dynamic mastering services

Preparation & File Delivery Guidelines

David Mackie Scouller is extremely passionate about music and high quality audio. Before preparing your project to send for mastering please consider the following guidelines which have been created to help achieve the best possible final product.

Bit Depth: 24-bit.

Dither: Use Triangular or POW-r 1 dither to eliminate quantisation distortion when exporting at 24-bit or 16-bit.

Sample Rate: 96kHz, 48kHz, 44.1kHz. Please send files exported at the native sample rate of your project.

File Formats: Interleaved Stereo WAV or AIFF.

Track Naming
It is very important that you name all your tracks correctly so it's easy to tell which file belongs to which project. Related files can be put in a folder with the project name.

Exporting Files
When exporting your files from your digital audio workstation create a gap at the start of your song of one bar or more. Select the area to be exported starting one bar before the track starts playing and one bar after all audio has stopped and the fade has **completely** gone. Export to 24-bit Interleaved WAV stereo or AIFF and apply a simple dither such as Triangular or POW-r1.

Mix Levels
Ensure the peaks of your final mix do not exceed -3dBFS (the main goal here is to ensure your peaks do not reach 0dBFS where clipping may occur) this leaves some headroom to play with and will benefit the resulting mastered track. Recording at 24-bit allows low levels without lowering signal to noise ratio or sound quality!
There is no need for any processors on your master channel such as compressors and especially limiters if you are to send your music to be professionally mastered. High end analogue equipment will be used where necessary. If you have mixed into a compressor or limiter please ensure that the required headroom still remains after removal. Processing that is an intrinsic part of the sound of the mix (such as compression) can be left on but it may be preferable for an additional mix to be supplied with the processing removed.

Stem Mastering
When exporting stems it is important that the exact same start point is used on each stem with no gain changes. Mute only the tracks you do not wish to hear this way any reverbs or processing across the full mix will remain in the stems. Do not worry if there are large sections of silence in your vocal stem this is normal and having all stems the same length is vital to make alignment easier. The sum of all your stems at unity gain should produce the full mix on playback. A compressor should not be used on the mix buss when exporting stems as the compressor will not react the same to the stems as it will to the whole mix being passed through it. If a compressor has been used on the mix buss the integrity of the mix must be checked once it is removed.

FTP Delivery
Your project can be sent via the internet using services such as We Transfer which is free up to 2GB. Your project should be archived using RAR (.rar) as this provides checksum error detection to help ensure that what you send is what is actually received. Projects archived with ZIP (.zip) can also be accepted.

Physical Delivery
Projects can also be sent via post on CD/DVD please get in contact for details.

Email Website Facebook Twitter