

iTunes

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Podcasting Resources

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FAQs: For Podcast Fans

What is a podcast?

A podcast is an episodic program delivered via the Internet using an XML protocol called RSS. Podcast episodes can be audio files, video files, documents, or any combination of the three. The publisher or provider podcasts the program by posting the episodes and the XML document to a web server. The consumer subscribes to the podcast using a client application, such as iTunes, which regularly reads the XML file and downloads new episodes.

Because podcasts can include several of the most common types of media, they can be used to offer many different kinds of programs. Any television or radio program can of course be transmitted as a podcast, as can any lecture, performance, or other recorded event. Using the AAC file format, audio podcasts can include synchronized still images to create a narrated slideshow. In this way, a series of lectures can include the lecturer's voice and presentation slides. In most podcasts, each episode is the same file format, so subscribers can enjoy the program the same way each time. However, some podcasts use multiple media. Language courses, for example, can combine video for a sense of the foreign country, audio for information and ear training, and documents for practice and reference.

A wide variety of programs are distributed as podcasts, because the protocol offers compelling characteristics for publishers:


- The cost of distribution is limited to the cost of data transfer.
- The XML document that ties the podcast together is simpler to create and maintain than most web pages.
- The RSS protocol helps facilitate an ongoing, opt-in, and highly convenient relationship with the subscriber.
- The size of the channel is effectively unlimited and therefore can't be dominated by any other publisher or provider.

And podcasts are attractive to subscribers, too:

- Podcasts are free.
- Thousands of podcasts are available from all over the world.
- New podcast episodes appear automatically and can be enjoyed anywhere, anytime.

How can I get started?

The podcast directory in the iTunes Store is where you find and subscribe to new podcasts.



The Podcasts section of your iTunes library is where you manage your subscriptions and play the episodes you have downloaded.

To find and subscribe to a podcast:

- Open iTunes. If you do not have iTunes, [download](#) the latest version of iTunes, free.
- In the upper-right corner of iTunes, click iTunes Store in the navigation bar.

4. Explore the wide selection of podcasts by clicking the various pages and links.
5. Alternatively, you can search for podcasts by entering search terms in the Search Store field. When iTunes displays results for your search, click Podcasts in the list on the right to show only podcasts.
6. When you find a podcast you want to try, you can:
 - Stream the podcast directly from the store by double-clicking an episode.
 - Download a specific episode to your iTunes library by clicking the Free button next to an individual episode.
 - Subscribe to the podcast by selecting Subscribe below the cover art located on the left of the podcast page.

To listen to or watch episodes you have downloaded to your iTunes library:

1. Navigate to Library on the right side of the navigation bar in iTunes.
2. Select Podcasts from the Library pop-up menu.
3. Click the name of a podcast to see all the episodes.
4. Double-click an episode to play it.

When a book is downloaded, the book is automatically copied into your Books library in iTunes. To read the book, you must use the Apple iBooks app on your iOS device.

How much do podcasts cost?

All podcasts on the iTunes Store are free.

How do podcasts work?

Podcasts consist of the episode files that you download and an XML file that lists all the episodes. When you subscribe to a podcast, iTunes reads the XML file and downloads the latest episode. Each day, iTunes rereads the XML file. If a new episode is available, iTunes downloads it automatically.

For more information on creating your own podcast, see the For Podcast Makers FAQs and the Making a Podcast page.

Are iTunes podcasts available in my country?

iTunes podcasts are now available in over 155 countries worldwide.

How does iTunes support podcasts?

The iTunes client application that you download and use on your Mac or PC lets you subscribe to podcasts and listen to or watch the episodes on your computer, iPod, iPhone, iPad, or Apple TV.

The iTunes Store, which includes a podcast directory, helps you find and subscribe to programs and helps podcasters publicize their programs.

The Podcasts app makes it easy to enjoy podcasts on iOS devices.

[Download the Podcasts app free from the App Store](#)

Do I need an iPod, iPhone, or iPad?

No. Although you can download podcasts to your iPod, iPhone, or iPad to play them on the go, you can listen to or watch podcasts on your computer using iTunes, or on your TV using Apple TV. To read ebooks for text-based podcasts, you must use the Apple iBooks app on your iOS device.

Do I have to have an account for the iTunes Store to get podcasts?

No. However, you do need an account to submit a podcast to the iTunes Store.

What should I do if a podcast I want to subscribe to isn't available in the iTunes Store?

Store. To subscribe, find and copy the podcast's feed URL. From the File menu, choose Subscribe to Podcast and paste the feed URL into the text box.

Are there video podcasts?

Podcasts are more than just audio; some of the most popular podcasts in the iTunes Store are video podcasts. Most are playable on iPod, iPhone, and iPad. Additionally, Apple TV supports watching video podcasts on your TV screen.

There are also text-based podcasts. iTunes podcasting supports PDF files, which can be opened on your computer (iPod, iPhone, and iPad cannot display PDF files), and ebooks, which can be read using the Apple iBooks app on your iOS device.

What is an enhanced podcast?

An enhanced podcast is an audio podcast that can include chapter marks, photos, and hyperlinks. When you download and play an enhanced podcast in iTunes, a Chapters menu appears in the menu bar. Here you can find all chapter marks, artwork, and start times associated with each chapter. During playback, the artwork and any associated hyperlinks for each chapter are displayed in the bottom-left corner of the iTunes viewer window.

When you play an enhanced podcast on an iOS device, the artwork and any associated hyperlinks appear on the screen and update with each chapter. On iPad, you can find chapter marks for a downloaded enhanced podcast by tapping the cover art and then tapping the far-right icon at the bottom.

Why won't some video podcasts play on my iPod, iPhone, iPad, or Apple TV?

Some video podcasts, while playable in iTunes, are encoded in formats that are not compatible with iPod, iPhone, iPad, or Apple TV. To convert those videos so that they are compatible across different Apple platforms, select the downloaded video in iTunes and choose Create New Version from the File menu. From there, you can choose to create a version compatible with iPod and iPhone or iPad and Apple TV. iTunes will automatically re-encode the video for playback on your selected device. Go to the Movies section of your iTunes library to find and play the converted episodes.

How can I find podcasts in my language?

Podcasts are available in many different languages. The easiest way to find them is simply to search using words in the desired language.

To see podcasts that are popular in other countries, click the Home icon to go to the main page of the iTunes Store. At the bottom right of the main page is a circular flag that indicates the current store's country. Click the flag to display a list of countries supported by iTunes, and click one of the flag icons to navigate to the store for that particular country. Once in the desired store, navigate to the Podcasts page. In the Top Podcasts list, for example, you will find podcasts popular in that country.

How can I share the podcasts to which I subscribe?

There are so many podcasts, it's tough to know which ones to subscribe to. Make it easy for your friends to find great podcasts by sending them some of your favorites. From a podcast's page in the iTunes Store, select the Tell a Friend option from the pop-up menu next to the Subscribe button. This option will allow you to send a link for the podcast, along with a custom message, via email. From the same pop-up menu, you can also copy the URL or share the podcast via your Twitter and Facebook accounts.

Are there parental controls for podcasts?

The parental controls built into iTunes apply to podcasts. Limit your children's exposure to explicit content, or block the Podcasts section altogether, from the Parental Controls section of iTunes preferences.

If you are no longer interested in a podcast to which you subscribed, select the podcast in your library and click the Unsubscribe button next to the podcast title. To unsubscribe and delete all files related to the podcast, simply press the Delete key after selecting a podcast.

Can I put podcasts in a playlist?

Yes, podcast episodes can be added to a playlist or Smart Playlist like any other track. However, new episodes of a podcast are not automatically added to a standard playlist. See the Make Playlists section of the Tips for Podcast Fans page for details on enhancing your podcast experience with Smart Playlists.

Can I play podcasts on my iPod shuffle?

Yes. To play a podcast on iPod shuffle, set the switch on iPod shuffle to play in order. Also, note that the Autofill feature of iTunes does not add audiobooks and podcasts to iPod shuffle. Instead, you should add audiobooks and podcasts manually by dragging them to the iPod shuffle playlist.

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