

## Jing Free: Screencasts and Screen Captures - Tutorial

Many of you have wanted to capture a portion of what is showing on your computer's monitor, and then save it as a picture file. I use this technique often when I create tutorials on how to use software. A picture IS sometimes worth a thousand words. Also, it's nice to capture what's happening on your computer-and save it as a video file. This is where Jing, from TechSmith Corporation, comes in handy. What can you do with Jing?

- Collaborate on a design project
- Share a screen snapshot
- Narrate your vacation photos
- Capture that pesky bug in action
- Show your students how to do a task in Word
- Comment verbally on students' homework

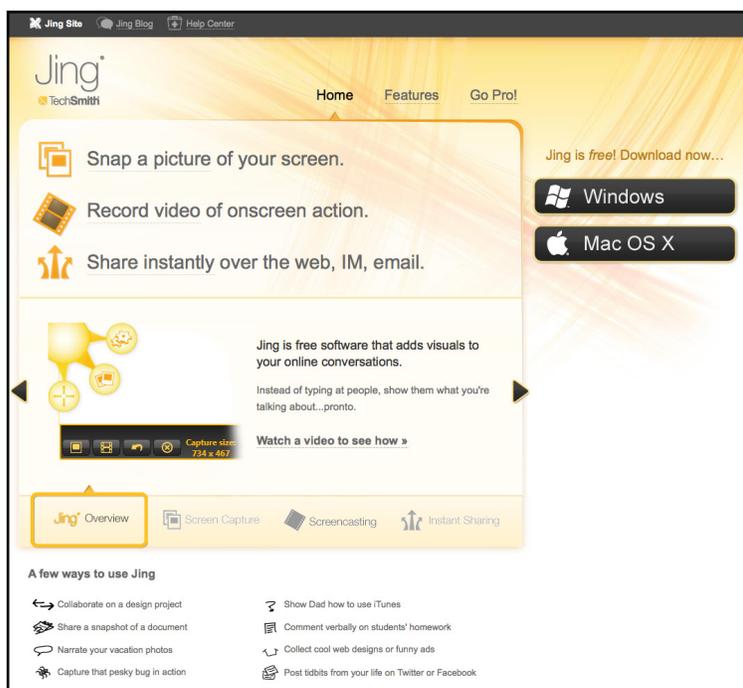
Jing has a free version and a paid professional version. The professional version has features the free version doesn't. The Pro version allows you to save files in MP4 format as well as SWF, whereas the free version only saves SWF (Flash Video) files. The Pro version compresses video into smaller files. Pro lets you upload directly to YouTube. And Pro takes the JING ads off.

Both versions limit you to a five minute video recording.

That said, let's show you how to use the product. First, you'll need to download Jing...

Link: <http://www.jingproject.com/>

Jing is available for Windows or Macintosh. For Windows, follow the installation instructions after double-clicking the install application. Mac users, Jing downloads as a disk image file (.DMG file.) Double-click the .dmg file to mount the disk image. Then you can either click the script button to automatically install everything, or you can drag the Jing application to your applications folder yourself. Now that Jing is installed, let's learn how to use it.



First of all, as you're installing Jing, you'll be asked to set up a ScreenCast account. This is a must if you want to use Jing. Quoting from the Jing website: "Screencast.com is TechSmith's media hosting solution. Jing uses Screencast.com to securely host your content since it's perfect for the kind of images and videos you'll want to make with Jing. We also use Screencast.com so we can give everyone a free, secure hosting option that enables the fastest visual communication possible!

- Does Jing only work with Screencast.com? No. You can upload content to your own FTP server, save images and video to your computer, and more.
- Is Screencast.com free for Jing users? Yes. We give you 2 GB of storage, and 2 GB of bandwidth per month.
- Is Screencast.com private? Yes. Your content on Screencast.com is your business. (You can make it public if you want to.)

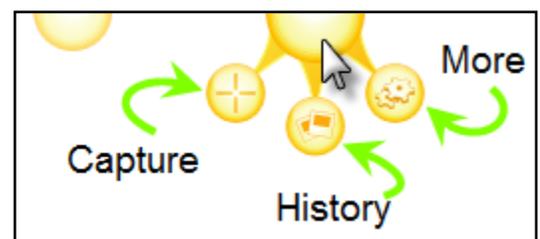
Screencast.com offers a ton of other benefits as well:

- Video and image quality is lossless. That means that Screencast.com doesn't mess with your content. No compression, no loss of quality, no resizing.
- You have great control over the privacy level of your content.
- Allow viewers to comment on your content.
- Screencast.com lets you create MediaRolls and Playlists--a nice way to put a lot of content in one convenient place for viewers--and when you update it, viewers have the option to be automatically notified.
- Screencast.com returns convenient, small links to your content. They're easy to paste or even re-type if someone has to.
- Return embed code automatically. This is great for bloggers or people that want to provide viewers with Jing images or videos right on their site. (As opposed of a user having to click a link and leave the page.)
- Attach files to your content. For example, allow people to view your Jing video and download an accompanying PDF or ZIP file.
- Track the number of times people have viewed your content. You can even sort by what's most or least popular."

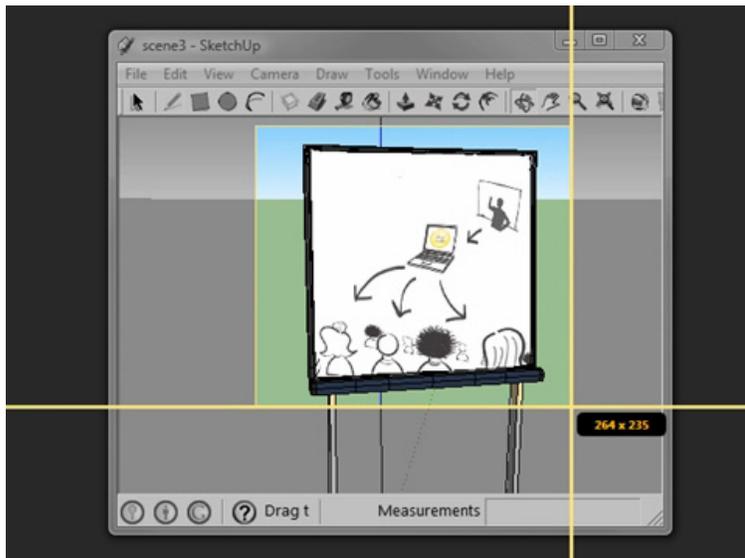
After you've set up your account, and logged into Jing's Screencast.com site - you're ready to do some capturing. Jing has a very easy-to-use help section, with screen captures and videos to walk you through about every thing Jing can do...

Link: <http://help.jingproject.com/>

Now that Jing is running on your computer, you'll notice a sun icon at the top of your screen...

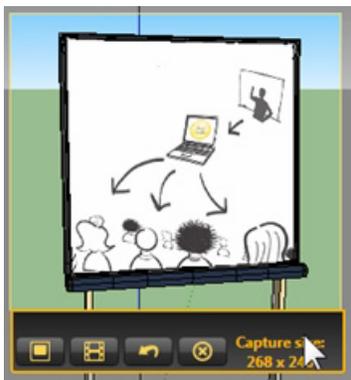


When you mouse-over the sun, three "pseudopods" appear. The first is capture. This is what you click when you wish to capture a screen, a window, or a portion of your screen. Your cursor turns into a cross hair. Draw a rectangle of the portion of the screen you wish to capture. (See the illustration at the top of the next page.)



Just below the image is a spot where you can name your file. The buttons below the filename field are, from left to right:

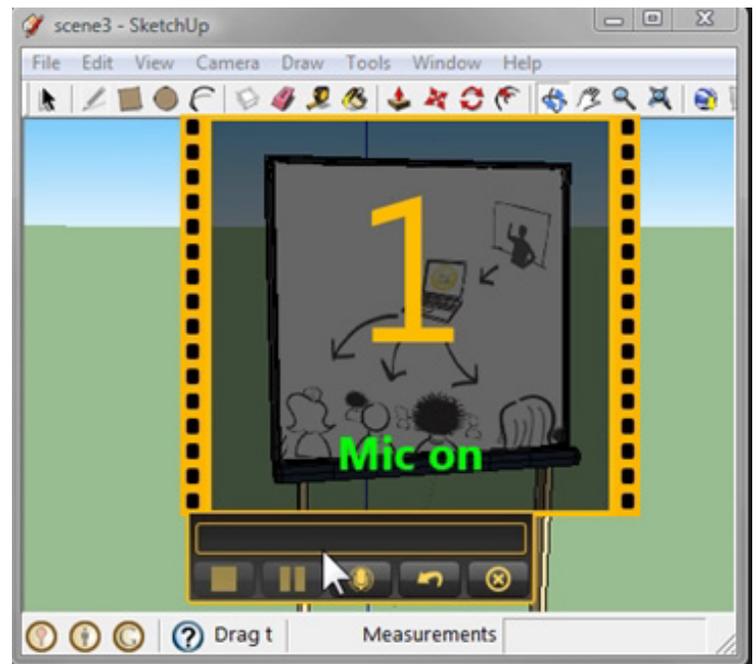
- Share your capture on Screencast.com. Your free Screencast.com account allows you 2GB of storage space, and up to 2GB bandwidth per month. When you upload to screencast.com, a link to your file is returned and placed on your clipboard.
- Save your Jing capture to your hard drive.
- Copy the image to the computer's clipboard - so you can paste it into another program such as Word or PowerPoint.
- Cancel
- Button Options: Here you can set up your own buttons such as upload to Flickr, upload to YouTube (Pro version only), save to a specific location on your hard drive, or upload via FTP to your own site.



Once you've selected the area you wish, let go of the mouse button and a dialog will appear that lets you choose to capture a picture or a movie (screen cast) of what's happening on your monitor. The button on the left captures a picture. The next button captures a screen cast.

If you capture an image, you'll see the screen below. The tools on the left side allow you to add shapes and annotations on your

image. Think of it as a mini-drawing program. You can add text, arrows, shapes, or freehand drawing - as well as select the color for each element you add.

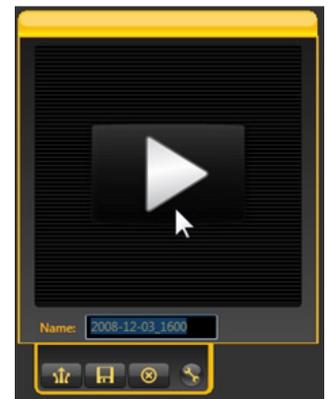
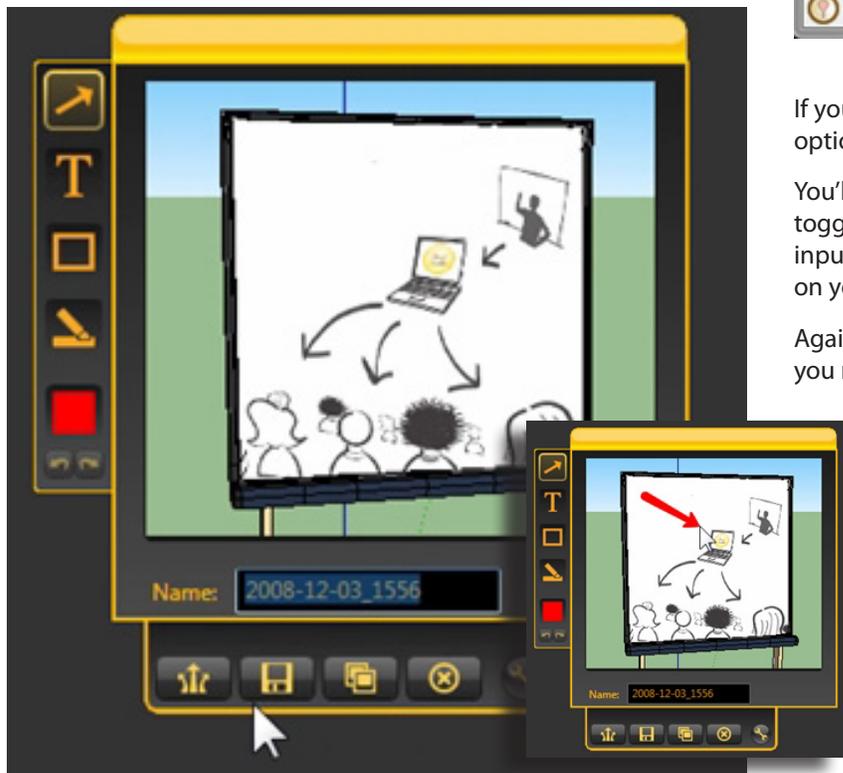


If you choose to capture a screen cast, you'll have some different options...

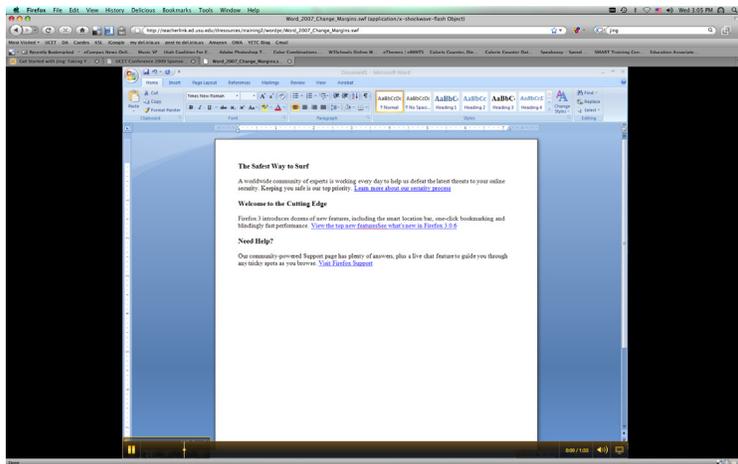
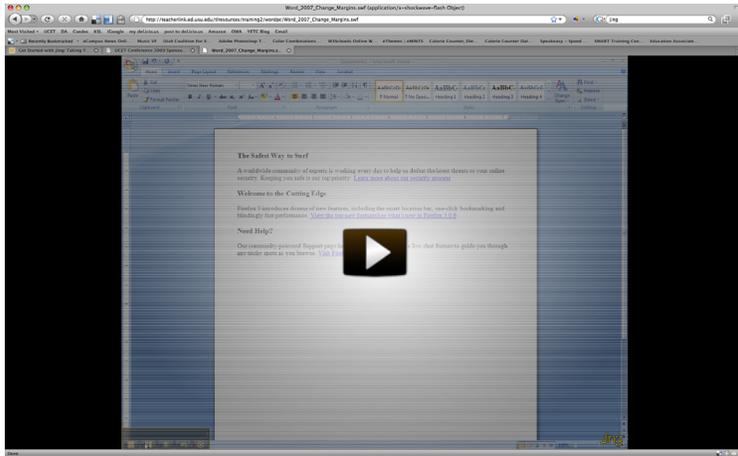
You'll see a countdown (3...2...1). Click the microphone button to toggle audio capture on or off. Jing only captures the microphone input. After the countdown Jing starts recording what's happening on your screen in real time.

Again, you are limited to five minutes of screen recording time. If you need to do more than this, you

can capture what you need to do in multiple sessions. Once finished with your screen cast capture, click the stop button on the left, and Jing will show you a preview of your recording, also with the same save options (minus the clipboard one) as explained with the still images.



Screen cast files in Jing Free are saved as SWF files - or flash videos. The easiest way to play these files is in your web browser. You can drag a JING .swf file right on the browser's window, and it will play. Or you can go to the FILE menu and open the file. If you have a



web site, you can upload these files and link directly to them and they will play in your browser when clicked...

Since they are flash files, they contain all the programming they need to play within your browser. You may need to install the free Flash player if you don't already have it installed on your computer.



Flash Player Link: <http://www.adobe.com/products/flashplayer/>

The "More" option in Jing gets you to the Jing preferences. Here you can set a hotkey to invoke Jing. You can change your Jing account information. If you have the Pro version of Jing, this is where you choose the video format you wish to save screen casts with. You also have the option of turning off the "Launch on startup" that Jing prefers.

My personal preference is to turn off the "Launch at startup" option. Launching Jing automatically makes your computer's startup time longer. Jing uses memory resources even when you don't use Jing. So I prefer to launch the application by hand, when I choose to.

As well, the "More" option is another place you can add customized buttons to your Jing save screens, such as a button for uploading images to Flickr, FTPing to your own site, etc.

Overall, Jing is a very good program for the purpose it serves. It has a friendly, easy-to-use interface. It's great for doing quick tutorials, or sharing something you've captured on screen.

As I mentioned earlier, you can't get computer audio in your screen casts - only the microphone input. So if you don't want your own narration, you can get around this using a patch cable to connect from the headphone jack into the microphone jack. Microphone inputs are extremely sensitive, so you'll want the computer volume control turned almost all the way down or you'll get some serious audio distortion. I set it at its lowest possible level without muting it. Once you've connected the two, do your screen cast, and you'll capture the computer's audio.

Be sure to visit the Jing help site for even more help on using this program.

### Other Free/Paid Applications that Capture Screens:

**SnapzProX:** <http://www.ambrosiasw.com/utilities/snapzprox/>

**Adobe Captivate:** <http://www.adobe.com/products/captivate/?sclid=EICLC>

**Camtasia Studio:** <http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.asp?CMP=KgoogleCShome&gclid=CKq9oZiU55gCFQ6jagod9xZVcg>

**CamStudio Pro:** <http://www.camstudiopro.com/secret.php?kw=camstudio>

**CamStudio:** <http://camstudio.org/>

**AviScreen:** <http://www.bobyte.com/>

**Copernicus:** <http://danisoft.com/projects/copernicus/>

**ScreenCast-o-matic:** <http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/>

**Wink:** <http://www.debugmode.com/wink/>

**AllCapture:** <http://www.allcapture.com/eng/index.php>

**HyperCam:** <http://www.hyperionics.com/>

**iShowU:** <http://www.shinywhitebox.com/home/home.html>

**Screen Mimic:** <http://www.decimus.net/ScreenMimic.php>