

Mix Preparation Guide

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Here are some guidelines to stick to when sending on tracks for mixing. Most of this is common sense, but it's good to have them in print!

Exporting Your Audio

1. Export all the separate tracks in your song from 0:00 in your DAW - even if the track is silent until the end of the song. This means they'll all line up with each other when imported into my DAW, ready to mix. Every instrument/vocal should be on its own track.
2. Clearly label each individual track - e.g.: LeadVox, SnareTopMic, SnareBtmMic, BassDI, MiniMoog etc.
3. Ensure that all comps/edits are done, and that they're properly cross-faded (no clicks, pops, cut off breaths, drums etc).
4. Remove all non-essential plug-ins/inserts. You can remove compressors and most EQs, delays, and reverbs etc, unless they are integral to the sound. Use common sense here :-)
5. If you want to keep your effects on, just include a copy of the clean track and add "_Dry" to the original track name, e.g. "Lead_Vocal_Dry". Or, you can add _FX, to the one with the effects, it's up to you. Just include both copies!
6. Keep all vocal tuning, unless you'd like me to do the vocal tuning (let me know!). To indicate a track you would like tuned, append "_PlsTune" to the original track name, e.g. "Lead_Vocal_PlsTune". Generally, though, the tuning is part of the production process.
7. Please remove all non-essential automation: keep mutes and special effects.
8. If you'd like me to 'continue where you left off', keep your mixer's fader/volume and pan settings when you export tracks. Usually though, it's best to reset all track pans to the centre, and reset all faders to the 0dB point. I'll be able to recognise the relative levels you like from the rough mix you provide.
9. If you do reset the faders to 0dB - make sure no individual tracks are clipping. If a track clips at ANY point in the song, turn down the fader (or clip gain) until isn't any. If a track has been recorded clipped, make sure that no additional clipping is introduced.
10. Include a rough mix of the song. Label this track "ROUGHMIX". Avoid using any master bus compression/limiting on this if possible!
11. Import all the tracks you've just exported into the new project – they should all line up and sound 'correct'!
12. Ideally, please include any notes in a plain text file. Label this file "<Songtitle>_mixnotes.txt". Notes should include:
 - Song BPM (important)
 - Any specific requests for FX/vocal treatment
 - The names of any reference songs you like the sound/aesthetic of that you'd like me to listen to
13. **File formats:** Files should generally be exported at the same sample rate that they were recorded/created in - anything between 44.1KHz and 96KHz is fine. 16-Bit or 24-Bit is fine, but 24-Bit is preferred and hopefully the bit depth that the tracks were created/recorded in. **Aiff** or **Wav** is fine!
14. Place all raw audio files, the rough mix, and the text file in a folder. The folder name should correspond to the song title. Zip the folder and you're ready to upload!

Much love & take care,
Eddie Al-Shakarchi