

PowerPoint Narration

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ABOUT SELF-RUNNING PRESENTATIONS

Self-running presentations are commonly used at conventions and trade shows, or even the waiting room at your local doctor's office. Self-running presentations are designed to run without a

speaker present so the presentation should therefore provide enough time for the user to read the information, as well as to provide clear navigation cues for the audience if required.

Setting Up A Self-Running Presentation

For most self-running presentations, you will set up the slides to advance automatically after a specified period of time. This is done by assigning **automatic** timings to each slide.

You can use the **Rehearse Timings** feature to apply the same timing to all slides. Alternatively you can assign variable timings to each slide, which is particularly useful where some slides contain less content than other slides (such as title slides). It's a good idea to actually read through each slide when rehearsing timings to determine how much time it will take your audience to read and absorb the information.

Adding Narration To A Self-Running Presentation

You can also add **narration** to a self-running presentation. As everyone absorbs information in different ways (such as auditory or visual learners) this can help to deliver your message more effectively. To add narration, you can **record the slide show**. PowerPoint will record the amount of time that you spend viewing each slide, and at the same time you can record narration for the slides as required. PowerPoint will store the timing for each slide, and will also store the recording on each slide (displayed as a speaker icon on slides). Timings applied to each slide can be viewed in **Slide Sorter** view.

Note that you will need specific hardware to record the narration, such as a sound card in your computer, a microphone and speakers. Hardware requirements are discussed in more detail on the following page.

An alternative to recording the slide show is to record specific sounds or comments on relevant slides. This is achieved by selecting the **INSERT** tab, **Audio** and then **Record Audio**. Again, you will require the necessary hardware as noted above.

Enabling User Navigation

If you want your audience to be able to navigate through a presentation at their own pace, you can disable any automatic timings and instead provide navigation cues for the audience, such as **action buttons** or **hyperlinks**.

For example, you can insert an action button in the shape of an arrow with the word 'Next' as a cue to the audience that they can click on this button to advance to the next slide. Action buttons give the look and feel of a web page with easily recognisable navigation icons such as *Home*, *Help*, *Next Page*, *Last Page*, and so on.


Alternatively, you can create **hyperlinks** for custom shows (which display specific slides within your presentation), other presentations, Microsoft Word or Excel files, specific addresses on the internet, or to email addresses. You can create hyperlinks from any object – including text, shapes, tables and pictures.

UNDERSTANDING NARRATION

Narration can enhance self-running presentations. You can also use narration to retain the details of a meeting, so that presenters or absentees can review the presentation later and hear any comments made during the presentation.

1 How Narration Works

You can record a narration **before** you run a presentation or you can **record a narration during a presentation** so that you include audience comments and feedback as part of the recording. If you don't want narration throughout the presentation, you can record comments only on selected slides or turn off the narration so that it plays only when you want it to play.

When you add a narration to a slide, a sound icon  appears on the slide. As with all sound icons, you can either click it to play the sound or set the sound to play automatically. Voice narration takes precedence over any other sounds, and only one sound can play at a time in a presentation. As a result, other sounds that are set to play automatically in a presentation are overridden by a narration and will not play. However, sounds that are set to play when clicked will still play when you click them.

If you have rehearsed timings for the slides in a presentation and then you record narration, the rehearsed timings will be overwritten with the narration times.

Note: To record and hear a narration, your computer must have the appropriate equipment - a sound card, microphone, and speakers.

2 Linked or Embedded Narration

There are two ways in which narration can be included in a slide show. You can record your narration and embed it into the presentation. Alternatively, you can use any recording software (and equipment) to record your speech and then you can link that into any of your presentations.

Embedded

The narration sound file becomes part of the presentation and is stored with it, resulting in a larger file size for the presentation.

Linked

The file size of a presentation containing linked narration is smaller because the sound file is stored outside the presentation file. You can specify a location on your hard disk drive for the narration, and the sound file plays with the presentation. If you run the presentation on a different computer, you must move the linked sound file to that computer.

If you link narrations to your presentations, you can make changes to the sound files by using a sound editing program.

RECORDING A SLIDE SHOW (NARRATION)

If you are setting up a self-running presentation for viewing by a particular audience or the general public, you might decide it's a good idea to add narration to the presentation. In this way, the presentation will be seen as well as heard. Here we give you an overview of how to record narration and timings for a self-running presentation.

Hardware Required

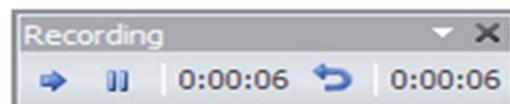
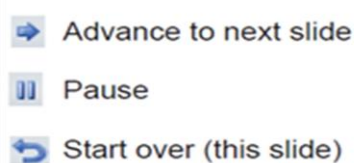
To enable you to record and play back the narration, you will require the following hardware:

- A **sound card** installed on your computer. This enables you to hear sound. Most computers will already have this device installed.
- **Computer speakers.** Most computers today have built-in speakers which should be enabled by default. You may need to check that the volume is working. You can do this by clicking on the *Speakers* icon (or similar) on the taskbar and check that the sound is not turned off (or muted), and then adjust the volume to the desired level.
- A **microphone** to record your narration. For most computers, you can simply plug the microphone into the available microphone plug (a round plug with a microphone icon just above it or labelled 'mic-in') at the rear of your computer (for desktop computers) or along the side or rear of your laptop computer.
You can then begin recording your narration in PowerPoint.

Recording The Slide Show

The following is a guide to recording narrations for a slide show.

1. When you are ready to record the narration for each slide, click on the **SLIDE SHOW** tab, then click on the bottom half of **Record Slide Show**. You then select **Start Recording from Beginning** or **Start Recording from Current Slide**. If you select the latter option, ensure that the required slide is displayed in the **Slides** window or selected in **Slide Sorter** view.
You do not necessarily have to record in sequence. Also, you can pause during recording and resume at any time.
2. The **Record Slide Show** dialog box will then appear asking you if you want to record narrations (**Narrations and laser pointer**) and timings (**Slide and animation timings**). To record both narrations and slide timings, leave both of these options selected and then click on **[Start Recording]**.
3. The first (or selected) slide will appear, along with the **Recording** toolbar. The **Recording** toolbar will record the timings for each slide. You can advance to the next slide when you finish recording narration for the current slide or **Pause** recording and timing. You can also re-record by clicking on **Start over**.



4. To end the recording at any time, press **[Esc]**.

Previewing The Narration

Timings are saved and these will be displayed in **Slide Sorter** view. Any recorded narration will appear as a sound icon on the slide. To listen to a recorded narration, navigate to the slide, click on the sound icon, click on the **PLAYBACK** tab, then click on **Play** in the **Preview** group. If you are not satisfied with the recording, simply press **[Del]** to delete it. To re-record narration for that slide, click on the **SLIDE SHOW** tab, then click on **Record Slide Show** and select **Start Recording from Current Slide**.

Setting Up The Show

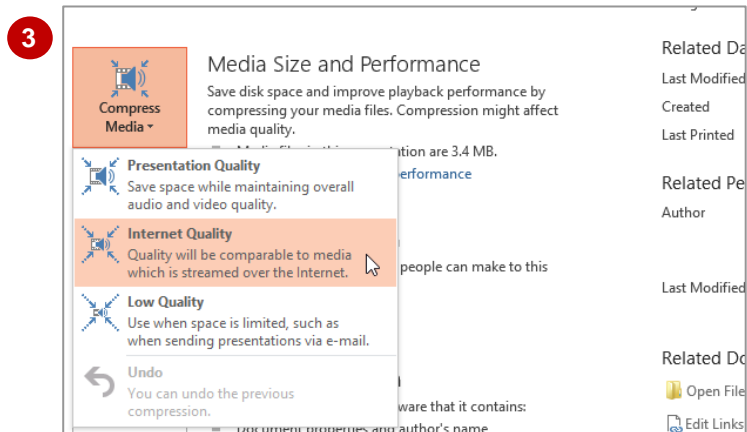
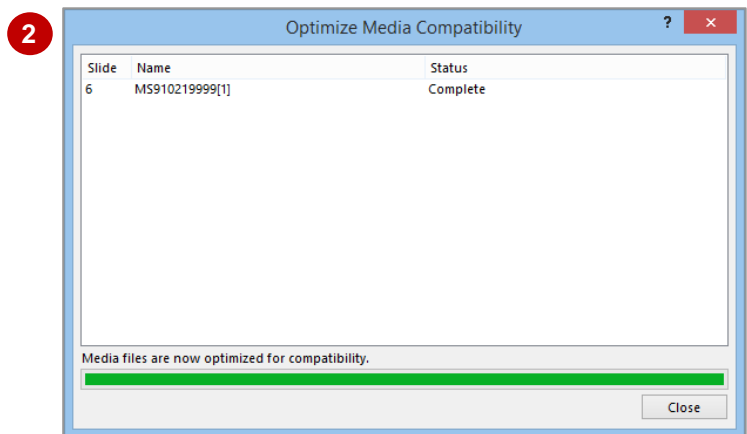
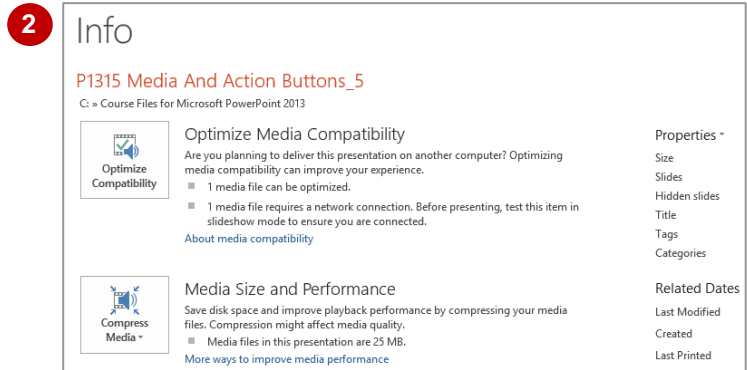
By default, timings and narrations will be applied when you set up the presentation as a self-running presentation. To set up the presentation as a self-running presentation, click on the **SLIDE SHOW** tab, then click on **Set Up Slide Show** to open the **Set Up Show** dialog box. Click on **Browsed at a kiosk** option under **Show Type**. You can hide the sound icons on each slide by selecting the sound icon, clicking on the **PLAYBACK** tab and then clicking on **Hide During Show** in the **Audio Options** group so that it appears with a tick.

OPTIMISING AND COMPRESSING MEDIA

Embedding media into your presentation can increase overall file size. If you are preparing a presentation to distribute on the internet or to send via email, you can **optimise** and **compress** the media. Optimising a presentation will ensure compatibility across computers, while compressing a presentation will reduce its file size (along with a possible reduction in media quality).

To optimise and compress media:

1. Click on the **FILE** tab to display the **Backstage** and ensure **Info** is selected in the left pane
Here you can optimise and compress media...
2. Click on **[Optimize Compatibility]** to begin the optimisation process
The Optimize Media Compatibility dialog box is displayed. Optimising enables the video to be viewed on any computer, even if the video format is not supported. Now we'll compress the remaining media objects...
3. Click on **[Close]**, then click on **[Compress Media]** and select **Internet Quality**
This option will compress to a size suitable for viewing on the internet...
4. Click on **[Close]** to close the **Compress Media** dialog box, then click on the **Back** arrow to return to the presentation



Handy to Know...

The **Compress Media** option contains two other compression options: **Presentation Quality** and **Low Quality**. Select **Presentation Quality** when you want to preserve current video and media quality and select **Low Quality** when you want to send the presentation via email, for example.

SAVING A PRESENTATION AS A VIDEO

PowerPoint provides you with the ability to save your presentation as a **video**. This might be useful if you want to upload the presentation to the internet or burn it onto a DVD. When you save the presentation as a video you can save it as an **MPEG-4 Video (*.mp4)** or a **Windows Media Video file (.wmv)**, and it will include any narrations, audio, animations and transitions.

To save a presentation as a video:

1. Click on the **FILE** tab, then click on **Export**
2. Click on **Create a Video** under **Export** to display the options for creating a video

Read the information in the right pane and ensure the default settings are selected

3. Click on **[Create Video]** to open the **Save As** dialog box

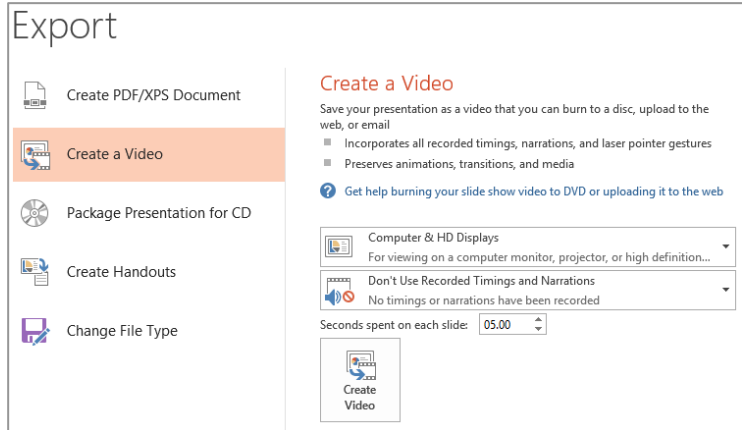
The default file type in Save as type will be MPEG-4 Video (.mp4)...*

4. Type in a **File name**, then click on **[Save]**

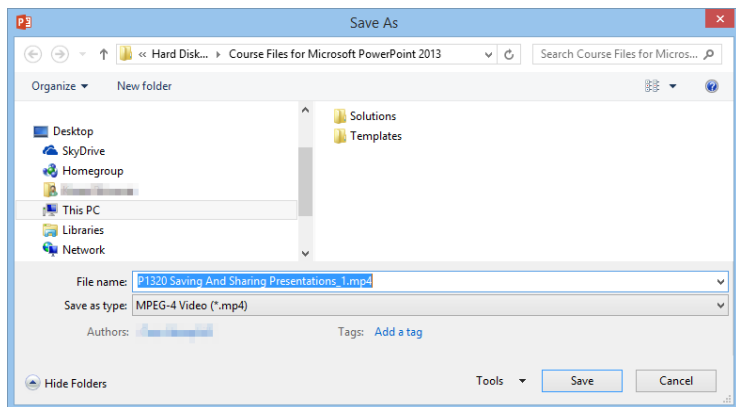
If a message appears, click on [Continue without media].

It may take some time to save in this video format. You can check the progress of the save operation in the status bar...

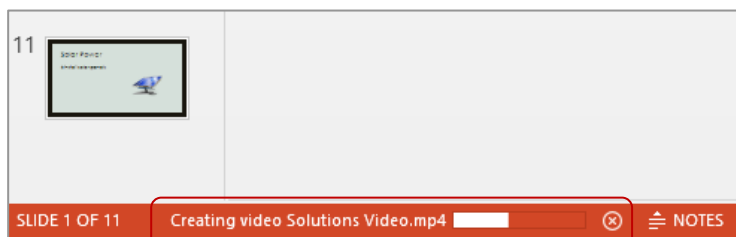
5. Once the operation is complete, open **File Explorer**, navigate to the course files folder and double-click on the video to open it



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Handy to Know...

- If you do not want to distribute a video in the native **.mp4** format, you can use third-party conversion software to convert the file into your preferred video format.
- Video files will be much greater in file size than a presentation file.