

VLC Play Howto

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This document is the complete user guide for the client aspects of VLC.

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Chapter 1. Introduction to VLC

Overview of the VideoLAN project

VideoLAN is a complete software solution for video streaming and playback, developed by students of the Ecole Centrale Paris (<http://www.ecp.fr>) and developers from all over the world, under the GNU General Public License (<http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/gpl.html>) (GPL). VideoLAN is designed to stream MPEG videos on high bandwidth networks.

VideoLAN was originally designed for network streaming but VideoLAN's main software, VLC media player has evolved to become a full-featured cross-platform media player.

More details about the project can be found on the VideoLAN Web site (<http://www.videolan.org/>).

VLC media player

Originally called VideoLAN Client, VLC media player is the main software of the VideoLAN solution.

VLC works on many platforms: Linux, Windows, Mac OS X, BeOS, *BSD, Solaris, Familiar Linux, Yopy/Linupy and QNX. It can play:

- MPEG-1, MPEG-2 and MPEG-4 / DivX files from a hard disk, a CD-ROM drive, ...
- DVDs, VCDs, and Audio CDs
- from satellite card (DVB-S),
- Several types of network stream : UDP Unicast, UDP Multicast (MPEG-TS), HTTP, RTP/RTSP, MMS, etc .
- From acquisition or encoding cards (on GNU/Linux and Windows only)

VLC can also be used as a streaming server. These aspects are detailed in the Streaming Howto (<http://www.videolan.org/doc/streaming-howto>)

The present guide describes all the client (playback) aspects of VLC

Getting some help

Documentation

The user documentation of VideoLAN is made up of 4 documents:

- the *Play-Howto*. This document is the complete guide of VLC as a client.
- the *Streaming Howto*. This document is the complete guide of VLC as a streaming server. It will give you practical examples to set up your streaming solution.
- the *VLS user guide*. This document is the complete guide for VLS (VideoLAN's legacy streaming server)
- The *VideoLAN FAQ*. This document contains Frequently Asked Questions about VideoLAN.

The latest version of these documents can be found on the documentation page (<http://www.videolan.org/doc/>).

User support

There are different methods to get support from The VideoLAN team. For more details, please visit our Support page (<http://www.videolan.org/support/>).

Chapter 2. Installing VLC

Installing VLC

There are VLC binaries available for the many OSes, but not for all supported ones. If there are no binaries for your OS or if you want to change the default settings, you can compile VLC from sources.

Windows

VLC works under Windows 95/98/ME/2000/XP. Download the self-extracting package from the VLC Windows download page (<http://www.videolan.org/vlc/download-windows.html>). Launch the .exe to install VLC.

Mac OS X

Download the Mac OS X package from the VLC MacOS X download page (<http://www.videolan.org/vlc/download-macosx.html>). Double-click on the icon of the package : an icon will appear on your Desktop, right beside your drive(s). Open it and drag the VLC application from the resulting window to the place where you want to install it (it should be /Applications).

BeOS

Download the Zip file from the VLC BeOS download page (<http://www.videolan.org/vlc/download-beos.html>). Unzip the file in a directory to install VLC.

Debian GNU/Linux

Debian stable (woody)

Add the following lines to your `/etc/apt/sources.list`:

```
deb http://download.videolan.org/pub/videolan/debian woody main
deb-src http://download.videolan.org/pub/videolan/debian woody main
```

Then, for a normal install, do:

```
# apt-get update
# apt-get install gnome-vlc libdvdcss2
```

Debian unstable (sid)

Add the following lines to your `/etc/apt/sources.list`:

```
deb http://download.videolan.org/pub/videolan/debian sid main
deb-src http://download.videolan.org/pub/videolan/debian sid main
```

Then, for a normal install, do:

```
# apt-get update
```

```
# apt-get install wxvlc libdvdcss2
```

Debian testing (sarge)

You should not be using Debian testing unless you perfectly know what you are doing. It is almost impossible to support Debian testing and there are no plans to do it. For more informations on Debian testing, please look: testing page (<http://www.debian.org/devel/testing>)

Linux Mandrake

There are VLC packages for Mandrake 9.1 and cooker.

To install them, add the following sources for either Mandrake 9.1 or Cooker (you can use Easy urpmi (<http://plf.zarb.org/~nanardon/>) for that): *contrib* from the core distribution and *plf* (Penguin Liberation Front) from the external add-ons.

Then install the required packages with **urpmi**:

```
# urpmi libdvdcss2 libdvdisplay0 wxvlc vlc-plugin-a52 vlc-plugin-ogg vlc-plugin-mad
```

Linux Redhat

Download the RPM package *vlc* and the packages listed in the *required libraries and codecs* section (the other packages are optional) from the VLC Red Hat download page (<http://www.videolan.org/vlc/download-redhat.html>) and put them all into the same directory.

Then install the RPM packages you have downloaded:

```
# rpm -U *.rpm
```

If you have not installed all the RPM packages included with your distribution, you may be asked to install a few of them first.

Compile the sources by yourself (for every other OS)

For more detailed information on compiling VLC by yourself, please have a look at the documentation on our developers website (<http://developers.videolan.org>).

Uninstalling VLC

Windows

Click on the *Uninstall VLC* icon that was created during installation

Mac OS X

Drag the VLC application to your trash can. You can also remove the configuration file and the cache files in `~/Library/Preferences/VLC/`.

BeOS

Delete the `vlc-version` directory. You can also remove the configuration file `/boot/home/config/settings/vlcrc`.

Debian GNU/Linux

Remove the packages that you installed:

```
# apt-get remove --purge wxvlc vlc-mad libdvdcss2 libdvbpsi1
```

GNU/Linux Redhat, Mandrake and SuSE

Uninstall the RPM packages that you installed:

```
# rpm -e vlc-version vlc-mad-version wxvlc-version  
libdvdcss2-version libdvbpsi1-version
```

If you compiled VLC from sources

Go to the directory containing VLC sources and execute

```
# make uninstall
```

You can then remove the VLC sources.

Chapter 3. Basic use of VLC

General interface description

VLC has several interfaces: a cross-platform interface, for Windows and GNU/Linux, called wxWindows, a MacOS X native interface and a skinnable interface for Windows and GNU/Linux.

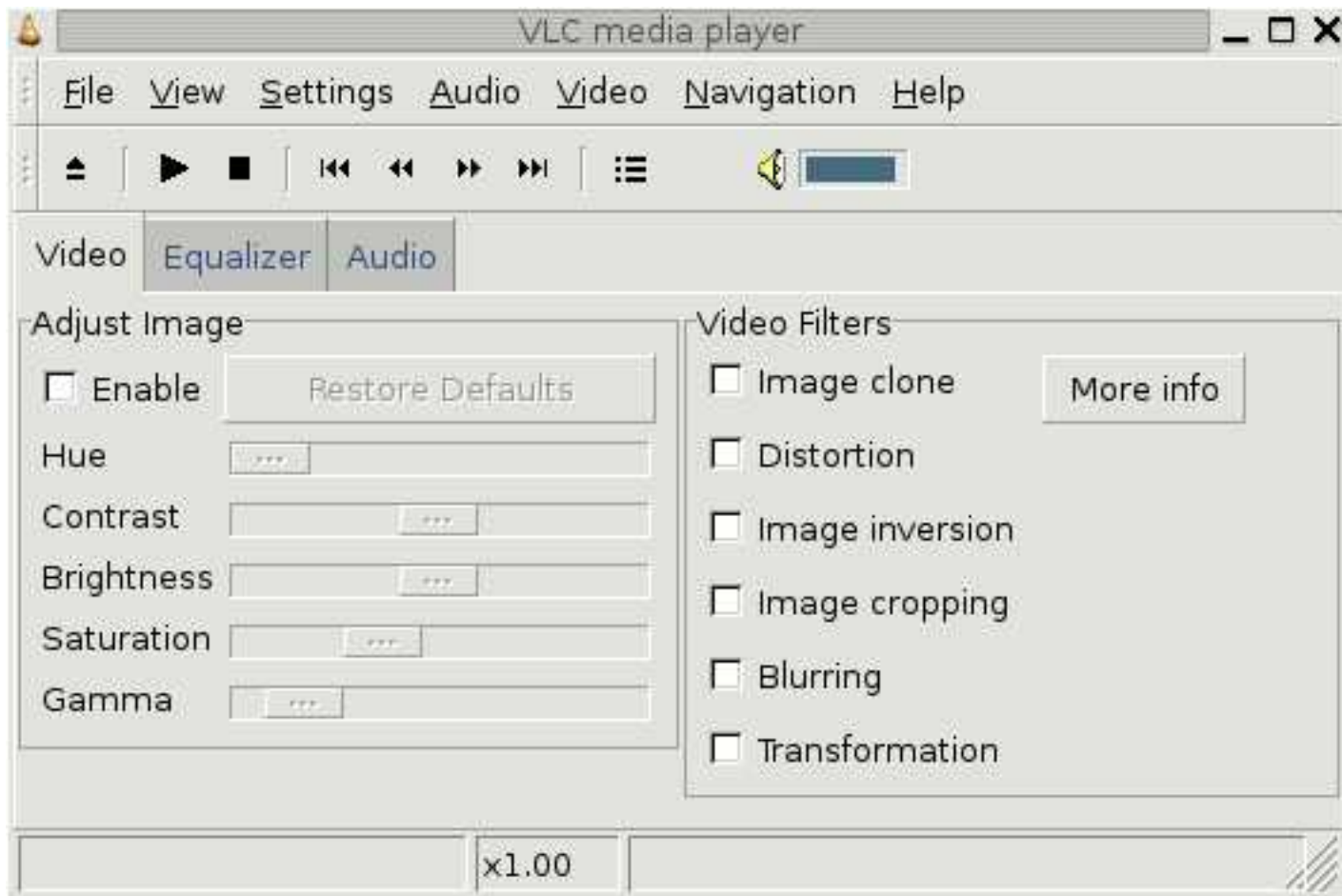
Windows and GNU/Linux

This is the default interface on Windows and GNU/Linux (the screenshot is done on GNU/Linux, but it would look quite the same on Windows).



The wxWindows interface

This interface also features an *Extended GUI* which contains many additional features. To display or hide it, go to the *Settings* menu and click *Extended GUI*.



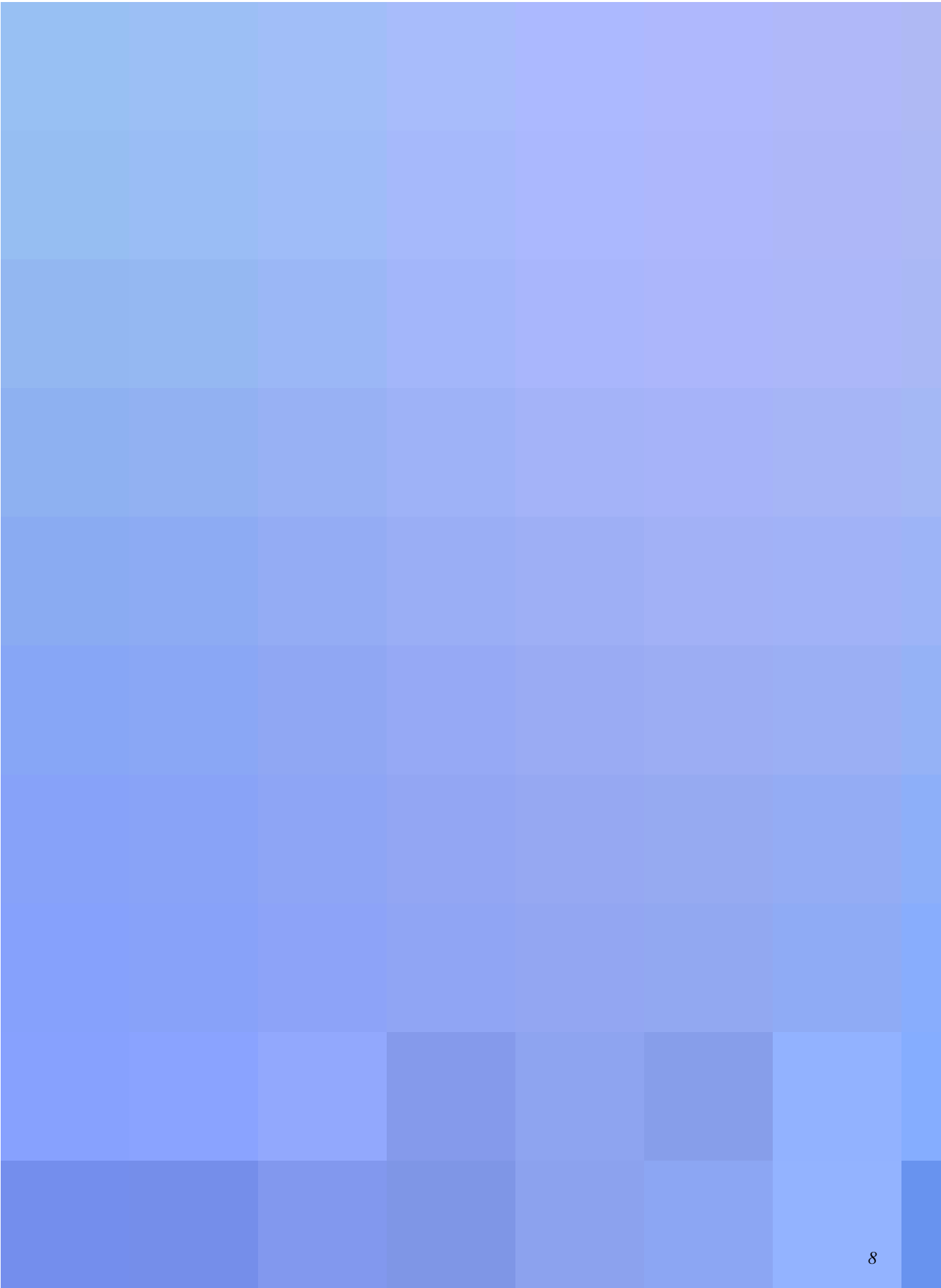
The wxWindows interface with extended GUI

Simple play

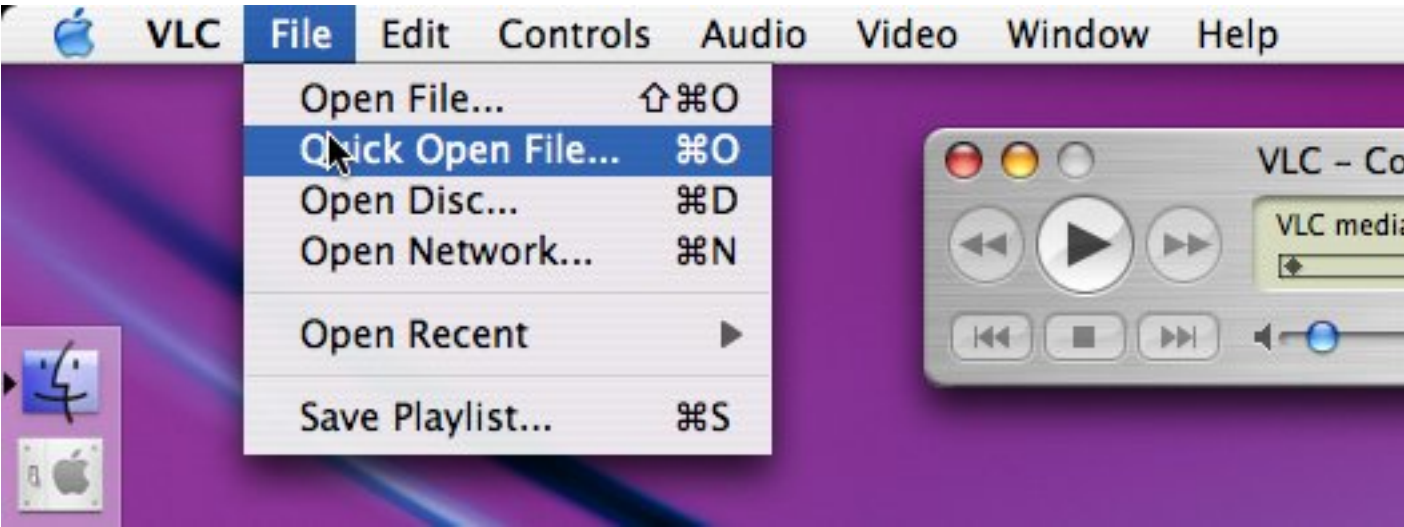
Play a file

To open a file, open the *File* menu, and select the *Quick Open File* menu item. An Open File dialog box will appear. Select the file you want to open, and select Open. VLC will start playing the selected file.

An alternative is to Drag'n'Drop your file on the VLC main interface or playlist window from the file explorer (Finder on MacOS X).

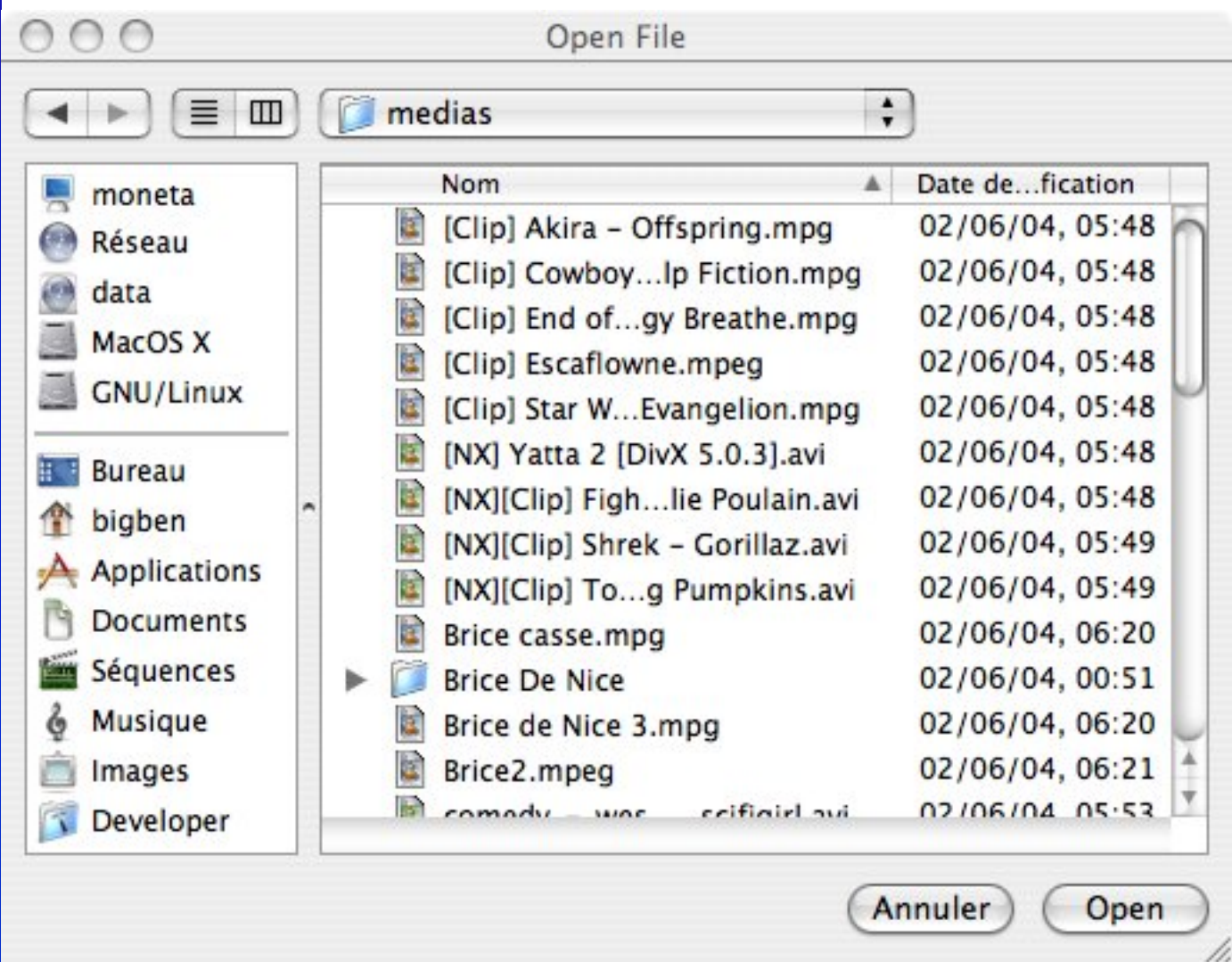


The File menu - wxWindows interface



The File menu - MacOS X interface

The Open file dialog - wxWindows interface



The Open file dialog - MacOS X interface

Play a CD/DVD/VCD

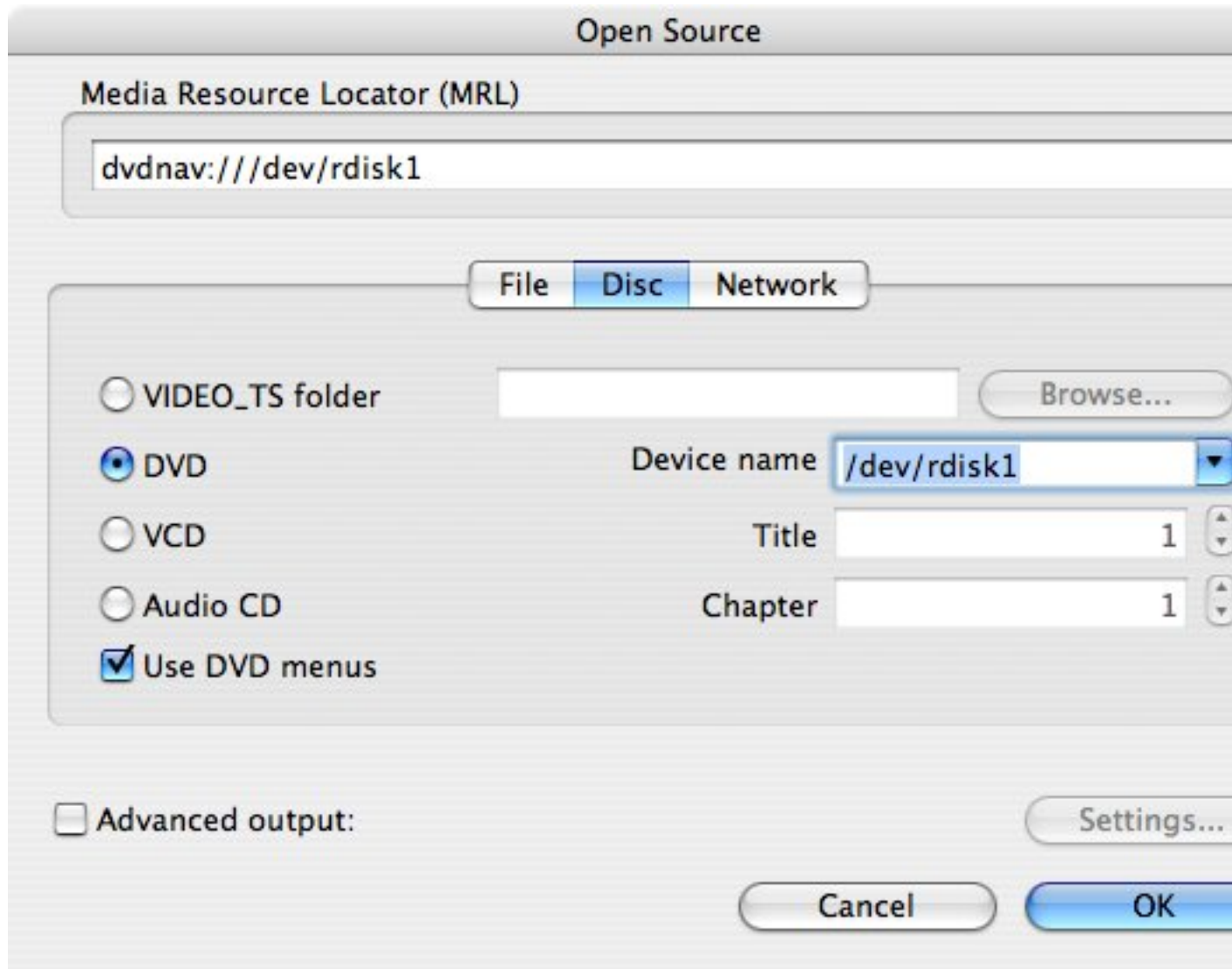
To Play a CD, VCD or a DVD, open the *File* menu, and select the *Open Disc...* menu item. In the Open Disk Dialog Box, select the type of media (DVD, VCD or Audio CD). When reading a DVD, you can enable DVD menus by selecting the *DVD (menus)* Disc type in the wxWindows Interface. In the MacOS X interface, this can be done by selecting the "Use DVD menus" dialog box.

You can select the drive from which the media should be read by giving the appropriate drive letter or device name in the "Device Name" text input. This should be autodetected on MacOS X.

If you want to start the DVD or VCD playback from a given title and chapter instead of from the beginning, you can set it using the *Title* and *Chapter* selectors.

You can start playback by selecting the *Ok* button.

The Open disk dialog - wxWindows interface



The Open disk dialog - MacOS X interface

Play a network stream (WebRadio, WebTV, ...)

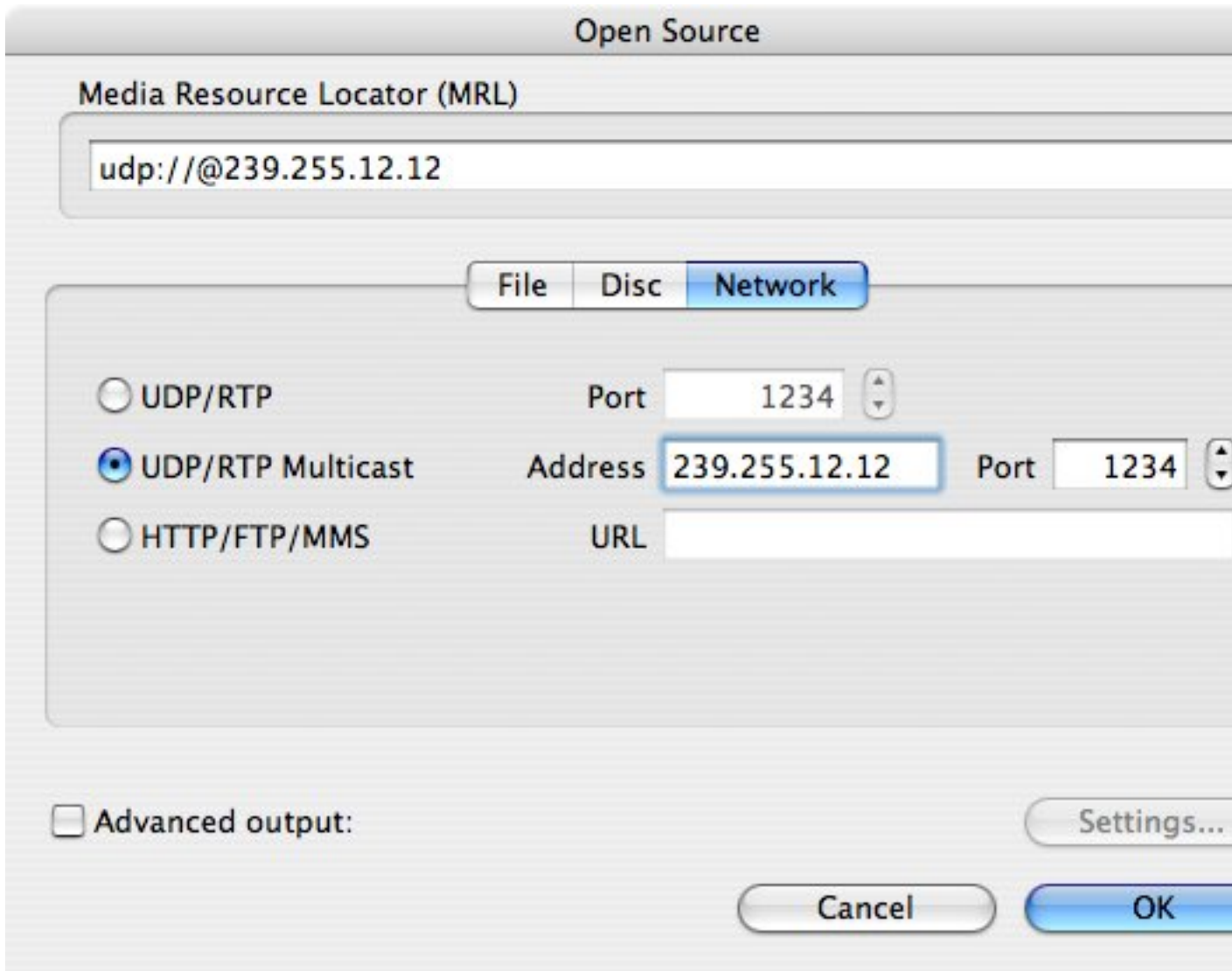
To open a network stream, open the "File" menu and select the "Open Network Stream" menu item.

- To open a UDP unicast stream, select *UDP/RTP*, and set the appropriate UDP port in the selector (it is 1234 for streams sent by a VLC or VLS server).
- To open a UDP multicast stream, select *UDP/RTP multicast*. Give the address of the multicast group in the "Address" text input, and select the appropriate UDP port.
- To open a stream sent over http (Webradios, WebTVs, Shoutcast, Icecast...), ftp, or mms (Microsoft Media Server), select "HTTP/FTP/MMS", and give the corresponding complete URL, (such as `http://live.stream.org:8080/live` or `mms://live.ms.stream.net:8080/live.asf`) in the corresponding text input. This also the way to open a RTSP stream with the MacOS X interface.
- To open a RTSP stream (sent by Darwin Streaming Server, VLC, etc), in the wxWindows interface, select "RTSP" and give the URL in the text input.

You can start playback by selecting the *Ok* button.

If you get some stuttering during playback, you can try to increase the size of the read buffer. This can be done in the *Open Network Stream* dialog box, by selecting the *Caching* box. You can then choose the amount time (in milliseconds) VLC should store data in its buffer before starting playback.

The Open network dialog - wxWindows interface



The Open network dialog - MacOS X interface

Play from an acquisition card

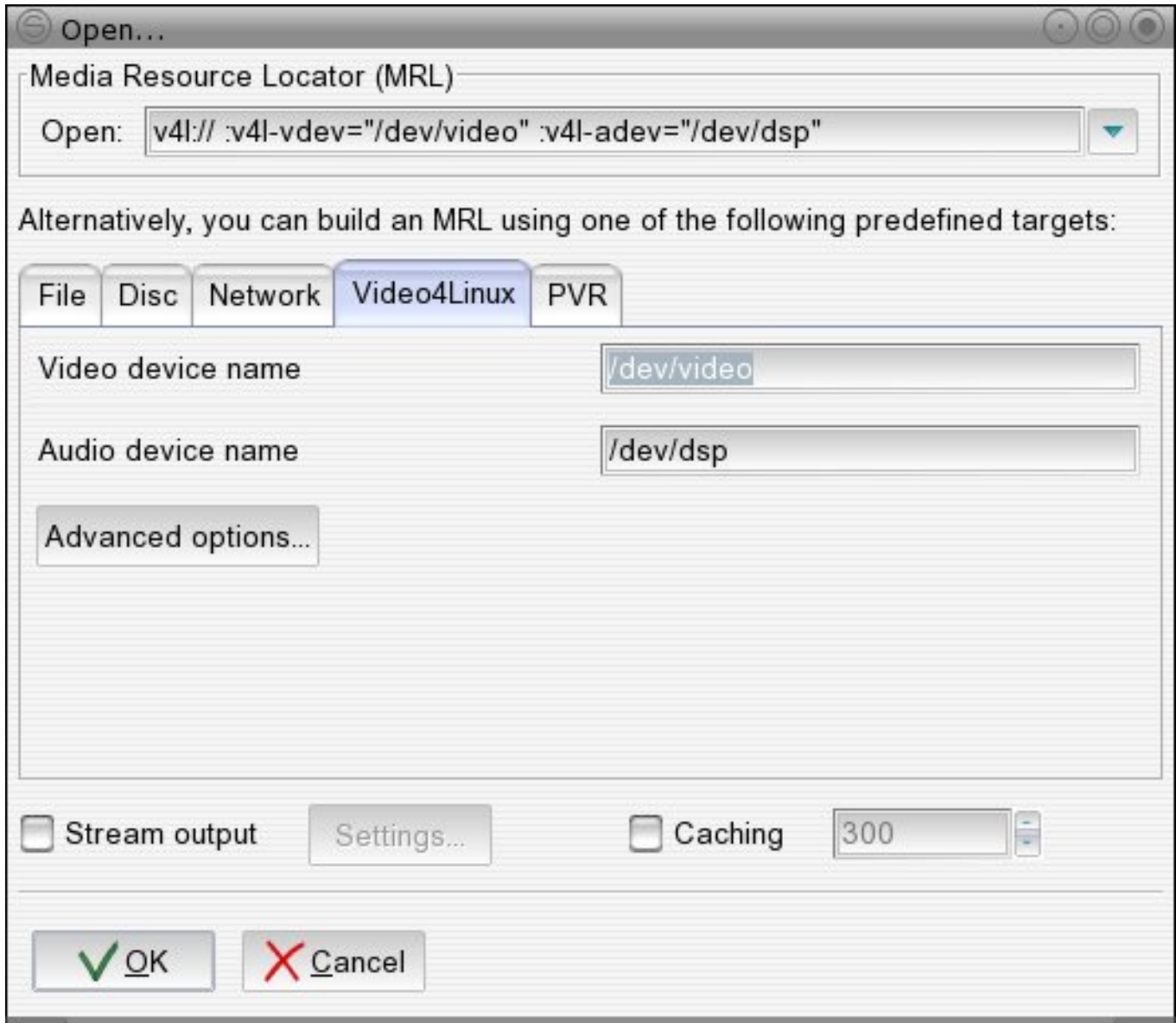
This currently only possible on Linux and Windows. Open the File menu, and select "Open Capture Device..."

On Windows, supported cards include webcams, TV cards, acquisition cards... provided they come with directshow compatible drivers (Almost all acquisition cards do). You can choose the device to use for video and audio capture using the "Video device name" and "Audio device name" selectors. If your device doesn't appear in the list, try to select the "Refresh list" button. You can access the settings of your acquisition device by selecting the *configure* button. Options here depend on the driver of the device. You can select the "Device Proprieties" box if you want the configuration dialog box of every device to be displayed after having pressed the *Ok* button. Select the *Tuner properties* box to be prompted for tuner settings (PAL/NTSC standard, frequency...) for TV cards. The *Advanced options...* button allows to select some further settings useful in some rare cases, such as the chroma of the input (the way colors are encoded) and the size of the input buffer.

The Open Capture device dialog and a device configuration windows - wxWindows interface

On Linux, supported cards include webcams, TV cards, acquisition cards, provided they are supported by the Video4Linux architecture. Hauppauge PVR 250/350 cards are also supported, using the IVTV drivers (<http://ivtv.sourceforge.net/>).

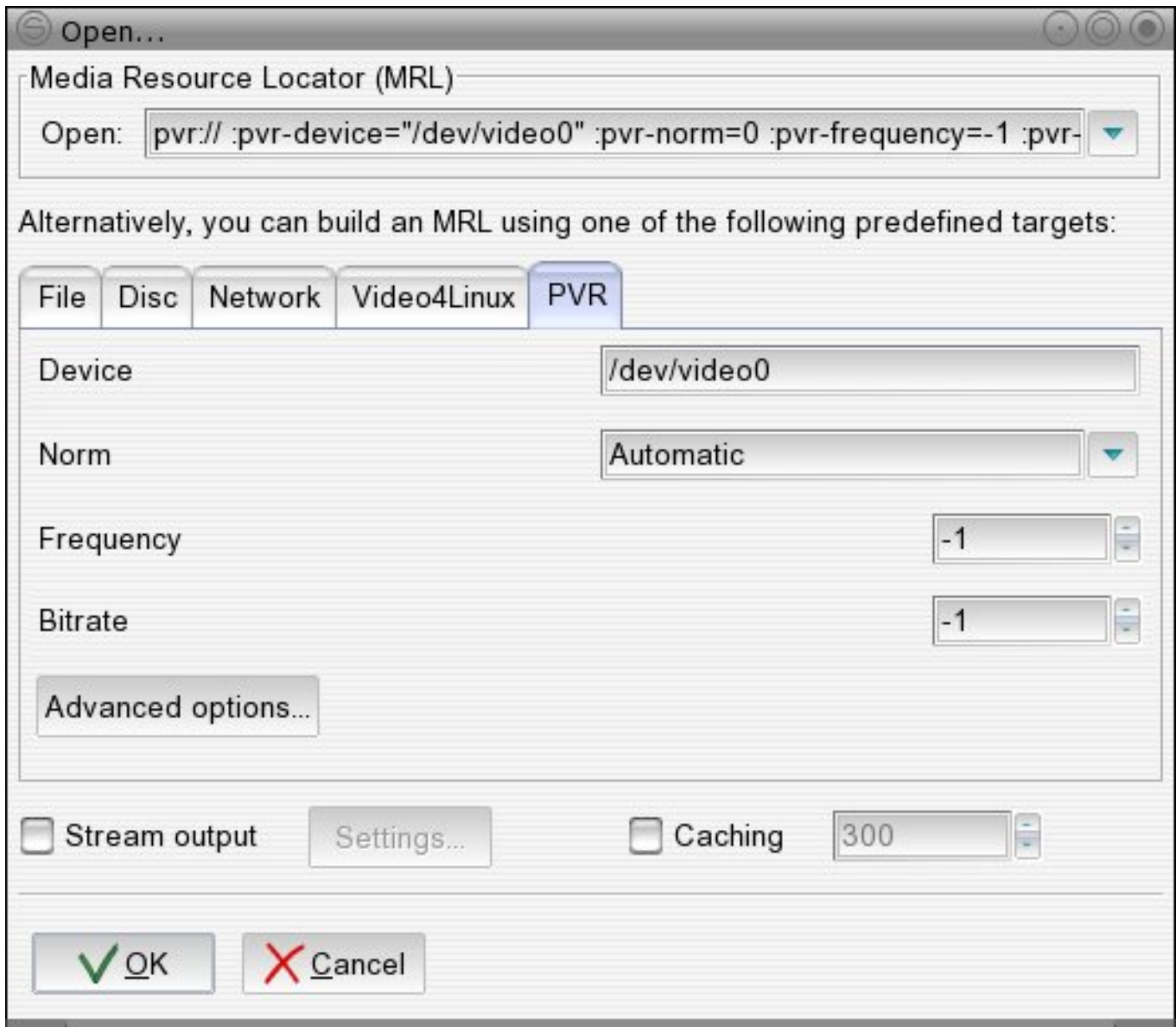
- For Video4Linux devices, you can set the name of the video and audio devices using the "Video device name" and "Audio device name" text inputs. The "Advanced options..." button allows to select some further settings useful in some rare cases, such as the chroma of the input (the way colors are encoded) and the size of the input buffer.



The Open Video4Linux dialog - wxWindows interface

- To use a Hauppauge PVR card, select the PVR tab in the "Open" dialog box. Use the "Device" text input to set the device of the card you want to use. You can set the Norm of the tuner (PAL, SECAM or NTSC) by using the "Norm" Drop Down. The Frequency selector allows you to set the frequency of the tuner (in kHz), the bitrate selector to set the bitrate of the resulting encoded stream (in bit/s). The "Advanced Options" button allows to set some more settings, such as the size of the encoded video (in pixels), its framerate (in frame per second), the interval between 2 key frames, etc.

After having set all the required parameters, you can start the capture by selecting the "Ok" button.



The Open PVR dialog - wxWindows interface

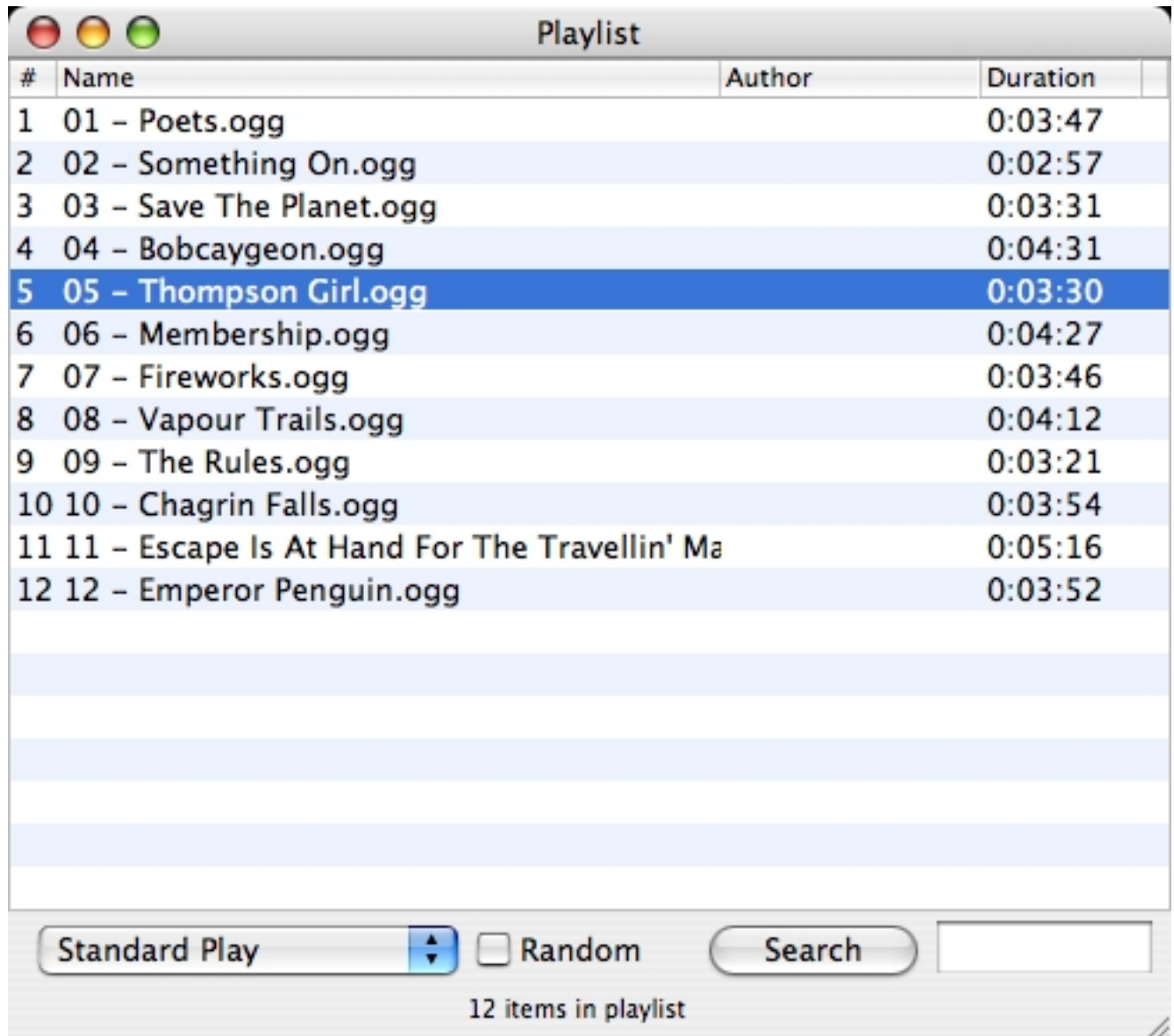
Using the playlist

VLC can of course store a list several files to play one after the other, using its playlist system. To access the playlist, click on the *Playlist* button on the main interface (see *General interface description*).

Each time you use the Open dialog box, the stream you select is appended at the end of the playlist and started.

The playlist window shows all the streams available in the playlist. Double-click one to have it played.

The Playlist - wxWindows interface



The Playlist - MacOS X interface

Adding items, saving and loading playlists

In the wxWindows interface, the *Manage* menu allows you to append an item at the end of the playlist (its playback won't start immediately), to save the playlist as a M3U or PLS file, or to import a playlist file.

In the MacOS X interface, saving a playlist can be done using the *Save Playlist...* function in the *File* menu. To import a playlist file, open it the same way as any other media file, using the *Quick Open File...* menu item.

Sorting

In the wxWindows interface, *Sort* allows you to sort the playlist according to several criteria, or to shuffle it. You can also sort by clicking the header of the column

In the MacOS X interface, sorting can be done by clicking the header of the column matching the criteria you want to use for sorting.

Playlist modes

The playlist supports several playback modes.

In the wxWindows interface, the toolbar contains three playlist mode buttons. They allow to enable random mode, to repeat the whole playlist or to repeat one item.

In the MacOS X interface, random mode can be enabled by selecting the *Random* box. A drop down menu allows you to enable playlist and item repeat modes.

Misc

Search

You also have a search tool. Enter a search string and hit search. The next item to match the string will be highlighted. Keep hitting Search to cycle between all matching items.

Moving items

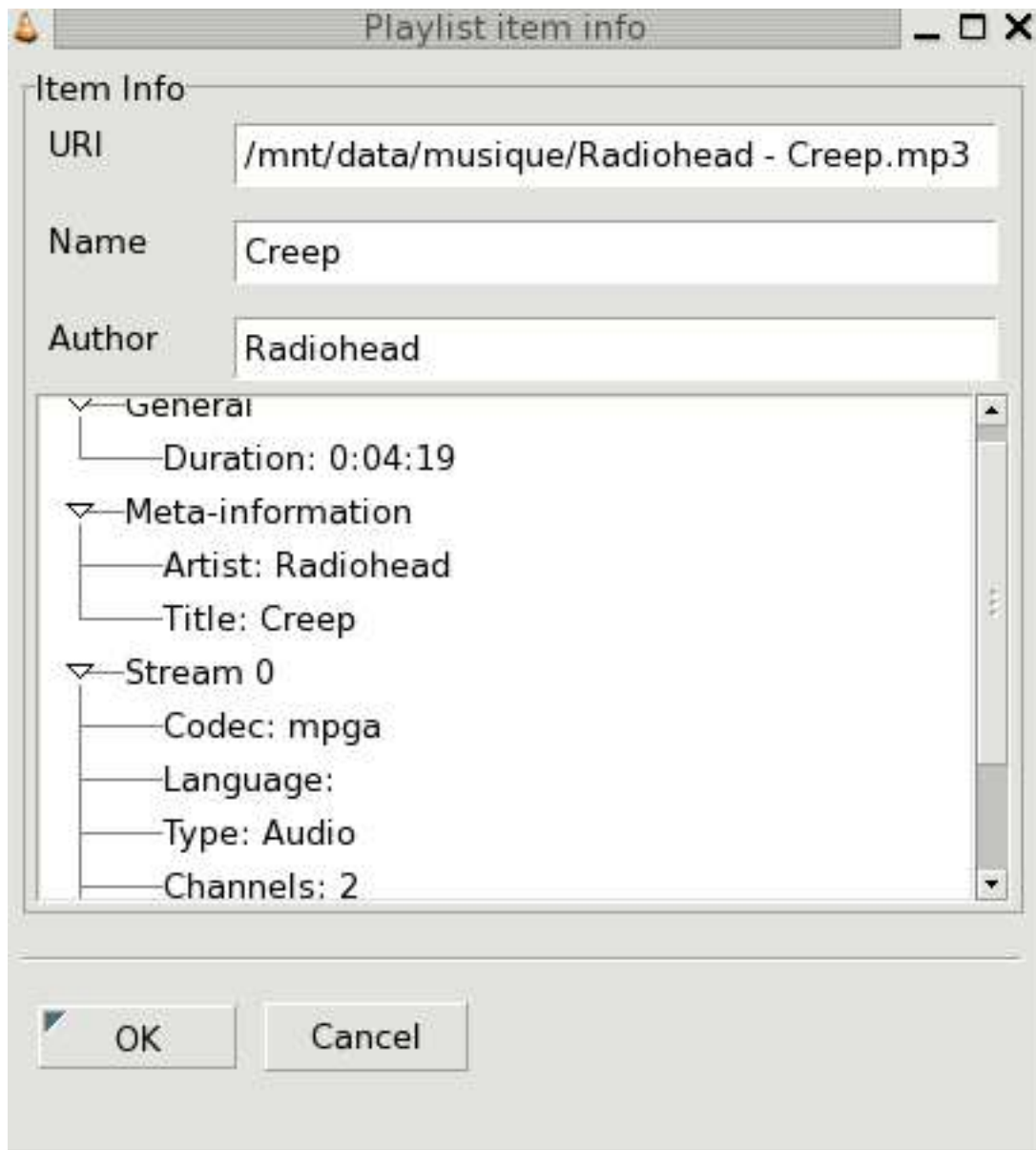
In the wxWindows interface, the *Up* and *Down* buttons at the bottom of the playlist window allow you to move an item. Select an item and use these buttons to move it.

In the MacOS X interface, you can move an item with the mouse, easily using a *Drag'n'Drop*.

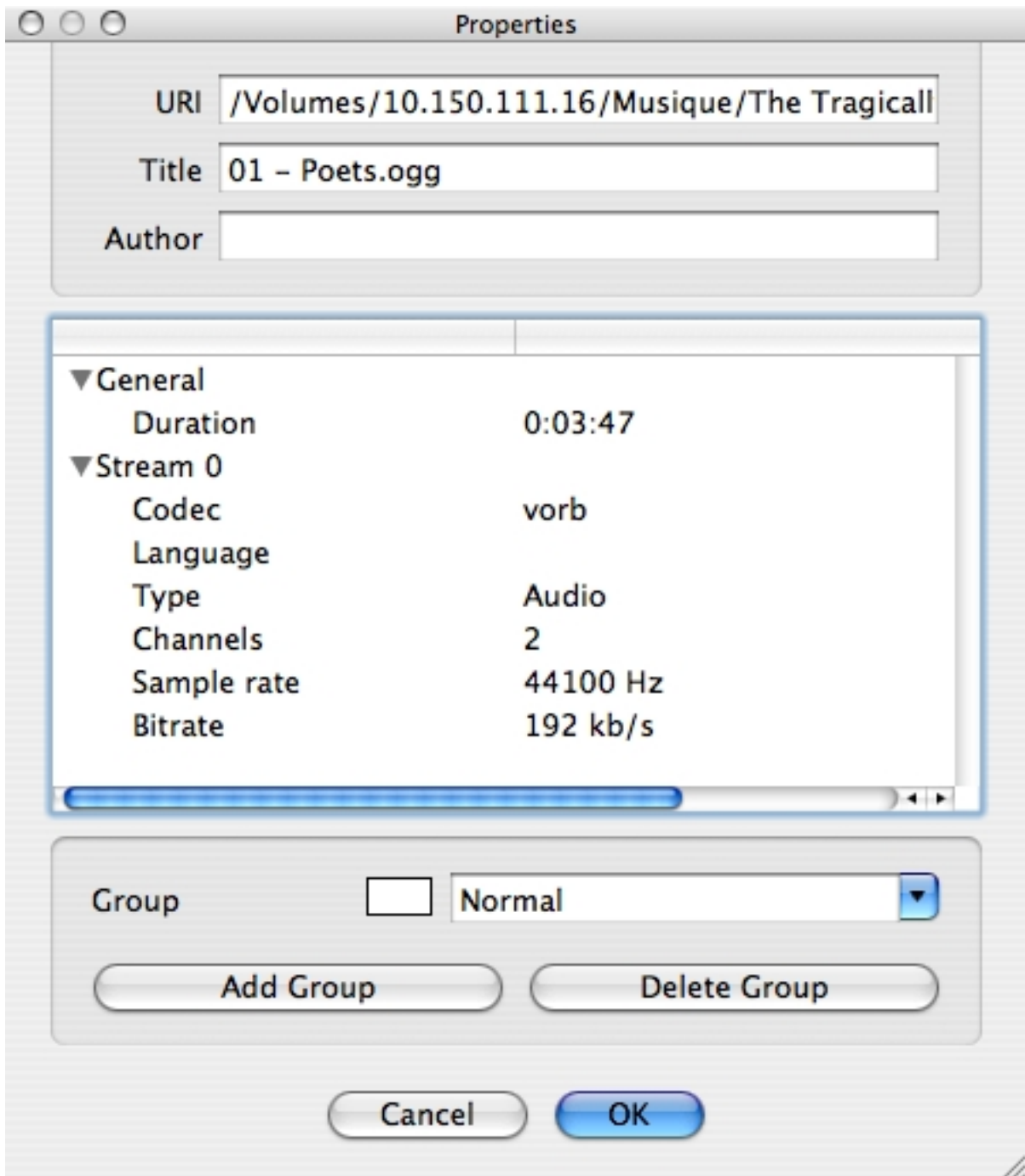
Contextual menu

By right-clicking an item, a contextual menu will appear, giving access to a number of functions (play the item, disable it, delete it, or get info on it).

If you ask for info, an *item info* dialog box will appear. This dialog box also allows you to change the name, the author and the location of the item to play.



Item Info Dialog - wx Interface



Item Info Dialog - MacOS X interface

Hotkeys

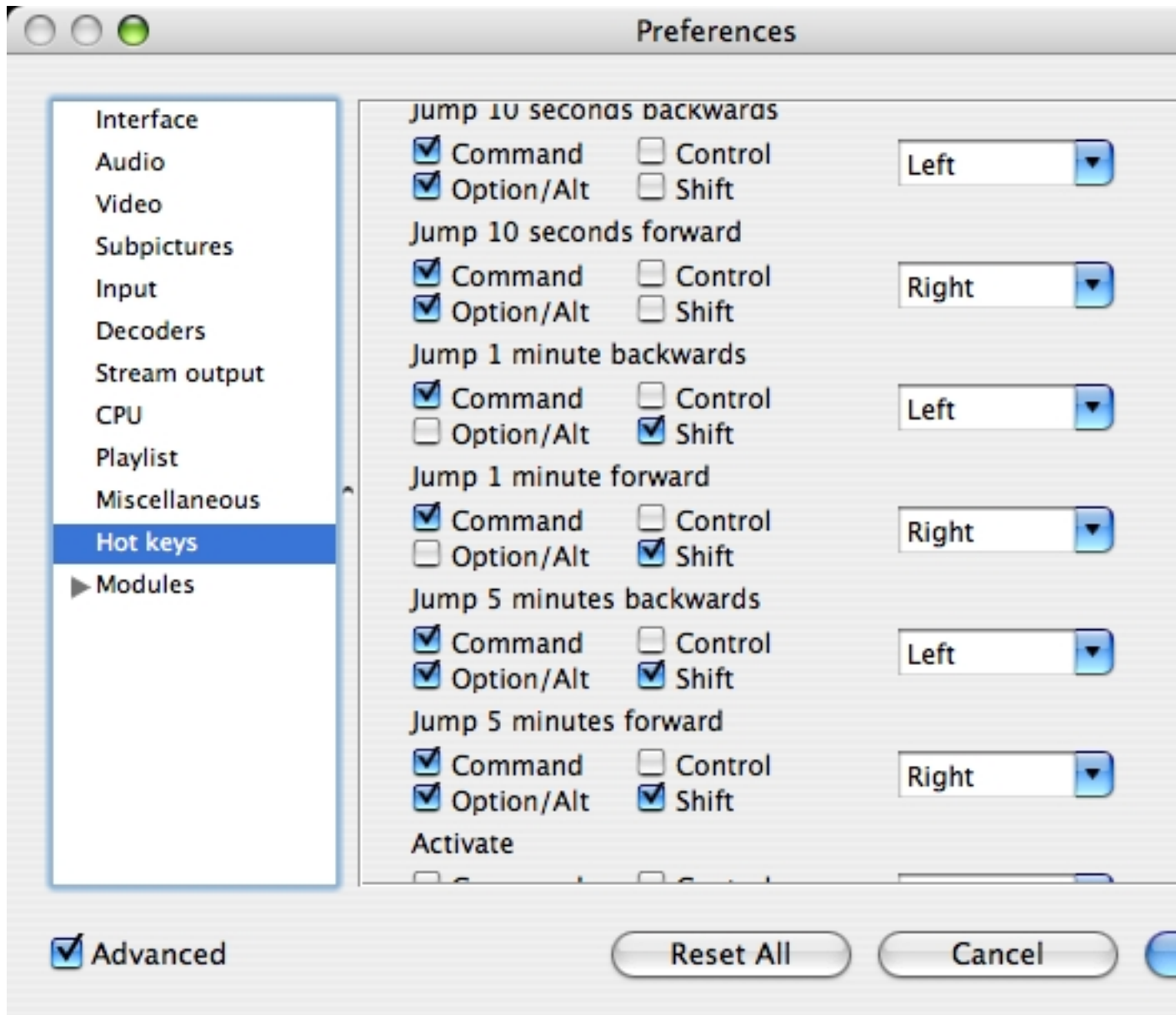
Most of VLC functions are accessible using hotkeys

The list of the available hotkeys and their binding can be retrieved and altered in the preferences panel of the player. In the wxWindows interface, preferences are available in the "Settings" menu, "Preferences" menu item. In the MacOS X interface, open the "VLC" menu, and select "Preferences". Select the "Hot keys" panel in the dialog. For each function of VLC, you get the bound hotkey in the dropdown in the right part of the panel. Several boxes gives the list of modifiers for

the hotkey. To trigger an action using a hotkey, you need to press at the same time the keys corresponding to the different selected modifiers as well as the key set in the dropdown.

To change the binding of a hotkey, select or deselect boxes corresponding to the different modifiers, and change the key by using the dropdown. Select the *Save* button to apply the changes.

The Hotkeys Panel - wxWindows interface



The Hotkeys Panel - MacOS X interface

Using subtitles

VLC supports many kinds of subtitles.

Media with included subtitles

Many types of media can have embedded subtitles. VLC can read subtitles for the following media:

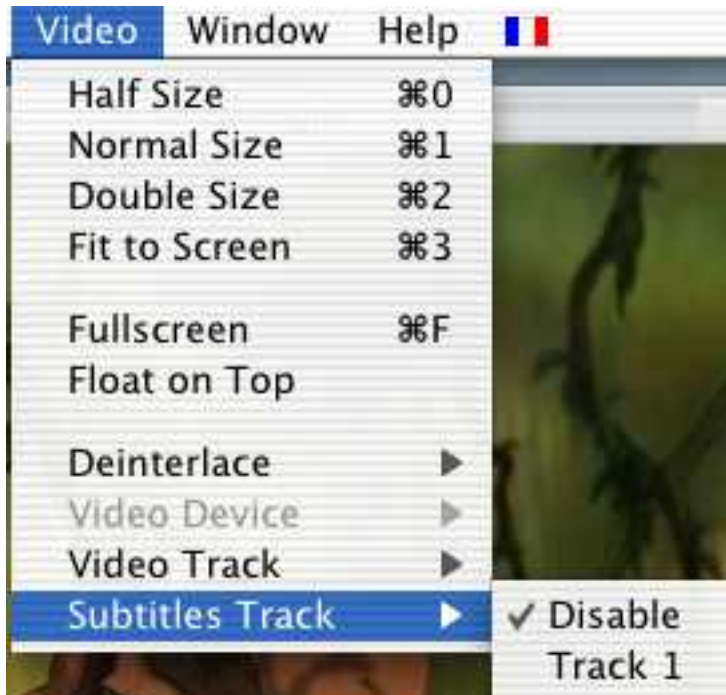
- DVD
- SVCD
- OGM files

- Matroska (MKV) files

Subtitles are disabled by default. To enable them, go to the *Video* menu, and to *Subtitles track*. All available subtitles tracks will be listed. Select one to get the subtitles. Depending on the media, a description (language, for example) might be available for the track.



Select a subtitles track under Windows or Linux



Select a subtitles track under MacOS X

DVD and SVCD subtitles are merely images, so you won't be able to change anything for them. OGM and Matroska subtitles are rendered text, so you will be able to change several options.

Text rendering options can be changed in the Preferences. In the *Modules* section, *text renderer* subsection, open the *freetype* page. You can then set the font and its size. For the font, you have to select a font file. Under Windows, they can be found in *C:\Windows\Fonts*. Under MacOS X, they are in */System/Library/Fonts*. Size can be set either relatively or as a number of pixels.

You need to restart your stream for the font modifications to take effect.

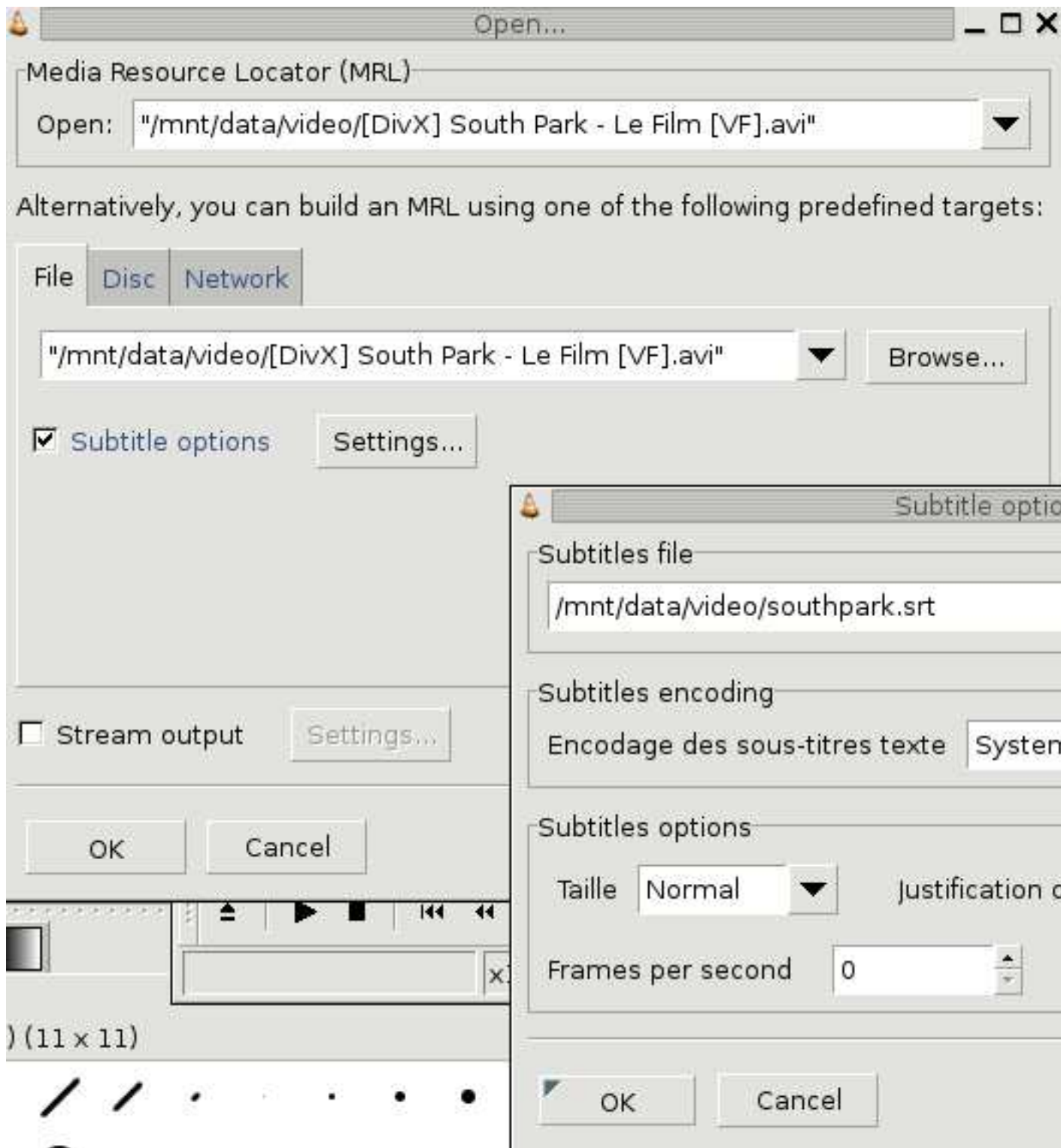
Subtitles files

While modern file formats like Matroska or OGM can handle subtitles directly, older formats like AVI can't. Therefore, a number of subtitles files formats have been created. You need two files: the video file and the subtitles files that only contains the text of the subtitles and timestamps.

VLC can handle these types of subtitles files:

- MicroDVD
- SubRIP
- SubViewer
- SSA
- Sami
- Vobsub (this one is quite special: it is not made from text but from images, which means that you can't change the fonts)

To open a subtitles file, use the Advanced Open dialog box (Menu File, Open file). Select your file by clicking on the *Browse* button. Then, check the *Subtitle options* checkbox and click on the Settings button.



Select a subtitles file under Windows or Linux

You can then select the subtitles file by clicking the *Browse* button. You can also set a few options like character encoding, alignment and size. The delay option allows you to delay the subtitles against the video if they are not in sync. If they are not at the same speed, you might also want to adjust the subtitles framerate.

Note: For Vobsub subtitles, you need to select the *.idx* file, not the *.sub* file

Encoding, alignment and size won't have any effect for Vobsub subtitles.

Font can be changed as explained in the previous section.

Video and audio filters

VLC includes a system of *filters* that allow you to modify the audio and video.

Deinterlacement and Post Processing

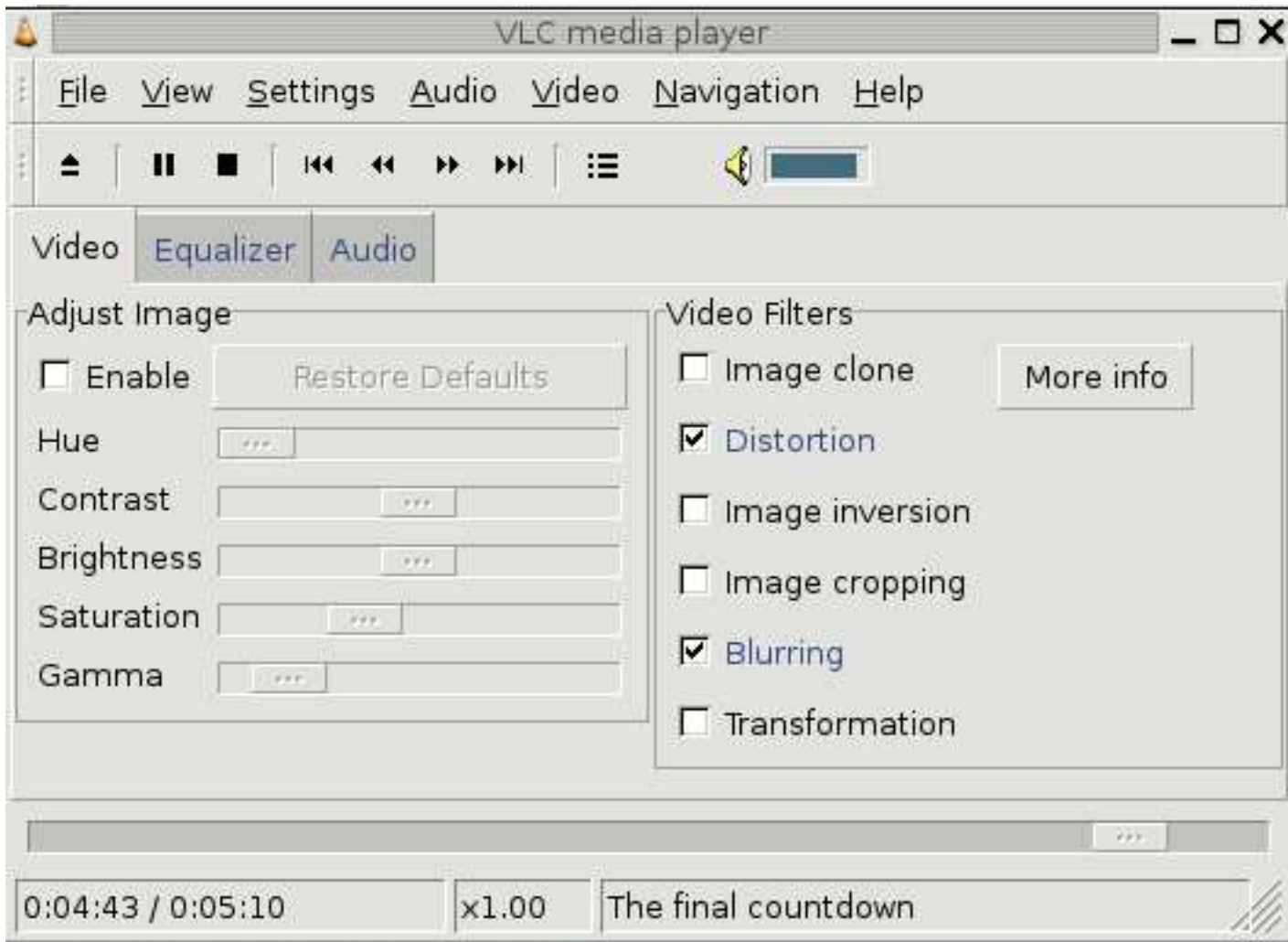
VLC is able to deinterlace a video stream using different deinterlacement methods. Deinterlacement can be enabled in the *Video* menu, *Deinterlacement* menu item. The *Blend* methods gives the best results in most cases. The *discard* method is a less resource consuming alternative.

On some particular streams (MPEG 4, DIVX, XVID, Sorenson, ...), some additional image filtering can be applied to the video before display, improving its quality in some cases. This can be enabled in the *Video* menu, *Post processing* menu item. Different levels of post processing can be chosen here. A higher level means more filtering.

Video filters

VLC features several filters able to change the video (distortion, brightness adjustment, motion blurring, ...).

With the wxWindows interface, filters can be easily enabled using the Extended GUI. In the Video tab, simply select the filters to enable. Image settings can be easily adjusted.



Video filters selection in the wxWindows interface

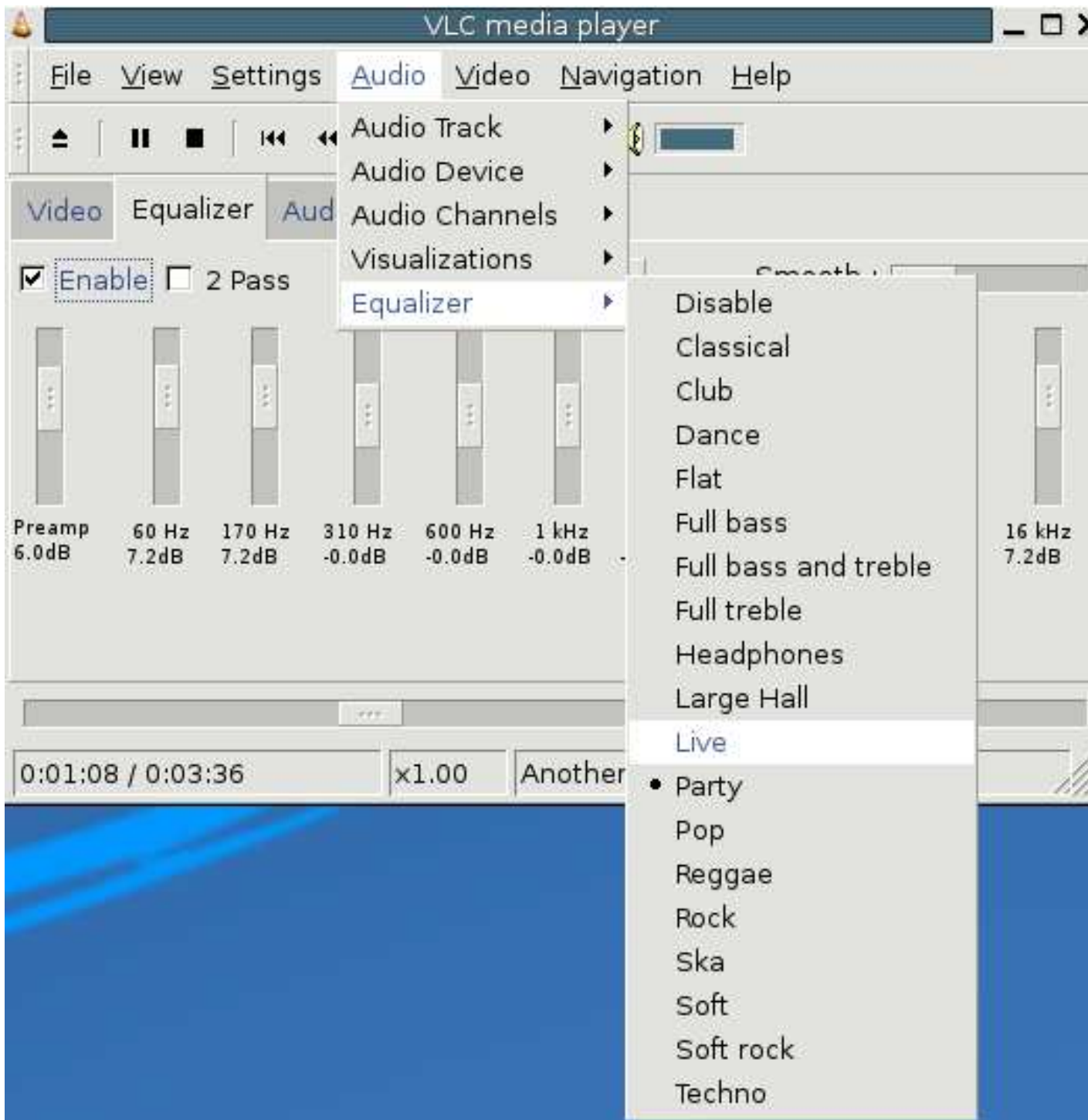
Under MacOS X, or for better control, you need to go to the preferences. To select the filters to be enabled, go to *General Settings*, then to *Video*. In the "video filter module" box, enter the names of the filters to enable, separated by semicommas. Filters will be applied in the selected order. Valid names are "clone", "wall", "transform", "adjust", "crop", "deinterlace", "distort", "motionblur" and "logo".

If you want to tune the behavior of these filters, go to *Modules, video filter*. For each filter, you will find a short description and the options

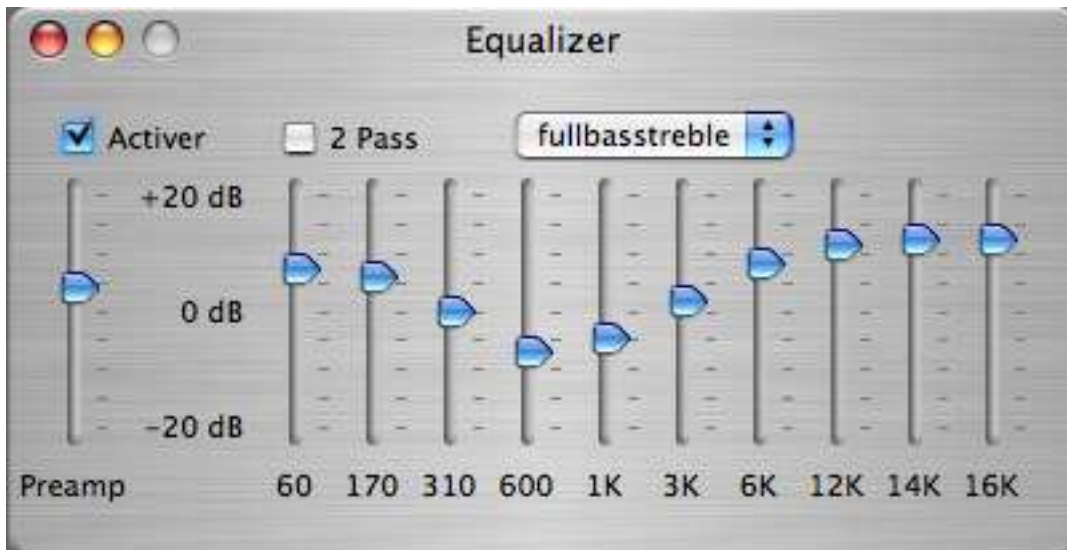
Audio filters

Equalizer

VLC features a 10-band graphical equalizer. You can display it by activating the advanced GUI on wxWindows or by clicking the *Equalizer* button on the MacOS X interface.



The equalizer in the wxWindows interface



The equalizer in the MacOS X interface

Presets are available in the Audio menu in wxWindows, or in the Equalizer window in the MacOS X interface

Other audio filters

At the moment, VLC features two other audio filters : a volume normalizer and a filter providing sound spatialization with a headphone. They can be enabled in the Audio tab of the extended GUI for the wxWindows interface.

Under MacOS X, or for better control, you need to go to the preferences. To select the filters to be enabled, go to *General Settings*, then to *Audio*. In the "audio filters" box, enter the names of the filters to enable, separated by commas. Valid names are "equalizer", "normvol" and "headphone".

If you want to tune the behavior of these filters, go to *Modules/audio_filter*. The equalizer and headphone filters can be tuned.

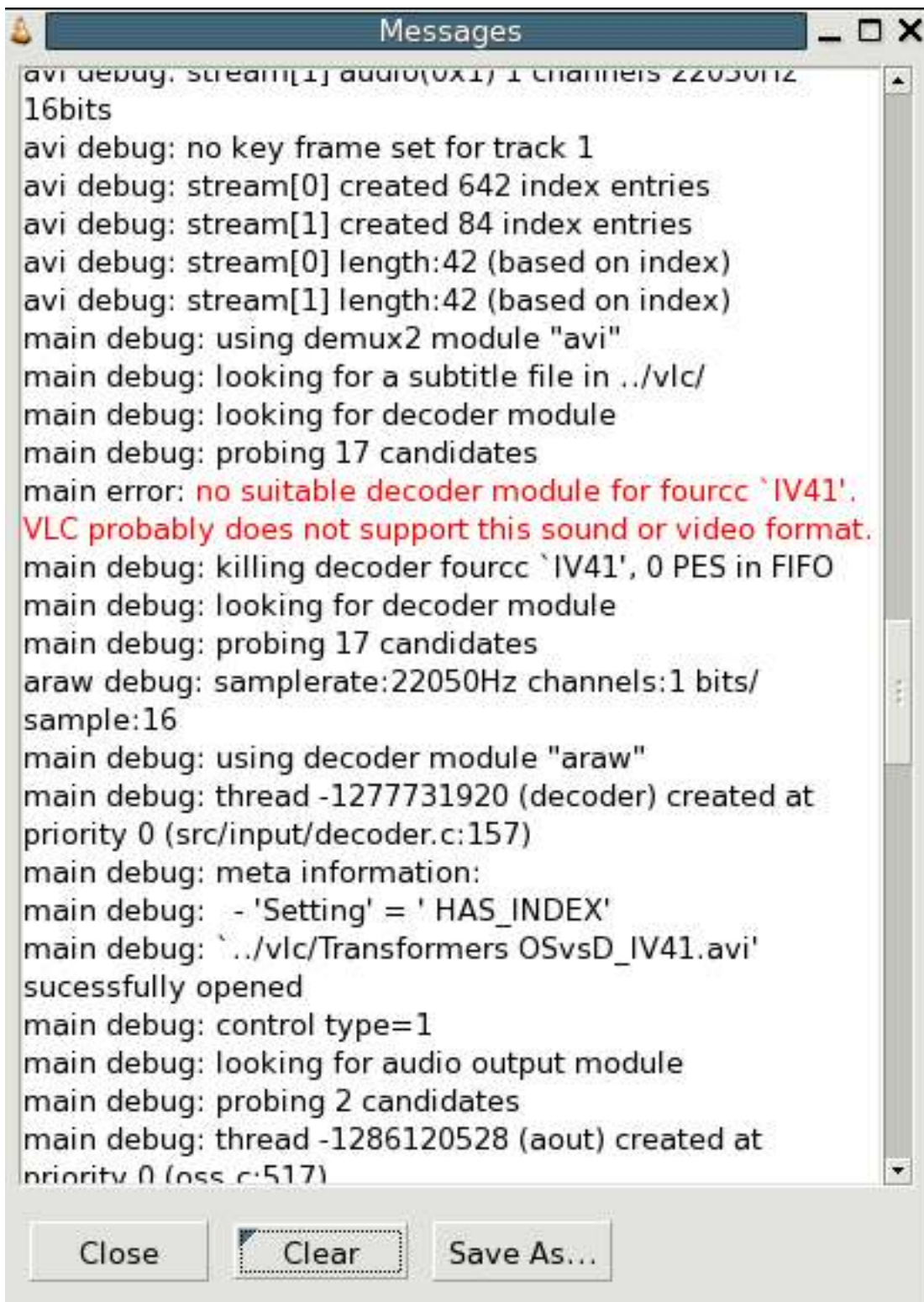
Basic troubleshooting

Note: This is very incomplete

File does not play, only sound or only video

Maybe the file you are trying to read is not fully supported. VLC does not use the codec packs you might have installed. It comes with its own codecs. If there is no open-source decoder for the format you are trying to read, it won't be supported. (There is an exception, under Windows, for codecs that use the DirectShow framework).

To find out, open the Messages Window (View menu) and restart your stream. Look for error messages (red messages)



The wxWindows messages window

In this example, the file contains a IV41 video stream, a codec that is not supported by VLC.

You may of course have other messages. If you post to a VideoLAN mailing list or in the forum, please include such a log, it is very valuable.

Weird VLC behavior ("stopped working")

A very common thing is a bogus preferences file. Don't hesitate to delete it if problems appear suddenly. You will find in the FAQ details on how to delete your preferences file (<http://www.videolan.org/doc/faq/en/index.html#id2470084>).

Computer crashes / Video is corrupted

Another common problem is buggy video drivers. Try upgrading them from the website of your video card's manufacturer.

Also, you can try disabling Overlay (Preferences/General/Video, untick "Overlay video output")

Chapter 4. Advanced use of VLC

Use the command line

All standard operations of VLC should be available from the GUI. However, some complex operations can only be done from the command line and there are situations in which you don't need or want a GUI. Here is the complete description of VLC's command line and how to use it

You need to be quite comfortable with command line usage to use this.

Note: Windows users have to use the `--option-name="value"` syntax instead of the `--option-name value` syntax.

Getting help

VLC uses a modular structure. The core mainly manages communication between modules. All the multimedia processing is done by modules. There are input modules, demultiplexers, decoders, video output modules, ...

This chapter will only describe the "general" options, i.e. the core options. Each module adds new options. For example, the HTTP input module will add options for caching, proxy, authentication, ...

By using `vlc --help`, you will get the basic core options. `vlc --longhelp` will give all the basic options (core + modules). Adding `--advanced` will give the "advanced options" (for advanced users). So `vlc --longhelp --advanced` will give you all options.

Also, you might want to get debug informations. To do this, use `-v` or `-vv` (this will show lower severity messages). If your console supports it, you can add `--color` to get messages in color.

Opening streams

The following commands start VLC and start reading the given element(s)

Opening a file

Start VLC with:

```
% vlc my_file
```

VLC should be able to recognize the file type. If it does not, you can force demultiplexer and decoder (see below).

A list of all video and audio codecs supported by VLC is available on the VLC features list (<http://www.videolan.org/vlc/features.html>).

Opening a DVD or VCD, or an audio CD

Start VLC with:

For a DVD with menus :

```
% vlc dvd://[device]@[raw_device]@[title][,chapter][,angle]]
```

In most cases, `vlc dvd://` or `vlc dvd://[device]` will do. [device] is for example `/dev/dvd` on GNU/Linux or `D:` on Windows (complete path to your DVD drive).

or (DVD without menus) :

```
% vlc dvdsimple://[device][@raw_device][@[title][,[chapter][,angle]]]
```

or (VCD):

```
% vlc vcd://[device][@{E|P|E|T|S}[number]]
```

or (Audio CD):

```
% vlc cdda://[device][@[track]]
```

Receiving a network stream

To receive an unicast UDP stream (sent by VLS or VLC's stream output), start VLC with:

```
% vlc udp:[@:server_port]
```

If you use the default port (1234), `vlc udp:` will do. For more information, look at the Streaming Howto

To receive an multicast UDP stream (sent by VLS or VLC's stream output), start VLC with:

```
% vlc udp:@multicast_address[:server_port]
```

To receive a SSM (source specific multicast) stream, you can use:

```
% vlc udp:server_address@multicast_address[:server_port]
```

This only works on OSs that support SSM (Windows XP and recent Linux kernels)

To receive a HTTP stream, start VLC with :

```
% vlc http://www.example.org/your_file.mpg
```

To receive a RTSP stream, start VLC with:

```
% vlc rtsp://www.example.org/your_stream
```

Modules selection

VLC always try to select the most appropriate interface, input and output modules, among the ones available on the system, according to the stream it is given to read. However, you may wish to force the use of a specific module with the following options.

- `--intf <module>` allows you to select the interface module.
- `--extraintf <module>` allows you to select extra interface modules that will be launched in addition to the main one. This is mainly useful for special *control* interfaces, like HTTP, RC (Remote Control), ... (see below)
- `--aout <module>` allows you to select the audio output module.
- `--vout <module>` allows you to select the video output module.
- `--memcpy <module>` allows you to choose a memory copy module. You should probably never touch that.

You can get a listing of the available modules by using `vlc -l`

Stream Output

The Stream output system allows vlc to become a streaming server.

For more details on the stream output system, please have a look at the Streaming Howto.

Other Options

Audio options

- `--noaudio` disables audio output.
- `--mono` forces VLC to treat the stream in mono audio.
- `--volume <integer>` sets the level of audio output (between 0 and 1024)
- `--aout-rate <integer>` sets the audio output frequency (Hz). By default, VLC will try to autodetect this.
- `--desync <integer>` compensates desynchronization of audio (ms). (If audio and video streams are not synchronized, use this setting to delay the audio stream)
- `--audio-filter <string>` adds audio filters to the processing chain. Available filters are visual (visualizer with spectrum analyzer and oscilloscope), headphone (virtual headphone spatialization) and normalizer (volume normalizer)

Video options

- `--novideo` disables video output.
- `--greyscale` turns video output into grayscale mode.
- `--fullscreen` (or `-f`) sets fullscreen video.
- `--nooverlay` disables hardware acceleration for the video output.
- `--width, --height <integer>` sets the video window dimensions. By default, the video window size will be adjusted to match the video dimensions.
- `--zoom <float>` adds a zoom factor.
- `--aspect-ratio <mode>` forces source aspect ratio. Modes are 4x3, 16x9, ...
- `--spumargin <integer>` forces SPU subtitles position.
- `--filter <string>` adds video filters to the processing chain. You can add several filters, separated by commas
- `--sout-transcode-sfilter <string>` adds video subpictures filter to the processing chain.

Playlist options

- `--random` plays files randomly forever.
- `--loop` loops playlist on end.
- `--repeat` repeats the current item until another item is forced
- `--play-and-stop` stops the playlist after each played item.

Network options

- `--server-port <integer>` sets server port.
- `--iface <string>` specifies the network interface to use.
- `--iface-addr <string>` specifies your network interface IP address.
- `--mtu <integer>` specifies the MTU of the network interface.
- `--ipv6` forces IPv6.
- `--ipv4` forces IPv4.

CPU options

You should probably not touch these options unless you know what you are doing.

- `--nommx` disables the use of MMX CPU extensions.
- `--no3dn` disables the use of 3D Now! CPU extensions.
- `--nommxext` disables the use of MMX Ext CPU extensions.
- `--nosse` disables the use of SSE CPU extensions.
- `--noaltivec` disables the use of AltiVec CPU extensions.

Miscellaneous options

- `--quiet` deactivates all console messages.
- `--color` displays color messages.
- `--search-path <string>` specifies interface default search path.
- `--plugin-path <string>` specifies plugin search path.
- `--no-plugins-cache` disables the plugin cache (plugins cache speeds up startup)
- `--dvd <string>` specifies the default DVD device.
- `--vcd <string>` specifies the default VCD device.
- `--program <integer>` specifies program (SID) (for streams with several programs, like satellite ones).
- `--audio-type <integer>` specifies the default audio type to use with dvds.
- `--audio-channel <integer>` specifies the default audio channel to use with dvds.
- `--spu-channel <integer>` specifies the default subtitle channel to use with dvds.
- `--version` gives you information about the current VLC version.
- `--module <module>` displays help about specified module. (Shortcut : `-p`)

Item-specific options

There are many options that are related to items (like `--novideo`, `--codec`, `--fullscreen`).

For all of these, you have the possibility to make them item-specific, using ":" instead of "--" and putting the option just after the concerned item

Examples:

- `% vlc file1.mpg :fullscreen file2.mpg`
will play file1.mpg in fullscreen mode and file2.mpg in the default mode (which is generally no fullscreen), whereas
`% vlc --fullscreen file1.mpg file2.mpg`
will play both files in fullscreen mode
- `% vlc --fullscreen file1.mpg :sub-file=file1.srt :no-fullscreen file2.mpg :filter=distort`
will play file1.mpg in windowed (no-fullscreen) mode with the subtitles file file1.srt and will play file2.mpg with video filter distort enabled in fullscreen mode (item-specific options override global options)

Advanced use of filters

Filters

These are the old style VLC filters. They only apply to on screen display and thus cannot be streamed.

Deinterlacing video filter

Module name : *deinterlace*

- `--deinterlace-mode {discard,blend,mean,bob,linear}` choose a deinterlacing mode.

Invert video filter

Module name : *invert*

Image properties filter

Module name : *adjust*

- `--contrast <float>` Image contrast in the 0-2 range.
- `--brightness <float>` Image brightness in the 0-2 range.
- `--hue <integer>` Image hue in the 0-360 range
- `--saturation <float>` Image saturation in the 0-3 range.
- `--gamma <float>` Image gamma in the 0-10 range.

Wall video filter

Module name : *wall*

This filter splits the output in several windows.

- `--wall-cols <integer>` Number of columns.
- `--wall-rows <integer>` Number of rows.

- `--wall-active <string>` Select the windows you want to display. To select windows 2 and 4 you would write `--wall-active 2,4`. When this option isn't specified, all windows are displayed.

Video transformation filter

Module name : *transform*

- `--transform-type {90,180,270,hflip,vflip}` Select rotation angle or symmetry.

Distort video filter

Module name : *distort*

Clone video filter

This filter clones the output window.

Module name : *clone*

- `--clone-count <integer>` Number of clones.
- `--clone-vout-list <string>` Comma separated string of video output modules.

Crop video filter

Module name : *crop*

- `--crop-geometry <string>` Set the geometry of the zone to crop. This is set as `<width> x <height> + <left offset> + <top offset>`.
- `--autocrop` Enable automatic black border cropping.

Motion blur filter

Module name : *motionblur*

- `--blur-factor <integer>` Blur factor in the 1-127 range.

Video pictures blending

Module name : *blend*

Video scaling filter

Module name : *scale*

Subpictures Filters

These are the new VLC filters. They can be streamed.

Time display sub filter

Module name : *time*

- *--time-format* <string> Time format string. You can use the following special characters %Y = year, %m = month, %d = day, %H = hour, %M = minute, %S = second.
- *--time-x* <integer> X offset from the left in pixels.
- *--time-y* <integer> Y offset from the top in pixels.

Marque display sub filter

Module name : *marq*

- *--marq-marquee* <string> Marquee text to display.
- *--marq-x* <integer> X offset from the left in pixels.
- *--marq-y* <integer> Y offset from the top in pixels.
- *--marq-timeout* <timeout> Defines the time the marquee must remain displayed in milliseconds. Default value is 0 (remain forever).

Logo video filter

Module name : *logo*

This filter can be used both as an old style filter or a subpictures filter.

- *--logo-file* <string> Full path of the PNG file to use.
- *--logo-x* <integer> X offset from the left in pixels.
- *--logo-y* <integer> Y offset from the top in pixels.
- *--logo-transparency* <integer> You can set the logo transparency value here (from 0 for full transparency to 255 for full opacity).

Note: You can move the logo by left-clicking on it.

The HTTP interface

VLC ships with a little HTTP server integrated. It is used both to stream using HTTP, and for the HTTP remote control interface.

To start VLC with the HTTP interface, use:

```
% vlc -I http [--http-src /directory/ --http-host host:port]
```

If you want to have both the "normal" interface and the HTTP interface, use `vlc --extraintf http`.

The HTTP interface will start listening at host:port (<all interfaces>:8080 if omitted), and will reproduce the structure of /directory at `http://host:port/` (`vlc_source_path/share/http` if omitted).

Use a browser to go to `http://your_host_machine:port`. You should be taken to the main page

VLC is shipped with a set of files that should be enough for generic needs. It is also possible to customize pages. See Appendix B.

Available pages are :

- `/index.html` gives access to the playlist, allows you to add or delete items and to control playback.
- `/info.html` gives you statistics and data about the usage of the server.
- `/admin/`. This folder gives more power and is therefore protected by a login/password. The default couple is admin/admin. The passwords and users can be changed in the `.access` file in the `VLC_directory/share/http/admin` folder. (Each folder can be protected, see Appendix B for more details).
- `/vlm/`. This folder allows you to control the VideoLAN manager (VLM). The VLM allows you to stream several input streams with only one VLC instance. For more information about VLM, please look at the Streaming Howto (<http://www.videolan.org/doc/streaming-howto/en>).

Other control interfaces

VLC includes a number of so-called interfaces that are not really interfaces, but means of controlling VLC. Nevertheless, they are enabled by setting them as interface or extra interface, either in the Preferences, in General/Interface, or using `-I` or `--extraintf` on the command line.

Hotkeys

This module allows you to control VLC and playback via hotkeys. It is always enabled by default. You can use hotkeys in the video output window.

Hotkeys can be hacked by :

```
% vlc --key-<function> '<code>'
```

Code is composed by modifiers keys (Alt, Shift, Ctrl, Meta, Command) separated by a dash (-) and terminated by a key (a...z, +, =, -, ', +, <, >, ', /, :, ', \,], *, Left, Right, Up, Down, Space, Enter, F1...F12, Home, End, Menu, Esc, Page Up, Page Down, Tab, Backspace, Mouse Wheel Up and Mouse Wheel Down). Main controls are available from hotkeys, such as : fullscreen, play-pause, faster, slower, next, prev, stop, quit, vol-up, etc. (use the `--longhelp` option for full list of functions). For example, for binding fullscreen to Ctrl-f, run :

```
% vlc --key-fullscreen 'Ctrl-f'
```

RC and RTCI

These two interfaces allow you to control VLC from a command shell (possibly using a remote connexion or a Unix socket).

Start VLC with `-I rc` or `--extraintf rc`. When you get the **Remote control interface initialized**, `'h'` for **help** message, press h and Enter to get help about available commands.

To be able to remote connect to your VLC using a TCP socket (telnet-like connexion), use `--rc-host your_host:port`. Then, by connecting (using telnet or netcat) to the host on the given port, you will get the command shell.

To use a UNIX socket (local socket, this does not work for Windows), use `--rc-unix /path/to/socket`. Commands can then be passed using this UNIX socket.

The RTCI interface gives you more advanced options, such as marquee control for the marquee subpicture filter (See filter section).

Ncurses

This is a text interface, using ncurses library.

Start VLC with `-I ncurses` or `--extraintf ncurses`. You will then get something like that:

```

VLC media player (ncurses interface) [ h for help ]

Source   : BG/05 - Cup Of Coffee.mp3
State    : Playing
Position : 0:01:42/0:04:31 (37.89%)
Volume   : 62%

[Progress bar]

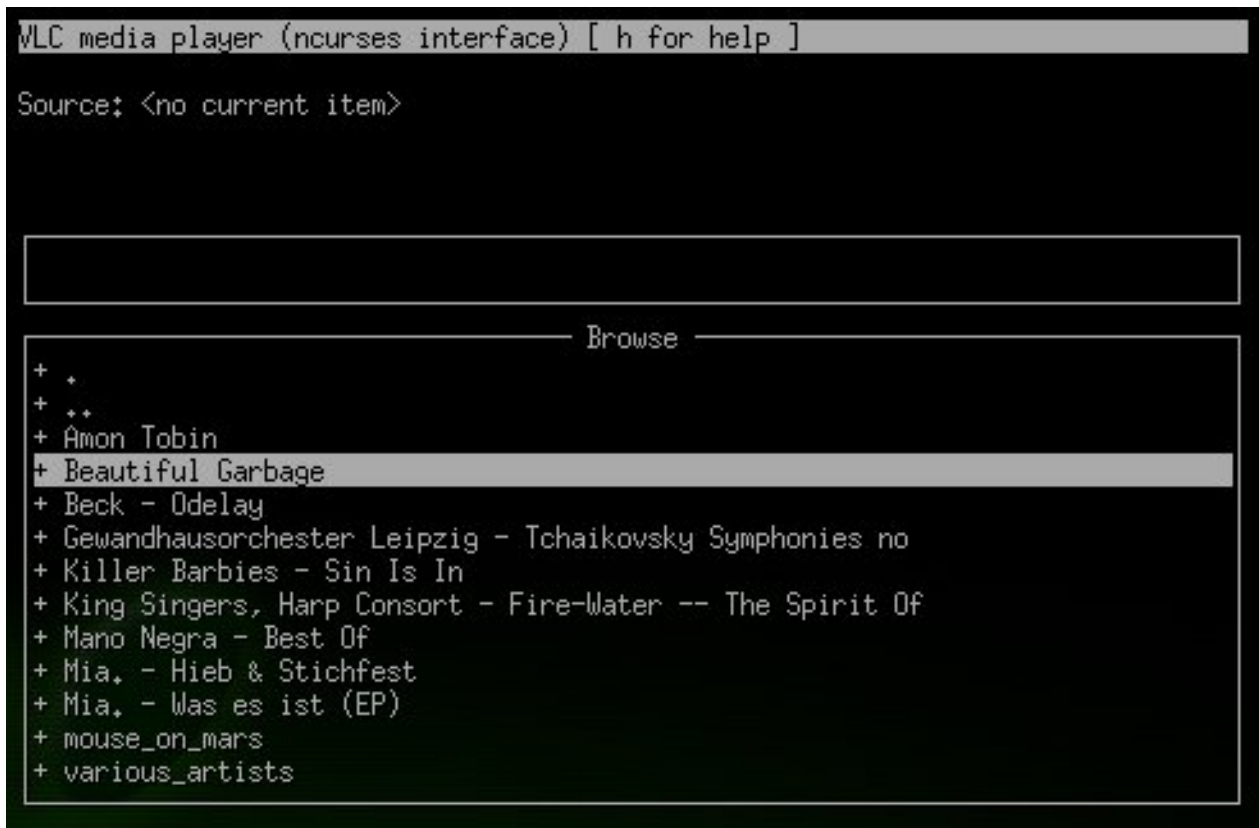
----- Playlist -----
0 - 'BG/01 - Shut Your Mouth.mp3' (01 - Shut Your Mouth.mp3)
1 - 'BG/02 - Androgyny.mp3' (02 - Androgyny.mp3)
2 - 'BG/03 - Can't Cry These Tears.mp3' (03 - Can't Cry These Tears.mp3)
3 - 'BG/04 - Til The Day I Die.mp3' (04 - Til The Day I Die.mp3)
> 4 - 'BG/05 - Cup Of Coffee.mp3' (05 - Cup Of Coffee.mp3)
5 - 'BG/06 - Silence Is Golden.mp3' (06 - Silence Is Golden.mp3)
6 - 'BG/07 - Cherry Lips (Go Baby Go...) (07 - Cherry Lips (Go Baby Go!).mp3)
7 - 'BG/08 - Breaking Up The Girl.mp3' (08 - Breaking Up The Girl.mp3)
8 - 'BG/09 - Drive You Home.mp3' (09 - Drive You Home.mp3)
9 - 'BG/10 - Parade.mp3' (10 - Parade.mp3)
10 - 'BG/11 - Nobody Loves You.mp3' (11 - Nobody Loves You.mp3)
11 - 'BG/12 - Untouchable.mp3' (12 - Untouchable.mp3)
12 - 'BG/13 - So Like A Rose.mp3' (13 - So Like A Rose.mp3)

```

The ncurses interface

Press `h` to get the list of all available commands, with a short description.

There is also a filebrowser available for the ncurses interface in order to add playlist items. Press `'B'` to use it.



The ncurses filebrowser

You can set the filebrowser starting point by launching vlc with the `--browse-dir` option:

```
% vlc -I ncurses --browse-dir /filebrowser/starting/point/
```

Gestures

Gestures provide a simple mouse gestures control. TODO

The Mozilla plugin

VLC can also be embedded in a web browser ! At the moment, this function is only available with Mozilla (<http://www.mozilla.org/>) or Firefox (<http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/>).

Install the plugin

GNU/Linux Debian

You should already have the following lines in your `/etc/apt/sources.list` file, if you run Debian Woody:

```
deb http://download.videolan.org/pub/videolan/debian woody main
deb-src http://download.videolan.org/pub/videolan/debian woody main
```

VLC's latest packaged version is always in the official Debian unstable branch. However you should still use our apt-get line if you need libdvdcss in its latest version:

```
deb http://download.videolan.org/pub/videolan/debian sid main
deb-src http://download.videolan.org/pub/videolan/debian sid main
```

Install the *mozilla-plugin-vlc* package:

```
# apt-get update
# apt-get install mozilla-plugin-vlc
```

Windows

Quit Firefox or Mozilla

Copy the two files in *VLC_Installation_folder\mozilla* (usually *C:\Program Files\VideoLAN\VLC\mozilla*) to your mozilla plugins directory (Usually *C:\Program Files\Mozilla\plugins* or *C:\Program Files\Mozilla Firefox\plugins*).

Restart Firefox or Mozilla

Compile the sources yourself

Please look at the developers page (<http://developers.videolan.org>) for information on how to do this.

Use the plugin

If you open a link to a video file handled by the VLC plugin (To get the list of handled types, browse to **about:plugins**) or a page with an embedded video, the plugin should open and read the video.

Build HTML pages that use the plugin

Additionally to viewing video on all pages, you can build custom pages that will use the advanced features of the plugin, using Javascript functions to control playback or extract information from the plugin.

The vlc plugin supports the following function calls:

- **play()** : Start playing media in the plugin.
- **pause()** : Pause playback.
- **stop()** : Stop media playback.
- **fullscreen()** : Switch the video to full screen.
- **set_volume(vol)** : Set the volume. *vol* has to be an int in the 0-200 range.
- **get_volume()** : Get the current volume setting.
- **mute()** : Toggle volume muting.
- **set_int_variable(var_name, value)** :
- **set_bool_variable(var_name, value)** :
- **set_str_variable(var_name, value)** :
- **get_int_variable(var_name)** :

- **get_bool_variable(var_name)** :
- **get_str_variable(var_name)** :
- **clear_playlist()** : Clear the playlist.
- **add_item(mrl)** : Append an item whose location is given by the Media Resource Locator to the playlist.
- **next()**
- **previous()**
- **isplaying()** : return true if the plugin is playing something.
- **get_length()** : Get the media's length in seconds.
- **get_position()** : Get the current position in the media in percent.
- **get_time()** : Get the current position in the media in seconds.
- **seek(seconds,is_relative)** : If is_relative is true, seek relatively to current time, else seek from beginning of the stream. Seek time is specified in seconds.

Here are a few examples of HTML pages that use the Mozilla plugin.

Example 1

In this example, the plugin will read an HTTP stream inside the web page. If the user goes fullscreen, he will have to press **f** to go back in normal view.

```
<html>
<head><title>Demo of VLC mozilla plugin</title></head>

<body>

<h1>Demo of VLC mozilla plugin - Example 1</h1>

<embed type="application/x-vlc-plugin"
        name="video1"
        autoplay="no" loop="yes" width="400" height="300"
        target="http://server.example.org/video1.vob" />
<br />
    <a href="javascript:;" onclick='document.video1.play()'>Play video1</a>
    <a href="javascript:;" onclick='document.video1.pause()'>Pause video1</a>
    <a href="javascript:;" onclick='document.video1.stop()'>Stop video1</a>
    <a href="javascript:;" onclick='document.video1.fullscreen()'>Fullscreen</a>

</body>
</html>
```

Example

In this example, the plugin will read a multicast UDP stream in a dedicated video output window.

```
<html>
<head><title>Demo of VLC mozilla plugin</title></head>

<body>

<h1>Demo of VLC mozilla plugin - Example 2</h1>

<embed type="application/x-vlc-plugin"
```

```
        name="video2"
        autoplay="no" loop="no" hidden="yes"
        target="udp:@239.255.12.42" />
<br />
    <a href="javascript:;" onclick='document.video2.play()>Play video2</a>
    <a href="javascript:;" onclick='document.video2.stop()>Stop video2</a>
    <a href="javascript:;" onclick='document.video2.fullscreen()>Fullscreen</a>

</body>
</html>
```

Appendix A. GNU General Public License

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Appendix B. Building pages for the HTTP interface

Introduction

This appendix describes the language used for writing dynamic web pages for the HTTP interface.

Pages must be placed in the share/http folder in either VLC's folder (Windows, Mac) or /usr/share/vlc/share/http or /usr/local/share/vlc/share/http (or wherever vlc's shared files are installed)

Some files are handled a bit specially :

- Files beginning with '.' are not exported.
- A '.access' file will be opened and the http interface will expect to find at the first line a login/password (written as login:password). This login/password will be used to protect all files in this directory. Be careful that only files in this directory will be protected. (sub-directories won't be protected.)
- The file <dir>/index.html will be exported as <dir> and <dir>/ and not as index.html.

The MIME type is set by looking at the file extension and cannot be specified nor modified for a specific file. Unknown extensions will have "application/octet-stream" as MIME type.

You should avoid exporting big files. Each file is indeed first loaded into the memory before being sent to the client, so please be careful.

VLC macros

Each type a .html/.htm page is requested, it is parsed by VLC before being sent. The parser searches for the VLC macros, and executes or substitutes them. Moreover, URL arguments received by the GET method can be interpreted .

A VLC macro looks like: `<vlc id="macro-name" param1="macro-parameters1" param2="macro-parameters2" />`.

"id" is the only mandatory field, param1 and param2 may or may not be present and depend on the value of "id".

You should take care that you _have to_ respect this syntax, VLC won't like invalid syntax. (It could easily leads to crashes).

Examples :

Correct: `<vlc id="value" param1="version" />`

Incorrect: `<vlc id="value" param1="version" >` (missing tag ending), `<vlc id=value param1="version" />` (missing "")

Valid macros are:

- *control* (1 optional parameter)
- *get* (2 parameters)
- *set* (2 parameters)
- *rpn* (1 parameter)
- *if* (1 optional parameter)
- *else* (no parameter)
- *end* (no parameter)
- *value* (1 optional parameter)
- *foreach* (2 parameters)

For powerful macros, you may use these tools :

- RPN Evaluator (see part 2)
- Stacks: The stack is a place where you can push numbers and strings, and then pop them backs. It's used with the little RPN evaluator.
- Local variables: You can dynamically create new variables and changes their values. Some local variables are predefined:
 - `url_value` : parameter of the URL
 - `url_param` : 1 if `url_value` isn't empty else 0
 - `version` : the VLC version
 - `copyright` : the VLC copyright

Remark: The stacks, and local variables context is reseted before the page is executed.

The RPN evaluator

RPN means Reverse Polish Notation

Introduction

RPN could look strange but it's a fast and easy way to write expressions. It also avoids the use of (and).

Instead of writing `(1 + 2) * 5` you just use `1 2 + 5 *`.

The idea beyond it is: if we have a number or a string (using `"`), push it on the stack. If it is an operator (like `+`), pop the arguments from the stack, execute the operators and then push the result onto the stack. The result of the RPN sequence is the value on the top of the stack.

stack:	Word processed	
empty	1	1 is pushed on the stack
1	2	2 same things
1 2	+	+: remove 1 and 2 and write 3 on the stack
3	5	5 is pushed on the stack
3 5	*	*: remove 3 and 5 and write 15
15		<- result

Operators

Notation: `ST(1)` means the first stack element, `ST(2)` the second one ... and `op` the operator.

You have access to :

- Standard arithmetics operators: `+`, `-`, `*`, `/`, `%`: these ones push the result of `ST(1) op ST(2)` to the stack
- Binary operators: `!` (push `!ST(1)`); `^`, `&`, `|`: push the result `ST(1) op ST(2)`
- test: `=`, `<`, `<=`, `>`, `>=`: execute `ST(1) op ST(2)` and push -1 if true else 0
- string: `strcat` pushes the result of `'ST(1)ST(2)'`, `strcmp` compares `ST(1)` and `ST(2)`, pushes -1 if `ST(1)<ST(2)`, 0 if equal, 1 else, `strlen` pushes the length of `ST(1)`.

- stack manipulation: dup duplicates ST(1), drop removes ST(1), swap exchanges ST(1) and ST(2), and flush empties the stack.
- variables manipulation: store stores ST(2) in a local variable named ST(1), value pushes the value of the local variable named ST(1), url_extract pushes the value of the ST(1) part of the url parameters.

The macros

The *control* macro

When asking for a page, you can pass arguments to it through the url. (e.g. using a <form>). Ex:

http://host:port/page.html?var=value&var2=value2&... The "control" macro tells a page to parse these arguments and to execute the ones that are allowed. param1 of this macro says which commands are allowed. If empty, all commands will be permitted.

Some commands require an argument that must be passed in the URL too.

Table B-1. URL commands

Name	Argument	Description
play	item (integer)	Play the specified playlist item
stop		Stop
pause		Pause
next		Go to next playlist item
previous		Go to previous playlist item
add	mrl (string)	Add a MRL (Media Resource Locator) to the playlist
delete	item (integer)	Delete the specified playlist item or list of playlist items
empty		Empty the playlist
close	id (hexa)	Close a specific connection
shutdown		Quit VLC

For example, you can restrict execution of the **shutdown** command to protected page (through a .access file), using the control macro in all unprotected pages.

The *get* macro

This macro will be replaced by the value of the configuration variable which name is stored in param1 and which type is given by param2.

param1 must be the name of an existing configuration variable. param2 must be the right type of the variable. It can be one of *int*, *float*, or *string*.

Example: <vlc id="get" param1="sout" param2="string" /> will be replaced in the output page by the value of sout.

The **set** macro

This macro allows to set the value of a configuration variable. The name is given by param1 and the type by param2 (like for get). The value is retrieved from the url using the name given in param1.

For example, if player.html contains `<vlc id="set" param1="sout" param2="string" />`, and if you browse at `http://host:ip/player.html?sout=sout_value`, the sout variable will be set to "sout_value". If the URL doesn't contain sout, nothing will be done.

The **rpn** macro

This macro allows you to interpret RPN commands. (See II).

The **if,else,end** macro

This macro allows you to control the parsing of the HTML page.

If param1 isn't empty, it is first executed with the RPN evaluator. If the first element from the stack is not 0, the test value is true, else false..

```
<vlc id="if" param1="1 2 =" />
  <!-- Never reached -->
<vlc id="else" />
  <p> Test succeed: 1 isn't equal to 2 </p>
<vlc id="end" />
```

You can also just use "if" and "end".

The **value** macro

If param1 isn't empty, it is first executed with the RPN evaluator. The macro is replaced with the value of the first element of the stack.

Note: If the element is the name of a local variable, its value will be displayed instead of its name.

The **foreach,end** macro

param1 is the name of the variable that will be used for the loop. param2 is the name of the set to be built:

- *integer*: take the first element from the stack to construct a set of integer. The stack element should be a string like: `first:last[:step][.first2:last2[:step2]][,...]` (Ex: 1:5:2,6:8:1 will be expanded into 1,3,5,6,7,8)
- *directory*: take the first element of the stack as the base directory and construct a set of filename and directly in it. Each element has the following fields:
 - name: file/directory name
 - type: "directory" or "file" or "unknown"
 - size: size of the file
 - date

- **playlist**: set based on the playlist with fields: current is 1 if item is currently selected, 0 else. index is the index value, that can be used by the play or delete control command. name is the name of the item.
- **"informations"**: Create informations for the current playing stream. name is the name of the category, value is its value, info is a new set that can be parsed with a new foreach (subfields of info are name and value).
- **"hosts"**: Create the list of host we are listening. Contains the "id" (opaque id), host, ip and port fields.
- **"urls"**: Create the list of urls currently available. Fields are id, stream (1 if we have a stream, 0 else), url, mime, protected (1 if protected, 0 else), used (is it currently used ?).
- **"connections"**: Create the list of current connections. Fields are: id, an opaque id that can be used in the close command, ip, url, and status (HTTP error code).
- the name of a foreach variable if it's a set of set of value.

```

; <vlc id="foreach" param1="cat" param2="informations" />
    <p> <vlc id="value" param1="cat.name" />
    <ul>
        <vlc id="foreach" param1="info" param2="cat.info" />
        <li>
            <vlc id="value" param1="info.name" /> :
            <vlc id="value" param1="info.value" />
        </li>
    </ul>
    <vlc id="end" />
</vlc id="end" />

```

For more details, have a look at the share/http directory of the VLC source tree...