: Automatically adjusts columns on mobile

Gallery Layout (Masonry)

Pinterest-style layout where cards have varying heights based on content.

- Perfect for: Dynamic, interesting layouts
- Responsive: Adapts to different screen sizes

List Layout

Horizontal layout with larger thumbnails on the left, content on the right.

- Perfect for: Detailed video information
- Best for: Blog-style video lists

Cards Layout

Enhanced grid with prominent card styling and shadows.

- Perfect for: Modern, professional look
- Supports all card style variations

Carousel Layout

Auto-scrolling carousel with navigation arrows and dots.

- Perfect for: Homepage features, limited space
- Touch-enabled: Swipe support on mobile
- Auto-play: Configurable timing

Showcase Layout

Large featured video at top with grid of other videos below.

- Perfect for: Highlighting specific content
- Customizable: Set which video to feature

Showcase Carousel

Featured video at top with carousel of other videos below.

- Perfect for: Maximum engagement
- Combines: Both showcase and carousel features

Customization Tips

Change Gallery Appearance

Edit `style.css` to customize colors, spacing, hover effects, etc.

Override Shortcode Settings

You can override settings in the shortcode:

```
[youtube_gallery columns="4" posts_per_page="20"]
```

Add to Sidebar

Use a widget that supports shortcodes, or add this to `functions.php`:

```php
php

add_filter('widget_text', 'do_shortcode');
```

Then add the shortcode to a text widget.

What Happens Next?

Once configured:

1. ✅ Plugin checks YouTube automatically based on your schedule
2. ✅ New videos create WordPress posts automatically
3. ✅ Gallery updates automatically with new videos
4. ✅ All metadata (title, duration, date, description) is saved
5. ✅ Featured images are set from YouTube thumbnails
6. ✅ (Optional) Existing posts refresh with latest video data
7. ✅ You just keep uploading to YouTube - everything else is automatic!

What Gets Updated During Refresh?

When "Update Existing Posts" is enabled:

- Featured images (if "Update Featured Images" is ON)
- Post title (if "Update Metadata" is ON)

- Post content with video embed (if "Update Metadata" is ON)

- Video description (if "Update Metadata" is ON)

- Video duration

- Thumbnail URL metadata

What DOESN'T get updated:

- Post slug/URL (stays the same for SEO)

- Post publish date (original date preserved)

- Categories and tags (your WordPress settings kept)

- Comments and post metadata

Support & Updates

Need Help?

- Check YouTube Data API documentation

- Verify your API key hasn't expired

- Ensure WordPress cron is working

- Check error logs in WordPress

Future Enhancements

You can further enhance this plugin by adding:

- Custom post types for videos

- Playlist support

- Video categories from YouTube

- View count tracking

- Analytics integration

- Bulk operations

- And more!

Ready to Go!

Your plugin is now installed and configured. Upload a new video to YouTube and watch it automatically appear

on your WordPress site! 🎉