Video Formats

In this lesson, we will cover the three different video formats that are commonly used.
Let's begin!

Although the early versions of the HTML5 recommendations suggested several specific video and audio formats that every browser should support, the standard does not require any specific format. This means that browsers are free to choose the supported video and audio formats.

Supporting a certain video format actually means accommodating to three standards: the video codec, which is responsible for decoding the compressed video into a stream of data; the audio codec, which is expected to decode one of the audio tracks (a video can have more than one audio track); and the container format, which assembles the video, audio, and other descriptive information such as still images and subtitles into a single video file.

By the time of writing this course, there are three wide-spread standards used with HTML5-compliant browsers, but of course the list of them will definitely change as time passes on. **H.264** is an industry standard for video encoding generally used for high-definition video.

Most consumer devices, such as camcorders, mobile phones, and Blu-ray players support this, and it is popular in video sharing websites like YouTube and Vimeo. This is what most users know as MP4 files, because the default file extension for this kind of video is **.mp4**, and they use the `video/mp4` MIME type.

Ogg Theora is a free, open standard for video, and although its quality and performance are not as good as H.264, this standard still satisfies most users. When you see the .ogv file extension, it means an Ogg Theora format, which has the `video/ogg` MIME type.

There is a new video format, **WebM**. Google purchased VP8 and transformed

it into this free standard. It was designed to provide royalty-free, open video compression for use with HTML5 video. When you meet videos with the `video/webm` MIME type, or with the **.webm** file extension, you see examples of this new standard.

When you add video to your pages, you have to cope with the fact that different browsers support different formats. HTML5 provides workaround to resolve most of these issues with the help of the tag, as you will learn in the next exercise.