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# How To Batch Export Videos from Telegram

A basic guide to saving media outside of the app

By *Yvonne Ng*



Telegram is a key platform for sharing audiovisual media that document human rights abuses – whether it is captured by officials, bystanders, journalists, activists, or perpetrators and their supporters. For example, it has been widely used by [news outlets and officials in Ukraine](#) to share information, by [activists in Hong Kong](#) to communicate and organize, and also by [far-right politicians and disinformation spreaders in Brazil](#) and [the military junta in Myanmar](#) to track and dox opponents. Many attribute Telegram’s widespread use/misuse to its large group size limits (maximum 200,000 participants vs. only 256 in WhatsApp), and the app’s [reluctance to moderate or remove content](#).

Telegram is also somewhat unique among chat apps and social media platforms for making it easy for senders to share original media with its original metadata, strengthening its usefulness as evidence. Because of the volume of media with potential value as evidence, it can be useful to know how to export larger batches of media and related chat text from a chat or channel.

The guidance below applies to media shared on channels, public and private group chats, and non-secret chats. It does not work for secret chats, which have extra layers of protection and do not sync with Telegram Desktop. Channels, public and private group chats, and non-secret chats are backed up on Telegram’s servers, and do not have the same security features as secret chats.

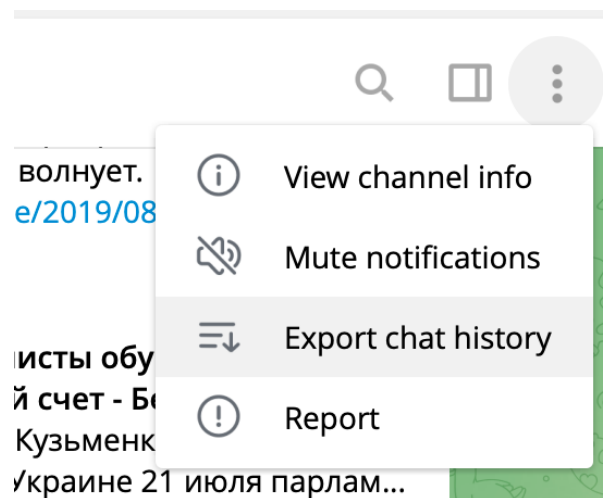
Be aware of the risks of vicarious or secondary trauma when working with distressing content, and [set up a plan before you start](#).

- [Batch Exporting Media from Telegram](#)

- [Receiving Original-Quality Media on Telegram](#)

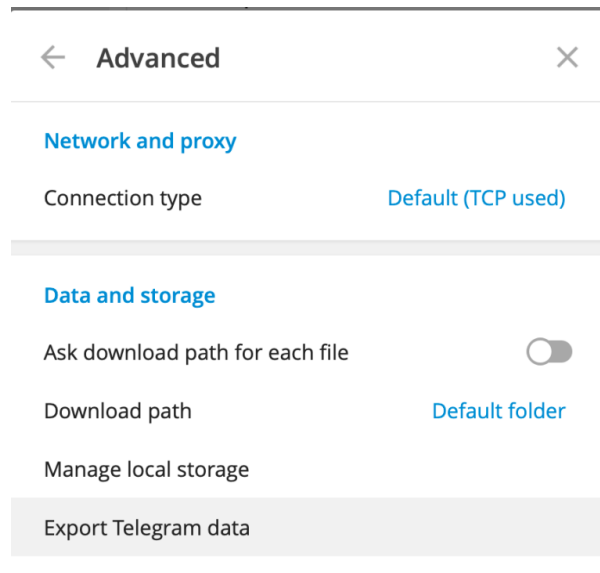
## Batch Exporting Media from Telegram

You can export videos from channels, public and private group chats, and non-secret chats in batches on a computer using [Telegram Desktop](#)'s Export Chat History feature:

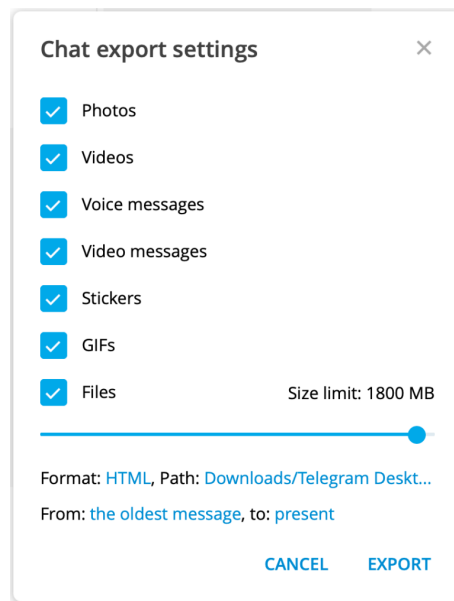


*Mac users:* Export Chat History is only available on the version of Telegram Desktop available [on the website](#), NOT in the version available through the Apple App Store.

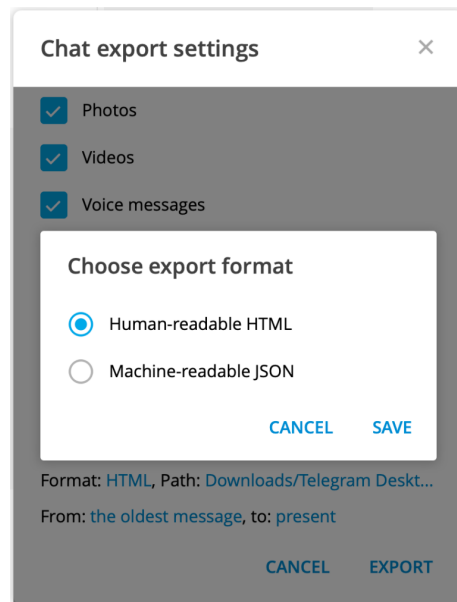
You can also export chat histories under *Settings > Advanced* on Telegram Desktop:



Telegram's Export feature provides options for batch exporting by type, maximum file size, and date range:



You can choose HTML or JSON as formats for the chat text:



*Which text format should I choose?*

*Choosing HTML:* This will give you the chat history with formatting tags that will allow you to present the exported chat visually in a browser:

```
<div class="text">
BREAKING:<br>Belarusian troops entered Chernihiv region. The information was confirmed by the spokesman of the regional
</div>
</div>
</div>
<div class="message default clearfix joined" id="message1302">
<div class="body">
11:12 <div class="pull_right date details" title="01.03.2022 11:12:56">
</div>
<div class="media_wrap clearfix">
<a class="photo_wrap clearfix pull_left" href="photos/photo_330@01-03-2022_11-12-56.jpg">

</a>
</div>
</div>
```

HTML document as text.

## Kyiv Post

Mykolaiv beat off two attacks of the Russian Army during #UkraineRussiaWar. – the City Head of Mykolaiv, Senkevych reported



11:36

Losses of Russian Army in #UkraineRussiaWar on Mar. 3:  
Planes – 30  
Automobile techniques – 374  
MLRS – 42  
AFV – 900  
Helicopters – 31  
Artylerian systems – 90  
Cisterns with fuel – 60  
Cuttars – ?

HTML viewed in a browser.

*Choosing JSON:* This will give you a chat history with tagged metadata, but without formatting tags, that you can view or machine-process as plain text.

```
"type": "public_channel",
"id": 1283201591,
"messages": [
  {
    "id": 1316,
    "type": "message",
    "date": "2022-03-03T11:34:55",
    "edited": "2022-03-03T11:51:41",
    "from": "Kyiv Post",
    "from_id": "channel1283201591",
    "photo": "photos/photo_332@03-03-2022_11-34-55.jpg",
    "width": 972,
    "height": 1280,
    "text": [
      "TIME's new cover: Volodymyr Zelensky and the heroes of Kyiv ",
      {
        "type": "link",
        "text": "https://ti.me/3pwuwnI"
      }
    ]
  }
]
```

JSON document.

*Preserving the relationship between media and chat text*

HTML and JSON chat histories will only indicate the filename of attached media if you export the media **with** the text:

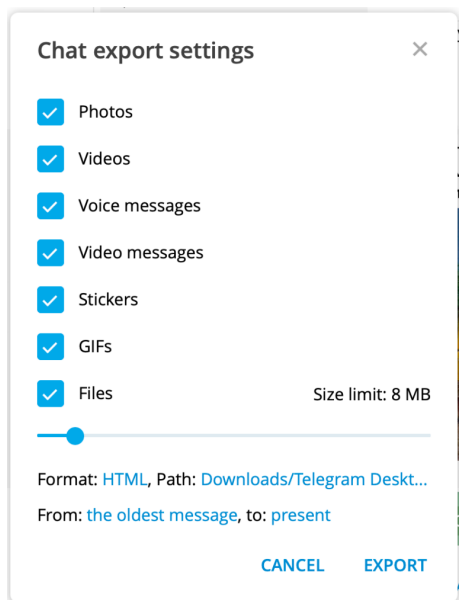
```
"date": "2022-03-03T12:40:23",
"edited": "2022-03-03T12:41:05",
"from": "Kyiv Post",
"from_id": "channel1283201591",
"photo": "photos/photo_335@03-03-2022_12-40-23.jpg",
"width": 1280,
"height": 960,
"text": "In Chernihiv, a Russian plane fired on apartment buildings in the center of the c
}
```

Chat history "photo" tag when photo is exported with the text.

```
"type": "message",
"date": "2022-03-03T12:40:23",
"edited": "2022-03-03T12:41:05",
"from": "Kyiv Post",
"from_id": "channel1283201591",
"photo": "(File not included. Change data exporting settings to download.)",
"width": 1280,
```

Chat history "photo" tag when photo is not exported with the text.

If you want the filenames included in the chat history, check off the media elements when you export:



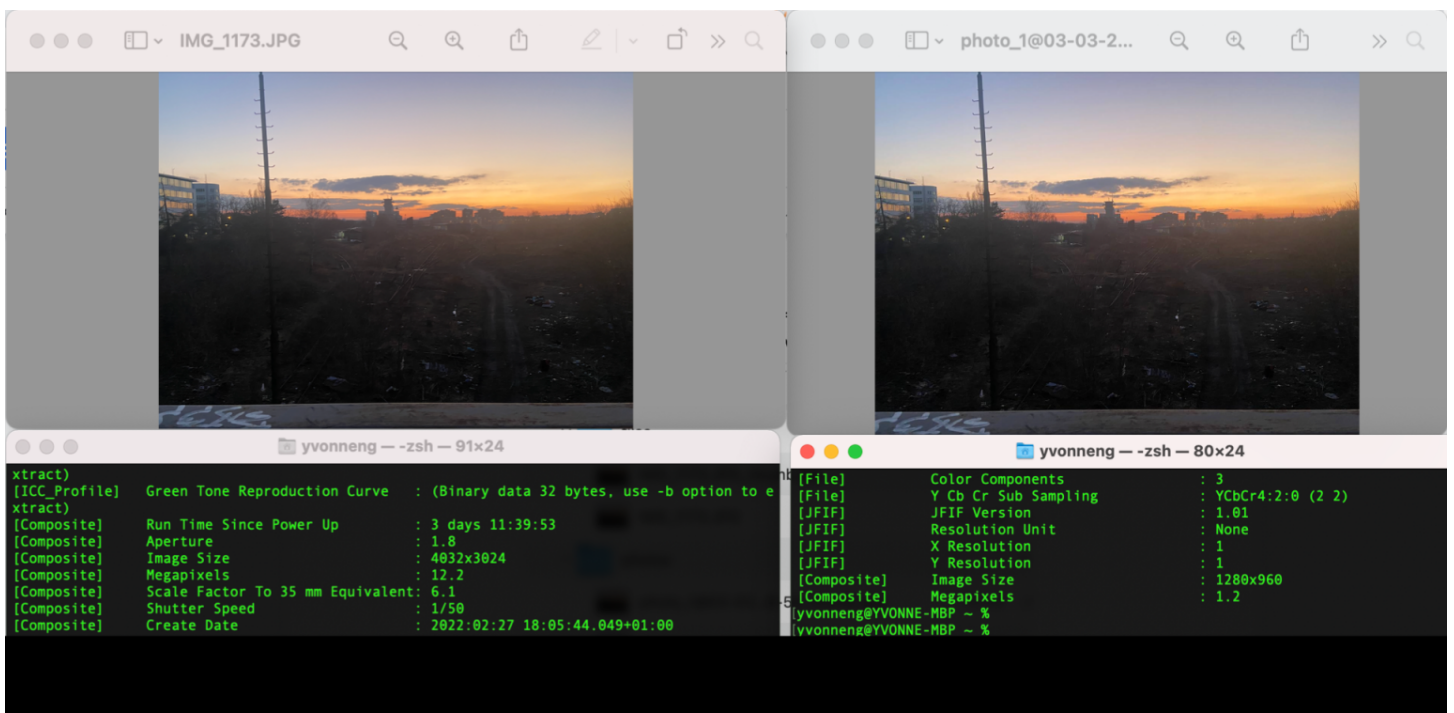
## Receiving Original-Quality Media on Telegram

Unlike media shared on most social media, Telegram has options for sending media in its original quality and with its original metadata (up to 2GB file size limit).

- [Android](#)
- [iPhone](#)
- [Computer](#)

## *Why is un-recompressed media useful?*

Media stays at its highest audiovisual quality and fidelity when it is not altered from its original state. When media is compressed (specifically, in ways that are “lossy”), data is eliminated to reduce file size or transformed into another format. This can result in degradation and introduce artifacts.



The original photo (left) is higher quality than the compressed copy received from Telegram (right).



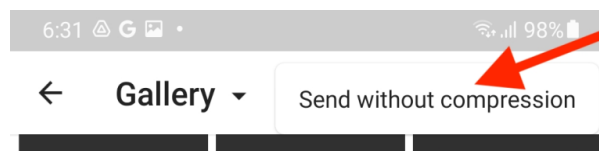
Media files also contain metadata about themselves. A camera original video file, for example, usually contains metadata such as the date/time and location where the video was created. This information is useful for verifying that the events captured in the video occurred at a particular time or place. Metadata from Telegram videos has been used, for example, to refute [Russian sources who claimed that videos showed Ukrainian soldiers on Russian soil](#) as justification for its invasion; the metadata showed they were actually in Eastern Ukraine.

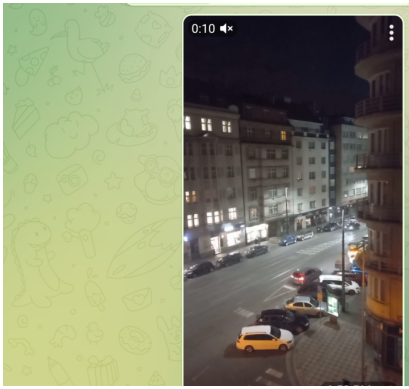
```
Scene Type : Directly photographed
Exposure Mode : Auto
White Balance : Auto
Focal Length In 35mm Format : 26 mm
Scene Capture Type : Standard
Lens Info : 1.539999962-4.25mm f/1.8-2.4
Lens Make : Apple
Lens Model : iPhone 11 back dual wide camera 4.25mm f/1.8
Composite Image : General Composite Image
GPS Latitude Ref : North
GPS Longitude Ref : East
GPS Altitude Ref : Above Sea Level
GPS Speed Ref : km/h
GPS Speed : 0.423711747
GPS Img Direction Ref : True North
```

Some of the metadata from a camera original file.

## Android

Ask the sender to send the media with the “Send without compression” option selected:

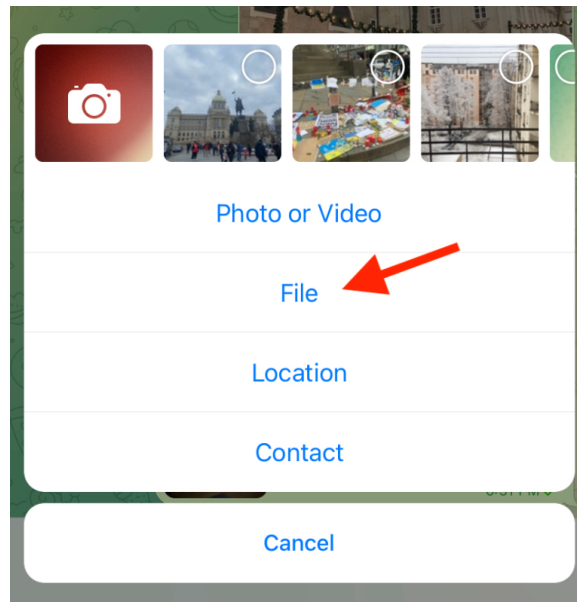


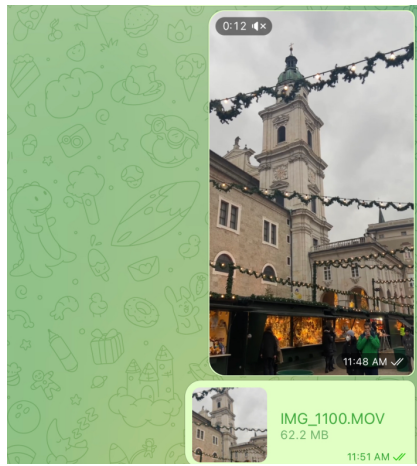


Top message sent with compression, bottom message without compression.

## iPhone

Ask the sender to send the media as a “File” instead of “Photo or Video.”  
Media sent as “file” will be sent as original file:



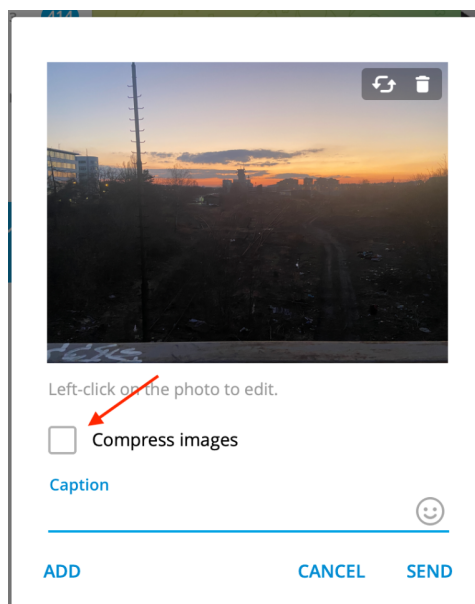


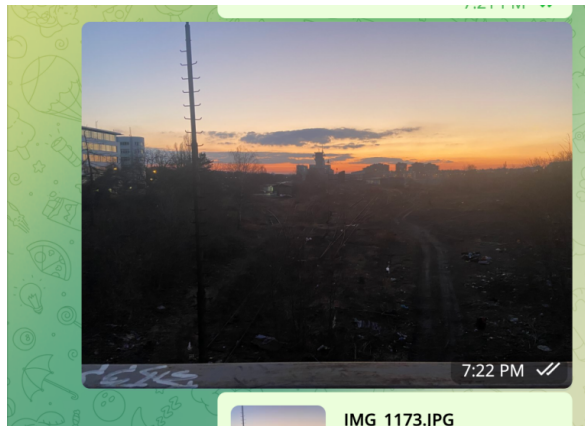
Top message sent as “video,”  
bottom message sent as “file.”

## Computer

By default, videos sent from Telegram Desktop will not be re-compressed. There is nothing the sender needs to do.

For still photos, ask the sender to uncheck the “Compress images” option:





Top photo sent with “Compress images” checked, bottom photo with “Compress images” unchecked.

Also check out these useful guides from other organizations:

- [How to Archive Telegram Content to Document Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine](#) (Bellingcat)
- [Telegram Harm Reduction for Users in Russia and Ukraine](#) (EFF)

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By WITNESS