

Re: Can I play a region 1 DVD in my region 2 dvd recorder?

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- *From:* Måns Rullgård <[mans@xxxxxxxx](mailto:mans@xxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Sat, 29 Sep 2007 19:38:48 +0100
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rodsmith@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx (Rod Smith) writes:

In article <o532t4-qgd.ln1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>, markhobley@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx (Mark Hobley) writes:

I would like to play a region 1 dvd on my region 2 dvd rewriter drive. My drive is a Lite-On DVDRW S0HW-012S rewriter.

I have mounted the disk, but when I try to play the video files, I get errors as follows:

```
mplayer *.vob
```

```
Playing vts_01_0.vob.  
Seek failed
```

...

Presumably this is due to the region code not matching the region of my drive (I am in the United Kingdom.)

Actually, the problem is more likely due to the fact that you've tried to mount the disc and play the files from the mounted image. Instead, you should use xine or some other Linux DVD-playing tool to play the disc by pointing the program at your DVD-ROM drive's device file:

```
xine dvd:///
```

Details will vary depending on what program you use, though. Note that mplayer isn't the best choice for this because it can't handle DVD menus, which makes DVD navigation difficult.

While that is true, MPlayer has the advantage of skipping the annoying logo sequences and copyright notices most players insist on showing

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before the actual film. Which player is best depends entirely on the situation.

As to region codes specifically, it's my understanding that most DVD drives for computers ship with the region code unset, meaning that the drive will play discs from any region. In most cases, Windows or MacOS DVD-playing software sets the code the first time the software is run, but Linux software doesn't do this. Thus, if you've never tried to play a video DVD in Windows or MacOS on your system, you'll PROBABLY be able to play media intended for any region in Linux. If you've used the DVD drive to play videos under Windows or MacOS, though, the region code will probably be set. You can check this detail with the regionset utility (<http://linvdr.org/projects/regionset/>); just insert a CD or DVD, type "regionset", and examine the output. On my systems, I get several lines of output, including:

```
drive plays discs from region(s):, mask=0xFF
```

If the region code is set, it would appear just before the comma, as in:

```
drive plays discs from region(s): 2, mask=0xFF
```

At the end of the output, regionset asks if you want to change your drive's region code. Most drives limit the number of times you can do this (regionset reports how many are left), so don't do it unnecessarily.

It is correct that many DVD drives, at least if sold separately (not part of an assembled computer), come without a region configured. Until a region is set, the behaviour varies between models. Some will happily play anything, others will not play any discs at all.

One further point: I've seen a claim that the decss library can get around region coding and play discs for one region even when the drive is set to another region code.

This claim is true. Libdvdec is able to play DVDs with any region mask on any player. Oddly enough, the exception is some drives with no region set, as mentioned above. On these drives, setting any region will allow playback of any DVD.

As for the legality of libdvdec, I reckon the risk of getting caught is fairly minimal, even in the US.

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