Captioning Videos

Captioning videos is important for accessibility reasons as well as Universal Design for Learning principles. Whenever possible, add captions or a transcript to recordings, for accessibility and Universal Design for Learning principles. There are various methods to auto-generate captions that can be downloaded and shared on one of our hosting platforms.
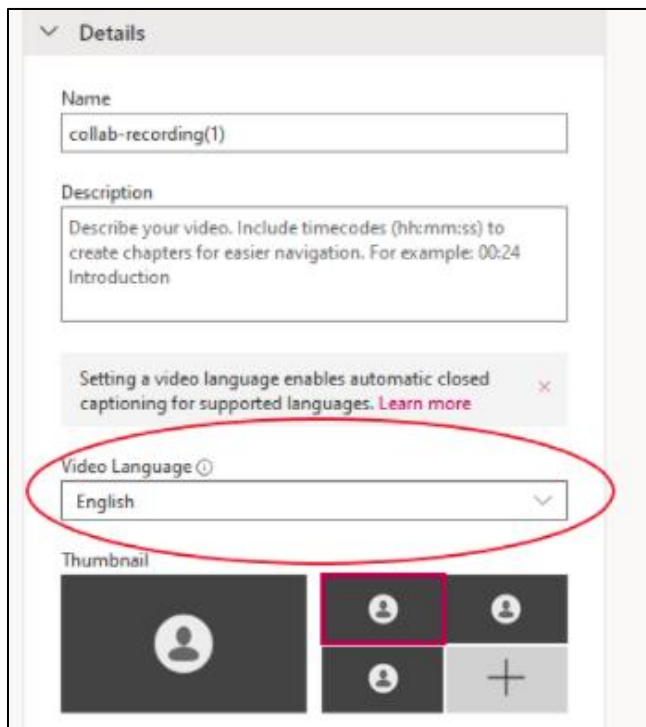
Microsoft Stream uses speech-recognition technology to automatically create captions for videos for both MS Stream or MyMedia. A new OneDrive/SharePoint feature can also be used to add captions to recordings. Captions can also be generated within Zoom and downloaded for hosting at one of University of Toronto's hosting solutions.
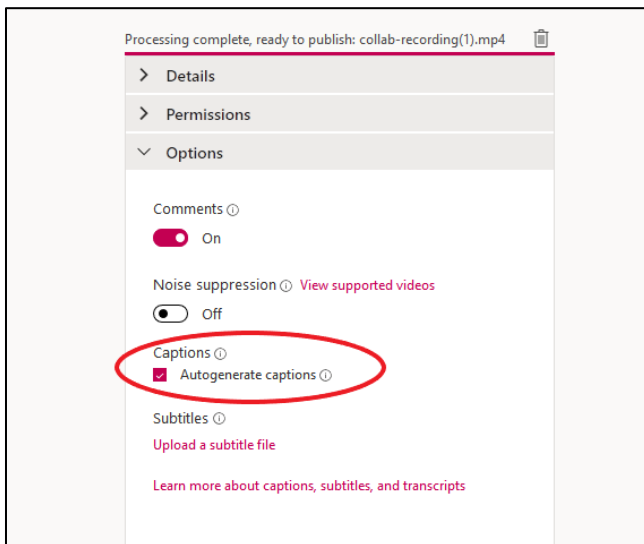
Microsoft Stream

Staff and Students can upload .mp4s and many other formats to their OneDrive and autogenerate captions. OneDrive has a 1TB limit for all data.

Autogenerate captions on videos uploaded to MS Stream

1. Upload or open the video that you wish to caption.

2. If you don't see the following panes, select the **… More options** link beside Liked and then select **Update video details.**

3. Ensure that under **Details** your **Video Language** is set to English.

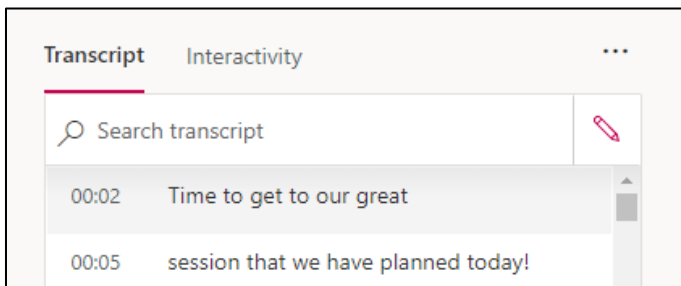4. Under the **Options** tab, choose: Autogenerate captions.

5. Once your captions have been generated, a transcript will show to the right of the video in MS Stream. Note that it might take a while for them to appear. Refresh the page periodically.
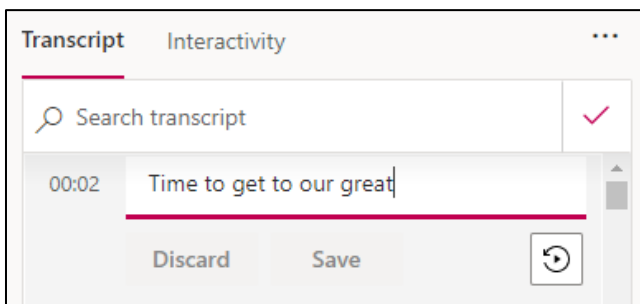
Edit Captions in MS Stream

Autogenerated captions are not always accurate and will usually need corrections. You can edit them directly in Microsoft Stream.

1. Go to the Transcript shown in the pane to the right of the video.

2. Select the pencil icon in the top right of the transcript box.
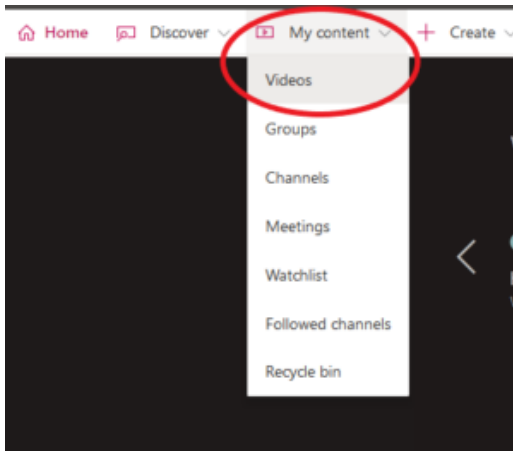

3. The edit transcript function allows you to select individual timestamp segments and make the changes you need.

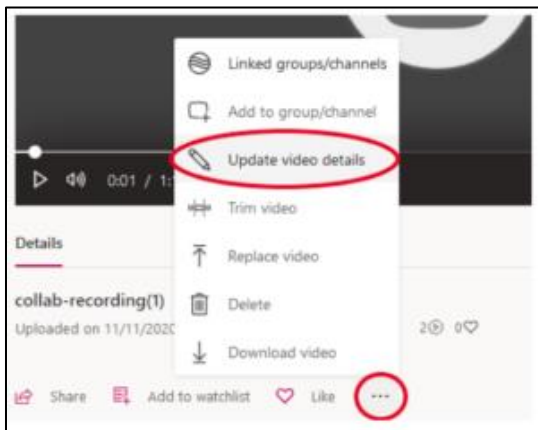4. Select **Save** to accept the change.

Download Autogenerated Captions to Edit Offline

If your caption file requires significant changes, you may wish to edit it offline. There are a number of apps that you can use, including a text editor.
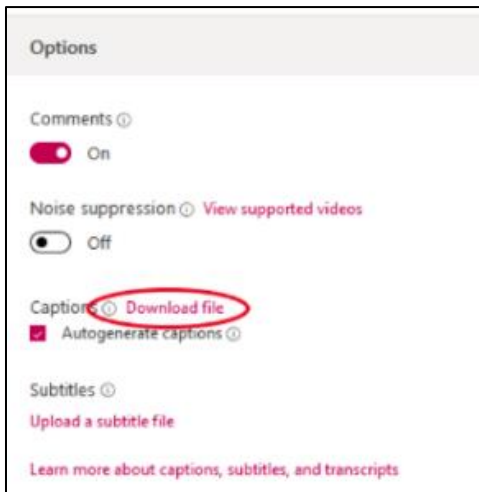
1. Access your Videos and change video details by going back to the top menu and selecting **My Content** > **Videos** .

2. Select the three dots to the right of the "Like" button and select "Update video details" from the drop-down menu.

3. On the video details page, select Options and find the captioning information.

4. Select the **Download** link. It will download to your local computer.

5. If you choose to edit in a text editor like Notepad:

   a) change the suffix (.vtt) to .txt

   b) Make your corrections.

   c) Save the file.

   d) Change the file extension back from .txt back to .vtt and it is ready to upload.

6. You may also choose to use a code editor like Visual Studio Code, which will provide colour context and other useful features. It is free to download. You can right-click on the Caption (.vtt) file and open with Code to edit. There is no need to change the suffix. Save frequently. Save prior to closing. Once finished, you can upload the .vtt file a needed.

Editing Captions

Important: Only edit the text of the captions. Do not change the header, timestamps, or codes included in the file.
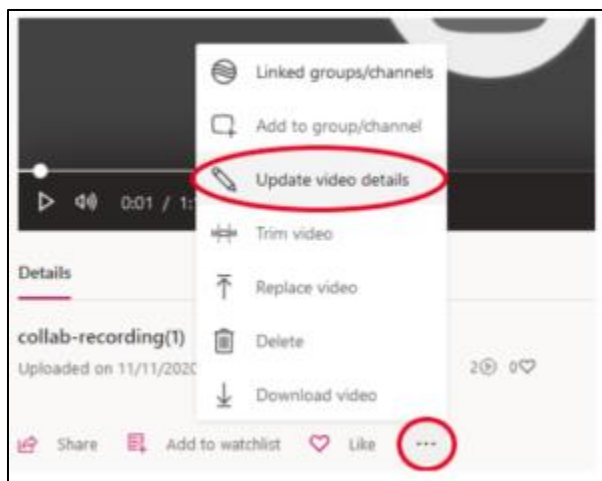
Use the program of your choice to make corrections to your captions file. Common errors are punctuation, abbreviations, and the names of individuals and departments. We recommend listening to the recording (adjusting the speed to .50) while making corrections.
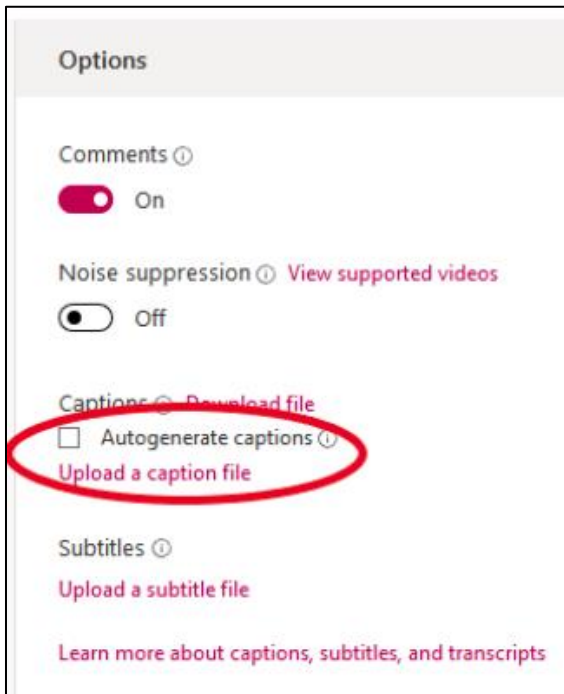
 Upload Corrected Transcript

Once you have finished and saved a corrected file on your computer, you will need to upload it to MS Stream again. Alternative, you may upload the video and caption file to MyMedia.

To upload the correct transcript to MS Stream:

1. Return to the Videos page, select the video, and **Update Video Details**.

2. Under Options, find the Captions section.

3. Uncheck the "Autogenerate captions" checkbox.

4. You will now see the text "Upload a caption file."

5. Select the link and select the updated caption file on your computer.

6. Once uploaded, the newly corrected transcript should appear to the right of your video.

OneDrive / SharePoint

Staff and Students can upload .mp4s and many other formats to their OneDrive and autogenerate captions. OneDrive has a 1TB limit for all data.
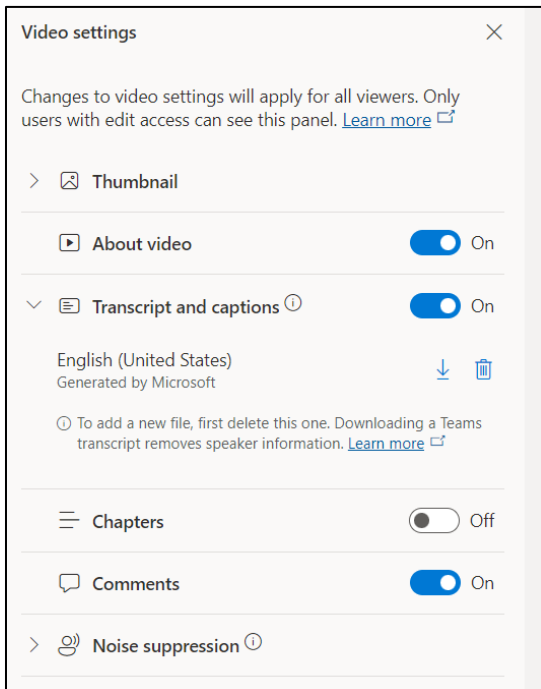
Autogenerate Captions in OneDrive / SharePoint

Videos can be up uploaded to OneDrive or SharePoint and captions can be autogenerated inside the platform. This option is available to anyone with University of Toronto credentials including students. Note that students don't have access to uploading in MS Stream so this makes an excellent option for captioning.

Steps for Captioning in OneDrive

1. Log in to OneDrive with your U of T credentials.

2. Select the **Upload** button in the top menu > **Files** and upload your video.

3. Once the video is uploaded, select and open the video.

4. On the top of the video, select **Video settings** at the top right of the video.

5. Use the slider bar beside **Transcript and captions** to turn it on.

6. Select your caption source.

   a) **Autogenerate captions**, select the **Generate English** button (the only option currently available as of June 2022). It might take a few minutes to generate, depending upon the size of your recording. Use the **Refresh** button periodically to check progress.

   b) **Upload an existing caption file.** If you already have an existing caption file (.vtt) on your computer, then you can select Upload to add it. Caption files can be downloaded from MS Stream or Zoom.

7. The **CC** button will be displayed at the bottom of the video and viewers can choose to turn on or off captions as desired.

Note: You may wish to download and host your video and captions on MyMedia or Stream.

Downloading with captions is a two-step process.

1. Download the video from the link on the top menu above the video. This download does **not** include the caption (.vtt) file.

2. Download the caption file: go back to **Video Settings** > **Transcript and captions** and use the download arrow beside the captions to get that file, as well.

Refer to MyMedia or Stream documentation on how to upload the file.

Note: The caption (.vtt) file can be downloaded from OneDrive and corrected. There is no method currently to correct the transcript within OneDrive.

Download the .vtt file, change the suffix from. vtt to .txt and edit it like a text file. When finished, save and rename back to. vtt. It can be uploaded back to the OneDrive video.

ZOOM Videos

If the student has access to Zoom they could record a presentation directly in Zoom. Save the recording to Zoom Cloud (for a maximum of 120 days) or record directly to the computer. In either option, a caption file (.vtt) can be generated and saved to the cloud or computer.

To Record:

1. Log in to https://utoronto.zoom.us/ with U of T credentials.

2. Start a meeting and record. You can share a PowerPoint within the meeting.

3. If recording to your computer, choose where to save the recording and .vtt file. You can choose to host files on MyMedia (with your U of T credentials) or in your OneDrive.

4. If recording to the cloud, log back in to Zoom any time (within 120 days) to access it.

Documentation on Zoom is available at https://teaching.utoronto.ca/tool-guides/zoom/

Recording with Captions Displayed on Screen

Captions can be displayed using PowerPoint or Chrome captions (in Chrome Settings) and recorded. Those captions are "burned" (also called Open Captions) into the video, meaning they are hardcoded into the video itself and can't be edited. That makes them less flexible, however they are an option in no other solution is available.

PowerPoint

PowerPoint captions can be generated on the screen and recorded; however there is no way to download a caption file.

Chrome's captions while can be turned on while recording (within Settings). Again, there's no way to download a caption file.

Hosting to MyMedia

Anyone with University of Toronto credentials can log in and host on MyMedia, the U of T Library's video hosting solution.

To upload with captions, first upload the video and then add the captions. Please refer to [MyMedia Hosting and Sharing](#) for documentation.