

# DIGITAL CONVERTING: VHS TO MP4

*Photos and instructions are for the NTSC VHS player for tapes made in the US and Americas. See below for more info.*



## Elgato Video Capture

The Elgato Video Capture device connects analog devices — like the VHS player — to the computer. Once connected, the Elgato Video Capture software will record the video and convert it to MP4 digital format.

One end of the Elgato Video Capture has composite (yellow, red, and white) cables and a S-video cable to connect to most analog video devices. The other end of the Elgato Video Capture is a USB that connects to the computer. In order to work, the composite or S-video cables must be connected to a “playback” device — like a VHS player or camcorder. The Elgato Video Capture can convert NTSC, SECAM, PAL, and PAL/60 formats into MP4 files, as long as you have the right “playback” device to connect.

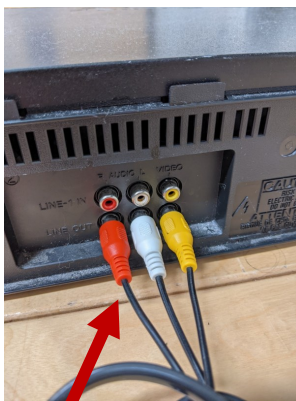
For more info, go to [www.elgato.com/en/video-capture](http://www.elgato.com/en/video-capture)

## Terminology

- **Analog** — refers to audio and video that is stored on film, like VHS tapes or Hi8 mm video tapes
- **Playback Device** — the device that reads the analog format, like a VHS player
- **NTSC** — the VHS format for tapes made in the US and Americas. Requires a NTSC-specific player.
- **PAL**— the VHS format for tapes made in most of Europe and parts of Africa and Asia. Requires a PAL-specific player.
- **SECAM**—the VHS format for tapes made in France and parts of Africa and Asia. Requires a SECAM-specific player

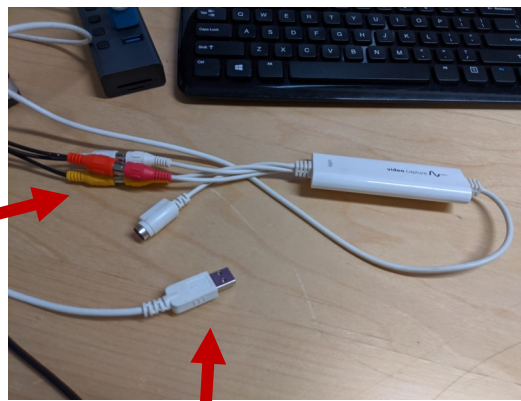
## Set Up the VHS Player and Elgato Video Capture

1. Confirm the VHS player is plugged in. Note: Make sure you are using the right VHS player. If your tape is NTSC, use the NTSC player. If your tape is PAL, use the PAL player. The photos in this handout show the NTSC player.
2. Make sure the composite cables (with the black cord) are plugged into the back of the VHS player where it says “Line Out.”
3. Plug the other end of the composite cables (with the black cord) into the composite input cables on the Elgato Video Capture (with the white cord).
4. Plug the USB cable into a USB port on the iMac.



Composite Line Out ports

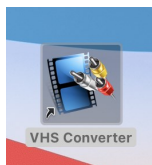
VHS composite cable connected to Elgato composite input



The USB cable that plugs into the iMac

## Open the VHS Converter Software

1. Find the **VHS Convert** icon on the desktop.
2. Double-click to open.



## Alternative Method

1. Click “**Go**” in the Top Menu.
2. Click “**Applications.**”
3. Find “**VHS Converter**” in the list of Applications.
4. Double-click to open.

## VHS-C Tapes

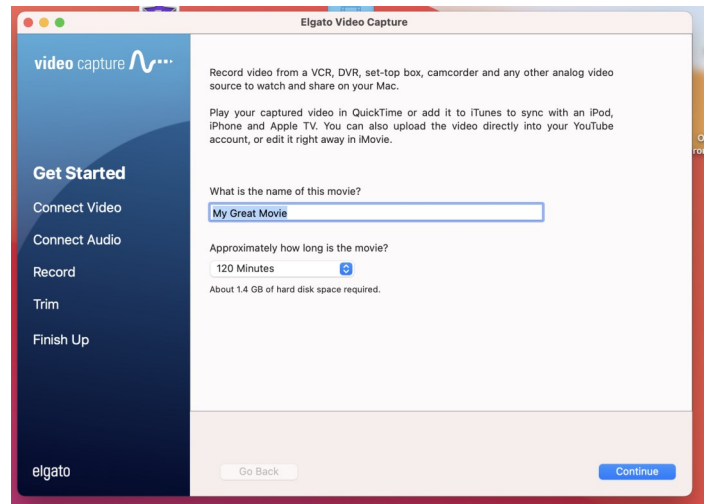
The Sound Studio has a VHS-C-to-VHS adapter to digitize VHS-C tapes. VHS-C tapes look like mini versions of VHS tapes.

1. Use the tab to open the cartridge
2. Insert your VHS-C tape.
3. Close the cartridge door and insert into player.

## Get Started

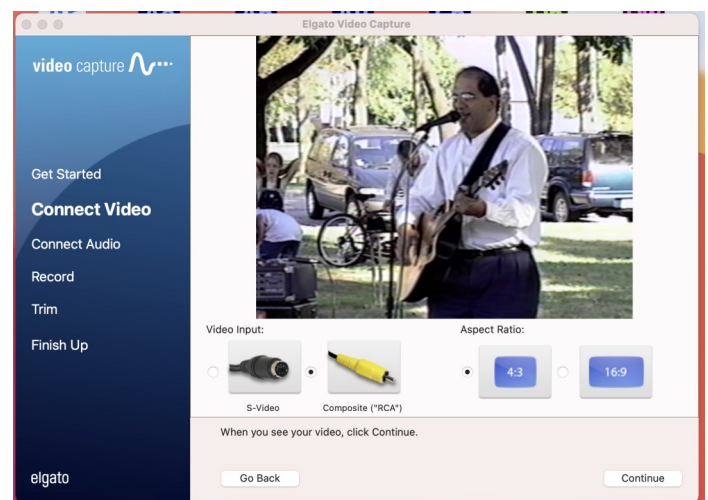
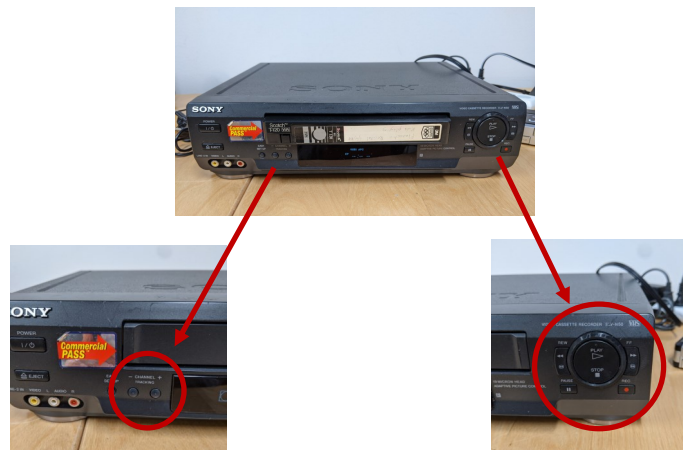
Follow the prompts on the VHS Converter software.

1. Give your file a name. (This can be changed later.)
2. Choose the approximate time of the movie. Check to see if it's listed on your VHS tape. This will provide an idea for the file size of the MP4. For instance, for 120 minutes, it is predicting about 1.2 GB.
3. Click **“Continue.”**



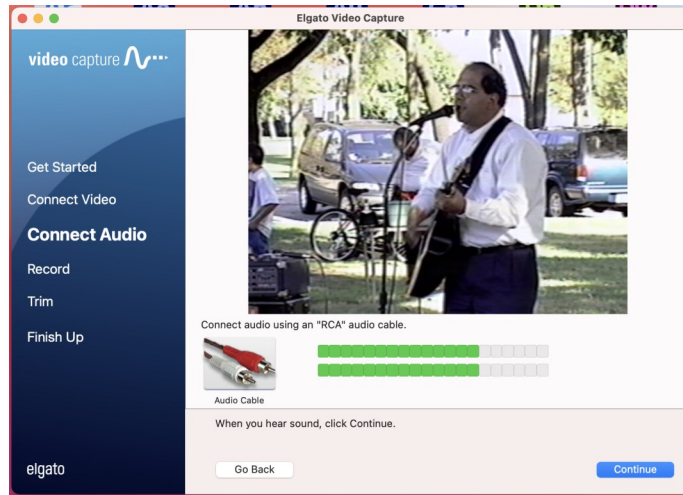
## Connect Video

1. Insert your VHS tape into the VHS player.
2. Select **“Composite (“RCA”)”**
3. Press **“Play”** on the VHS player. The video should be displayed in the Elgato Video Capture software.
4. If it looks like the video is getting cut off, change the Aspect Ratio from 4:3 to 16:9.
5. If the video feed seems fuzzy, you can try using the **“Channel Tracking +/-”** button help clear it up. This helps calibrate the VHS tape.
6. If you are seeing a playback of your tape, click **“Continue.”**



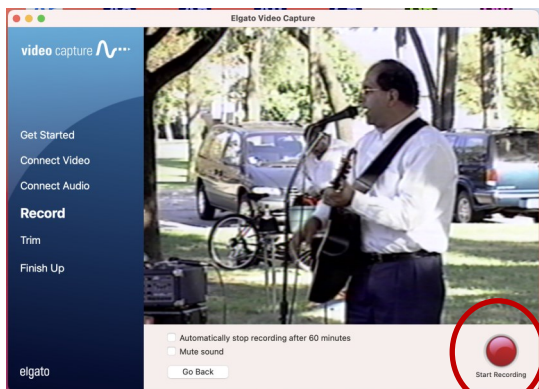
## Connect Audio

1. Check that the Composite “RCA” cables are receiving an audio signal. You should notice a green bar that moves based on the noise level of your video.
2. If there is a green bar, click “**Continue.**”

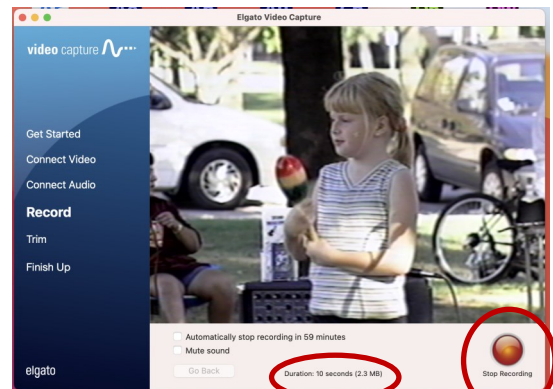


## Record

1. Press the “**Rewind**” button on the VHS player to rewind to the very beginning.
2. Press “**Play**” on the VHS player to start the tape.
3. Click “**Start Recording**” in the bottom right corner. The Elgato Video Capture software will begin recording and converting the video to MP4. This is in real-time, so if your video is 2 hours, it will take 2 hours. There is a counter that tracks the time and the file size of the MP4 video.
4. When your VHS tape is finished, click “**Stop Recording.**”



Start Recording



Stop Recording

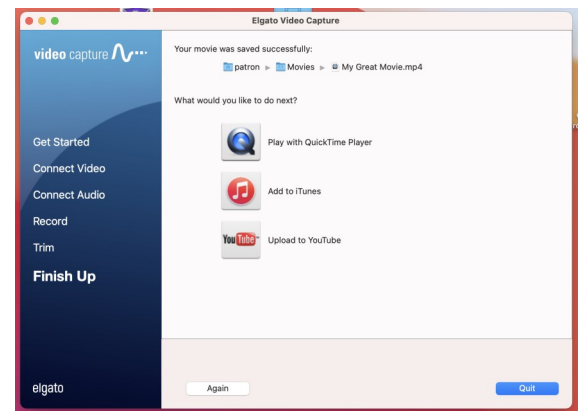
## Trim

1. You can **“Trim”** — or delete — parts of the video at the beginning and end of the recording. This can be used to delete commercials or any unwanted video.
2. To Trim, click and drag blue triangles to where you want the video to begin and end.
3. Click **“Continue.”**



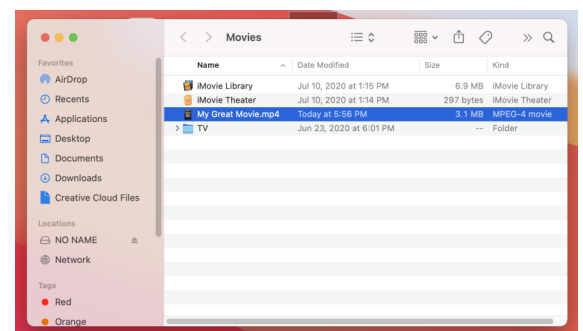
## Finish Up

1. The file will automatically save to the **“Movies”** folder. It will ask if you want to open up the file in QuickTime Player or iTunes to view it.



## Save to USB

1. After the file is saved to the **“Movies”** folder, you’ll want to save it to a USB or upload to Cloud Storage. Make sure you have enough storage space for the file, since it can be up to 1.5 GB of data.
2. Double-click the **“Movies”** folder on the desktop.
3. Find the file name for your video.
4. Copy and paste it to your USB.



## Troubleshooting

*There is no video signal // There is no sound signal*

- Make sure the VHS player is turned on and that you have pressed “Play” on the VHS player
- Check that the RCA (red, yellow, white) cables are plugged into the back where it says “Line Out.”
- Check that the other end of the RCA (red, yellow, white) cables are plugged into the Elgato Video Capture
- Check that the Elgato Video Capture USB is plugged into the iMac

*The video looks stretched // The video looks squished*

- Test out the difference between 4:3 and 16:9 Aspect Ratios. Most home videos were recorded on 4:3. Most feature films were recorded on 16:9.

*The video is fuzzy // the image isn't clear // there are lines on the screen*

- Try using the “Channel Tracking +/-” buttons on the VHS player. This will help adjust the VHS film and sometimes helps clear the image.
- If “Channel Tracking +/-” doesn't work, then the VSH film might be worn or damaged.

*The tape doesn't fit // The image is very distorted*

- Check that the label is for a VHS tape in NTSC format
  - NTSC tapes must be used in NTSC players. PAL tapes must be used in PAL players.
- If it's a VHS-C tape, use the VHS-C-to-VHS adapter so it can work in the VHS player
- If the tape says Video 8, Hi8, Betamax, or MiniDV, it will not fit in the VHS player and there is no adapter for those tapes.
  - The Sound Studio has camcorders to digitize Video 8 and Hi8 tapes.
  - The Sound Studio does not have equipment for Betamax or MiniDV