NARMOVION

Studio Player

User manual

Version 1.8.1-rc1

November 2026

Windows 10 and 11

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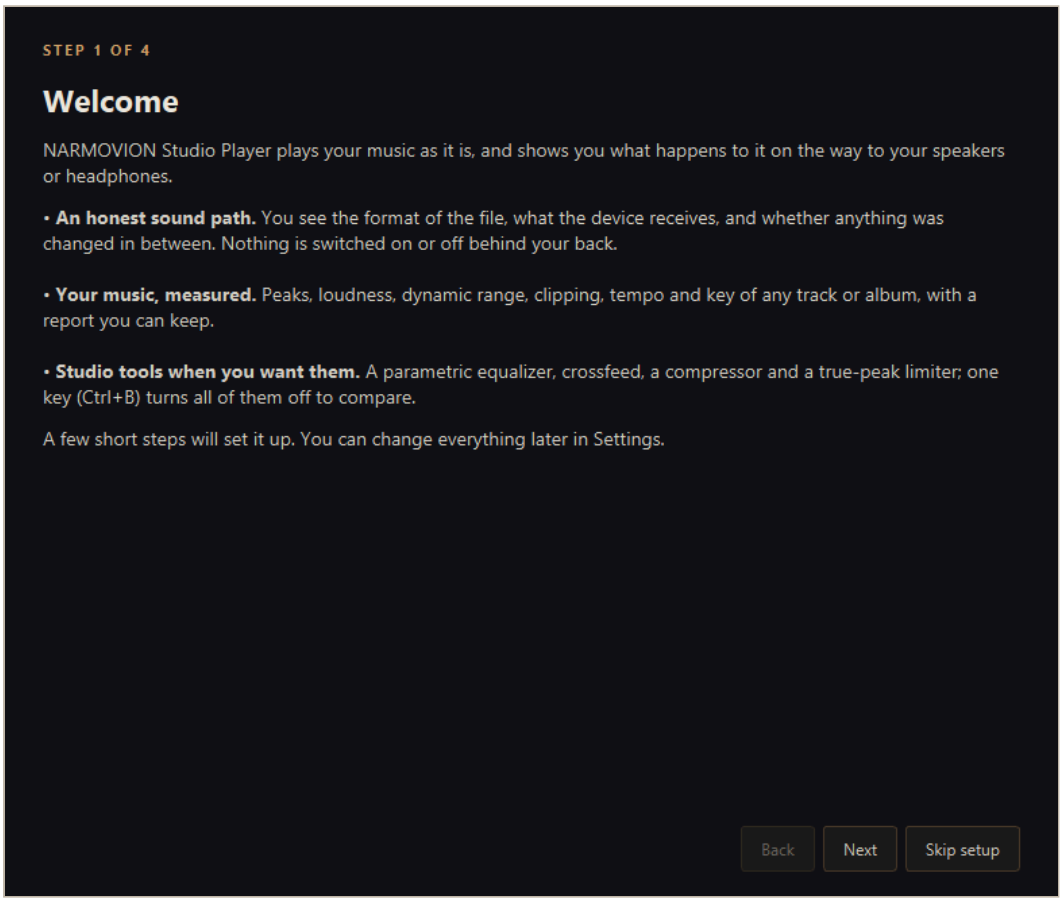
1. Quick start

NARMOVION Studio Player plays your own music files with as little processing between the file and the sound card as you ask for. This page takes you from the first start to the first song.

The first start

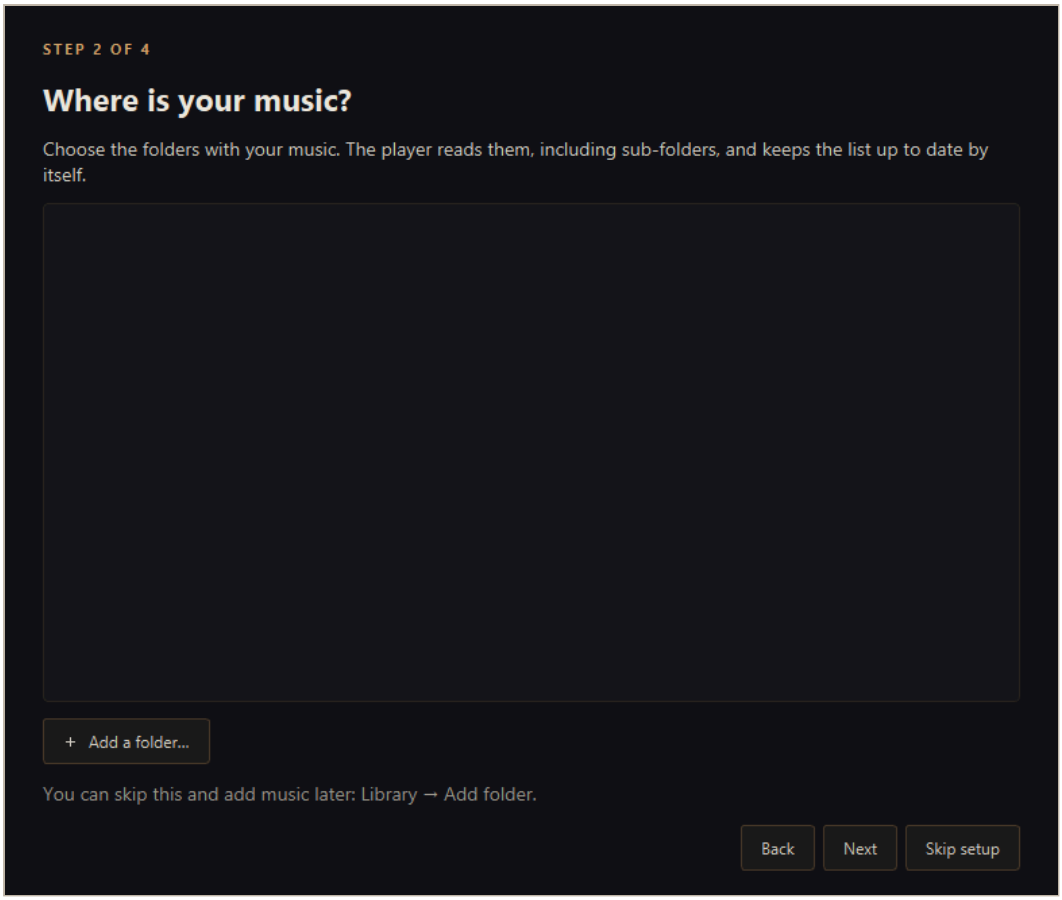
The first time the player opens, a short setup window, *Welcome to NARMOVION Studio Player*, asks four things, one page each:

1. **Welcome** — what the player is.



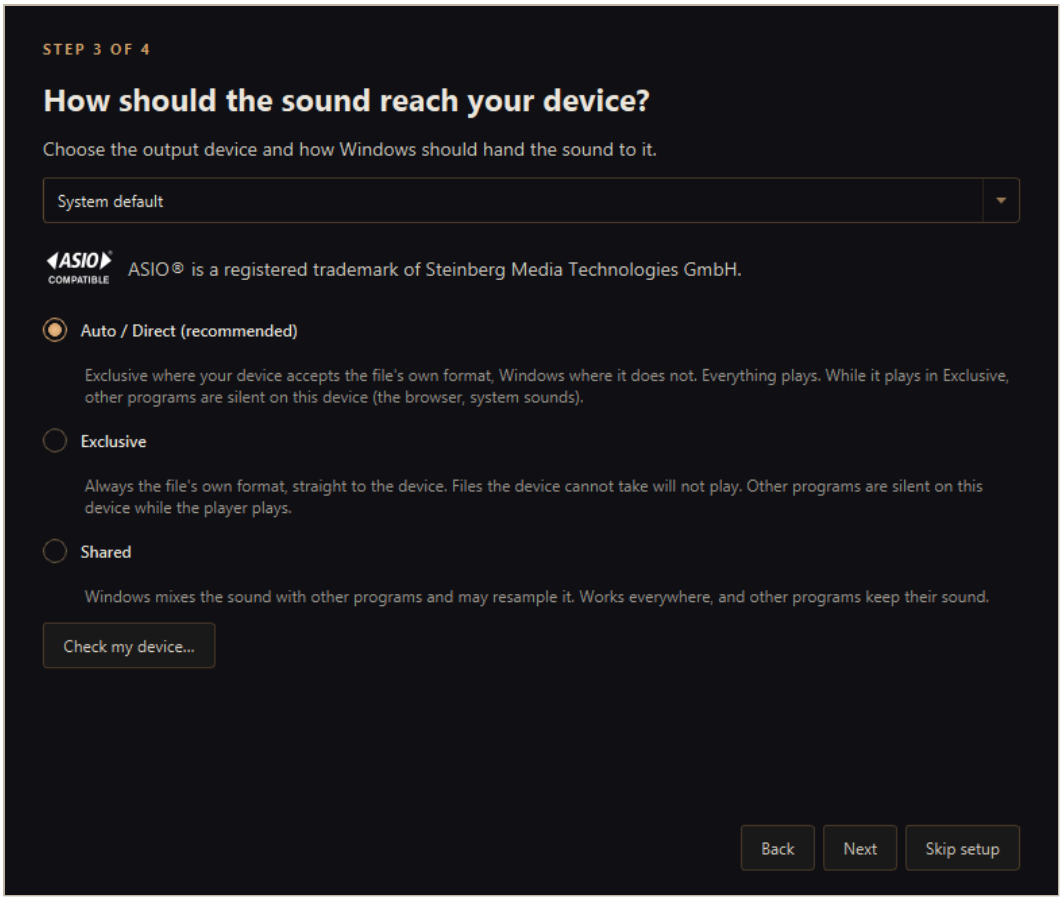
Setup, step 1

2. **Where is your music?** — **Add a folder…** as many times as you like; sub-folders are included. You can skip it and add music later with *Add folder* in the left column.



Setup, step 2

3. **How should the sound reach your device?** — choose the output device and the mode: **Auto / Direct** (recommended: Exclusive where the device accepts the file's own format, Windows where it does not), **Exclusive** or **Shared** (section 2). **Check my device…** asks the device which formats it accepts.

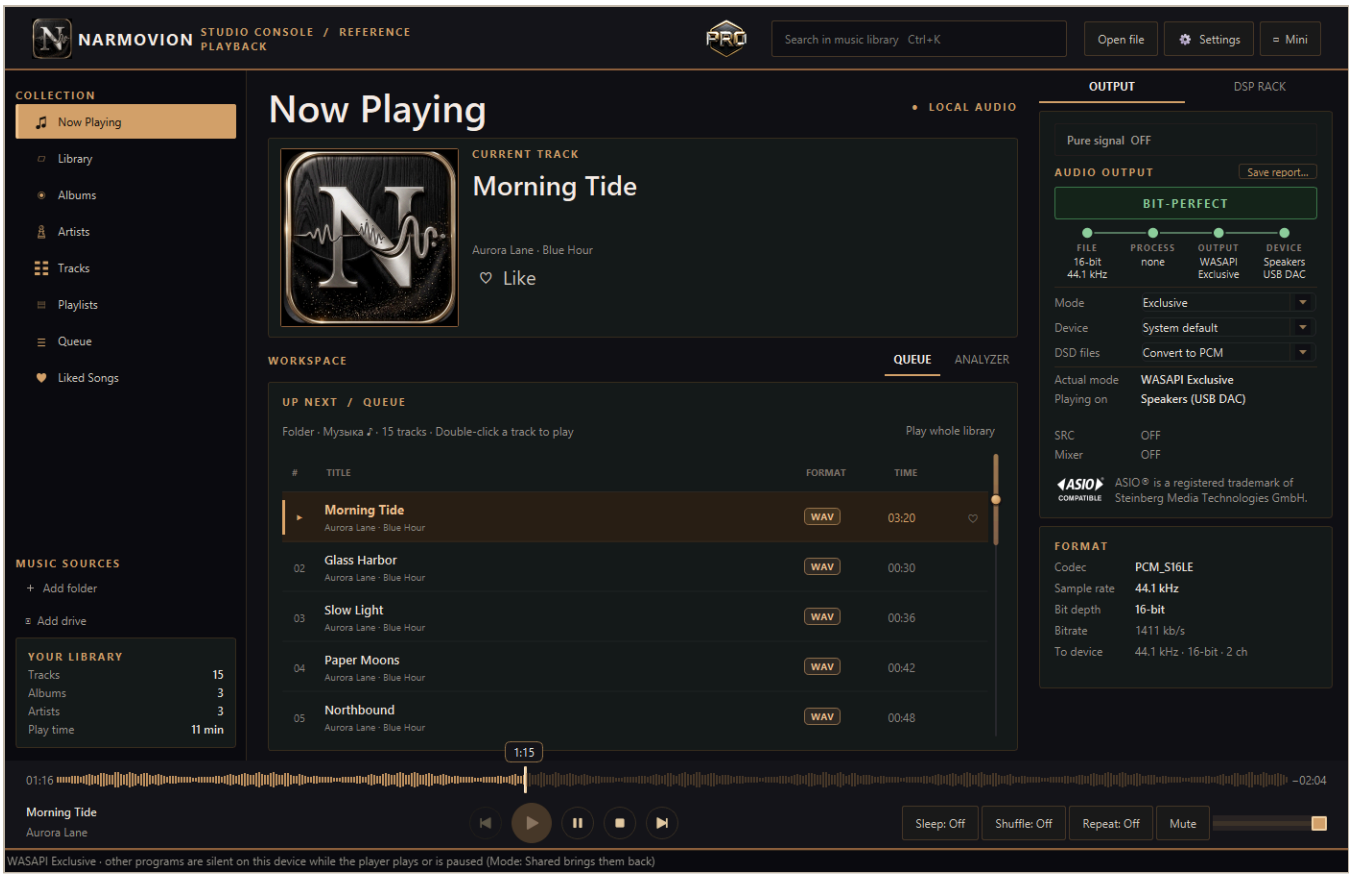


Setup, step 3

4. **You are ready** — a few hints (Ctrl+K searches, right-click a track, Pure signal, Diagnostics) and **Start listening**.

Use **Next** and **Back** to move; **Skip setup** closes it and keeps the defaults. Nothing here is final: every answer is a setting you can change later, and **Settings** → **About** has **Run the setup again**.

The main window



The main window with a track playing (PRO edition)

1. **Left column.** The sections of your collection: *Now Playing*, *Library*, *Albums*, *Artists*, *Tracks*, *Playlists*, *Queue* and *Liked Songs*. Below them the **music sources** (*Add folder*, *Add drive*) and a short summary of your library.
2. **Centre.** The page of the section you chose. *Now Playing* shows the current track, the queue ("UP NEXT / QUEUE") and, on a second tab, the analyzer.
3. **Right column.** Two tabs. **OUTPUT** shows where the sound goes and in what format (section 2); **DSP RACK** holds the sound tools (section 4). Under them, the **FORMAT** card tells what the current file is.
4. **Header.** The search box (Ctrl+K), *Open file*, *Settings*, *Mini*, and to the left of the search box the **edition emblem** (FREE or PRO, section 3).
5. **Bottom bar.** Elapsed time, the seek bar, the remaining time, the transport buttons, *Sleep*, *Shuffle*, *Repeat*, *Mute* and the volume slider.

1. Add your music

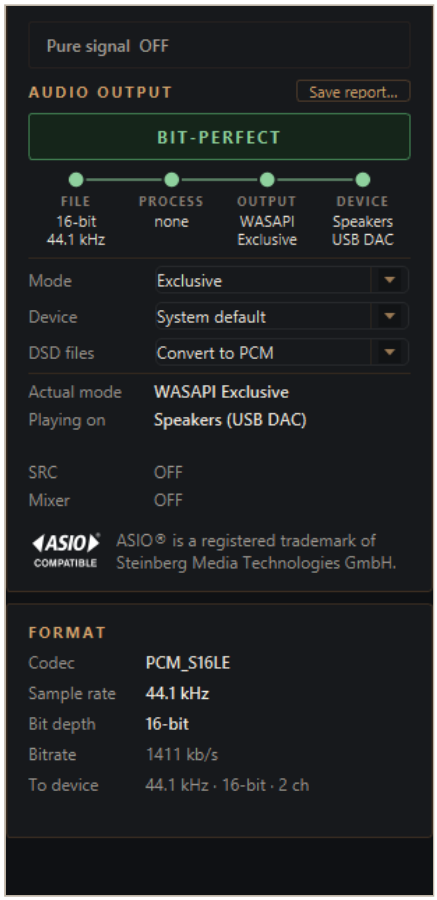
- Press **Add folder** (left column, *Music sources*) and choose the folder with your music. The player scans it, reads the tags and fills *Library*, *Albums*, *Artists* and *Tracks*. Add as many folders as you like; **Add drive** adds a whole drive.
- To play a single file or a CUE sheet without adding it to the library, use **Open file** (Ctrl+O), or open it from Windows with "Open with". Settings → Interface can make the player the program that opens audio files.

- Adding a folder never moves or changes your files.

2. Play

- Double-click a track in the queue or in any list of the library. The player plays it and fills the queue with the tracks that follow in the same list.
- **Space** plays or pauses, **Esc** stops. The round buttons in the bottom bar are *previous*, *play*, *pause*, *stop* and *next*.
- Click anywhere on the seek bar to jump there. **Left** and **Right** arrow keys seek by 5 seconds (with **Shift**, 30 seconds). Click the elapsed or the remaining time to type a time to jump to (**Ctrl+G**).
- **Ctrl+Up** and **Ctrl+Down** change the volume by 5 %. The slider at the right edge does the same; **Mute** silences the output.
- **Shuffle** and **Repeat** in the bottom bar change the order; **Sleep** stops the music after a time you choose.

3. Choose where the sound goes



The OUTPUT card

On the **OUTPUT** tab:

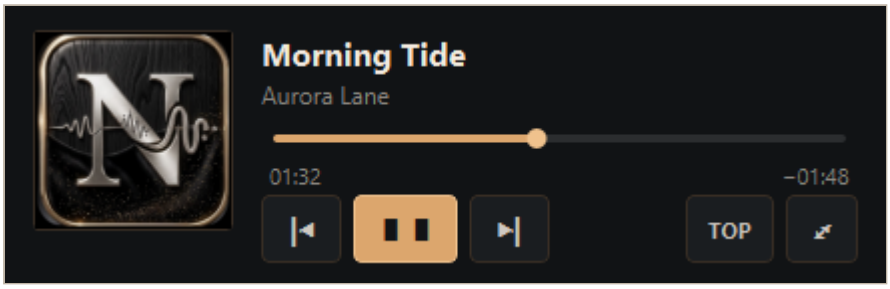
- **Device** — *System default* follows the device Windows uses. Choose the DAC or the sound card you listen to if it is not the default.

- **Mode** — *Shared* lets Windows mix your music with other programs (everything works, Windows may change the sample rate). *Exclusive* gives the file's own format to the device and nothing else can use the device while the player plays. *Auto* uses Exclusive when the device accepts the format and Shared otherwise.
- **DSD files** — DSD recordings are converted to PCM by default (see section 2).

The big bar above the settings tells in one word what is happening, for example *EXCLUSIVE · SRC* (Exclusive mode, sample rate converted) or *EXCLUSIVE · BIT-PERFECT*. Section 2 explains the words.

If you have a PRO license, ASIO drivers appear in the device list as **ASIO · name of the driver**.

4. The compact player



The mini player

Mini (Ctrl+M) turns the player into a small window with the track, the seek bar and the buttons, for when you work in other programs. Press the same button or Ctrl+M again to come back.

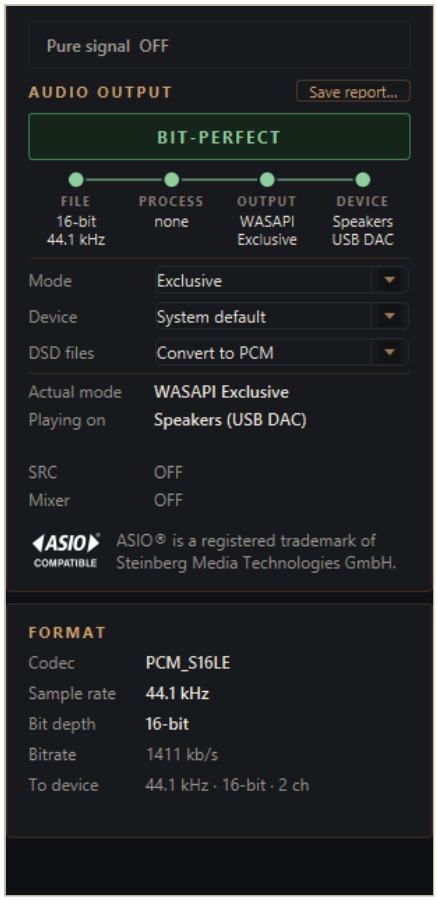
Where to go next

- Sound output, formats and the signal path: section 2.
- Free and PRO, activating a license: section 3.
- The sound tools: section 4.
- Library, playlists, shortcuts, settings: section 5.
- Something does not work: section 6.

2. Sound output

This section explains what the **OUTPUT** tab and **Settings** → **Audio** tell you, and how the sound gets from the file to your device.

The signal path



The OUTPUT card

The row of four points shows the path:

Point	Meaning
PROCESS	what happens to the sound inside the player: sample rate conversion (*SRC*), volume, effects
OUTPUT	the way the sound leaves the player: *WASAPI* or *ASIO*
DEVICE	the device it arrives at

Below it, *Actual mode*, *Playing on*, *SRC* and *Mixer* repeat the facts in words, and the **FORMAT** card shows the file and, in the line **To device**, the format that is sent to the device.

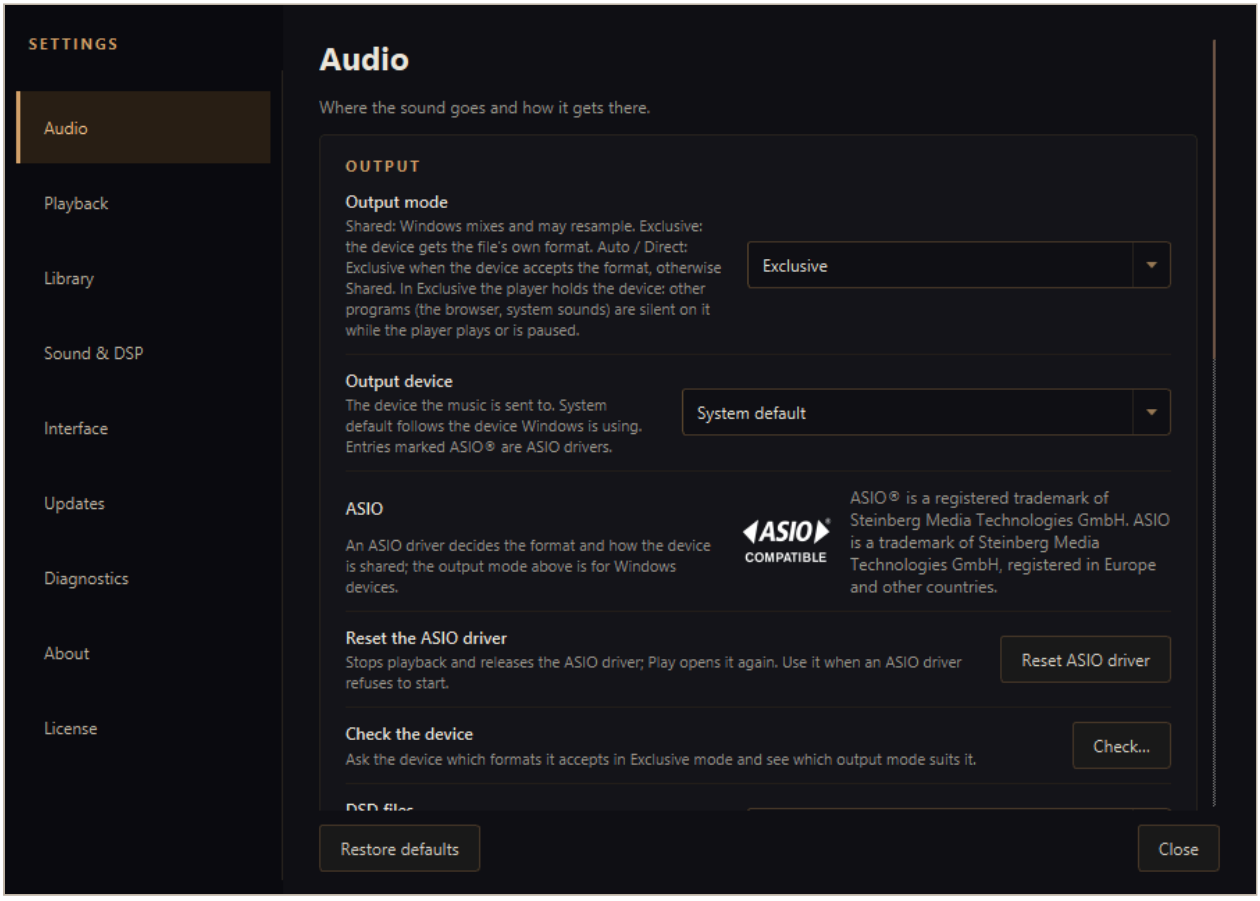
BIT-PERFECT, SRC and the mixer

- **BIT-PERFECT** means the samples of the file reach the device unchanged: Exclusive mode (or an ASIO driver) in a format the device accepts, volume at 100 %, and no equalizer, effect, crossfeed or ReplayGain in the way. The player says so only when this is true.
- **SRC** (sample rate conversion) means the music is converted to a rate the device accepts. The player uses its own high quality converter (*Settings → Audio → Sample-rate conversion*). This happens when the device does not take the file's rate, or when the file needs it (DSD, very high rates).
- **Windows mixer ON** means Windows mixes the player's sound with the other programs (Shared mode); **OFF** means the player talks to the device directly (Exclusive, ASIO).
- Lossy files (MP3, OGG) and floating point files are decoded by the player and are never "bit-perfect" in this sense; that is not a fault.

The output mode

In **Settings → Audio → Output mode**:

- **Shared** — Windows mixes and may resample. Works with everything; other programs stay audible.
- **Exclusive** — the device gets the file's own format. In Exclusive mode the player holds the device: other programs (the browser, system sounds) are silent on it while the player plays or is paused.
- **Auto / Direct** — Exclusive when the device accepts the format, otherwise Shared.



Settings: Audio

Check the device asks the device which formats it accepts in Exclusive mode and tells which mode suits it. Some devices accept only certain rates (many USB DACs and sound cards do not take every high rate); for those the player converts to the nearest rate that works and the OUTPUT card shows *SRC*.

The other settings of the page (hover for their explanations): *Multichannel files* (5.1, 7.1 are mixed down to stereo or ask first), *Tracks louder than full scale*, *Output format*, *Sample-rate conversion*, *Windows mixer*.

DSD files

Settings → **Audio** → **DSD files** (and the *DSD files* line of the OUTPUT card) chooses how DSD recordings (DSF, DFF) are played:

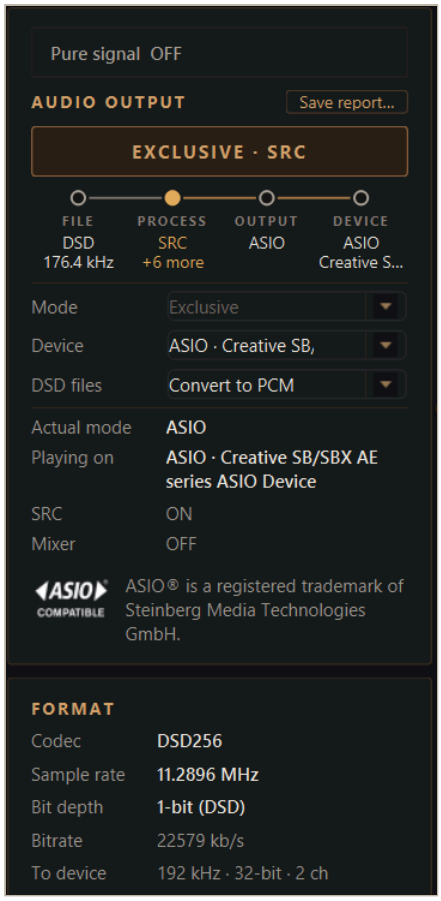
- **Convert to PCM** — the player converts DSD to PCM. A DSD256 file (11.2896 MHz) plays as 192 kHz, 32 bit, and the card shows *SRC ON*.
- **DoP** — the DSD bits are sent unchanged inside PCM frames. It needs WASAPI Exclusive and a DAC that supports DoP, and a device that accepts the rate DoP needs (176.4 kHz for DSD64, 352.8 kHz for DSD128).

On some sound cards DoP is not possible: for example the Creative AE series does not accept 176.4 and 352.8 kHz, and its ASIO drivers offer native DSD only for DSD64 in a limited, non-standard form. There DSD always plays through the conversion. This is a limit of the hardware, not of the file.

ASIO (PRO)

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ASIO output is a PRO feature. Installed ASIO drivers are listed in **Output device** as **ASIO · name of the driver** (in the Free edition the entries are marked *ASIO (PRO)* and cannot be chosen). An ASIO driver decides the format and how the device is shared; the output mode above is for Windows devices.



The OUTPUT and FORMAT cards while a DSD256 file plays through an ASIO driver

What the picture shows: a DSD256 file (**FILE**), converted by the player (**PROCESS · SRC**), sent through ASIO (**OUTPUT**) to the sound card (**DEVICE**) at 192 kHz, 32 bit, 2 channels (**To device**).

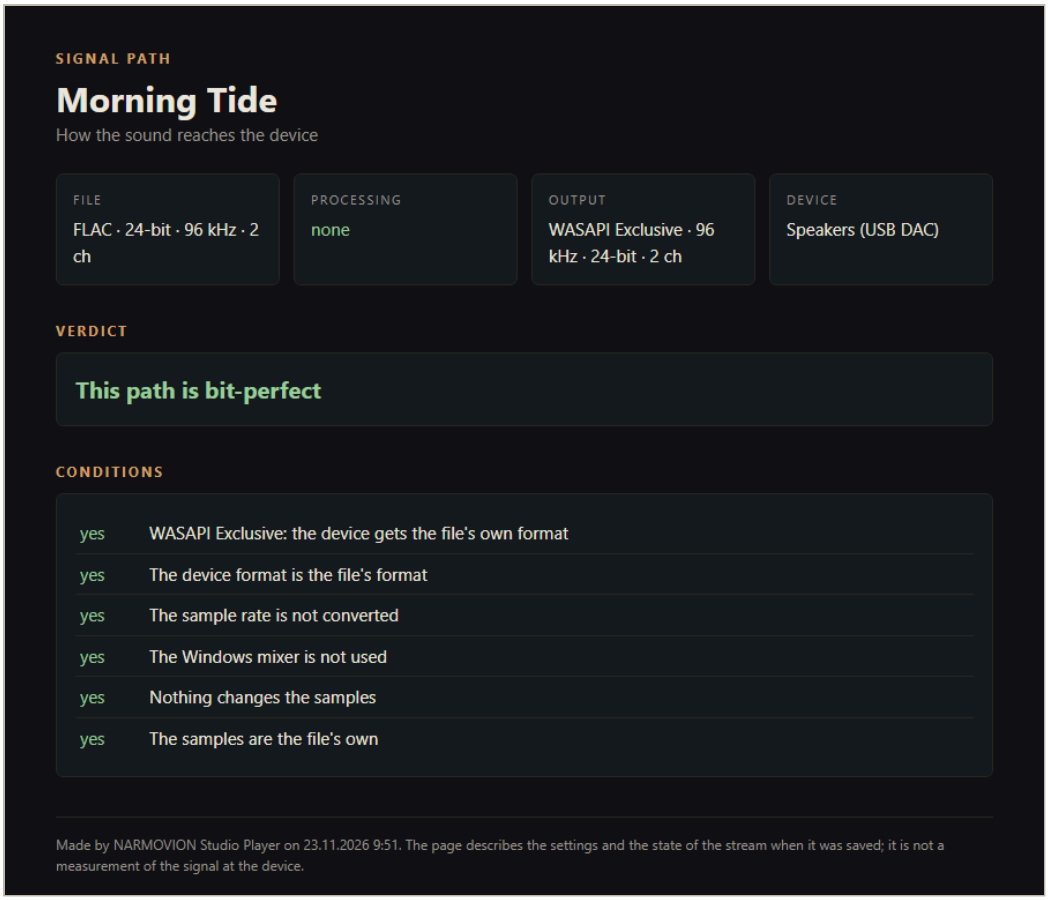
Things to know:

- The player opens only the front pair of the driver's outputs (stereo). Files with more channels are mixed down.
- If the driver does not take a sample rate (for example 352.8 kHz), the player converts to the nearest rate it takes (384 kHz) and the card shows *SRC*.
- **Settings** → **Audio** → **Reset ASIO driver** stops playback and releases the driver; **Play** opens it again. Use it when a driver refuses to start (section 6).
- If a driver gives you trouble, close the sound card's own control program (for example Sound Blaster Command) while you listen through ASIO.
- A change of sample rate between two tracks closes and opens the driver again; the player waits a moment in between so that the driver settles. Tracks of the same format play without a gap.

The signal path report (PRO)

Save report... (top right of the OUTPUT card) writes a one-page report on how the sound reaches the device right now, as a web page (`.html`, named after the track), and opens it in your browser. It shows the four points of the path (file, processing, output, device), the verdict, and six conditions, each answered *yes* or *no* in words: Exclusive mode, the same format as the file, no sample rate conversion, no Windows mixer,

nothing changing the samples, the samples are the file's own. If the path is not bit-perfect, the *no* lines say which condition fails. The page describes the settings and the state of the stream when it was saved; it is not a measurement of the signal at the device. A report that mentions ASIO carries Steinberg's trademark notice.



A signal path report (the page that Save report… writes)

In the Free edition the button is marked PRO.

3. Free and PRO

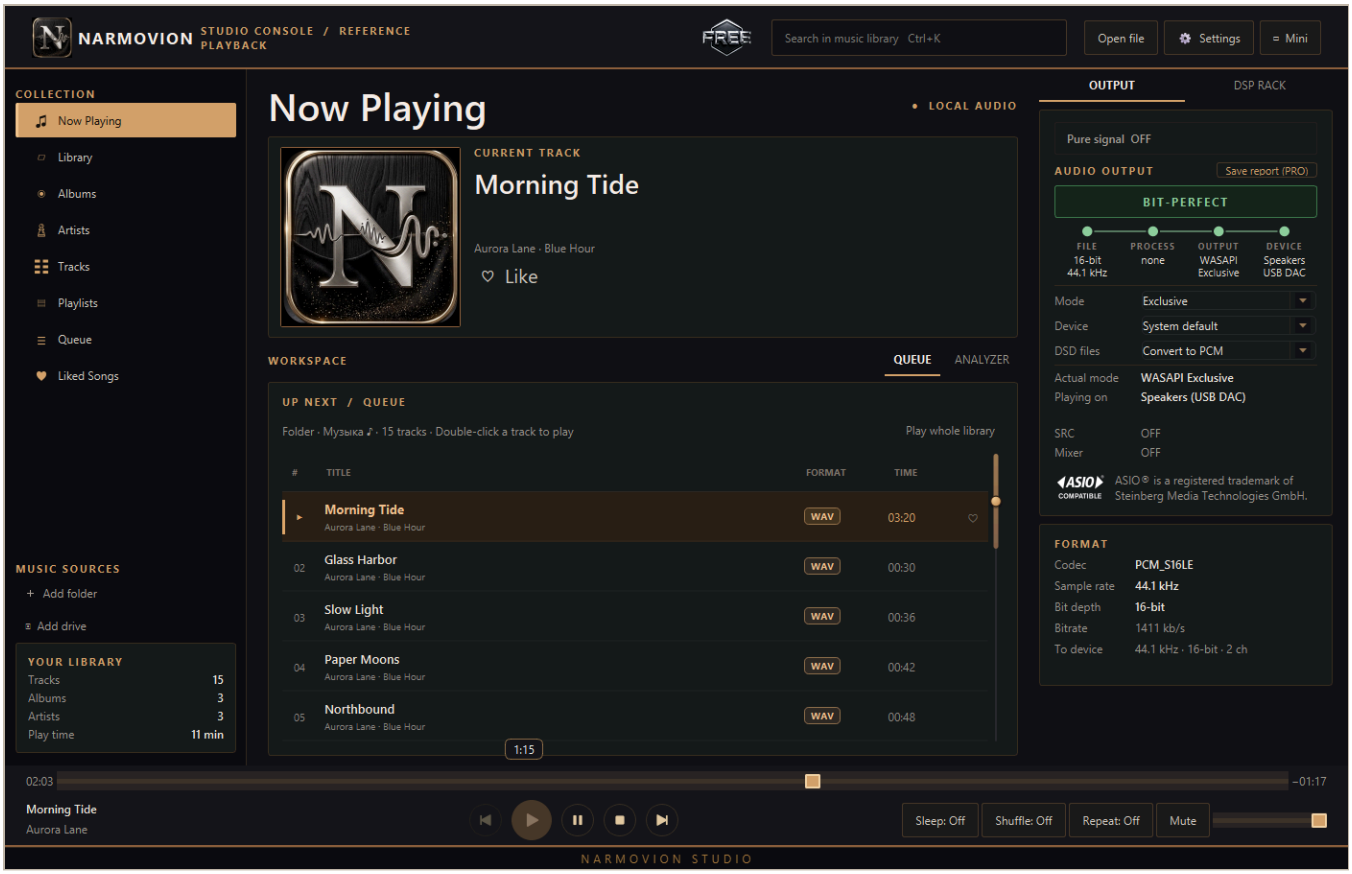
NARMOVION Studio Player comes in two editions. **Free** is a complete player for everyday listening. **PRO** adds the tools for people who tune and check their sound path. The edition is shown by the emblem in the header, to the left of the search box: **FREE**, **PRO**, or **PRO · PAUSED** (see "The PRO pause" below). Clicking the emblem opens the License page (PRO) or the PRO overview (Free).

What each edition has

	Free	PRO
Music library, playlists, liked songs, queue	yes	yes
Equalizer	simple: 5 bands at fixed frequencies, gain only	full parametric equalizer
Seek bar	ordinary slider	waveform of the whole track
Output through ASIO drivers		yes
ABX blind test		yes
Hi-Res filter in the library		yes
Convolution (room and headphone correction)		yes
Compressor		yes
Reports (signal path, track passport, library reports)		yes
Device profiles		yes
Advanced analysis		yes
Channel tools		yes
Smart playlists		yes

Sending a support report, copying system information and the crash report are always available in both editions.

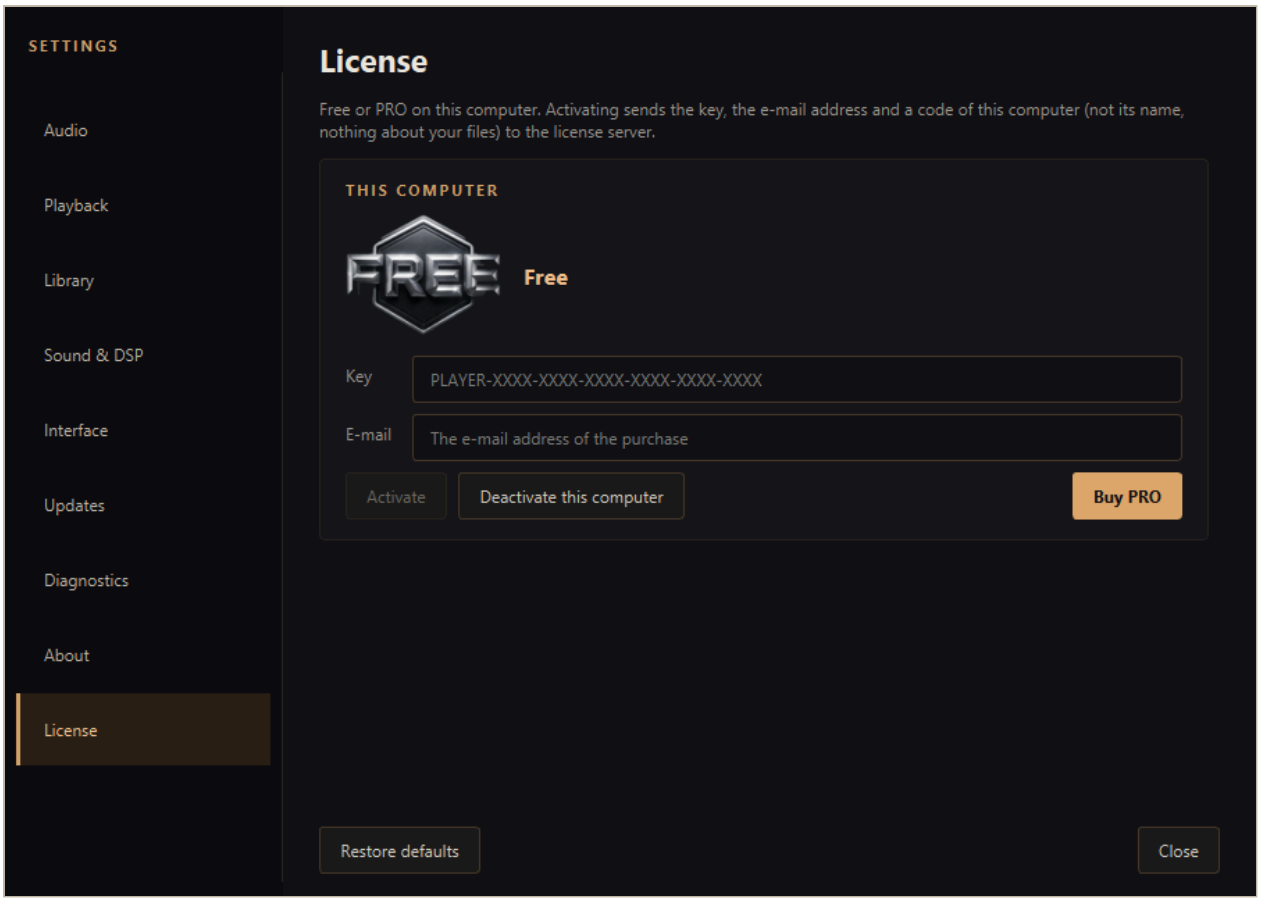
The same window in the Free edition: the emblem says FREE and the seek bar is an ordinary slider.



The main window in the Free edition

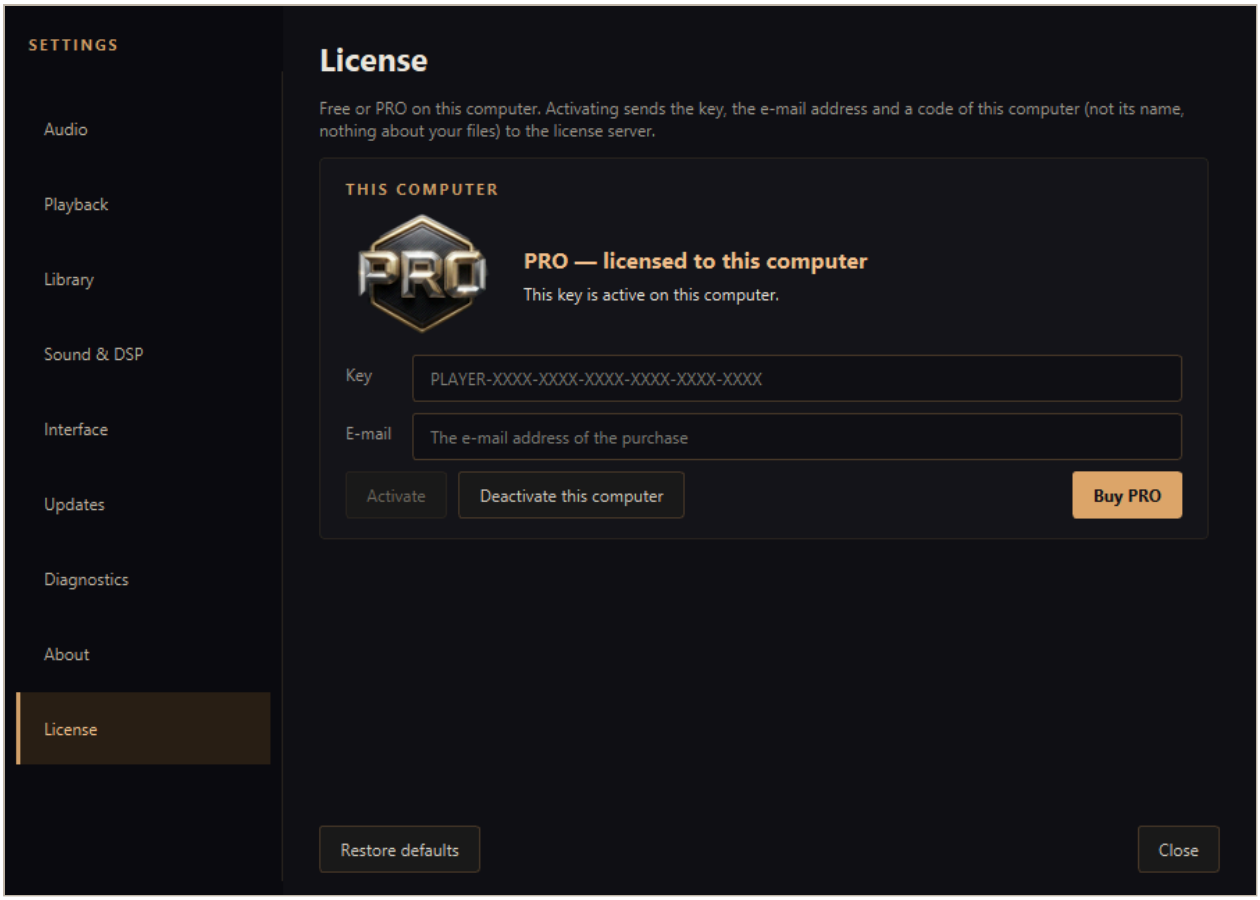
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Getting PRO



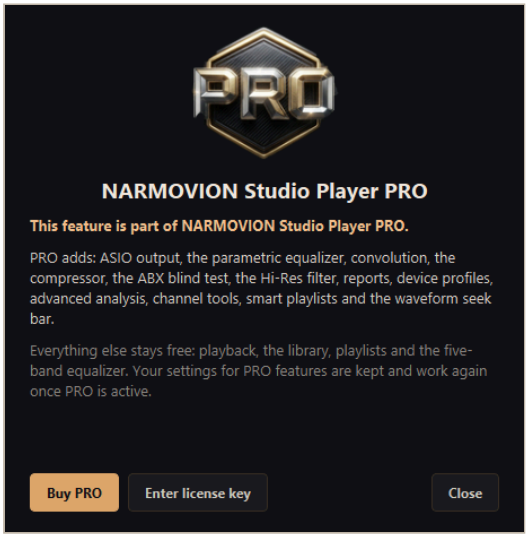
The License page in the Free edition

1. Buy PRO on the website (Settings → License → **Buy PRO** opens the page). The license key arrives by e-mail after the payment.
2. Open **Settings** → **License**, enter the **Key** (it looks like `PLAYER-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX`) and the **E-mail** address you bought with, and press **Activate**. The computer needs an internet connection for this.
3. The page says "PRO — licensed to this computer", the emblem turns gold, and the PRO features unlock at once. Nothing has to be restarted.



The License page with PRO active

In the Free edition a PRO tool that you try to use opens this overview instead of switching on; it explains what PRO adds and has the **Buy PRO** and license buttons.



The PRO overview

One key is for **one computer**. Your settings for PRO features are never deleted: if PRO is off for a while, they come back with PRO.

Moving the license to another computer

1. On the old computer open **Settings** → **License** and press **Deactivate this computer**. This frees the place of the key.
2. On the new computer activate the key as described above.

If the old computer is no longer available (Windows was reinstalled, the system drive was replaced, the computer was lost) the old place cannot be freed by you: the player sees a changed computer and the key then answers that it is already on another computer. Write to the address on the purchase page; the license administrator frees the old computer, and you can activate the key again.

The internet and the PRO pause

The player asks the license server about your key now and then (about once a day, in the background; nothing is shown). The key and your settings stay on your computer, and a short loss of the connection changes nothing.

If the player could not reach the license server for **30 days**, PRO is **paused**: the player works as Free, the emblem shows **PRO · PAUSED**, and a message asks you to connect to the internet so the license can be checked. As soon as the player reaches the server and the key is confirmed, PRO comes back by itself, without entering the key again. While it is paused the player tries every 10 minutes; you can also press **Check now** on the License page.

If the license server says the key is no longer valid (for example after a refund), or that it was released from this computer, PRO ends and the player works as Free.

What is sent to the license server

On activation: the key, the e-mail of the purchase and a one-way hash of an identity of your computer. On the later checks: the license token, which contains the key and that hash. The computer name, your files and your music are never sent.

Messages on the License page

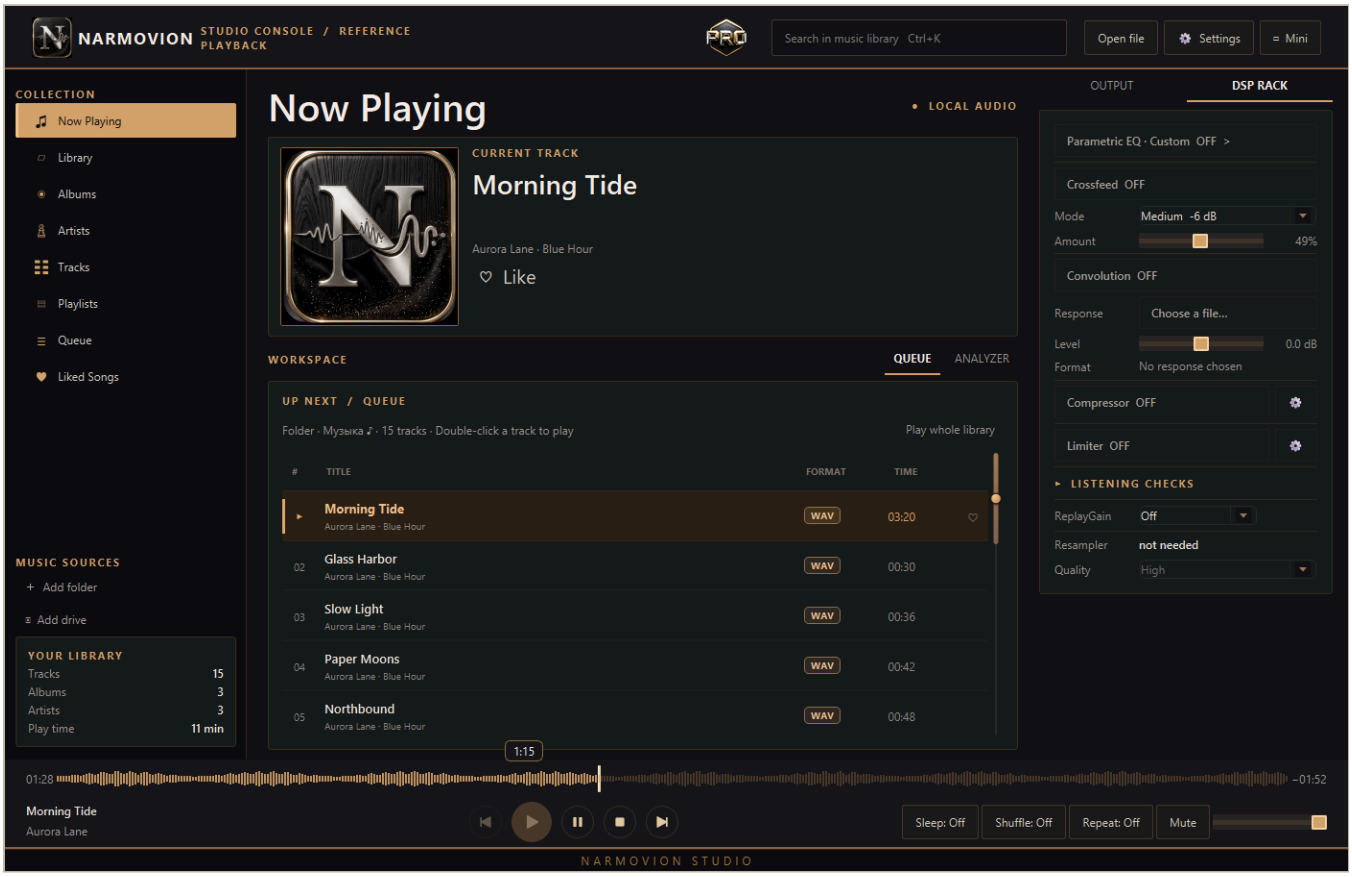
Message	What it means and what to do
The key or the e-mail does not match.	Check both against the purchase e-mail (the key is case-insensitive; no spaces).
This key is no longer valid.	The key was blocked or refunded. Write to support if you think this is a mistake.
This license was released from this computer.	The place was freed (by you or by the administrator). Activate again if you want to use PRO here.
No connection. Try again later.	The player cannot reach the license server: check the internet connection, a firewall or a proxy.

Message	What it means and what to do
The license server did not give a clear answer. Try again later.	A temporary problem on the server side. Nothing is lost.
The license server is out of date. Try again later.	The server and this player version do not fit together yet. Update the player or try later.
This computer cannot be identified, so a license cannot be activated.	Windows did not give the player the data it needs. Write to support with a diagnostics report.
The license was accepted but does not match this computer. Try again or contact support.	The server accepted the key but the answer did not fit this computer. Try once more; if it repeats, write to support.

If something is unclear, **Settings** → **Diagnostics** → **Copy full report** collects the information support needs (see section 6).

4. The sound tools

The **DSP RACK** tab (right column of the main window) holds the tools that shape or check the sound. Everything in the rack can be switched off at once with **Pure signal** (Ctrl+B): equalizer, crossfeed, convolution, compressor and the other effects go off, so that you hear the file as it is; press it again to bring the settings back. The volume is not changed.

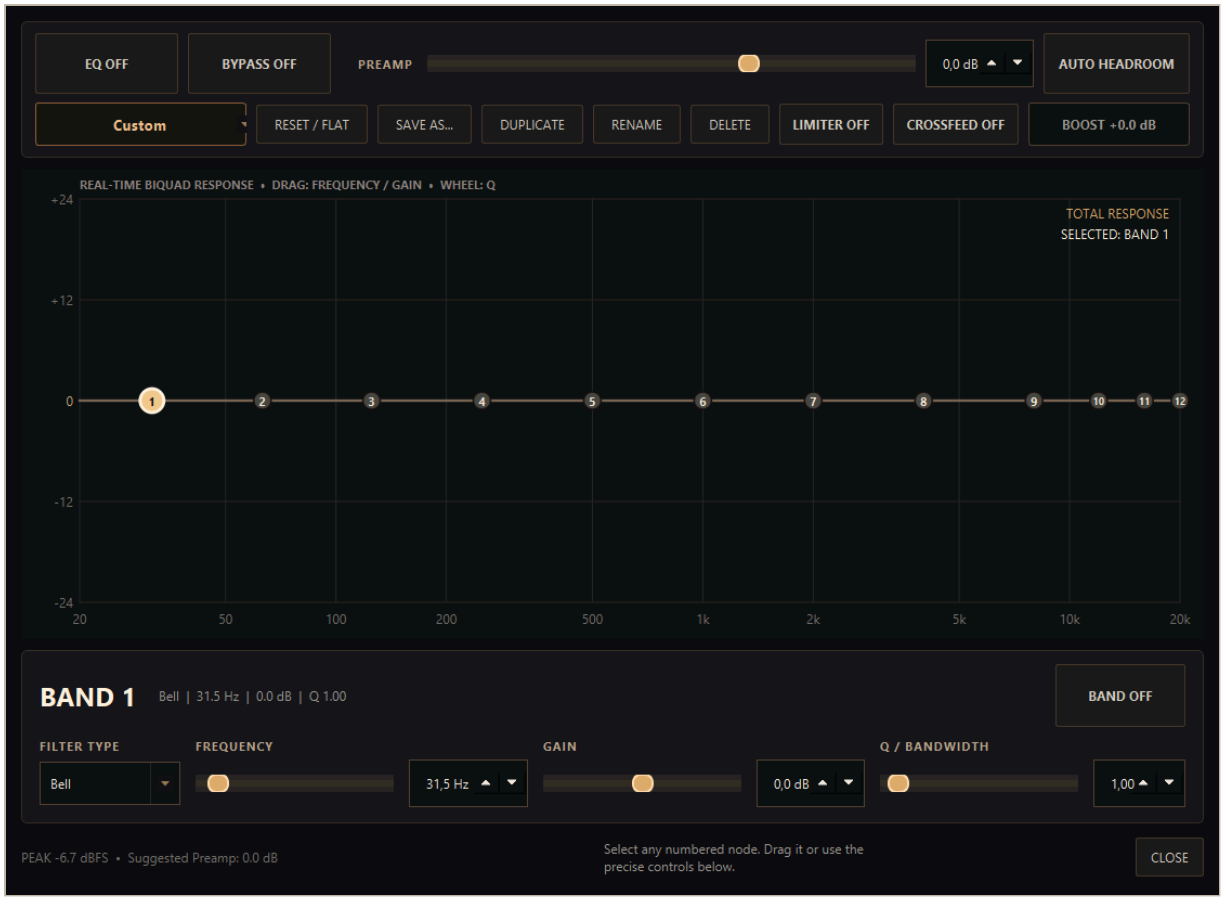


The DSP rack

Which tool is in which edition is in the table of section 3. **PRO** marks a PRO tool in the text below.

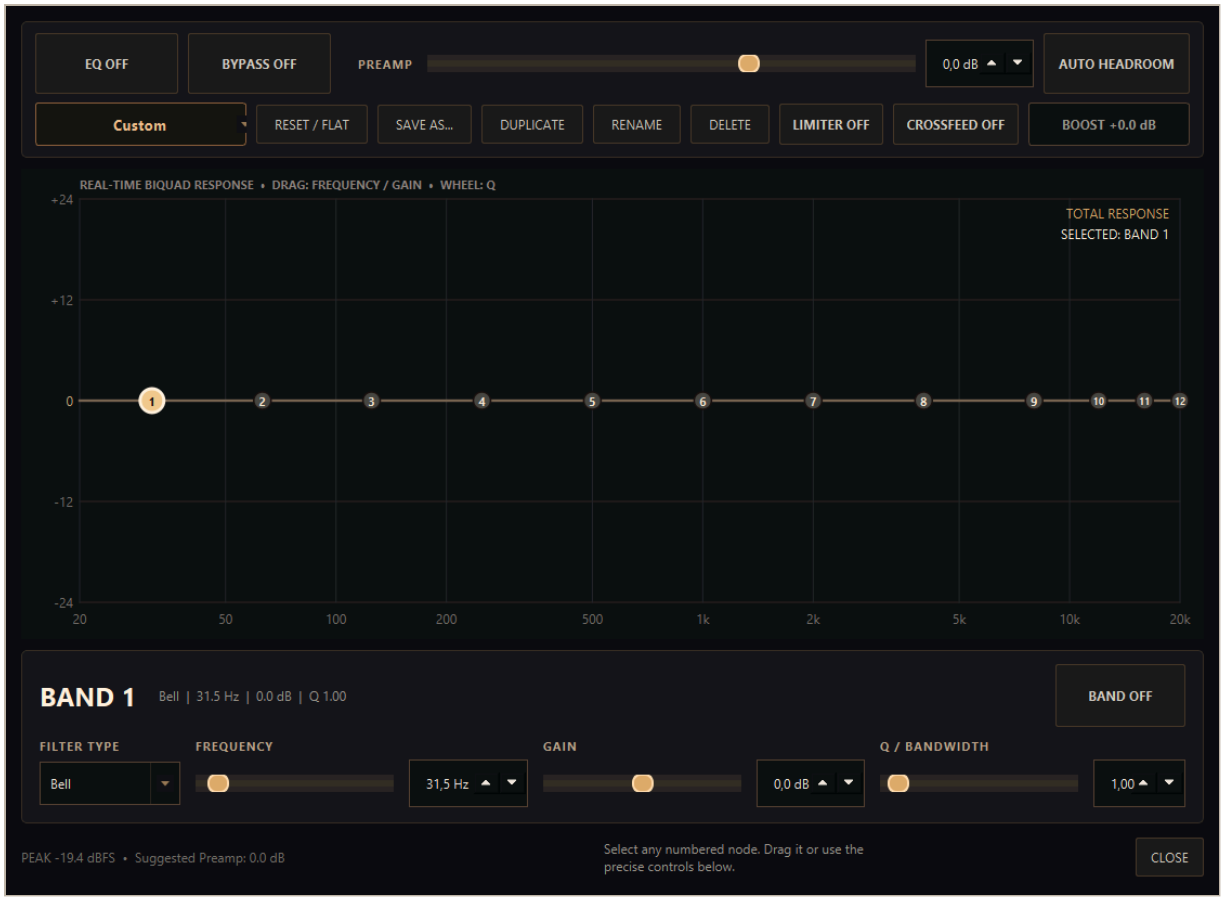
Equalizer

- **Free:** a simple graphic equalizer with five bands at fixed frequencies (60 Hz, 230 Hz, 910 Hz, 3.6 kHz, 14 kHz). Move a slider to boost or cut a band by up to 12 dB; double-click a slider or press *Reset* to return a band to zero.



The simple equalizer of the Free edition

- **PRO — parametric equalizer:** bands with their own frequency, gain and width, correction curves you can load and export, and a read-out of how much the curve boosts (a boost can clip; the limiter below catches it).



The parametric equalizer

An equalizer or any other effect means the player no longer sends the file's samples unchanged, so *BIT-PERFECT* goes off while it is on.

Crossfeed

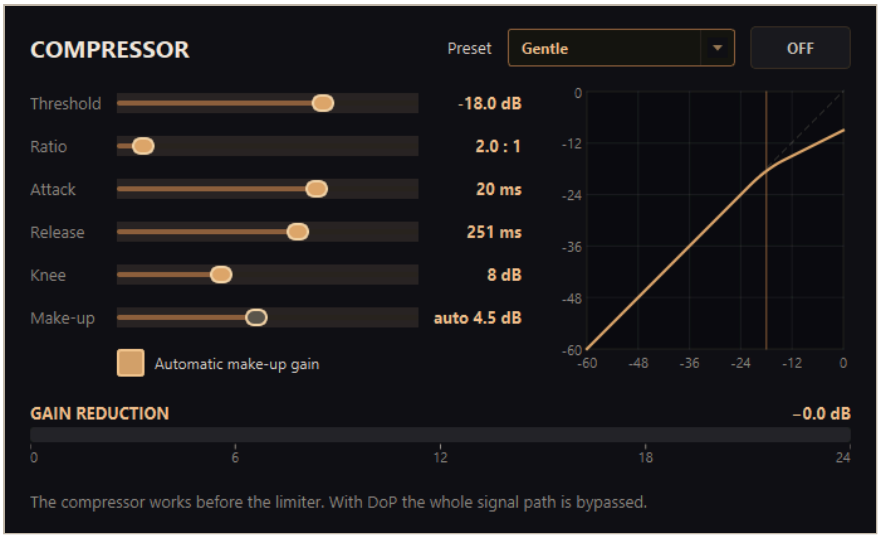
Mixes a little of each channel into the other, so that headphone listening feels less like sound inside the head. Choose a *Mode* (strength) and an *Amount*. Off by default.

Convolution (PRO)

Applies an impulse response (room correction, headphone correction): press **Choose a file…** under *Response* and pick the file; *Level* sets how much of it is added. The line *Format* tells what the file is.

Compressor (PRO)

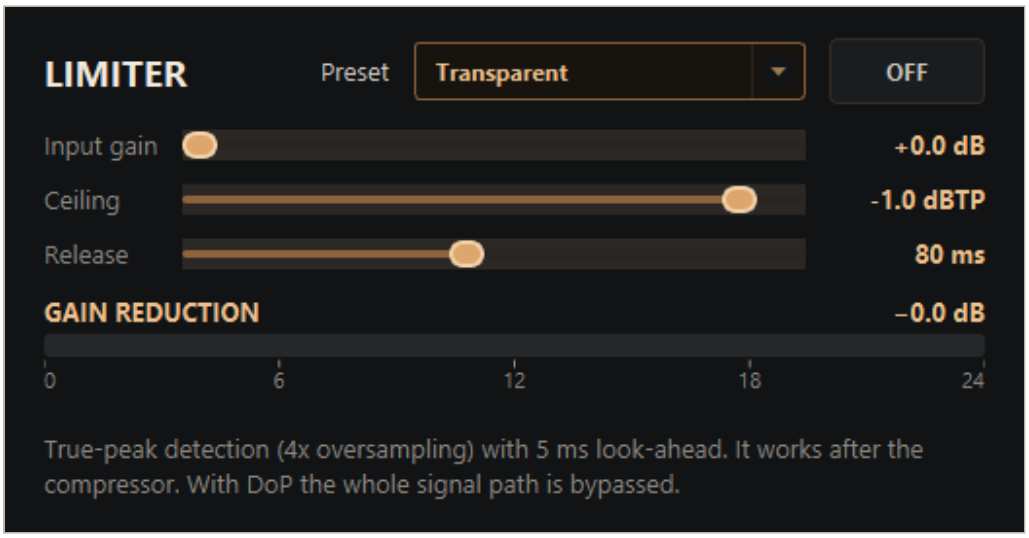
Reduces the difference between loud and quiet parts. The switch turns it on; the gear button beside it opens threshold, ratio, attack, release, knee and make-up gain. It works before the limiter.



The compressor

Limiter

A true-peak limiter: it catches the peaks that a boost or the other effects can create, so that they do not clip. The gear button opens its settings.



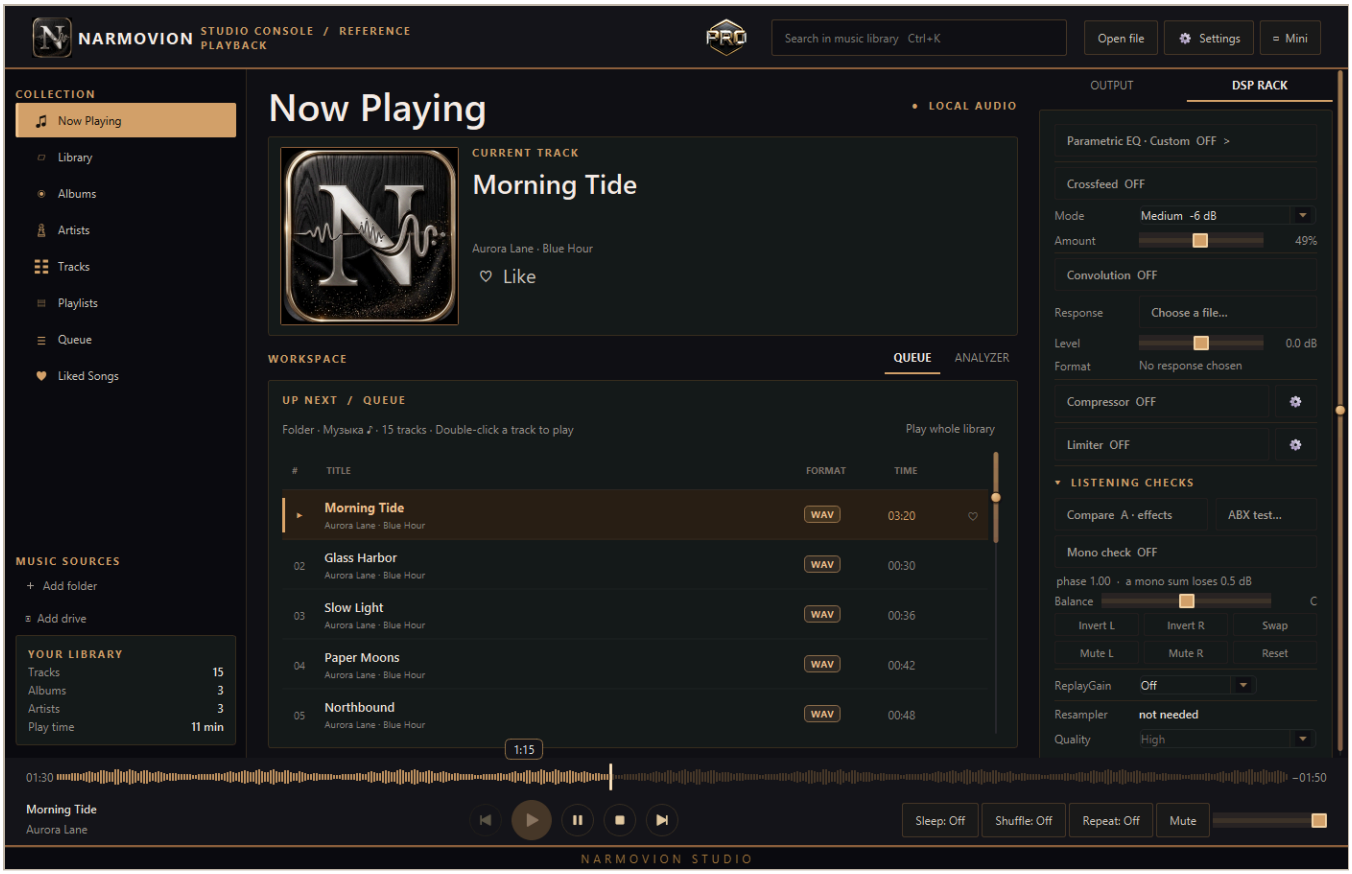
The limiter

ReplayGain and the resampler

ReplayGain (Off, Track or Album) levels every track to the same loudness using its ReplayGain / R128 tags. Any gain change makes the output no longer bit-perfect. *Resampler / Quality* chooses the quality of the converter that changes the sample rate when it has to (section 2).

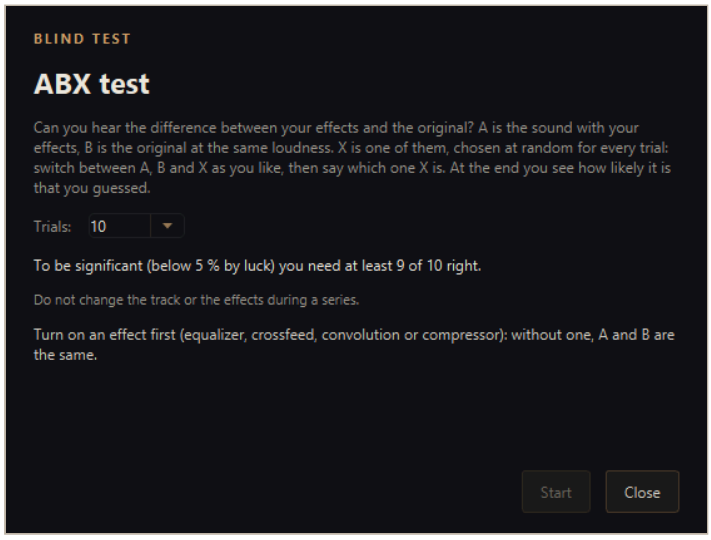
Listening checks

Open the **LISTENING CHECKS** section of the rack. These are for listening and for finding faults, not sound settings.



The listening checks

- **Compare** — hear the original instead of the equalizer, crossfeed and compressor, brought to the same loudness, so that the louder one does not win. Click again to come back.
- **ABX test (PRO)** — a blind test: can you hear the difference between your effects and the original? You switch between A (with your effects), B (the original at the same loudness) and X (one of them, chosen at random each time) and say which one X is; at the end you see how likely it is that you only guessed. Turn on an effect first, or A and B are the same.



The ABX test window

- **Mono check** — listen to the stereo signal as one channel, (L+R)/2, the way a phone, a mono speaker or a club system plays it, and see how much of it a mono sum loses. It is not remembered between sessions,

and Pure signal switches it off.

- **Channel tools (PRO)** — a balance between the left and the right channel, and swapping, inverting or muting a channel. *Reset* puts the balance in the centre and clears the rest.

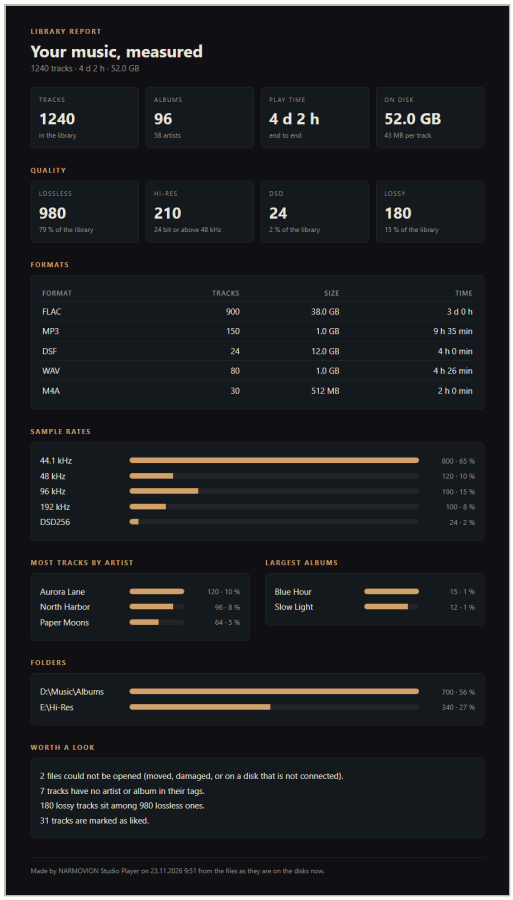
Analysis and reports (PRO)

- **Advanced analysis** — loudness and peak analysis of a track, a selection or an album, and *Mark for comparison* to put tracks next to each other. The live **Analyzer** (tab next to *Queue* on *Now Playing*) is in both editions.



The analyzer

- **Reports** — three pages, each one self-contained web page (`.html`) that you can keep, print or send: the format of the file and notes in words. The same window can also *Save report…* as text, *Save as CSV…* and *Copy report*; the size on disk, how much is lossless, hi-res, DSD and lossy, the formats and sample rates, the artists, albums and folders with the most tracks, and lists what needs a look (files that cannot be opened, tracks without tags). The picture shows invented sample numbers. *Loudness and dynamics of the library…* in the same menu measures every track (PRO).
  •- the **signal path report** (OUTPUT card, *Save report…*, section 2);
  •- the **track passport**: in the *Analyze track…* window press *Save passport…* for a page with the loudness, true peak, dynamics, clipping,
  •- the **library report**: on *Library*, the **…** button → *Library report…*. It counts the tracks, albums, artists, the play time and



A library report

- **Sending a support report** and *Copy system info* are in both editions.

Device profiles (PRO)

Settings → Audio → Remember for each output keeps the sound settings of each output device: when you switch between headphones, speakers and a DAC, the settings that belong to that output come back.

The waveform seek bar (PRO)

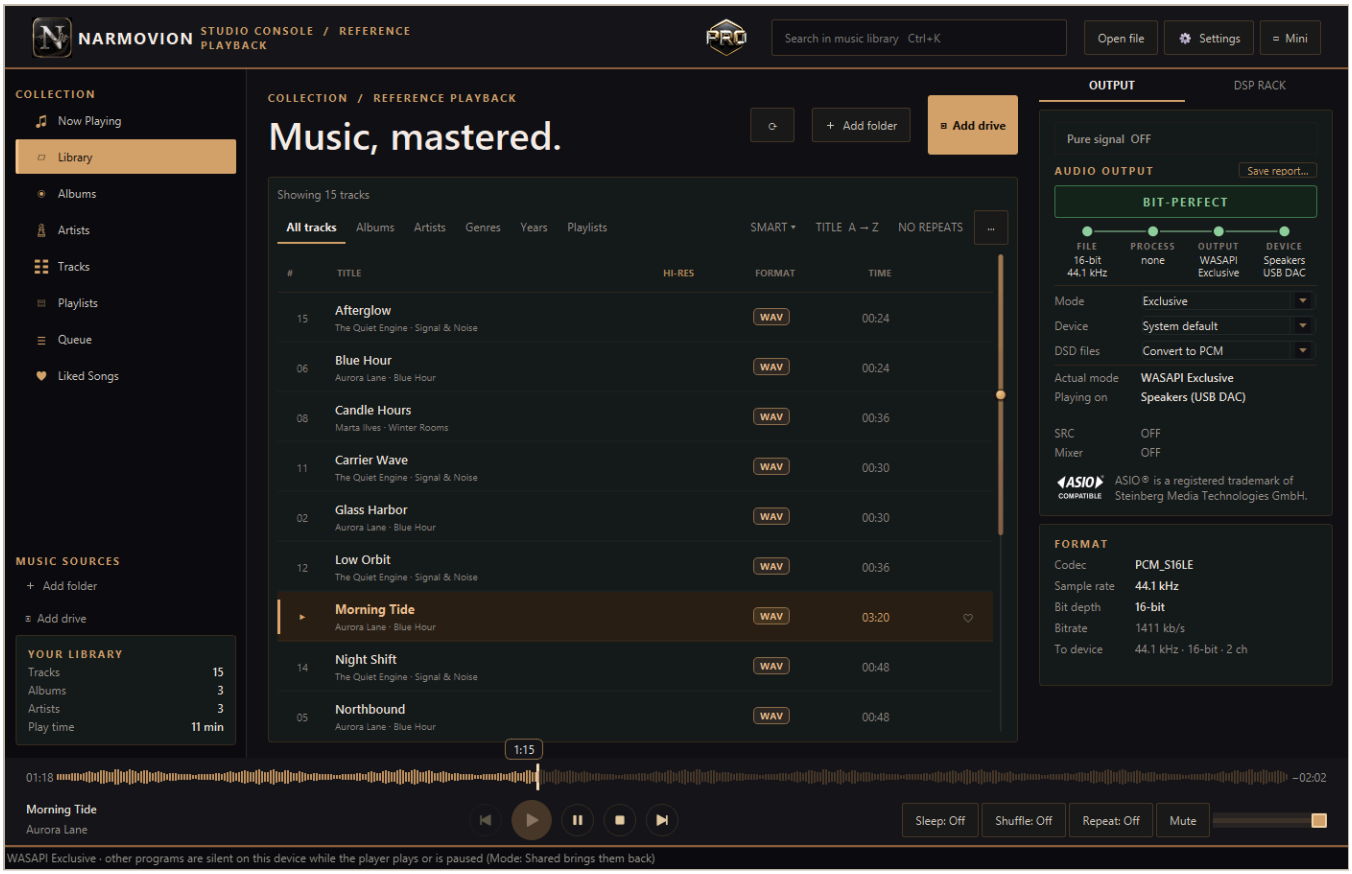
In PRO the seek bar shows the loudness of the whole track as a waveform; in Free it is an ordinary slider. (*Settings → Interface → Progress bar: shape of the track* turns the waveform off in PRO too.)

Smart playlists and the Hi-Res filter (PRO)

- **SMART** (above the track list in the library) offers ready-made smart lists and lets you build your own from rules. They update as your library does.
- **HI-RES** (the column header in the library) filters the list to high resolution files.

5. Library, playlists, shortcuts and settings

The library



The Library page

Library lists everything the player found in your music folders. Above the list:

- **All tracks / Albums / Artists / Genres / Years / Playlists** switch the way the library is grouped.
- **SMART** (PRO) opens smart lists, see section 4.
- **TITLE A→Z** chooses the sorting; **NO REPEATS** hides repeated copies of the same recording.
- The **HI-RES** column marks high resolution files; clicking its header filters by them (PRO).
- The **…** button has more actions, such as the library report (PRO).

Double-click a track to play it. The search box in the header (**Ctrl+K**) finds tracks, albums and artists as you type.

The track menu

A right-click on a track (or on several selected tracks) opens a menu:

Entry	What it does
Play next / **Add to queue**	puts the track right after the current one, or at the end of the queue

Entry	What it does
Add to playlist…	adds it to a playlist you choose or create
Like / Unlike	puts the heart on the track, or takes it off (Liked Songs)
Show in folder	opens the folder of the file in Windows Explorer
Properties	the tags and the file facts of the track
Move to Recycle Bin…	only if you switched it on in *Settings* → *Library*; asks first; not for CUE tracks and not on drives without a Recycle Bin
Analyze track… (PRO)	loudness, peaks and dynamics of the track; with several tracks selected, of the selection; for an album, of the whole album. The result window can save a *track passport* (see section 4)
Mark for comparison / **Compare with …** (PRO)	mark one track, then choose *Compare with …* on another to see the two side by side; **Clear comparison mark** drops the mark

Sleep timer, Like and the queue

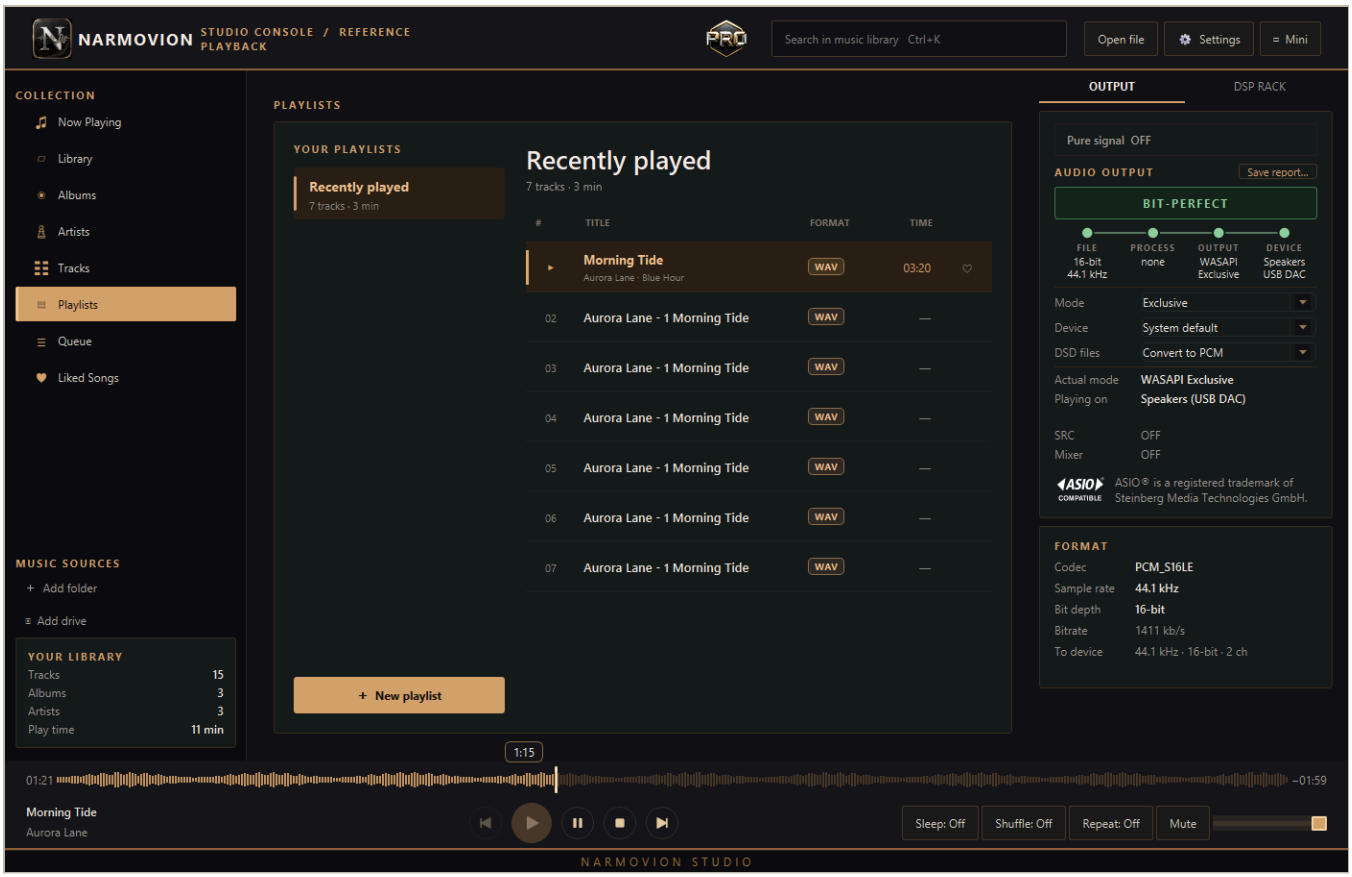
- **Sleep** (bottom bar) stops the music after a time: *Off*, 15, 30, 45, 60 or 90 minutes, or *After this track*. The button shows what is set, for example *Sleep: 30 min*.
- The **heart** (*Like* on *Now Playing*, and in the lists) marks a track as liked; the marked tracks are on *Liked Songs*.
- **Play whole library** (on *Now Playing*, above the queue) fills the queue with the whole library.

Settings → **Library** → **Rebuild library index** reads your folders again if something looks wrong.

The separate pages of the left column show the same music in other ways:

Page	What it shows
	**Artists** — all artists, then their albums and tracks
	**Tracks** — every track in one list

Playlists



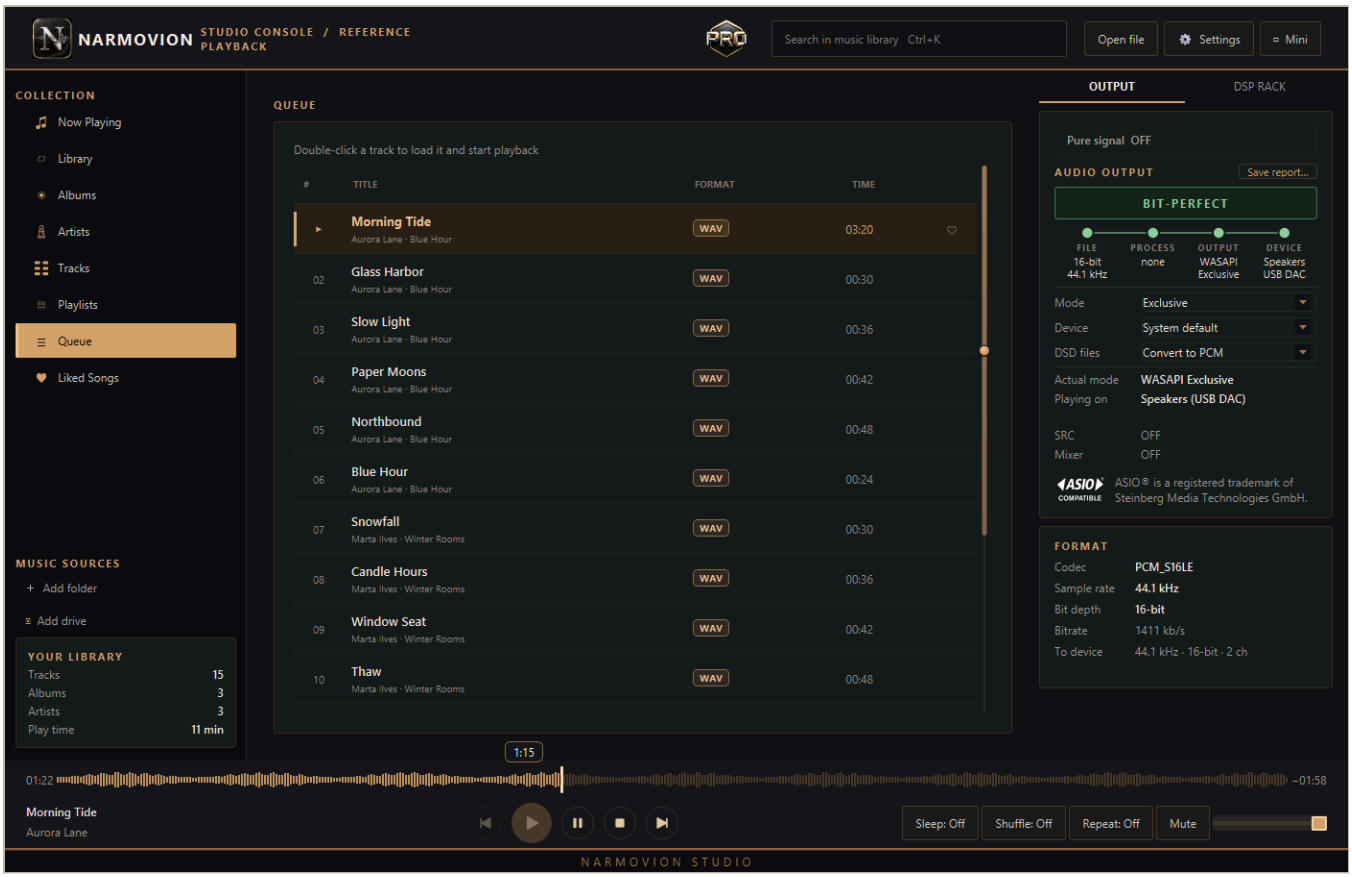
Playlists

On **Playlists** you create playlists and open them. To add a track, right-click it and choose **Add to playlist...**. Inside a playlist the right-click menu has **Move up**, **Move down**, **Remove from playlist** and **Show in folder**. Playlists, likes and the play history are kept in the player's own library file, separate from your music.

M3U files (both editions). *Export...* (top right of an open playlist) saves it as an `.m3u8` file that other players open; paths inside the folder you save to are written relative, the others in full, and CUE tracks (parts of a larger file) are left out. *Import .m3u...* (under *New playlist*) makes a playlist from an `.m3u` or `.m3u8` file. Only tracks that are in your library are added; the status line says how many were added and how many were not in the library, not found, or web addresses (which are left out). If nothing matches, add the music folder first and import again.

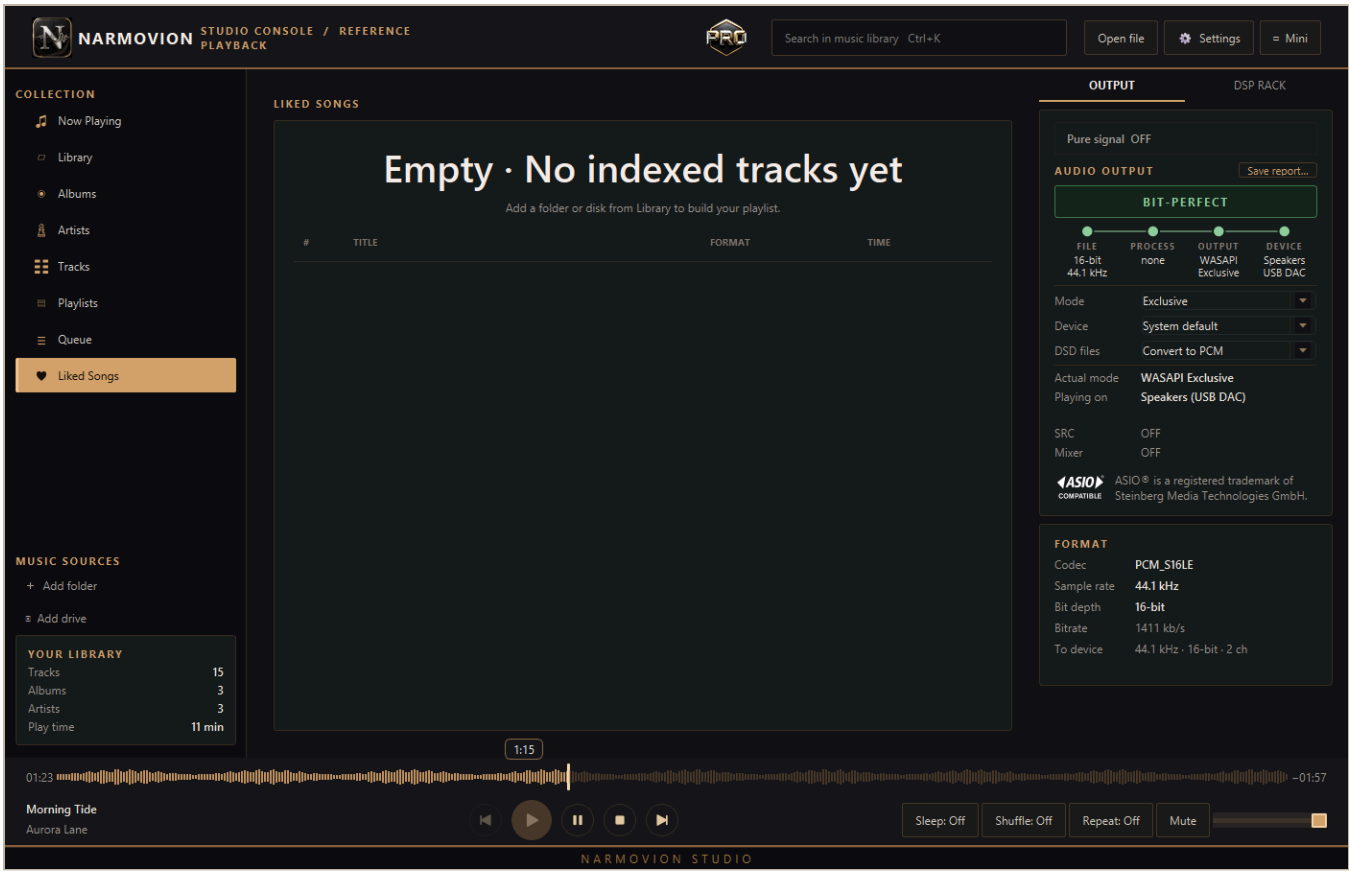
If the player's library file is ever damaged, the player keeps the damaged one aside, starts a new one and tells you.

Queue and Liked Songs



The Queue page

Queue is what plays next. Double-click a track in a list to start a queue from that list; the tracks that follow it in the list come next. **Liked Songs** collects the tracks you marked with the heart (the heart button on *Now Playing* and in the lists).



Liked Songs

Keyboard shortcuts

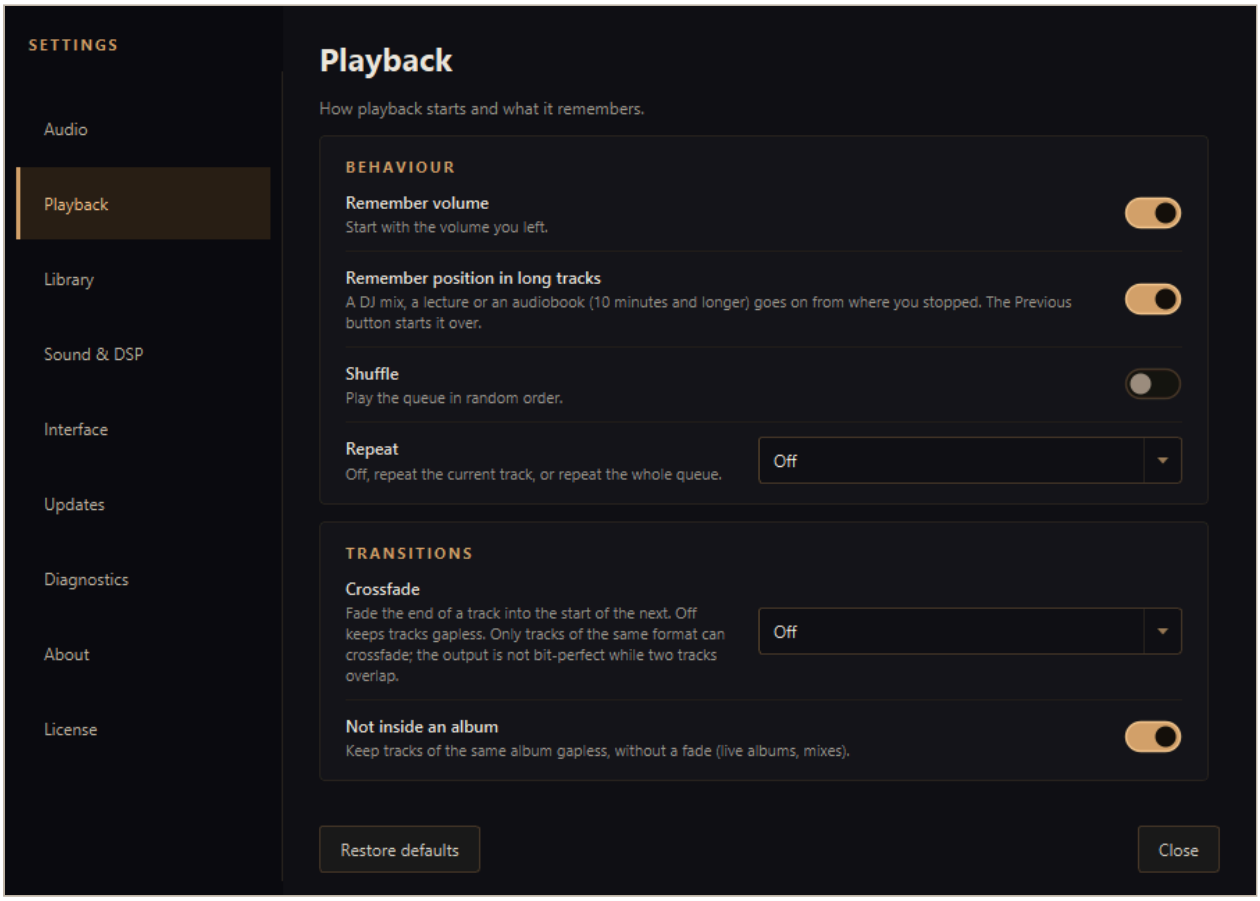
Keys	What it does
Esc	stop
Left / Right	seek back / forward 5 seconds
Shift + Left / Right	seek 30 seconds
Ctrl + Up / Down	volume up / down 5 %
Ctrl + G	go to a time in the track
Ctrl + K	search the library
Ctrl + O	open a file or a CUE sheet
Ctrl + M	mini player on / off
Ctrl + B	Pure signal: switch the effects off and back on
Media keys	play / pause, next, previous (the player registers them at start)

In a text field or a list the arrow keys keep their own job.

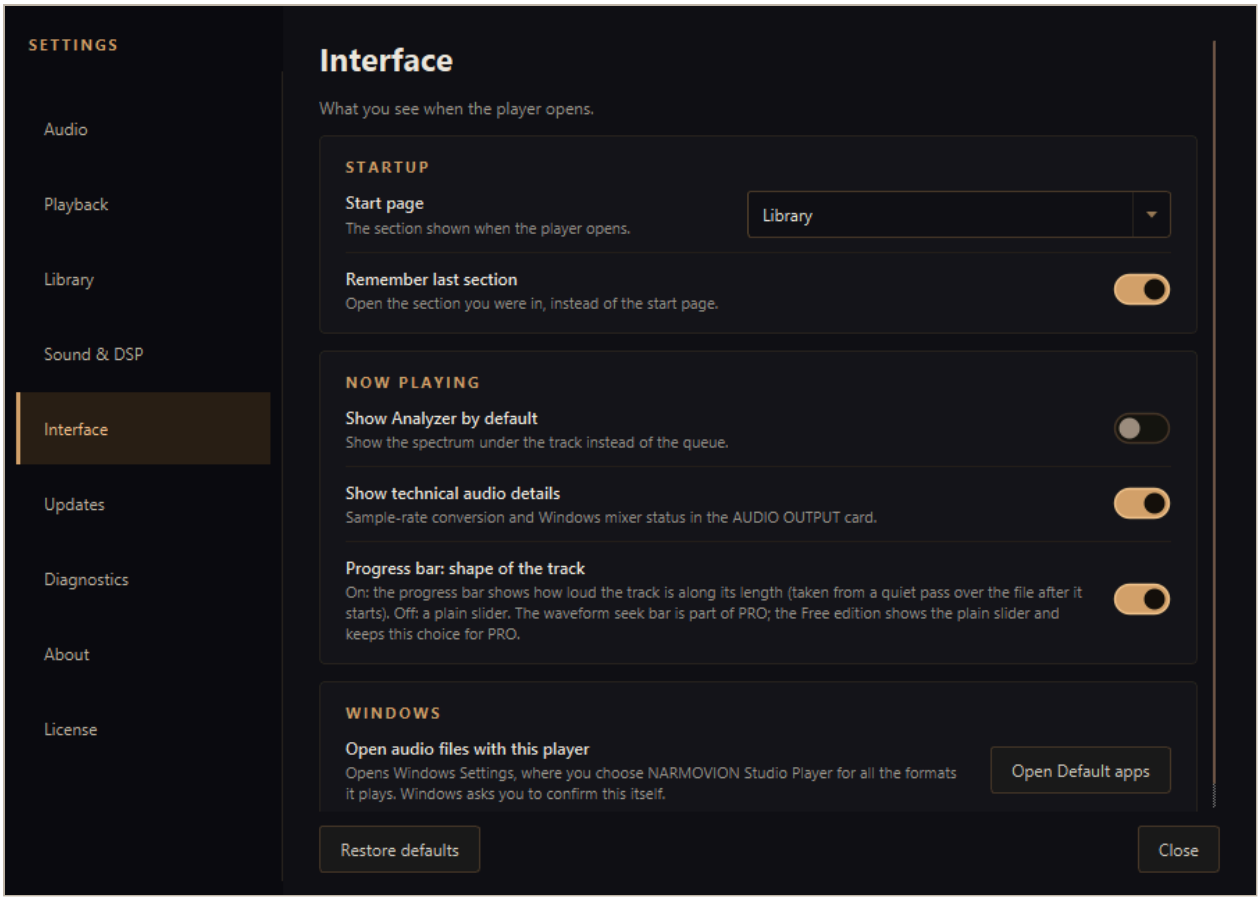
Settings

Open **Settings** in the header. It has nine pages:

Page	What is on it
Playback	remember the volume and the position in long tracks, shuffle, repeat, crossfade, "not inside an album"
Library	add a music folder or a drive, rebuild the index, what "open the whole folder" and "delete files from the player" do
Sound & DSP	restore the last sound profile, equalizer and crossfeed on startup
Interface	start page, remember the last section, show the analyzer by default, technical details, the progress bar look, open audio files with this player
Updates	the current version, check for updates when the player starts
Diagnostics	what happened to the sound, with times; reports for support (section 6)
About	version, **Edition**, platform, copyright and the open source components
License	Free or PRO on this computer, activate, deactivate (section 3)



Settings: Playback

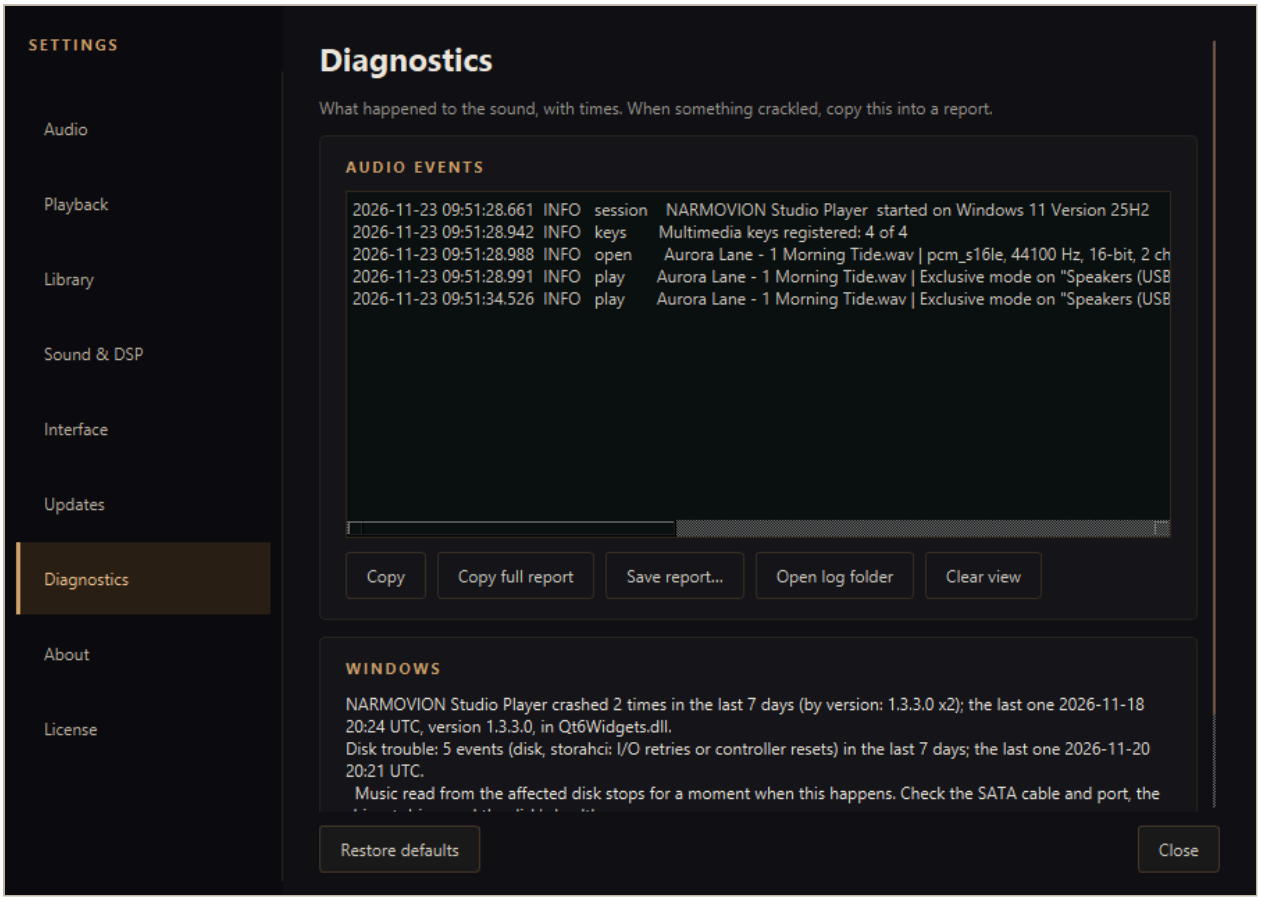


Settings: Interface

Restore defaults (bottom left of Settings) asks first and then restores the application preferences; library files and custom presets are kept.

6. Troubleshooting

First: what the player can tell you



Settings: Diagnostics

Open **Settings** → **Diagnostics**. It lists the audio events with times, checks Windows for audio and disk problems, and has these buttons: **Copy**, **Copy full report** (version, Windows, the state of the sound path, the Windows check and the events in one text, for a message to support), **Save report...** (the same as a text file), **Open log folder** and **Clear view**. The log file itself, `audio-events.log`, is in the log folder. When you write to support, send the full report.

There is no sound, or it plays on the wrong device

1. Check **Settings** → **Audio** → **Output device**. "System default" follows the device Windows uses; pick the device you listen to explicitly if it is not the default.
2. In **Exclusive** mode the player takes the device for itself and other programs are silent while it plays; in **Shared** mode Windows mixes the sound with the other programs. If another program holds the device in Exclusive mode, the player cannot start: close that program.
3. If the dialog "Playback could not start" appears, press **Show Details...** and read the line: it names the device and the reason. Try another output mode or device. If it keeps happening, copy the full report from Settings → Diagnostics and send it to support.

4. If the sound crackles, copy the report right after it happens: the audio events show whether the player's buffer ran dry.

ASIO does not start

ASIO® is a registered trademark of Steinberg Media Technologies GmbH. ASIO output is a PRO feature.

The dialog says that the audio driver of the sound card did not start. The line in the details names the driver call and its code; for the Creative Sound Blaster AE cards the code is `ASE_HWMalfunction (-999)`: the **driver or the card is in a bad state**, not the file and not the player. Try in this order:

1. Close the control program of the sound card (for example **Sound Blaster Command**) and every other program that plays through the same ASIO driver. An ASIO driver is usually used by one program at a time.
2. Open **Settings** → **Audio** and press **Reset ASIO driver** (see the picture in section 2). It stops playback and releases the driver; **Play** opens it again.
3. Wait a few seconds and press **Play** again.
4. **Restart Windows.** This always clears a driver that stays in a bad state; the player cannot do that for the driver.

Facts that help support: the player opens only the front pair of the driver's outputs (the Creative drivers refuse to start with more), it sets the sample rate explicitly and, when the start fails, tries once more after setting a different rate. Every open is written to `audio-events.log` as a line "ASIO open on …" with what the driver answered at each step.

ASIO plays only the formats the driver offers. If the driver does not take a sample rate, the player converts the music to the nearest rate it takes and the signal path report shows "SRC ON" instead of "BIT-PERFECT".

DSD files play as PCM

DSD files (DSF, DFF) are converted to PCM unless you choose DoP in **Settings** → **Audio** → **DSD files**. DoP needs WASAPI Exclusive and a DAC that accepts the rates it needs (176.4 kHz for DSD64, 352.8 kHz for DSD128). Many sound cards, for example the Creative AE series, do not accept those rates, and their ASIO drivers offer native DSD only for DSD64 in a non-standard format and then fail to start, so DSD there always plays through the conversion and the signal path shows *SRC ON*. This is a limit of those drivers, not a fault of the file.

A file does not open

- **AAC / M4A audio is not supported** by this version of the player ("AAC audio is not supported by this version of the player"). This is a licensing decision; convert such files, or use ALAC (also .m4a), FLAC, WAV, AIFF, WavPack, OGG, MP3 or another format of the list in section 8.
- A damaged file or an unusual container shows its own message in the events list of Settings → Diagnostics.
- If a file name contains unusual characters and fails to open, send the report to support: this should work.

The license does not activate, or PRO is paused

See section 3 ("Messages on the License page", "The internet and the PRO pause"). In short: activation needs the internet, a key works on one computer, and PRO pauses after 30 days without a successful check and returns by itself after one. **Check now** on the License page asks the server at once.

Sending a report to support

1. **Settings** → **Diagnostics** → **Copy full report** (or **Save report…** to a file).
2. Paste it into the message, say what you did and what you expected, and give the version of the player (Settings → About).
3. If the player closed by itself, the crash report is in the `crashes` folder inside the log folder (**Open log folder**); attach it. File names of your music can appear in the reports; you can remove them from the text before you send it.

7. Installation, updates and removal

What you need

- Windows 10 (version 1809 or newer) or Windows 11, 64-bit.
- Administrator rights for the installation (the program goes into *Program Files*).
- A sound device. For ASIO output (PRO) the ASIO driver of your device must be installed.

Installing

1. Run the installer `NARMOVION-Studio-Player-Setup-<version>-x64.exe`. If the player is running, the installer closes it first.
2. Read and accept the license agreement.
3. Choose the folder. The default is `C:\Program Files\NARMOVION\NARMOVION Studio Player`.
4. Two optional choices, both off by default: installer opens *Windows Settings → Default apps* on the player's page, where you confirm the choice.
   •- **Create a desktop shortcut.**
   •- **Open all supported audio formats with NARMOVION Studio Player.** Windows does not let a program take over file types by itself, so the
5. The last page offers to start the player and, if you wish, to open the product page.

The Start menu gets a **NARMOVION** group with the player and **Licenses and notices** (the licenses of the open source components).

On the first start the player shows a short first-run setup. Everything it asks can be changed later in **Settings**.

Updating

Install the new version over the old one: run its installer. Your settings, library, playlists, likes and license stay. The installer removes files that the new version no longer needs.

Settings → **Updates** shows the *Current version*, a *Status* line and the switch **Check for updates on startup**. When it is on, the player looks for a newer version when it opens. It never installs anything by itself: it tells you, and you decide whether to download and run the new installer.

Where the player keeps your data

What	Where
The license of this computer	`%APPDATA%\NARMOVION\NARMOVION Studio Player\license.json`
The log of audio events (for support)	`audio-events.log` and `audio-events.log.1` in the same folder

What	Where
Crash reports	the `crashes` folder in the same folder
Settings	the Windows registry, `HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\NARMOVION\NARMOVION Studio Player`

(**Settings** → **Diagnostics** → **Open log folder** opens that folder.) Your music files are never touched: the player only reads them. If the library file is ever damaged, the player keeps the damaged copy aside, starts a new library and tells you.

Removing the player

Use **Windows Settings** → **Apps** → **Installed apps** → **NARMOVION Studio Player** → **Uninstall**. This removes the program, its Start menu entries and the file associations it made. **It does not delete your settings, library and license**, so a later reinstall finds them again. To remove everything, delete the data folder and the registry key from the table above after uninstalling.

If you uninstall to move PRO to another computer, press **Deactivate this computer** on the License page first (section 3).

Where to get help

Support and reports: <https://narmovion.eu/narmovion-studio-player-report.html>. Product page: <https://narmovion.eu/narmovion-studio-player.html>. Send the full diagnostics report (section 6) with your question.

8. Supported formats and every setting

Supported formats

Kind	Formats (file extensions)
Lossy	MP3 (`.mp3`), Ogg Vorbis (`.ogg`), Opus (`.opus`)
DSD	DSF (`.dsf`), DFF (`.dff`)
Albums	CUE sheets (one file with many tracks)

- **AAC is not supported** (also AAC inside `.m4a`). The player says so: "AAC audio is not supported by this version of the player". ALAC in `.m4a` plays.
- Lossy files and floating point files are decoded by the player; the signal path shows them as not bit-perfect (section 2).
- Multichannel files (5.1, 7.1) play, see *Multichannel files* below.
- Tags (title, artist, album, track number, year, genre, cover) are read from the files; the library is built from them.

Settings, page by page

Open **Settings** in the header. Hover over a setting for its explanation; it is the same text.

Audio

Setting	What it does
Output device	The device the music is sent to. *System default* follows the device Windows is using. Entries marked ASIO® are ASIO drivers (PRO).
ASIO	An ASIO driver decides the format and how the device is shared; the output mode above is for Windows devices.
Reset the ASIO driver	Stops playback and releases the ASIO driver; **Play** opens it again. Use it when an ASIO driver refuses to start.
Check the device	Asks the device which formats it accepts in Exclusive mode and tells which output mode suits it.
DSD files	*Convert to PCM* plays DSD as PCM. *DoP* sends the DSD bits unchanged inside PCM frames; it needs WASAPI Exclusive and a DAC that supports DoP, and a device that accepts the high rate DoP needs (DSD64 as DoP is 176.4 kHz, DSD128 is 352.8 kHz).

Setting	What it does
Multichannel files (5.1, 7.1)	Send every channel to the device, or mix them down to two channels for stereo speakers and headphones (centre and surround channels join the front pair, the LFE channel is left out). A change applies to the playing track at once.
Multichannel files: ask first	When a 5.1 or 7.1 file is about to play and the mix-down is off, ask what to do before it starts.
Tracks louder than full scale	Some files contain peaks above 0 dBFS and would clip at the device. The player measures the whole track and turns it down by just enough to bring its peak to −0.1 dBFS. Tracks that are not that loud are not touched. DSD over DoP is never changed.
Remember for each output (PRO)	Keeps the sound settings of each output device (device profiles, section 4).
Playing on, Actual mode, Output format, Sample-rate conversion, Windows mixer	Read-outs of the current signal path, the same facts as the OUTPUT card (section 2).

Playback

Setting	What it does
Remember position in long tracks	A DJ mix, a lecture or an audiobook (10 minutes and longer) goes on from where you stopped. The Previous button starts it over.
Shuffle	Play the queue in random order.
Repeat	Off, repeat the current track, or repeat the whole queue.
Crossfade	Fade the end of a track into the start of the next. Off keeps tracks gapless. Only tracks of the same format can crossfade; the output is not bit-perfect while two tracks overlap.
Not inside an album	Keep tracks of the same album gapless, without a fade (live albums, mixes).

Library

Setting	What it does
Delete files from the player	Adds *Move to Recycle Bin…* to the track menu. The file goes to the Windows Recycle Bin after you confirm, and the track leaves the library. Not offered for CUE tracks or on drives without a Recycle Bin.
Add a music folder	Every audio file inside it, including sub-folders, joins the library.
Add a drive	Scan a whole disk or an external drive for music.
Rebuild library index	Read tags, lengths and covers again for tracks that are missing them.

Sound & DSP

Setting	What it does
EQ on startup	Whether the equalizer is on when the player opens.
Crossfeed on startup	Whether crossfeed is on when the player opens. Mode and amount are set in the DSP rack.

Interface

Setting	What it does
Remember last section	Open the section you were in, instead of the start page.
Show Analyzer by default	Show the spectrum under the track instead of the queue.
Show technical audio details	Sample-rate conversion and Windows mixer status in the AUDIO OUTPUT card.
Progress bar: shape of the track	On: the progress bar shows how loud the track is along its length (taken from a quiet pass over the file after it starts). Off: a plain slider. The waveform seek bar is part of PRO; Free shows the plain slider and keeps this choice for PRO.
Open audio files with this player	Opens Windows Settings, where you choose NARMOVION Studio Player for all the formats it plays. Windows asks you to confirm this itself.

Updates

Current version, **Check for updates on startup** (looks for a newer version when the player opens; nothing is installed without you), and a **Status** line.

Diagnostics

The audio events with times, the Windows check for audio and disk problems, and the report buttons (section 6).

About

Version, **Edition** (Free or PRO), reliability counters, platform, copyright and the open source components the player uses (Qt, FFmpeg and others).

License

Activate, deactivate and check the license of this computer (section 3).

Restore defaults (bottom left of Settings) asks first and then restores the application preferences; library files and custom presets are kept.

9. Questions and terms

Frequently asked questions

Does the player change my music files? No. It only reads them. Your library, playlists and likes are kept in a separate file (`library.sqlite`, section 7).

Why does the signal path say SRC, and the format is not bit-perfect? SRC means the music was converted to another sample rate: the device does not take the file's rate, or the file is DSD or a very high rate. Effects, volume below 100 %, ReplayGain and lossy or floating point files also make the output not bit-perfect. Section 2 has the details.

Why does a DSD file play as PCM? By default DSD is converted to PCM. DoP (DSD inside PCM frames) is a setting, **Settings → Audio → DSD files**, and needs WASAPI Exclusive and a DAC that accepts the rates DoP needs (176.4 kHz for DSD64, 352.8 kHz for DSD128). Many sound cards, for example the Creative AE series, do not accept those rates, and their ASIO drivers offer native DSD only in a limited form, so DSD there always plays as PCM. This is a limit of the hardware.

Can I play AAC or M4A files? ALAC in `.m4a` plays. AAC does not: the player says "AAC audio is not supported by this version of the player".

What is different in Free and PRO? The table in section 3. In short: Free is a complete player; PRO adds ASIO, the parametric equalizer, convolution, the compressor, ABX tests, reports, device profiles, advanced analysis, channel tools, smart playlists, the Hi-Res filter and the waveform seek bar.

How many computers can I use PRO on? One computer per key. To move it, press **Deactivate this computer** on the old one, then activate on the new one. If the old computer is gone (reinstalled Windows, a replaced drive), write to support: the old place has to be freed from the license server.

Do I need the internet to use PRO? For activation, yes. After that the player checks the license in the background; a short loss of the connection changes nothing. If the license could not be checked for 30 days, PRO pauses until the next successful check (section 3).

What does the player send over the internet? A check for a newer version (the player name and version number, if the update check is on), and, for PRO, the activation and the license checks (the key, the purchase e-mail on activation, and a code of your computer; never the computer's name, your files or your music).

The sound stops or crackles in Exclusive or ASIO mode. Copy the full report from **Settings → Diagnostics** right after it happens and send it to support (section 6).

Where do I find the log and the crash reports? Settings → Diagnostics → Open log folder.

Terms

Term	Meaning
SRC	Sample rate conversion: changing the music to another sample rate.

Term	Meaning
Sample rate	How many samples per second (44.1 kHz, 96 kHz, 192 kHz). Higher is not always better, but the file's own rate is the one that needs no conversion.
Bit depth	The size of each sample (16, 24 or 32 bit).
PCM	Ordinary digital audio: a number for every sample.
DSD	A 1-bit format at a very high rate (DSD64 is 2.8224 MHz, DSD256 11.2896 MHz), used by SACD recordings.
DoP	DSD over PCM: a way to carry DSD bits inside PCM frames to a DAC that understands it.
WASAPI	Windows' own audio interface. The player uses it in *Shared* mode (Windows mixes) or *Exclusive* mode (the player has the device to itself).
ASIO	A driver standard for audio devices (a trademark of Steinberg Media Technologies GmbH). The driver decides the format and the sharing of the device. PRO feature.
Gapless	Tracks follow each other without a pause or click.
Crossfade	The end of one track fades into the start of the next.
Crossfeed	Mixes a little of each channel into the other for headphones, so the sound is less "inside the head".
Convolution	Filtering the sound with an impulse response, used for room and headphone correction.
Compressor	Reduces the difference between loud and quiet parts.
Limiter / true peak	Holds peaks below a ceiling so they do not clip, also the peaks between samples that a converter can create.
dBFS	Level relative to the digital maximum: 0 dBFS is the loudest value a file can hold.
ReplayGain	Tags in a file that tell the player how much to turn it up or down so tracks have the same loudness.
ABX test	A blind test: A and B are two versions, X is one of them chosen at random, and you say which. The result tells how likely it is that you only guessed.
LFE	The low frequency channel of a 5.1 or 7.1 file (the subwoofer).
CUE sheet	A small file that describes the tracks of one long audio file, such as a whole album.