



# YouTube 101 for sport communicators

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If you've read our [What Social Media Sites Should My Sports Organization Be Using?](#) module, you'll know that YouTube is on the top of the list. Not only does YouTube allow you to easily host and embed videos so that you can share them with your members, its search and 'recommended videos' functions allow people far outside of your community to view your content. Remember the moment you witnessed an elite athlete win a gold medal, and decided that you wanted to do it one day, too? Thanks to YouTube, your content can give someone that feeling at home in their pajamas at 2:00am.

In this module, we'll answer all of your YouTube questions so that you can reap the benefits of this popular platform.

Looking for tips on how to create a specific type of video? Check out our module on [conducting video interviews](#) and [making video highlight packages](#).

## 1. What makes a good YouTube video?

In other modules, we've given you practical tips like how to set up your camera, frame your shot, adjust your white balance (see [20 Tips for the Perfect Sports Interview](#)), pick a resolution, sort through sport highlights and find royalty-free music (see [Making a Video Highlight Package](#)). Here are some general principles of a good YouTube video:

- **It's concise.** Many amateur videographers take too long to get to the point, causing the audience to tune out. In fact, according to the [Wadsworth Constant](#), a viewer can skip the first 30% of any YouTube video and not miss anything. Ensure that any preamble, introductions or opening graphics are short and purposeful.
- **It's between 2 - 3 minutes long:** Though your content will dictate your video length, keep in mind that the average length of the most popular YouTube videos is 2 minutes, and some studies have found that viewer retention drops dramatically between the 2:30 and 3:00 mark. In a study of YouTube's most popular videos, researchers (yes, people do get paid to research this stuff) found that 82% of popular videos were less than five minutes long.

- **It's focused on one topic:** Your video should have a clear purpose that is clearly conveyed in the title.
- **It's simple:** Keep your concept and your videography clean and simple to let your content shine. Bells and whistles like complicated scene transitions and animations could detract from your message.
- **It's original:** Make sure that you have the rights to all of the photos, videos and music in your videos. It would be a shame to put all those hours of effort into your video only to be hit with a take-down request.

## 2. How do I set up my YouTube channel?

As YouTube has evolved, more functions have been added to allow users to customize their channel. How *much* you want to customize your channel depends on what role YouTube plays in your communications strategy, how much time you have on your hands, and how many videos you're planning and able to upload.

### **First, here are some general principles to keep in mind when setting up your YouTube channel:**

- Keep all writing (channel description, video descriptions, etc) concise.
- Strengthen your communications network by putting links to your website and other social media channels on your YouTube channel.
- Remember that most people won't scroll to the bottom of your channel page. The more important your content is, the higher up it should be.
- Strengthen your connection to sponsors and partners by subscribing to their YouTube channels. These channels will appear on the side of your page, allowing your visitors to view them.
- Don't be afraid to highlight different videos or playlists on your channel depending on your organization's upcoming events. For example, if your organization is sending a team to the Canada Games, you could put your playlist of Canada Games athlete video interviews at the top of your channel.
- Brand your channel with your organization's colours and logo.
- Group similar videos together to encourage viewers to keep watching.

To customize your YouTube channel, go to YouTube, **log in** with the appropriate email address and click on the button on the top right-hand corner of the screen. (It might look like the blue square below). You'll be given a list of YouTube channels you control. Click on the '**Creator Studio**' of the channel you want to edit.



You'll be taken to a dashboard. To edit your channel, click on '**view channel.**'

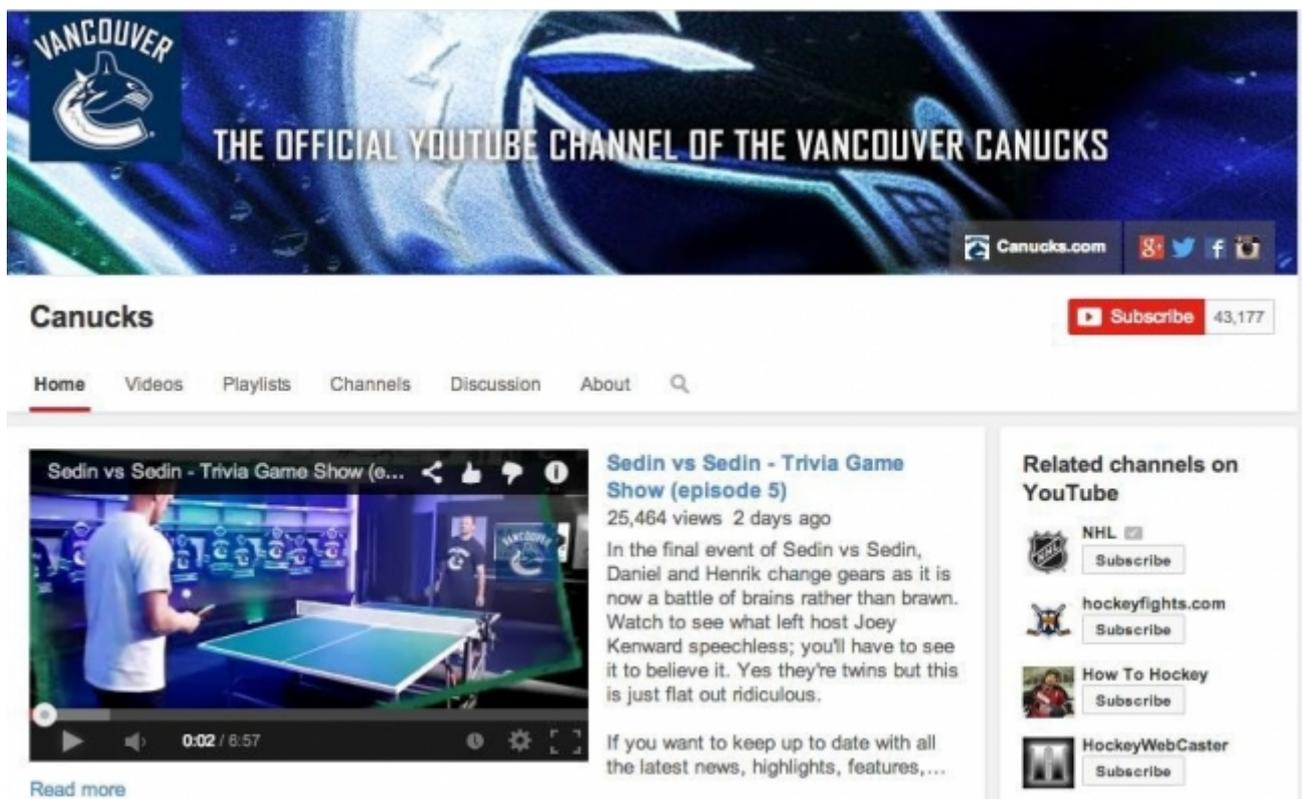


Editing your channel is simple. Simply hover your mouse over an element and click on the **'pencil' icon** on the top right corner, then edit the element as you see fit. If you're new to YouTube, you'll actually be guided through the process with a handy checklist on the side of your page.



### 3. What does a well-designed YouTube channel look like?

To give you some ideas for your own YouTube channel, let's take a look at the channel for the [Vancouver Canucks](#).



As you can see, the Canucks have branded their channel with team colours. Their **"channel art" header** is the appropriate size (2560 pixels x 1440 pixels) and contains links to their other social media platforms and their website. They've included a team logo as their **channel icon** (top left).

When you reach their profile, a **channel trailer** (bottom left) begins to play. Some people choose to create a short intro video specifically for this purpose, but others use their most recent video as the channel trailer. You don't have to add a channel trailer, but it's a good way to draw attention to a particular video or give your fans an overview of your organization or sport.

To the bottom right, you'll see a list of **related channels**. This is a list of channels you subscribe to. It's a great way to highlight the channels of partners and sponsors.

**Below the header, you'll see a few tabs:**



All of these tabs are customizable:

- **Videos:** Shows all of your videos.
- **Playlists:** Shows playlists you've created (see below).
- **Channels:** Shows channels you've subscribed to. If you have partners or sponsors, you can subscribe to their channels.
- **Discussion:** A collection of YouTube comments. You may choose to disable YouTube comments, since they can be a cesspool of trolling and bad grammar, or you can choose to moderate them to encourage discussion.
- **About:** Concisely describe what your channel or your organization is about. Make sure to include links to your websites and other social media channels.

If you scroll down the page, you'll see **recent uploads** and then **playlists**. The Canucks have chosen to group their videos by series, placing the most recent series at the top of the page.

**Sedin vs Sedin**

**SEDIN VS SEDIN**  
PENALTY KICKS 3:05  
Sedin vs Sedin - Penalty Kicks (episode 1)  
by Canucks 45,990 views 6 days ago

**SEDIN VS SEDIN**  
RAPID SHOT 1:41  
Sedin vs Sedin - Rapid Shot (episode 2)  
by Canucks 24,311 views 5 days ago

**SEDIN VS SEDIN**  
PING PONG BATTLE 3:36  
Sedin vs Sedin - Ping Pong (episode 3)  
by Canucks 21,086 views 4 days ago

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**2014 - All Access**

**CANUCKS TV** 1:24  
Ryan Kesler trade talks - All Access  
by Canucks 34,874 views 3 weeks ago

**CANUCKS TV** 2:40  
Jim Benning mic'd up at NHL draft table - All Access  
by Canucks 22,769 views 3 weeks ago

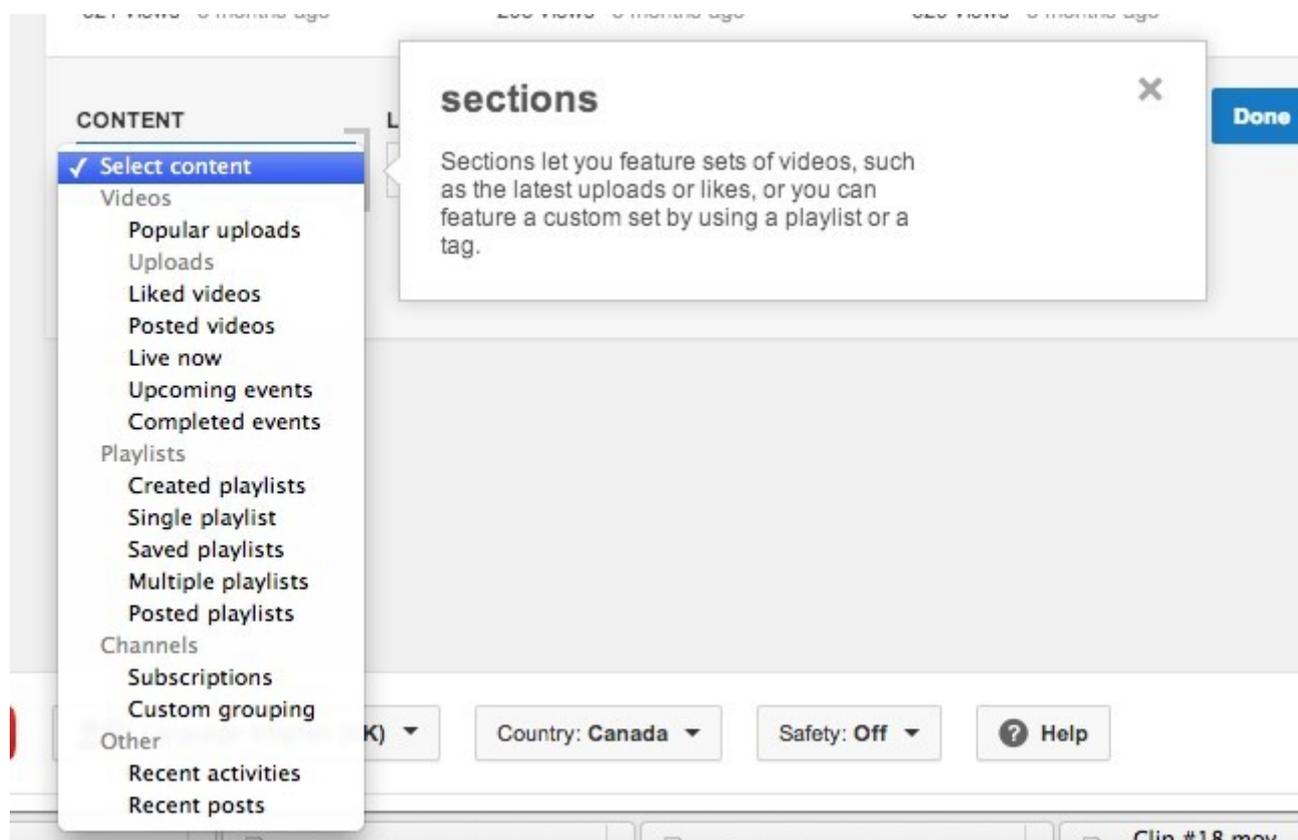
**CANUCKS TV** 1:20  
Nikita Tryamkin pre-draft interview - All Access  
by Canucks 16,934 views 1 month ago

In short, the Canucks' YouTube channel feels cohesive. It has a consistent look and feel, all of the videos are neatly organized into playlists, and the most important content is easy to find. Given that you probably don't have a dedicated social media team like the Canucks, you may not want to devote this level of care and attention into your YouTube channel. However, by stealing a few of their tricks, you can create a channel that looks professional.

#### 4. What are YouTube sections and how do I use them?

Think of sections as the building blocks of your YouTube channel. You can customize them and move them around to highlight different types of content. If you click on **Add a Section**, you'll be given a

huge variety of types of sections to add. If you livestream through YouTube, you can create an 'Upcoming Events' or 'Completed Events' section. (More on this below). If you want to highlight a playlist of athlete interviews, you can do so. You can choose how sections are arranged on your page, and what orientation they have.



When arranging your sections, make sure to consider what your goals are for the YouTube channel. (If you need help setting some goals for YouTube, check out our module on [Creating A Social Media Action Plan](#)). For example, if you are using YouTube to livestream an event, you'll want these links at the top of the page. If you want to attract new fans to your sport, you might choose to put a playlist of sport highlights at the top.

##### 5. What are YouTube playlists and how should I use them?

YouTube playlists allow you to group similar videos together so that viewers can watch them one after the other. Not only do playlists help you organize the videos on your channel, they also encourage your viewers to watch more of your content. (If you've ever started watching a series on Netflix and suddenly looked up to see that five hours have gone by, you'll understand the power of this feature).

To create a playlist, go to the top of your page and click on **Playlists** and then '**New Playlist.**'



You'll be prompted to give your playlist a name and select whether to keep it public or not. Once you've created your playlist, click on 'Add Videos' to select videos to add to the playlist. You can

even give your playlist a profile picture and a description.

**Remember:** you can either add videos by entering a URL (for videos that aren't on your channel) or you can select videos on your channel. Once you've added videos to your playlist, you can rearrange them clicking on the left-hand side of the video and dragging it up or down the list.



## 6. If I don't have the rights to this music, can I use it on my YouTube video?

Short answer: No! While YouTube does have a system worked out to reward artists whose music is used in videos without permission, using unlicensed music puts severe limitations on your video (can't be seen on mobile, can't be seen in certain countries, can't earn ad revenue etc). If an artist becomes upset over your use of a song, he or she can also issue a take-down notice and your video will get pulled.

Instead, find music through [Creative Commons](#) which is a licensing system where artists give the public permission to use their work under certain restrictions. (For example, an artist may decide that non-profits and individuals can use her song, but for profit companies can't). As long as you credit the artist and aren't making money off your video, you'll find a wide range of legal [Creative Commons](#) music to use.

## 7. I've uploaded a video to YouTube. How do I ensure that it gets maximum exposure?

We've already discussed how you can draw attention to videos by customizing your channel. But how do you put your video in front of people who've never heard of your organization and your sport? The answer: Make your video searchable.

Before you get started, do a little research to see what types of videos are popular for your sport. For example, if you work for a mountain biking organization, crash videos might be most popular. Come up with some popular key words to describe your video.

Once you upload your video, you'll be prompted to fill out the fields below. Make sure that your video's **name** accurately describes the content and contains keywords, if possible. For example, in the video below, I've discovered that people search for 'wheelchair rugby hits' and 'wheelchair rugby highlights.' Since it's video of the 2013 Canadian National Championships, I want to include those words in the title as well.

Next, write a brief **description** that contains strong keywords. Here, I'm using words like 'hard hits'. If a certain athlete is featured, make sure to include his or her name in both the keywords and the description. You should also include a link to your website.

Next, you'll be prompted to enter some **keywords**. Make sure that your keywords are both popular and accurate. After all, you'll only annoy viewers if you tag your video as a 'crash' video and there isn't a single crash.



## 8. Does YouTube allow live streaming?

Yes. In fact, many major sporting events choose to use YouTube to live-stream their event. If you've got a bit of technical know-how, YouTube does allow you to customize audio and video, create highlight reels, show viewer comments, and more.

To become eligible to live-stream, you must go through a simple approval process to make sure that your account is in good standing. Once you're approved, you'll be able to manage your live-streaming by clicking on the 'Live Events' tab in the Video Manager. To learn more about Youtube livestreaming, go to [https://www.youtube.com/my\\_live\\_events](https://www.youtube.com/my_live_events)

**Remember:** If you don't want the hassle of setting up your own live-stream, viaSport grants a event live-streaming services! To learn more about eligibility or to apply, visit our [viaSport TV](#) page.

## 9. How do I use YouTube analytics?

YouTube's Analytics have recently taken a major step forward and they're likely to change more in the future. Right now, YouTube's Analytics are located in the **Creator Studio**. Click on '**Analytics**' on the left side of the page.

As you can see, you'll have access to a wide range of data on your YouTube channel.



In the future, we'll have a whole module devoted to Analytics, but for now, let's take a look some basic questions that you can answer using Youtube's Analytics.

- **How have my videos performed in a certain date range?** (Monthly, quarterly, lifetime, etc). YouTube's Analytics have a default setting of 28 days, but you can change it by clicking on the little calendar icon at the top right of the page.
- **What kind of people are watching my videos?** By clicking on 'Demographics,' you can see the age and gender of your viewers.
- **Where are people watching my videos located?** By clicking on 'Demographics,' you can see where your viewers are located. This is important information if your strategy is to target people in British Columbia or Canada
- **How are people watching my videos?** By clicking on 'Playback Locations,' you can see whether people watched your videos on YouTube, on a mobile device, or if they watched it on an embedded player in another location (such as on your website). You can also click on 'Traffic Sources' for a further breakdown of this data. This information is useful to see what part of your video promotion strategies are working, and what strategies could use tweaking. If, for example, very few people are finding your videos via YouTube's search function, you should add different keywords.
- **What websites are viewers finding my content on?** Use this information to both see what social media platforms or websites are driving traffic to your YouTube videos and to discover if someone has embedded your videos on their own website. For example, this data alerted me to the fact that one of our videos had been embedded on a disturbing website. I was able to trace the video and get it removed
- **How much of my content did viewers watch?** By clicking on Viewer Retention, you can see what percentage of the video your viewers watched, on average. This provides valuable feedback for your next videos. If you discover that viewers only watched 30% of your video blog, for example, you'll want to make the next one shorter.
- **How did I get new subscribers to my channel?** By clicking on Subscribers, you can see what videos impressed your viewers so much that they subscribed to get more. This is the ultimate YouTube compliment. By tracking what videos caused people to subscribe (and unsubscribe), you can adjust your strategy.
- **How many likes and dislikes did my videos get?** Likes and dislikes are a sign that your content is resonating with your audience. The 'Likes and Dislikes' section breaks down your likes/dislikes by video, and by date.

Got a YouTube question we didn't answer? Have another comment?  
 Email [arley@bcwheelchairsports.com](mailto:arley@bcwheelchairsports.com) to get in the conversation.

**Remember:** YouTube also offers in-depth tutorials, which you can access here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/creatoracademy>  
 To learn more, check out our Social Media Toolkit, found [here](#).



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Click this button to download the toolkit as a PDF:

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