

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING FILES FOR MASTERING

(please read all pages)

FILE TYPES

- mix files can be either .wav or .aiff files (wave or AIFF)
- 24-bit audio files are strongly preferred, 16-bit files are acceptable when 24-bit files are absolutely unavailable, or the original recording/mix session was done at 16-bit.
- Sample rates up to 192k are accepted. Preferred sample rate is whatever the original printed mix or recording session is at, and not necessarily the highest possible sample rate. Basically, no need to upsample your files after they're created.
- Please be sure that the mix files have reasonable volume headroom to work with, it's hard and sometimes impossible to do anything useful (sonically) to mix files that are already "CD Loud" or have a high RMS level. Please do not send mix files that have already been "pre-mastered", normalized or made extremely loud using digital processing or plugins. I understand that in some cases, certain plugins on the master fader/buss can be very important to your sound, but if you're adding an L2 or Ozone limiter (or something similar) simply for the sake of loudness, I prefer that you remove it before making your final bounces for mastering. I can easily make your master as loud as you'd like, but it's hard to do a quality mastering job when the mix files are already pushed very loud. I'm referring to processing on just the master fader or mix file, or overall mix. Compression on individual tracks or instruments within the mix is definitely ok and an entirely different thing.

It's becoming more common for mix engineers to show clients their mixes with some "pre-mastering" volume/compression added so that the mixes compete with some finished products that they might be comparing them to, but ideally the mix engineer should remove that "premastering" and create a 24-bit mix file without any L2 or Ozone type limiting/compression for the actual mastering session. Although it might seem simple, I can't simply turn down mixes that are already too loud because in almost all cases, severe sonic compression and damage has already been done, and can only be undone from the mix source.

If you feel that your mixes won't be the same without a particular plugin, feel free to send one song as a sample to see if it's something I can do any useful mastering to. Another option is to send your processed version and a version with no processing on the master so I can see what you're shooting for.

BEFORE THE MASTERING SESSION

Please send an e-mail, or include a typed note with the following information:

-final song order/track listing (please note where side A and B split for vinyl releases). Please make sure the spelling and capitalization is exactly as you want it to appear. Please make a note if the original source file name is drastically different than the official name to help avoid confusion)

-artist name as you want it to appear in the CD-Text

-album/release/project name

-ISRC codes (if you are choosing to include them on the master CD, it's optional)

-format(s) it's being released on (CD, Vinyl, digital distribution etc.)

Remember, that since the files are being submitted to me as data, they are probably not in any order other than alphabetical, even if your engineer has burned CD's for you in the past in the correct order.

Feel free to include any notes about song-to-song transitions, and spacing between the songs.

Please let me know if there are issues with any of the mixes that you'd like me to try and address, such as too much low or high end, or lack of etc.

Also, if you have a stylistic preference, please let me know ahead of time. Some clients want a master that is as loud as the average commercial CD these days, while some prefer to preserve more of the dynamics of the music, and sacrifice some overall loudness, please let me know if you have any strong preferences either way.

FILE DELIVERY

Please do not bring in, or send in audio CD's or mp3's to master from.

Audio CD's are not really appropriate for mastering for a number of reasons. Bring in your mixes on a DATA CD (or DVD), or a hard disk or flash drive.

I have an iDisk account that files can be uploaded to as well. To do this, make a folder with all your mixes in it, and then zip up the folder using the Mac Finder or a 3rd party software program for zipping files. If you're having uploading problems, it may help to break it up into 2 or 3 smaller folders/zip files. If you're on a Mac, you can upload the zip file to my iDisk by doing the following:

Using the Finder, select the "Go" tab, select iDisk, and then "other users public folder"

Member Name: justincarlperkins

Choose "connect as Registered User"

Name: public (it should fill this in for you)

Password: public

I also have a [Dropbox](#) account under mysteryroommastering@gmail.com if you want to use Dropbox to send the files

If you're not familiar with using iDisk, [Dropbox](#) or using a Windows machine, please make a folder with all the mixes in it, and then zip up the folder, creating a zip file (please do not make a .rar file). Upload the zip file to a website like www.wetransfer.com or www.sendspace.com and then e-mail me the link to download the files. For larger projects, you may need to split it up into 2 or 3 zip files as sendspace has a size limit for each upload. Please do not upload each file individually as it's more time consuming on my end to get each one, zip file is much easier and safer for your data.

If you prefer to mail a DATA CD/DVD or flash drive please send it to:

Mystery Room Mastering
1442 Underwood Ave
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

AFTER THE MASTERING SESSION

When the initial session is finished, I can supply you with a CD reference copy and/or upload files for you to be sure everything is ready to go. Once everything is approved and finalized, I will supply you with a master audio CD-R, or upload a DDP image to your CD manufacturing plant. Most CD plants accept DDP files so check with them as it's easier and a better method to use a DDP for the master in my opinion, since audio CD-R masters are much more susceptible to potential errors, and always contain some rate of micro-errors. All audio master CD-R's are tested for C1/C2

errors to make sure the error rate is within spec to be a master CD, but by submitted a DDP file for a master, we can forget about all of that.

VINYL MASTERS: Unless otherwise directed, for vinyl masters I will prepare one 24-bit file for each side of the record. Unlike audio CD's, vinyl itself has no limits on bitrate or sample rate, so rather than reduce your music to CD quality and then transfer to vinyl, I like to keep things at 24-bit, as well as leave some more dynamics and headroom/breathing room in the music for the vinyl cutter to work with. The reason I make one file per side, is to assure that the spacing between the songs, or that the song order won't get changed accidentally. I also include a PDF file with all the song information and times so the vinyl cutter knows where each song is starting and stopping, which is not always easy for them to determine.

The mastering fee includes one round of adjustments to be made after the initial mastering session, any further adjustments, or submitting new mixes, or remixes is subject to further billing.

For payment, please send a check made to:

Mystery Room Mastering
1442 Underwood Ave
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

If you prefer PayPal, send a payment to PayPal ID:
justincarlperkins@gmail.com

I can also accept Visa/MasterCard/Discover and American Express either in person or over the phone (or e-mail/iChat).

*** PayPal or Credit/Debit card payments may be subject to a 2.5% transaction fee. This allows me to keep my rates for everybody as low as possible.**

Thank you.