

## HiFi Mastering Online: Preparing Your Mix for Mastering:

The two most common reasons songs are returned:

1. They were uploaded in the wrong format.
2. They were mixed down “too loud” either by clipping or over compressing/limiting/maximizing.

To make sure you get the best sound possible from mastering, follow these guidelines:

### **If you are recording in a professional recording studio:**

Simply tell your mix engineer you need your songs mixed down to:

- File format: .wav, .aiff or .flac lossless
- Resolution: 24bit (16bit is ok)
- Sample frequency: 44.1kHz, 48kHz, 88.2kHz or 96kHz
- Peak volume: -6db to -3db below 0db (no clipping)
- **Avoid master buss limiting or maximizing** (unless used for a very specific effect)

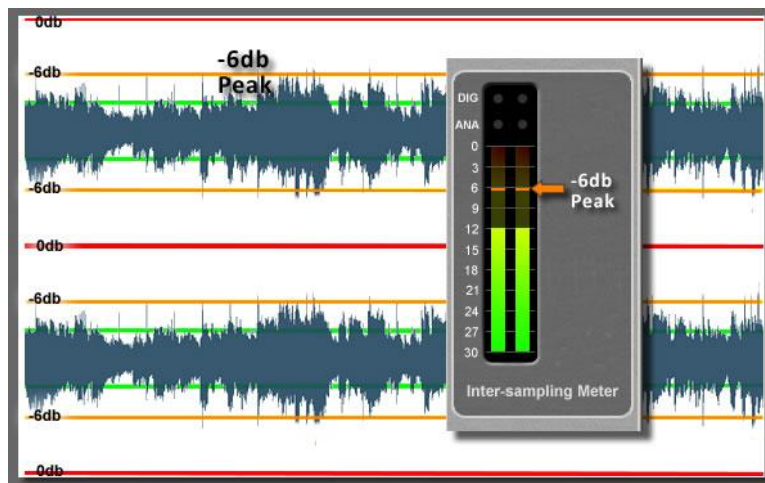
Any experienced engineer will be very familiar with these guidelines.

### **If you are recording at home:**

Follow the same criteria as above. Mixing is very different from mastering. Don't try to do both at the same time. While you are mixing:

- Keep your master fader at 0db (unity gain) with **no compression/limiting/maximizing**.
- Concentrate on making your mix sound *good*. Don't worry too much about how loud your mix is – that's our job.
- If your master level meter starts clipping or consistently peaks above -6db to -3db that means your individual tracks are too loud. Correct accordingly.
- **Remember:** It is much, *much* better for your mix to be too quiet than too loud – seriously.
- It is much better to use too little compression than too much.

Your final, stereo waveform should look something like this with volume peaks around -6db to -3db :



**REMEMBER:**

If your levels are consistently hitting 0db – your mix is too loud

If your waveform looks like it just got run over by a lawn mower – too much limiting/compression.

**If you only have your tracks on an audio CD:**

Use any music program (Windows Media Player, iTunes, WinAmp...) to rip your songs to an **uncompressed** or **lossless** format. We recommend:

- 16bit, 44.1khz .wav file
- 16bit, 44.1kHz .aiff file
- 16bit, 44.1khz .flac file

As always, if you have any questions, give us a call. We're here to help. (1-866-927-8136)

HiFi Mastering Online

[www.hifimasteringonline.com](http://www.hifimasteringonline.com)

[hifimasteringonline@gmail.com](mailto:hifimasteringonline@gmail.com)