Subject: MP3 Quality -- Anything Better?
Posted by GoodVibrations on Wed, 08 Dec 2010 03:22:23 GMT
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I listen to mp3 music on my Sansa player and I am so impressed with the quality of sound. Is it the mp3 format that makes the music so pure or is it the equipment? I know you need good equipment to qualify the sound, but when it comes to format, is there anything better than mp3? How can this be tested?

Subject: Audio formats and converters
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 08 Dec 2010 16:16:29 GMT
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There's a lot to learn about audio formats, converters and digital audio in general. Here are a couple links for a start:
Audio formats primer
PCM (fixed width Nyquist) verses Delta Sigma (one-bit oversampled bitstream) converters

Subject: Re: MP3 Quality -- Anything Better?
Posted by Adveser on Thu, 09 Dec 2010 23:09:25 GMT
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After viewing the voiceprints of many MP3 bitrates and very very recently learning what I used to think wasn't a big deal was ruining my fun, I;ve concluded that320 is just about mandatory with 224kbps being the bare minimum.

This is not a hard and fast rule though. In the context of music you have never heard otherwise, you are unlikely to notice anything wrong at 160kbps. Something you've heard on CD a dozen times is a completely different story.

Here is my MP3 format command line:

-b 320 -m s -h -c -V 9 -B 320 -q 0 -k

(-b 320) the bitrate
(-m s) real 2-channel stereo
(-h) high quality encoding
(-c) mark as copyrighted
(-v 9 -b 320) variable bitrate @ 320 target @ highest quality
(-q 0) use the absolute best and slowest algorithms for encoding
(-k) do not use any filtering

I'm pretty sure the VBR setting is making them CBR since the average bitrate is always 320 and I

never see any fluctuation in the bitrate.

Subject: Re: MP3 Quality -- Anything Better?
Posted by Adveser on Fri, 10 Dec 2010 23:33:04 GMT
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I have noticed a lot of filtering on several albums that seem to be what everyone is bootlegging. You really have to make sure that the highs are being rolled off naturally in the studio and not brick walled by an encoder.

More highs is going to sound smoother and less harsh, contrary to the common assumption.

The texture and fidelity is completely missing on the brick walled encodings.

Be careful, don't ruin the perception of the music you love with terrible quality files that may have been floating around for more than a decade when the tech was no where close to being accurate or good at all.

I'm currently using Lame 3.89, which is a few years old at least, but it is the last one where the coveted "disable any and all filtering" option actually works which will reproduce the exact frequency range of the WAV file.

Subject: Re: MP3 Quality -- Anything Better?
Posted by GoodVibrations on Sat, 11 Dec 2010 01:38:53 GMT
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Thanks for the links Wayne. Adveser, I wish I knew what you are talking about. I will look at the sites and see if it sinks in. I didn't realize there were as many other formats that are shown in the first link, but it makes sense that some formats are made for marketing to the masses. I'm sure I will have more questions after reading this stuff!

Subject: Re: MP3 Quality -- Anything Better?
Posted by Shane on Mon, 13 Dec 2010 18:12:59 GMT
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I do almost exactly as Adveser does. I can go below 320 if I'm going to be listening where there is other ambient noise happening, but otherwise 320kbps for me as well. This is just with my iPod/mp3 player, otherwise it's usually FLAC. I don't remember what version of LAME I'm using, but essentially the same thing.

Subject: Re: MP3 Quality -- Anything Better?
Posted by Forest on Fri, 03 Jun 2011 19:25:09 GMT

I think MP3 on any radio sounds better then a cd or over the radio on the same radio. I don't know if I have been able to experience that brand of radio. Is it a regular radio or a car radio? I think it's pretty cool how they are making cars with MP3 players now!