

## Reducing & Converting Files

This document provides instructions on how to import your files from a CD to your computer, reduce the size of large files and convert files to a preferred audio format.

Sterling Transcription's preferred audio formats are .mp3, .wma, .wav, .dct, .dss, .ds2, .dvf, .msv, .ogg, .aiff, .m4a, mp4, .vox, and .aac.

Sterling requires files to be under 1000MB in size.

Frequently asked questions are addressed at the end of the brochure.

To skip to the instructions or information that you require, click on the relevant section listed below.

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## Importing Files From A CD

### 1 Ripping files from a CD using Windows Media player (PC only)



Files on an audio CD are generally in .cda format and should be ripped before uploading to your secure login on the Sterling Transcription website.

CDA files uploaded to our website that have not been ripped will display as 0KB in size and will not be playable (and therefore not transcribable). You can rip audio CD files in Windows Media Player (WMP) by following the instructions below:

1. Load your audio CD into your computer's disc drive.

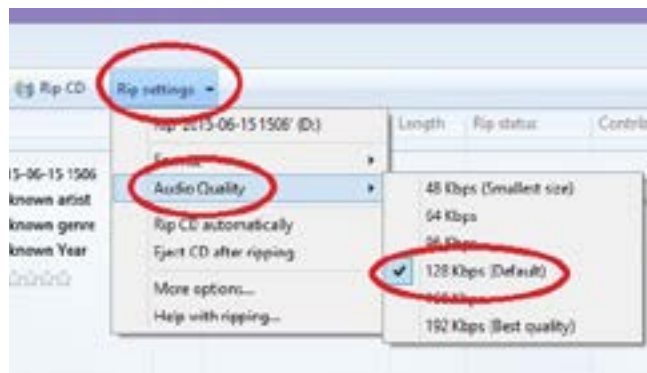
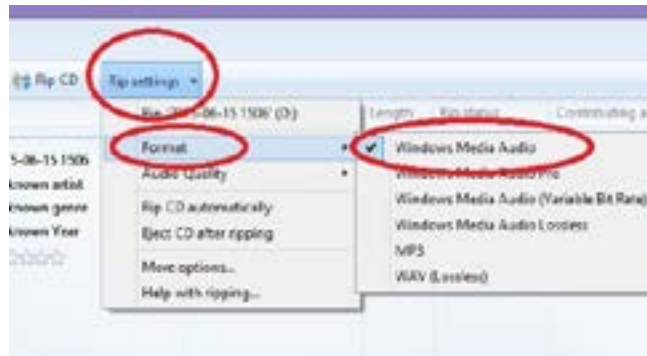
2. Open/view the audio CD in Windows Media Player and ensure the program window is fully maximised.

3. Click Rip Settings tab, select Format and tick Windows Media Audio format (.wma).

4. Click Rip Settings tab, select Audio Quality and tick 128Kbps (default).

5. Under the Rip Settings tab you can change the location of where the file will be saved, by clicking on More Options..., then Rip Music tab.

6. To change this location you can click Change and browse to the folder you'd like to save your files and click OK.



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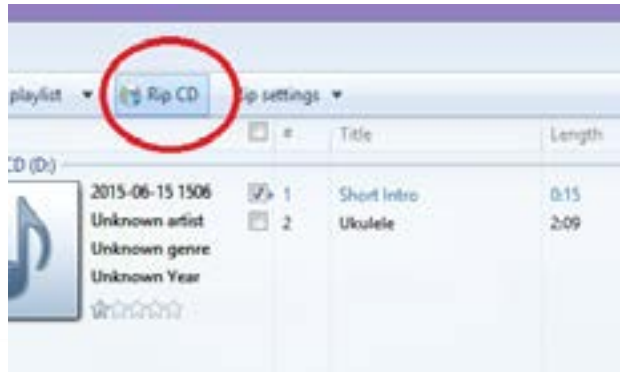
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7. In WMP main window select the audio files you want to rip.

8. Hit the Rip CD tab.

9. After ripping finishes, browse to the saved location specified in step 5.

You are ready to upload your files for transcription.



## 2 Importing Files From a CD Using iTunes (PC and Mac)



[Download iTunes here.](#)

1. Load your audio CD into your computer's disc drive.

2. Open the iTunes program.

3. Check the import settings by clicking on the Import CD icon.



4. Make sure Import Using is selected to MP3 Encoder or WAV Encoder.

5. Click Ok. The files will begin importing.



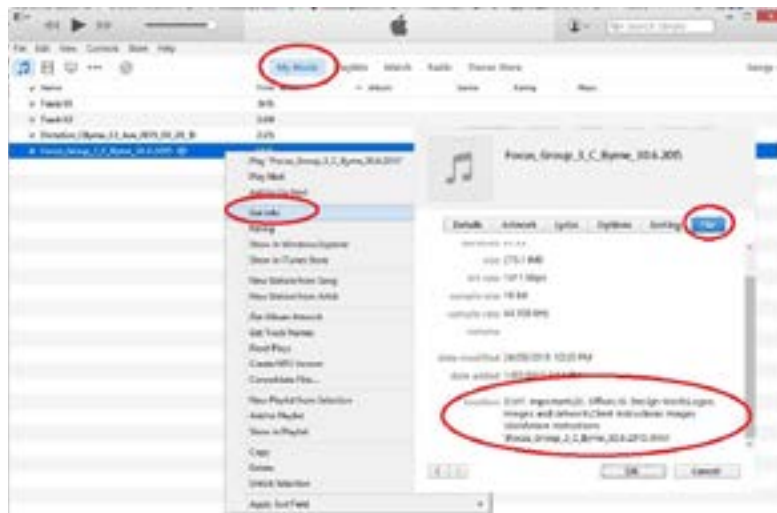
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6. Once the CD has been imported check the file/folder location by clicking on My Music, and right-click on the file you wish to check.

7. Select Get Info. In the pop-up screen select File at the top righthand side, and scroll down to Location. This is where your file is located.

You are now ready to upload your files for transcription.



## Reducing Large Audio Files

### 3 Compressing Large .wav Files (PC and Mac)

Some WAV files can be very large in size - even up to a gigabyte per file! This makes them time consuming when uploading to your Sterling Transcription account.

The good news is that files can be compressed without drastically compromising the quality of the audio.

To compress .wav files you may use either the program Switch (30 day trial) or GoldWave (free) and install them on your PC or Mac (Switch is Mac compatible).

The conversion process in each program is outlined below and involves converting your .wav file to an .mp3 file (which will effectively reduce the size with minimal loss of audio quality).

Once you have installed one of these programs you will need to take the following steps to compress the audio file.

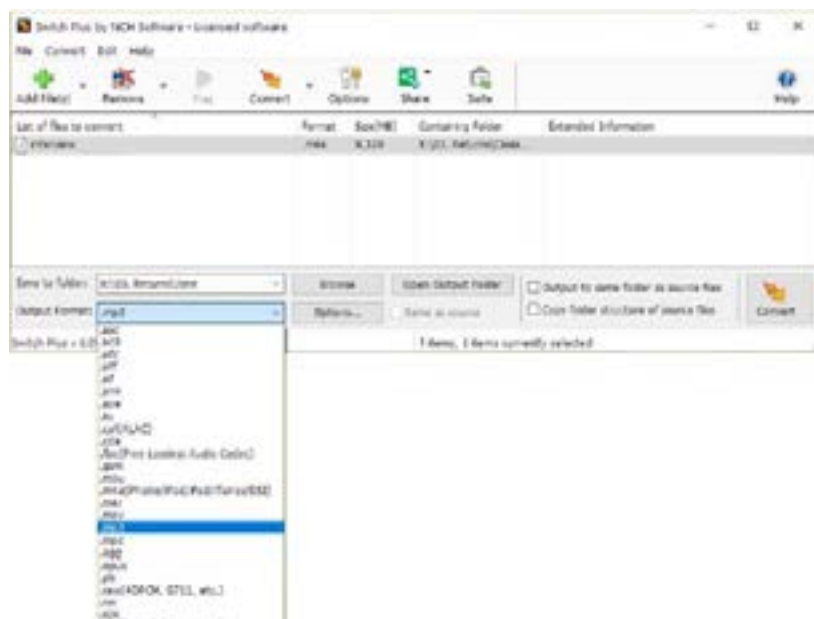


## Reducing Audio Size Using Switch (PC and Mac)



[Download Switch here.](#)

1. Open the Switch program.
2. Click Add File/s icon at the top left-hand corner of the window.
3. Navigate to the audio file you wish to reduce in size, select the audio file and click Open.



4. At the bottom of the screen Click the Output Format drop down menu and select .mp3.
5. Select the Convert icon at the bottom right-hand corner of the window. Your audio file will convert to an .mp3 format.
6. The new audio file should be saved in the same folder as the original file that you converted.

You are now ready to upload your file for transcription.



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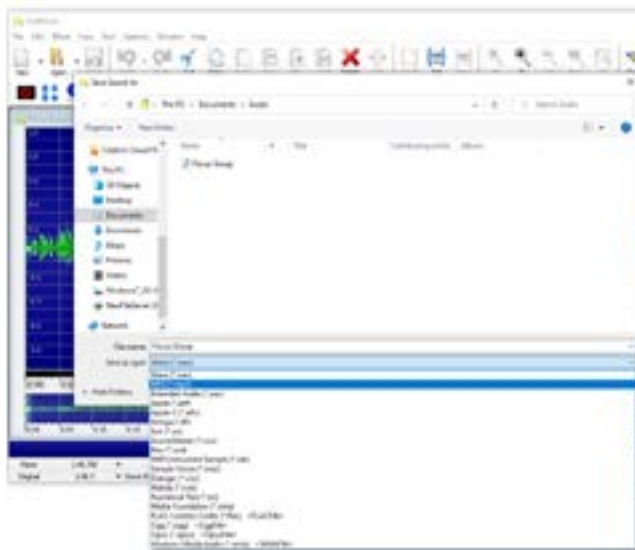
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## Reducing Audio Size Using GoldWave (PC Only)



[Download GoldWave here.](#)

1. Open the GoldWave program.
2. Click the Open icon and navigate to the audio file you wish to reduce in size.
3. Select the Audio File and click Open.



4. In the File menu, click Save As.
5. Navigate to the folder to which you would like to save the audio file.
6. Select the Save As Type drop down menu and select MP3 (\*.mp3).
7. Click Save at the bottom right-hand corner of the window.

You are now ready to upload your file to the Sterling Transcription website.

## **4** Converting Large .m4a (.aac) Files

Some .m4a files produced by iPhones, iPads and iPods are very large. This makes them time consuming to upload to your Sterling Transcription account.

Sterling Transcription suggests converting your large .m4a files to a more compressed file format (such as .mp3 or .wav).



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To convert your files we recommend that you use GoldWave or iTunes.

Please note that GoldWave supports .m4a files provided you have QuickTime or iTunes installed on you PC.

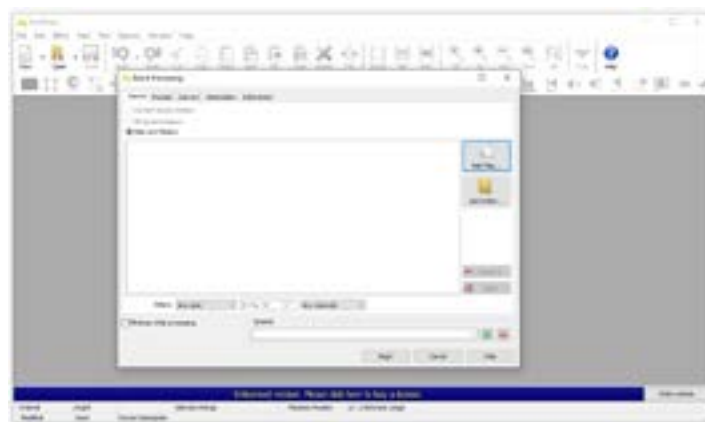
To compress the size of your .m4a files using GoldWave or iTunes, follow these instructions.

## Converting .m4a Files Using GoldWave (PC Only)



[Download GoldWave here.](#)

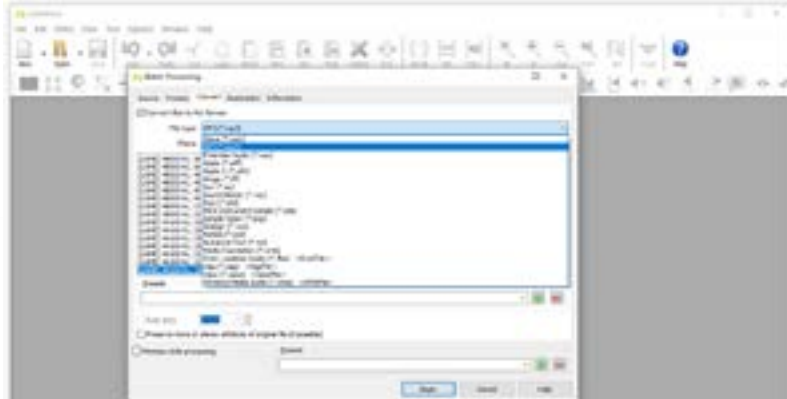
1. Enter the GoldWave program.
2. Click on File and select Batch Processing.
3. Select Add Files icon on right-hand side, and navigate to the file you wish to convert.
4. Click Add.



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5. Under the Convert tab, tick Convert Files to this format, and under File Type drop down menu, select MP3 (\*.mp3).



6. Select the Destination tab and identify the output folder.

7. Click Begin. The audio will convert to the selected output type.

8. Navigate to the output folder to access your file.

## Converting .m4a Files Using iTunes (PC and Mac)



[Download iTunes here.](#)

1. Enter the iTunes program.

2. Upload your audio file to iTunes. To do this click on File, then Add File to Library, navigate to the file and click Open. Your file will now appear in My Music.

3. Select the audio file that you wish to convert and right-click.

4. Scroll down and select Create MP3 Version. The file will convert to an .mp3 format.





5. To locate the file, right click on the audio file and select Get Info.
7. Select the File tab at the top right of the window and scroll down to Location, which shows the pathway to your file.
8. Navigate to the relevant location to access your file for upload to your secure Sterling client account area.

## Converting Large Video Files

### 5 Converting .mp4 Files (PC and Mac)

Sterling Transcription recommends that you convert your .mp4 files which are larger than 1000MB, to a preferred file format. Only the audio track is required for transcription purposes, and converting .mp4 files to a preferred format will significantly reduce the time required to upload your files to your secure Sterling client account.

To convert large .mp4 files to audio files we recommend Prism Video File Converter. It is a free software which can convert .mp4 files to preferred audio file formats.

\* Please note that if your Prism trial has expired you will have to purchase the program to complete the task of converting .mp4 files via Prism.

If you are unable to use Prism, there are a number of other free video to mp3 converter programs available. One is called Free Video to MP3 Converter, and is easy to use.

\* Please note that it is the responsibility of the downloader to thoroughly read all material provided by the program developer, before completing installation. Make sure you deselect any extras to ensure unwanted “add-ons” are not installed with the program.

### Converting .mp4 Files Using Prism Video File Converter



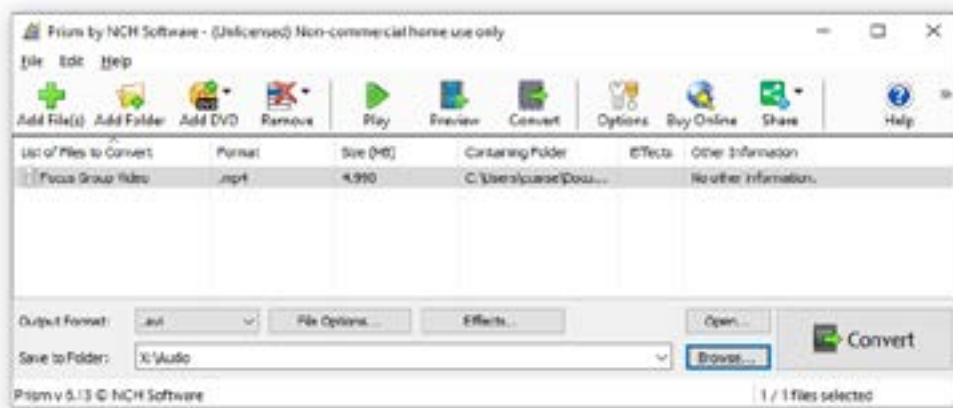
[Download Prism here.](#)



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1. Open the Prism Video File Converter program.
2. Click Add File to select your .mp4 file.
3. At the bottom of the screen you can view settings. Check and change the Save to Folder and Output options if necessary. We recommend setting the output options to .mp3.
4. Press to Convert the .mp4 file. The file will convert to the selected file format, and saved in the selected area.



## Converting .mp4 Files Using VLC Media Player



[Download VLC Media Player here.](#)

1. Open the VLC Media Player.
2. Click on Media and select Convert/Save, or press ctrl + R on your keyboard.
3. Use the Add... button to choose your files.
4. Press the Convert/Save button down the bottom.
5. In the drop down menu, select Audio - MP3.
6. Down the bottom under Destination, click Browse and navigate to where you would like to save your file.



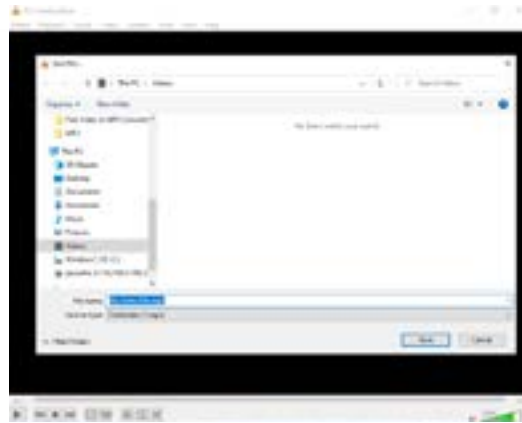
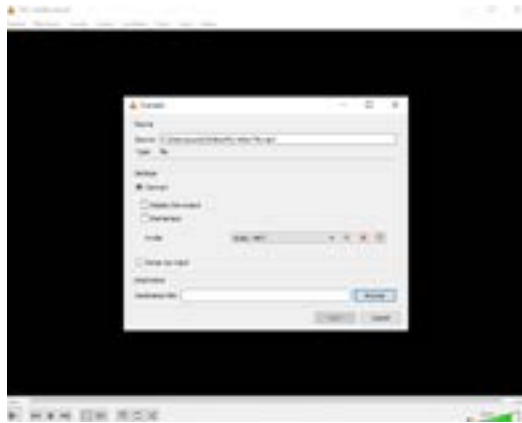
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7. In the File name: section, either rename your file, or type .mp3 at the end before clicking Save. E.g. "My Video" becomes "My Audio" or "My Video.mp3".

IMPORTANT: If you leave the same file name without adding .mp3 it could overwrite or corrupt your file.

8. Click Start.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### How large can my files be?

This depends on the audio format and recording quality. As a rough guide, your files should not be larger than 1MB per minute of audio. As such a one hour interview should not exceed 60MB.

Sterling Transcription requires each file to be no larger than 1000MB in size. Files larger than 1000MB cannot be uploaded to your secure client account, and therefore must be reduced or converted to below 1000MB in size.

### What are Sterling Transcription's preferred file formats?

Sterling Transcription's preferred file formats are: .mp3, .wma, .wav, .dct, .dss, .ds2, .dvf, msv, .ogg, .aiff, .m4a, .vox, and .aac.



## What do I do if I have reduced the size of my .wav file and it is still quite large?

As large files can hinder the upload process, we recommend that you compress the file further. To do so, convert the large .wav file to .mp3 using GoldWave.

An .mp3 version will always be smaller than .wav, usually without much loss of quality.

## I've used Switch before, but now Switch won't convert my file - what's happening?

If you have already installed and used Switch, and the 30 day trial has expired, you will not be able to complete the file conversion process.

Instead, you will be prompted to purchase a Switch license to continue successfully using the program.

There are a few options: purchase a Switch license; or use another program to convert the file.

A Switch license is generally inexpensive, and can be cost effective if you use the program regularly.

## Why doesn't Sterling Transcription use DropBox?

Sterling Transcription cares about the security of our client's information.

As such, we do not recommend the use of Dropbox or other cloud-based information exchanges as we cannot guarantee safe passage of the information provided.

Sterling's Privacy Policy is available via the [Brochures page](#), or in your secure login area.

## How long will it take to upload my files to Sterling's secure client login area?

The time it takes to upload files depends on both the size of the files you are uploading and the speed of your internet connection.

Upload speeds are a lot slower than download speeds for most internet connections, and a 50MB file can easily take 5-10 minutes to upload.

We recommend uploading from a university or business grade connection where possible.



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## How do I convert a video file to an audio file?

Sterling Transcription suggests you use Switch to convert video files. Switch does not claim to support video files, however, it will often convert them anyway.

Before browsing for your audio file, ensure Files of Type: is set to All Files.

## Notes on downloading free software

Many free software programs use the download process to install other “add-on” programs, many of which are unnecessary, unwanted and can interfere with computer operation and settings.

It is the responsibility of the downloader to thoroughly read all material provided by the program developer, before completing installation.

Please make sure you deselect any extras to ensure unwanted “add-ons” are not installed with the program.

## Are the programs listed the only ones I can use to convert or compress files?

Sterling Transcription has tested all the programs listed in this brochure. There are many more free or inexpensive programs available online.

Sterling Transcription is always happy to hear of other programs which clients have found useful.

We like to share this helpful information with our clients.

### Please Note

These instructions are based on the current versions of the software mentioned and may not apply to newer or older versions.

Windows Media Player (WMP) version 12.  
iTunes version 12.2.0.145.  
GoldWave 6.31  
Switch version 4.79.  
Prism version 2.45.  
VLC Media Player Version 3.0.11.



### Contact Us

Phone us on 0800 910 1410  
or email us at  
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to discuss your particular needs.

