

By John Lee

In a previous [How do I... blog entry](#) I showed how easy it was to create your own custom Flash Video player using Adobe Flash's new video components and a few lines of ActionScript. The example I wrote featured a sample Flash video file (FLV) from a royalty-free stock video site. This time, I will show you how to convert your own MPEG, AVI or QuickTime files into the FLV format.

Converting an MPEG, AVI or QuickTime video is a simple process that involves using Adobe's Flash Video Encoder, a separate program which installs on your hard drive in conjunction with the installation of Flash CS3 itself. If you already have Flash CS3 on your computer, you can open the Flash Video Encoder from the Start Menu.

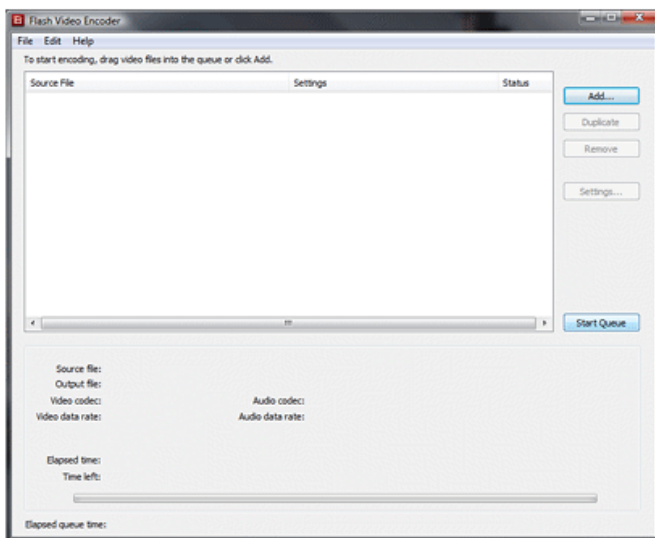
If you don't own a copy of Flash CS3, you can download a fully functioning [30-day trial from Adobe](#). If you don't have multiple MPEG, AVI or QuickTime files of your own to use in this exercise, you can download a couple of low-resolution stock QuickTime files from [FreeStockFootage.com](#) and save them to your hard drive.

Oddly, Flash CS3 does not provide a stand-alone FLV viewer for watching FLV files from your hard drive. But you can download a [free FLV player](#) if you need one.

Converting files

Begin by opening the Flash Video Encoder if you haven't already. You should see a screen resembling **Figure A**.

Figure A



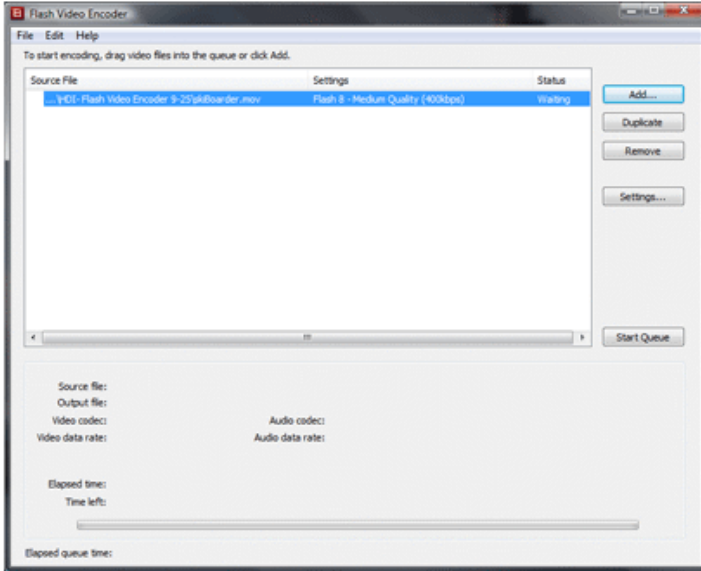
The Flash Video Encoder

How do I: Convert an MPEG video file into Flash video?

Click on the button labeled "Add..." in the upper right corner. This will open a dialog box that you will use to locate one of the MPEG, AVI or QuickTime files on your hard drive that you will be converting to FLV format.

After you have added a source video file, it will be listed at the top of the Encoder's Queue, with a default setting of Medium Quality. (**Figure B**)

Figure B

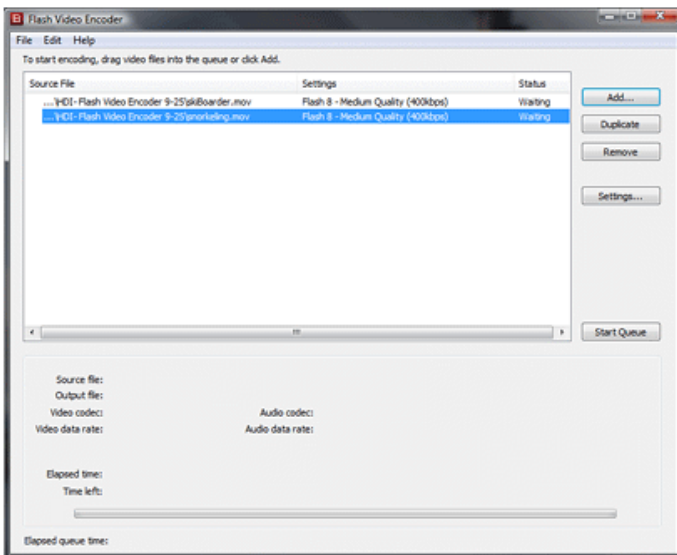


The first source video added to the Queue

The Flash Video Encoder is set up for batch processing of videos, so if you had a large number of videos that you wanted to convert to FLV format, you would simply add them to the Queue by clicking the Add... button and listing an unlimited number of source videos so that the Encoder could process them all automatically in the order that you listed them.

Let's add a second video to the Queue now. Click the "Add..." button again and locate another source video that you wish to convert to FLV format. When you are finished, the Queue should resemble **Figure C**.

Figure C



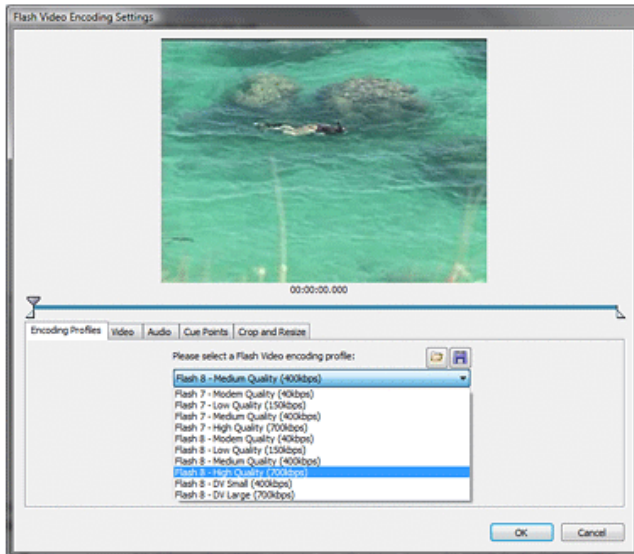
The second source video added to the Queue

How do I: Convert an MPEG video file into Flash video?

Many people convert their source videos to FLV format for posting on video sharing sites such as YouTube. However, most of these sites will automatically downgrade the quality of the video to help conserve their bandwidth. If you want to ensure a high-quality FLV file makes it online intact through one of these video-sharing services, you will need to change the default Quality Settings before you convert your source video.

For the sake of comparison, let's just change the Settings for the second video in the Queue. Select the second video in the Queue window and then click on the "Settings" button on the right side. A dialog box will appear that shows the first frame of the video with several Settings options tabs underneath. Click on the Encoding Profiles tab, and in the pull-down menu, choose the option named "Flash 8 -- High Quality 700 kbps". (**Figure D**)

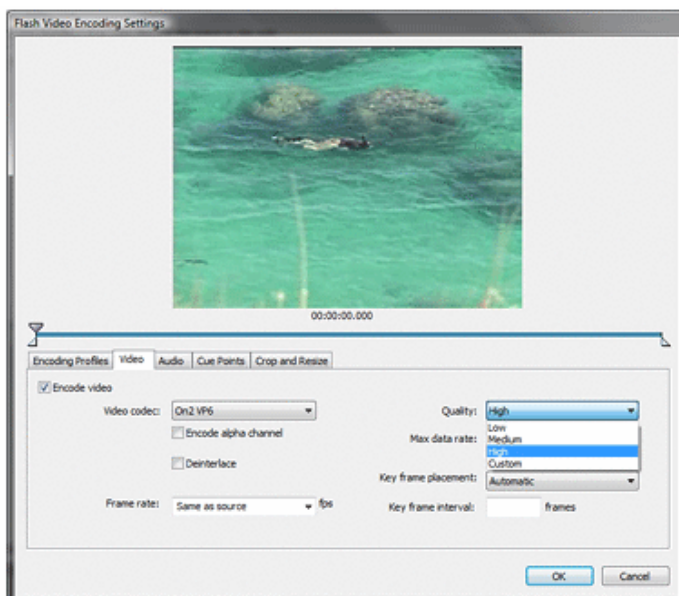
Figure D



Setting the second Source video to a High Quality setting

Next, click on the Video tab and from the "Quality" pull-down menu on the right, select the option labeled "High" (**Figure E**). These settings should work fine. Click the "OK" button to close the Settings dialog box.

Figure E

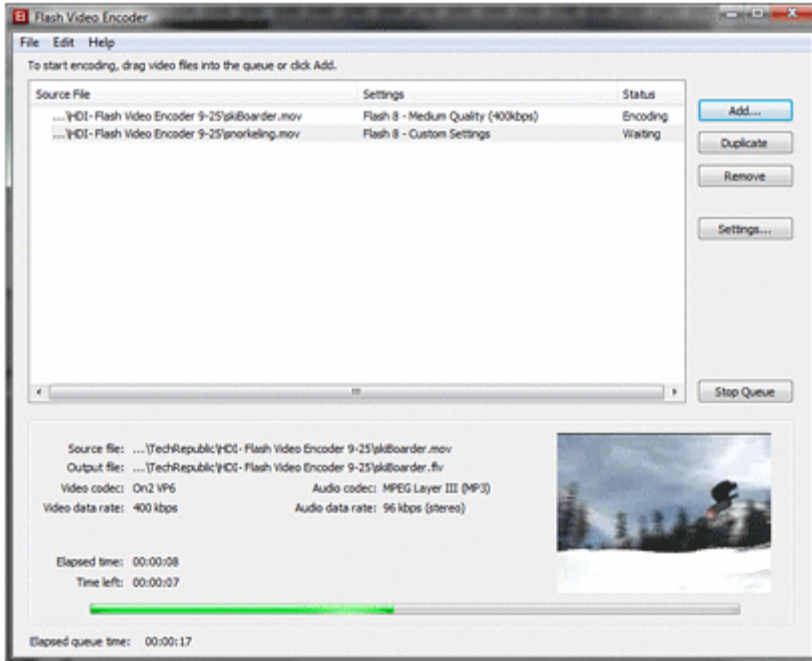


Adjusting the video quality of the second source video

How do I: Convert an MPEG video file into Flash video?

Now you're ready to process the Queue and convert your source videos to FLV format. Click the "Start Queue" button on the right and let the Encoder get to work. As the Encoder converts the videos, you will see a preview play in the bottom right of the screen. (**Figure F**)

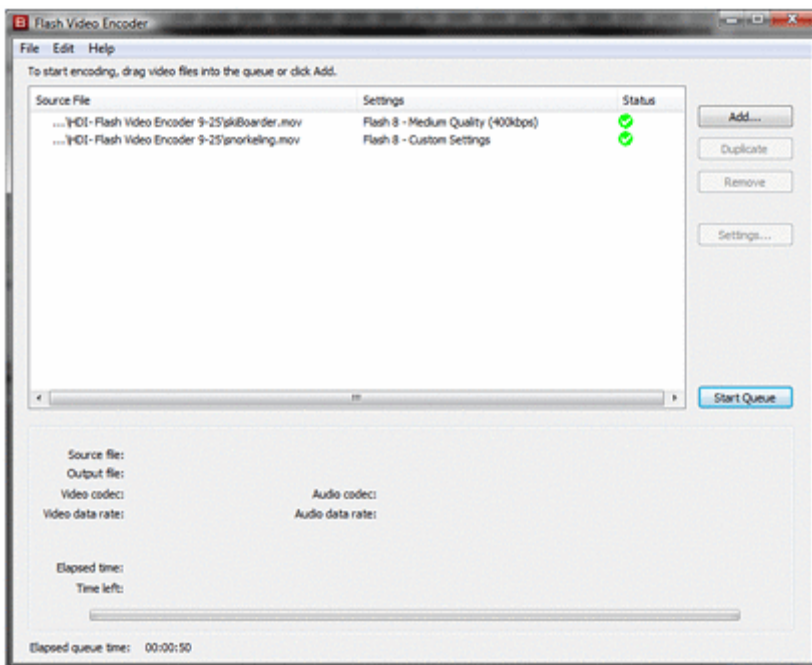
Figure F



Processing the Queue

When the conversion is complete, the videos in the Queue will be marked with a green checkmark (**Figure G**) and the FLV version of your source videos will be in the same directory as their source videos.

Figure G

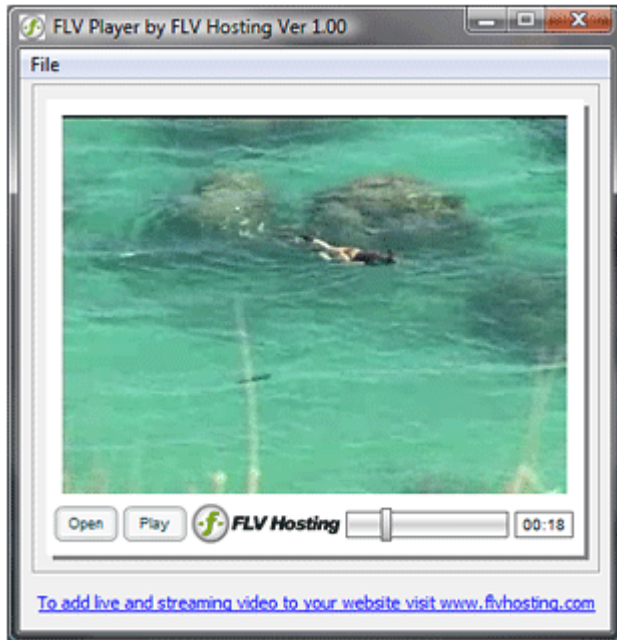


Both source videos have been converted to FLV format

How do I: Convert an MPEG video file into Flash video?

Now open the standalone FLV player that you downloaded earlier and preview your new FLV movie. **(Figure H)** These FLV files can be used in the creation of your Flash content, or they can be uploaded to any video sharing site that accepts videos in FLV format.

Figure H



Viewing the new FLV files through the standalone FLV player

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