

Preparing Audio Files for Streaming

Sometimes you may want to create audio-only files for your students to access on their own time. Files that have been encoded for streaming are preferable to downloadable files when it comes to posting on Blackboard, due mainly to the smaller file size of streamed files.

Step 1: Record or acquire an audio file. A common type is an .mp3 file.

Step 2: Open **Windows Media Encoder** on your computer. To see if you have this program, click **Start > All Programs** and then look for **Windows Media > Windows Media Encoder**. If you do not have this program, you may download it for free from the Microsoft website, at <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=5691ba02-e496-465a-bba9-b2f1182cdf24&displaylang=en>

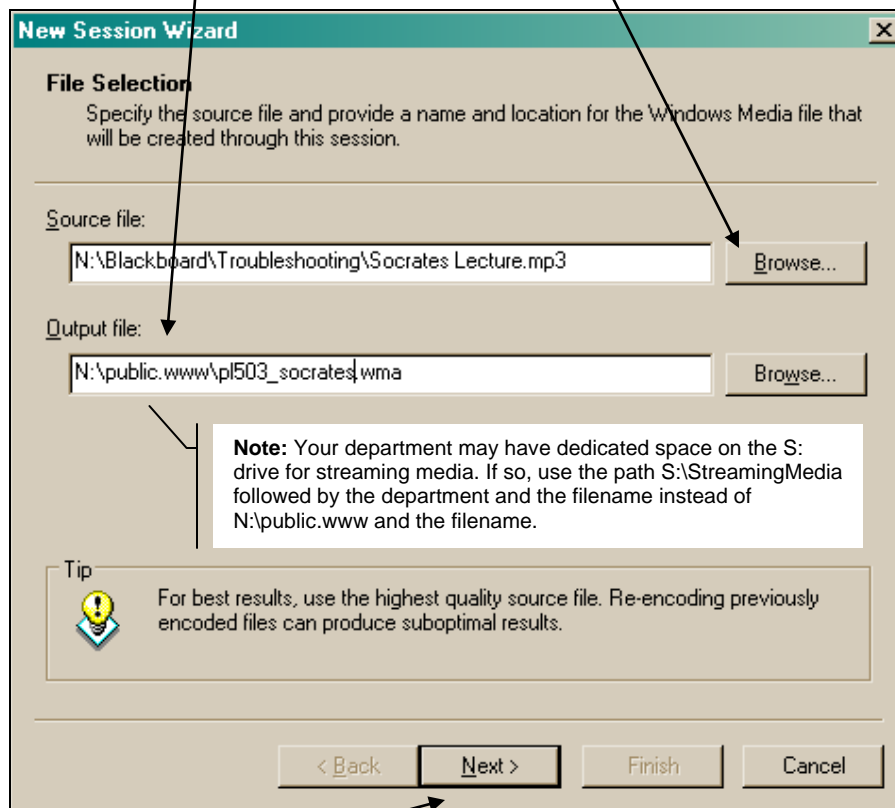
Step 3: Highlight **Convert a File**, then click **OK**.

Step 4: In the Source File field, click **Browse** to find your raw audio file (e.g., the .mp3 file) that you have saved on your computer or in a USB drive.

Step 5: Highlight the desired file, and click **Open**.

Step 6: Windows Media Encoder will place the expected name of the Output File into its field. You will want to **edit this path** to reflect the public.www folder of your N: drive. The name of the actual file should

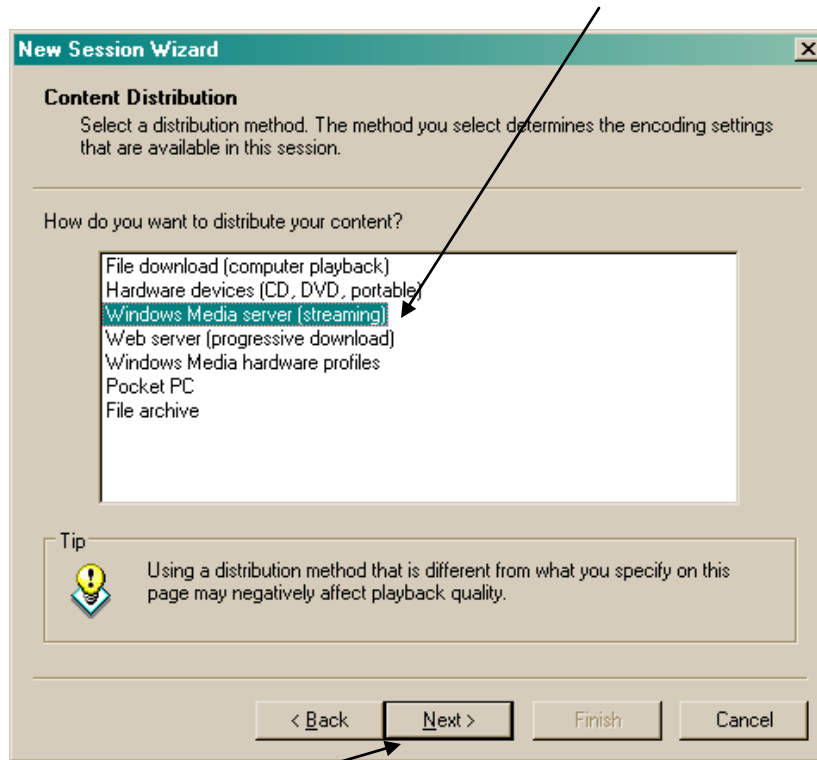
- Be brief
- Be lowercase
- Include your course number or department
- Use underscore (_) instead of spaces
- End with .wma, which stands for Windows Media Audio



Step 7: Click **Next**.

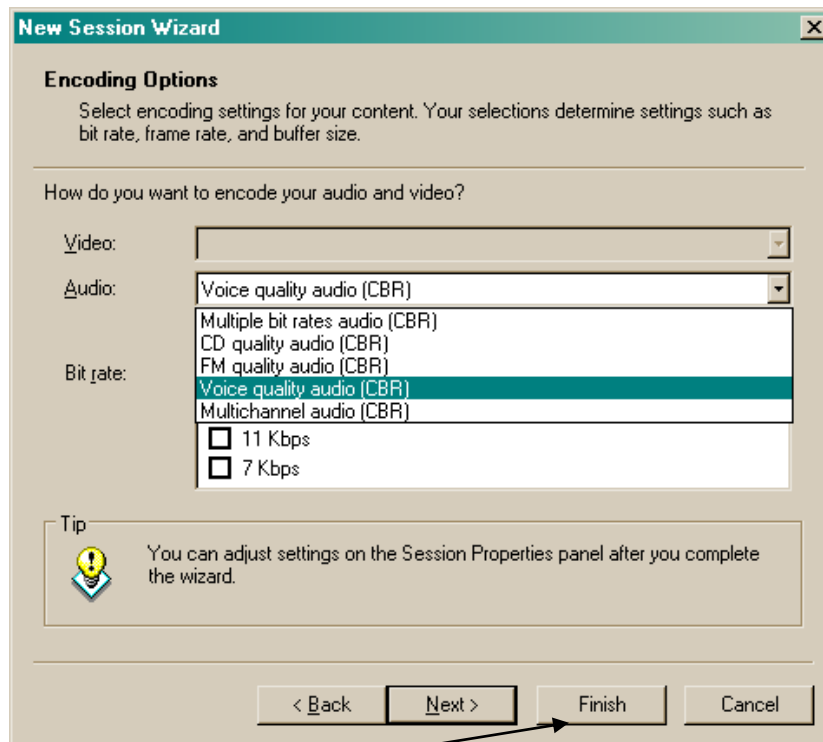
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Step 8: For the Content Distribution, highlight **Windows Media server (streaming)**.



Step 9: Click **Next**.

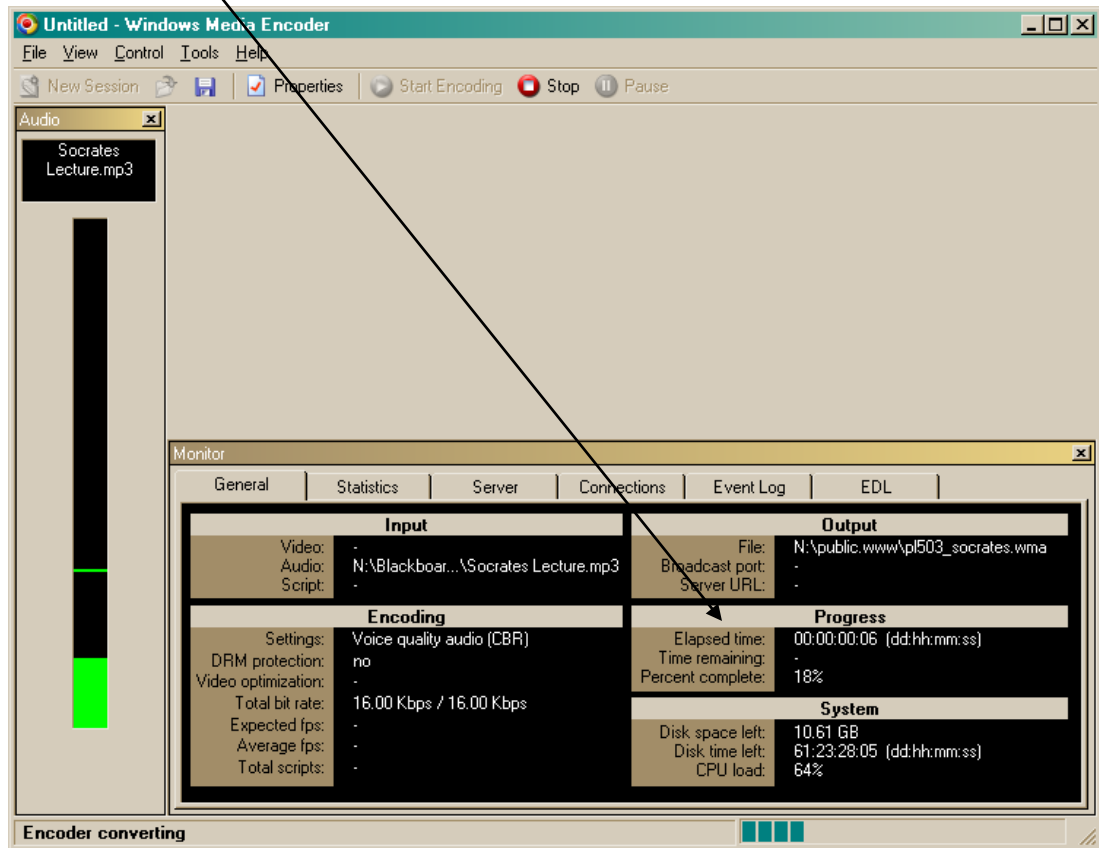
Step 10: For the Encoding Options, highlight **Voice Quality Audio (CBR)**, which should be sufficient for most spoken files (e.g., lectures). If yours is a music file, choose CD Quality or FM Quality instead. Note that the bigger the Total Bit Rate, the bigger the file size.



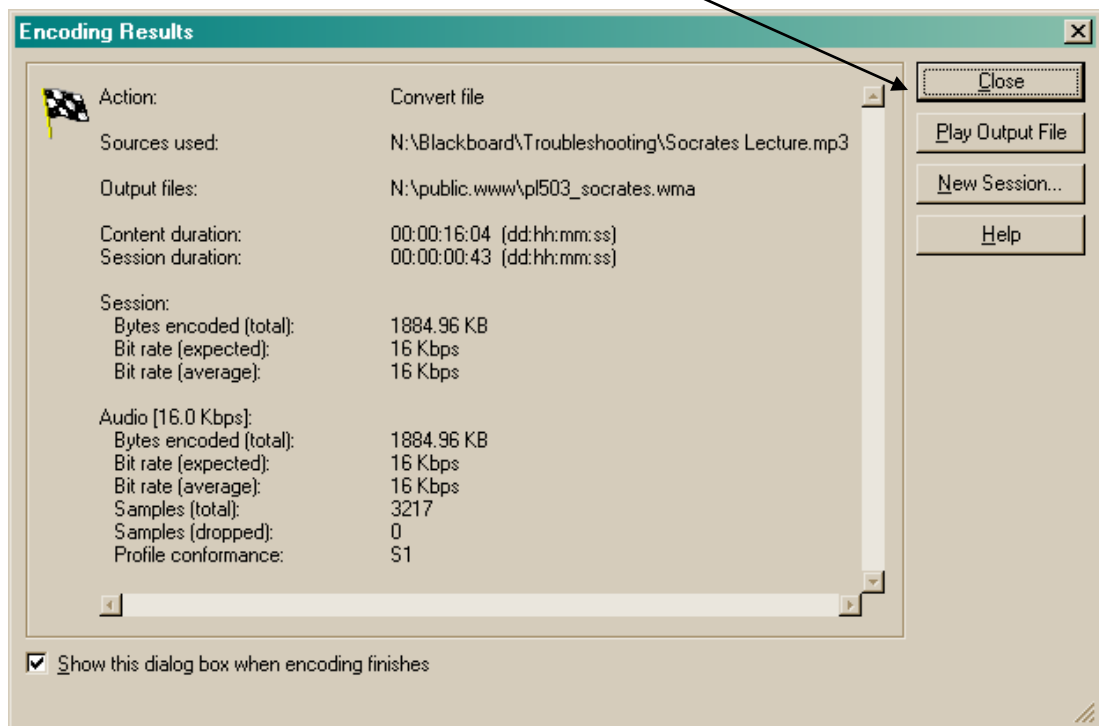
Step 11: Click **Finish**.

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Step 12: Watch the Progress area to see the Time Remaining as Encoder does its work.



Step 13: In time, Encoder will give you the results. Click either **Close** or **Play Output File**.



To play the file from within Blackboard, create an External Link and use the appropriate mms pathname from the Streaming Media Information and Policy document.