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How to Setup and Use Open Broadcaster Software (OBS)

Open Broadcaster Software (OBS), is a popular free and open sourced software used for video recording and live-streaming. Managing multiple content windows, audio, and visual inputs, it helps you create a professional video or streaming experience. This guide will introduce the basics of OBS, and how you can use it to deliver your course content.

⚠ This guide uses examples with the Bb Collaborate web conferencing tool. As of August 31, 2021, UofT no longer licenses Bb Collaborate. Please see ACT's termination of Collaborate license memo for more details. We recommend reviewing our guide of currently available webinar tools for alternate options to host synchronous online sessions.

This guide will cover:

1. How to Download OBS
2. Setting up OBS on your computer
3. How to use Scenes and Sources
4. Using OBS to Livestream your Content
5. Using OBS to Record your Content
6. Using a Green Screen with OBS

💡 **Looking for more information on using OBS?** - Check out the OBS wiki, or the OBS Quickstart Guide!

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1. How to download OBS

1. Go to the OBS website.
2. Select your Operating System and the Download should begin automatically.

2. Setting up OBS on your computer

1. Open the downloaded file.
2. Follow the prompts to install OBS on your computer.
3. When OBS opens, follow the OBS quick start guide.

3. How to use Scenes and Sources

## 3.1. What are Scenes and Sources?

Scenes and sources are OBS' way of organizing the various content you can share. Sources are media sources that you select to share in OBS. They can be toggled and manipulated to output the specific content you need at different times. Having a layout of your sources on screen creates a scene. Multiple scenes can be created and renamed to support different stages of your stream or presentation recording.

3.2. Adding Scenes
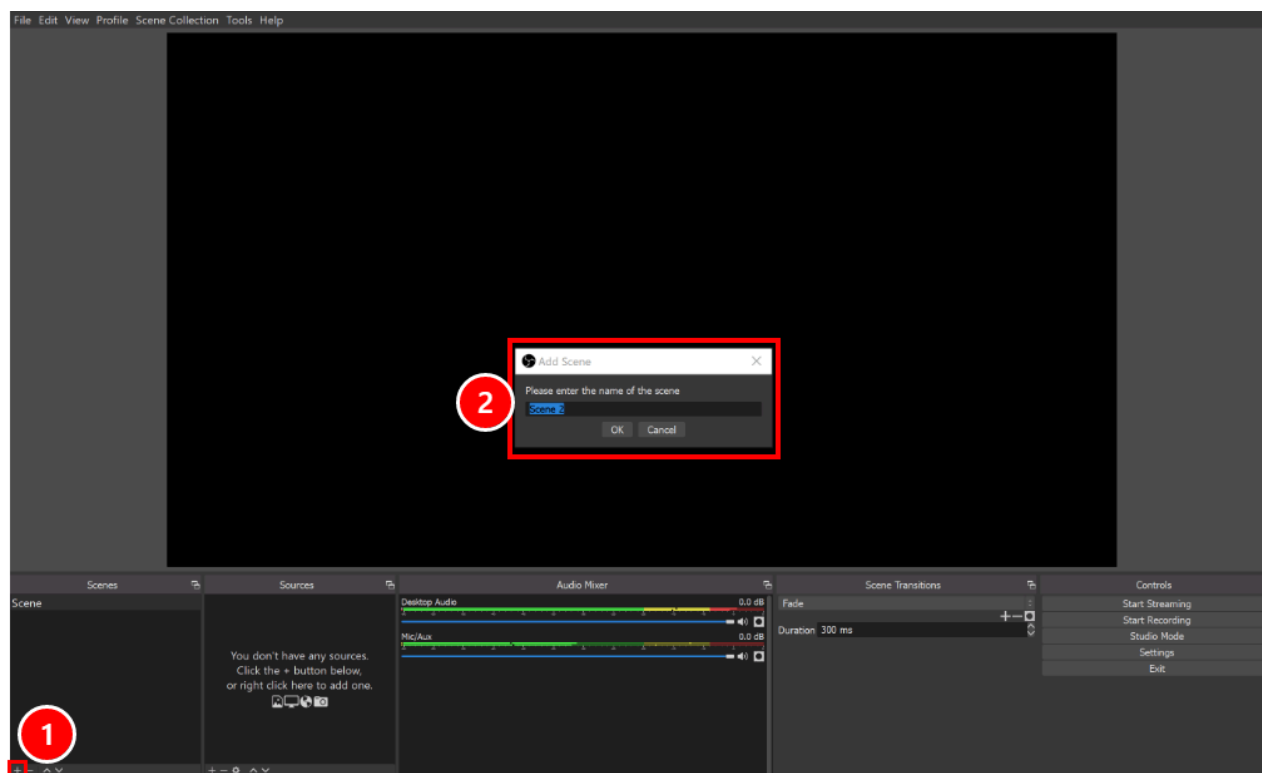
1. When opening OBS for the first time, there should be a default scene. Click the plus (+) icon in the "Scenes" bottom toolbar to add more.
2. Rename the scene and click "OK".
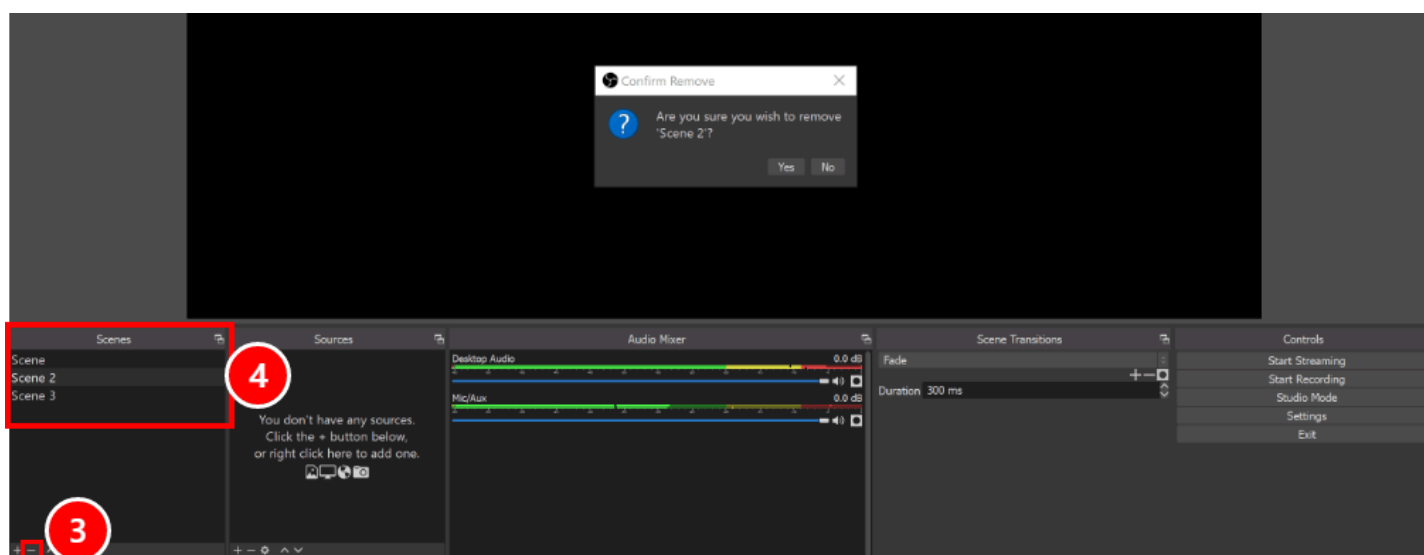
3. To remove a scene, select the scene you wish to delete, and click the minus (-) icon under "Scenes" in the bottom toolbar.
4. You can navigate through scenes by clicking the names in the scene list.
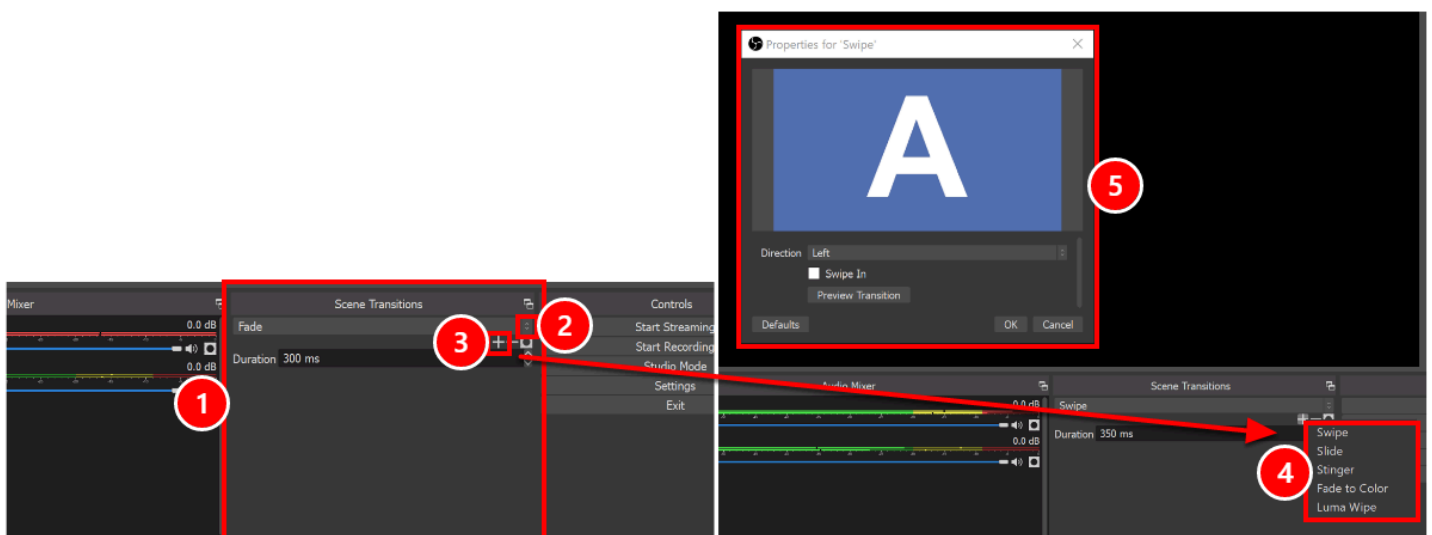
3.3. Adding Sources
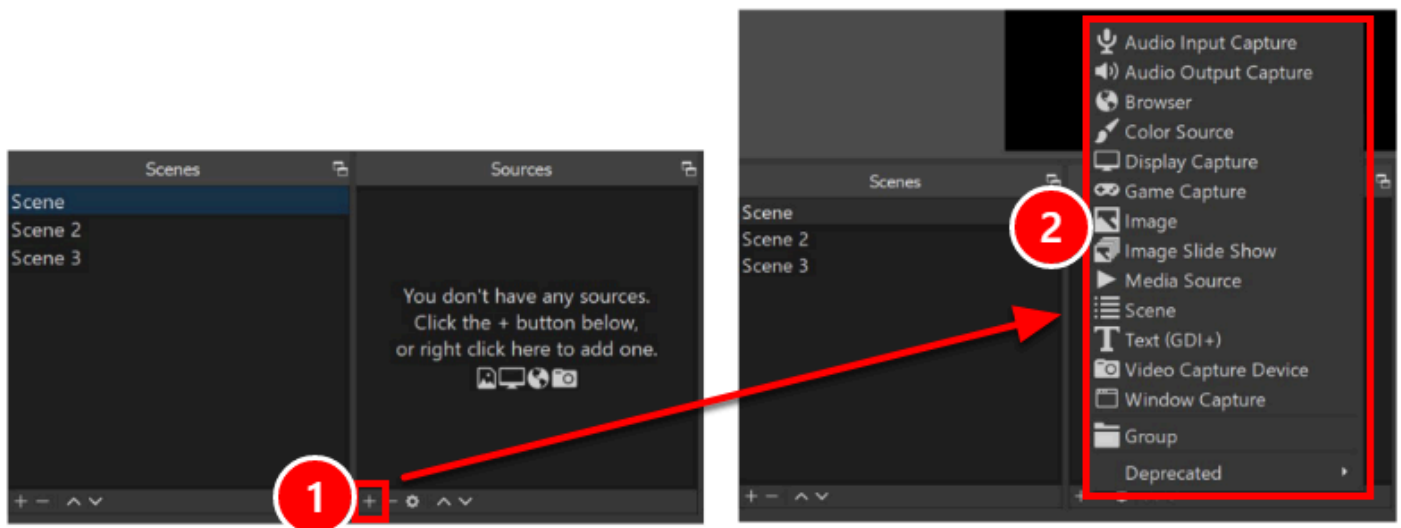
1. To add sources to the selected scene, click the plus (+) icon in the "Sources" bottom
2. In the list that pops up, select the appropriate media source.
3. Continue to add or remove sources as necessary. This will save in the current scene.

3.4. Transitioning between Scenes

1. You can select different transitions for moving between scenes in the "Scene Transitions" bottom toolbar.
2. The drop-down menu will have different types of transitions to choose from.
3. To add other transitions, select the plus (+) icon.
4. In the menu that appears, select the transition style of your choice. After selecting a transition style, you can then rename the transition.

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5. There are now options and settings to select and change for each different transition. When finished, click OK.
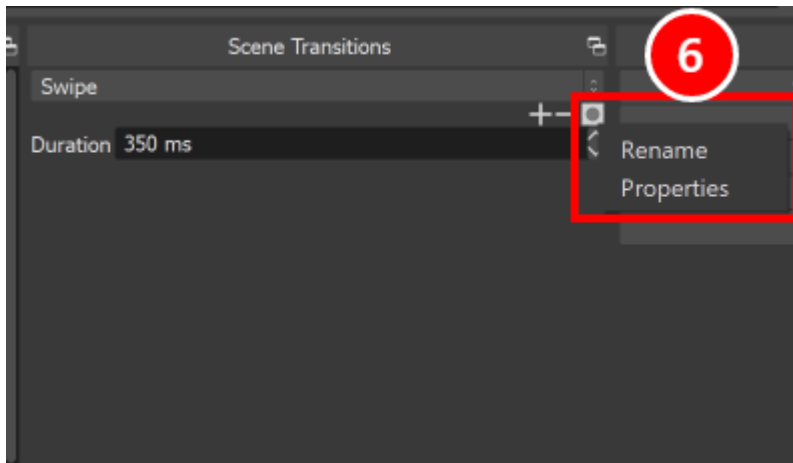

6. For scene transitions that you created, you can delete or change its settings. To do so, first find the appropriate transition in the drop-down list and select it. Click the gear symbol to rename or change transition settings, or click the minus (-) sign to delete the transition entirely.

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4. Using OBS to Livestream your Content

4.1. Livestreaming your Content on Bb Collaborate

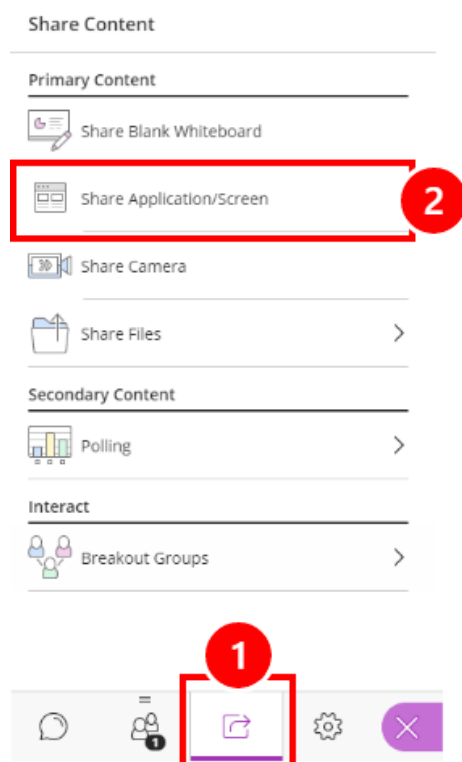### 4.1.1. Set Up your OBS Window for Sharing
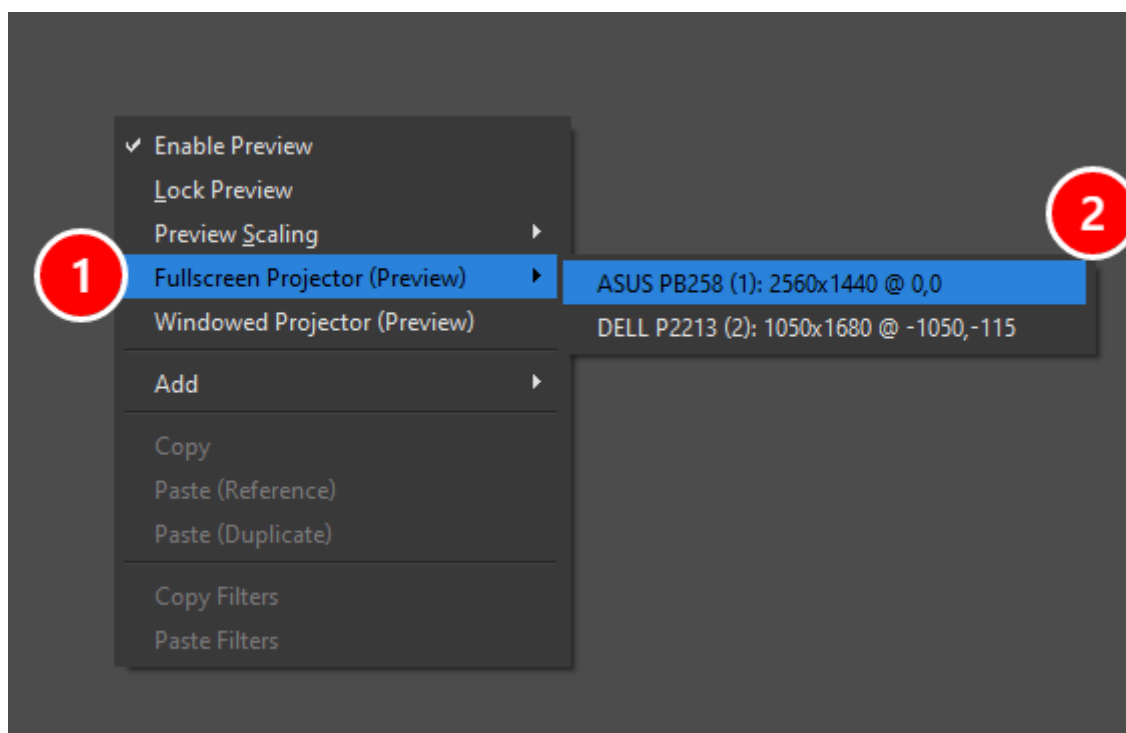
In OBS, right click anywhere on your canvas:

1. Hover over "Full-screen Projector (Preview)".
2. Select your monitor, there should now be a full-screen preview of what your OBS scene looks like on that monitor.

4.1.2. Sharing your Content on Bb Collaborate

On Bb Collaborate, open the Collaborate panel on the right:

1. Navigate to the "Share Content" tab. (if you're unfamiliar with Bb Collaborate and would like to learn more, you might start with the Get started with Collaborate Ultra for Moderators guide).
2. Choose the "Share Application/Screen" option; this will pop up a window with options for you to select an application to share.
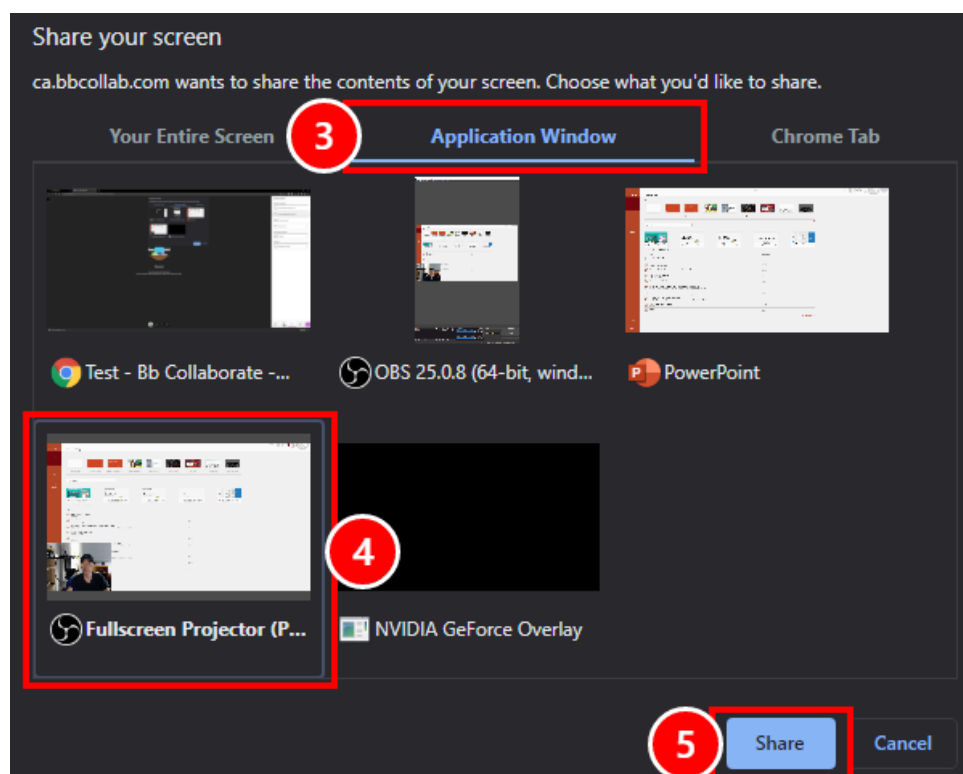
3. Select the "Application Window" tab.
4. Choose the "Fullscreen Projector (Preview)" window.
5. Press "Share".

4.2. Live-streaming your Content on Twitch

Twitch is a popular free streaming platform that has a direct OBS integration, making it easy to start and end a live-stream right from your OBS window. However, note that Twitch is an external tool not institutionally vetted by the University of Toronto, and for students to chat in your twitch stream, they are required to make an account.

4.2.1. Making a twitch account

1. In your browser, go to Twitch.tv.
2. In the top right corner, select "sign up".
3. Fill out the pop-up card to make an account.

## 4.2.2. Connecting your Twitch account to OBS
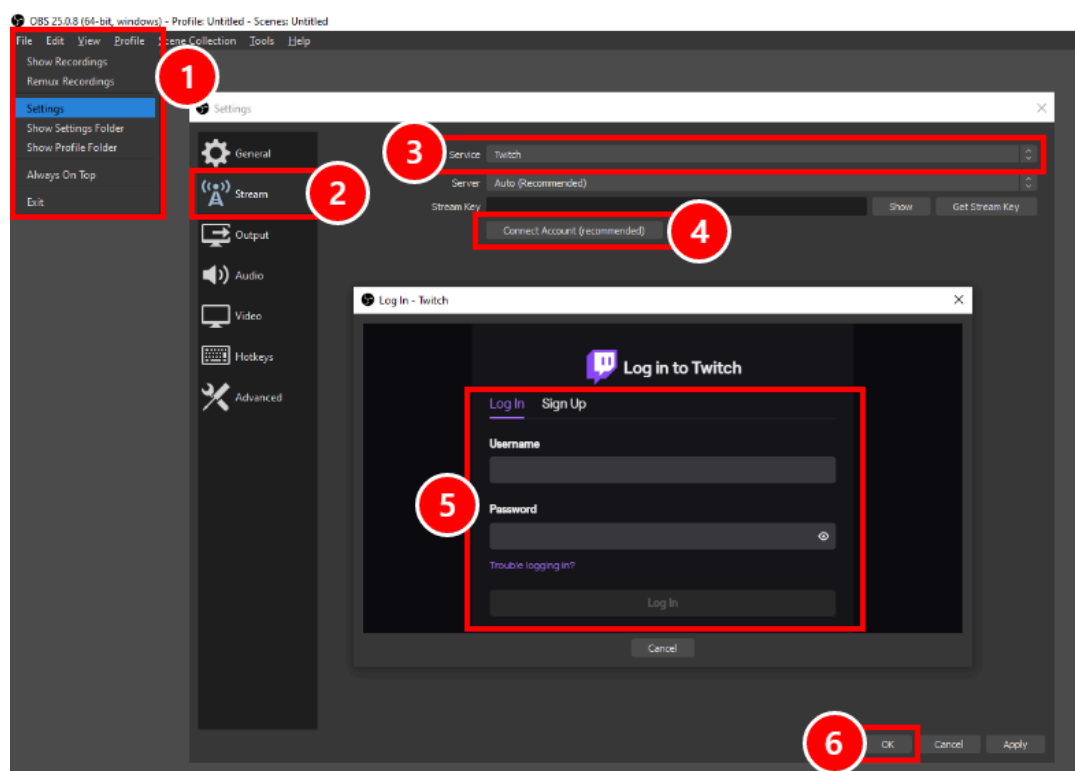
1. In OBS, select "File," then "Settings".
2. Select the "Stream" tab.
3. Ensure that "Twitch" is selected in the "Service" drop-down menu.
4. Press "Connect Account".
5. Login to you Twitch account.
6. Press "Ok" to save your settings.

4.2.3. Starting your Twitch Stream

Once you have connected your twitch account, two pop-ups will appear. One panel contains your stream information, and the other is your chat window, where students can send a message to the stream (much like the chat functionality in Bb Collaborate).

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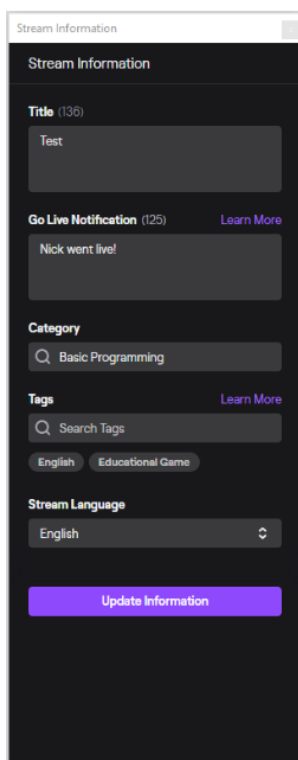
Update your stream's title and category in the "Stream Information" window to fit your content.
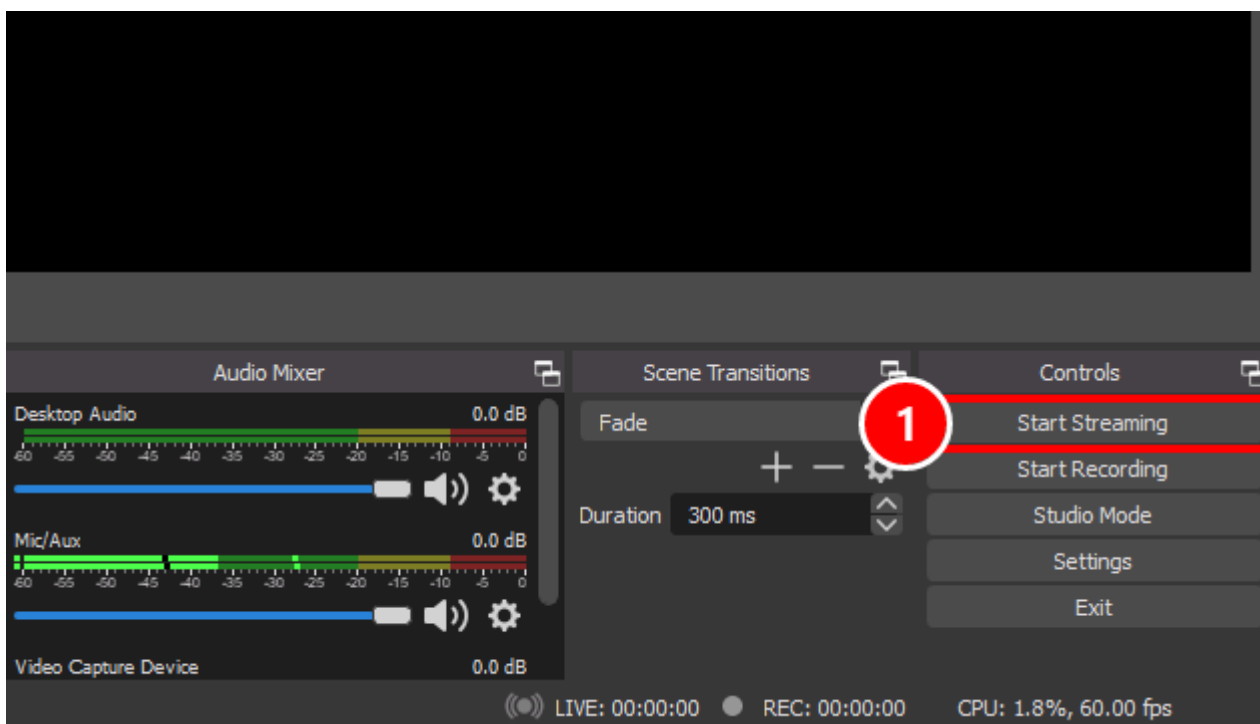
1. In the bottom right side of your OBS window, press "Start Streaming"

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> 💡 **Can't Find your Stream Chat Window or Stream Information Window?** - On the top menu bar in OBS, navigate to View > Docks, then you will be able to enable or disable whatever windows you want to see.

5. Recording your Content with OBS
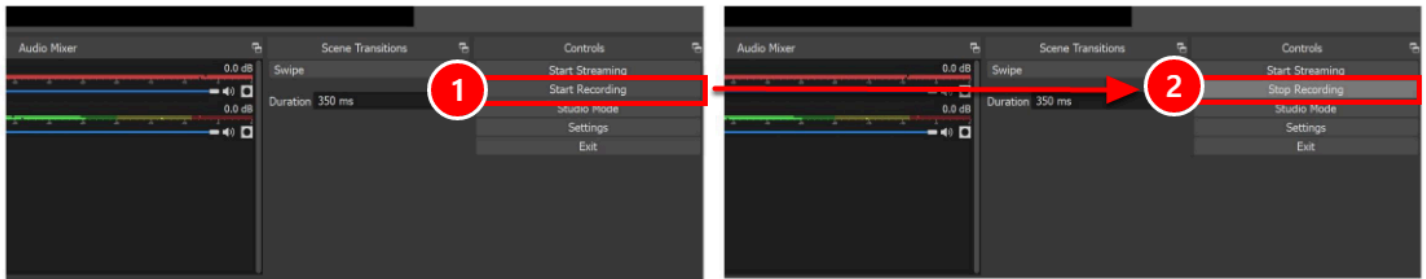
1. In the bottom right side of your OBS window, press "Start Recording." This button will then turn into a "Stop Recording" button.
2. When you are done delivering your content, press "Stop Recording" to end the recording.

> 💡 **Planning to Stream and Record your content at the same time?** - You can use the "Start Recording" button to start recording at any time, even when streaming. But, if you are streaming, you can also use the built-in recorder (like in Bb Collaborate) to record your synchronous sessions.
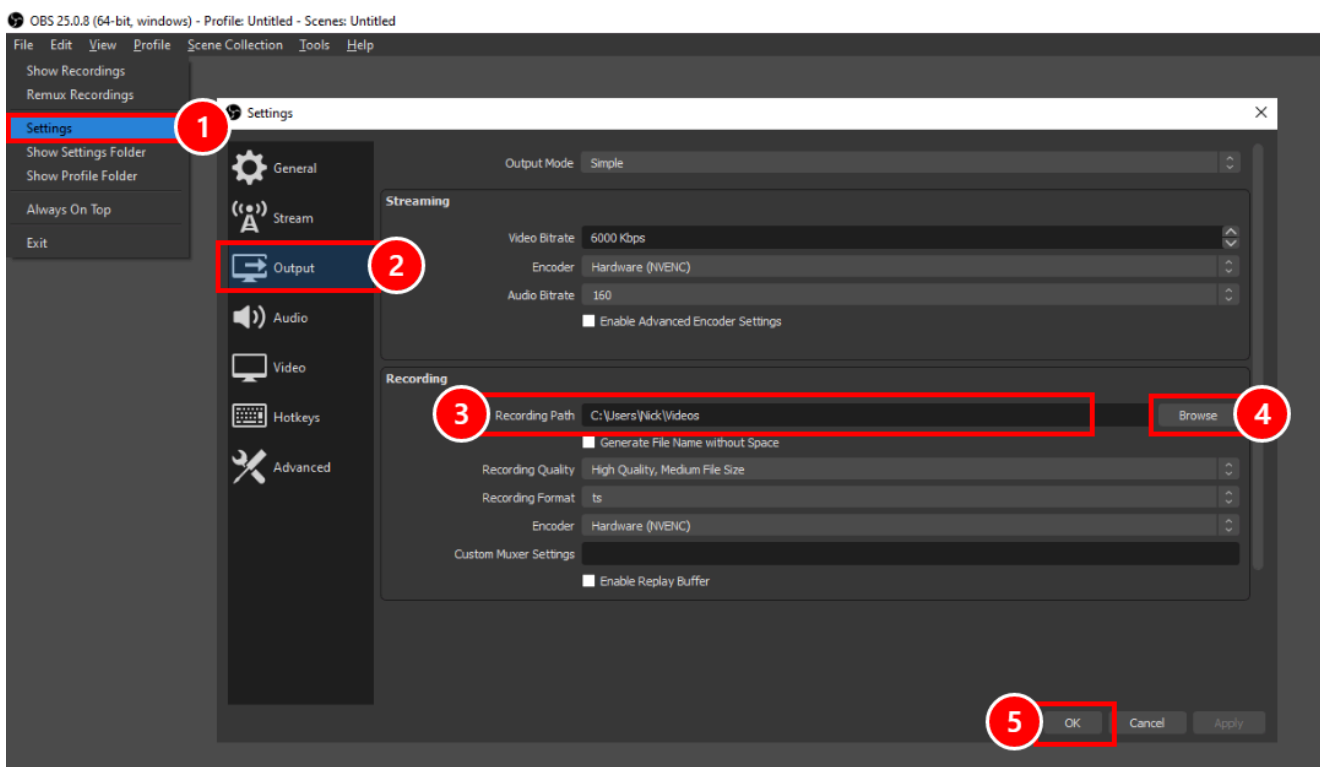
5.1. Where are OBS Recordings Saved?
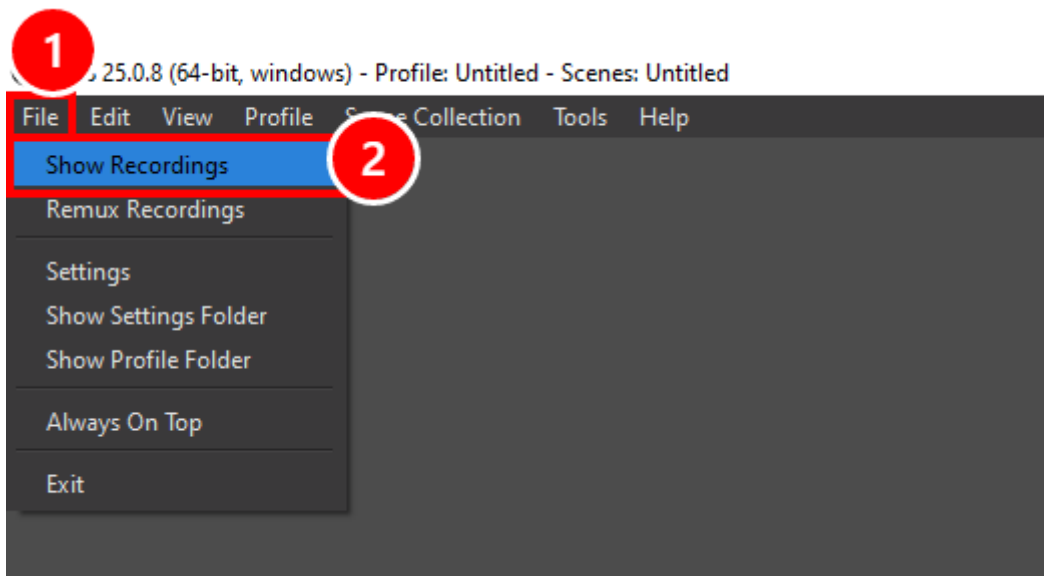
1. In the OBS menu bar, select "File".
2. Click on "Show Recordings." This will open the folder where your recordings are saved.

5.2. Changing the Location of Saved Recordings

1. In the OBS menu bar, select "File," then "Settings".

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2. Select the "Output" tab.
3. Under "Recording", the "Recording Path" is the current location of your saved OBS videos.
4. Press "Browse" to choose a new location.
5. Press "Ok" to save your changes.

5.3. Changing the File Type of Saved Recordings

By default, OBS does not save recordings as a mp4 file. This is because if your computer were to crash, or your disk gets full, an mp4 recording would be unusable, whereas a mkv or flv file would be saved. However, you still may want to convert these recordings to a mp4 file. Note that by converting them to a mp4 file, you will end up with two recording files - one with the original file extension, and another with a mp4 extension.
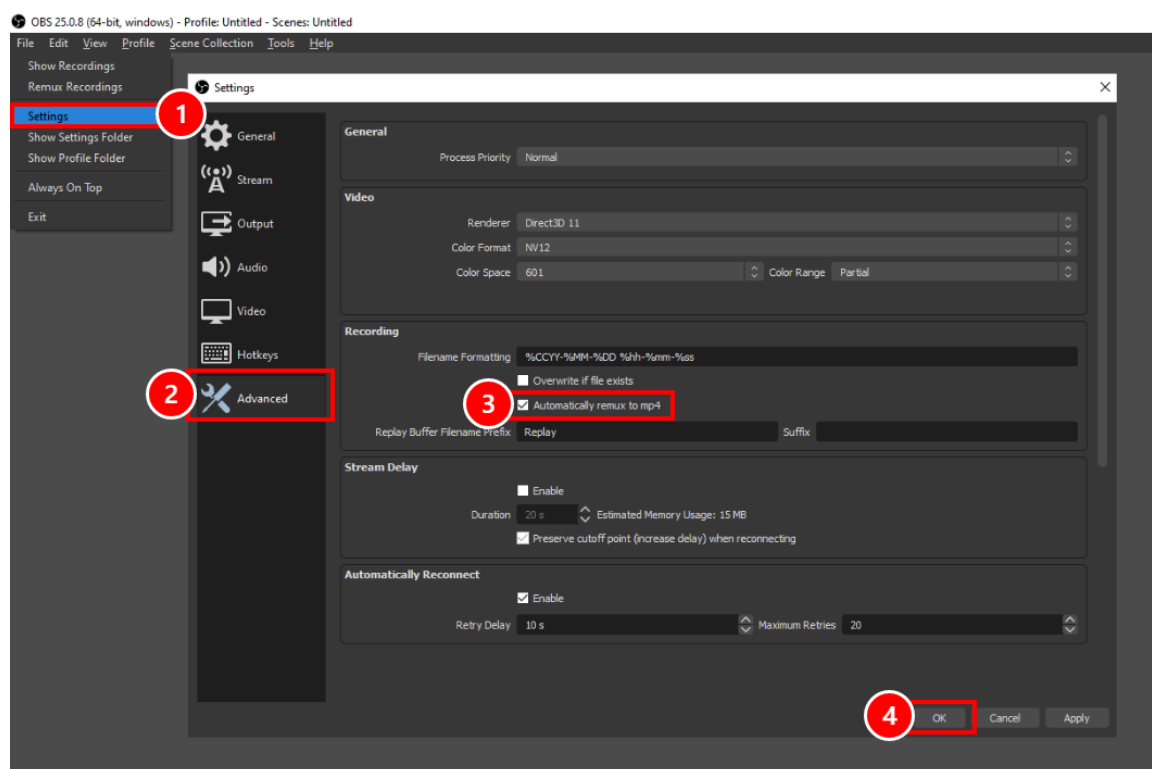
1. In the OBS menu bar, select "File," then "Settings".
2. Select the "Advanced" tab.
3. Under "Recording," tick the checkbox that says "Automatically remux to mp4".
4. Press "Ok" to confirm your changes.

> 💡 **Prefer to convert all your videos at once?** - Instead of having the videos automatically converted to mp4, you can manually convert batches of videos by going to the top menu bar and selecting File > Remux Recordings.

6. Using a Green Screen with OBS

Using a green screen with OBS is a great way to eliminate the background in your videos, so you can create a "newscaster" style video, where you have your face and body superimposed onto your presentation.

> 💡 **Setting up a green screen** - When setting up a green screen, the most important thing to keep in mind is keeping an even shade of green across the green screen. This means lighting it up as evenly as possible and eliminating shadows, making it easier for software to key out your background.
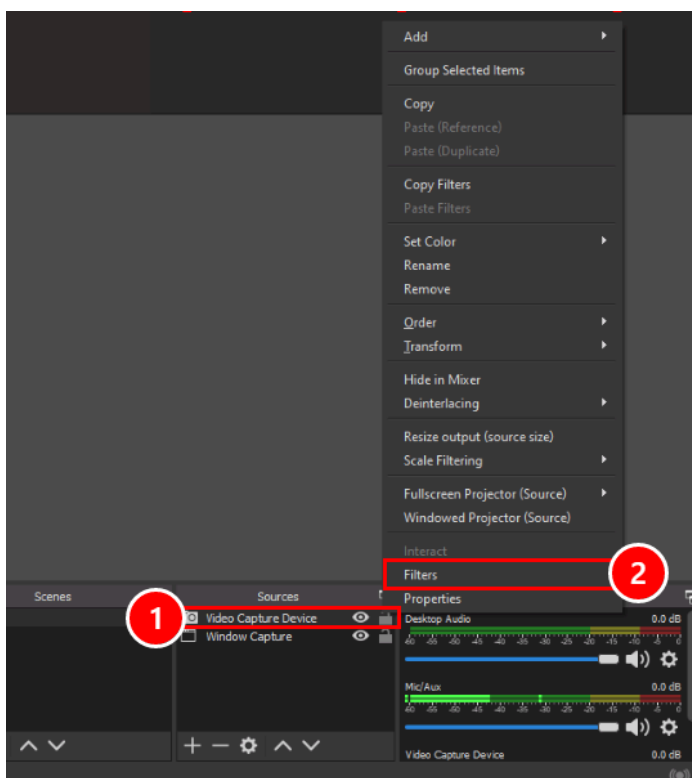
1. Right click on your Video Capture Device under the Source window.
2. Select "Filters" and there will be a pop up window "Filters for 'Video Capture Device' ".

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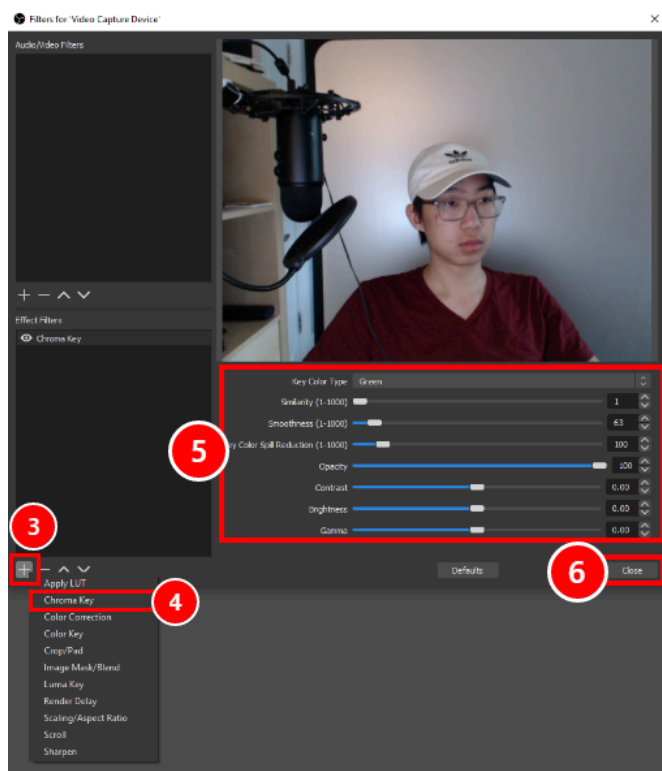
3. Press the plus (+) icon to add a filter.
4. Select the "Chroma Key" option. Specify a name for the filter and hit "Ok" - your green screen should be removed from your video feed.
5. Use the sliders to adjust the filter until you get the best result you want the edge between you and the green screen to be a clean edge.
6. Once you are happy with the result, press "Close" to complete setup.