
ffmpy Documentation

Release 0.2.2

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Aug 06, 2017

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ffmpy is a Python wrapper for [FFmpeg](#). It compiles FFmpeg command line from provided arguments and their respective options and excutes it using Python's [subprocess](#).

ffmpy resembles the command line approach FFmpeg uses. It can read from an arbitrary number of input "files" (regular files, pipes, network streams, grabbing devices, etc.) and write into arbitrary number of output "files". See [FFmpeg documentation](#) for further details about how FFmpeg command line options and arguments work.

ffmpy supports FFmpeg [pipe](#) protocol. This means that it is possible to pass input data to `stdin` and get output data from `stdout`.

At this moment ffmpy has wrappers for `ffmpeg` and `ffprobe` commands, but it should be possible to run other FFmpeg tools with it (e.g. `ffserver`).

CHAPTER 1

Installation

```
pip install ffmpeg
```


CHAPTER 2

Quickstart

```
>>> import ffmpy
>>> ff = ffmpy.FFmpeg(
...     inputs={'input.mp4': None},
...     outputs={'output.avi': None}
... )
>>> ff.run()
```

This takes `input.mp4` file in the current directory as the input, changes the video container from MP4 to AVI without changing any other video parameters and creates a new output file `output.avi` in the current directory.

ffmpy

class `ffmpy.FFmpeg` (*executable='ffmpeg', global_options=None, inputs=None, outputs=None*)
Wrapper for various `FFmpeg` related applications (`ffmpeg`, `ffprobe`).

Initialize `FFmpeg` command line wrapper.

Compiles `FFmpeg` command line from passed arguments (`executable` path, `options`, `inputs` and `outputs`). `inputs` and `outputs` are dictionaries containing inputs/outputs as keys and their respective options as values. One dictionary value (set of options) must be either a single space separated string, or a list of strings without spaces (i.e. each part of the option is a separate item of the list, the result of calling `split()` on the options string). If the value is a list, it cannot be mixed, i.e. cannot contain items with spaces. An exception are complex `FFmpeg` command lines that contain quotes: the quoted part must be one string, even if it contains spaces (see *Examples* for more info). For more info about `FFmpeg` command line format see [here](#).

Parameters

- **executable** (*str*) – path to `ffmpeg` executable; by default the `ffmpeg` command will be searched for in the `PATH`, but can be overridden with an absolute path to `ffmpeg` executable
- **global_options** (*iterable*) – global options passed to `ffmpeg` executable (e.g. `-y`, `-v` etc.); can be specified either as a list/tuple/set of strings, or one space-separated string; by default no global options are passed
- **inputs** (*dict*) – a dictionary specifying one or more input arguments as keys with their corresponding options (either as a list of strings or a single space separated string) as values
- **outputs** (*dict*) – a dictionary specifying one or more output arguments as keys with their corresponding options (either as a list of strings or a single space separated string) as values

run (*input_data=None, stdout=None, stderr=None*)
Execute `FFmpeg` command line.

`input_data` can contain input for `FFmpeg` in case pipe protocol is used for input. `stdout` and `stderr` specify where to redirect the `stdout` and `stderr` of the process. By default no redirection is

done, which means all output goes to running shell (this mode should normally only be used for debugging purposes). If FFmpeg pipe protocol is used for output, `stdout` must be redirected to a pipe by passing `subprocess.PIPE` as `stdout` argument.

Returns a 2-tuple containing `stdout` and `stderr` of the process. If there was no redirection or if the output was redirected to e.g. `os.devnull`, the value returned will be a tuple of two `None` values, otherwise it will contain the actual `stdout` and `stderr` data returned by ffmpeg process.

More info about pipe protocol [here](#).

Parameters

- **input_data** (*str*) – input data for FFmpeg to deal with (audio, video etc.) as bytes (e.g. the result of reading a file in binary mode)
- **stdout** – redirect FFmpeg `stdout` there (default is `None` which means no redirection)
- **stderr** – redirect FFmpeg `stderr` there (default is `None` which means no redirection)

Returns a 2-tuple containing `stdout` and `stderr` of the process

Return type tuple

Raise `FFRuntimeError` in case FFmpeg command exits with a non-zero code;
`FFExecutableNotFoundError` in case the executable path passed was not valid

class `ffmpeg.FFprobe` (*executable='ffprobe', global_options='', inputs=None*)
 Wrapper for `ffprobe`.

Create an instance of `FFprobe`.

Compiles `FFprobe` command line from passed arguments (executable path, options, inputs). `FFprobe` executable by default is taken from `PATH` but can be overridden with an absolute path. For more info about `FFprobe` command line format see [here](#).

Parameters

- **executable** (*str*) – absolute path to `ffprobe` executable
- **global_options** (*iterable*) – global options passed to `ffmpeg` executable; can be specified either as a list/tuple of strings or a space-separated string
- **inputs** (*dict*) – a dictionary specifying one or more inputs as keys with their corresponding options as values

exception `ffmpeg.FFExecutableNotFoundError`
 Raise when `FFmpeg/FFprobe` executable was not found.

exception `ffmpeg.FFRuntimeError` (*cmd, exit_code, stdout, stderr*)
 Raise when `FFmpeg/FFprobe` command line execution returns a non-zero exit code.

The resulting exception object will contain the attributes relates to command line execution: `cmd`, `exit_code`, `stdout`, `stderr`.

Examples

- [Format conversion](#)
- [Transcoding](#)
- [Demultiplexing](#)

- *Multiplexing*
- *Using pipe protocol*
- *Complex command lines*

Format conversion

The simplest example of usage is converting media from one format to another (in this case from MPEG transport stream to MP4) preserving all other attributes:

```
>>> from ffmpy import FFmpeg
... ff = FFmpeg(
...     inputs={'input.ts': None},
...     outputs={'output.mp4': None}
... )
>>> ff.cmd
'ffmpeg -i input.ts output.mp4'
>>> ff.run()
```

Transcoding

If at the same time we wanted to re-encode video and audio using different codecs we'd have to specify additional output options:

```
>>> ff = FFmpeg(
...     inputs={'input.ts': None},
...     outputs={'output.mp4': '-c:a mp2 -c:v mpeg2video'}
... )
>>> ff.cmd
'ffmpeg -i input.ts -c:a mp2 -c:v mpeg2video output.mp4'
>>> ff.run()
```

Demultiplexing

A more complex usage example would be demultiplexing an MPEG transport stream into separate elementary (audio and video) streams and save them in MP4 containers preserving the codecs (note how a list is used for options here):

```
>>> ff = FFmpeg(
...     inputs={'input.ts': None},
...     outputs={
...         'video.mp4': ['-map', '0:0', '-c:a', 'copy', '-f', 'mp4'],
...         'audio.mp4': ['-map', '0:1', '-c:a', 'copy', '-f', 'mp4']
...     }
... )
>>> ff.cmd
'ffmpeg -i input.ts -map 0:1 -c:a copy -f mp4 audio.mp4 -map 0:0 -c:a copy -f mp4_
↪video.mp4'
>>> ff.run()
```

Warning: Note that it is not possible to mix the expression formats for options, i.e. it is not possible to have a list that contains strings with spaces (an exception to this is *Complex command lines*). For example, this command line will not work with FFmpeg:

```
>>> from subprocess import PIPE
>>> ff = FFmpeg(
...     inputs={'input.ts': None},
...     outputs={
...         'video.mp4': ['-map 0:0', '-c:a copy', '-f mp4'],
...         'audio.mp4': ['-map 0:1', '-c:a copy', '-f mp4']
...     }
... )
>>> ff.cmd
'ffmpeg -hide_banner -i input.ts "-map 0:1" "-c:a copy" "-f mp4" audio.mp4 "-map 0:0
↳ "-c:a copy" "-f mp4" video.mp4'
>>>
>>> ff.run(stderr=PIPE)
Traceback (most recent call last):
  File "<stdin>", line 1, in <module>
  File "/Users/ay/projects/personal/ffmpy/ffmpy.py", line 104, in run
    raise FFmpegRuntimeError(self.cmd, ff_command.returncode, out[0], out[1])
ffmpy.FFmpegRuntimeError: `ffmpeg -hide_banner -i input.ts "-map 0:1" "-c:a copy" "-f_
↳ mp4" audio.mp4 "-map 0:0" "-c:a copy" "-f mp4" video.mp4` exited with status 1

STDOUT:

STDERR:
Unrecognized option 'map 0:1'.
Error splitting the argument list: Option not found

>>>
```

Notice how the actual FFmpeg command line contains unnecessary quotes.

Multiplexing

To multiplex video and audio back into an MPEG transport stream with re-encoding:

```
>>> ff = FFmpeg(
...     inputs={'video.mp4': None, 'audio.mp3': None},
...     outputs={'output.ts': '-c:v h264 -c:a ac3'}
... )
>>> ff.cmd
'ffmpeg -i audio.mp4 -i video.mp4 -c:v h264 -c:a ac3 output.ts'
>>> ff.run()
```

There are cases where the order of inputs and outputs must be preserved (e.g. when using FFmpeg `-map` option). In these cases the use of regular Python dictionary will not work because it does not preserve order. Instead, use `OrderedDict`. For example we want to multiplex one video and two audio streams into an MPEG transport streams re-encoding both audio streams using different codecs. Here we use an `OrderedDict` to preserve the order of inputs so they match the order of streams in output options:

```
>>> from collections import OrderedDict
>>> inputs = OrderedDict([('video.mp4', None), ('audio_1.mp3', None), ('audio_2.mp3',
↳ None)])
```

```
>>> outputs = {'output.ts', '-map 0 -c:v h264 -map 1 -c:a:0 ac3 -map 2 -c:a:1 mp2'}
>>> ff = FFmpeg(inputs=inputs, outputs=outputs)
>>> ff.cmd
'ffmpeg -i video.mp4 -i audio_1.mp3 -i audio_2.mp3 -map 0 -c:v h264 -map 1 -c:a:0 ac3_
↳-map 2 -c:a:1 mp2 output.ts'
>>> ff.run()
```

Using pipe protocol

ffmpy can read input from STDIN and write output to STDOUT. This can be achieved by using FFmpeg [pipe](#) protocol. The following example reads data from a file containing raw video frames in RGB format and passes it to ffmpy on STDIN; ffmpy in its turn will encode raw frame data with H.264 and pack it in an MP4 container passing the output to STDOUT (note that you must redirect STDOUT of the process to a pipe by using `subprocess.PIPE` as `stdout` value, otherwise the output will get lost):

```
>>> import subprocess
>>> ff = FFmpeg(
...     inputs={'pipe:0': '-f rawvideo -pix_fmt rgb24 -s:v 640x480'},
...     outputs={'pipe:1': '-c:v h264 -f mp4'}
... )
>>> ff.cmd
'ffmpeg -f rawvideo -pix_fmt rgb24 -s:v 640x480 -i pipe:0 -c:v h264 -f mp4 pipe:1'
>>> stdout, stderr = ff.run(input_data=open('rawvideo', 'rb').read(),
↳stdout=subprocess.PIPE)
```

Complex command lines

FFmpeg command line can get pretty complex, for example, when using [filtering](#). Therefore it is important to understand some of the rules for building command lines building with ffmpy. If an option contains quotes, it must be specified as a separate item in the options list **without** the quotes. However, if a single string is used for options, the quotes of the quoted option must be preserved in the string:

```
>>> ff = FFmpeg(
...     inputs={'input.ts': None},
...     outputs={'output.ts': ['-vf', 'adif=0:-1:0, scale=iw/2:-1']}
... )
>>> ff.cmd
'ffmpeg -i input.ts -vf "adif=0:-1:0, scale=iw/2:-1" output.ts'
>>>
>>> ff = FFmpeg(
...     inputs={'input.ts': None},
...     outputs={'output.ts': '-vf "adif=0:-1:0, scale=iw/2:-1"' }
... )
>>> ff.cmd
'ffmpeg -i input.ts -vf "adif=0:-1:0, scale=iw/2:-1" output.ts'
```

An even more complex example is a command line that burns the timecode into video:

```
ffmpeg -i input.ts -vf "drawtext=fontfile=/Library/Fonts/Verdana.ttf: timecode=
↳'09\:57\:00\:00': r=25: x=(w-tw)/2: y=h-(2*lh): fontcolor=white: box=1:
↳boxcolor=0x00000000@1" -an output.ts
```

In ffmpy it can be expressed in the following way:

```
>>> ff = FFmpeg(  
...     inputs={'input.ts': None},  
...     outputs={'output.ts': ['-vf', "drawtext=fontfile=/Library/Fonts/Verdana.ttf:  
↪timecode='09:57:00:00': r=25: x=(w-tw)/2: y=h-(2*lh): fontcolor=white: box=1:  
↪boxcolor=0x00000000@1", '-an']}]  
... )  
>>> ff.cmd  
'ffmpeg -i input.ts -vf "drawtext=fontfile=/Library/Fonts/Verdana.ttf: timecode=  
↪'09:57:00:00': r=25: x=(w-tw)/2: y=h-(2*lh): fontcolor=white: box=1:  
↪boxcolor=0x00000000@1" -an output.ts'
```

The same command line can be compiled by passing output option as a single string, while keeping the quotes:

```
>>> ff = FFmpeg(  
...     inputs={'input.ts': None},  
...     outputs={'output.ts': ["-vf \"drawtext=fontfile=/Library/Fonts/Verdana.ttf:  
↪timecode='09:57:00:00': r=25: x=(w-tw)/2: y=h-(2*lh): fontcolor=white: box=1:  
↪boxcolor=0x00000000@1\" -an"]}]  
... )  
>>> ff.cmd  
'ffmpeg -i input.ts -vf "drawtext=fontfile=/Library/Fonts/Verdana.ttf: timecode=  
↪'09:57:00:00': r=25: x=(w-tw)/2: y=h-(2*lh): fontcolor=white: box=1:  
↪boxcolor=0x00000000@1" -an output.ts'
```


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