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How to download an MP3 track from a YouTube video



250



116

There are several Q&A threads that explain how to download youtube videos using the terminal.

However, I would also like to learn how to extract the video's soundtracks as MP3 files--also using only the terminal.

Answers briefly explaining how to use `youtube-dl` or other similar utilities before explaining how to extract the MP3 would be ideal for the sake of having all the information in one place--even though this aspect has been covered in other posts.

[command-line](#)

[downloads](#)

[mp3](#)

[youtube](#)

[ffmpeg](#)

edited Feb 21 '17 at 9:19



[muru](#)

asked Aug 21 '12 at 9:44



[siraj](#)

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In most cases you can download m4a or webm without conversion. This is an interactive script that will let you choose a specific 'rendition' such as audio-only, video-only, etc: `youtube-dl -F "$1" ; read -p "Please enter the desired quality # " FORMAT ; youtube-dl -f $FORMAT "$1"` – [ccpizza](#) Jun 29 '16 at 13:08

I'm voting to reopen this question because the linked question is quite different, doesn't have any answers and goes into a chain of duplicate questions that don't address audio extraction of Youtube videos. – [David Foerster](#) Feb 20 '17 at 12:39

Note: for MacPorts users who found this, use `sudo port install youtube-dl` to install `youtube-dl` . – [jvriesem](#) Mar 23 '18 at 22:35

3 Answers



You can also download the mp3 directly from youtube without converting using ffmpeg

440

```
youtube-dl --extract-audio --audio-format mp3 <video URL>
```



From the online help:

```
-x, --extract-audio      convert video files to audio-only files (requires
                        ffmpeg or avconv and ffprobe or avprobe)
```

Bear in mind as well that youtube-dl defaults to using avconv so you should consider specifying either avconv or FFmpeg at the commandline . From the online help :

```
--prefer-avconv          Prefer avconv over ffmpeg for running the
                        postprocessors (default)
--prefer-ffmpeg           Prefer ffmpeg over avconv for running the
                        postprocessors
```

Further options for keeping the original video, adjusting the bitrate or quality of the audio and a few others can be seen by looking at `youtube-dl -h` .

edited Apr 23 '17 at 18:39



Seth ♦

36.5k

27

118

172

answered Aug 22 '12 at 13:13



uniquerockrz


4.609

1

8

7

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-
- 4 it case of problems like this with youtube-dl: ERROR: Unable to download webpage: <urlopen error [Errno 8] _ssl.c:510: EOF occurred in violation of protocol> this helped me: askubuntu.com/questions/791969/error-while-using-youtube-dl – [noisy](#) Sep 17 '16 at 9:53
-
- 7 If you are using `zsh` or `Oh My Zsh` instead of `Bash`, then you might get an error saying "no matches found" - simply put the URL inside of quotes so:
`youtube-dl --extract-audio --audio-format mp3 "<video URL>"` or `youtube-dl --extract-audio --audio-format mp3 '<video URL>'` . – [hazrpg](#) Oct 25 '16 at 14:02 
-
- 6 Have better mp3 filename with `youtube-dl --output "%(title)s.%(ext)s" --extract-audio --audio-format mp3 --audio-quality 0 -`
[Pablo Bianchi](#) Mar 23 '17 at 20:44
-
- 6 No need to add `-f bestaudio`. From the [documentation](#): *"By default youtube-dl tries to download the best available quality, i.e. if you want the best quality you don't need to pass any special options, youtube-dl will guess it for you by default."* – [Lu55](#) Oct 8 '17 at 20:32
-

Downloading from YouTube

53 Install [youtube-dl](#) from the official repository in Ubuntu:

 `sudo apt-get install youtube-dl`

or [as official readme suggest](#) using `curl` or `wget`. This will let you upgrade with `sudo youtube-dl -U`

To download a video execute the following:

```
youtube-dl <url>
```

E.g

```
youtube-dl http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_z-hEyVQDRA
```

You can also specify other options

```
-b          Best quality
-m          Mobile version
-d          High Definition
-s          Don't download, just show the url
```

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For complete list of switches execute `man youtube-dl` in terminal.

Information from [here](#)

Converting to mp3

Now install [ffmpeg](#) from the official repo.

```
sudo apt-get install ffmpeg
```

Next have a look to make sure the flv file has downloaded from youtube by typing

```
ls *.flv
```

This will list all the flv files you have. What you should see is a flv file with the same name as the 'v' component of the youtube url you downloaded.

E.g if you downloaded `http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_z-hEyVQDRA` then you should have a file called `_z-hEyVQDRA.flv`

Next you need to copy that file name and then put it in an ffmpeg command like

```
ffmpeg -i <file name>.flv -acodec libmp3lame <song name>.mp3
```

So for this example you would type

```
ffmpeg -i _z-hEyVQDRA.flv -acodec libmp3lame MasterOfPuppets.mp3
```

Once this has successfully completed you will now have the mp3 file you were after.

Note

- For cleanup you may want to type `rm _z-hEyVQDRA.flv` to get rid of the flv file that you no longer need.
- Information from [here](#)

edited Mar 10 at 5:19

answered Aug 21 '12 at 9:49

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You may want to add converting to mp3 with ffmpeg or aconv. – [NRoach44](#) Aug 22 '12 at 8:13

One more, `-acodec liblamemp3` in the ffmpeg command line. – [NRoach44](#) Aug 23 '12 at 1:01

1 Yes you could force the codec to be sure, I have added this. You could also use `-ac 2 -ab 128k` to ensure it converts at 128k – [Jacob Tomlinson](#) Aug 23 '12 at 10:06

4 Or just `youtube-dl -x "${URL}"` . – [Mathias Bynens](#) Nov 21 '15 at 9:45

@NRoach44: it's "libmp3lame", not "liblamemp3" – [Dan Dascalescu](#) Jan 26 '16 at 5:28



For those of us who prefer a GUI interface, there is [YouTube to MP3](#) from MediaHuman.

1

1. Installation



You can do [direct downloads](#) for Ubuntu 16.04+ but I prefer the [repository](#) because of automatic updates.

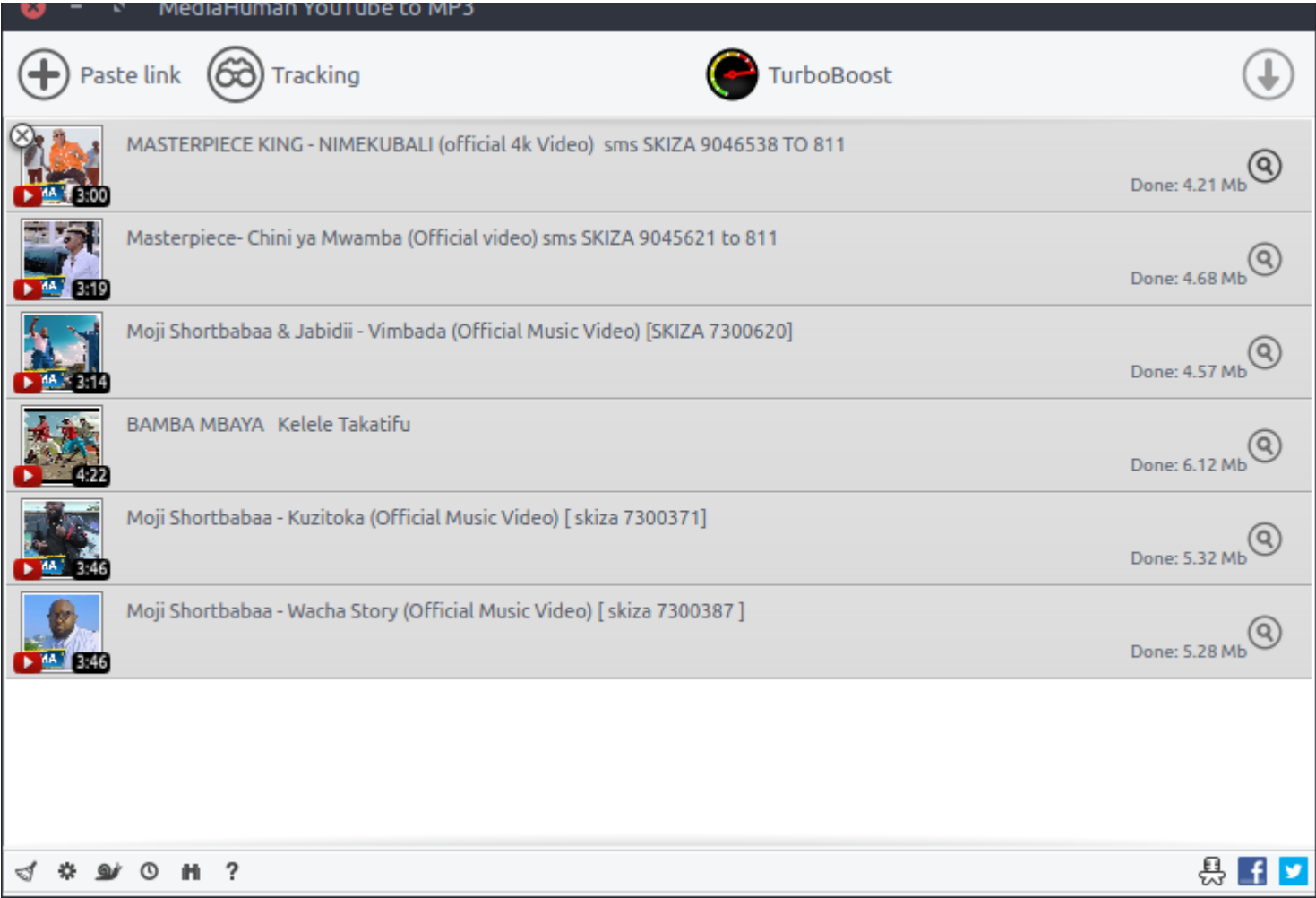
```
sudo add-apt-repository https://www.mediahuman.com/packages/ubuntu
sudo apt-key adv --keyserver pgp.mit.edu --recv-keys 7D19F1F3
sudo apt update
sudo apt install youtube-to-mp3
```

2. Usage

Search and open 'Youtube to MP3' via dash or another launcher. Copy the Youtube video URL from the browser to your clipboard and paste it into the application by clicking the 'Paste link' button on the top-left corner. See screenshot below.

The download and conversion will begin automatically and the audio saved in the Home folder under `/Music/Downloaded by MediaHuman`

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answered Mar 12 at 10:23



Parto

9,740

19

69

107

protected by Community ♦ Oct 3 '17 at 12:19

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2 watchers 903 questions

Downloading a file is taking a file stored on a remote machine or attached device and transferring it to your computer to be stored.

[View tag](#)

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