

Podcasting in Education

The FAQ

Texas Regional Collaboratives for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching

What is a podcast?

“The practice of making audio files available online in a way that allows software to automatically detect new files and download them.” Wikipedia: Podcasting is a means of one-to-many audio distribution via the Internet. The term was coined from “iPod” and “Broadcast” The term Podcasting refers to the process of publishing a podcast series.

What format is a podcast? Is it two way?

A podcast is a one to many broadcast medium. It is not live. The podcast may be audio, audio with still images and web links, video, photos, and PDFs.

Is a podcast just a downloadable file?

Not just a file, but rather an ongoing sequence of files, with new content posted on a regular basis. It is more accurate to think of a podcast as a “podcast series,” with many sequential episodes.

What are the tools I need to listen?

1. The free application iTunes from Apple (Windows or Mac)
<http://www.apple.com/itunes/overview>
2. A fast Internet Connection is preferred (DSL, Cable, School Ethernet)
3. An optional iPod will provide portable access.

Do I have to buy an iPod to listen to or watch podcast?

No, you can just listen or watch on your computer.

So, a podcast is like a daily radio show?

In some ways, but unlike radio, you can listen at your convenience. The episodes, usually audio, download automatically to your CPU and can also be automatically transferred to your iPOD when it is connected. You could think of it as TIVO for radio. The episodes are recorded if and only if you have added them to your list.

Do I have to check to see when new content has been added?

No, the free application iTunes is used to manage the process of using podcast content. Within iTunes, you can search and find new podcast, subscribe to podcast of interest (free), and set up preferences as to how often iTunes checks for new content and which podcasts are transferred to your iPod. You can listen to the content

within iTunes and do not have to have an iPod to participate in this new information distribution medium.

What does it mean to “subscribe” to a podcast?

This term is a little misleading, it just means you are telling iTunes the URL of a new podcast so that it can check the source for new content on a regular basis. It does not mean that you are communicating with the publisher of the content.

Can I use iTunes on a shared CPU to manage my podcast?

If you are not using an iPod with automatic sync, it is possible, but iTunes will not keep your list of podcast separate from others. If your operating system supports multiple users, then there can be a separate iTunes library for each user.

Where does the podcast content come from?

- Traditional print, radio, and video publishers are re-publishing existing and original content as podcasts.
- Universities are supporting standard and distance learning courses with supplemental podcasts.
- Museums and other organizations with an educational purpose
- Individual self-proclaimed content experts.

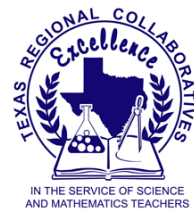
Do I have to use iTunes and iPod?

If you have another kind of MP3 player, you can use one of several podcast aggregators other than iTunes. Non iTunes aggregators are compatible with MP3 format podcasts, but not the AAC format supported by iTunes which allows embedded images and web links.



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What are some of the educational applications of podcasting?

Professional development
Supplemental textbook materials
School-to-home communications
Faculty lectures or daily announcements
Foreign languages
Audiobooks
Speeches
Music programs
Test preparation
Synchronized slideshows
Opportunities for authentic learning
Sound-seeing tours
Broadcast student audio plays
Interviews with content experts
Ongoing student produced “radio” talk shows about content learned

What knowledge & skills are required to access podcast content?

Learn to do the following to demonstrate mastery:

1. Download and install the latest version of iTunes.
2. Learn how to find a podcast of interest.
3. Listen to a few sample episodes.
4. Subscribe to the podcasts that will be useful.
5. Identify your personal iTunes library and demonstrate how to set your preferences for updates.

Tell me step by step how to use iTunes for podcast.

1. Launch iTunes
2. Select Podcasts in Store.
3. Browse featured items
4. Then select a category
5. Browse by New & Notable, Provider, Featured, or Top Podcast groupings.
6. Read the series description
7. Note associated websites
8. Click the Subscribe button
9. Navigate to the podcast section of your iTunes library.
10. Expand the series title (small triangle icon)
11. Select an episode, click the Play button to listen
12. If video or photos, choose View: Artwork
13. Click Get button for passed episodes

How do I transfer podcasts to my iPod?

1. Connect your iPod and select Podcasts tab.
2. Check Sync all unplayed episodes.
3. Check those podcasts you wish on your iPod
4. Click Apply.
5. Alternatively, choose manual mode to drag content.

How do I learn more about the instructional use of podcasting in the classroom?

Apple has 3 excellent online video segments which address:

- the tools required for student authoring of podcasts,
- classroom podcast examples and how students are engaged, and
- how podcasts can be used by administrators for internal and external communication.

Register to watch these free video webcasts here:
<http://www.apple.com/education/resources/podcastingvideos/>

What hardware do I use for capturing content for a podcasts?

I have tested and use the [Logitech USB Headset](#), model 350 and the [Griffin iMic USB](#) adapter with an external mike, and the [Griffin iTalk Pro](#) iPod recorder. Use a standard camcorder for video or a USB or Firewire camera.

What software applications should I use?

- For simple audio or video capture, when very little editing is required, I use [QuickTime Pro](#) (\$29).
- For audio podcasts requiring editing or embedded images, web links, and chapter tracks, I use [Garageband](#) from Apple or [Profcast](#) on the Macintosh platform.
- For more complex video podcasts, I use [iMovie](#).
- On Windows, any application that can export QuickTime movies should work. I have used [Audacity](#) for audio editing and heard good things about [Propaganda](#). Use iTunes for final formatting for the iPod.

After capturing the media, how do I publish to the web and have people subscribe?

You have to have access to a standard HTTP server. You must upload your media files to this server along with a text file (the feed) which tells iTunes the title, description, and location of each episode’s media. I use [iWeb](#) to produce this file on the Mac. Windows users often use [FeedBurner](#). An [OS X Podcasting Server](#) will also take care of hosting both the content and creating the required text file (feed).

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