

Rimshot Mastering Service FAQ

www.rimshotmastering.co.uk

Welcome to Rimshot's mastering FAQ. Please read through these notes - it will help do the best job possible for your music. We've included the usual things we get asked but if anything isn't clear, please call us on **+44 (0) 7970 093240**. We're here to help.

General thoughts

Please don't "pre-master" your mixes or limit them using a Finalizer or L2 (or similar) as this severely reduces our options when working on them.

Give your mixes some breathing space - If you're printing your mixes to digital, there's no need to get anywhere close to zero! Leave some headroom and your masters will sound much better (I promise).

Mastering decisions

Where you have clear ideas about certain decisions, please include these as notes. Although these may change slightly during the session, they provide a good starting point for us to work from. Things to think about include:

- Sequence of tracks
- Any edits or crossfades between mixes
- Fades - when they should start, when they should end...
- Spacing between songs
- Alternate mixes - which to use

Digital file formats

We can work with files up to 24 bit 192 KHz. Send us the best fidelity you can - go for the highest sampling rate and widest bit depth when you mix. However, if your mix is a different sample rate or bit depth, don't convert it to a higher rate before sending it - just send us what you have.

If possible, send files as Wav (.wav) or Broadcast Wav Format (.bwf).

Sending us your digital mixes

If you're sending us your mixes on physical media, rather than via FTP, please include the following information on your label: Artist, Producer, Contact Tel, Date, Project Title, Song Title, Bit Depth, Sample Rate and File Format.

If you're sending us mixes via the internet, please compress them before sending. Although this doesn't reduce the file size drastically, it does mean that the contents get error checked so that what we receive is what you've sent! Shareware compression software includes PeaZip (Windows) or Ziplt (Mac).

Please use our WeTransfer site at <http://rimshot.wetransfer.com>

You can also email a download link to mixes@rimshotmastering.co.uk

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Analogue tape formats & lineup tones

Our Studer C37 valve reel to reel can work with 1/2 inch tapes at either 15 IPS or 30 IPS. We have Dolby SR and Dolby A noise reduction. Other tape formats are OK too - call to discuss.

Please print line up tones at the tail (to avoid print-through) of the first reel and include at least 30 seconds of the following tones at 0 VU: 1 KHz, 10 KHz, 15 KHz, 100 Hz and 50 Hz. If you've used noise reduction, print Dolby noise or tone as well. Leader up the head and tail of the reel, as well as between each mix.

Please include the following information on your tape label: Artist, Producer, Contact Tel, Date, Project title, Song title, Tape speed, Record level (e.g. +3 / 250 nWb), Recorder type (e.g. Ampex), Tones (Which ones and where), Noise reduction (SR, Dolby A or none).

Approving the master

Once your album is mastered we will provide you with a reference DDP (Disc Description Protocol) file or reference CDR (see below). Have a listen and if there are any changes to be made, we'll make them and then provide your Production Master.

Production Master delivery?

If you've chosen to receive your master via FTP, we will send you a DDP file. This file contains your entire album, complete with track spacings and CD Text. Please use Rimshot's DDP player (available to download from our website) to play the file and burn a reference CDR.

Most manufacturers prefer delivery of your master as a DDP file.

If you require a CDR Production Master we are happy to provide one. The disc goes through several layers of quality control checks to ensure it is a clone of the reference disc you've approved and that all the relevant sub-code data is present and correct and that the disc has the lowest error rates possible.

CD Text

CD Text is written to your Master but is only readable by certain CD players, usually those found in cars. We will send you a text file of the CD text so you can confirm everything is as you want.

Gracenote Database

iTunes (and most other software) uses the online Gracenote CD database to look up the track names on your CD. Once you've submitted the track names yourself, iTunes should download them automatically. For details please visit <http://www.gracenote.com/about/FAQs/#upload>

ISRC Codes

An ISRC code is a unique 12 digit alpha-numeric code that is the digital equivalent of a fingerprint for each song. It allows your music to be tracked for royalty collection.

If you're working with a label, they usually provide the codes you need. If you're an independent artist please visit <http://www.ppluk.com> and type "isrc" into the search box. The link explains how to obtain your own ISRC codes. Please call if you need any help with this.

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UPC / EAN Codes

Similar to an ISRC code, a UPC or EAN code is used to identify your product at a retail checkout and to track sales. They are usually provided by your label or distributor.

Payment

For our Mastering service we take a 50% deposit to book your mastering session with the balance due before delivery.

We accept bank transfers, credit cards via Paypal or cash. Cheques are OK too, but please allow time for them to clear. We're VAT registered - if you're in the UK, we have to add 20% VAT to our prices (this will be shown on your invoice).