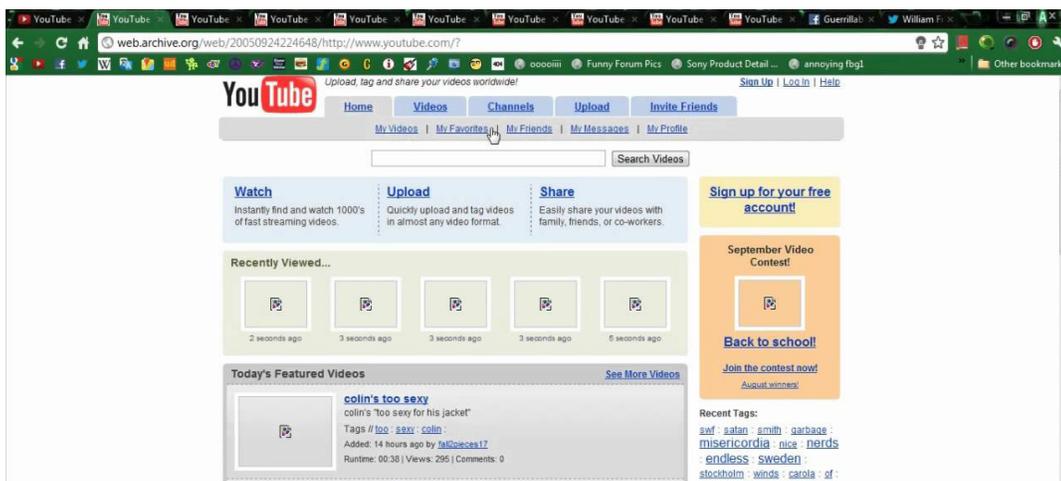


# The New YouTube Logo

Babies. People accidentally hurting themselves. Tutorials. Cats. Since 2005, thousands of videos on these topics and more have been shared on YouTube, the internet's largest video sharing platform. Since its inception, the YouTube website has seen many a makeover, both technical and aesthetic. But their logo has remained relatively unchanged until 2017, when it was updated as part of a full refresh of the entire YouTube brand and its collection of products.

## *Not So Humble Beginnings*

In 2005, YouTube was founded by three PayPal employees in their headquarters above a California pizzeria. By December of the same year, 8 million videos were being watched per day. The startup initially received \$11.5 million in funding, and was bought by Google in November 2006, less than a year after its official launch. Since then, regular updates to the site's functionality have been introduced, such as channel subscriptions and HD video capabilities. As of September 2018, over 5 billion videos from around the globe have been uploaded, shared, and watched on YouTube (Aslam).



YouTube's original layout in 2005.  
Source: youtube.com

## The “Tube” in YouTube

The creators of YouTube were in college when the site was created in 2005, so it is safe to assume that they grew up watching their favorite shows and movies on “Tube” television screens, named after the cathode-ray tube technology that powered most tv sets and computer monitors before the rise of LCD technology in the 2000s. This is where the “Tube” in YouTube’s name comes from. The catchy name was designed into a wordmark style logo, with the word “tube” set in white type on a red rounded rectangle shape, made to resemble the old-fashioned technology that matches the second half of the site’s name. The “You” was set in black, and the whole mark was set in Alternate Gothic. Between 2005 and 2017, there were some subtle changes and alternative versions of this original logo, but none were very significant. There were minor color tweaks and certain details were removed or changed. The original logo had shadows and highlights added to make it look more dimensional. The newer version lacks those elements and has a flatter appearance.



Examples of “tube” television sets. The shape of the screens is mimicked in the YouTube logo. Source: [istockphoto.com](https://www.istockphoto.com)

## A New Logo for a New Era

In the 2017 update, the wordmark itself is still very similar, using an only slightly modified typeface, YouTube New, designed specifically for this redesign by Google’s design team. The colors of the logo were

intensified, the black of the type becoming “almost black” and the red shape now pure red, much brighter and more “fun” than the darker version. The red icon is the most significant and noticeable change to the logo, having been moved from behind the word “Tube” to the right of the wordmark. The new white triangle in the center of this shape forms the now very well-known “Play Button” icon, an obvious nod to the process by which all videos on any form of the YouTube app or website have to be accessed. This new logo fits more with the multi-screen world in which YouTube has gained its popularity, much more so than the tv-based symbolism of the original logo.



2005-2011



2011-2013



2013-2015



2015-2017

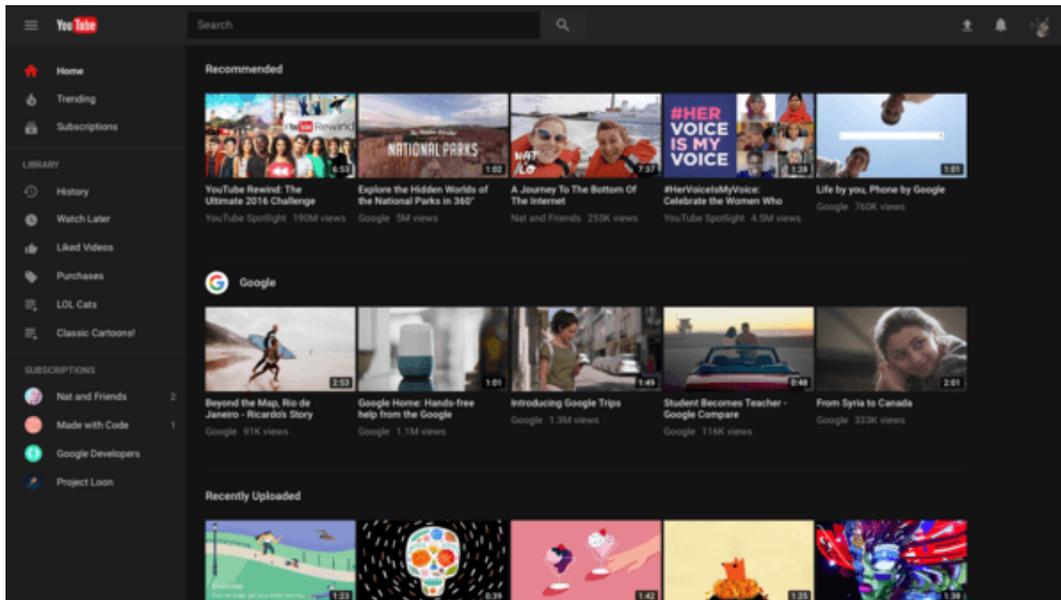
The evolution of the YouTube logo from its original launch to the 2017 redesign. Source: cgfrog.com



NEW

The logo redesign was part of an overhaul and modernization of the entire YouTube suite of products. Now more than just one website, there are mobile apps that expand the reach and function of the YouTube brand. The new look applies Material Design to the look of each platform, giving them all a much cleaner look and improved functionality. Material Design is an intuitive design language that was developed by Google, which owns YouTube, in 2014. It is “a sensory expression of Google’s brand” (Sinsabaugh). It combines the classic principles of good design (such as typography, image, and space) with the innovation of technology and science. While the original YouTube site was never hard to navigate, the new look makes using the desktop site and mobile apps a more dynamic experience, and the design across platforms is more unified

within the YouTube suite itself and all other Google products. There is even a new darkened theme option available on both desktop and mobile, which some users find easier on the eyes.



The current YouTube desktop layout using the new dark theme. Source: medium.com

YouTube's new look makes it clear that the site can keep up with the demands of a constantly advancing technology and social media culture. The new logo and layout tie the original site to YouTube's newer collection of apps and services. YouTube TV, Google's live television streaming service and the sponsor of both the MLB World Series and the NBA Finals, just announced a partnership with Verizon to expand the brand's reach. YouTube Premium grants its subscribers access to the YouTube Originals video content library and the music streaming service YouTube Music. YouTube has evolved from just a website to an entire brand, and all of its content is recognized by that bright red play button.

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