

XBMC

Ultimate Guide

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Introduction

Don't worry, this is going to be short: This guide was created after a lot of people complained that "getting into "XBMC was kind of difficult for them. Thus I decided to create this guide to help them – so I do not have to explain it over and over again. This guide includes instructions for a fully automatic PVR without actually owning a TV-Card. Also – it heavily relies on some stuff that may be illegal in your country. Check your local copyright-laws whether they apply, if they do – go ahead and decide for yourself if you want to continue. I take no responsibility.

This is also the point at which I want to thank the whole community which surrounds the XBMC and of course the XBMC-Team as well. The creator of "sickbeard" (midgetspy), of "Couch Potato" (ruudburger) plus the teams around sabnzbd+ and XBMC. They put a lot of work into this and deserve to be appreciated. Take that into account and consider donating something, because all of the mentioned projects are completely community-driven open-source projects and they do not take a cent for the supplied software.

Donations can be made to:

[XBMC](#) – Donation-Page

[Sickbeard](#) – Homepage with Donation-Button

[Couch Potato](#) – Homepage with Donation-Button

[Sabnzbd](#) – Donation-Page

I am sure they will appreciate your support.

XBMC

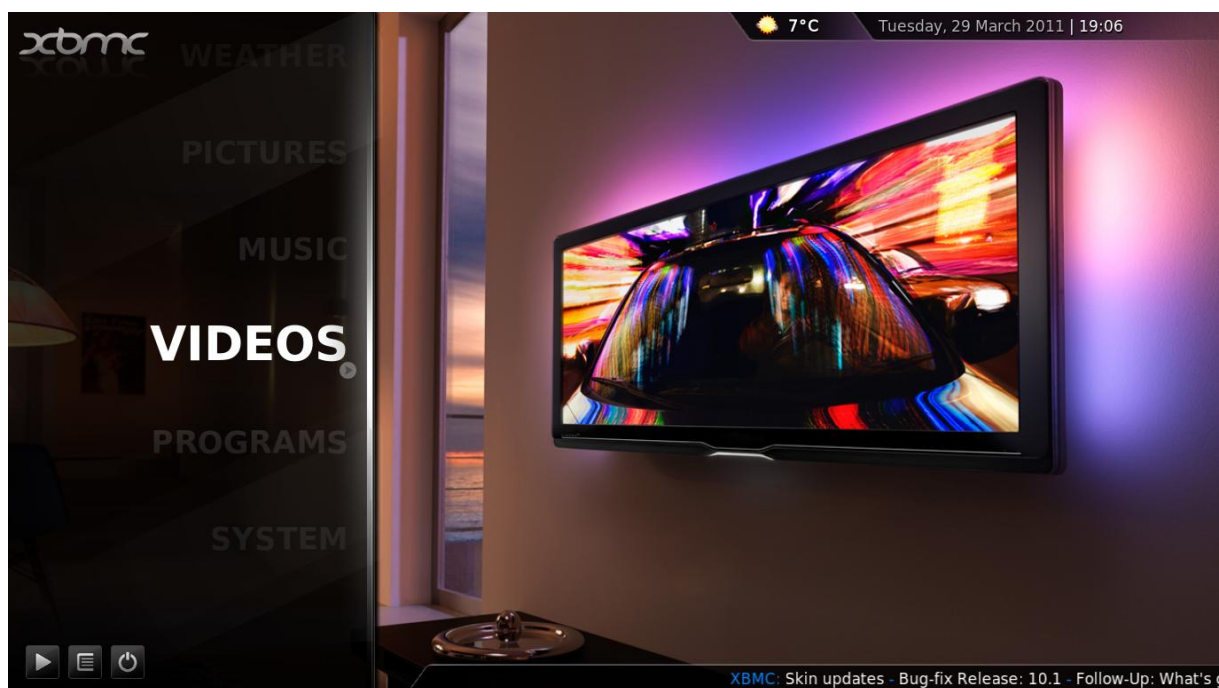
Homepage: <http://www.xbmc.org>

Download and Install XBMC

You can get the XBMC-Setup here:

<http://xbmc.org/download/>

Click the Windows-Logo to get the newest stable Windows-Build for your machine. You could download the Nightly-Builds as well, but those are not approved to be working and may not work as thought. So – if you're not familiar with the XBMC and you are new to all of this, just take the stable version. Download the Setup-File and install it. It will also install the needed libraries (DirectX, C++), so it will take a little bit to complete. Wait a little while and launch XBMC afterwards. You will be presented with the following screen:



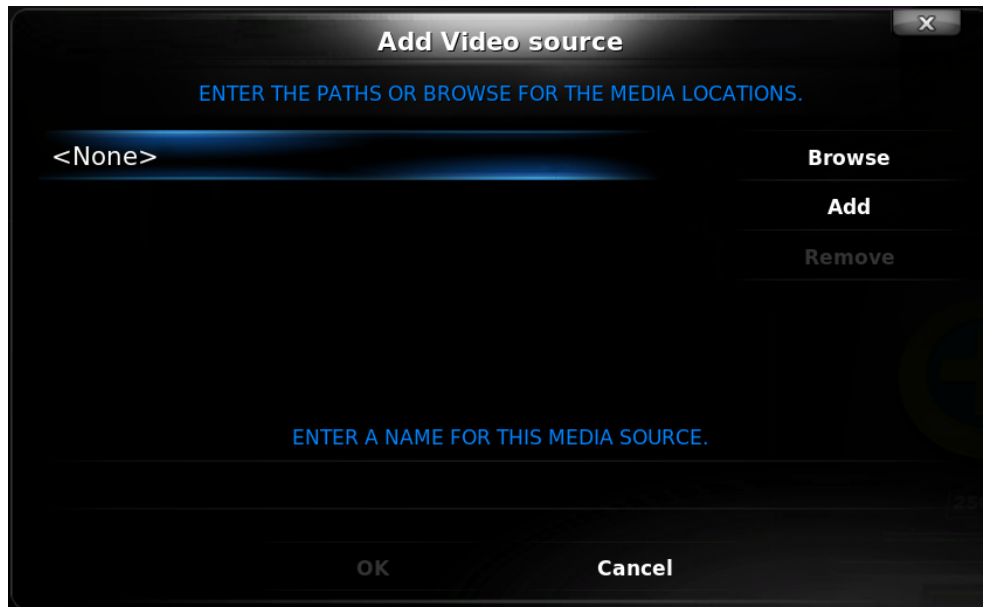
You will notice that you cannot do anything right now, the Videos-Section is completely empty and so is everything else. We are going to change that in the next step.

Setup the Sources

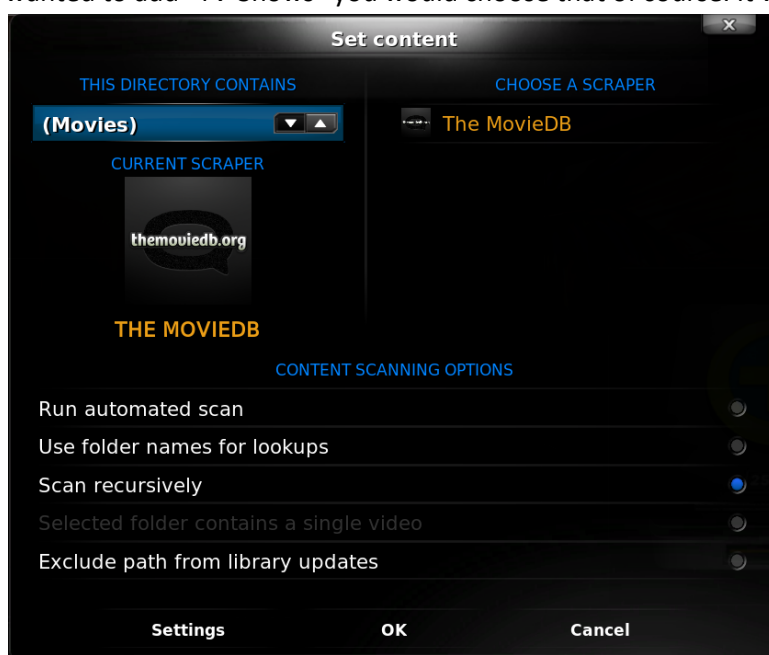
Sources – this is where XBMC looks for your media-files. We are going to add one right now for your movies, which are locally stored on your drive or mounted in a network drive. This is just an example, afterwards you can apply what you learned to Music- and TV-Show-Sources as well. That is going to be easy, you'll see.

To start adding a source hit the “Videos” button in the home- You will see a list of your CD-Drives and removable media-devices which is connected right now. You will also find a Button “Add Source” – hit it in order to bring up the Source-Menu.

You will find a screenshot below, how that should look like:



Hit the “Browse”-Button and locate your movie-location. This is ideally one folder which contains your movies – this can be in subfolders as well as in single files or you just can mix them. The only really important thing is that every movie in the movie-folder is named properly. You should name your movies like “Film Name” and you may add additional information like “Year Quality” which will help the XBMC to scan those files properly, although “Film Name” might just be enough. After you choose the movie-folder in which your movies are stored you hit the “OK”-Button and hit “OK” again in the “Add Source”-Dialog. You will then be presented with the content-dialog. You can now choose what kind of media you stored in the source. We are going to choose “Movies” right now, but if you wanted to add “TV-Shows” you would choose that of course. It will look like this:

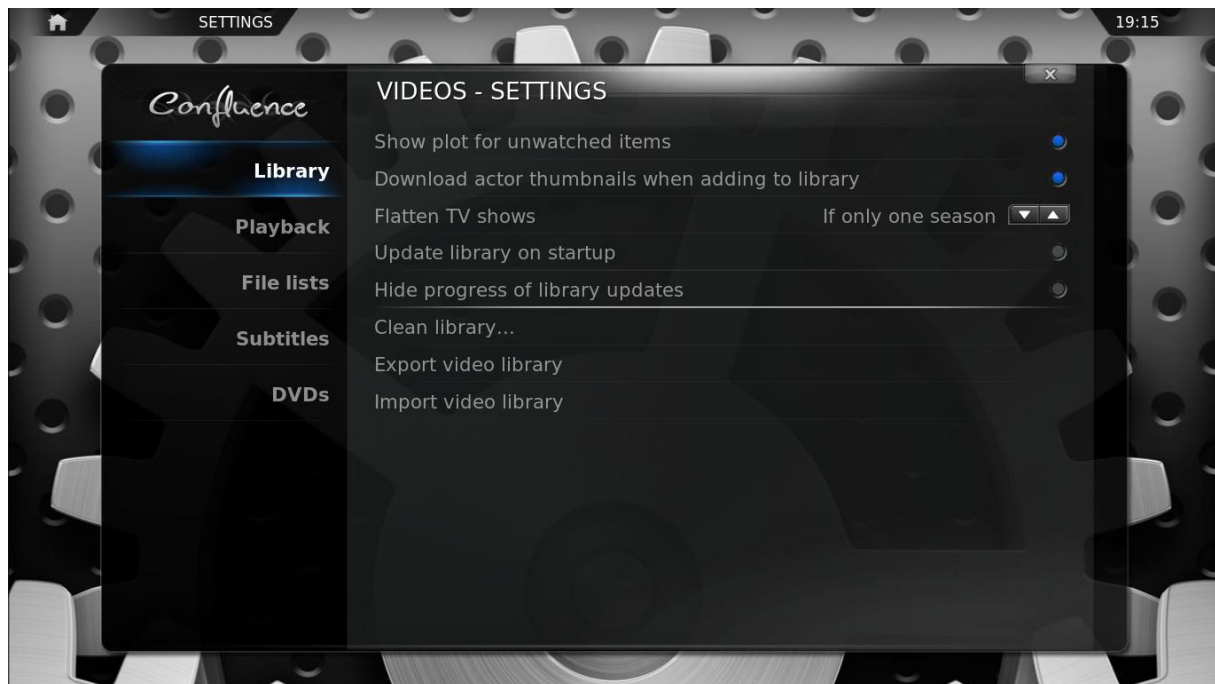


If you want to add your movies right now (you want to ;-)) hit the selection “Run automated scan”. If you have subfolders in your movie-folder you can set “Use folder names for lookups” and “Scan recursively” too. Hit “Ok” – XBMC will now search for your stored movies with the Movie-Scraper. This will take a while. After the scanning completes, go ahead and add your other sources as well. You want to include the TV-Shows-Folder you have stored locally.

Additional Settings

Library Settings

Navigate back to the Home-Window (hit Backspace to get back) and open up the Settings-Menu. Open the “Video”-Tab and click on the Library-Tab. I recommend using “Automated Scan on Startup”, this way you make sure that every new file you add will be there after you restart your XBMC. I will explain later how you can start the scan by yourself. Remember the “Clean Library”-Button – if you delete files out of the folders you specified under your Sources it still will show up in the library of XBMC, even after you scanned for new content. To remove dead entries hit the button “Clean Library”, it will remove them. Be aware: If you added a removable device as a source and you hit the “Clean Library”-Button while the device is disconnected you can lose your library.

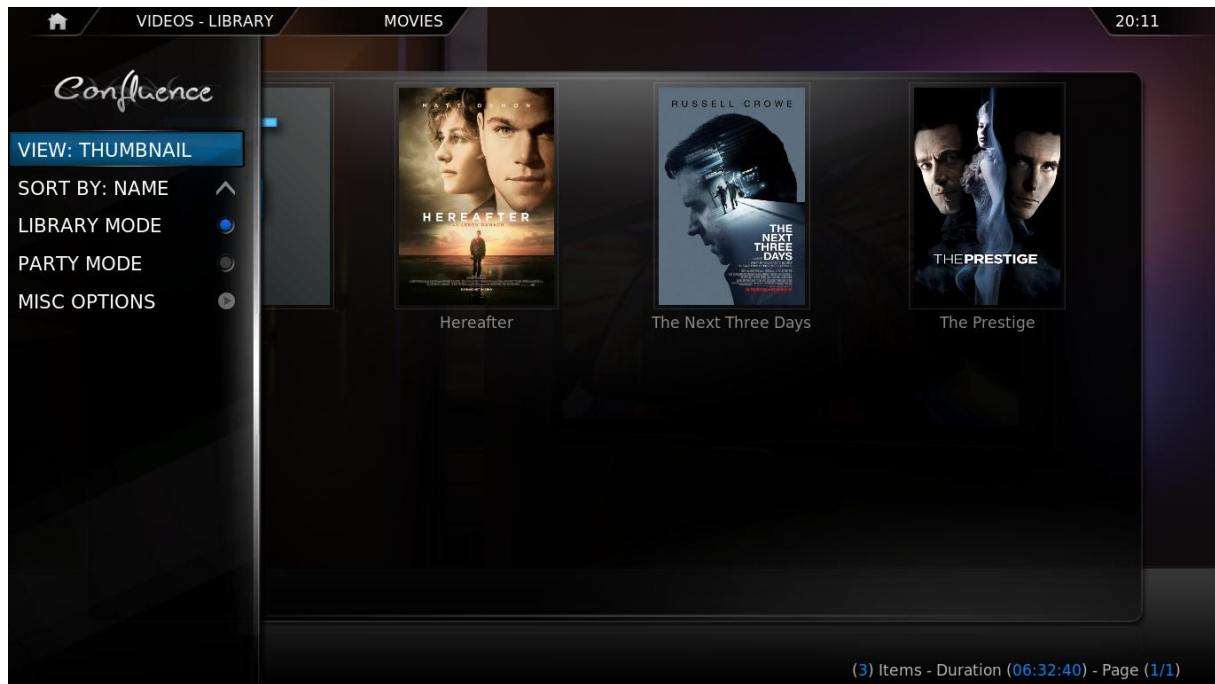


Customization (Skins!)

You can modify the behavior and appearance of your skin by applying extended settings. Each skin has specific settings, you have to choose what you like. Generally you can disable/enable specific Home-Menu-Buttons and more. Play a little bit with the settings if you are not sure and see what you like. You should in any case activate the home-screen menus “TV Shows” and “Movies” (accordingly to your sources) – because this are the library-sections which you want to use later.

Every skin has also own views for the different media-sections (TV Shows, Movies, Music) between which you can choose in order to customize everything for your needs. This is also a little bit of a “Trial & Error”-Game – switch between the different views in order to find out what you like most. In order to apply a new view for a specific section, navigate back to the home-menu and click on the “Movie”-Tab for example. Now – in the movie section – click the Right-Arrow-Key on your keyboard.

This will open up the side-menu, where you can choose the view. In this example you see the view “Thumbnail” selected:



You can apply complete new skins to your XBMC which will change the look and feel of XBMC entirely. I recommend the Night-Skin, although you might prefer something else. To install a new skin, open up the “Appearance”-Settings. You will find an option “Skin” – click here to open the Skin-Selector. Click on the “More”-Button at the bottom of the selector. Choose the skin you want to try and it will download. After the download completes you will be asked to switch to the skin – choose what you like.



Setup additional Addons

You can expand your XBMC-Experience by installing Add-Ons/Plugins. Since XBMC Dharma we have a repository installed from which we can choose additional Add-ons/Plugins. You can find this sub-section on the home-screen. Hit the “Add-On”-Section in XBMC and choose “Get Addons” – browse and install what you like.

Extras

Advanced-Launcher

(Coming Soon)

SVN Repositories

(Coming Soon)

Logo-/Tunes-Skins

(Coming Soon)

Configure Gamepads

(Coming Soon)

SABnzbd+

Homepage: <http://sabnzbd.org/>

Since the documentation around SAB is very well done and helpful, I won't do anything on SABnzbd+ besides pointing to the right direction. Download the latest Windows build at:

<http://sabnzbd.org/>

After the download check the Setup Walkthrough – it will help you get things up and running:

<http://wiki.sabnzbd.org/quick-setup>

This may be interesting in the context as you may want to use the PP-Script of Sickbeard (more on that later):

<http://wiki.sabnzbd.org/configure-categories>

<http://wiki.sabnzbd.org/configure-directories>

Sickbeard

Homepage: www.sickbeard.com

Installation and Setup


Sickbeard is fairly easy to handle. Download the latest build from the Sickbeard-Homepage:

www.sickbeard.com

Just unzip it and run “sickbeard.exe” – You can now access your Sickbeard via the Web-Interface, which should be reachable under <http://localhost:8081> in your Webbrowser. Please note that the first time you want to show Sickbeards-Page it runs a little bit. Just stay calm – eventually the site will pop up.

After you reached the Web-Interface you want to configure everything before you put in your already existent TV-Shows. For the sake of this manual, I'll just go ahead and copy the content from <http://www.sickbeard.com/config.html> into this document. This was not done by me, but by the Sickbeard-Community and the guide is very good. Note that everything may look a bit different on your end. In the newer updates of Sickbeard you will find that Twitter-Notifications are actually working, etc.

General

 alpha alpha2

Home | Coming Episodes | History | Backlog | **Config** | Logs & Errors (272) |

General | Episode Downloads | Search Providers | Notifications |

General Configuration

All non-absolute folder locations are relative to C:\SickBeard

NOTE: Manual restart needed for web server changes!

Misc

- Logging directory:**
Directory where Sick Beard should place its logs
- ☒ **Create metadata**
If checked Sick Beard will create nfo files for all your media
- ☒ **Create images**
If checked Sick Beard will create tbn/fanart/posters for all your media
- ☒ **Launch browser on startup**
Should Sick Beard open its home page in your browser when you start it?
- ☒ **Notify when new versions are available**
Doesn't work if you're running from source

Web Interface (requires restart)

- HTTP port**
Web port Sick Beard should listen on
- ☐ **Enable HTTP log**
Whether you want cherrypy logs to be generated
- Sick Beard username**
Web authentication username
- Sick Beard password**
Web authentication password

Defaults

Initial Quality 10.
Quality to assign to a newly created show

☒ **Use Season Folders 11.**
Whether shows should use season folders by default

Episode Naming

☒ **Include show name 12.**

☒ **Include episode name 13.**

☐ **Use periods 14.**
If checked all spaces will be replaced with periods

Separator Style 15.

Number Style 16.
Style of season/episode numbers

Example:
Show Name - 1x02 - Ep Name

Multi-episode Style 17.
Style of season/episode numbers for multi-episodes

Example:
Show Name - 1x02 - 1x03 - Ep Name

411 shows (222 active) | 13393/15187 episodes downloaded
Search: 0:17:17 | Backlog: Saturday

Misc

1. Logging directory

The directory where you want your logs to be stored

2. Create Metadata

If checked, Sick Beard will generate NFO files for use with XBMC (and other compatible HTPC applications)

3. Create Images

If checked, Sick Beard will download posters, fanart, and tbn for XBMC

4. Launch browser on startup

If checked, Sick Beard will open the GUI homepage in your browser when you start it.

5. Notify when new versions are available

When running the Windows binaries, Sick Beard will let you know when a new version is available

Web Interface

6. HTTP Port

The port you want Sick Beard to run on

7. Enable HTTP log

If checked, Sick Beard will tell cherrypy to place a log in your log folder

8. Sick Beard username

Username required to log in to the Sick Beard web GUI (Leave blank for no authentication)

9. Sick Beard password

Password required to log in to the Sick Beard web GUI (Leave blank for no authentication)

Defaults

10. Initial Quality

When you add a show it will be assigned this quality by default.

11. Use Season Folders

When a show is added its "use season folders" setting will be this.

Episode Naming

12. Include show name

If checked, the name of the show will be part of the filename

13. Include episode name

If checked, the name of the episode title will be part of the filename

14. Use periods

If checked, periods will be used instead of spaces

15. Separator Style

Choose your separator style

16. Number Style


Choose your number style

17. Multi-episode Style

Choose the style of multi-episode files

Episode Downloads

[Donate](#)


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Episode Download Options

All non-absolute folder locations are relative to C:\SickBeard

Episode Search

- ☒ **NZBs**
Whether or not we should search NZB sites
- ☐ **Torrents**
Whether or not we should search Torrent sites
- Search Frequency:**
Time between searches (in minutes)
- Backlog Search Frequency:**
Time between backlog searches (in days)

NZB/Torrent Options

NZB Action 5.
What to do with found NZBs

NZB Black Hole: 6.
The directory where Sick Beard should store your NZB files

Usenet Retention: 7.
How old should a report be before we don't download it

Torrent Black Hole: 8.
The directory where Sick Beard should store your torrent files

SABnzbd

Username: 9.
Your SABnzbd authentication username

Password: 10.
Your SABnzbd authentication password

API Key: 11.
Your SABnzbd API key

Category: 12.
The category you want your downloads to go in (default is TV)

IP/port: 13.
Address of your SABnzbd server (IP:port, eg. 192.168.1.100:8080)

Post-processing

TV Download Dir 14.
The folder where your download client puts your TV downloads (only needed if you're not using SAB post processing OR if SAB and Sick Beard are on different PCs)

☐ **Keep folder 15.**
If checked Sick Beard won't delete the episode folder and any extra files (original nfo, sfv, etc)

☒ **Rename episodes 16.**
If checked Sick Beard will rename the episode according to the naming settings in General

☐ **Scan & Process TV Download Dir 17.**
Will scan your TV Download Dir and attempt to post-process every file it finds.
NOTE: If you use sabToSickbeard w/ SABnzbd+ do not check this!

411 shows (222 active) | 13394/15187 episodes downloaded
Search: 0:00:17 | Backlog: Saturday

Episode Search

1. NZBs

If this is unchecked then the search will not look for NZBs at all, no matter what providers you have selected.

2. Torrents

Sick Beard will only search for torrent files if this is checked.

3. Search Frequency

The number of minutes between searches (min 10)

4. Backlog Search Frequency

The number of days between backlog searches

NZB/Torrent Options

5. NZB Action

Black hole: saves NZBs to a folder that your newsgroup client is watching

SABnzbdbd: passes the NZB URLs directly to SABnzbdbd so it can download them itself. For this your SABnzbdbd section must be configured properly and you must be running SABnzbdbd 0.5+

6. NZB Black Hole

If black hole is selected then NZB files will be saved to this folder. Your newsgroup client should be configured to watch this folder and automatically pick up NZBs inside.

7. Usenet Retention

The number of days of retention that your usenet provider offers. NZBs older than this won't be downloaded.

8. Torrent Black Hole

If torrents are enabled then they will be downloaded to this folder. Your torrent client should be configured to watch this folder and automatically pick up any torrents it finds.

SABnzbdbd

These settings are required if you have your NZB Action set to "SABnzbdbd". If you are using Black hole you can leave this section blank.

9. Username

Your SAB auth username

10. Password

Your SAB auth password

11. API Key

The API key specified in your SAB config

12. Category

The name of the category you want your downloads to go to ("TV" is default)

13. IP/Port

The address of your SAB host - no http:// or /sabnzbdbd/ required. Only IP/port, eg.
192.168.1.100:8080

Post-Processing

14. TV Download Dir

The folder where your download client puts your TV downloads (only needed if you're not using SAB post processing OR if SAB and Sick Beard are on different PCs)

15. Keep folder

If checked, Sick Beard won't delete the episode folder and any extra files (original nfo, sfv, etc)


16. Rename episodes

If checked, Sick Beard will rename the episode according to the naming settings in General

17. Scan & Process TV Download Dir

Will scan your TV Download Dir and attempt to post-process every file it finds. NOTE: If you use sabToSickbeard w/ SABnzbdbd+ do not check this!

Search Providers

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NZB Provider Configuration

Provider Priorities
Drag the providers into the order you want them to be searched

NZBMatrix


NZBs


EZTV


NZBsRUS


BinReq

1.

NZBs.org
☒ **Enable NZBs.org**  **2.**
Check to search NZBs.org for episodes
UID: 3.
NZBs.org UID
Hash: 4.
NZBs.org hash

NZBs'R'US
☐ **Enable NZBs'R'US**  **5.**
Check to search NZBsRus.com for episodes
UID: 6.
NZBs'R'US UID
Hash: 7.
NZBs'R'US hash

Bin-Req
☒ **Enable Bin-Req**  **8.**
Check to search NZBs.org for episodes

NZBMatrix
☒ **Enable NZBMatrix**  **9.**
Check to search NZBMatrix for episodes
Username: 10.
NZBMatrix username
API Key: 11.
NZBMatrix API Key

Save Changes

411 shows (222 active) | 13394/15187 episodes downloaded
Search: 0:20:20 | Backlog: Saturday

Provider Priorities

1. Provider Priorities

Drag the providers into the order you want them to be searched

NZBs.org

Log in and go to <http://nzbs.org/index.php?action=rss>

Near the top there is a string like:

Add this string to your feed URL to allow NZB downloads without logging in:

&i=12345&h=abcdef1234567890fedcba1234567890

The numbers after &i= are your UID, the string after &h= is your hash (UID=12345 and hash=abcdef1234567890fedcba1234567890 in the example above)

2. Enable NZBs.org

Check to enable searching for episodes on NZBs.org

3. NZBs.org UID

Your NZBs.org UID

4. NZBs.org hash

Your NZBs.org hash

NZBs'R'US

Log in and go to <http://www.nzbsrus.com/rss.php>

In the "User defined" select box at the bottom, click on any option

At the bottom of the page, an URL will appear like this:

<http://www.nzbsrus.com/rssfeed.php?cat=87&i=21345&h=abcdef1234567890fedcba1234567890>

The numbers after &i= are your UID, the string after &h= is your hash (UID=12345 and hash=abcdef1234567890fedcba1234567890 in the example above)

5. Enable NZBs'R'US

Check to enable searching for episodes on NZBs'R'US (Only currently Airing)

6. NZBs'R'US UID

Your NZBs'R'US UID

7. NZBs'R'US hash

Your NZBs'R'US hash

Bin-Req

8. Enable Bin-Req

Check to enable searching for episodes on NZBs'R'US (Only currently Airing)

NZBMatrix

Log in and go to <http://nzbmatrix.com/account.php>

Retrieve your **API key** from that page

9. Enable NZBMatrix

Your SAB auth username


10. NZBMatrix username

Your SAB auth password

11. NZBMatrix API Key

The API key specified in your SAB config

Notifications

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Notifications

XBMC
☒ **Notify XBMC on NZB retrieval** 1.
Send XBMC a notification when we find an NZB?
☒ **Notify XBMC on episode download** 2.
Send XBMC a notification when we finish a download?
☒ **Update XBMC library** 3.
Update XBMC library when we finish a download?
XBMC host: 4.
XBMC HTTP API address (IP:port, eg. 192.168.1.100:8080)
(multiple host strings can be separated by commas)

XBMC Username: 5.
Username of your XBMC server (blank for none)

XBMC Password: 6.
Password of your XBMC server (blank for none)

 7.

Growl
☐ **Enable Growl Notifications** 8.
Should Sick Beard send Growl notifications?
Growl Host: 9.
IP:Port of the host running Growl (eg. 192.168.1.100:2222)
If no port is given the default 23053 will be used.

Growl Password: 10.
If Growl is running on the same host as Sick Beard you may leave this blank, but if the hosts are different Growl **requires** a password.

Email
Not Implemented

Twitter
Not Implemented

411 shows (222 active) | 13394/15187 episodes downloaded
Search: 0:14:52 | Backlog: Saturday

XBMC

1. Notify XBMC on NZB retrieval

Send XBMC a notification when we find an NZB?

2. Notify XBMC on episode download

Send XBMC a notification when we finish a download?

3. Update XBMC library

Update XBMC library when we finish a download?

4. XBMC host

XBMC HTTP API address (IP:port, eg. 192.168.1.100:8080).(multiple host strings can be separated by commas)

5. XBMC Username

Username of your XBMC server (blank for none)

6. XBMC Password

Password of your XBMC server (blank for none)

7. Test XBMC

Click this to send a test notification to your XBMC host(s)

Adding TV-Shows

You have two different options available: New Show and Existing Show. If you want to download a TV-Show you do not own at this time, click on the button „Add New Show“ and head to the section below. If you want to add one or more TV-Shows you already have saved on your disk click on the button „Add Existing Shows“ and head to the section „Existing Shows“ further below.

Add New Show

There are three steps in order to add a new Show to your database:

1. Find TV-Show on TVDB
2. Pick the folder in which the Show will be stored
3. Customization

The third step however is optional – you can just apply the settings which are stored in your configuration.

First type in the name of the Show you want to add. Sickbeard will then look in the TVDB for a corresponding title and will present you with the results.

Step 1

Find a show on the TVDB

Step 2

Pick the parent folder

Step 3

Customize options

Archer en * Search

* This will only affect the language of the retrieved metadata file contents and episode filenames. This **DOES NOT** allow Sick Beard to download non-english TV episodes!

Search Results:

- ☐ **Archer** (started on 1975-01-01)
- ☒ **Archer (2009)** (started on 2009-09-17)
- ☐ **Meet Corliss Archer** (started on 1954-09-01)

Hit the results which suit your Show and click the “Next”-Button. As you do not have a parent-folder specified right now, click the “New”-Button in the next step and choose the folder in which the Show should be stored.

Step 1

Find a show on the TVDB

Step 2

Pick the parent folder

Step 3

Customize options

*D:\Serien

New Edit Delete Set as Default *

In the next step choose your likings and click on “Add Show” at the bottom of the page.

Add Existing Show

First click on the button “Manage Directories” and add the Root-Folder of your existent TV-Shows. You can add more folders if you like (if you – for example – have a folder Shows and Shows2, you could add them both). You should notice that sickbeard starts to load and indexes the new folders which are subfolders of your Shows-Folder(s).

Now click on the button “Customize Options” and set everything accordingly and hit the button “Submit”.

You will now be presented with the “Step 1”-screen of the Add-Show-Dialog. It will show you the search results for the Show lookups based on your Show-Directory.

Step 1

Find a show on the TVDB

Step 2

Pick the parent folder

Step 3

Customize options

Archer en * Search

* This will only affect the language of the retrieved metadata file contents and episode filenames. This **DOES NOT** allow Sick Beard to download non-english TV episodes!

Search Results:

- ☐ **Archer** (started on 1975-01-01)
- ☒ **Archer (2009)** (started on 2009-09-17)
- ☐ **Meet Corliss Archer** (started on 1954-09-01)

Click on the right Show and hit the button “Add Show” below. This will continue until every folder is scanned and checked. If you do not want to add a specific show, just hit the button “Skip Show” and if you want to customize your choices hit “Next” and “Next” again to get to Step 3. Here you can configure special settings for the single show.

After you added the Shows to Sickbeard you have to wait a little bit – Sickbeard is now gathering all the required information and then will start looking up the series (if you specified it) in the NZB-Databases. Otherwise Sickbeard is now completely ready for usage – just hit the button “Coming Episodes” in Sickbeard to see what Sickbeard will download next and what episodes already were missed.

Post-Processing

At this point Sickbeard is configured to look for new releases. But how will Sickbeard now know if a download finished? Post-Processing is the key-word. Post-Processing is the ability of Sickbeard to automatically rename your downloads and sort them into the proper folders. Without this you will need to manually copy them over and then re-scan the show directory to find the new episodes. There are two possibilities to do this:

1. Head back to the section "Episode Downloads" under "Installation and Setup" and you will find the options "TV Download Dir" and "Scan and Process TV Download Dir". Set these settings accordingly.
2. You can configure SABnzbd to launch a Post-Processing-Script for sickbeard. Again I will copy the content of the sickbeard-page regarding this process

(<http://code.google.com/p/sickbeard/wiki/PostProcessing>):

To set up post processing, first copy the contents of the autoProcessTV directory from your Sick Beard installation to your SABnzbd+ scripts folder (or set your scripts folder to the location of the autoProcessTV directory). Rename autoProcessTV.cfg.sample to simply autoProcessTV.cfg and open it in a text editor. Change the host, port, username, and password values to the appropriate settings for your Sick Beard server. Then set the appropriate script as your postprocessing script inside SABnzbd+/HellaNZB:

sabToSickbeard.py - linux/OSX SABnzbd+

sabToSickbeard.exe - Windows SABnzbd+

hellaToSickbeard.py - HellaNZB

Note: If your SABnzbd+ is running on a different PC than your Sick Beard you may need to enter your TV download dir into your Sick Beard settings so that Sick Beard knows how to find the SABnzbd+ downloads.

Note 2: You must **disable** SAB sorting to use Sick Beard post processing, all episodes should be being post-processed from a temporary download folder.

Couch Potato

Homepage: <http://couchpotatoapp.com/>

(Coming Soon)