Why Bitrate Matters

PLEXplainers

Technical Guide #1:
Why Bitrate Matters

A video's **"bitrate"** is how much data you need to download every second while streaming it. If you are watching a video with a higher bitrate than your internet connection can handle, Plex will need to periodically buffer so it can "catch up"

The Tradeoff

Higher bitrate = Better Quality
Lower bitrate = Less Buffering

NOTE

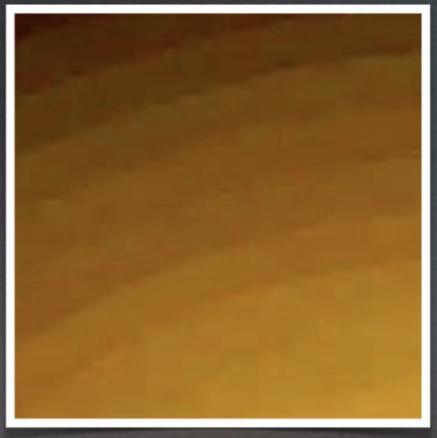
"Bitrate" is not the same thing as "resolution"

Resolution measures **pixels**
Bitrate measures **data**

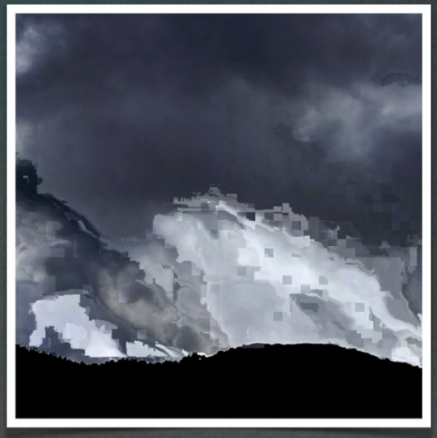
How Bitrate Affects Video Quality

When videos are compressed to reduce the bitrate, data is lost. As the bitrate gets very low, that missing data will cause "artifacts", especially during darkly-lit or high-action scenes.

Examples of Compression Artifacts



Color banding



Glitched Images

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