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Introducing Media Player

Media Player is a Microsoft application for Windows that controls multimedia-hardware devices and plays media sequences, such as video clips, animation, and waveform and Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI) sound files. Media Player can interact with any device accessible through the [Media Control Interface \(MCI\)](#), such as videodisc players and audio CD players, or any device for which the manufacturer has provided an MCI-compatible driver. Media Player supports object linking and embedding (OLE) and acts as an OLE server for the media clips it controls.

Media Player can also be embedded in a document belonging to another application, such as a spreadsheet or a word-processing document. When inserted in another application, the embedded version of Media Player, its media sequence, and a selection of the media sequence (if it exists), is called a media-clip object.

The main window in Media Player lets you control the sequence you are playing, and shows you the elapsed playing time from the beginning of the sequence.

See Also

[Playing a Media Sequence](#)

[Embedding a Media Sequence in Another Application](#)



Starting Media Player

You can start Media Player in any of the following ways:

- From Program Manager, choose the Media Player icon from the Video for Windows group.
- From Program Manager, choose the Run command and then type the Media Player command line.
- Drag a file icon from File Manager and drop it on the Media Player icon or in the Media Player window.
- From within an OLE client application, choose a Media Player object.

If you start Media Player from Program Manager, you can specify the particular device and file you want to use.

See Also

[Playing a Media Sequence](#)

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[Specifying a Media Device](#)

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Specifying a Media Device

Media Player supports two types of devices: simple and compound. A simple device is ready to play when you choose it. Compound devices, on the other hand, also require you to specify the media file you want to open.

You choose devices from the Device menu. However, for Media Player to list a device on the Device menu, the device and its software driver must be installed correctly and configured for your system.

▶ To specify a simple device

- From the Device menu, choose the media device you want.
Simple devices do not have an ellipsis.

▶ To specify a compound device

- 1 From the Device menu, choose the media device you want.
Compound devices have an ellipsis (. . .).
- 2 Type or select the name of the file you want to play.
- 3 Choose OK.

You can now open files available for that device.

▶ To specify a different device

- From the Device menu, choose the device you want.
Or, choose a different file type from the Open dialog box.

See Also

[Playing a Media Sequence](#)

[Starting Media Player](#)



Opening a File

Media Player associates the various types of media files with the appropriate devices and automatically allocates the needed playback resources when you open a file.

▶ **To open a file**

- 1 From the File menu, choose Open.
- 2 Type or select the name of the file you want to open.
To change the device type, select another entry in the List Files Of Type box.
- 3 Choose OK.

See Also

[Playing a Media Sequence](#)

[Starting Media Player](#)



Closing a Media Device

You can close simple and compound media devices by using the Close command; however, the effects of closing each device differ slightly.

For simple devices, Media Player releases control of the device, allowing other applications to access the device. If a media sequence is playing when a simple device is closed, the sequence continues to play.

For compound devices, Media Player closes the file, then releases control of the device. If a media sequence is playing when a compound device is closed, the sequence stops playing.

▶ To close a media device

- From the File menu, choose Close.

See Also

[Playing a Media Sequence](#)



Quitting Media Player

When you close Media Player, simple devices, such as audio CD players, continue to play. Compound devices stop playing when you quit the application.

- ▶ **To quit Media Player**
 - From the File menu, choose Exit.
- ▶ **To quit Media Player from a media-clip object**
 - Select another item or area within the application.

See Also

[Starting Media Player](#)



Playing a Media Sequence

▶ To play or restart a paused media sequence

- Choose the



Play button.

▶ To play an embedded media clip

- Double-click the media-clip icon.

▶ To play a marked selection in a media sequence

- Press ALT while choosing the Play button.

Or, choose Play if the sequence is embedded in a document.

▶ To pause play

- Choose the



Pause button.

See Also

[Changing the Scale](#)

[Media Player Buttons](#)

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[Setting Video Characteristics](#)

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Stopping a Media Sequence or Device

▶ **To stop play**

- Choose the



Stop button.

▶ **To stop playing an embedded media clip**

- Press ALT+F4, click the right mouse button, or double-click the Control menu.

▶ **To stop playing an embedded media clip running in full-screen mode**

- Press the ESC key, or press the left mouse button.

▶ **To eject a compact disc or other media element**

- Choose the



Eject button.

The Eject button is available only with devices that include a software-based eject function.

See Also

[Media Player Buttons](#)

[Setting Video Characteristics](#)





[Quitting Media Player](#)



Moving to Another Position

You can move within a media sequence to play your favorite song or view a particular video sequence.

► To change the playback position

- Drag the slider to the desired position on the track bar.
- Or-
- Use the scroll arrows at the right edge of the track bar.
- Or-
- Use the LEFT ARROW, RIGHT ARROW, PAGE UP, PAGE DOWN, HOME, and END keys.
- Or-
- Choose the
 -  Page Right,
 -  Page Left,
 -  Next Mark, and
 -  Previous Mark buttons.

See Also

[Media Player Buttons](#)

[Media Player Keys](#)



[Media Player Track Bar](#)



Selecting Part of a Media Sequence

You can mark the beginning and end of a selection, and then play only that selection.

▶ To mark a selection using Media Player controls

- 1 Drag the slider to the beginning of the section you want to mark.
- 2 Choose the  Mark In button.
- 3 Drag the slider to the end of the section you want to mark.
- 4 Choose the  Mark Out button.

Or, mark the beginning of the selection, then hold down the SHIFT key as you drag the slider to the end of the selection you want to mark.

▶ To mark a selection using the Selection command

- 1 From the Edit menu, choose Selection.
Or, double-click the scale rule.
- 2 Select From and type the selection's beginning time, frame, or track.
- 3 Set the section range using either the To box or the Size box.
 - Select the To box and type the selection's ending time, frame, or track.
 - Select the Size box and type the selection's duration as elapsed time, frames, or tracks.
- 4 Choose OK.

Note After you've marked a media sequence, don't change the current track-bar scale. Changing the scale clears the selection.

See Also

[Embedding a Media Sequence in Another Application](#)

[Set Selection Dialog Box](#)

[Media Player Track Bar](#)



Changing the Scale

Media Player displays one of three scales beneath the track bar.

- Time scale, which shows time intervals
- Frames scale, which shows frames of a video sequence
- Track scale, which shows tracks

You can use a time scale for any media sequence. However, some media types, such as CD Audio or Video for Windows, can use other scales to locate specific portions of a media sequence.

► **To change scales**

- From the Scale menu, select Time, Frames, or Tracks.

Changing the scale erases any mark set in the current media sequence.

See Also

[Selecting Part of a Media Sequence](#)



Setting Media Player Options

Media Player provides several playback and display options for embedded media clips. Two of these options (Auto Rewind and Auto Repeat) can also be used when Media Player runs as a stand-alone application.

▶ **To set Media Player options**

- 1 From the Edit Menu, choose Options.
- 2 Select the display and playback options you want.
- 3 Choose OK.

See Also

[Options Dialog Box](#)



Setting Video Characteristics

The Video for Windows device (an MCI device), which Media Player uses to play video sequences, has its own configuration options. You can set its configuration options using the Configure command from the Control Panel Drivers application.

▶ **To set video characteristics using the Configure command**

1 From the Device Menu, choose Configure.

If the Configure command is unavailable or the Video Playback Options dialog box does not appear, you must first select the Video for Windows device type and specify an .AVI file containing a video sequence.

2 Select the options you want.

3 Choose OK.

You can also set configuration options using the Control Panel Drivers application.

▶ **To set video characteristics using Control Panel**

1 Start Control Panel.

2 Choose the Drivers application.

3 Select the Microsoft MCI AVI Driver.

4 Choose the Setup button.

5 Select the options you want.

6 Choose OK.

The changes you make for a specific video sequence apply only to that sequence.

▶ **To set specific options for all video sequences**

- Choose the Set Default button.

▶ **To set the Video Playback options for an embedded media clip**

- Choose the Set Default button.

See Also

[Video Playback Options Dialog Box](#)



Controlling Media Player's Appearance

For devices that do not require a playback window, Media Player provides an abbreviated form of its controls, which includes the track bar and the Play/Pause and Stop buttons. If the device (video and animation, for example) requires a playback window, it appears above the abbreviated controls.

- ▶ **To toggle between Media Player's normal and abbreviated display modes**
 - Press CTRL+W.
Or, double-click the Media Player title bar.
- ▶ **To double the size of the abbreviated mode's display window**
 - Choose the Maximize button.
- ▶ **To resize the abbreviated mode's display window**
 - Drag the window frame.
- ▶ **To restore the window to the default size**
 - Choose the Restore button.

See Also

[Media Player Keys](#)



Embedding a Media Sequence in Another Application

Using OLE technology, you can embed media-clip objects in other applications, a sound clip in a spreadsheet, for example, so that they will play when users choose the objects' icons.

► **To embed a media clip in an application**

- 1 Start Media Player.
- 2 From the File menu, choose Open and select the file or device you want to embed.
- 3 If the embedded media clip is a video clip or animation, move the slider to a frame that best represents the entire clip.
The selected frame is used as the icon for the media-clip object.
- 4 From the Media Player Edit menu, choose Copy Object.
- 5 Select the application or document where you want to insert the media clip.
- 6 From the application's Edit menu, choose Paste or Paste Special to embed the media clip.

Note If the Paste or Paste Special command doesn't properly insert the media clip into the application, refer to your application's documentation for additional information about using OLE objects from another application.

See Also

[Setting Media Player Options](#)



Editing an Embedded Media Clip

You can edit embedded media clips from within the application. You simply start Media Player from the application, edit the media clip, and then close Media Player.

► **To edit an embedded media clip**

- 1 Open the document that contains the embedded media clip.
- 2 Select the embedded clip you want to edit.
- 3 From the Edit menu, choose Media Clip Object, and then choose Edit.
- 4 Edit the media clip.
- 5 From the Media Player File menu, choose Update.
This updates the embedded media clip in the other application.
- 6 From the Media Player File menu, choose Exit.

See Also

[Setting Media Player Options](#)

Options Dialog Box

Option	Description
Auto Rewind	Rewinds a media sequence, selection, or clip when Media Player reaches the end. You can use Auto Rewind if Media Player is open as a stand-alone application, or from a media-clip object.
Auto Repeat	Plays a media sequence, selection, or clip as a continuous loop. You can use Auto Repeat if Media Player is open as a stand-alone application, or from a media-clip object.
Caption	Adds a caption below the media-clip object. The caption text appears in the box to the right and can be edited.
Border Around Object	Inserts a thin border around the window of the media-clip object.
Play In Client Document	Plays a media clip within the application window that contains the object. If this option is not selected and the Control Bar On Playback option is selected, the media-clip object opens another window containing the abbreviated controls (and playback window, if necessary) to play the embedded media clip.
Control Bar On Playback	Displays a playback control bar when the media-clip object is selected. The control bar includes a Play/Pause button, a Stop button, and a track bar.
Dither Picture To VGA Colors	Dithers the image of the place marker using the standard VGA color palette. With an embedded video clip or animation, the media-clip object is marked in an application with a frame from the embedded media clip instead of an icon. If not selected, the place marker uses the color palette of the video clip or animation, creating possible color distortion.

See Also

[Setting Media Player Options](#)

Video Playback Options Dialog Box

For the Video for Windows device, the configuration options let you adjust viewing characteristics of a video sequence.

Option	Description
Zoom By 2	Doubles the frame size of the playback area in normal and full-screen video modes.
Play Only If Waveform Device Available	Waits to play the video sequence until the audio resources become available (given that the video sequence includes a sound track and the audio resources are already in use). If not selected, Media Player plays the video sequence immediately with or without the soundtrack, depending on the availability of the audio resources.
Seek To Nearest Full Frame	Plays the nearest full frame when a jump to a non-consecutive frame occurs (always displaying the correct frame image). If not selected, Media Player chooses the exact frame when a jump to a non-consecutive frame occurs. Media Player displays the current frame data correctly. However, if the frame depends on other frames for some of its data, the frame display might contain inaccuracies.
Skip video Frames If Behind	Prioritizes the sound track of a video sequence above the frame. If Media Player cannot maintain the playback pace, it skips video frames to keep pace with the audio track. If not selected, Media Player plays all frames of the video sequence and pauses the audio track as needed.
Don't Buffer Offscreen	Provides a slightly faster playback rate by omitting updates to an off-screen buffer of the playback window. If your system cannot keep pace with the playback rate of a video sequence, but lags only slightly, this option might let you play the video sequence at its normal rate without dropping frames. If you select this option and your system still lags behind the playback rate of the video sequence, the video images might become fuzzy. Also, because a copy of the playback window is not updated off screen, jumping to another position within a video sequence will probably result in a distorted image until Media Player reaches the next full frame.

See Also

[Setting Video Characteristics](#)

Set Selection Dialog Box

The Set Selection dialog box lets you mark a selection for playback.

Option	Description
All	Selects the entire media sequence.
None	Erases an existing selection or selection markers.
From	Creates a new selection or edits an existing selection. After selecting From, you type or edit the values in the From, To, and Size boxes.
From box	Specifies a value for the selection's starting point.
To box	Specifies a value for the selection's ending point.
Size box	Specifies the length of the selection. With a value from either the From or the To box, the value in the Size box determines where the other selection marker is placed.

Note Entries for the From, To, and Size boxes use the same units as those currently used for the reference scale: time, frame number, or track and elapsed time within the track.

See Also

[Selecting Part of a Media Sequence](#)

simple device

A device that plays a media sequence without requiring you to specify an associated media file. For example, an audio CD player is a simple device.

compound device

A device that plays media sequences by accessing data files on disk or CD-ROM. For compound devices, you must specify both the device and the file you want to play.

Media Control Interface (MCI)

A standard control interface for multimedia devices and files. MCI allows a multimedia application to control a variety of multimedia devices and files.

track bar

A bar that appears above the control buttons in Media Player and represents the duration of the current media sequence. The left end represents the beginning of the sequence and the right end represents the end of the sequence. The track bar also includes a slider that indicates the current playing position.

slider

A pencil-shaped pointer on the Media Player track bar that shows the current playing position. You can move the slider to different positions along the track bar.

Product Support











If you purchased Video for Windows directly from Microsoft or through a retail outlet, product-support information is listed at the end of the *Video for Windows User's Guide* (following the index).

If your copy of Video for Windows is part of an OEM product, you should consult the OEM product documentation for addition support information.



Media Player Buttons

Use the following buttons to perform Media Player functions:

Button	Description
	Plays the content of the current media device.
	Pauses the device that is currently playing.
	Stops the media sequence or device that is currently playing.
	Moves the slider to the closest mark to the left, or to the beginning of the track bar if both marks are to the right of the slider. Pressing SHIFT+Previous Mark selects the portion of the video sequence traversed by the slider.
	Moves the slider to the closest mark to the right, or to the end of the media sequence if both marks are to the left of the slider. Pressing SHIFT+Next Mark selects the portion of the video sequence traversed by the slider.
	Steps backward through the current media sequence in approximately 10 percent increments.
	Steps forward through the current media sequence in approximately 10 percent increments.
	Ejects the media cartridge from the device. This button is enabled for devices that have programmatic control of their eject function.
	Marks the beginning of a selection for playing or for embedding in another application.
	Marks the end of a selection for playing or for embedding in another application.

See Also

[Playing a Media Sequence](#)

[Stopping a Media Sequence or Device](#)

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Media Player Track Bar



Represents the open media sequence. The slider indicates the current playing position of the media sequence. You can change the current playing position by dragging the slider to another location along the track bar, or by choosing the scroll arrows on the right.

See Also

[Moving to Another Position](#)

[Selecting Part of a Media Sequence](#)

[Changing the Scale](#)

[Controlling Media Player's Appearance](#)

[Options Dialog Box](#)



File Menu Commands

The File menu contains the following commands.

Item	Does this
Open	Opens a data file. Based on the filename extension, Media Player chooses an appropriate device to play the file.
Close	Releases the device allocated by Media Player and, for compound devices, closes the open media file.
Exit	Closes the device and file allocated by Media Player.

See Also

[Closing a Media Device](#)

[Opening a File](#)

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Edit Menu Commands

The Edit Menu contains the following commands:

Item	Description
Copy Object	Copies Media Player and the current media file to the Clipboard as a media-clip object so it can be inserted into another application.
Options	Sets playback and display options for the current media sequence or embedded media clip.
Selection	Selects a portion of the current media sequence for playback.

See Also

[Embedding a Media Sequence in Another Application](#)

[Editing an Embedded Media Clip](#)

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Device Menu Commands

The Device Menu lists the devices installed on your system. The following table describes some of the device types that Media Player recognizes. Other devices will appear on the menu if they are properly installed.

Item	Specifies a device that plays
Animation	Animations saved in the Microsoft Multimedia Movie file format.
CD Audio	Digital audio from a CD.
Video for Windows	Video sequences in the .AVI file format. The Video for Windows device supports video sequences made from 8-bit, 16-bit, and 24-bit color images, with or without an accompanying sound track. The Configure command for the Video for Windows device controls the video mode and some video-playback options.
MIDI Sequencer	MIDI (.MID or .RMI) files. The number of voices and the degree of polyphony depend on the sequencer's characteristics.
Sound	Digital audio (.WAV) files. The Configure command for the Sound device controls the amount of extended memory (RAM) used to buffer the sound files.
Video Cassette Player	VCR tapes.
Videodisk	Videodisks.

See Also

[Setting Video Characteristics](#)

[Specifying a Media Device](#)



Scale Menu Commands

The Scale Menu identifies the following scales to use with different types of media.

Item	Changes the scale to show
Time Scale	Elapsed time
Frames Scale	Frame sequence
Track Scale	Tracks

See Also

[Changing the Scale](#)

[Selecting Part of a Media Sequence](#)



Media Player Keys

You can use the following key equivalents with Media Player.

Button-Selection Keys

To select

Next control button.
Previous control button.
Current control.

Press

TAB
SHIFT+TAB
SPACEBAR

Menu-Command Keys

To

Edit the playback device driver configuration. (Same as the Configure command on the Device menu.)
Select a new file to play with Media Player. (Same as the Open command on the File menu.)
Edit the current selection. (Same as the Selection command on the Edit menu.)
Close the current file or device. Or, to update an embedded object you have edited. (Same as the Close command on the File menu.)
Toggle between normal and abbreviated display modes.

Press

CTRL+D
CTRL+F
CTRL+L
CTRL+U
CTRL+W

Playback Keys

To

Play the media content, or to pause playback.
Play a marked selection in the media content.
Stop playing the current media sequence.

Press

CTRL+P
ALT+P or
ALT+CTRL+P
CTRL+S or ESC

Slider Keys

To move the slider to the

Beginning of the media content.
End of the media content.
Next page of the media content.
Previous page of the media content.
Beginning of the next track (Tracks scale only).
Beginning of the previous track (Tracks scale only).
Left (backward) in the media content.
Right (forward) in the media content.

Press

HOME
END
PAGE DOWN
PAGE UP
CTRL+PageDown
CTRL+PageUp
LEFT ARROW
RIGHT ARROW

Zoom Keys

To Zoom the playback image size to

Press

Normal size.

CTRL+1

Twice the frame size.

CTRL+2

Three times the frame size.

CTRL+3

Four times the frame size.

CTRL+4

See Also

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