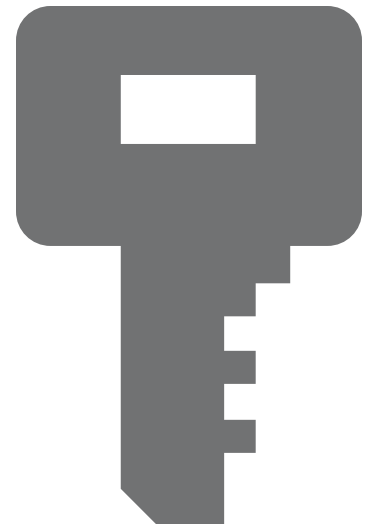


Best Practices: Captioning



Spelling and Grammar

- Spelling should be at least 99% accurate
- Both upper and lowercase letters should be used
- Punctuation should be used for maximum clarity, it does not need to be as formalized as it would appear in a published paper or textbook. It should, however, maintain the meaning and context behind what is being said in the video, use periods, upper/lower case, and commas where necessary to maintain clarity
- Captions should preserve and identify slang or accents
- For example, if the speaker says “y’all” do not change it to you all as this change removes the intended accent

Non-Speech Sounds

- Non-speech sounds like [MUSIC] or [LAUGHTER] should be added in brackets
- When possible describe the music being played i.e. [UPBEAT MUSIC] or [INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC]
- It isn't necessary to note background music when someone is speaking unless that music adds to the meaning or context of what is being said

Format

- Should be non-serif such as Helvetica or Arial
- Each caption frame should hold 1 to 3 lines of text
- Each caption should remain onscreen for 3 to 7 seconds
- All captions frames should be precisely time-synced to the audio
- A caption frame should be repositioned on the screen if it obscures onscreen text or other essential visual elements

Other

- Each caption frame should be replaced by another caption
- For example, if there is a pause in speaking in the video, note this pause in the captions as “speaker has paused”
- When multiple speakers are present, identify who is speaking at the start of the caption
- Verbal pauses such as “um” or “uh” may be omitted at your discretion if they do not add meaning to the video.
- For example, in a video meant to showcase someone’s ability to speak professionally, verbal pauses may provide additional insight into that ability
- When in doubt, ask yourself if it adds to the meaning of the video and would someone be missing that meaning if it were not included