

MiniDeskMixer

Mix every audio input, with meters and faders, in one small window.



Overview

MiniDeskMixer shows each audio input as a channel strip, the way a small desk mixer does. Each strip has a level meter, a clip light, a fader, and a balance or pan control. You can rename strips, separate left and right, and shrink the window until only the meters show.

- **On a Mac**, you choose any or all of your inputs, such as a built-in microphone, a USB microphone, and an audio interface, and MiniDeskMixer combines them into the Mac's input. Apps that use your Mac's microphone hear the mix. Recording apps can also take each input on its own pair of channels. The **Monitor** strip sets how much of the mix you hear through your current output.
- **On iPhone and iPad**, MiniDeskMixer shows one strip for each available input. iOS uses one input at a time, so the strip you choose is the one you hear and meter. The **Monitor** strip sets how much of it you hear.

MiniDeskMixer passes audio from your inputs to the MiniDeskMixer device and to your speakers or headphones. It doesn't save or send any audio.

Requirements

- A Mac with macOS 15 Sequoia or later, or an iPhone or iPad with iOS 18 or iPadOS 18 or later.
- Permission to use the microphone, so MiniDeskMixer can mix and meter your inputs.
- On a Mac, an administrator password once, to install the MiniDeskMixer audio device.

Use cases

- **Add background music to a podcast.** Bring in music on one input and your voice on another, set the music low under your voice, and your recording or call app hears both. Music must arrive as an input, such as a phone or mixer plugged into your audio interface. To use music from an app on your Mac, route it through a loopback device such as BlackHole, which then appears as an input strip.
- **Teach guitar live.** Turn on your guitar's audio interface and a microphone for your voice, and your student hears both in the video call. In the call app, turn on its music or original-sound mode so it doesn't filter out the guitar.
- **Simplify a recording session.** Combine several interfaces and microphones into one device. In GarageBand or another recording app, record the full mix from channels 1–2, or each input on its own track from channels 3–4, 5–6, and so on.
- **Record a meeting with several microphones.** Place USB microphones around the room, turn them all on, and record or stream the combined mix.

- **Catch clipping.** The clip light stays on after a peak reaches full scale, so you notice it even if you looked away.
- **Monitor an input on iPhone or iPad.** Plug in headphones and raise the Monitor fader to hear the active input.

Getting started

Install MiniDeskMixer

1. Install MiniDeskMixer: on a Mac, from the [MiniDeskMixer page](#); on iPhone or iPad, from the App Store.
2. Open MiniDeskMixer. On a Mac, the mixer window opens, and a mixer icon appears in the menu bar.
3. When macOS or iOS asks for microphone access, choose **Allow**. Without it, MiniDeskMixer gets silence from your inputs.

If you declined microphone access, turn it on later:

- On a Mac, open **System Settings > Privacy & Security > Microphone** and turn on MiniDeskMixer.
- On iPhone or iPad, open **Settings > Privacy & Security > Microphone** and turn on MiniDeskMixer.

Install the MiniDeskMixer audio device (Mac)

MiniDeskMixer combines your inputs into the **MiniDeskMixer** audio device, which you install once. Until it's installed, MiniDeskMixer opens on a setup screen instead of the mixer.

Warning: Installing the device restarts your Mac's audio system. Sound in every app stops for a moment, and some apps that are recording or playing might need to be restarted.

1. On the setup screen, click **Install Audio Device**. Installer opens.
2. Follow the steps in Installer, and enter an administrator password when it asks.
3. When Installer finishes, wait a few seconds for audio to restart. MiniDeskMixer replaces the setup screen with the mixer, and **MiniDeskMixer** appears as an input in **System Settings > Sound** and in other apps.

If you closed Installer before it finished, click **Open Installer Again** on the setup screen.

What MiniDeskMixer asks for

Permission	Why
Microphone	To mix and meter each audio input.
Administrator password (Mac, once)	To install the MiniDeskMixer audio device.

Features

Channel strips

Each strip, from top to bottom, has a name, a clip light, a level meter and its fader, a balance or pan control, buttons, and the device's name. On a Mac, an input strip that isn't in the Mac's input has a dimmed fader.

Input strips come first. The **Monitor** strip is last, after a divider, and shows your current output device. When you connect or disconnect a device, its strip appears or disappears within a moment.

Level meters

Each meter shows the signal level in decibels relative to full scale (dBFS), from -60 at the bottom to 0 at the top. The scale beside it marks 0, 6, 12, 18, 24, 36, and 48 dB below full scale. Stereo devices show two bars, left and right; mono devices show one.

The meter color shows how close the signal is to full scale:

Color	Level
Green	Below -18 dBFS: comfortable headroom.
Yellow	Around -9 dBFS: loud.
Orange	Around -3 dBFS: close to full scale.
Red	Near 0 dBFS: about to clip.

For speech, aim for peaks in the green and yellow. Meters show the level after the fader and before mute, so a muted strip still shows its signal. The Monitor meter shows the mix at the Monitor fader's level.

Clip light

The small light above each meter turns red when the signal reaches full scale (0 dBFS), where it distorts. It stays red until you reset it, so you notice a peak even if you missed it.

To reset the clip light, click or tap it. If it turns red again, lower that strip's fader or the level at the source.

Faders

Drag a fader to change its strip's level in the mix. The fader changes only MiniDeskMixer's mix, not the device's own volume.

- About four-fifths of the way up is unity: the input passes at its original level. The top adds 6 dB. The bottom is silent.
- The **Monitor** fader sets how loud you hear the mix through your output. It doesn't change what other apps record from the MiniDeskMixer device.

MiniDeskMixer remembers each fader's level.

Choose inputs for the Mac's input (Mac)

Each input strip has a microphone button. Click it to add that input to the Mac's input; the button turns green. Turn on as many inputs as you like, and MiniDeskMixer combines them at their fader and balance settings.

- Inputs start turned off, so nothing joins your calls until you choose it.
- When you turn on an input, MiniDeskMixer makes the **MiniDeskMixer** device the Mac's input, so apps that use the default microphone hear the mix. To switch back, choose another input in **System Settings > Sound**. To make the mix the Mac's input again, click the microphone button on the **Monitor** strip.
- An input that's turned off keeps its meter moving, so you can check its signal before you add it.

MiniDeskMixer remembers which inputs are turned on.

Mute

Click or tap the speaker button to mute the **Monitor** strip, or, on iPhone and iPad, an input. The button turns orange.

The **Monitor** strip starts muted, so a microphone can't feed back through your speakers. Use headphones, then unmute it to hear the mix.

MiniDeskMixer remembers which strips are muted.

Balance and pan

Below the fader, a slider moves the sound left or right. Drag it, or double-click or double-tap it to return to center.

- On a stereo device it's a **balance** control. At center, both sides play at the fader's level; moving it toward one side lowers only the other side.
- On a mono device, such as most microphones, it's a **pan** control that places the voice in the stereo mix.

Stereo: link, left and right

A stereo device shows a link button.

- **Linked** (the link button is highlighted): one fader sets both sides, and the balance control is shown.
- **Separate**: click or tap the link button to show two faders, labeled **L** and **R**, one for each side. Click or tap it again to link them.

MiniDeskMixer remembers which strips are linked.

Choose the active input (iPhone and iPad)

iOS uses one input at a time. Strips for the other inputs are dimmed. To switch, tap a dimmed strip's microphone button; it turns green on the active input.

Record the mix in another app (Mac)

Apps that use the Mac's default microphone already hear the mix. In an app with its own input setting, choose **MiniDeskMixer**. The device has 16 channels:

Channels	Carry
1-2	The full mix of the inputs that are turned on.
3-4	The first input strip, after its fader and balance, when it's turned on.
5-6	The second input strip.
7-8 through 15-16	The third through seventh input strips.

Apps that use only two channels, such as most video call apps, get the full mix. Inputs after the seventh are in the full mix but have no channels of their own.

Name a strip

Each strip shows the device's name until you give it your own, such as "Voice" or "Guitar".

1. Click or tap the name at the top of the strip.
2. Type a name, then press Return.

To go back to the device's name, delete the name you typed. MiniDeskMixer remembers names.

Compact view

Make the window small, and the strips drop their names, scales, sliders, and buttons to show only the clip lights, meters, and faders. This is useful for a small level display in a corner of the screen. Make the window larger to bring the controls back.

Menu bar and window (Mac)

On a Mac, MiniDeskMixer keeps running in the menu bar when you close its window. It keeps mixing while the window is closed.

Action	How
Show the mixer	Click the MiniDeskMixer icon in the menu bar and choose Show Mixer , or press Command-O.
Move the window	Drag any empty part of the window.
See the version	Click the menu bar icon and choose About MiniDeskMixer .
Quit	Click the menu bar icon and choose Quit MiniDeskMixer , or press Command-Q. Quitting stops the mix.

Troubleshooting

What you see	Why	What to do
No audio devices	MiniDeskMixer found no audio devices.	Connect a device, or check that your Mac or iPhone has a working microphone and output.
An input meter never moves.	MiniDeskMixer doesn't have microphone access, or the device is silent.	Turn on microphone access (see Install MiniDeskMixer), and check that the source is sending sound.
You don't hear anything.	The Monitor strip is muted or its fader is down.	Unmute the Monitor strip and raise its fader.
The setup screen stays after Installer finishes.	The audio system hasn't restarted yet, or the installation didn't finish.	Wait a few seconds. If the setup screen is still there, click Open Installer Again and complete the installation.

What you see	Why	What to do
Another app hears silence from MiniDeskMixer.	MiniDeskMixer isn't running, or no inputs are turned on.	Open MiniDeskMixer, and click the microphone button on the inputs you want.
Apps don't hear the mix.	The Mac's input is set to another device.	Click the microphone button on the Monitor strip, or choose MiniDeskMixer in the app's input setting.
An input is silent in the mix but works elsewhere.	It's set to a different sample rate from your other devices.	In Audio MIDI Setup , set your devices to the same rate, such as 48,000 Hz.
The clip light stays red.	A peak reached full scale earlier.	Click or tap the light to reset it, and lower the fader or source if it happens again.
A strip is dimmed on iPhone or iPad.	iOS uses one input at a time, and that input isn't active.	Tap the strip's microphone button.
A fader is dimmed on a Mac.	That input isn't in the Mac's input.	Click the strip's microphone button.
You hear feedback.	The Monitor sends a microphone to the speakers.	Mute the Monitor strip or lower its fader, and use headphones.

Privacy

MiniDeskMixer works entirely on your device. Endogen LLC doesn't receive any of your data.

- **What it reads:** the audio from your inputs, which it mixes and sends to the MiniDeskMixer audio device and your output as it plays. It doesn't save or send any audio.
- **Where requests go:** nowhere. MiniDeskMixer makes no network connections and includes no analytics or tracking.
- **What it stores on your device:** the strip names you type, fader levels, and which strips are linked, turned on, and muted.
- **Removing your data:** delete MiniDeskMixer to remove everything it stored. On a Mac, to remove the audio device too, delete `/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/HAL/MiniDeskMixer.driver` and restart your Mac.

For Endogen's full privacy policy, see the [Endogen privacy policy](#).

Support

For help, email support@endogenllc.com. Include your device, your macOS or iOS version, and the audio devices you use.

For updates and more information, visit the [MiniDeskMixer page](#).

Legal

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This manual describes MiniDeskMixer as of the revision date. Features and screens may change in later versions.

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