



Tips for reducing video file size with HandBrake

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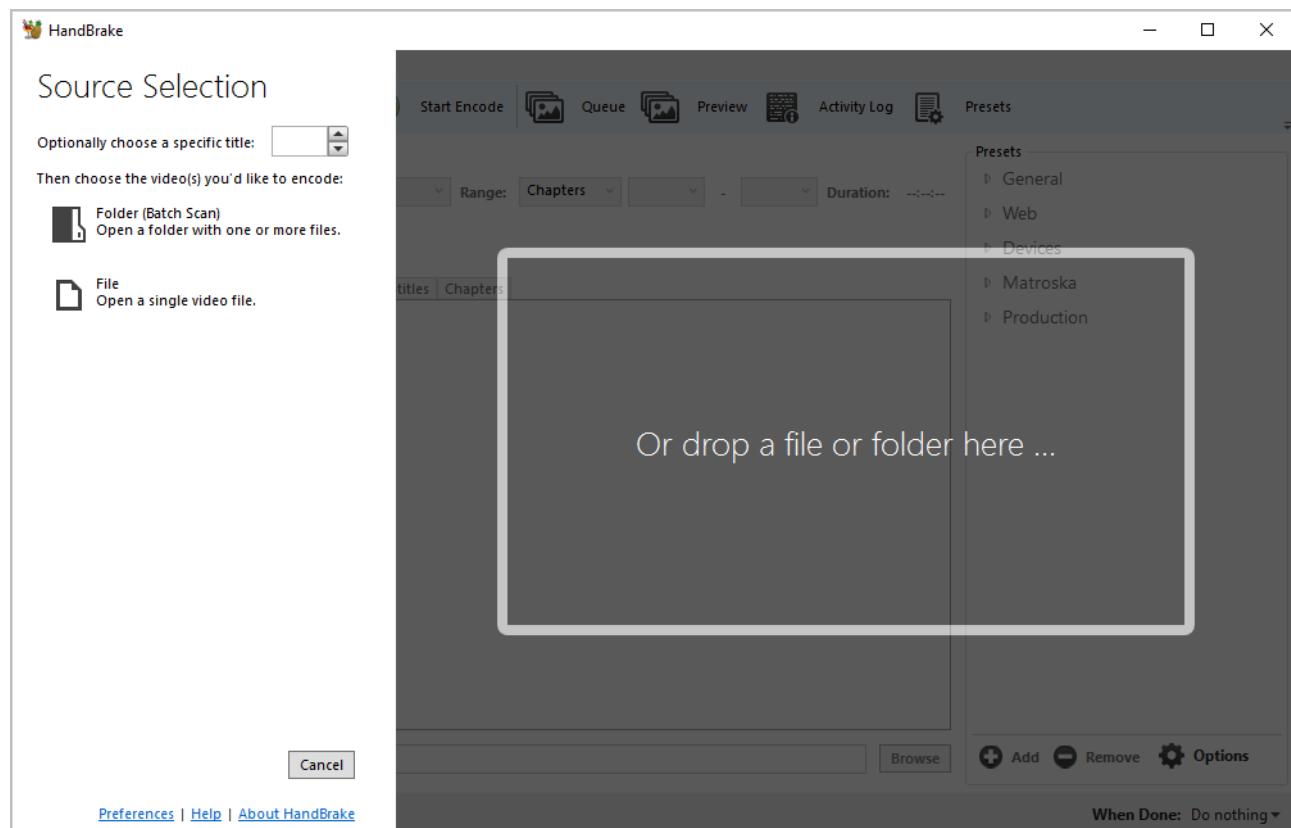
HandBrake is a free-of-charge open source software for converting videos.

The software is available for Windows, Mac and Linux. This short guide describes the first steps based on Windows version 1.3.3.

If you work with videos, you'll probably come into contact with (too) large files sizes. When you place large videos in heiBOX or Moodle, some of your target audience will run into problems due to their low Internet bandwidth. Therefore: Lecture recordings don't need feature film 4k image quality and should be offered for download in an optimized form.

Installation

HandBrake is open source and available via this URL: <https://handbrake.fr/>.



screenshot: HandBrake start window after installation on Windows

Which conversion presets are generally suitable?

A suitable target format is MP4 with video codec H.264 and audio codec AAC. The file may become much smaller when using the standard preset of HandBrake - e.g. without reducing the screen resolution or framerate – please start this way! It's good to know:

- 1080p = resolution 1920x1080 – high resolution
- 720p = resolution 1280x720 – lower resolution, often sufficient for lecture recordings

Either use the same resolution for target format and source format or select a lower resolution for the target format. In HandBrake, you'll see the file name, resolution and framerate right next to "Source".

Tip: Except for computing time and some local disk space, it will cost you nothing to try different HandBrake options! If you always create your videos technically with the same camera / software, you can always use the same HandBrake settings.

The most common steps for converting videos / reducing file size

1. Drag your file into the HandBrake window
2. Make sure about the source format (probably 1920x1080)
3. Check the preset:
 - a. Use Preset Fast 1080p30 (= target format 1920x1080) OR
 - b. Change Preset, reduce quality (choose, if necessary, Presets / General / „Fast 720p30“)
4. Select local storage location and file extension „mp4“.
5. Click on „Start Encode“ Wait Finished.
6. Your converted video with new (smaller) file size is located in the specified storage location.
7. Play the converted video and evaluate if the quality is sufficient for your purposes.

