

Tech Talk

Navigating the world of technology one gadget at a time
A service of the Hinsdale Public Library

Podcasts

Volume 5, Number 1



What is a podcast?

A podcast is a series of audio (or less often, video) programs to which you subscribe for delivery over the Internet. Your computer uses a special program to automatically check for and download new episodes as they are released.

Will podcasts play on music players other than iPods?

Even though the name podcast comes from a combination of “iPod” and “broadcast,” audio podcasts will play on nearly any digital audio player which supports the MP3 file format.

Do I need a computer to download podcasts?

Generally speaking, yes. However, once the actual podcast audio file is downloaded to your computer you can transfer it to an MP3 player or record it to a blank recordable compact disc (CD-R) to play it back. Some smartphones like Apple’s iPhone allow you to listen to podcasts over wireless Internet (WiFi) or your telephone’s data network.

How do I find and subscribe to podcasts?

The quickest way to get started listening to podcasts using a Macintosh or Windows computer is to use Apple’s free iTunes software (apple.com/itunes/), which features an easy-to-use interface for podcast subscriptions. The figures in this brochure offer a step-by-step guide to subscribing to podcasts with iTunes. There are other alternatives, though, such as Juice (juicereceiver.sourceforge.net/) and RSS Radio (dorada.co.uk).

Do I have to pay for podcast subscriptions?

The vast majority of podcasts are free, though there are a few which charge a fee. Many free podcasts are supported through corporate sponsorships or advertisements.

What kind of podcasts are available for download?

There is a wide spectrum of content available. The breadth of subject matter has increased dramatically over the past three years. As a result, podcasting is acquiring more and more of the flavor of mainstream media.

Traditional media sources like the Wall Street Journal (online.wsj.com/public/page/podcast.html) and National Public Radio (npr.org/rss/podcast/podcast_directory.php) offer multiple podcasts to which you may subscribe. When you add in all of the podcast material that enthusiasts create every week, you get a surprisingly rich pool of audio programs. These podcast titles represent a small sample of the topics covered:

- Legal Lad's Quick and Dirty Tips for a More Lawful Life
- Grammar Girl's Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing
- The History of Rome
- Mad Money Machine



Subscribing to a podcast in iTunes:

1. Click the iTunes Store button
2. Select Podcasts from the list



3. Browse the list of categories and click the subscribe button. iTunes will automatically download the podcast.
(Continued on next page).

- Irish & Celtic Music Podcast
- This American Life
- Sound Investing Radio Show
- About The Church
- The Amateur Traveler
- Imprint: The #1 Twilight Podcast

How frequently will I download new podcast episodes?

Update frequency varies by podcast. For example, some podcasts update hourly, some daily, some weekly and some only intermittently.

Tell me about video podcasts.

Video podcasts, sometimes called

vodcasts, are distributed using the same subscription technology as traditional audio-only podcasts. However, unlike audio podcasts, there is no single universal video file type in use. This means you're at the mercy of the video format selected by the vodcast producer. Common video podcast file extensions include .mov and .wmv. If you're lucky, your computer already has the software required to display the video in your vodcast. If you're stuck trying to play a video podcast, consider downloading the VLC Media Player (videolan.org/vlc/), a versatile computer media program which can play nearly any digital video or audio file format in use today without installing specific playback software for each type.

Amateur Traveler Podcast (Chris Christensen) Free SUBSCRIBE

Anything Ghost Podcast Lex Free SUBSCRIBE

Amateur Traveler Podcast (iTunes enhan... Chris Christensen Category: Music & Travel Language: English Free SUBSCRIBE

| # | Name | Time | Artist | Release Date | Description | Price |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| AT#182 | Travel to Slovenia | 23:32 | Chris Christensen | 11/26/2008 | Travel to Slovenia | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#181 | Transylvania in E... | 26:33 | Chris Christensen | 11/22/2008 | Transylvania in Romania | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| #28 | Crusiky - St George B... | 29:45 | Chris Christensen | 11/26/2008 | Crusiky - St George (Romania) | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| #13 | Crusiky - Abadita for S... | 30:23 | Chris Christensen | 11/26/2008 | Crusiky - Abadita for Slovenia | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| Iska as a Woman - Episode | 30:40 | Chris Christensen | 11/15/2008 | Iska as a Woman | Free (GET IT NOW) | |
| AT#139 | San Francisco, C... | 43:20 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | San Francisco, California | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| #138 | Chadstone | 38:22 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | Chadstone with Alex Lindsay | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#137 | Seoul, South Korea | 38:22 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | Seoul, South Korea | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#136 | Puerto Vallarta, M... | 38:22 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | Puerto Vallarta, Mexico | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#135 | Colorado | 38:22 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | Colorado | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#134 | Innovative Travel in the USA | 38:22 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | Innovative Travel in the USA | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#133 | Paros Islands | 38:22 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | Paros Islands | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#132 | Georgia | 38:22 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | Georgia | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#131 | The Outer Banks of North... | 38:22 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | The Outer Banks of North Carolina | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#130 | The Bahamas | 38:22 | Chris Christensen | 11/09/2008 | The Bahamas | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#129 | Siberia, Russia - (No)Adve... | 33:30 | Chris Christensen | 8/20/2008 | Siberia, Russia - (No)Adventures | Free (GET IT NOW) |
| AT#128 | Tokyo, Japan | 38:30 | Chris Christensen | 8/20/2008 | Tokyo, Japan | Free (GET IT NOW) |

4. (optional) If you click on the title of the podcast instead of clicking the subscribe button, you'll be presented with a list of previous episodes.
5. (optional) To download prior episodes, simply click the "Get Episode" button. (Continued on next page).

6. Click on the “Podcasts” button in your iTunes Library to reveal your downloaded podcasts. Grayed-out files are available on iTunes but not yet downloaded. You can listen to (or watch) a podcast episode like any other file in your iTunes library. Double click a downloaded episode to play it on your computer.

7. (optional) To transfer podcasts to your iPod or iPhone for listening on the go, click on your device’s name in the left hand column.

8. Select the “Podcasts” tab to tell your iPod what podcasts, if any, you’d like to synchronize. You can choose to sync all of them or just a select few the next time you connect your iPod to your computer.

Final thought...

Podcasts are a fantastic way to keep up to date with news and developments in your areas of interest. Subscribe to a few today!

If you have questions, comments or suggestions, you can visit me at the Reference Desk, contact me via email (motting@hinsdalelibrary.info), or call me at 630-986-1976x225.

Mike Oetting, Reference Librarian
1/16/2009



20 East Maple St.
Hinsdale IL 60521
630-986-1976
www.hinsdalelibrary.info
reference@hinsdalelibrary.info