



# EZ-Play

## User Manual

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Watch and check your rushes before the edit — every format macOS can decode, plus the ones it cannot. Field-accurate, with honest answers about what is really in the file. For macOS.

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# 1. What EZ-Play does

EZ-Play is a viewer for rushes. It opens a folder of camera files, shows you what is in them, and lets you watch and step through them before anyone starts editing. It writes nothing back to your footage.

Two things set it apart from a general media player:

- **It plays what macOS cannot.** VP9, AV1 and other formats that AVFoundation refuses are offered either through a WebKit player or as a rendered viewing copy — you are asked which, and the copy behaves like any other clip afterwards.
- **It does not guess.** Where a fact about the file cannot be established, EZ-Play says so instead of estimating. The field order in particular is *measured* from the picture, not read from the container — see chapter 7.

**NOTHING IS WRITTEN TO YOUR FOOTAGE**  
EZ-Play only ever reads your original files. Rendering makes a new file in a separate folder; the source is never touched, moved or renamed.

## Where things are

|                                                 |                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Rendered copies</b><br>you choose the folder | ~/Movies/EZplay-Render by default. Open it from <b>File &gt; Open render folder</b> .           |
| <b>Settings</b><br>prefs.json                   | ~/Library/Application Support/EZPlay/                                                           |
| <b>This manual</b><br>and the licence           | Inside the app: <b>Help &gt; EZ-Play Quickguide</b> and <b>EZ-Play &gt; Licence Agreement</b> . |

## 2. Installing

EZ-Play arrives as a disk image. Open it, drag the app onto the **Applications** shortcut, then eject the image.

**NEVER RUN THE APP FROM THE DISK IMAGE**  
Copy it to Applications first. An app running from a mounted image stops with a bus error the moment the image is ejected — and macOS ejects images on its own.

### First launch

The app is signed and notarised by movid Medienproduktion GmbH, so it opens without a warning. If macOS still objects, the copy was damaged in transit — download it again rather than overriding the warning.

### What comes with it

A trimmed LGPL build of ffmpeg and ffprobe travels inside the app bundle. Nothing needs to be installed alongside; on a fresh Mac there is no ffmpeg, and every feature that depends on it would otherwise fail quietly.

|                                        |                                                               |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Thumbnails</b><br>in the media list | Drawn by ffmpeg when AVFoundation cannot decode the file.     |
| <b>Field measurement</b><br>chapter 7  | Reads a few hundred frames to establish the true field order. |
| <b>Rendering</b><br>chapters 9         | ProRes and deinterlaced copies.                               |

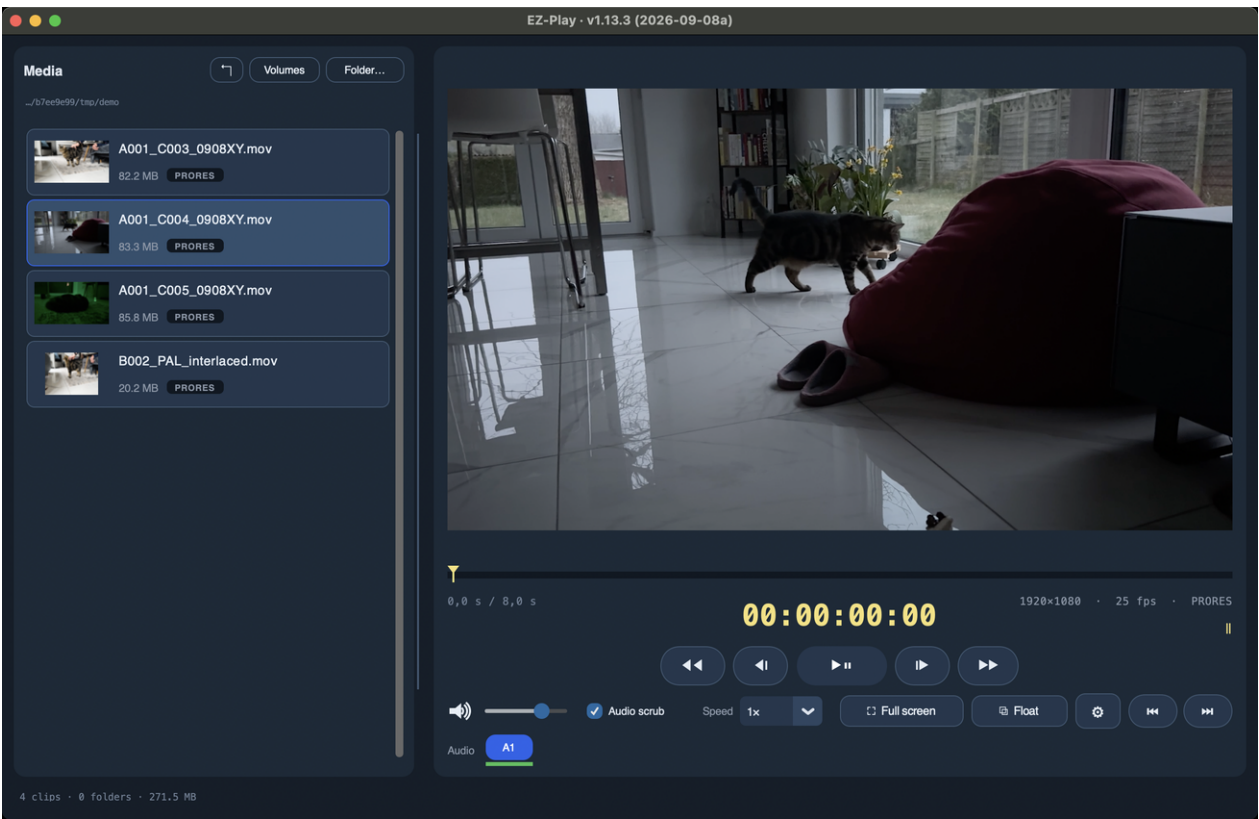
### What does not come with it

Sony, Panasonic P2 and other MXF files play natively only with Apple's free **Pro Video Formats** package. It is Apple's, so EZ-Play cannot bundle or install it — a Mac with Final Cut Pro or Compressor already has it, a fresh Mac does not.

**PRO VIDEO FORMATS — ONE DOWNLOAD, 10 MB**  
support.apple.com/106396. Install it, restart EZ-Play, and every MXF plays like any other clip. Until then, EZ-Play offers the download page and a rendered preview whenever you open an MXF.

### 3. The window at a glance

The window has two halves: the media list on the left, and the monitor with its transport on the right.



The main window. Four rushes in the list, the selected clip in the monitor, transport underneath.

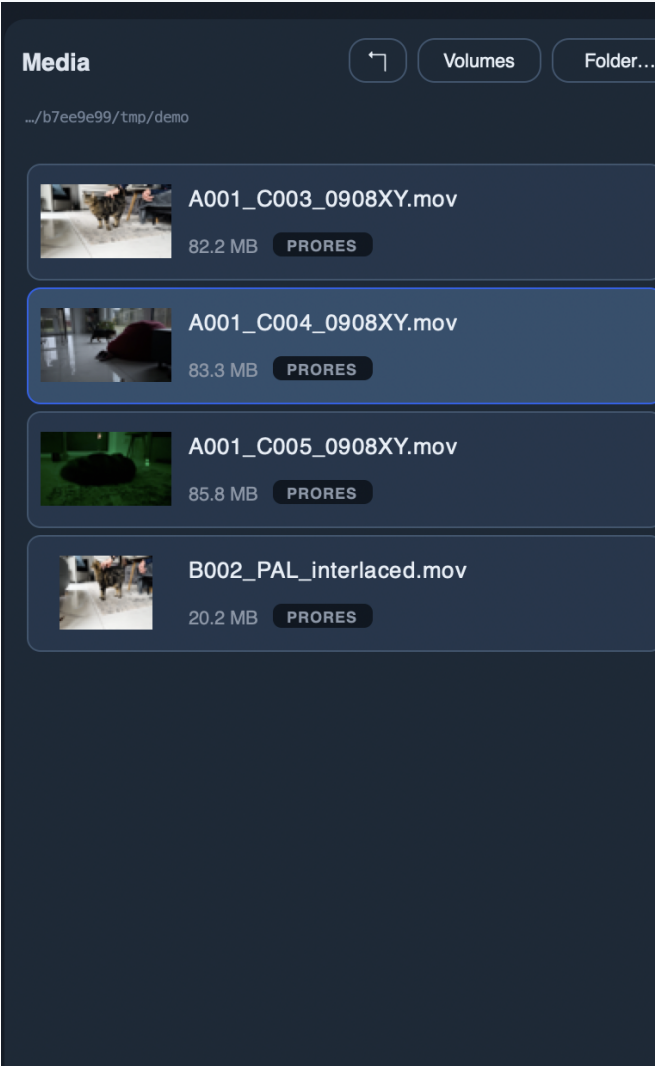
|                                        |                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Media list</b><br>left              | Every clip in the current folder, with a thumbnail, its size and its codec. Folders appear first.                      |
| <b>Monitor</b><br>centre               | The picture. It is a separate window laid into the frame — that is how it can also float or fill the screen.           |
| <b>Scrub bar</b><br>under the picture  | Drag to move through the clip. The marker shows the position; audio scrubbing can be turned on beside it.              |
| <b>Timecode</b><br>large, amber        | The position in the clip's own timecode, not a count from zero. The clip's start timecode is shown in the status line. |
| <b>Transport</b><br>five buttons       | Shuttle back, step back, play/pause, step forward, shuttle forward.                                                    |
| <b>Bottom row</b><br>volume to markers | Volume, audio scrub, playback speed, Full screen, Float, settings, and jump to start or end.                           |
| <b>Status line</b><br>very bottom      | How many clips are in the folder, and the name, size and start timecode of the selected one. Warnings appear here too. |

The divider between list and monitor can be dragged to widen either side. The width is remembered.

## 4. Finding your footage

Point EZ-Play at a folder and it lists every media file it recognises.

|                                         |                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Folder...</b><br>Cmd+O               | Pick a folder anywhere on the machine.                                 |
| <b>Volumes</b><br>Cmd+Shift+Up          | Jump to the list of mounted drives — cards, shuttles, network volumes. |
| <b>Open selected folder</b><br>Cmd+Down | Step into the highlighted folder.                                      |
| <b>Go up</b><br>Cmd+Up                  | Back to the enclosing folder.                                          |



Each row carries a thumbnail, the file size and the codec.

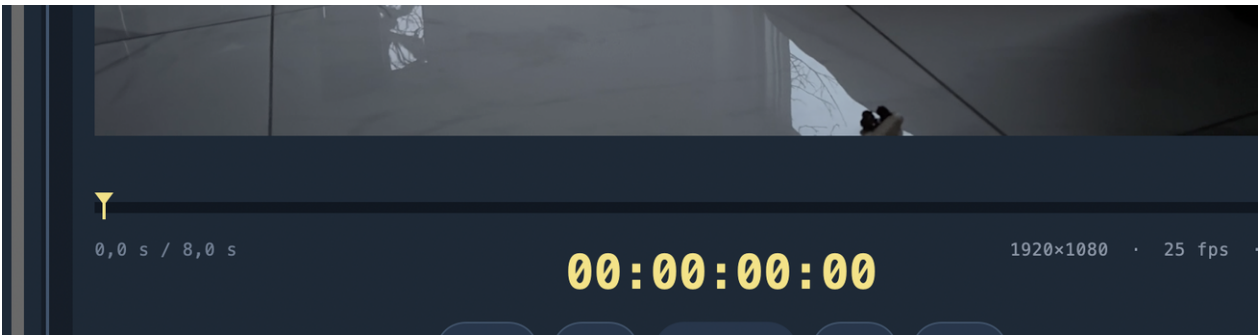
### Reading the rows

- **The thumbnail is a real frame** taken a second into the clip, not an icon. If AVFoundation cannot decode the file, ffmpeg draws it instead.
- **The badge names the codec** as the file actually stores it — PRORES, H.264, VP9, AV1, MPEG-2.
- **A warning triangle** marks a clip macOS cannot show. It still opens; you are offered the web player or a rendered copy (chapter 9).

- **PREVIEW** marks a clip that is itself a rendered copy made earlier by EZ-Play.

Use the up and down arrow keys to walk through the folder — the clip loads as you go.

## 5. Playing



The transport, timecode and bottom row.

### Playing and pausing

Press Space or K to start and stop. Playback begins at the speed chosen in the **Speed** menu, not always at 1×.

### Stepping

|                                                    |                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>One frame</b><br>Left / Right                   | Step a single frame either way.                                                                      |
| <b>Ten frames</b><br>Shift+Left / Shift+Right      | Step ten frames — useful for finding an action quickly.                                              |
| <b>Shuttle</b><br>J and L                          | Press repeatedly to speed up: 1×, 2×, 4×, 8×. J runs backwards, L forwards. Space returns to normal. |
| <b>Start / end</b><br>the two buttons on the right | Jump to the first or last frame.                                                                     |

### Scrubbing

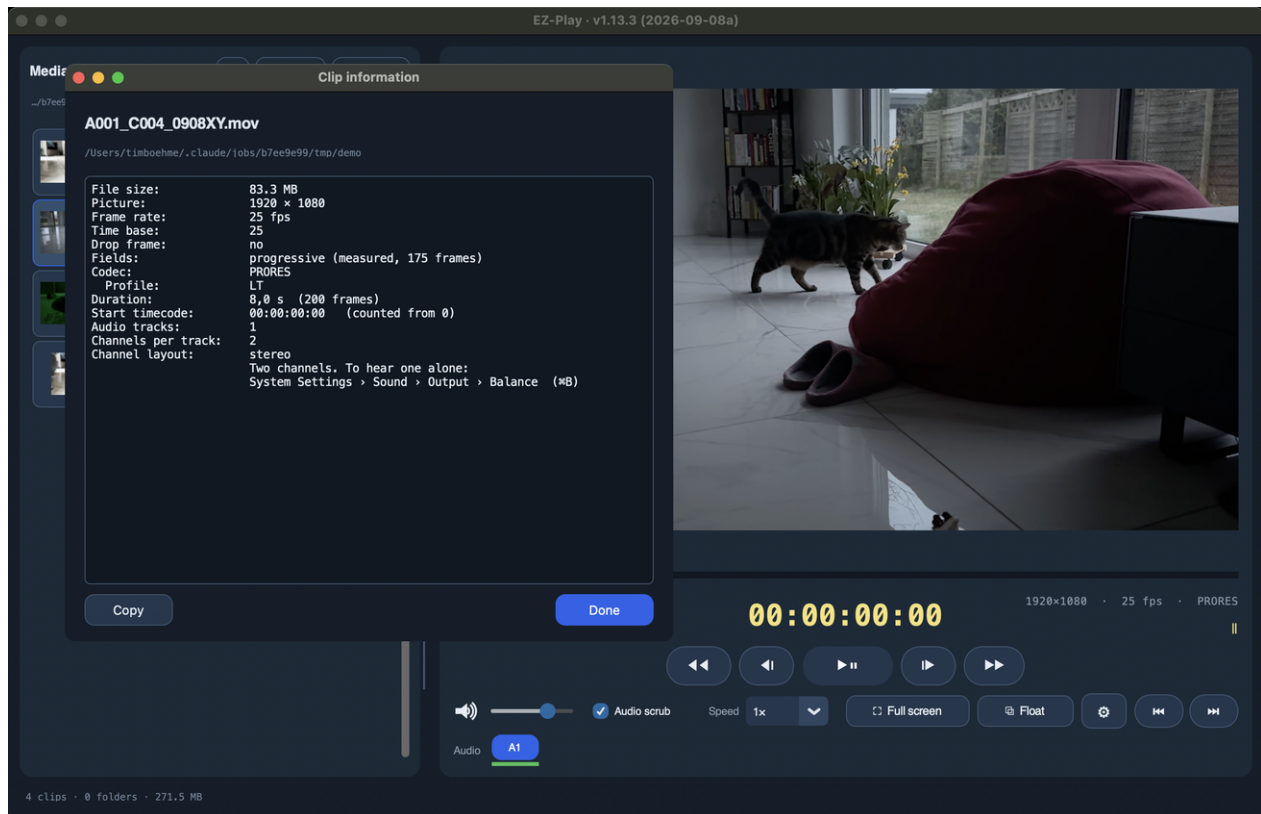
Drag the scrub bar to move through the clip. With **Audio scrub** ticked you hear the sound while dragging, which is how you find a word or a clap. Playback resumes if it was running when you started.

**THE TIMECODE IS THE CLIP'S OWN**

EZ-Play shows the timecode recorded by the camera, not a count from zero. A clip that starts at 10:00:00:00 shows that on its first frame.

## 6. Clip information

**Clip > Information** (Cmd+I) opens everything EZ-Play knows about the selected file.



Clip information. The values come from ffprobe and the player — nothing is estimated.

### What is and is not known

Where a value cannot be established it reads **unknown**, not a plausible guess. That distinction matters when the window is used to settle an argument in the edit suite.

The Fields line is special: it is *measured*, not copied from the file's own claim. It may take a second or two to settle, and while it does the line says **measuring....** Chapter 7 explains why.

The text can be selected and copied straight out of the window.

## 7. Interlaced footage

Interlaced footage stores two half-pictures — fields — for every frame, taken a fiftieth of a second apart. EZ-Play treats them as first-class citizens, because tape-era material and much SD material still arrives that way.

### Why the file's own claim is not trusted

Every container carries a field-order flag, and that flag lies often enough to matter. Material shot progressively and wrapped in an interlaced frame — PsF — states a field order and has no fields at all. Converted material frequently carries no flag.

So EZ-Play measures instead: a few hundred frames are examined and the verdict is reported alongside the claim. Where they disagree, both are shown:

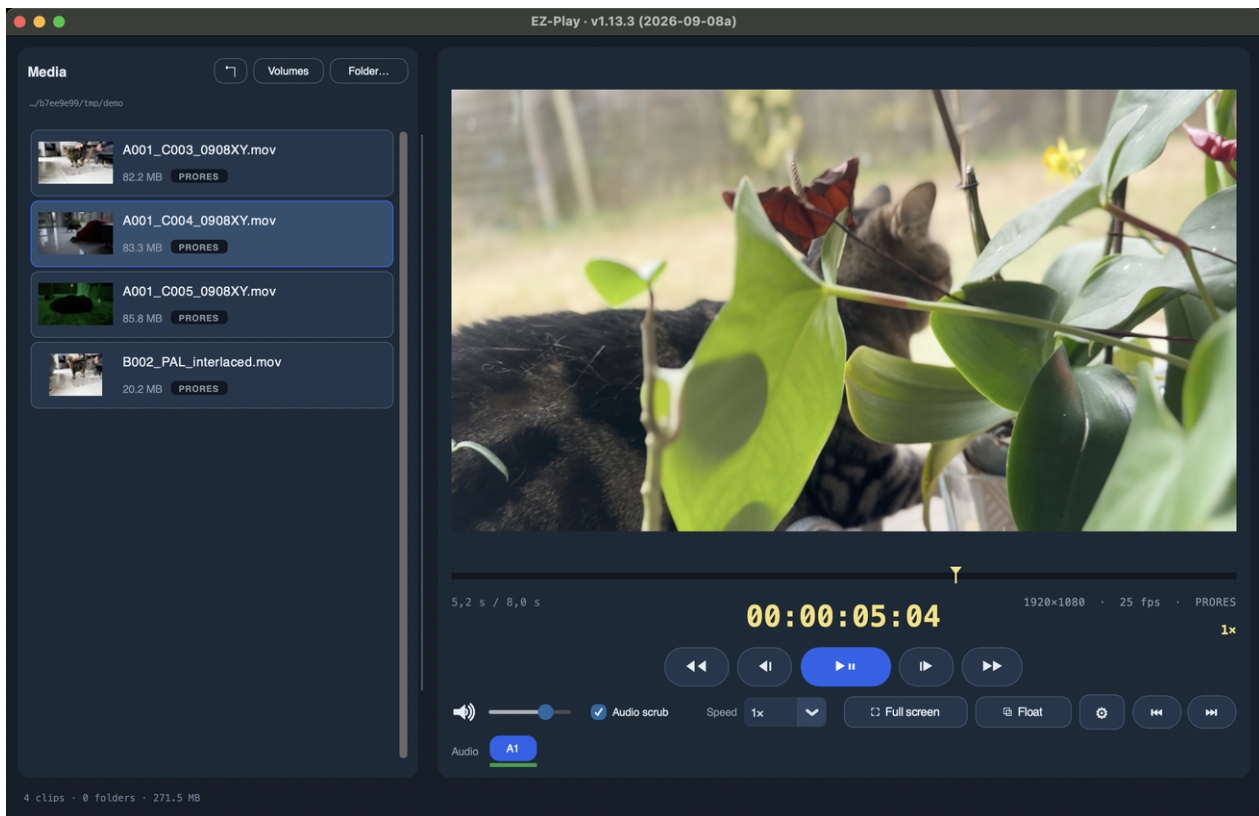
|                                                 |                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agreement</b><br>the ordinary case           | <i>interlaced, upper field first (measured, 201 frames)</i>                                         |
| <b>Flag lies</b><br>PsF material                | <i>flagged interlaced, upper field first, MEASURED PROGRESSIVE over 200 frames — looks like PsF</i> |
| <b>No claim at all</b><br>converted material    | <i>interlaced, lower field first (measured over 200 frames; the file itself says nothing)</i>       |
| <b>No verdict</b><br>flat or very soft pictures | <i>measurement inconclusive — and then nothing is claimed.</i>                                      |

### Looking at a single field

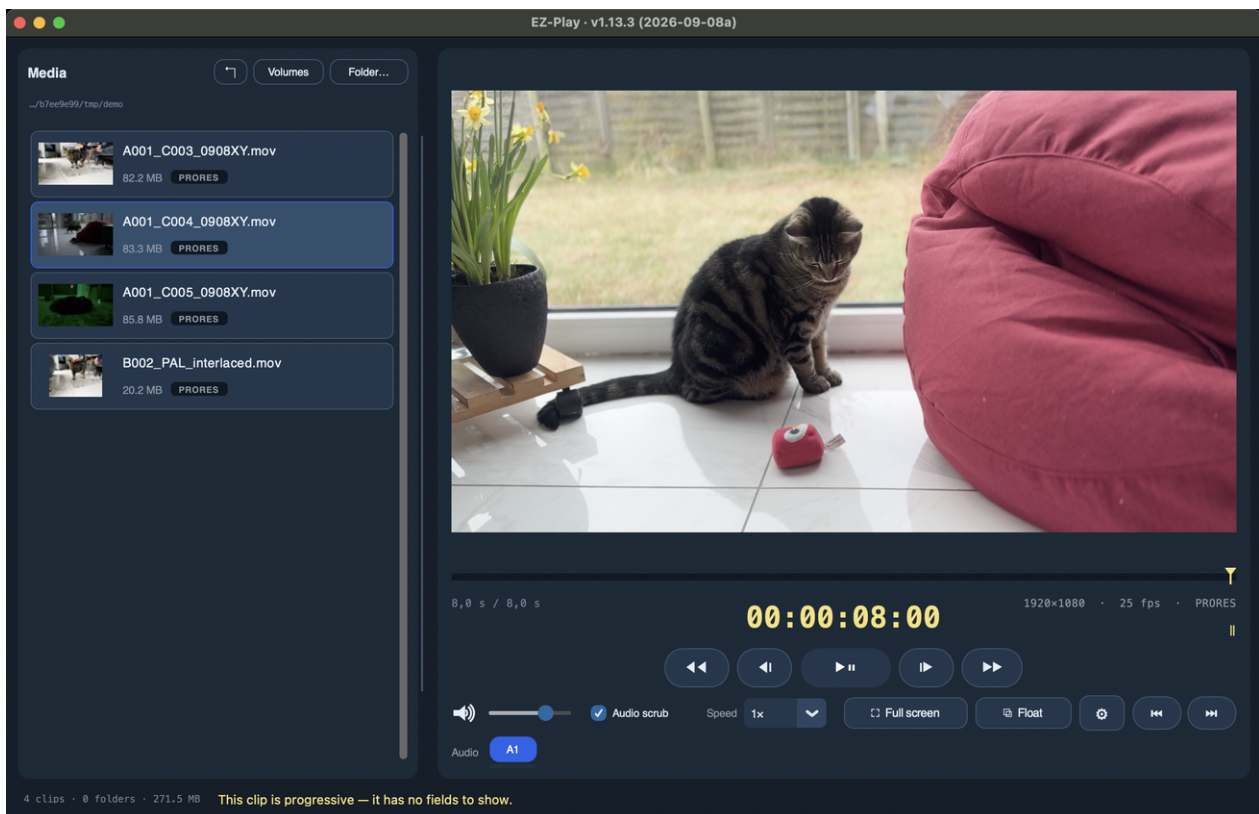
Pause the clip and press 1 for the first field, 2 for the second, 0 to return to the full frame. The status line names which physical field you are seeing.

**F1 IS NOT THE SAME AS “THE TOP FIELD”**

“First field” means first in time. On upper-field-first material that is the top one; on lower-field-first material — DV and most SD tape — it is the bottom one. EZ-Play maps F1 and F2 through the measured order, so the label always tells the truth. Where the order cannot be measured, no field view is offered at all.



Full frame — both fields woven together.



First field only, lines doubled. Motion between the fields is what makes the comb in the full frame.

The field view works while paused only. Each field is extracted with `ffmpeg` beside the player, which takes a moment — fine for a still, impossible twenty-five times a second. To watch interlaced motion properly, render a deinterlaced copy instead (chapter 9).

# 8. Sound

**Clip > Sound settings** (Cmd+B) opens the balance window for clips with more than one audio track.

Camera files often carry several mono tracks — a radio mic on one, the camera mic on another. The window lets you choose which of them you hear, so a take can be checked on the boom alone without touching the file.

|                                             |                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Track buttons</b><br>under the transport | A1, A2 ... one per track. Click to hear or mute it.                                  |
| <b>Level lamps</b><br>beside the buttons    | Show how loud each track actually is, measured in advance rather than while playing. |
| <b>Volume</b><br>bottom row                 | Overall level. It is remembered between sessions.                                    |

**THE LAMPS ARE MEASURED, NOT GUESSED**

Levels are read from the file before playback so they are right from the first frame, instead of creeping up as the clip runs.

## 9. Rendering

Two kinds of copy can be made from the selected clip. Both write a new file into the render folder and leave the original alone.

|                                              |                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Convert to ProRes</b><br>Cmd+E            | ProRes 422 LT with uncompressed sound. Goes straight into Resolve, Premiere or Final Cut and survives repeated editing.  |
| <b>Render deinterlaced</b><br>Cmd+D          | A progressive 50p copy of interlaced material — one full frame per field, so the motion is preserved rather than halved. |
| <b>Viewing copy</b><br>offered automatically | A small HEVC file, made when macOS cannot show a clip and you choose to render rather than use the web player.           |

A progress bar counts the render honestly — the figure comes from ffmpeg's own report, not from a guess. The copy loads by itself when it is finished, and is found again next time instead of being made twice.

### Deinterlacing, done properly

A deinterlaced copy is rendered at **double the frame rate**: 25 interlaced frames become 50 progressive ones. Both fields carry their own moment in time, and throwing one away — as a half-rate deinterlace does — removes half the motion. The picture then looks clean and still judders.

#### THE FIELD ORDER IS MEASURED FIRST

Deinterlacing with the wrong field order swaps every pair, and the motion stutters back and forth. EZ-Play measures the order before rendering and passes it explicitly, rather than letting the encoder read the container's claim. On a mislabelled file that is worth roughly 9 dB of reconstruction quality.

If the measurement says the clip is progressive, EZ-Play refuses to deinterlace it and says so — softening a progressive picture gains nothing.

## 10. The monitor

The picture can sit in three places.

|                                        |                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Docked</b><br>the default           | Inside the main window, between the media list and the transport.                                                                                          |
| <b>Floating</b><br>the Float button    | Its own window, freely placed and resized. The timecode sits in a strip above the picture, the transport in a strip below it. The main window steps aside. |
| <b>Full screen</b><br>F or Cmd+Shift+F | The whole display. Here the transport and timecode float over the picture as movable bars — see chapter 11. Escape returns.                                |



The floating monitor: timecode above, picture, transport below — all in one window.

### Resizing the floating monitor

Drag the edge of the floating window. It keeps the clip's aspect ratio, so no black bars appear at the sides, and the picture tracks the frame as you drag.

#### NOTHING HERE CAN DRIFT OUT OF PLACE

Timecode and transport are ordinary parts of the window, not separate floating panels. They cannot slip behind the picture, fade at the wrong moment or wander off when you change clips — the whole class of problem is gone rather than worked around.

#### THE PICTURE IS A WINDOW OF ITS OWN

It is drawn by macOS in a separate window laid into the frame. That is what makes floating and full screen possible without re-decoding, and it is why the field view has to be drawn over it rather than into it.

# 11. Controls in full screen

In **full screen** there is no frame to put anything in, so the transport and the timecode become two small bars that hover over the picture.

- **Drag them by the grip** — the dotted handle at the left end. Only the grip moves them; a stray click between the buttons will not drag the bar away.
- **They fade out** after about three seconds of stillness and come back the moment you move the mouse over the picture.
- **They stay where you put them** and are placed again in the same spot next time.

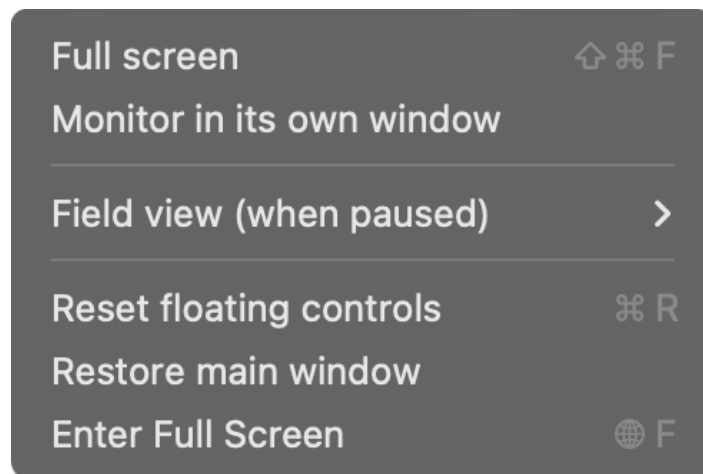
|                                          |                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Reset floating controls</b><br>Cmd+R  | Puts both bars back to their default place — the way out if one has ended up somewhere awkward. |
| <b>Restore main window</b><br>View menu  | Brings the main window back if it has been left hidden.                                         |
| <b>Appearance</b><br>the settings button | Opacity, timecode size and colour, and how long the bars wait before fading.                    |

## IN THE FLOATING MONITOR THERE IS NOTHING TO MOVE

There the timecode and the transport sit in fixed strips above and below the picture, so fading, dragging and opacity do not apply — the three settings named above are for full screen only. Timecode size and colour do apply to both; the strip takes its height from the size you choose.

## 12. Menus and keyboard shortcuts

Every menu item that matters has a keyboard shortcut, and the menus are arranged by what the items actually do.



The View menu.

### Transport

|                    |                                                  |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Space or K         | Play / pause                                     |
| J / L              | Shuttle backwards / forwards, repeat to speed up |
| Left / Right       | Step one frame                                   |
| Shift+Left / Right | Step ten frames                                  |
| Up / Down          | Previous / next clip                             |

### Windows and view

|                  |                                         |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| F or Cmd+Shift+F | Full screen                             |
| Escape           | Leave full screen                       |
| 0 / 1 / 2        | Full frame / first field / second field |
| Cmd+R            | Reset the floating controls             |

### Files and clips

|                   |                              |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Cmd+O             | Choose folder                |
| Cmd+Up / Cmd+Down | Go up / open selected folder |
| Cmd+Shift+Up      | Volumes                      |
| Cmd+I             | Clip information             |
| Cmd+B             | Sound settings               |
| Cmd+E             | Convert to ProRes            |

|              |                                         |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>Cmd+D</b> | Render deinterlaced                     |
| <b>Cmd+W</b> | Open the current clip in the web player |
| <b>Cmd+Q</b> | Quit                                    |

## 13. Settings

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Settings live in a single file:

`~/Library/Application Support/EZPlay/prefs.json`

Remembered there are the last folder, the width of the media list, volume and speed, the appearance of the floating bars and their positions, and the render folder. Deleting the file resets EZ-Play to its defaults; nothing else is affected.

### The render folder

Rendered copies go to **~/Movies/EZplay-Render** unless you point them elsewhere in the settings. A visible folder was chosen deliberately over a hidden one — it can be cleaned out, backed up and opened in the Finder.

Each rendered file carries a fingerprint of its source in the name, so changing the original produces a new copy instead of quietly reusing a stale one.

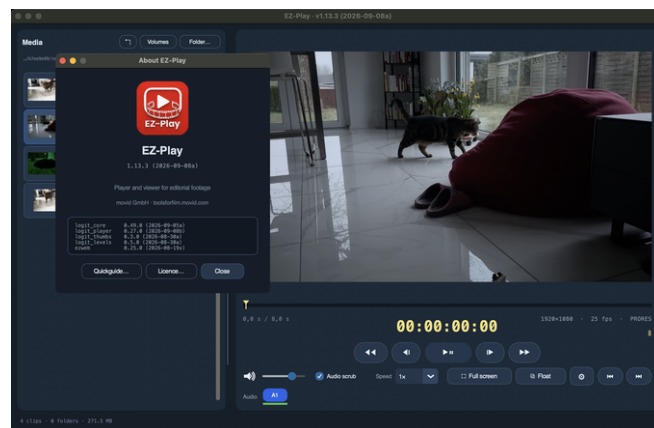
## 14. Licence

EZ-Play is free of charge. There is no trial, no serial number and nothing to activate.

The licence agreement is inside the app under **EZ-Play > Licence Agreement** as well as on the disk image. It is kept in the app deliberately: most people drag the app out and throw the image away, and a condition that exists only on the image is a condition nobody has.

### What reaches the network

- **The tools page** under **Help > About these tools** is loaded from [toolsforfilm.movid.com](https://toolsforfilm.movid.com) when you open it.
- **The shop** opens in your browser when you ask for it.
- **Your footage never leaves the machine.** Nothing about the files you open is sent anywhere.



The About window also lists the versions of the shared modules — the first thing worth quoting in a support question.

## 15. Troubleshooting

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### A clip shows a warning triangle and no picture

macOS cannot decode it. EZ-Play offers the web player, which starts at once and can play and step, or a rendered copy, which takes a moment and then behaves like any other clip.

### The Fields line says “measurement inconclusive”

The picture has too little vertical detail for the measurement to be sure — flat surfaces, heavy grain, a very soft image. EZ-Play then claims nothing, and the field view stays unavailable rather than showing a field it cannot label correctly.

### The field view refuses on a clip I believe is interlaced

Check the Fields line in **Clip > Information**. If it reads *MEASURED PROGRESSIVE ... looks like PsF*, the clip genuinely has no fields, whatever the file claims.

### The floating controls have disappeared

Move the mouse over the picture and they come back. If they are in an awkward place, **View > Reset floating controls** (Cmd+R) puts them back.

### The main window is gone

**View > Restore main window**.

### MXF files show no picture on a new Mac

Install Apple's free **Pro Video Formats** package ([support.apple.com/106396](https://support.apple.com/106396)), then restart EZ-Play. Until then, **Render preview...** in the dialog shows the clip.

### A render did not finish

Unfinished renders are written under a .part name and are never mistaken for a finished copy. Delete them from the render folder and start again.

## 16. Reference tables

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### Formats

|                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Played by macOS</b><br>directly                | ProRes, H.264, HEVC, MPEG-2, DV, and the usual QuickTime and MXF wrappers.                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Played another way</b><br>web player or render | VP9, AV1 and anything else AVFoundation refuses.                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>MXF needs</b><br>Apple's Pro Video Formats     | Sony, Panasonic P2 and other MXF files play natively only with Apple's free Pro Video Formats package. On a Mac without it, EZ-Play says so and offers the download page and a rendered preview. |
| <b>Rendered to</b><br>ProRes 422 LT               | yuv422p10le with uncompressed sound, in a .mov.                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Rendered to</b><br>HEVC                        | For viewing copies and deinterlaced copies, in a .mov.                                                                                                                                           |

### Field order

|                                     |                                                  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>tt / tb</b><br>upper field first | F1 is the top field, F2 the bottom one.          |
| <b>bb / bt</b><br>lower field first | F1 is the bottom field, F2 the top one.          |
| <b>progressive</b><br>no fields     | The field view is not offered.                   |
| <b>unknown</b><br>no measurement    | Nothing is claimed and no field view is offered. |

### Where files live

|                 |                                                 |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Renders</b>  | ~/Movies/EZplay-Render                          |
| <b>Settings</b> | ~/Library/Application Support/EZPlay/prefs.json |
| <b>The app</b>  | /Applications/EZ-Play.app                       |