

How to produce Flash video for use on the web

Adobe Flash CS4 provides a number of options for importing and publishing video with a Flash movie.

You can import the following video formats:

- Video for Adobe Flash (.flv, .f4v)
- 3GPP/3GPP2 for mobile devices (.3gp, .3gpp)

You can import the following video formats if you have QuickTime 7 or later installed (Windows and Mac OS):

- Audio Video Interleaved (.avi)
- Digital Video (.dv)
- Motion Picture Experts Group (.mp4, .m4v, .avc)
- QuickTime Movie (.mov, .qt)

You can import the following file formats if you have DirectX 9 or later installed (Windows only):

- Audio Video Interleaved (.avi)
- Motion Picture Experts Group (.mpg or .mpeg)
- Windows Media File (.wmv, .asf)

Deploying video

How you choose to deploy your video determines how you create your video content and how you integrate it with Flash. You can incorporate video into Flash in the following ways:

Progressively download video from a web server: Flash creates a Flash video file that downloads from a regular web server and plays within the published SWF file.

Stream video with Adobe Flash Media Server: This option produces the overall best performance; however, it requires either the Flash Media Server or a subscription to a Flash Video Streaming service. See the Adobe website for more information: www.adobe.com.

Embed video in the Flash document: You can embed a small, short-duration video file directly into the Flash document and publish it as part of the SWF file. Embedding video content directly into the Flash SWF file significantly increases the size of published file and is only suitable for small video files (typically less than 10 seconds in length).

To encode your video for Flash:

1. Open an existing Flash document or create and save a new Flash document.

Note: You must save the Flash document before you begin the video import process.

2. Select a keyframe on the layer in which you want to import the video.

This is where the video player will be located after the video import is complete.

- Click File > Import > Import Video.

The import Video dialog box appears (**Figure 1**).

- Click the Launch Adobe Media Encoder button.

The Adobe Media Encoder appears (**Figure 2**).

- In the Media Encoder, click the Add button and browse to the location for the video file you want to encode.

- Choose an appropriate Format, Preset (**Figure 3**), and Output File location in the Media Encoder.

- Click the Start Queue button to begin encoding.

When the encoding process is complete, close the Adobe Media Encoder.

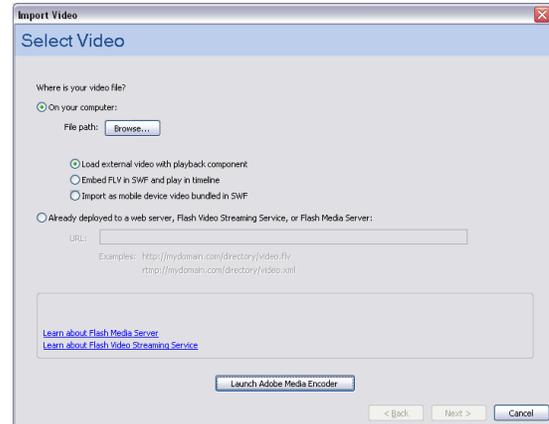


Figure 1 Import Video dialog box

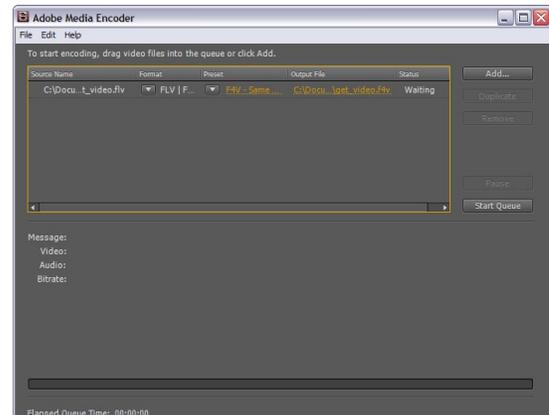


Figure 2 Adobe Media Encoder

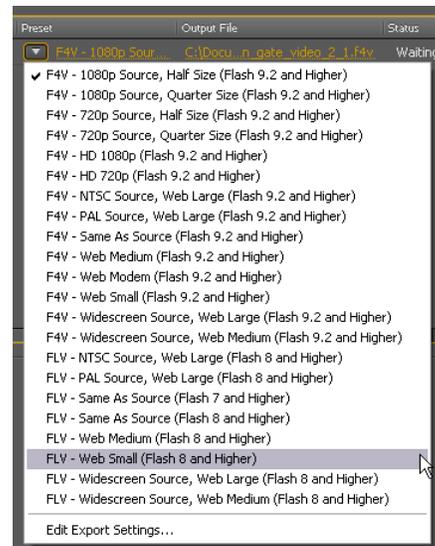


Figure 3 Preset options for encoding video

To use progressive download:

1. Click File > Import > Import Video.

The import Video dialog box appears (**Figure 4**).

2. Click the browse button to find the location for the newly encoded video file you want to import.

You can use a video file located either on your computer or on the Internet.

3. Select Load External Video With Playback Component.

This option progressively loads your external video file into your Flash document.

4. Click Next (Windows) or Continue (Mac OS).

The Skinning page of the Import Video wizard appears (**Figure 5**).

The video's skin determines the location and appearance of the video controls. Visitors see this skin when Flash plays the video.

5. Select a skin from the Skin pop-up menu.
6. Select a skin color from the color picker.
7. Click Next (Windows) or Continue (Mac OS).

The Finish Video Import page of the Import Video wizard appears. This page confirms the location of the Flash video file.

8. Click Finish.

The FLVPlayback object appears on the Stage (**Figure 6**).

9. Select Control > Test Movie to see it play.

The video plays in the Flash Player window. You can use the controls to stop, pause, fast forward, rewind, and change the volume of the video.

10. Select File > Close to close the preview window.

11. Open the folder in which you saved the Flash document.

This folder now contains two new files: an FLV file and a SWF for the video's skin. (The skin will be called something like MojaveOverAll.swf.) When you publish your Flash document, you need to copy both of these files to the same location as the Flash document.

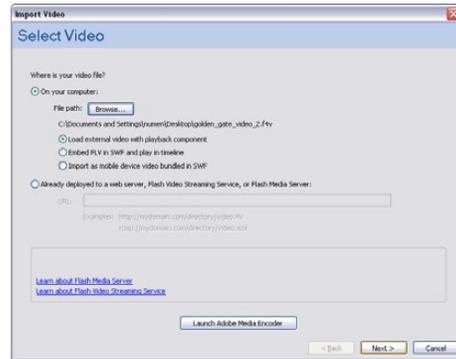


Figure 4 Import Video wizard, Select Video page



Figure 5 Import Video wizard, Skinning page

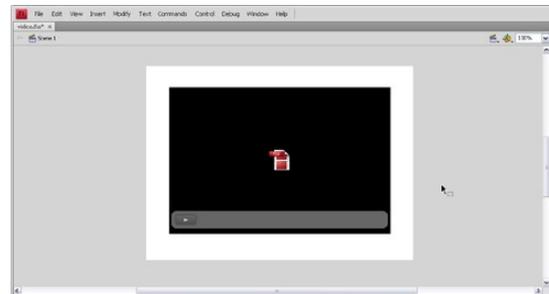


Figure 6 FLVPlayback object on Stage

Embedding video within SWF files

When you select the embedded video option, Flash converts video to Timeline frames. When the SWF file is published, the video is fully contained in that file. Unlike progressive download, embedded video requires no external file and so is easier to deploy. However, because embedded video often has problems with audio synchronization after 120 frames, Adobe recommends embedded video in only three cases:

- When you want visitors who have Flash 5 to be able to view your video
- When you must have one single file that encapsulates the video and the Flash content
- When your video clip is less than 5 seconds long

These situations are not common. In all other situations, embedded video is not recommended.