

Re: VHS tapes and DVDs

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- *From:* "Jaime" <jaimelobo@xxxxxxxxxxxx>
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Yes, you are correct, you need two basic items – some hardware to capture/convert the VHS tapes to the PC and some software to do the editing. You also need to make sure that the PC you have can handle these tasks – video editing requires a decent amount of CPU power, memory, and lots of hard drive space.

As far as hardware goes, there are lots of different ways to get the info into the PC, there are some simple "capture" cards that go into your PC and have plugs/cables to connect the output of the VCR to the PC, some are internally installed the PC, some are a box that sits outside the PC. There are also cards/boxes that not only function as a way to capture video, but also have a TV tuner built in, so you can hook up to your cable/antenna/etc. and watch or record TV on the computer. These devices range in price from perhaps \$20 to over \$100, the difference in price has to do with whether or not they have tuners and whether or not the process of capturing and recording the video is done by hardware on the card or by software on the PC; using hardware to "encode" the signal is better. I use a Hauppauge 150 card in my system, which is a Media Center PC, it is used primarily as a tuner, but it also can function as a capture device for tapes.

As far as software, Movie Maker is an editing program that come free with Windows XP, and if you don't need anything really fancy, it works fine for doing simple editing. Otherwise, there are other video editing choices out there, Pinnacle, uLead, and Sony all sell editing software for <\$100 (you can spend a lot more for professional level stuff if you want). The thing to make sure of if you buy another product is that is also can create the playable DVD as an end product. Most do this now, but earlier versions of some of the editing software only created a computer file as a finished product; you needed to have a DVD Authoring package to generate a standalone DVD with Titles and Chapters, etc. These programs provide some ability to cleanup and fix the source material, but there is only so much you can do with old VHS recordings, they're never going to look like new DVD's.

When using any of this software, you need to make sure that the format you capture the tapes in is compatible with the editing software (mpeg, for example).

None of this is particularly hard to do, but you have said that you are

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fairly computer illiterate, this does take time to learn the basics, capture all the tapes, edit them, and create the final product. One option (not necessarily a money saver) would be to check around at a photo shop, to see if you can take your tapes somewhere and have them transferred them to DVD, they probably won't edit the commercials out, but it would save a lot of time on your part. You still could take the data to your PC and do the editing later and create a final version.

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James

Orlando (Goofy says "Hey!"), Florida

"Chrono1st" <Chrono1st@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message news:F3FA2E75-8B66-4B60-AF9F-01C3C9B18B18@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Wow, I am completely and totally overwhelmed by the amount of information here, it's scaring me. Even the mere act of putting this thread into the correct discussion group was beyond me. I don't have XP Media Center Edition, I think it's just the normal edition. Sorry! People in this section seemed to know a ton about this kind of stuff, so I thought *maybe* it was a good place to ask my questions.

What I'd like to do is:

My friend has many, many old VHS tapes, of recorded sports events and other things. I'd like copies of his tapes, and told him that since we're going to go and copy fourty odd tapes anyway, why not covert them to a better format? You know, tapes go bad over time, etc.

So, I'd like to copy these VHS tapes to DVDs. I'd also like to edit them, to perfectly cut out all the commercials, while leaving the events themselves intact. Also, if possible (I have NO idea if it is possible), I'd like to improve the quality of the videos. So, covert to DVD, cut out all unnecessary stuff like commercials, and if possible, make even better quality.

The problem is, I am almost totally computer illiterate. I tried looking around this forum for the same question, and I found it several times. Unfortunately, many people were responding to the questions with acronyms, which I didn't understand at all. Anytime someone uses an acronym, I am just like "huh?" and become confused. Again, sorry.

Can anyone explain this to me, part by part? Please explain as if you were talking to a small child, with overbearing amounts of details. I'm assuming I'm going to need to buy several different things to do this, but I don't know what, obviously. Some sort of hardware for turning the VHS into

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computer data I'd guess, but I don't have ANY idea what hardware that would be, which brands are best, etc. Money isn't so important, I'd rather buy something high-quality that records the VHS perfectly. Aside from that, I'm assuming I'll need some kind of program to actually edit the data once it's on my computer (for cutting out the commercials and such). Again, don't know which program is best. I've been hearing people mentioning something called Movie Maker, but I don't know what that is, or if that is what I want. Finally, after transferring the VHS to my computer and editing them, I need to burn them on to DVDs, right? Of course, again I don't know what hardware I need for that. Like before, I'd like to buy the highest quality hardware, so the DVDs turn out at the highest quality that they possibly can. Which brand would be ideal for this?

I guess you can divide my quest into three parts – VHS to computer, editing data, computer to DVD. Any help people can give is greatly appreciated. Stepping me through it slowly and thoroughly would leave me unspeakably happy. Thank you all for your time. Also, sorry I wrote such an absurdly long post..... I guess I wanted to be thorough explaining everything.

Oh, a small thing – I keep hearing that VHS tapes take up crazy amount of space. Some of these sporting events, even with commercials out, will be hours long, I'd wager. Is it possible to put the entire event on a single DVD? Do any sort of "super-DVDs" exist that hold more data or something?

Thank you so much!
From,
Chrono1st