



# Media file formats for subtitle preparation

When creating or checking subtitles it is vital that the video and audio reference material accurately represents the master media that the subtitles will be used with. This is true regardless of the style or type of subtitle to be used, if the dialogue is not accurate and correctly timed then the subtitles are unusable.

To achieve accurate and correctly timed subtitles the media used at the subtitle preparation stage needs to meet a range of requirements:

- The video should have sufficient image quality to be usable and to check lip sync
- Good quality audio so you can easily understand the dialogue,
- Good audio to video sync to get the subtitle timing accurate
- No missing or duplicated frames when referenced against the original
- A timecode track that matches the master version
- As small a file size as possible to speed up file transfers.

To meet these requirements Screen Subtitling Systems recommend the following file format:

Audio and Video Coding:	WMV
Codecs:	Windows Media 9 video and audio codecs
Total bit rate:	500kb/s
Audio bit rate:	64-96kbp/s
Resolution:	352 x 288 for PAL - quarter SD 352 x 240 for NTSC (HD video can be down converted to the same resolution)
Aspect ratio:	Use native aspect ratio (4:3 or 16:9)
Frame rates:	24,25,29.97 fps Constant frame rate (CFR) Note: Variable frame rate (VFR) is not recommended
Timecode:	Embedded Optional burnt in timecode may also be present.