Great Tools for Creating Screencast Videos

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What is a screencast video?
A screencast video is a video recording of the screen on your computer, tablet, or phone. A screencast video can be silent or you can narrate the video to explain what is happening on your screen. Screencast videos are frequently created to demonstrate how to use an app, website, or program on a computer, tablet, or phone.

Tools for creating a screencast video on a Windows or Mac computer:
Screencast-o-matic (http://screencast-o-matic.com) is my favorite tool for screencasting on a Windows or Mac computer. Screencast-O-Matic is available in a free version and a pro version. The free version allows you to record for up to fifteen minutes at a time (that is plenty of time for most screencasts), publish to YouTube in HD, and save videos to your computer as MP4, AVI, and FLV files. The pro version ($15/year) includes video editing tools, unlimited recording lengths, a script tool, and removal of the Screencast-O-Matic watermark. Both versions of Screencast-O-Matic include a highlighted circle around your cursor so that viewers can easily follow your movements on the screen. A webcam recording option is included in the free and pro versions of Screencast-O-Matic.

On a Mac The simplest way to create a screencast on a Mac is to use Quicktime. Apple offers step-by-step directions (http://apple.co/1Xuireu) for recording a screencast through Quicktime. The shortcoming of using Quicktime is that it doesn't include the option to record your webcam in sync with your screen. It also doesn't include highlighting around your cursor to show your audience where you are clicking on your screen.

Tools for creating a screencast video on Chromebooks:
Nimbus Screenshot (http://bitly.com/1OvPrRN) is my favorite option for screencasting on a Chromebook. It is easy to install and it is the only tool on this list that provides a customizable countdown timer. I like the countdown timer because it gives me a few seconds to prepare to start talking over my screencast. The other tools just started recording the second that I hit the record button. Nimbus Screenshot was also the easiest to install and configure on my Chromebook.
Screencasts recorded with Nimbus Screenshot can be saved to your local drive or to an online Nimbus account. I chose to save to my local drive then upload to my YouTube channel (http://bitly.com/250edtech). You could also save the video to your local drive then share it to Google Drive or another online storage service.

CaptureCast (http://bitly.com/1R3YJyJ) is another good option for screencasting on a Chromebook. CaptureCast is rather easy to install and set-up. Your recording length is unlimited. You can record your webcam while recording your screen which you cannot do with

the Nimbus tool. For folks who don't want to use YouTube to share their recordings, CaptureCast lets you share directly to a Vimeo account.

Screencastify (http://bitly.com/1R3YSlM) might have the most name recognition in this list, but I like it the least of the tools in this list. In fact, it's definitely the last one that I'd recommend to new Chromebook users. The set-up process asks a lot questions that could confuse new users. The free version limits recordings to ten minutes and puts a watermark on the recording. I am also not impressed with quality of the video and audio output from Screencastify.

Tools for creating a screencast video of iPad/ iPhone screens:
If you have a Mac computer connect your iPad to your Mac by using the Lightning cable (the cable that came with your iPad). Then open QuickTime on your Mac. Next select "new movie recording" from the QuickTime menu. You can then choose the name of your iPad and click record. When you're done recording your new screencast will save to your computer as a video file that you can then edit in iMovie if you want to cut out portions of it or lay a music track under your narration.

If you have a Windows computer you will need a third-party service that allows you to mirror your iPad to the screen of your Windows computer. Air Server (http://www.airserver.com/) is the service that I recommend for mirroring an iPad to a Windows computer. Air Server includes a recording tool that you can use to make a screencast video of your iPad's screen. With Air Server running you can just tap record and instantly start capturing your screen and your narration. The video will save on your Windows computer where you can then edit it and or upload it to your favorite video hosting service.

If you simply want to create a whiteboard video that doesn't include where to tap on a your iPad, you can use any number of apps including ShowMe, Educreations, DoodleCast, and Explain Everything.

Creating a screencast of Android screens:
AZ Screen Recorder (http://bitly.com/1OvUVMc) is a fantastic free app for creating screencasts on your Android phone or tablet. Unlike a lot of Android screencasting apps AZ Screen Recorder does not require you to have root access to your device nor does it require you to mirror to another device to record.

To create a screencast with AZ Screen Recorder on your Android device simply install it then open it and tap the record icon. You will see a three second countdown timer appear on your screen and then you'll be recording. You can talk over your recording to explain what you're showing on your screen. When you're done just tap the stop button and your recording is saved on your device. You can share your recording directly to Google Drive, YouTube, or any other file storage service that is connected to your Android device.