

Promotional Video Titling Conventions

(Current as of Jan 25, 2019)

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Background for Updated Guidelines

The PBS Social and Digital teams co-manage the PBS YouTube account.

Over the last few years, updates to YouTube algorithms, changes to industry standards, and users' feedback have led to a need for a refresh in our previous titling conventions.

Purpose

In order to provide consistency across video titles for all properties under the PBS brand, a cross-departmental working group at PBS developed new titling conventions in late 2018 with the following goals:

- Preserve consistency across platforms
- Increase content discoverability (improve search, related content)
- Develop a stronger focus on the best user experience on mobile
- Maintain a stronger alignment with industry standard

With an eye toward optimizing video assets for SEO and user accessibility, these guidelines get as much contextual information around video titles as much as possible. On YouTube, this means adding information about Show, Season and even network (PBS) to video titles. In Media manager, some of that context is added automatically. The examples below show the ideal end result in both platforms.

This document provides these updated guidelines for promotional video titling conventions. These conventions are required for videos going into the PBS YouTube account and are very strongly recommended for video titles in Media Manager and producer YouTube accounts. ***If you have any questions about these guidelines, please reach out to your program manager.***

Video Titling Conventions

General Summary of Titling Formats

Video Title | Show Name | PBS

General Notes on Video Titling

- Keep titles concise to optimize across formats and platforms
- Show/Series titles will no longer be all caps. The only exceptions are FRONTLINE, POV, NATURE, NOVA, MASTERPIECE and ANTIQUES ROADSHOW which are always styled with all caps
- Avoid "inside baseball" jargon
- There will be slight nuances across platforms:
 - Media Manager
 - The show name, franchise name and season number are not required in the title field; that said, adding as much unique metadata as possible in the title field strongly encouraged for SEO reasons. Example: if an episode has a unique name, try to fit it in - add what you can within the 60 character limit. Keep conventions consistent across a season and show.¹
 - Omit the words "Official" and "PBS" for Media Manager
 - PBS Facebook Account

- The PBS social media team will have the show name remain first for videos posted to the PBS Facebook account as an exception for reasons involving paid media.

¹ Media Manager titles have a max of 60 characters (including spaces). Note that Media Manager programmatically adds the show name to the a video landing page's page title. The uploader should add as much unique show metadata as possible in the title field to provide clarity for Google search. If there are many show assets just titled "Preview" on pbs.org for example, they may all seem like the same asset to search engines.

Video Categories

Series Sell

Promotes the whole show or season, and can be of any length, such as "first look" or "series sell." These videos do not include interviews.

DO:

- Season # Preview | Show | PBS
- Official Preview | Show | PBS
- Official Trailer | Show | PBS
- "Mini-Series" Preview | Show | Series | PBS
- "Mini-Series" Trailer | Show | Series | PBS
- NOTE: Use "Trailer" for docs and "films"; Use "Preview" for everything else. The PBS Marketing Strategy team will determine when exceptions should be made for high priority shows.

Examples by Platform:

- YouTube: Season 7 Official Preview | Call the Midwife | PBS
 - Media Manager: Season 7 Preview
- YouTube: Holiday Special 2018 Official Preview | Call the Midwife | PBS
 - Media Manager: Holiday Special 2018 Preview
- YouTube: Season 2 Official Preview | Victoria | MASTERPIECE | PBS
 - Media Manager: Season 2 Preview
- YouTube: Official Trailer | Dark Money | POV | PBS
 - Media Manager: Trailer | Dark Money
- YouTube: Official Preview | Anne of Green Gables | PBS
 - Media Manager: Preview

Long Lead Tease

Promotes the upcoming show as a season, and is often released before the show has a broadcast date. The teaser can vary in length and typically do not include interviews.

DO:

- Official Teaser | Show | PBS
- Official Teaser | Show | Series | PBS
- Official Teaser | Show | Season # | PBS
- Official Teaser | Show | Series | Season # | PBS

Example by Platform:

- YouTube: Official Teaser | The Great American Read | PBS
 - Media Manager: Teaser
- YouTube: Season 2 Official Teaser | Victoria | MASTERPIECE | PBS
 - Media Manager: Season 2 Teaser

Show With Multiple Trailers

Certain priority shows can have multiple trailers. To differentiate each trailer, use numbers for the trailer names, unless there is a strong relevancy around the "name" of the trailer (as judged by the PBS Marketing Strategy team).

DO:

- Official Teaser # | Show | Series | PBS
- Official Preview # | Show | Series | PBS
- Official Trailer # | Show | PBS

Examples by Platform:

- Official Teaser #2 | Victoria | Season 2 | MASTERPIECE | PBS
 - Media Manager: Teaser #2
- Official Trailer #3 | The Great War | American Experience | PBS
 - Media Manager: Trailer #3 | The Great War
- Official Trailer #4: No Single Truth | The Vietnam War | PBS
 - Media Manager: Trailer #4 : No Single Truth

- Official Preview #2 | Super Cats | NATURE | PBS
 - Media Manager: Preview #2 | Super Cats: A NATURE Miniseries

Episodic Promo

Use this titling for the 20-30 second episodic preview videos. Notes:

- YouTube: If the episode has a unique name, list the episode name in the description.
- Media Manager: If the episode has a unique name, list the name in addition to the number (if it fits) in the title field.

DO:

- Episode # Preview | Show | PBS
- Episode # Preview | Show | Season # | PBS
- Episode # Preview | Show | Season # | Franchise | PBS
- Episode Preview | Show | Miniseries | Franchise | PBS

Examples by Platform:

- YouTube: Episode 2 Preview | Call the Midwife | Season 7 | PBS
 - Media Manager: Episode 2 Preview
- YouTube: Episode 3 Preview | Victoria | Season 2 | MASTERPIECE | PBS
 - Media Manager: Episode 3 Preview | Entent Cordiale
- YouTube: Episode 2 Preview | Civilizations | PBS
 - Media Manager: Episode 2 Preview | God and Art
- YouTube: Foo Fighters Preview | Landmarks Live | Great Performances | PBS
 - Media Manager: Foo Fighters Preview | Landmarks Live
- YouTube: Julia Louis-Dreyfus 2018 Preview | Mark Twain Prize | PBS
 - Media Manager: Julia Louis-Dreyfus 2018 Preview

Full Episode

Use this titling for full episodes. Notes:

- YouTube: If the episode has a unique name, list the episode name in the description.
- Media Manager: If the episode has a unique name, list the name in addition to the number (if it fits) in the title field.

DO:

- Episode # | Show | PBS
- Episode # | Show | Season # | PBS
- Episode # | Show | Season # | Franchise | PBS
- Episode | Show | Mini-series | Franchise | PBS

Examples by Platform:

- YouTube: Episode 2 | Call the Midwife | Season 7 | PBS
 - Media Manager: Episode 2
- YouTube: Episode 3 | Victoria | Season 2 | MASTERPIECE | PBS
 - Media Manager: Episode 3 | Entent Cordiale
- YouTube: Episode 2 | Civilizations | PBS
 - Media Manager: Episode 2 | God and Art
- YouTube: Foo Fighters | Landmarks Live | Great Performances | PBS
 - Media Manager: Foo Fighters | Landmarks Live
- YouTube: Julia Louis-Dreyfus 2018 | Mark Twain Prize | PBS
 - Media Manager: Julia Louis-Dreyfus 2018

360° Video

Add 360° and/or VR (when applicable) and show name in title if associated with a specific show.

DO:

- Video Name - 360° | PBS
- Video Name - 360° | Show | PBS

Examples for YouTube, other platforms:

- Hagia Sophia in 3D - 360° Video | Ancient Invisible Cities | PBS
- My Brother's Keeper - 360° | PBS Digital Studios
- A Letter Home - 360° Video | Mercy Street | PBS

Straight Lift/Featurette/Press Tour Filler/Social-First/SFV etc

Topical videos or clips that vary in length (generally 1-3 minutes) and are a portion of a show, a vignette of a topic or character, and/or a feature interview with the stars and producers.

NOTES:

- Describe the video succinctly
- Omit the season number if it is the first (or only) season of the show
- Omit the season number if it is irrelevant (ex. FRONTLINE, Independent Lens)
- Omit the episode number if the video relates to the show as a whole
- Media Manager: Reminder to add as much unique metadata as possible that fits into 60 characters for SEO purposes. Keep title structure consistent across a season/show.

DO:

- Video Name | Show | Series | PBS
- Video Name | Show | Season # | PBS
- Video Name | Show | Season # | Episode # | PBS
- Video Name | Show | Episode # | PBS

Example by Platform:

- YouTube: What Is Fougasse? | The Great British Baking Show | Season 4 | Episode 9 | PBS
 - Media Manager: What Is Fougasse?
- YouTube: How 1962 Changed Poplar | Call the Midwife | Season 6 | PBS
 - Media Manager: How 1962 Changed Poplar
- YouTube: Inside Look | The Child in Time | MASTERPIECE | PBS
 - Media Manager: Inside Look | The Child in Time
- YouTube: Babies on Set | Victoria | Season 2 | MASTERPIECE | PBS
 - Media Manager: Babies on Set
- YouTube: Behind the Scenes | Tell Them We Are Rising | Independent Lens | PBS
 - Media Manager: Behind the Scenes | Tell Them We Are Rising
- YouTube: Revisiting the Pentagon After 9/11 | We'll Meet Again | Episode 4 | PBS
 - Media Manager: Revisiting the Pentagon After 9/11
- YouTube: The Elaine Dance | Julia Louis-Dreyfus 2018 | Mark Twain Prize | PBS
 - Media Manager: The Elaine Dance | Julia Louis-Dreyfus 2018
- YouTube: Hopi Origin Story | Sacred Stories | Native America | PBS
 - Media Manager: Hopi Origin Story | Sacred Stories

Broadcast Sizzle Reel

Announces the show line-up for each season or broadcast campaign (typically 30 seconds long).

DO:

- Season Year Preview | PBS
- Season Preview | Series | PBS
- Campaign Year Preview | PBS
- Coming to Passport: Month Year | PBS
- NOTE: Avoid jargon (e.g. sizzle reel), name the specific shows in the description

Examples by Platform:

- YouTube: Season 33 Preview | American Masters | PBS
 - Media Manager: Season 33 Preview
- YouTube: Fall 2018 Preview | MASTERPIECE | PBS
 - Media Manager: Fall 2018 Preview
- YouTube: Spring 2018 Preview | PBS
 - Media Manager: Spring 2018 Preview
- YouTube: Summer of Adventure 2018 Preview | PBS
 - Media Manager: Summer of Adventure 2018 Preview
- YouTube: Black History Month 2018 Preview | PBS
 - Media Manager: Black History Month 2018 Preview
- Facebook: Coming to Passport: July 2018 | PBS

YouTube Metadata Description Format

YouTube: Ensure video descriptions are keyword rich in the metadata section to boost your video's presence in search. Official website, hashtag and social follow language and other PBS/show links helps to extend the user's connection with the PBS brand.

[Series Sell Example](#)

Official Preview | Ancient Invisible Cities | PBS

Official website: <https://to.pbs.org/2OMpIXe> | #InvisibleCitiesPBS

Professor Darius Arya explores the hidden secrets of three of the most fascinating cities of the ancient world: Cairo, Athens and Istanbul. 3D scans allow us to view the architectural jewels of these cities as they've never been seen before. Ancient Invisible Cities premieres Wednesday, Aug. 29 at 9/8c.

Subscribe to the PBS channel for more clips: <https://www.youtube.com/user/PBS/featured>

Enjoy full episodes of your favorite PBS shows at <https://www.pbs.org/video/>

FOLLOW US:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pbs/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PBS>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/PBS>

Shop: <https://shop.pbs.org/>

[Episodic Promo Example 1](#)

Snow Bears Preview | NATURE | PBS

Official Website: <https://to.pbs.org/2Qgd0Rd> | #NaturePBS

Witness the incredible journey of newborn polar bear cubs as they learn to survive in the Arctic. Snow Bears premieres Wednesday, November 28 at 8/7c on PBS. The full episode will be available to stream online and on the PBS app the following day.

Subscribe to the PBS channel for more clips: <https://www.youtube.com/user/PBS/featured>

Enjoy full episodes of your favorite PBS shows and at <https://www.pbs.org/video/>

FOLLOW NATURE:

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/PBSNature>

Twitter: <http://www.twitter/pbsnature>

Instagram: <http://instagram.com/pbsnature>

FOLLOW PBS:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pbs/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PBS>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/PBS>

Shop: <http://www.shop.pbs.org/>

Set against the harsh backdrop of the Arctic, Snow Bears is a dramatized story based on the extraordinary adventures and life-changing journey of newborn polar bear cubs as they leave the safety of their den for the first time. Bravely led by their mother, the cubs must make the perilous 400-mile trek to the sea to feed. Encountering many dangers and adventures along the way — marauding male bears ready to kill, extreme weather, Arctic foxes, Walruses, Narwhal, snowdrifts and ice cracks — they undertake an epic survival challenge. These cubs are rarely seen in their natural habitat, and this is a unique glimpse into their world. Kate Winslet narrates.

[Episodic Promo Example 2](#)

Episode 4 Preview | Native America | PBS

Official Website: <https://to.pbs.org/2DdzTCv> | #NativeAmericaPBS

Discover the cosmological secrets behind America's ancient cities. Scientists explore some of the world's largest pyramids and 3D-scan a lost city of monumental mounds on the Mississippi River; native elders reveal ancient powers of the sky. Watch Episode 4, Cities of the Sky, Nov. 13 at 9/8c.

Subscribe to the PBS channel for more clips: <https://www.youtube.com/user/PBS/featured>

Enjoy full episodes of your favorite PBS shows at <https://www.pbs.org/video/>

FOLLOW US:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pbs/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PBS>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/PBS>

Shop: <https://shop.pbs.org/>

Native America explores the world created by America's First Peoples. The four-part series reaches back 15,000 years to reveal massive cities aligned to the stars, unique systems of science and spirituality, and 100 million people connected by social networks spanning two continents. Watch extended interviews, digital-exclusive video & more at <https://to.pbs.org/2DdzTCv>²

[Straight Lift Example](#)

Kirsten Gillibrand Faces Rejection | Breaking Big | PBS³

Official website: <https://to.pbs.org/2kWvMid> | #BreakingBigPBS⁴

After many rejections, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand was given the opportunity to work at HUD, where she served during the last seven months of the Clinton Administration. This position gave Kirsten the self-motivation to run for office. Breaking Big airs Fridays at 8:30/7:30c

Subscribe to the PBS channel for more clips: <https://www.youtube.com/user/PBS/featured>

Enjoy full episodes of your favorite PBS shows at <https://www.pbs.org/video/>

FOLLOW US:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pbs/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PBS>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/PBS>

Shop: <https://shop.pbs.org/>

Why and how did some of the world's most influential artists, innovators, athletes and leaders break big? Talented men and women recount their most difficult, dramatic and serendipitous turning points, while renowned social psychologists connect the dots. Breaking Big airs Fridays at 8:30/7:30c. Watch episode, clips and previews at <https://to.pbs.org/2kWvMid>⁵

² These bitly links should be changed for each show. Contact your program manager if you have any questions

³ Video title should be descriptive to the clip. Show name should be in sentence case (not all caps). Again, the only exceptions are FRONTLINE, POV, NATURE, NOVA, MASTERPIECE and ANTIQUES ROADSHOW which are always styled with all caps

⁴ Get Bitly link from [Hashtag and Vanity URL google doc](#)

⁵ Description: Series description at the bottom is no more than 75 characters suggested. If the video is a preview/trailer, then you don't need double series description.

YouTube Thumbnail Naming Format

- Thumbnails should directly illustrate the content of the video.
- The "Blue Bar" thumbnail should be applied to all YouTube thumbnails (except for Theatrical department trailers).
 - Download Photoshop template here⁶: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B01r9uXz5-ITW5rZS1RalQ2TzQ/view?usp=sharing>
- The show title should ideally fit on one line in Title Case (not ALL CAPS — unless the show is styled as such⁷). Longer titles can fit on two lines when necessary.
- Any questions, please reach out to your program managers.

⁶ Download the PSD template to your computer and open and edit in Photoshop

⁷ The only exceptions are FRONTLINE, POV, NATURE, NOVA, MASTERPIECE, which are always styled with ALL CAPS

