



Original Content QA Lab: Subtitling Guidelines IT-IT (SDH)

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Reading Speed

20 characters per second for most programming.

17 characters per second for programming intended for children

Duration

Minimum duration for subtitles is 20 frames.*

Maximum duration for subtitles is 7 seconds.

*Reading speed should always be considered. Avoid reading-speed violations whenever possible.

Intervals

A minimum of 2-frame intervals should be used between continuous subtitles.

Character Limitations

42 characters per line.

Timing + Duration

Text should be timed closely to the beginning and end of audio when possible. However, it's acceptable for subtitles to stay on-screen for up to a second after audio ends to meet reading-speed requirements.

Avoid subtitles that:

- Are not in sync with the audio
- Start well in advance of the corresponding audio (approximately 7 frames or more)
- Stay on-screen for too long (more than a second after dialogue ends or more than 7 seconds total)
- Flash on-screen too briefly to read

Line Treatment

Subtitles should occupy 2 lines maximum.

Positioning

Standard positioning is center-justified, at the bottom of screen.

If subtitles obscure pertinent text that appears in the lower third of the screen, or if overlapping with lower-third text will cause subtitles to become illegible, then they should be moved to the top of the screen.

Abbreviations

Dottore: Dr.

Dottoressa: Dr.ssa

Signore: Sig.

Signora: Sig.ra

Signorina: Sig.na

Titling Dialogue

Dialogue should be subtitled as faithfully as possible within the limits of reading speed.

- When reading speed is exceeded, dialogue should be truncated without sacrificing or altering its intended meaning.
- Non-essential dialogue should generally be truncated first (verbal hedgers such as "sai," "guarda" or "capisci", for example).
- Conversely, subtitles should not add or rewrite dialogue for clarity.
- SDH files should include, when possible, stand-alone utterances/ exclamations such as "wow" , "ah", "eh".

Dual Speakers

If a speaker identifier is needed - in cases where it is not clear - it should follow the hyphen (see Speaker Identifiers section).

EXAMPLE:

- Ho voglia di un gelato.
- [John] Un altro? È il secondo oggi.

Continuity

Do not use ellipses when an ongoing sentence is split between two or more continuous subtitles. Commas should be used as usual when appropriate.

CORRECT:

SUB 1: La userei sicuramente,

SUB 2: una volta capito come
funziona nel dettaglio.

INCORRECT:

SUB 1: La userei sicuramente...

SUB 2: ... una volta capito come
funziona nel dettaglio.

Use an ellipsis to indicate:

- dialogue that trails off
- dialogue that begins mid-sentence
- a significant pause (one second or more)
- if dialogue continues in the next subtitle after a significant pause, ellipses should be used at both the end of the first subtitle and at the beginning of the second subtitle.

EXAMPLE:

SUB 1: Aspetta, ti sei mangiato...

SUB 2: ...veramente tutto?

Use ellipses at the end of the first sentence to indicate an abrupt interruption.

EXAMPLE:

- Credo che tu abbia dimenticato di chiudere...

- L'ho chiusa!

When a dialogue is interrupted by a speaker's title, use ellipses at the end of the first sentence and at the beginning of the second.

EXAMPLE:

SUB 1: Quando iniziammo a produrre
dischi hip-hop...

SUB 2: Nome
PRODUTTORE DISCOGRAFICO

SUB 3: ...la scena era molto vivace.

Speaker identifiers

Speaker identifiers should be used when it's not clear from visuals or context who is speaking. Speaker IDs should appear on their own line when possible.

CORRECT:

[Mary]
Che succede?

INCORRECT:

[Mary] Che succede?

Avoid SDH subtitles with:

- incorrect speaker IDs (the wrong person is identified)
- redundant speaker IDs (the person is clearly speaking on-screen)
- missing speaker IDs (it's not clear from visuals or context who's speaking without an ID).

Qualifiers should be used when a speaker alters their regular speaking voice in a way that is not obvious from context or visuals.

Avoid the use of generic IDs like [uomo], [donna], [uomo1], [donna2] either when the speaker name is known or will be revealed during the video.

EXAMPLES:

If it's not clear from visuals/context who's speaking:

[John sussurra]
Stai arrivando?

If it is clear from visuals/context who's speaking:

[imitando l'accento russo]:
Piacere di conoscerti.

A qualifier should also be used when the speaker resumes speaking in their normal voice:

[con voce normale] Non so perché mi è
venuto l'accento russo.

Sound effects

Sound effects that are plot-pertinent or lend helpful context to a scene should be identified when they aren't obvious from visuals or context.

EXAMPLES:

When a sound is heard once:

[porta sbatte]

When a sound is heard repeatedly:

[uomo tossisce]

Avoid SDH subtitles with:

- redundant sound effects (if we see someone pour a glass of water or shoot a gun, it's not necessary to indicate [versa acqua] or [colpo di pistola])
- missing plot-pertinent sound effects (if someone reacts to a noise heard off-screen, for example, the sound should be indicated)
- inaccurate sound effects (a door slam is indicated as a gunshot, for example)

Note: Sound effects and dialogue should not appear in the same subtitle unless absolutely necessary due to time/reading-speed constraints.

EXAMPLE 1 (preferred):

SUB 1: [porta sbatte in lontananza]

SUB 2: Cos'è stato?

EXAMPLE 2 (only if needed in extreme cases):

- [porta sbatte in lontananza]
- Cos'è stato?

On-screen Text

SDH streams should not subtitle any redundant on-screen text. This applies to both narrative text (text that is part of principal photography) and burn-in text (text that has been added in post-production).

Glossaries

Keep a glossary of recurring terms and names to ensure consistency across episodes and seasons.

Glossaries should also include templates for recurring opening- and end-credits sequences when necessary.

EXAMPLE:

will.i.am
FONDATORE E AD, I.AM+

Names

Do not translate proper names (like Mark, John), names of places (like Caesars Palace) or nicknames, unless a widely known translation is already available (Jack the Ripper: Jack lo Squartatore) or they convey a specific meaning that has to be understood.

Spelling & Research

Spelling:

Refer to the following primary sources for spelling:

<http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/>

http://dizionari.corriere.it/dizionario_italiano/

Titles and names:

When confirming the names of songs, albums, cast & crew, movies/TV shows, or apps, please remain consistent with how they appear in Apple Music and iTunes.

Slang:

Slang spellings should be confirmed with reputable sources whenever possible.

Expletives

Match the audio. Do not censor at will. If the expletive is audible, title the word.

If the expletive is bleeped, muted or censored in any way, title the first letter of the word and represent the rest of the word with asterisks.

EXAMPLE:

Non me ne frega un c****!

Foreign Dialogue

Foreign dialogue should only be translated if it is plot-pertinent and meant to be understood by the viewer.

Non-essential foreign dialogue should not be titled if it stands alone.

Foreign words shouldn't be italicized if they have become part of standard usage (like "show", "check-in", "trendy", "bar", "boss", "quiz", "chat", "budget", "mix"). Always check the spelling for foreign words.

EXAMPLE:

È il caso di dirsi
adiòs per un po'.

Italics

Italics should be used for

- Voice-over dialogue (examples: narration or a character's internal thoughts)
- Dialogue from an entirely different location (such as pre-lap dialogue from the next scene)
- Dialogue transmitted over phone, radio, TV, or other electronic device
- Song lyrics
- Foreign language
- Titles of books, albums and movies (song titles should appear in quotation marks)
- Genus and species names (examples: *E. coli*, *Balaena mysticetus*)

Speaker IDs and qualifiers should be added as needed, but should not be italicized.

EXAMPLES:

[John] *La nostra storia inizia proprio qui,
esattamente 30 anni fa.*

[operatore al telefono]: *Resti in linea.
Un agente sarà presto da lei.*

Numerals

Numbers one to ten should be spelled out. Numbers 11 and up should be represented numerically. But please be consistent in mixed cases such as “da cinque a dodici” or “da 5 a 10.000”.

Numbers between 1000 and 9999 do not require a period. Numbers 10.000 and up should be written with a period.

Exceptions:

- Addresses should always be written numerically: via Garibaldi 34.
- Numbers that begin a sentence should generally be spelled out.

Currency and Measurement

If a unit of currency is spoken in dialogue it should be spelled out or represented with the appropriate symbol.

EXAMPLE 1:

L'app sarà in vendita a 99 centesimi
o a 1.29 €

EXAMPLE 2:

L'app sarà in vendita a 99 centesimi
o a \$ 1.29

If a unit of currency is not spoken in dialogue, the number should be written without it.

EXAMPLE 3:

- Quanto le devo?
- 25.50, grazie.

You don't have to convert everything in the Italian/EU currency.

But you should convert:

- Time (4 PM > 16:00)
- Dates (September, the 28th > 28 Settembre)
- Weight (220 lb > 100 kg)
- Distance (20 mi > 32 km)
- Temperature (90 °F > 32 °C)

Punctuation

Follow standard official rules.

Some notes:

- Quotation marks should be used for dialogue and written text that is quoted, recited from memory, or read.
- Question marks and exclamation points should be placed outside of the quotation marks unless they are part of the quoted material. Periods and commas are always placed inside the quotation marks.
- If quoted text continues over several subtitles, quotation marks should only be used at the very beginning and very end of the quote. (Not at the beginning of each subtitle within the quote.)
- Use single quotation marks for a quote within a quote.
- Colons can be used when appropriate. Semicolons should not be used.

Songs

Song lyrics should generally only be titled if they are actuated on-screen and plot-pertinent. Plot-pertinent doesn't simply mean thematically relevant—it means that the lyrics convey information that is necessary for a viewer's understanding of the plot.

Songs actuated on-screen or heard within the scene should be identified if possible.

EXAMPLE:

[“Blank Space” di Taylor Swift
suona in lontananza]

Generic descriptors should be used for non-identifiable songs actuated or heard within the scene.

EXAMPLE:

[musica rock in sottofondo]

Songs heard on the soundtrack should generally not be identified or indicated.

When titling lyrics:

- No end punctuation should be used when titling lyrics, except for question marks or exclamation points when appropriate.

- Commas should be used as usual within lyrics, but not at the end of a line.
- The first letter in each line should be capitalized.

CORRECT:

*Tentò la fuga in tram
Verso le sei del mattino*

INCORRECT:

*Tentò la fuga in tram,
verso le sei del mattino*

Songs in which the lyrics have been altered or parodied for comedic effect can generally be titled.

Translator Credits

There should not be a subtitle for a translator credit.

Title Translation

Use provided translation for titles (show, episode, etc). If not available/ provided, please leave in English.