

Force 4x3

A Simple DVD SP Helper

Force^{4x3} is a simple drop-on application that will take one or more MPEG-2 files, clear the 16x9 or anamorphic indicator (making them 4x3, standard or full screen) and gives them correct and consistent time code information.

DVD players use the 16x9 or anamorphic indicator to adjust the shape of the output video. On traditional televisions it causes the top and bottom to be squeezed to create a letter box appearance. On wide screen televisions, it causes the left and right edges to expand to the full width of the screen.

This DVD SP Helper is useful if the 16x9 indicator has been set inappropriately in an MPEG video file and you do not want to spend the time to re-encode it with the proper setting.

The original source video for the MPEG files must be in 4x3 or standard form for this operation to be successful.

Normally, during encoding into MPEG, the 16x9 flag will be appropriately set. However, if you accidentally checked the 16x9 box then you can use Force 4x3 to convert the MPEG file after encoding.

If you apply this to an MPEG file that is not really standard 4x3 format, your objects and people will appear vertically stretched in the final product. Beware.

Force 4x3, like other MPEG Append tools, transfers markers originating in Final Cut Pro and encoded with compatible encoders then adds new markers at the junction of files. These markers will appear, placed, when you use the asset in DVD Studio Pro.

You can choose to have the output file use Non-drop Frame timecode, or whatever timecode the first file uses using the pop-up at the bottom of the 'Save As' dialog.

For a detailed description of the options and general behavior of this and other applications based on MPEG Append, see the MPEG Append documentation.

Quick Start:

Choose the first file to convert, for example "MudPie.m2v"

If you want to append additional files, rename each of those additional files the same as the first with a numeric suffix, like "MudPie.m2v.1" and put them in a folder with the first.

So a Finder list will contain:

MudPie.m2v, MudPie.m2v.1, MudPie.m2v.2, MudPie.m2v.3 etc.

Drag MudPie.m2v onto the Force 4x3 application.

Specify a file name and location. Click Save.

When it is done, you will have one large file with the 16x9 attribute cleared and continuous timecode.

For almost all cases, the default Drop Frame timecode is preferred because it avoids a persistent bug in DVD Studio Pro which causes audio synchronization problems during preview.

However, if you are using subtitles with markers in your authoring you may encounter another DVD Studio Pro bug which causes it to generate errors indicating that the subtitles cross a marker point when Drop Frame timecode is used. You can avoid this problem by using Non-drop Frame timecode (but your audio may seem to be out of sync).

Force 4x3 is based on MPEG Append, another DVD SP Helper. For detailed information refer to the MPEG Append documentation.

Cautions

Force 4x3 makes the bold assumption that you have some idea what you are doing (boy, does that sim-

plify the programming).

If you give it a collection of files that are named appropriately, it will process them.

If you supply a combination of spreadsheet files, application files and your laundry list, you will not get anything useful on the output. But Force 4x3 will happily do it for you.

Force 4x3 for Mac OS 9 is free. Force 4x3 for Mac OS X is a paid product and part of the MPEG Append Suite for Mac OS X.