

Podcasting and iTunes: Frequently Asked Questions

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What is Podcasting?

The word "podcast" is a concatenation of the words iPod and broadcast. The underlying technology used for podcasts, called RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is capable of containing any type of media including audio, video, graphics, and more.

Podcasting is a way of publishing podcasts to the web, allowing people to subscribe to a podcast and receive new "episodes" automatically through an RSS feed. Podcasting consists of publishing XML files which contain references to media (called "enclosures") to a website. Podcast aggregators (often called "podcatchers"), then read these XML files and download all the linked enclosures.

Unlike terrestrial and Internet radio, podcasts are time-shifted, meaning that listeners have control over when and where they hear their favorite programming. And, the episodes are delivered automatically to a subscriber on iTunes so the latest updates are always readily available with no effort required by the listener.

Podcasts offer iTunes users and iPod owners the same freedom and level of control they are familiar with when listening to their own personal music collections.

How does iTunes support podcasts?

iTunes versions 4.9 and later allow people to subscribe to podcasts and automatically download new podcast episodes as they become available. Podcasts can be played within iTunes on your computer or downloaded to your iPod and listened to on the go.

iTunes also features a directory of podcasts within the iTunes Music Store. People can browse through thousands of podcasts by category, search, preview podcast episodes and subscribe.

Podcasters have the ability to submit their podcast for consideration to be included within the iTunes Music Store.

How much do podcasts cost?

All podcasts on the iTunes Music Store are free.

Do I have to have an account at an iTunes Music Store to get podcasts?

No. You can preview and subscribe to podcasts without opening a Music Store account. However, to submit a podcast to the Music Store, you will need a Music Store account.

Can I put a podcast into an iMix?

Yes but it will be ignored. Only the iTunes songs you select will be published.

Does iTunes support the creation of podcasts?

iTunes does not support the creation of podcasts. Many podcast authors edit audio for their podcast episodes using [GarageBand](#) software for the Mac.

Does iTunes support the serving of podcasts?

No. The iTunes Music Store podcast directory will only contain references to the RSS feeds available on a podcaster's website. A podcaster must be running web-server software in order to host their podcast. When a user subscribes to a podcast through the iTunes Music Store, iTunes accesses the podcaster's RSS feed and downloads the enclosed audio files directly from the podcaster's website.

How do I submit my podcast for possible inclusion on the iTunes Music Store?

Clicking the Submit Podcast link on the main page of the Podcast genre page in the Music Store allows you to enter the link for the RSS feed of the podcast you'd like to publish to the Music Store. You will be asked to provide the link (including the http:// tag that precedes it), check over the podcast information as it will appear in the Music Store, and provide additional information not included within the feed. Submitted podcasts do not immediately appear in the Music Store and may be reviewed before being posted.

Will there be any limitations or constraints for podcasters submitting their podcast to the iTunes Music Store?

Podcasts are recommended to have a title, description, artwork, subject, categorization, language, and if appropriate, "explicit material" tags. There is no limit on the number of podcasts that may be submitted by a given podcaster. For inclusion in the iTunes Music Store, additional information is provided on the [Technical Specification](#) page.

Once a podcast is submitted, how long will it remain in the iTunes Music Store?

Podcasts will remain in the iTunes Music Store as long as the podcaster keeps their podcast RSS feed available, unless it violates any of the Music Store Terms and Conditions, in which case it will be removed.

Will there be any limitation on how frequently a podcaster may update their podcast?

No.

If a podcaster does not update their podcast, will it remain published in the iTunes Music Store?

Yes.

What will happen if a podcast includes unauthorized copyrighted material?

Apple values copyrights and takes this issue very seriously. Users and copyright holders will have a readily accessible complaint form within the iTunes Music Store to notify Apple of any copyright violations.

Apple will investigate the validity of complaints against a podcast and respond accordingly, removing offending podcasts if necessary.

What's an enhanced podcast?

An enhanced podcast contains chapters that reference pictures or web links that are displayed within the iTunes artwork viewer.

How do I create an enhanced podcast?

You can download and use "Chapter Tool" to create enhanced podcasts. The Chapter Tool allows you to create chapters within a MPEG4 AAC file created with iTunes 4.9 or later. Chapters, at a minimum, must include a Start Time and one other attribute.

How do I install the Chapter Tool?

To install the Chapter Tool, drag the ChapterTool folder into the Music folder inside of your home folder. Check the "About Chapter Tool" documentation included in the download.

What are the System Requirements for the Chapter Tool?

Chapter Tool Beta requires Mac OS X version 10.3.8 or later (Mac OS X version 10.4.1 or later is recommended), QuickTime version 6.5.2, or later, and iTunes 4.9 or later.

Where do I go to download the Chapter Tool?

Download the Chapter Tool and documentation:

http://homepage.mac.com/applepodcast/podcasts/Resources/static/podcast_chapter_tool_beta.dmg

How does the Top Podcasts list work?

The list displayed in the Today's Top Podcasts box on the Podcast page in iTunes is created using automated algorithm -- the podcasts are not hand-picked. The algorithm is based primarily on new podcast subscriptions during the past 24 hours.

Do you cache podcast content?

With very few exceptions, iTunes does not cache episode files. The only exceptions have been cached with the permission of the podcaster.

Can I submit a test feed?

Please do not submit test feeds to iTunes. To test your feed, use the Subscribe to Podcast command in the Advanced menu of iTunes.

How do I link to my podcast page on iTunes?

Right-click or Ctrl-click on your podcast image in iTunes to copy the URL for your podcast page. The URL will begin "http://phobos.apple.com/..." When a user clicks on this link, the http:// prefix calls the default browser, and the phobos prefix calls the iTunes application.

How do I find which feed url is being used on iTunes?

You can determine which feed url is being used by iTunes to point to your podcast by (1) clicking on the Subscribe button for your podcast, then (2) clicking on the Information icon (the gray circle with an "i" in it) in the Description column of your Podcasts playlist. The feed URL is displayed at the top of the popup window.