

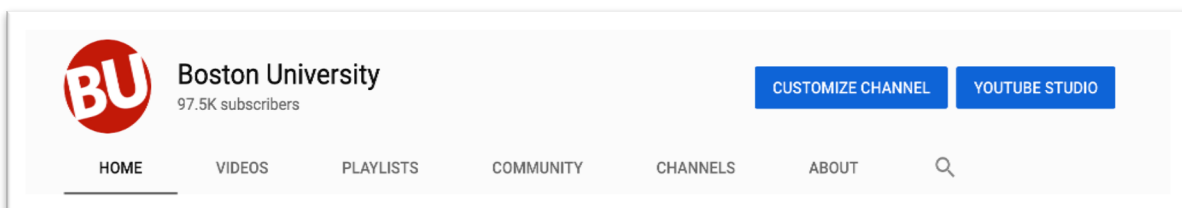


Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for YouTube: A Step by Step Guide

YouTube is the second largest search engine (after Google) which means having [search engine optimization](#) (SEO) in mind when uploading your videos is key. These guidelines will show you how you can enhance both your videos and your YouTube channel to achieve the best results.

Optimizing Your Channel

- Make sure your account accurately represents the name of your school, college or department. Including 'Boston University' in your account name garners better SEO results. Examples could include: *Boston University College of Communication*, *Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies at Boston University*, *Questrom School of Business*, *Boston University*, etc.
- To edit your description, select "Customize Channel" at the top right corner of your channel dashboard. From there, select "About" followed by the pencil icon to edit. When finished, click "Done" to save all changes.



- The first 100-150 character of your channel description are the most important, as YouTube shows that text snippet next to your channel in the search results. With this in mind, you'll want to communicate your band/positioning right off the bat.
- Make sure your description includes **keywords** about your school, college, or department's mission and role within the Boston University community.

What is a keyword, anyway?

A keyword is a word or phrase that describes the content on your page, video, or post the best. People will type the keyword or phrase into Google or another search engine, like YouTube for the best results.

- Examples can include "College", "Boston University," "BU", "Boston University data science", "Boston University freshman year", etc.

Channel Keywords

YouTube channel keywords are terms that give YouTube information and context about your channel. Specifically, they help YouTube understand the type of content you produce and who your target audience is.

- To add channel keywords, select "YouTube Studio" -> "Settings" -> "Channel" -> "Basic info".



- Think of keywords your target audience would search for by reviewing your channel, and types of videos you're uploading. Summarize those ideas into simple keywords.

The screenshot shows the 'Settings' page for a YouTube channel named 'Boston University'. The 'Basic info' tab is selected. Under the 'Channel' section, there is a 'Keywords' field. The keywords entered are: boston university, BU, boston university campus, boston university dorm, boston university vlog, boston university admissions, boston university acceptance, boston university athletics, boston university hockey, boston university admissions, boston university experience, boston u, boston university day in the life, boston university research, boston university alumni, and boston university dorm tour. At the bottom right, there are 'CLOSE' and 'SAVE' buttons.

Optimizing Your YouTube Video

Video Title

Now that your video is uploaded to your YouTube channel, you will want to write a relevant title that includes at least one **keyword** at the beginning.

- To edit your video's title, click on your profile and then "Creator Studio". From there, you'll see a list of your drafted or uploaded videos. Select the upload you want to optimize to make all appropriate changes. If you're uploading a new video, you will be directed to a screen where you can customize your title after the video is done loading.
- Try to keep titles within 70 characters (including spaces). YouTube has a 100-character limit for titles but anything longer than 70 will be shortened in most search results.
- When writing a title, it is better to use simplified language as opposed to technical jargon. Consider the video's significance to a broader YouTube audience, and use terms/keywords that reflect what the average user may be searching.
- Many users also search by asking questions into their smart devices (Siri, Alexa, etc.) or search engines. Consider if there are ways to reframe some of your titles with questions.

Examples from [the main BU channel](#) include:

How can my college application stand out? What is life like as a Boston University transfer student? Which major is right for me? What is it really like to work in a neuroscience lab?



Video Description

The video description also plays an important role in YouTube's search algorithm. Here, you are encouraged to write more in-depth about your video as the limit is 5,000 characters. A video's description is how the search engine knows what your video is about.

Video details

[Basic](#) [More options](#)

UNDO CHANGES [SAVE](#) ⋮


Title (required) ?

How Can My College Application Stand Out? | BU Student Takeover

Description ?

Meet Boston University sophomore Hessann Farooqi, a Colorado Springs native studying economics within BU's College of Arts & Sciences. When he's not focused on his studies, you can find Hessann immersed in BU's campus life, serving as a senator in BU student government, an intern for the sustainability program, and a program manager at the Howard Thurman Center. In this q&a he answers questions about his BU student experience, dining halls, extracurricular activities, and the admissions process.

Follow Hessann on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/hessannf>
Follow BU on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/bostonu>



Video link
<https://youtu.be/owiCpXSehdk>

Filename
Hessann Farooqi Takeover.mp4

Video quality
[SD](#) [HD](#)

- Include your keyword in the first 25 words (but first two sentence is fine).
- Aim to make the description at least 250 words long, using **keyword(s)** 2-4 times.
- You can also use the video description as a tool to cross-promote to other platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, your school/college's website, etc.

Video Tags

Tags are descriptive **keywords** you can add to your video to help viewers find your content.

- YouTube heavily accounts for your video's first few tags when ranking content in the search results, especially the first tag. Make sure your first tag is the exact keyword you want to target.
- There are many free online resources to help compare/select the best tags for your videos. These tools are also helpful when generating title ideas, descriptions, or channel keywords:
 - 1) [Google YouTube Trends](#) – allows you to compare multiple search terms to determine which word or phrase bodes a greater interest over time.
 - 2) [Keywordtool.io](#) – search keyword suggestions, search engine questions, prepositions, and relevant hashtags to tailor your video tags. Make sure you are using the YouTube feature when on the site. (Example tag: *Boston University*).



Video Cards

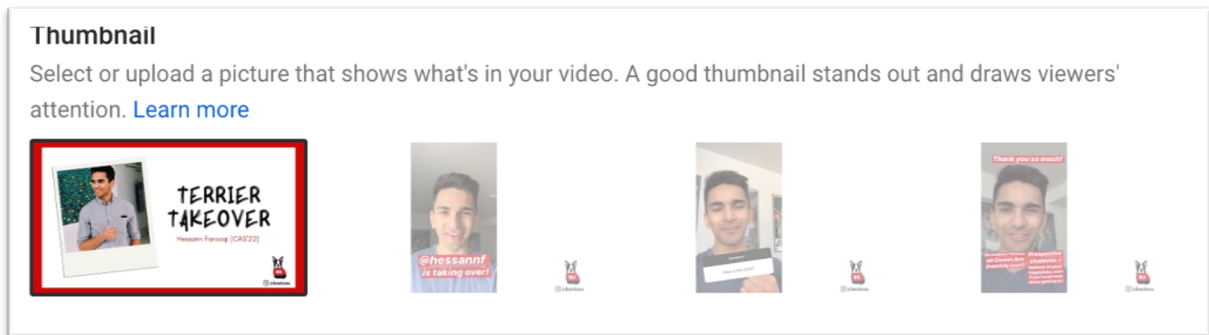
Cards are preformatted notifications that appear on desktop and mobile which you can set up to promote your brand and other videos on your channel.

- [This tutorial](#) from YouTube Creator Academy provides step-by-step instructions for adding cards onto your videos.

Thumbnails

A [thumbnail](#) is the cover photo that represents your video on YouTube.

- Once your video is uploaded, YouTube will automatically generate three frames from



the video and let you choose one to serve as the thumbnail image.

- You also always have the option to create and a custom thumbnail. Image formats should be saved as JPG, GIF, or PNG.
- The ideal thumbnail size is 1280 pixels by 720 pixels. Dimensions use an aspect ratio of 16:9.

Video Promotion

- **Take advantage of cross promotion.** The more likes, comments, shares, and subscribes your videos and channel get, the better your chances of ranking high in YouTube and Google search results. Share your videos on all of your social media platforms. For questions on additional promotion, please e-mail social@bu.edu or pr@bu.edu.