

ShowTimer

Stage & presenter timer for Windows and Mac

User manual

Version 1.2 · November 2026

Licensing & support: info@techvideotools.com

Downloads & video tutorials: techvideotools.com

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1 Welcome to Show Timer

Show Timer puts a big, clear countdown in front of your speakers and gives the operator everything needed to keep a show on time.



The stage screen: speaker name, countdown, progress bar, session timer and clock.

What it does

- **Presets** for every speaker or session, each with its own length, colour and warning times.
- A **speaker timer** and a separate **session timer**, with live ± adjustment and overtime counting.
- **Messages** to the speaker — full screen or as a banner — with a **Flash** button.
- Views: **Timer**, **Timer + Clock**, **Clock**, **countdown video** and **Black**, with optional fades.
- Your own **logo**, **background** and a **drag-and-drop layout** you can lock.
- Output to a **second screen**, any **web browser** on the network, and **NDI**.
- Control from a **phone or tablet**, a **Stream Deck** (via Bitfocus Companion), or any system that can send HTTP or TCP commands.

What you need

- A Mac with macOS 12 or later (Apple Silicon or Intel), or a PC with Windows 10/11 (64-bit).
- A second display, projector or LED processor input for the stage screen (optional — see chapter 11).
- A licence key for each computer (chapter 3).

> **Video tutorials.** Five short videos show everything in this manual in action. Find them at **techvideotools.com**.

2 Installing

Mac

1. Download the right file from techvideotools.com: `Show Timer-1.2.0-arm64.dmg` for Apple Silicon Macs (M1–M4), or `Show Timer-1.2.0.dmg` for Intel Macs. Not sure? Apple menu → *About This Mac* → *Chip*.
2. Open the .dmg and drag **Show Timer** into **Applications**.
3. The first time only: in Applications, **right-click Show Timer → Open**, then click **Open** again. macOS asks this once for apps downloaded outside the App Store.

> If macOS says the app “is damaged” or “can't be opened”, go to **System Settings → Privacy & Security**, scroll down and click **Open Anyway** next to Show Timer.

Windows

1. Download `Show Timer Setup 1.2.0.exe` from techvideotools.com.
2. Run it. If Windows shows “Windows protected your PC”, click **More info → Run anyway**.
3. Choose the install folder and finish. A **Show Timer** shortcut is placed on your desktop.
4. When Windows Firewall asks, allow access on **private networks** so phones, tablets and Stream Deck can reach the timer.

Updating

Install the new version over the old one. Your licence, presets, messages and look are kept.

3 Activating your licence

Each licence key is unique and made for one computer. Activation takes a minute and works offline.



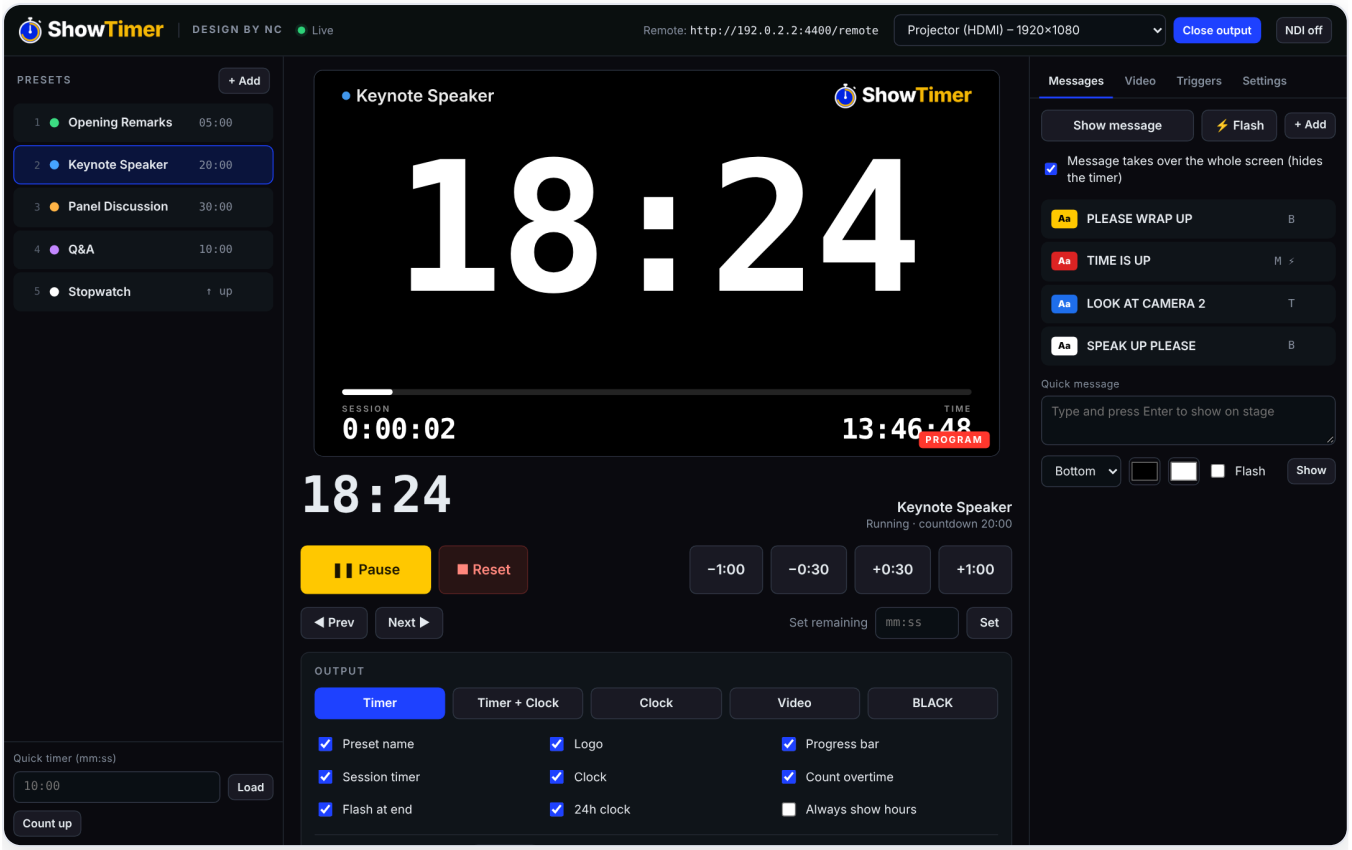
The activation screen on first launch.

1. Start Show Timer. The activation screen shows this computer's **Machine ID**, e.g. `749D-383D-DB46-FEF0`.
2. Click **Copy** and email the Machine ID to **info@techvideotools.com**, or use the licence form on techvideotools.com. Tell us your name, company and how long you need the licence.
3. You receive a licence key starting with `VMST1.`
4. Paste the whole key into **Licence key** and click **Activate**.

The key is saved — you won't be asked again on this computer. Your licence details (holder, serial number, expiry) are shown in **Settings → Licence**.

Rental licences stop working after their end date. **Changing computers?** Send us the new Machine ID and we'll issue a new key. Replacing the main network adapter also changes the Machine ID.

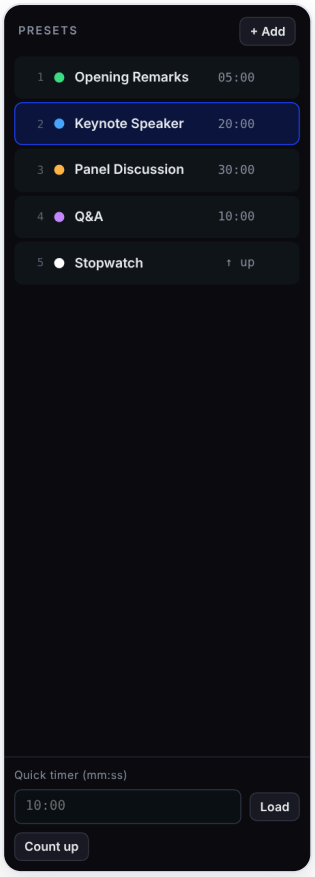
4 The control panel



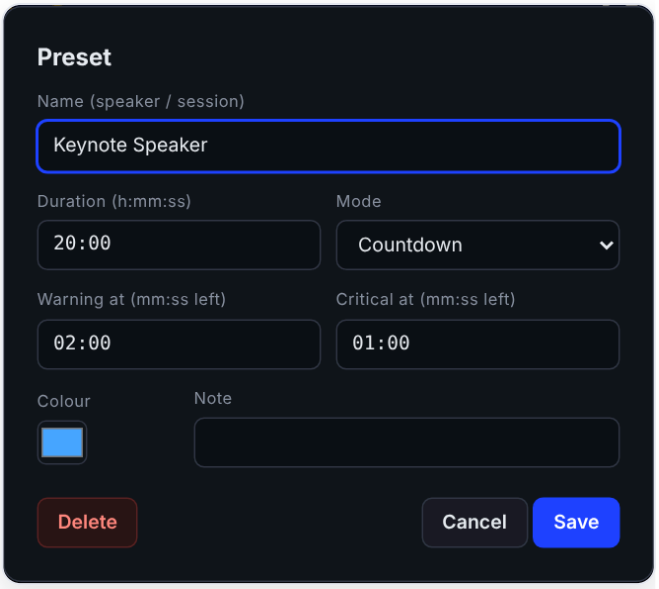
The control panel. Left: presets. Centre: program preview, timer controls and output settings. Right: messages, video, triggers and settings.

AREA	WHAT IT'S FOR
Top bar	Connection light, the **remote address** for phones and tablets, the **stage display** selector with **Open / Close output**, and the **NDI** button.
Presets (left)	Your speakers and sessions. Click to load, double-click to load and start. Drag to reorder. **Quick timer** at the bottom for one-off countdowns or a count-up stopwatch.
Program preview	Exactly what is on the stage screen right now.
Timer controls	Play / Pause, Reset, −1:00 / −0:30 / +0:30 / +1:00, Prev / Next preset and **Set remaining**.
Output	Views, Black, what is shown on stage, fades, **Edit layout** and the layout lock.
Session timer	The second, independent timer.
Tabs (right)	**Messages**, **Video**, **Triggers** and **Settings**.

5 Presets & running timers



The preset list.



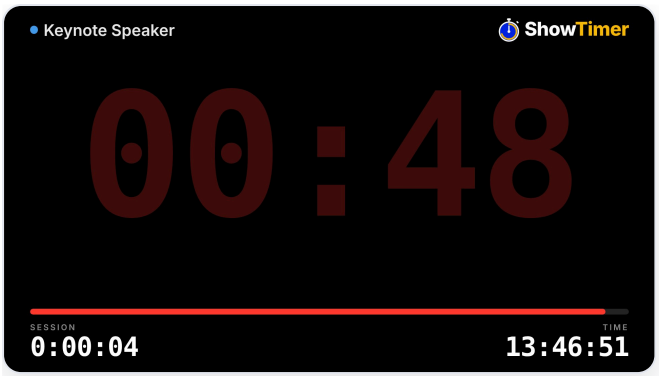
Editing a preset.

Creating and editing presets

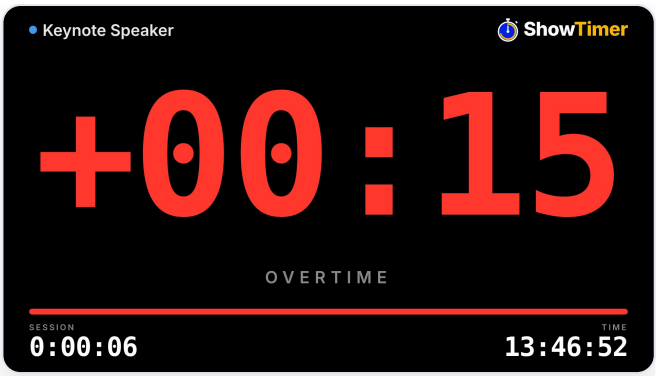
- **+ Add** creates a preset; the pencil ✎ edits one.
- **Name** — shown on the stage screen. **Duration** — e.g. `20:00` or `1:30:00`.
- **Mode** — *Countdown* or *Count up* (for a stopwatch, or to time a session with a target).
- **Warning** and **Critical** — time left at which the numbers turn yellow and then red. Set to 0:00 to switch off.
- **Colour** — the dot next to the name. **Note** — a private note, shown only to the operator.

Running a timer

1. Click a preset to load it (or press `1`–`9`).
2. ▶ **Play** or `Space` starts it; press again to pause. ■ **Reset** or `R` puts it back to the start.
3. Add or remove time with the ± buttons (or `+` / `−` for 30 seconds).
4. **Set remaining** jumps straight to a time, e.g. type `5:00` and click **Set**.
5. **Next** ▶ / ◀ **Prev** (or `↓` / `↑`) moves through the running order.



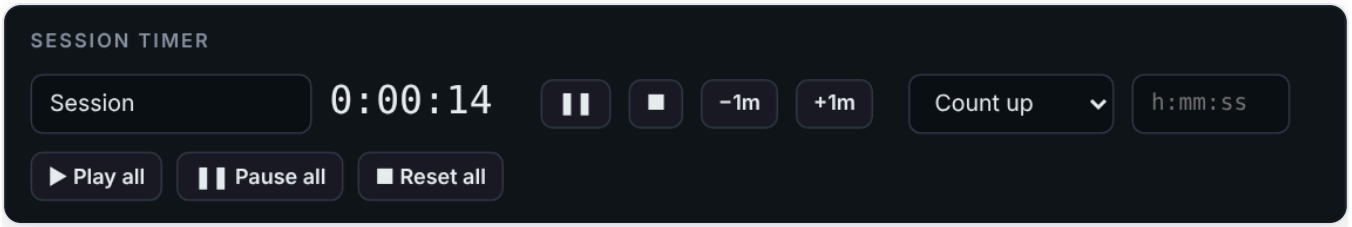
Below the warning time: yellow.



Out of time: red, counting the overtime.

When time runs out the timer keeps counting the **overtime** (`+00:15`) and can flash. Both are switched in the Output panel (*Count overtime*, *Flash at end*).

6 The session timer

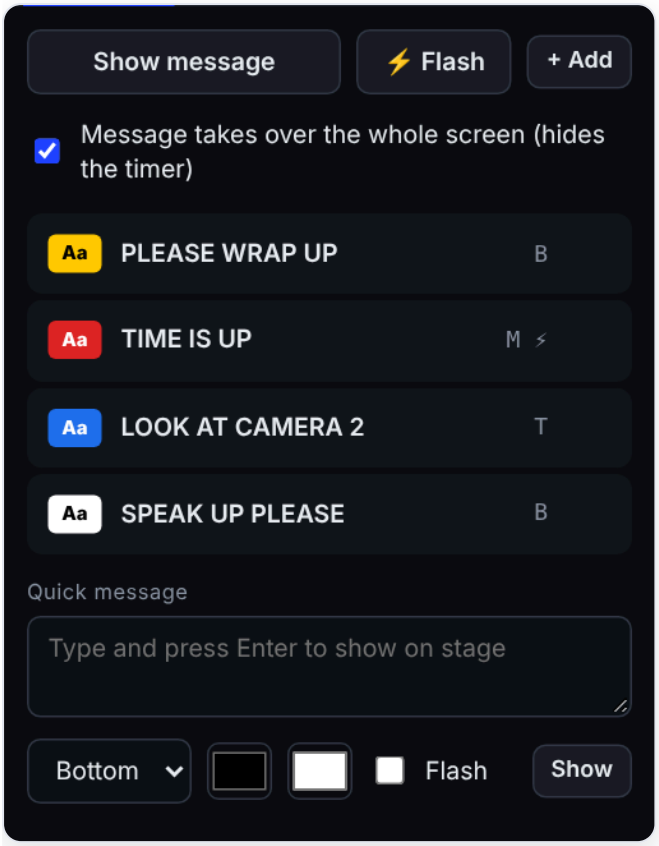


The session timer panel.

The session timer runs independently of the speaker timer — useful for the length of a whole session, a block of speakers, or the day.

- Give it a **name** (shown on stage), choose **Count up** or **Count down**, and for a countdown enter a duration such as `1:30:00`.
- ▶ / ■ start, pause and reset it. **−1m** / **+1m** adjust it.
- **Play all**, **Pause all** and **Reset all** control both timers together.

7 Messages to the speaker



The Messages tab.



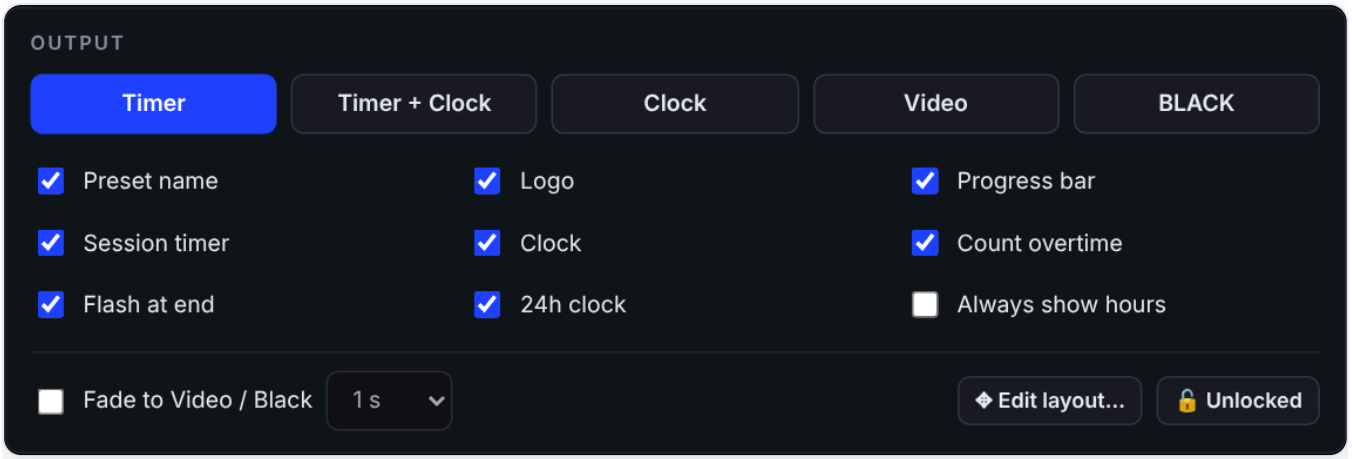
Message taking over the screen.



Message as a banner over the timer.

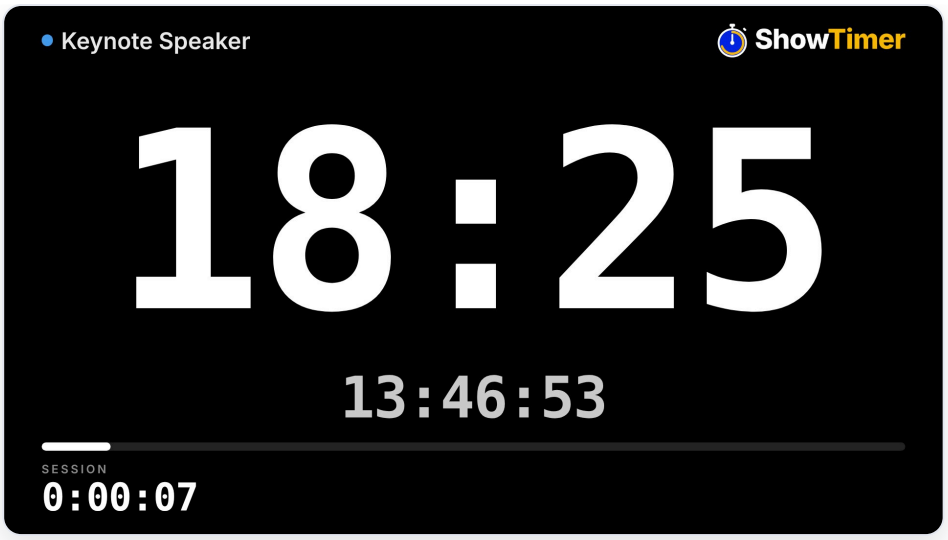
- **Click a saved message** to show it on stage; click it again to hide it. **Show / Hide message** (or `M`) does the same for the last message.
- ⚡ **Flash** makes the message on stage flash. Press again to stop.
- **Message takes over the whole screen** — when ticked, a message fills the stage screen and hides the timer. Untick it to show messages as a banner at the top, middle or bottom while the timer stays visible.
- **Quick message** — type any text and press `Enter` to show it straight away. Choose position, colours and flash first if you like.
- **+ Add** saves a new message; ✎ edits text, colours, size, position and whether it always flashes. Drag to reorder.

8 Views, Black & fades



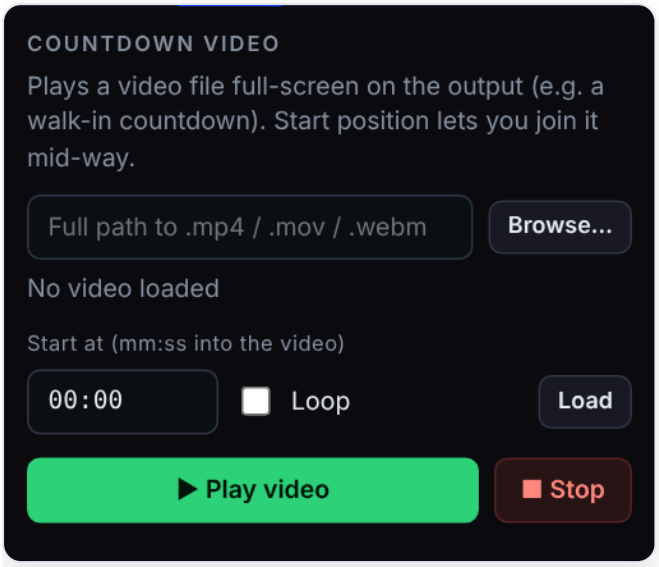
The Output panel.

BUTTON / OPTION	EFFECT ON THE STAGE SCREEN
Timer	The speaker timer (the normal view).
Timer + Clock	The timer with the time of day underneath.
Clock	Time of day only — for breaks and doors.
Video	Plays the countdown video (chapter 9).
BLACK	Takes the screen to black; press again to come back. Shortcut `B`.
Preset name, Logo, Progress bar, Session timer, Clock	Show or hide each element.
Count overtime / Flash at end	Keep counting past zero, and flash when time is up or critical.
24h clock / Always show hours	Clock format, and `0:05:00` instead of `05:00`.
Fade to Video / Black	Smooth fades (0.5–3 seconds) instead of cuts when going to Black or to and from the video.



Timer + Clock view.

9 Countdown video



The Video tab.

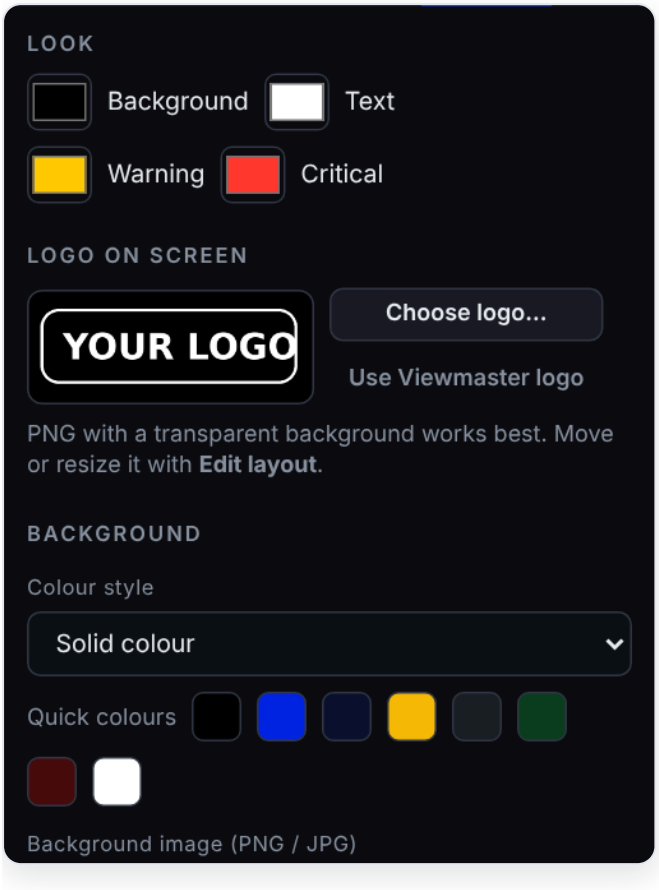
Play a video full-screen on the stage — a walk-in countdown, an opener or a sponsor loop.

1. Open the **Video** tab and click **Browse…** to choose the file.
2. Optionally set **Start at** (mm:ss) to join the video part-way in, and tick **Loop**.
3. ▶ **Play video** puts it on stage. ■ **Stop** goes back to the timer.

Timers keep running underneath. Messages and Black still go on top of the video.

> **Formats:** H.264 `.mp4` is the safest choice. Convert ProRes or other professional formats first (for example with Shutter Encoder or HandBrake). Sound plays from the computer showing the stage output.

10 Your look: logo, background & layout



Settings → Look, Logo and Background.

Colours

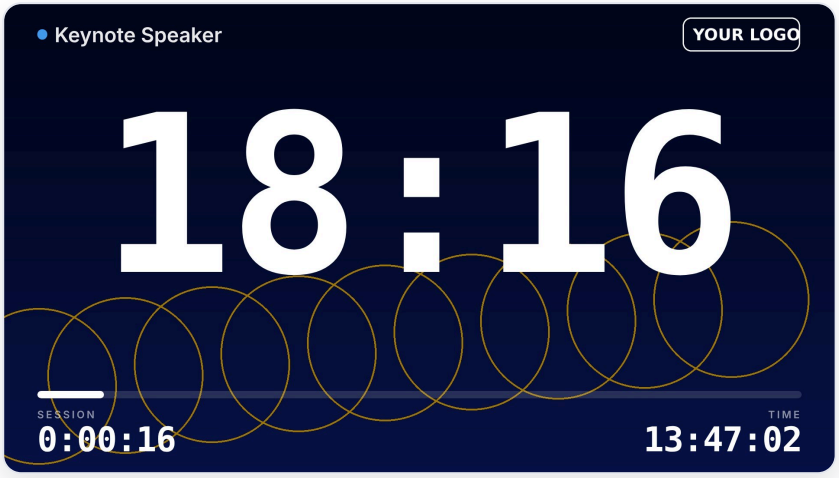
Background, **Text**, **Warning** and **Critical** colours, and the number font.

Logo on screen

Choose logo... puts your own or your client's logo on stage. A PNG with a transparent background looks best. **Use Show Timer logo** switches back.

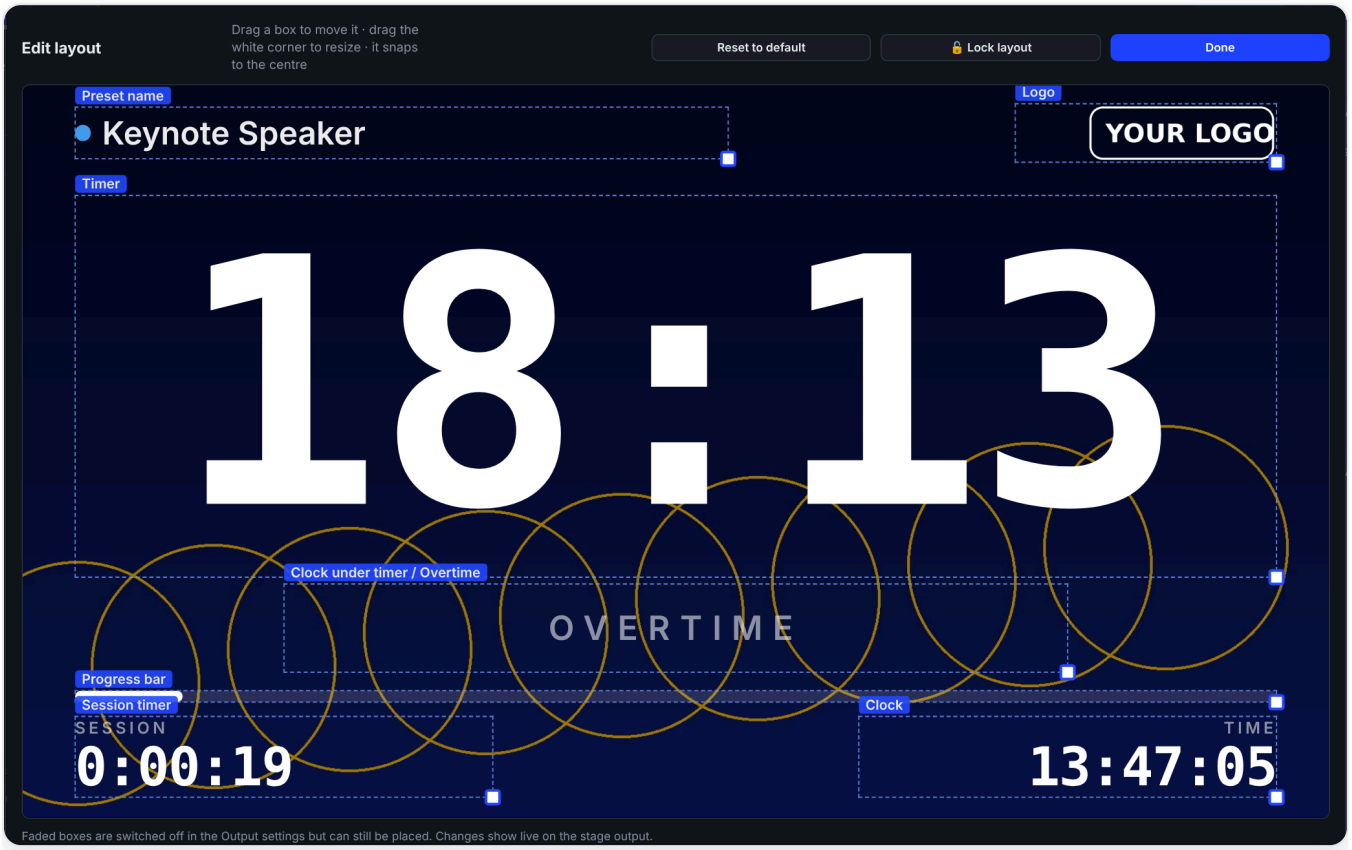
Background

A solid colour, one of the quick colours, or a gradient (top-to-bottom, diagonal, or a glow from the centre) with a second colour. Or **Choose image...** for a PNG/JPG background — *Fill screen*, *Fit whole image* or *Stretch* — and use **Darken** so the numbers stay readable.



Custom logo and background image.

Edit layout & lock



The layout editor.

- Click ✥ **Edit layout…** in the Output panel. Every element of the stage screen gets a box.
- **Drag a box** to move it, **drag the white corner** to resize it. Boxes snap to the centre (yellow guide line).
- Faded boxes are switched off in the Output panel but can still be placed.
- 🔒 **Lock layout** stops anything being moved by accident — also from Stream Deck. **Reset to default** puts everything back.

Logo, background and layout are saved with your **show file** (chapter 15), so every event can have its own look.

11 Getting the picture to the stage

Second screen, projector or LED processor

1. Connect the display and set it to **extended** desktop (not mirrored).
2. In the top bar choose the display in the selector and click **Open output**.
3. The stage output fills that screen; the control panel stays where it is. **Close output** or `Ctrl/Cmd` + `O` closes it.

Only one screen? The output opens as a movable 16:9 window next to the control panel.

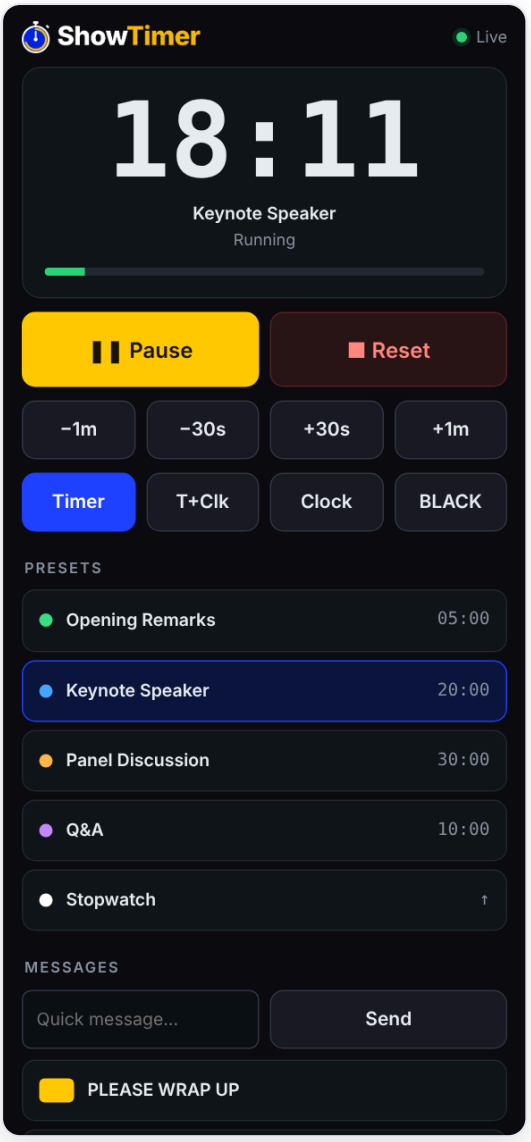
Any web browser on the network

Open `http://<computer-address>:4400/output` on any computer, smart TV or tablet on the same network. The address is shown in the top bar (*Remote: …*) — replace `/remote` with `/output`. Double-click the page for full screen. You can open as many as you like — confidence monitors, green room, production office.

NDI

Click **NDI off** in the top bar to switch NDI on. The stage output is sent as an NDI source called **Show Timer** (rename it in Settings → Network) to vMix, TriCaster, OBS, NDI Studio Monitor or any NDI receiver on the network, in 1920×1080 at 30 fps.

12 Phone & tablet remote



The remote on a phone.

Control the timer from any phone or tablet — no app to install.

1. Connect the phone to the **same network** as the timer computer.
2. Open the address shown in the top bar of the control panel, e.g. `http://192.168.1.20:4400/remote`.
3. Tip: add it to your home screen for one-tap access.

The remote has Play / Pause, Reset, ± time, views, Black, presets, saved and quick messages, Flash and Hide. Several people can use remotes at the same time — everything stays in sync.

13 Stream Deck, Companion & commands

Stream Deck with Bitfocus Companion

1. Install **Bitfocus Companion** (free) and connect your Stream Deck.
2. Add a connection: **Generic → HTTP Requests**. Base URL: `http://<timer-computer>:4400` (or `http://127.0.0.1:4400` on the same computer).
3. For each button add a **GET** action with a path from the table below, e.g. `/api/speaker.toggle`.

Prefer TCP? Use Companion's **Generic TCP** on port **4401** and send one command per line, e.g. `preset.recall 2`. The timer answers `OK` or `ERR …`.

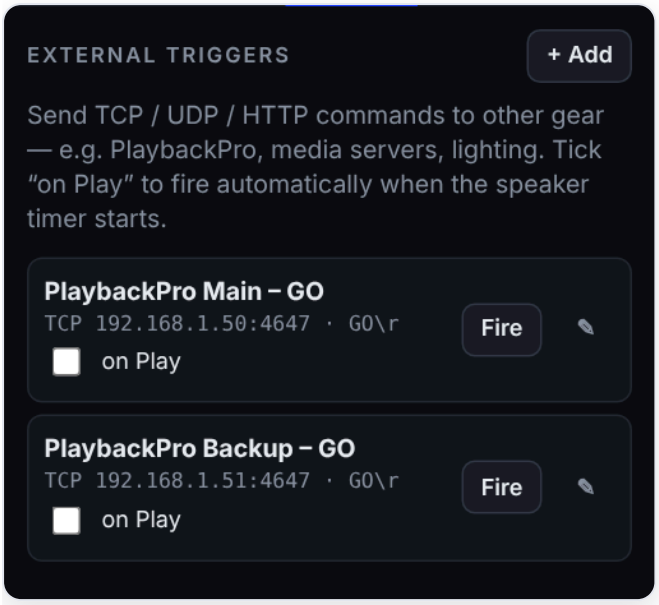
Command reference

HTTP PATH / TCP COMMAND	OPTIONS	WHAT IT DOES
`/api/speaker.toggle`		Play / pause the speaker timer (also `speaker.play`, `speaker.pause`)
`/api/speaker.stop`		Reset the speaker timer
`/api/speaker.adjust?sec=60`	`sec` ±	Add or remove time
`/api/speaker.remaining?sec=300`	`sec`	Jump to a remaining time
`/api/speaker.set?sec=600`	`sec`, `mode=up`	Load a quick timer
`/api/preset.recall?index=2`	`index` / `name`, `play=true`	Load a preset
`/api/preset.next` · `preset.prev`		Next / previous preset
`/api/session.toggle` · `session.stop`		Session timer play/pause, reset
`/api/all.play` · `all.pause` · `all.stop`		Both timers
`/api/message.recall?index=1`	`index` / `name`	Show a saved message
`/api/message.toggle` · `message.hide`		Show / hide the message
`/api/message.flash`	`on=true/false`	Flash the message on stage
`/api/message.quick?text=WRAP%20UP`	`text`, `bg`, `color`	Show a typed message
`/api/black.toggle`		Black on / off (also `black.show`, `black.hide`)

`/api/view.set?view=clock`	`timer` · `timerclock` · `clock` · `video`	Change view
`/api/video.play` · `video.stop`	`time`	Countdown video
`/api/trigger.fire?index=1`	`index` / `name`	Send an external trigger
`/api/layout.lock` · `layout.unlock`		Lock / unlock the layout
`/api/ndi.enable` · `ndi.disable`		NDI on / off
`/api/state`		Everything, as JSON

Indexes are 1-based (the first preset is 1). Commands work only while the timer is licensed.

14 Triggers for other equipment



The Triggers tab.

Show Timer can send commands **to** other equipment — media servers such as PlaybackPro, lighting desks, show controllers.

- **+ Add** a trigger: name, protocol (**TCP**, **UDP** or **HTTP GET**), host/IP, port and payload. Use `\r` and `\n` for Return and newline.
- **Fire** sends it manually.
- Tick **on Play** to send it automatically every time the speaker timer starts — e.g. start a walk-on video together with the timer.

> The two PlaybackPro entries are templates and start switched off. Check the exact command and port in your equipment's manual before using them in a show.

15 Show files, shortcuts & settings

Show files

Everything is saved automatically. To keep a separate setup per event or client, use **Settings → Save show…** and **Open show…**. A show file holds presets, messages, triggers, look, logo, background and layout. **New** starts from the default show.

Keyboard shortcuts (control panel)

KEY	ACTION
`Space`	Play / pause
`R`	Reset timer
`↑` / `↓`	Previous / next preset
`1` – `9`	Recall preset 1–9
`+` / `−`	Add / remove 30 seconds
`B`	Black on / off
`M`	Show / hide message
`Ctrl/Cmd` + `O`	Open / close stage output
`Ctrl/Cmd` + `B`	Black (from the menu)

Network settings

Settings → Network: the web port (default **4400**) for remotes, browser outputs and HTTP commands, and the TCP port (default **4401**). Changes apply after restarting the app. The NDI source name is set here too.

16 Troubleshooting & support

PROBLEM	TRY THIS
Phone / Stream Deck can't connect	Same network? Use the address from the top bar. On Windows allow Show Timer in the firewall (private networks). Some guest Wi-Fi networks block devices from seeing each other.
The stage output opens on the wrong screen	Choose the right display in the top bar selector; the output moves there. Make sure the display is *extended*, not mirrored.
“This licence is locked to another computer”	The key was made for a different Machine ID. Send us the Machine ID shown on the activation screen.
“Licence … expired”	Rental licences end on their date. Contact us to extend.
NDI source doesn't appear	Receiver on the same network and subnet? Check firewalls. Click NDI off/on once. Rename the source in Settings if two timers are on the network.
Video doesn't play	Use H.264 .mp4. Check the full file path in the Video tab.
A red dot in the corner of the stage screen	That screen lost its connection to the timer — it reconnects automatically. Check the network cable or Wi-Fi.
Something moved on the stage screen	Open **Edit layout** and lock the layout when you're happy with it.

Support & licensing

Email **info@techvideotools.com** or use the form on **techvideotools.com**. Please include your Machine ID and licence serial number (Settings → Licence) and which version you use (Settings → About).

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