Open source · runs locally

Clean up a talking-head video: cut pauses, even out volume

Tighten a talking-head recording before clipping it: remove silences with auto-editor and normalize loudness with FFmpeg's loudnorm filter. Free, local, a few minutes.

VideoToShorts · https://videotoshortsconverter.com/workflows/talking-head-cleanup-local · checked November 19, 2026

COST
Free

TIME
5 to 10 minutes per video

LEVEL
Beginner to intermediate (command line)

HARDWARE
Any recent computer.

What you need

auto-editor: Cut silences automatically

FFmpeg: Loudness normalization

Best for: Webcam and podcast recordings, Course and tutorial creators, Anyone whose audio jumps between quiet and loud.

Steps

1 Install

Install FFmpeg, then auto-editor.

```
pip install auto-editor
```

2 Cut the silences

auto-editor keeps a short margin around speech (0.2 seconds by default). Increase the margin if cuts feel abrupt. It writes recording_ALTERED.mp4.

```
auto-editor recording.mp4 --margin 0.3s
```

3 Normalize loudness

loudnorm evens out quiet and loud parts. The integrated target (I) is in LUFS; -14 is a common choice for online video. The video stream is copied, so it is not re-encoded.

```
ffmpeg -i recording_ALTERED.mp4 -c:v copy -af loudnorm=I=-14:TP=-1.5:LRA=11 -c:a aac clean.mp4
```

4 Watch it once

Check that no words were clipped at cut points. If they were, raise --margin and run auto-editor again.

5 Turn it into Shorts

Continue with our Podcast to Shorts workflow: cut moments, crop to 9:16, add captions.

Questions

Will auto-editor cut my pauses for effect?

It cuts anything quieter than its threshold. Raise --margin to keep more air around speech, or edit the result by hand where a pause matters.

Why normalize loudness?

Viewers set volume per video; even loudness avoids sudden jumps and keeps quiet speech audible.

Sources

- auto-editor options (--margin)
- FFmpeg loudnorm filter

Commands checked against each tool's docs on November 19, 2026.