

Suitcase Records

AUDIO SPECS & REQUIREMENTS

8 FEBRUARY 2024

When you submit your Audio files for your project, you need to supply the following items;

- Audio Files mastered and formatted correctly for vinyl production.
- Track List / Queue Sheet containing your track list and timings, RPM and Catalogue / Scribe number.

Please read the following information sheet for general information, or email us at orders@suitcaserecords.com.au if you have any specific questions.

Master Audio File Format

We accept audio files in WAV format in 24 or 32 bit. Your files should all have the same sample rate (ie, 44.1k, 48k, 88.2k, etc).

Files can be formatted as either;

.WAV files separated by Side *(ie, Side A / Side B, etc); or*

.WAV files separated by Track *(ie, Track 1, Track 2, etc)*

Mastering for Vinyl

It's important that your audio is mastered specifically for vinyl production. This is because vinyl mastering retains its dynamics, whereas digital mastering is often treated with compression. This can lead to audio distortion, saturation and even skipping when used for vinyl.

We do not check that your audio has been mastered correctly to be cut for vinyl, and we assume that files provided are ready for vinyl production. Our aim is producing a record that reflects the master audio, and as such we do not remaster your files at all. The only adjustments to the audio that our lacquer cutter might make is to adjust any high frequencies that may cause distortion, or phase correction in the low frequencies. We will never apply any limiting or compression to your audio.

Some Key Tips for Mastering for Vinyl

Dynamic audio files are always preferred to brick wall limited files.

Avoid using high shelf as you're boosting things that you can't hear as well as the things that you can. For vinyl this can cause harmonic distortion. Use detailed parametric EQing and only do things that you can hear. If you apply a plug in and can't hear its affect don't leave it on as it can cause problems further down the line.

Stereo image and phase in the sub bass can cause issues if not dealt with correctly. Out of phase audio can cause skips because this translates to up and downwards movement of the cutting and playback stylus. To combat this, our lacquer cutters ask that you try to keep frequencies below 300Hz in mono.

High frequencies are the most likely to distort on vinyl. Consider de-essing or reducing super high frequency audio throughout the mixing/mastering to reduce the chances of distortion occurring. While our lacquer cutters can reduce this moderately in-house, we cannot accept responsibility for distortion from high frequencies if they are not dealt with within the mixing and mastering process.

We recommend listening carefully to your audio files from top to bottom before submission (preferably through headphones). Once your stampers are made, any errors or defects from within the audio files themselves are not possible to fix without remaking the lacquers and stampers and will incur additional charges.

Recommended Audio Durations

The duration recommendations made here are conservative estimates. Use this chart as a guide, but if your project is outside the scope of these timings, please get in touch and we can check your audio files with our lacquer cutters.

Format	Music Style	Ideal Side Duration (minutes)	Okay	Not Recommended
12” 33rpm	Pop, Rap, Hip Hop	<18	20	23+
	Rock, Modern Jazz	<18	20	23+
	Acoustic Jazz, Chamber Music	<20	23	24+
	Ambient, Solo	<21	23	24+

Format	Music Style	Ideal Side Duration (minutes)	Okay	Not Recommended
12” 45rpm	Pop, Rap, Hip Hop	<9-10	11	12+
	Rock, Modern Jazz	<9-10	11	12+
	Acoustic Jazz, Chamber Music	<9-10	11	12+
	Ambient, Solo	<9-10	11	12+

RPM is an abbreviation for ‘revolutions per minute’, meaning which speed a record spins.

The two most common speeds are 33rpm (slower) and 45rpm (quicker). 33rpm is the most common speed and allows for more time-duration per side, while 45rpm allows for more detail.

A strange yet important thing to consider is that some turntables sadly don’t have RPM switches (heartbreaking, we know!), and therefore may have a fixed speed of 33rpm.

Track List / Queue Sheet

A timing/cue sheet allows our lacquer cutters to perform quality assurance checks, and shows where to place the marker (“spiral”) grooves on your record. These markers/spirals are the visual gaps between each song to show your listener where to drop the needle! (Note: these are visual gaps only and do not interrupt the audio).

Below are the two preferred formats of how your sheet might look. Either format is fine, as long as the timings between the songs are accurate:

Side A	
1. Alive Heart	0:00–4:14
2. Whispers of Echo	4:15–8:10
3. Broken Rocks	8:11–14:25

and a Spiral Cue Sheet looks like this:

Side A	
0:00	A1: Alive Heart
4:15	A2: Whispers of Echo
8:11	A3: Broken Rocks
Ends at 14:25	