

Listening to and Using American Memory Audio Clips

File Formats and Attributes

Audio Clips in American Memory are available for viewing in several different formats, including:

- RealAudio (REAL)
- MPEG 2, Layer 3 (.MP3)
- WaveForm (.wav)

The attributes of each audio file format will determine:

- File size
- Sound quality
- Download time
- Compatibility with PowerPoint or other applications, etc.

Audio Players

Some audio formats may require a specific brand of Player for playback. While the Windows Media Player comes included on any Windows computer, the RealPlayer is not readily available on Windows, and may need to be installed before you are able to hear an audio clip in its proprietary format. This Player is free, however, and can be downloaded to your computer directly from the internet address provided below. Links to these Players are also available from the homepage of the American Memory site in the How to View section (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amplayer.html>).

- **RealPlayer** – Go to <http://www.real.com/player/index.html> and click on “[Free RealPlayer](#)” in the upper right-hand corner.
- **QuickTime media player** – <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>

About Streaming

American Memory audio clips available in streaming formats are RealAudio clips. Streaming media formats require a live Internet connection for playback. For this reason, these formats are not entirely reliable for use in presentations where Internet connections are questionable. When using streaming formats, the following two factors are important in determining the quality of playback:

- Speed of the Internet connection
- Amount of Internet traffic

The advantage of using streaming formats is that playback of streaming formats does not require first downloading a file to your computer. Therefore use of streaming media eliminates the wait time necessary for downloading files for playback and reserves your computer’s storage capacity.

Saving and Using American Memory Audio Clips

First THINK about how you want to use the object you intend to download. You may need to save the file in a different way depending on the software into which you are putting the object. Different software programs may only allow you to insert (or import) certain types of files (and this may vary depending on which version of the software you are working with). Look in the documentation of the program in which you want the object to ultimately reside to determine the type(s) of files you need to have (Quinn).

For example, PowerPoint most easily accepts .wav files and MP3’s. Although you cannot Insert RealAudio (.ram, or .rm) into PowerPoint, you can hyperlink to this format from within PowerPoint to make the audio launch and open into the RealPlayer. Be mindful, however, that RealAudio requires an Internet connection for playback.

To **SAVE AND NAME AN AUDIO CLIP** from the internet, simply right-click on the link to the clip you would like to save, and then left-click on **Save Target As**. A dialogue box will appear that you will use to browse to the location where you would like to save your audio clip.

AUDIO CLIPS						
Format	File Extension	Player Required	File Size/ Quality	Streaming	Windows System Requirements	Notes
WaveForm	.wav	Standard Windows Media Player, QuickTime media player, or RealPlayer	very large/ highest	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enough hard disk space to download the audio file 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be inserted into MS PowerPoint • Can be imported into MS Movie Maker 2
MPEG 2, Layer 3	.MP3	Standard Windows Media Player, QuickTime media player, or RealPlayer	very small/ very high	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enough hard disk space to download the audio file 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be inserted into MS PowerPoint • Can be imported into MS Movie Maker 2
RealAudio	.ra, .rm, .ram, .rmj, .rms, etc.	RealPlayer	tiny/ okay	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.4 K-bps (kilobits per second) or faster Internet connection for your computer, although 28.8 or faster is recommended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be hyperlinked to from MS PowerPoint (will launch and open into the RealPlayer), but you must have a live internet connection for this to work

American Memory. "American Memory Viewer Information: Viewing and Listening to American Memory Collections." How to View. 2004. Library of Congress. 17 February 2004. <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/videomore.html>>

Quinn, Susan. "Capturing Multimedia Objects (Pictures, Movies, Sounds, etc) from the World Wide Web." University of South Carolina, Columbia: Susan Quinn, Fall 1998. p. 3