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Can I directly download audio using youtube-dl?

Can I *directly* download audio from a YouTube video instead of first downloading audio+video and then extracting the audio?

▲

91   youtube-dl

▼

★   edited Feb 24 '14 at 2:55   asked Feb 20 '14 at 7:05
                                               Braiam   DK Bose
31   **53.6k** 21 143 228   **17.5k** 12 51 104

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5   I don't think its a duplicate because that question clearly required the search facility. This question does not. I have also mentioned that in the answer.
     This question is useflu to people who already know what has to be downloaded. – DK Bose Feb 22 '14 at 4:45 ✏

YouTube. I hope you understand. – DK Bose   Feb 22 '14 at 5:35

2   That does not use youtube-dl. It uses another program called `mps-youtube` . Correct? This question is about using `youtube-dl` and not about using `mps-youtube` . I always try my answers myself before posting. If I don't, I will make it clear that it is only a suggestion :) – DK Bose   Feb 22 '14 at 5:58

3   This is not a duplicate. You can use `youtube-dl` to do this, but I can't answer this question because people have marked this as a duplicate. – palswim
     Sep 8 '16 at 22:12

2 Answers

▲

132

▼

✔

Here is a recent article in webupd8.org that explains how to use `youtube-dl` to directly download audio instead of first downloading video+audio and then extracting audio using `-x` . *Unfortunately, the search facility that Maythux asked for here isn't offered.* But it is still worth a look:

Video Downloader `youtube-dl` Gets Support For Separate Audio And Video YouTube DASH Streams

Basically, download the latest version of youtube-dl from source or from the ppa offered in the link above but **not** from the Software Center.

Then, if you already have the video link ...

Run, as example:

```
youtube-dl -F http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRIF4_WzU1w
```

This will list the various download formats available for this url (audio and video).

```
$ youtube-dl -F http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRIF4_WzU1w
[youtube] Setting language
[youtube] HRIF4_WzU1w: Downloading webpage
[youtube] HRIF4_WzU1w: Downloading video info webpage
[youtube] HRIF4_WzU1w: Extracting video information
[info] Available formats for HRIF4_WzU1w:
format code extension resolution  note
171         webm      audio only  DASH webm audio , audio@ 48k (worst)
140         m4a       audio only  DASH audio , audio@128k
160         mp4       192p        DASH video
133         mp4       240p        DASH video
```

```
36        3gp        320x240
5         flv        400x240
43        webm       640x360
18        mp4        640x360       (best)
```

Now, choose desired audio format. I went for `140`

Run:

```
youtube-dl -f 140 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRIF4_WzU1w

$ youtube-dl -f 140 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRIF4_WzU1w
[youtube] Setting language
[youtube] HRIF4_WzU1w: Downloading webpage
[youtube] HRIF4_WzU1w: Downloading video info webpage
[youtube] HRIF4_WzU1w: Extracting video information
[download] Destination: Martin Luther King - I Have a Dream on August 28, 1963 [Sous-
titres & Subtitles] [FULL SPEECH]-HRIF4_WzU1w.m4a
[download] 100% of 15.19MiB in 00:04
```

That's it.

edited Apr 13 '17 at 12:24

Community ♦
1

answered Feb 20 '14 at 7:06

DK Bose
17.5k　12　51　104

2　　Some audio players do not support DASH audio. For m4a, I had to demux it to make it a 'regular' m4a using ffmpeg. For example: `ffmpeg -i input.m4a -vn -c:a copy output.m4a` — Sun Nov 7 '14 at 8:14

8　　@sunk818 and just a public announcement that: `youtube-dl 2015.01.23.4 and newer will automatically correct the header of the m4a file if ffmpeg is present on the system.` So, if `ffmpeg` is installed before `youtube-dl` is called now it will automatically fix the DASH container and you won't need to run sunk818's fix. — tsujp Apr 21 '15 at 16:15

24　　`youtube-dl -f bestaudio http://...` if you don't want to select best audio manually. — Seppo Erviälä Nov 19 '15 at 13:27

8　　be careful with `-f bestaudio` as best audio could be .webm and not .m4a Use -f m4a if you want best m4a quality audio. — Sun Apr 13 '16 at 23:31

6　　`youtube-dl -f 'bestaudio[ext=m4a]' "http://youtu.be/hTvJoYnpeRQ"` — xiota May 9 '18 at 8:19 ✎

12

```
$ youtube-dl -f 'bestaudio[ext=m4a]' 'http://youtu.be/hTvJoYnpeRQ'
```

I've missed it on the first reading, so I've decided to post the comment as an answer to make it more visible.

answered Oct 5 '18 at 4:36

jfs
2,435   22   42

This gives 2 errors, one for format not available and the other for failing to parse the url, – Atte Juvonen Oct 24 '18 at 19:08

@AtteJuvonen the command works as is. – jfs Oct 24 '18 at 19:25

No it doesn't. WARNING: The url doesn't specify the protocol, trying with http ... Warning: Could not send HEAD request to http://'youtu.be/hTvJoYnpeRQ'. If I fix the url by removing the ' characters, then it gives ERROR: requested format not available. – Atte Juvonen Nov 21 '18 at 21:42

@AtteJuvonen try to copy the command *as is* If it is still failing for you, provide your OS, youtube-dl version. – jfs Nov 22 '18 at 4:33

2   @AtteJuvonen the site is "Ask Ubuntu". I tested the command on Ubuntu. Ubuntu is different from Windows. The command in the answer expects a bash-like shell. On Windows, for `cmd.exe` you could try to replace single quotes with doubles quotes (there could be other Windows related issues). – jfs Nov 23 '18 at 16:34