



VIDEO TOOLKIT · OFFLINE-FIRST

VideoForge

User Guide

The complete manual for all 24 tools, setup, licensing and troubleshooting.

Version	1.1.0
Platform	Windows 10 (1809) and Windows 11, 64-bit
Publisher	MES-DEV
Website	mes-dev.com/apps/video-forge
Support	contact@mes-dev.com

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1. Before you start

VideoForge is a desktop video toolkit for Windows. It processes video entirely on your own machine: nothing is uploaded, nothing is analysed in the cloud, and there is no watermark on anything it produces.

System requirements

Item	Minimum	Recommended
Operating system	Windows 10 version 1809 (build 17763)	Windows 11
Architecture	64-bit (x64)	64-bit (x64)
Memory	4 GB RAM	8 GB RAM or more
Disk space	About 400 MB (app plus video engine)	Several GB free for output files
Graphics	Not required	NVIDIA, Intel or AMD GPU for hardware encoding
Internet	Required once, for the first-run engine download	Not needed afterwards

Disk space is about the output, not the app. VideoForge itself is small, but video work is not. Compressing usually saves space; exporting to ProRes or DNxHR can produce files many times larger than the original. Check free space before large jobs.

What you do not need

- **An account.** There is no sign-up, no login and no profile.
- **An internet connection,** after the one-time engine download.
- **A licence key.** All 24 tools work without one; Premium only removes limits.
- **Any other software.** No codec packs, no separate FFmpeg install, no .NET runtime.

2. Installing VideoForge

Option A: Microsoft Store

- 1 Open the Microsoft Store and search for **VideoForge - Offline Video Converter & Compressor**.
- 2 Check the publisher reads **Mes-Dev** before installing.
- 3 Click **Get**, then **Install**.
- 4 VideoForge appears in your Start menu when it finishes.

The Store keeps the app updated automatically. This is the simplest route if you have no preference.

Search for the full name, and check the publisher. Several unrelated products are called VideoForge. The one you want is listed as **VideoForge - Offline Video Converter & Compressor**, published by **Mes-Dev**. The direct link from mes-dev.com/apps/video-forge always opens the correct listing.

Option B: direct download from mes-dev.com

- 1 Go to mes-dev.com/apps/video-forge.
- 2 Click the download button to get the installer (about 3 MB).

- 3 Run the downloaded **.exe** file.
- 4 If Windows shows a SmartScreen warning, click **More info**, then **Run anyway**.
- 5 Follow the installer. No administrator rights are needed.

About the SmartScreen warning. It appears because the installer is not signed with a commercial code-signing certificate, not because anything is wrong with the file. The Microsoft Store version does not show it, because Microsoft signs that copy. If the warning concerns you, use the Store.

Uninstalling

Open **Settings**, then **Apps**, find **VideoForge** and choose **Uninstall**. Your processed video files are never touched. Presets, history and the downloaded video engine are stored separately and can be removed by hand if you want a completely clean removal - see section 13.

3. First launch: the video engine

The first time you open VideoForge you will see a screen titled **One quick setup step**. This is expected, and it happens only once.

What is being downloaded

VideoForge uses FFmpeg, an open-source video engine, to do the actual processing. Rather than bundling it, the app downloads it on first launch. The download is about **168 MB** and needs an internet connection.

How to complete setup

- 1 Click **Set up VideoForge**.
- 2 Wait for the progress bar. On a normal connection this takes a few minutes.
- 3 A **Verifying download** stage runs when the transfer finishes.
- 4 The main dashboard opens by itself. Setup is complete.

Why it works this way

- **The app stays small.** The installer is about 3 MB rather than 170 MB.
- **The engine is verified.** The download is checked against a known fingerprint (SHA-256) before it is used, so a corrupted or altered file is rejected rather than run.
- **It only happens once.** After setup, VideoForge never needs the internet again except for optional licence activation.

If setup fails. The most common cause is a firewall or proxy blocking the download. VideoForge tries GitHub first and falls back to a mirror on mes-dev.com automatically. If both fail, see section 13.

4. Finding your way around

The dashboard

The home screen shows every tool as a card, grouped by what you are trying to do. Clicking a card opens that tool. The same tools are listed in the sidebar on the left, in the same groups, so you can move between them without returning home.

Group	Tools
Convert and compress	Compress, Convert, Resolution, Export for, Export for editing
Edit	Trim, Crop and rotate, Adjust and enhance, Stabilise, Chroma key, Remove silence, Split, Merge, Speed, Watermark, Subtitles
Extract	Video to GIF, Extract audio, Mute, Thumbnail, Frames
Batch	Batch compress, Batch convert, Watch folder
Library	Presets, History

The standard workflow

Almost every tool works the same way. Once you know this pattern, you know the app.

- 1 Load a video.** Click **Open a video** in the bar at the top of any screen. The bar then shows the file name, format, duration and resolution.
- 2 Choose an output folder.** Click **Choose** in the Output folder panel. This is shared across every tool, so you only do it once per session.
- 3 Adjust the settings** for the tool you are using.
- 4 Click the action button** at the bottom, for example **Compress video**.
- 5 Watch the progress bar.** It shows percentage, speed and estimated time. You can cancel at any point.
- 6 Check the result.** A card appears showing the output file, its size and, for video, a built-in player. **Open folder** reveals it in Explorer.

The output folder does not survive a restart. VideoForge asks for it again each time you open the app. Choosing it once at the start of a session covers every tool you use in that session.

Loading a different video

Click **Change video** in the top bar. Everything on the current screen resets to its defaults, so settings measured against the old file cannot carry over. Your output folder and encoder choice are kept, because those are preferences rather than file-specific settings.

The batch tools work slightly differently

Batch compress, Batch convert and Merge take a **list** of files instead of a single one. Use **Add files** to build the queue, and the X on each row to remove one. Everything else follows the same pattern.

5. Free tier and Premium

Every tool in VideoForge is open from the moment you install it. There is no locked section and no blurred screen. Premium removes the free tier's **length and volume limits**; it does not unlock hidden features.

Always free, with no limit at all

- Compress, Trim, Convert, Crop and rotate
- Extract audio, Mute, Thumbnail
- Colour adjustment (inside Adjust and enhance)
- Export for WhatsApp and Export for YouTube 1080p
- Presets and History

- Scanning for silence, and every live preview

These have no ceiling, at any length, forever - as long as you leave the encoder on the default H.264 / CPU / 8-bit.

Free up to a limit

Tool or feature	Free limit	With Premium
Watermark, Resolution, Speed, Subtitles	60 seconds of output	Any length
Stabilise, Chroma key, Remove silence	60 seconds of output	Any length
LUTs, upscaling, sharpening, audio levelling	60 seconds of output	Any length
GPU encoding, H.265, AV1, 10-bit	60 seconds of output	Any length
Export for editing (ProRes, DNxHR)	60 seconds of output	Any length
Other export presets (Reels, 4K, Instagram, X, email)	60 seconds of output	Any length
Video to GIF	15 seconds of output	Any length
Frame extractor	20 images per run	Unlimited
Merge	2 clips	Unlimited
Split	2 parts	Unlimited
Batch compress, Batch convert	2 files per run	Unlimited
Watch folder	2 files per session	Runs as long as you leave it

How a limit behaves

VideoForge never gives you half a file. It checks the job **before** starting, and if it exceeds the free limit the action button is replaced by a message naming the real numbers, for example: *Watermarking is free up to 60s. This job would produce 9m 14s.*

You can always change the settings to come back under the limit. Trimming a clip first, removing a file from a batch, or switching the encoder back to H.264 / CPU all work.

The badges tell you the limit up front. Capped tools show a small grey label in the sidebar and on their dashboard card, such as **60s**, **15s**, **2** or **20**. Those disappear entirely once Premium is active.

6. Convert and compress

6.1 Compress

Free tier: Unlimited on H.264 / CPU / 8-bit. Advanced encoders are free up to 60 seconds.

Makes a video file smaller. This is the most-used tool in the app.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Pick a **Mode**: **Quality** or **Target size**.
- 3 Adjust the setting for that mode (below).
- 4 Optionally choose a different **Encoder** - see section 11.
- 5 Click **Compress video**.

Quality mode

Choose **High**, **Medium**, **Low** or **Custom**. This targets a visual quality rather than a file size, which usually gives the best result per megabyte. The final size depends on the footage: typically 40 to 70 percent smaller.

- **High** - barely distinguishable from the original. Use for archiving.
- **Medium** - the usual choice. Good quality, much smaller file.
- **Low** - visible softening, smallest file. Use for quick sharing.
- **Custom** - set the quality value yourself. Lower numbers mean better quality and larger files.

Target size mode

Enter an exact bitrate and VideoForge hits it. Use this when the file has to fit a specific limit. A live estimate shows the expected output size as you change the value.

Tip. If you only need it to fit WhatsApp, YouTube or email, use **Export for** instead. Those presets already know the right size and bitrate.

6.2 Convert

Free tier: Unlimited on H.264 / CPU / 8-bit. Advanced encoders are free up to 60 seconds.

Changes the file format (the container). Use it when a program or device will not accept your file.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Pick a target format: **MP4**, **MOV**, **MKV**, **AVI**, **WEBM** or **FLV**.
- 3 Click **Convert to ...**

Which format to choose

Format	Best for
MP4	The safe default. Plays on virtually everything.
MOV	Apple software and hardware, and video editors.
MKV	Archiving. Handles almost any codec and multiple audio tracks.
AVI	Older Windows software that refuses newer formats.

Format	Best for
WEBM	Websites and browsers. Uses VP9 video and Opus audio.
FLV	Legacy Flash-based systems. Rarely needed now.

Some formats override your encoder choice. WEBM always uses VP9 and Opus, because that is what browsers reliably play. AVI and FLV can only carry H.264 in practice, so H.265 and AV1 are downgraded automatically. The app tells you on screen when this happens.

6.3 Resolution and aspect ratio

Free tier: Free up to 60 seconds of output.

Changes the pixel dimensions of the video.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Pick a **Target resolution**: 4K, 1080p, 720p, 480p or Custom.
- 3 Choose a **Fit** mode.
- 4 Choose a **Scaling algorithm**.
- 5 Click **Resize video**.

Fit modes

- **Fit (pad)** - keeps the whole picture and adds black bars if the shape does not match. Nothing is lost.
- **Cover (crop)** - fills the frame completely and cuts off the overflow. No bars, but the edges are trimmed.
- **Stretch** - forces the picture into the frame. Distorts people and objects; use only when you know you want it.

Scaling algorithms

- **Lanczos** - sharpest result. The right default.
- **Bicubic** - slightly softer, marginally faster.
- **Bilinear** - fast, noticeably soft.
- **Nearest** - hard pixel edges. For pixel art, not for footage.

6.4 Export for

Free tier: WhatsApp and YouTube 1080p are unlimited. Other presets are free up to 60 seconds.

One-click export for a specific destination. Each preset already knows the resolution, frame-rate cap and bitrate that destination wants, so you do not have to work them out.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Click a **Destination** card.
- 3 Read the estimated output size shown below.
- 4 Click **Export for ...**

The destinations

Destination	Output	Notes
WhatsApp	1280x720, letterboxed, max 30 fps	Fits under the 16 MB attachment limit

Destination	Output	Notes
YouTube 1080p	1920x1080, letterboxed	YouTube's recommended bitrate
YouTube 4K	3840x2160, letterboxed	2160p at YouTube's recommended bitrate
Reels / TikTok / Shorts	1080x1920 vertical, cropped to fill	No black bars
Instagram feed	1080x1080 square, cropped to fill	
X / Twitter	1280x720, letterboxed	Bitrate X accepts without re-compressing
Email attachment	1280x720, letterboxed	Under 10 MB, safe for most mail servers

Size-limited presets scale with length. A 16 MB ceiling is generous over one minute and very tight over twenty. If a clip is too long to fit at a watchable quality, VideoForge says so rather than producing an unwatchable file that happens to be the right size. Trim or split it first.

6.5 Export for editing

Free tier: Free up to 60 seconds of output.

Converts to **ProRes** or **DNxHR**, the intermediate formats video editors prefer. Use this when you are handing footage to Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro, DaVinci Resolve or Avid Media Composer.

Why these formats exist

H.264 is a delivery format: each frame depends on its neighbours, so an editor has to decode a run of frames for every seek. ProRes and DNxHR store each frame whole, which is why timelines scrub smoothly on them and stutter on H.264. The files are much larger; that is the trade.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Pick a **Format family**: **Apple ProRes** or **Avid DNxHR**.
- 3 Pick a **Profile**. Each row shows its data rate and estimated output size.
- 4 Check the estimated size, then click **Export as ...**

ProRes profiles (written to .mov)

Profile	Rate at 1080p30	Use for
ProRes 422 Proxy	~45 Mbps	Offline editing. Cut on this, relink later.
ProRes 422 LT	~102 Mbps	Long interviews. Lighter, most of the quality.
ProRes 422	~147 Mbps	The standard broadcast deliverable. Start here.
ProRes 422 HQ	~220 Mbps	Visually lossless. The usual grading master.
ProRes 4444	~330 Mbps	Motion graphics. Full colour plus alpha channel.

DNxHR profiles (written to .mxf)

Profile	Rate at 1080p30	Use for
DNxHR LB	~36 Mbps	Low bandwidth. The DNxHR equivalent of a proxy.
DNxHR SQ	~115 Mbps	Standard quality. The everyday Avid working format.

Profile	Rate at 1080p30	Use for
DNxHR HQ	~175 Mbps	High quality, 8-bit. Comparable to ProRes 422 HQ.
DNxHR HQX	~220 Mbps	10-bit, for HDR and heavy grading.

These files are enormous. ProRes 422 HQ at 1080p is roughly 220 Mbps: about 3.3 GB for two minutes and 33 GB for twenty. The screen shows an estimate before you start, and warns above 20 GB. Check your free disk space.

No preview, and no encoder choice. No web browser can decode ProRes or DNxHR, so the result card shows the file details instead of a player - open it in your editor, VLC or QuickTime. There is also no encoder picker on this screen: neither format has a GPU path on any vendor, and the profile itself determines the data rate.

7. Edit

7.1 Trim

Free tier: Unlimited.

Cuts a single section out of a clip and discards the rest.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Use the **Start** and **End** sliders to set the section you want to keep. The built-in player above them shows where you are.
- 3 Read **Selected clip length** to confirm.
- 4 Pick a **Mode**.
- 5 Click **Trim video**.

Lossless or Precise

- **Lossless (fast)** - copies the video without re-encoding. Instant, no quality loss at all, and the file keeps its original format. Cuts snap to the nearest keyframe, so the actual start can be up to a second or two from where you set it.
- **Precise (exact)** - re-encodes so the cut lands exactly where you put it. Slower, and a small amount of quality is lost as with any re-encode. Output is MP4.

Use Lossless unless the exact frame matters.

7.2 Crop and rotate

Free tier: Unlimited on H.264 / CPU / 8-bit.

Changes the framing: crop the edges, straighten a sideways phone clip, or mirror it.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Set **Rotate** if needed: None, 90 clockwise, 180, or 90 counter-clockwise.
- 3 Tick **Horizontal** or **Vertical** under Flip to mirror the picture.
- 4 To crop, tick **Crop the frame**, then either pick an aspect ratio or type Left, Top, Width and Height values in pixels.
- 5 Check the **Output frame** line, which shows the final dimensions.
- 6 Click **Apply changes**.

Aspect ratio buttons

Free, 16:9, 9:16, 1:1 and 4:5. Choosing one places the largest rectangle of that shape in the centre of your frame. You can then nudge the numbers by hand.

If you change nothing, nothing is re-encoded. The button reads **Copy without changes** and the file is copied in an instant, bit for bit. VideoForge will not degrade a file you did not ask it to change.

Crop values are rounded down to even numbers. Video codecs require even dimensions, and an odd value would fail the encode.

7.3 Adjust and enhance

Free tier: Colour is unlimited. LUTs, resize, sharpen, smooth motion, reverse and audio tools are free up to 60 seconds.

Six kinds of correction in one screen and, importantly, **one encode**. Using several of them together does not process your video several times.

The live preview

At the top of the screen, two images show a real frame from your video: **Original** on the left and **Adjusted** on the right. Move any slider and the right-hand image updates after about a second.

- **Preview position** - the slider underneath moves both images to a different moment.
- **Show result only** - hides the Original pane for a bigger view.
- **Refresh** - renders the frame again.

Reversing is not shown in the preview: rendering one frame would require decoding the entire clip.

Colour

Control	Range	What it does
Brightness	-0.50 to 0.50	Lifts or lowers the whole image. 0 is unchanged.
Contrast	0.50 to 2.00	Separates lights from darks. 1.00 is unchanged.
Saturation	0.00 to 2.50	Colour intensity. 0 is black and white, 1.00 unchanged.
Gamma	0.30 to 2.50	Adjusts midtones without moving black and white points.

Reset colour returns all four to their defaults.

Look-up table (.cube)

Click **Choose a .cube file** to apply a colour grade authored elsewhere. LUTs are widely available for film looks and for converting log footage to a normal picture.

The LUT is applied first, before your own colour adjustments. A LUT is authored against the original image, so anything else has to come after it.

Resize and sharpen

- **Upscale to** - Leave as-is, 1080p, 1440p or 4K.
- **Sharpen** - 0 to 2. Around 0.5 to 1.0 is subtle; above 1.5 shows halos on edges.

Upscaling cannot add detail that was never captured. It resamples cleanly and sharpens, which is useful for matching a timeline's resolution, not for rescuing soft footage.

Smooth motion (frame interpolation)

Converts to 30 or 60 fps by inventing frames between the real ones. On slow, steady movement the result looks smooth. On fast motion you will see warping around moving edges - that is the technique working as designed, not a fault. It is also very slow. Try it on a short clip first.

Reverse

Plays the clip backwards, audio included.

Reversing is limited to 120 seconds for everyone, including Premium. This is not a licence limit. Reversing holds every frame of the clip in memory at once, so a long video would exhaust your RAM and Windows would close the app. Trim it first.

Audio

- **Normalise loudness** - Off, YouTube (-14), Podcast (-16) or Broadcast (-23). Brings the whole clip to a consistent perceived level so viewers stop reaching for the volume between your videos.
- **Volume** - manual gain from -20 to +20 dB.
- **Remove low rumble** - filters out everything below 80 Hz: traffic, air conditioning, handling noise.

7.4 Stabilise

Free tier: Free up to 60 seconds of output.

Smooths out shaky handheld footage. This runs in **two passes**: the first measures how the camera moved, the second applies the correction.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Pick a **Strength**: Light, Medium or Strong.
- 3 Pick an **Edge handling** mode.
- 4 Click **Stabilise video**.

Strength

- **Light** - takes the edge off small wobbles and leaves deliberate camera moves alone.
- **Medium** - the usual choice. Handles walking and general handheld shake.
- **Strong** - for badly shaky footage. Deliberate pans may start to look like the camera is resisting you.

Edge handling

- **Crop as little as possible** - zooms only as much as each moment needs. Less cropping overall, but the framing breathes slightly.
- **Fixed 5 percent zoom** - the same zoom throughout. Steadier framing, a little more crop.

Two things to expect

- **The frame gets slightly tighter.** Cancelling shake exposes empty edges at the borders, and zooming in is the only way to hide them. Every stabiliser works this way.
- **It takes about twice as long** as a normal encode, because the clip is read once to measure and again to correct. Progress runs 0 to 50 percent while analysing, then 50 to 100 percent while correcting.

A steady clip will look unchanged. There is nothing to correct in screen recordings, exported videos, animation or tripod footage. Stabilise only does visible work on handheld video that actually shakes.

7.5 Chroma key

Free tier: Free up to 60 seconds of output.

Removes a green or blue screen and replaces the background with a colour or an image.

How to use it

- 1 Load a green-screen video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Set **Screen colour** to match your backdrop: Green, Blue or Magenta.
- 3 Watch the preview and adjust **Similarity** until the background is gone but your subject is intact.
- 4 Adjust **Edge softness** so hair and edges look natural.
- 5 Choose a **New background**: a solid colour, or your own image.
- 6 Click **Replace background**.

Reading the preview

The preview shows the **key only**. Removed areas are transparent rather than filled, so any hole accidentally cut out of your subject is immediately obvious. The background is added when you run the job.

The two sliders

- **Similarity** (0.01 to 0.60) - how much of the screen colour to remove. Too low leaves a green fringe around your subject; too high starts eating the subject itself. Around 0.30 is a common starting point.
- **Edge softness** (0.00 to 0.50) - softens the cut-out edge. A small amount helps hair look natural instead of cut with scissors.

Backgrounds

- **Solid colour** - Black, White, Charcoal or Navy.
- **Image** - choose any JPG, PNG, WebP or BMP. It is scaled and cropped to fill the frame, so it never appears letterboxed.

Lighting matters more than settings. An evenly lit screen keys far better than any slider can rescue. If the edges look ragged at every value, the lighting is usually the cause rather than the software.

7.6 Remove silence

Free tier: Scanning is free and unlimited. Applying the cut is free up to 60 seconds.

Finds the dead air in a recording and cuts it out. Useful for lectures, screen recordings, podcasts and interviews.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video with an audio track, and choose an output folder.
- 2 Set **How quiet counts as silent**.
- 3 Set **Ignore pauses shorter than**.
- 4 Set **Leave a little air either side**.
- 5 Click **Scan for silence**. This is free and changes nothing.
- 6 Read the report: how many silent stretches were found, how much time would be removed, and the resulting length.
- 7 If it looks right, click **Remove N silent stretches**. If not, adjust and scan again.

The three settings

Setting	Options	What it does
How quiet counts as silent	Quiet rooms (-40 dB), Normal (-30 dB), Noisy (-20 dB)	Lower values are stricter. If background hiss is stopping pauses from being detected, move towards -20 dB.
Ignore pauses shorter than	0.3 to 3.0 seconds	Below about 0.3s you start cutting the natural gaps between words, which sounds worse than the dead air did.
Leave a little air either side	0.00 to 0.50 seconds	Padding around each cut, so speech does not start abruptly on the first syllable.

Scanning is deliberately free and unlimited. It writes nothing and produces the only number that tells you whether the tool is worth using: how much time you would save. You see that before deciding anything.

This is a threshold on the audio level, not an AI model. It is called Remove silence rather than anything grander because that is what it does.

7.7 Split

Free tier: Free up to 2 parts.

Cuts one video into several clips.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Choose **Split by: Fixed duration** or **Number of parts**.
- 3 Enter the value - seconds per part, or how many equal parts.
- 4 Pick a **Cut mode**: Lossless or Precise, as described under Trim.
- 5 Check the line reading **This will produce N clips**.
- 6 Click **Split video**.

Output files are numbered: *name_part01*, *name_part02* and so on.

7.8 Merge

Free tier: Free up to 2 clips.

Joins several clips into one file. Mixed resolutions, frame rates and missing audio tracks are handled automatically.

How to use it

- 1 Click **Add files** and choose the clips. They are joined top to bottom.
- 2 Use the arrows on each row to reorder, or the X to remove one.
- 3 Choose an output folder.
- 4 Pick an **Output resolution**: Match first clip, 1080p, 720p or 480p.
- 5 Pick a **Frame rate**: 24, 30 or 60.
- 6 Click **Merge N clips**.

What happens to mismatched clips

- Every clip is scaled to fit the chosen resolution and letterboxed, so mixed sizes merge cleanly rather than jumping.
- Clips with no audio have silent audio added, so the sound stays in sync with the picture across the join.

7.9 Speed

Free tier: Free up to 60 seconds of output.

Speeds up or slows down a clip without making voices sound high or low.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Pick a **Playback speed**: 0.25x, 0.5x, 0.75x, 1.25x, 1.5x, 2x or 4x.
- 3 Click **Change speed**.

The limit is measured on the output, not the input. A 2x speed-up of a 110-second clip produces 55 seconds, which is inside the free tier. Speeding up is therefore a legitimate way to bring a job under the limit.

7.10 Watermark

Free tier: Free up to 60 seconds of output.

Overlays text or a logo on the picture.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Choose **Text** or **Logo / image**.
- 3 For text, type it and set the font size. For a logo, choose a PNG (transparency is preserved) and set its size.
- 4 Click one of the nine **Position** squares to place it.
- 5 Set **Opacity**.
- 6 Optionally tick **Show only during a time range** and set start and end.
- 7 Click **Add watermark**.

Practical settings

- **Opacity** around 70 to 85 percent is visible without dominating the picture.
- **Position** - bottom-right is conventional and least likely to cover the subject.
- **Logo** - a PNG with a transparent background looks far better than a JPG, which will show a solid rectangle.

7.11 Subtitles

Free tier: Free up to 60 seconds of output.

Burns an .srt subtitle file permanently into the picture. Unlike a separate subtitle file, burned-in subtitles cannot be switched off - which is exactly what social platforms and silent autoplay need.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Click **Choose subtitle file** and pick an .srt.
- 3 Set the **Font size**.
- 4 Click **Burn subtitles**.

Need subtitles created rather than burned in? VideoForge burns an existing file; it does not transcribe speech. AudioForge, also from MES-DEV, generates .srt files from audio and you can bring the result here.

8. Extract

8.1 Video to GIF

Free tier: Free up to 15 seconds of output.

Turns any part of a clip into an animated GIF, with palette optimisation for smaller files.

How to use it

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Set **Start at** and **Length**. Setting Length to 0 runs to the end of the clip.
- 3 Set the **Width** in pixels. Height follows the source aspect ratio automatically.
- 4 Set the **Frame rate**.
- 5 Choose a **Dithering** mode.
- 6 Check the rough output size shown below, then click **Create GIF**.

Keeping the file small

GIF is an old format with no real compression, so files grow quickly. Three levers:

- **Width** - the biggest single factor. 480 px is plenty for most uses; 320 px is fine for a reaction GIF.
- **Frame rate** - 10 to 15 is smooth. Higher multiplies the file size for little gain.
- **Dithering** - **Smooth** looks best on gradients, **Pattern** is a middle ground, **None** gives the smallest file with visible colour banding.

The GIF limit is 15 seconds rather than 60 because GIFs are short by nature and a 60-second GIF would be enormous.

8.2 Extract audio

Free tier: Unlimited.

Saves the audio track as a standalone file.

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
 - 2 Pick a **Format**: **MP3** or **WAV (lossless)**.
 - 3 Click **Extract audio**.
- **MP3** - compressed, small, plays everywhere. Right for most uses.
 - **WAV** - uncompressed, large, no quality loss. Right if the audio is going into an editor or a DAW.

8.3 Mute

Free tier: Unlimited.

Removes the audio track and leaves the picture untouched. There are no settings.

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Click **Remove audio**.

The video stream is copied rather than re-encoded, so this is near-instant and loses no quality.

8.4 Thumbnail

Free tier: Unlimited.

Grabs a single frame as an image.

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
 - 2 Use the player and the **Timestamp** slider to find the frame you want.
 - 3 Pick a format: **JPG** or **PNG**.
 - 4 Click **Create thumbnail**.
- **JPG** - smaller file, fine for a video thumbnail or a web page.
 - **PNG** - larger, perfectly sharp. Right if the image will be edited afterwards.

8.5 Frames

Free tier: Free up to 20 images per run.

Exports a sequence of still images from the video.

- 1 Load a video and choose an output folder.
- 2 Choose **Extraction: Every N seconds** or **Frames per second**.
- 3 Set the value with the slider.
- 4 Pick a format: JPG or PNG.
- 5 Check the line reading **This will write N images**.
- 6 Click **Extract frames**.

Images are written into their own subfolder inside your output folder, numbered in sequence, so they never clutter the main folder.

Watch the count. One frame every 0.5 seconds across a 40-minute lecture is 4,800 images. The live count exists so you find that out before pressing the button, not afterwards.

9. Batch and unattended

9.1 Batch compress

Free tier: Free up to 2 files per run.

Applies one compression setting to a queue of files.

- 1 Click **Add files** and choose your videos.
- 2 Choose an output folder.
- 3 Set **Mode** and **Quality** exactly as in the single Compress tool.
- 4 Optionally choose an **Encoder**.
- 5 Click **Start batch (N)**.

Files are processed one after another, not in parallel, so your machine stays usable. Each row shows its own status. If one file fails, the rest continue - the summary at the end tells you how many succeeded and how many did not.

A GPU encoder is where batch pays off most. The whole queue runs at several times the speed, and because files process sequentially your machine stays responsive.

9.2 Batch convert

Free tier: Free up to 2 files per run.

Converts a queue of files to one target format.

- 1 Click **Add files** and choose your videos.
- 2 Choose an output folder.
- 3 Pick a format under **Convert all to**.
- 4 Click **Start batch (N)**.

9.3 Watch folder

Free tier: Free for 2 files per session.

Point VideoForge at a folder and leave it running. Anything dropped in is processed automatically, overnight if you like.

How to use it

- 1 Click **Choose folder** under **Watch this folder**.
- 2 Click **Choose folder** under **Save results to**. This must be a **different** folder.
- 3 Choose what to do with each new file: **Compress** or **Convert**.
- 4 Set the quality, or the target format.
- 5 Optionally choose an **Encoder**.
- 6 Click **Start watching**.

The Activity list shows each file as it is detected, processed and finished. Press **Stop watching** when you are done.

How it behaves

- **Files already in the folder are ignored.** Only new arrivals are picked up, so pointing it at an existing archive will not re-encode years of material.
- **It waits for copies to finish.** A file is only processed once its size stops changing, so copying a large clip in over a network is safe.
- **One failure does not stop the session.** An unreadable file is reported and the watcher carries on.

The two folders must be different. If results were written back into the watched folder, every output would be detected as a new input and processed again, forever. VideoForge refuses this combination rather than letting it happen.

10. Library

10.1 Presets

Free tier: Unlimited.

Saves a tool's settings so you can apply them again in one click.

Saving a preset

- 1 Set up a tool the way you want it.
- 2 Click **Save current** in the Presets bar at the top of that tool.
- 3 Give it a name and confirm.

Using a preset

Open the same tool and pick your preset from the dropdown. The settings are applied immediately.

Managing presets

The **Presets** screen in the sidebar lists everything you have saved, grouped by tool, and lets you delete any of them.

Presets exist for Compress, Convert, Video to GIF, Crop and rotate, Export for, Export for editing, Adjust and enhance, Stabilise and Chroma key.

10.2 History

Free tier: Unlimited.

A log of every job you have run: the tool used, what happened, and where the output went.

- **Open folder** on any entry reveals that job's output in Explorer.
- **Delete** removes a single entry.
- **Clear history** empties the list.

History records what you did, not the files themselves. Clearing it never deletes any video.

11. Choosing an encoder

Most tools have an **Encoder** section. If you ignore it entirely, VideoForge uses H.264 on your CPU at 8-bit - the safest choice, and the one that is never subject to a free-tier limit.

The three codecs

Codec	File size	Compatibility	Speed
H.264	Baseline	Plays on virtually everything	Slowest on CPU
H.265 (HEVC)	About half of H.264	Most modern devices; not universal	Slower than H.264 on CPU
AV1	Smallest of the three	Needs a recent player or browser	Very slow on CPU

CPU or GPU

Each codec is offered on your processor and, where your hardware supports it, on your graphics card.

- **CPU** - works on every machine. The most predictable quality. Slowest.
- **NVIDIA GPU (NVENC)** - much faster at the same file size, on NVIDIA hardware.
- **Intel GPU (Quick Sync)** - fast, and easy on the processor.
- **AMD GPU (AMF)** - fast, and easy on the processor.

VideoForge checks what your machine actually has when it starts. Options your hardware cannot use are shown greyed out and labelled **Not on this PC** rather than hidden, so you can see the full picture.

Colour depth

When you select H.265 or AV1, a **Colour depth** choice appears.

- **8-bit** - standard, and correct for almost everything.
- **10-bit** - removes banding in gradients: skies, sunsets, studio backdrops, slow fades to black. It does *not* add detail or sharpness.

10-bit is not offered for H.264. It exists in the standard but plays almost nowhere, so VideoForge produces 8-bit instead rather than handing you a file that looks broken on most devices.

Which should you pick?

If you want to...	Choose
Share a file that must play anywhere	H.264 / CPU (the default)
Finish a long encode much faster	H.264 or H.265 on your GPU
Halve the file size at the same quality	H.265
Get the smallest possible file, and time is no object	AV1
Avoid banding in a sunset or a gradient	H.265 or AV1 at 10-bit
Hand footage to a video editor	Use Export for editing instead

Anything other than H.264 / CPU / 8-bit carries the 60-second free limit. That is deliberate: it lets you run a GPU encode or an H.265 encode on your own footage and see the difference for yourself before deciding whether it is worth buying. Switch back to H.264 / CPU at any time to process a file of any length for free.

12. Premium licence

Premium is a **one-time purchase**. There is no subscription and no recurring fee.

What it changes

Premium removes every free-tier ceiling listed in section 5. It does not add tools, and it does not unlock anything hidden - all 24 tools already work without it.

- No length limit on any tool
- Unlimited files per batch, and a watch folder that runs as long as you leave it
- Unlimited merging, splitting and frame extraction
- GPU, H.265, AV1 and 10-bit encoding at any length
- ProRes and DNxHR export at any length
- Every export preset, at any length

Buying

Click **Get Premium** in the top bar, or any **Unlock Premium** button. That opens mes-dev.com in your browser. VideoForge itself never takes a payment.

Your licence key arrives by email after purchase.

Activating

- 1 Click **Activate** in the top bar.
- 2 Paste your licence key.
- 3 Click **Activate**.

This needs an internet connection - it is the only time after setup that VideoForge contacts the internet. The sidebar footer changes to **PREMIUM ACTIVE** and every limit badge disappears immediately, with no restart.

Two machines

One licence covers **two machines** - a desktop and a laptop, for instance.

Moving to a different machine

- 1 On the machine you are leaving, open the licence dialog and click **Deactivate**.
- 2 On the new machine, activate with the same key.

If you cannot reach the old machine - it was replaced, or it failed - email **contact@mes-dev.com** with your licence key and we will free the slot.

What is sent during activation

Your licence key, a machine identifier and your computer name. That is used solely to enforce the two-machine limit and to let you see which machines are activated. No video files, file names or usage data are ever transmitted.

13. Troubleshooting

Setup will not complete

Symptom: the first-run download fails or stalls.

- Check your internet connection and try again. The download is about 168 MB.
- If you are behind a corporate firewall or proxy, it may be blocking the transfer. VideoForge tries GitHub first and falls back to a mirror on mes-dev.com automatically, so both would have to be blocked.
- Antivirus software occasionally quarantines the downloaded engine. Check its logs and allow VideoForge if so.
- If it still fails, email contact@mes-dev.com and we will send the engine directly.

A job fails with an error message

- **Check the source file plays** in another player. Partially downloaded or corrupted files fail here too.
- **Check free disk space.** This is by far the most common cause with ProRes, DNxHR and frame extraction.
- **Check the output folder still exists** and is writable. An unplugged USB drive or a disconnected network share will fail.
- **Try H.264 / CPU.** If a GPU encoder fails, your graphics driver may be out of date, or that encoder may be listed but not usable on your hardware.

A GPU encoder is listed but fails when I use it

VideoForge reports what the video engine supports, which is not always the same as what your graphics driver will accept. Update your graphics driver, or use H.264 / CPU, which works on every machine.

Stabilise produced no visible change

Almost always because there was nothing to correct. Screen recordings, exported videos, animation and tripod footage have no camera shake. If a genuinely shaky handheld clip shows no change either, and no warning appeared on the Stabilise screen, contact support.

The output looks zoomed in after stabilising

That is expected. Cancelling shake exposes empty edges at the borders, and zooming in is the only way to hide them. Choose **Crop as little as possible** to minimise it.

Chroma key leaves a green edge, or eats my subject

- **Green fringe remaining** - raise **Similarity** a little.
- **Holes in the subject** - lower **Similarity**.
- **Hard, cut-out edges** - raise **Edge softness**.
- **Nothing works at any value** - the screen was probably lit unevenly. No setting fully rescues that.

The result has no preview player

Expected for ProRes and DNxHR. No web browser can decode those formats, so VideoForge shows the file details instead. The file is fine - open it in your editor, VLC or QuickTime.

Reversing refuses to run

Reversing is limited to 120 seconds for everyone, including Premium. It holds every frame of the clip in memory at once, and a longer video would exhaust your RAM. Trim the clip first.

Where VideoForge keeps its files

What	Where
Video engine, presets, history, licence	%LOCALAPPDATA%\MES-DEV\VideoForge
Same, for the Microsoft Store version	%LOCALAPPDATA%\Packages\Mes-Dev.VideoForge...\LocalCache\Local\MES-DEV\VideoForge
Your processed videos	Wherever you set the output folder

AppData is a hidden folder. Paste the path into the Explorer address bar rather than browsing to it. Deleting the folder resets VideoForge completely - it will download the engine again on next launch. Your processed videos are never affected.

14. Frequently asked questions

Is VideoForge really free?

Yes. All 24 tools work without paying anything, and there is no watermark on your output. The free tier has length and volume limits on some tools - see section 5. Premium removes those limits and is a one-time purchase.

Does my video get uploaded anywhere?

No. Everything is processed on your own machine. VideoForge contacts the internet twice at most: once to download the video engine on first launch, and optionally to activate a licence key. No video file, file name or usage data is ever transmitted.

Why does it need to download something on first launch?

VideoForge uses FFmpeg to do the actual processing. Downloading it on first run keeps the installer at about 3 MB instead of 170 MB, and lets us update the engine without shipping a new version of the app. It happens once, and it is verified against a known fingerprint before it is used.

Can I use it offline?

Yes, completely, once setup has finished. If you have bought Premium, activate the key while you are online and it stays active offline afterwards.

Will it put a watermark on my video?

Never. There is no watermark at any tier. The Watermark tool exists so you can add your own if you want one.

What is the difference between Quality mode and Target size mode?

Quality mode aims at a visual quality and lets the file size fall where it does - usually the best result per megabyte. Target size mode hits an exact bitrate, so the final size is predictable. Use Target size when the file must fit a specific limit.

How do I make a video small enough for WhatsApp?

Use **Export for** and pick the WhatsApp preset. It already knows the 16 MB limit and shows you the estimated size before you run it.

What is the difference between Lossless and Precise trimming?

Lossless copies the video without re-encoding: instant, zero quality loss, but cuts snap to the nearest keyframe so the start may land a second or two from where you set it. Precise re-encodes so the cut is exact, at the cost of time and a small amount of quality.

Should I use H.265 instead of H.264?

H.265 gives roughly half the file size at the same quality, which is a real gain. The trade is compatibility: H.264 plays on virtually everything, while H.265 needs a reasonably modern device. If the file is for you, use H.265. If you are sending it to someone whose setup you do not know, use H.264.

What does GPU encoding actually do?

It moves the encoding work from your processor to your graphics card, which finishes the same job several times faster at a similar file size. It does not improve quality. VideoForge detects what your machine supports automatically.

What is 10-bit for?

It removes banding - the visible steps you sometimes see in a sunset, a studio backdrop or a slow fade to black. It does not make the picture sharper or add detail. It is available on H.265 and AV1 only.

Why is there no preview after exporting ProRes?

No web browser can decode ProRes or DNxHR, and the preview is a browser video player. The file is perfectly fine - open it in your video editor, VLC or QuickTime.

Can VideoForge create subtitles from speech?

No. It burns an existing .srt file into the picture. AudioForge, also from MES-DEV, generates .srt files from audio, and you can bring that result here.

Why is 'Remove silence' not called AI silence removal?

Because it is not AI. It measures the audio level and cuts where it stays below a threshold for long enough. The feature is genuinely useful either way, and we would rather describe it accurately.

Can I run two jobs at the same time?

No, and deliberately. Batch tools process files one after another so your machine stays usable while they run. Video encoding will use every core you give it.

Does the watch folder keep running when the app is closed?

No. VideoForge must stay open. It can be minimised, but closing it stops the watcher.

Why do I have to pick an output folder every time I open the app?

The output folder is held for the session rather than saved. Choosing it once at the start covers every tool you use until you close the app.

Can I use my licence on two computers?

Yes. One licence covers two machines. To move to a third, deactivate on one of the first two, or email contact@mes-dev.com if that machine is no longer available.

Do I have to pay again for updates?

No. Your licence covers future versions.

Windows says the installer is from an unknown publisher. Is that a problem?

It appears because the direct-download installer is not signed with a commercial code-signing certificate. Click More info, then Run anyway. The Microsoft Store version does not show this warning, because Microsoft signs that copy. In the Store, search for the full name **VideoForge - Offline Video Converter & Compressor**, published by **Mes-Dev**.

I searched the Microsoft Store for VideoForge and found a different app.

Several unrelated products share that name. The one you want is listed in full as **VideoForge - Offline Video Converter & Compressor**, published by **Mes-Dev**. The safest route is the link on mes-dev.com/apps/video-forge, which always opens the correct listing.

What happened to the two separate GIF tools?

They were merged into one in version 1.1.0. Every option - width, frame rate and dithering - is now available to everyone, with a 15-second length limit on the free tier.

Which formats can VideoForge open?

MP4, MOV, MKV, AVI, WebM and FLV, plus most files those containers can hold. If a file will not load, try converting it in another tool first and let us know.

15. Support and privacy

Getting help

Email	contact@mes-dev.com
Product page	mes-dev.com/apps/video-forge
All MES-DEV apps	mes-dev.com/apps
Privacy policy	mes-dev.com/privacy-policy

When reporting a problem, these details make it far quicker to solve:

- Which tool you were using, and the settings
- The source file's format, duration and resolution - all shown in the bar at the top of the app
- The exact error message, if there was one
- Your VideoForge version, shown at the bottom of the sidebar

Privacy in one paragraph

VideoForge has no accounts, no telemetry, no analytics and no advertising. No video file, file name or usage data ever leaves your machine. The app connects to the internet exactly twice: once to download the video engine on first launch, and optionally to activate a Premium licence, which sends only a licence key, a machine identifier and your computer name so the two-machine limit can be enforced.

Other MES-DEV applications

Application	What it does
AudioForge	Offline audio toolkit: transcription, noise removal, conversion
ImageForge	Offline image toolkit: convert, resize, compress, watermark
CutOut	Removes image backgrounds automatically
ConvertCraft	Unit and currency converter for the desktop
PDFForge	Offline PDF toolkit: merge, split, OCR, compare, sign