Home Recording Studio: How To Get Started

Music Repo

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Welcome

Thank you for downloading this guide to setting up a home recording studio from the ground up. I'm Jane from **Music Repo** and I'm the resident music technology and educational expert. I hope that by the end of reading this eBook you will be a few steps nearer to creating and operating your own home recording studio. If you want to read more about me or get in touch then **visit my Google Plus page** and say **hello**!

At Music Repo we have already helped **hundreds** of people to set up their own home studios and get up and running with this rewarding (and for many people lucrative) hobby. Many have gone on to successfully kick-start their careers in the music and entertainment industry. Not just bedroom DJ's and record producers but people making professional voiceovers and video backing tracks, stock music, podcasters and classical and jazz performers too.

There has never been a better time than **now** to record your own music and make professional audio tracks at home. Technology keeps advancing in leaps and bounds, which leads to quality equipment at affordable prices. Years ago most people didn't have the budget available to build a multi-track recording studio. Those days are gone. Today, you can have a **quality recording rig** for a couple of hundred dollars.

The problem we all face is that with the onset of affordable recording technology comes an endless

Here are just some of our most frequently asked questions

- I don't know much about computers, and I'm not technical, so **how on earth** do I get started?

- What is an audio interface? What does a soundcard actually do? Have I already got one? Do I need a **new one** to make recordings??

- What is the *perfect* **home studio equipment** for me?

- Which microphone is **best**? And how do I connect it to my computer?

- How do I record my guitar/keyboard/trumpet/double bass/other instrument and make it **sound** professional?

- What exactly *IS* a **MIDI controller**? Should I have one?

- What **production software** will suit my type of music?

- What is the best way to make professional voiceovers?

- How do I connect all my equipment up **correctly**?

- Why does it have to be so ***complicated***?

array of choices. There's not a single best way to build a studio.

Every component of a typical home set-up - from the computer to the audio interface, microphone, preamp, etc. – has dozens, maybe even hundreds, of choices. With all these options comes a lot of confusion. Hopefully this guide can help you decide where to start and pick out what is most important to your situation.

Sound familiar? With the **right** advice from the beginning you can set up a great home studio and

make high quality recordings that you will be proud to share with your friends, family, even the rest of the world.

I'm only going to be able to cover the absolute basics of setting up a home studio for recording in this short guide. If I miss anything out or you want to know more, then there are plenty of ways you can get in touch and get a direct answer to YOUR particular question - all our contact details are at the end so please do get in touch or post a comment. I would love to hear from back from you!

Also if you enjoy what you read, please feel free to **share** your feedback. You'd be helping me a lot and

I'd love to find out what you liked and what you want to know more about.

So let's kick off with 2 **very simple** golden rules

Rule #1: take just one step at a time

What do I mean by that? I mean don't lose focus and become overwhelmed by trying to get too many things working at once. That will almost certainly be doomed to failure. I know, you are eager to get started but I have seen so many people try to set up their complicated recording hardware and music production software all at once, it hasn't worked, and then it becomes really hard to fix because they don't

know which bit isn't working. So they give up before they've got started. What a shame.

Take a deep breath, get one piece of the jigsaw working at a time, become an expert in each piece of equipment or software as you install it, then introduce another component. Trust me, you will get much further and the whole process will be more rewarding. I can guarantee you are not limiting your options by taking this one-thing-at-once approach.

Rule #2: start with the hardware

It's very common to be asked about which is the best music production **software**. But no matter how much

you spend on software if you haven't got the **right hardware** for the job then you will find it very difficult to make good recordings.

What do I mean by hardware? I mean the computer itself, the recording interface, controllers, microphones, headphones and speakers. Don't worry if you don't understand all these terms right now, by the end of this guide you will hopefully be much clearer.

Even if you don't actually want to make any of your own recordings, you still want to have a **high quality** way of listening to your work, and your music software will work better and more efficiently with the right equipment installed. Once you get the correct hardware set up and optimised then you should be able to get great results with any music making software, even free or budget apps.

So let's break it down and look at each piece of the traditional home studio recording jigsaw. You may

not need everything listed here, but these are the basic building blocks of a **typical** home studio set-up and if you are looking to make purchases, there are some tips on what to look out for, and to help you decide whether you need to buy now or you can postpone the decision for a while.

Your Computer

It is very likely you already own a computer that is more than capable of being the hub of your recording studio or will at least get you started. In fact if you

can get away with it I would postpone buying a new computer unless your existing one just won't run with modern software or interfaces.

If you do need a new computer anyway, or you want to set one up especially for recording, then it is easy to get blinded by the options. Whether you decide on Mac or PC is personal preference.

Most music production software is dual platform so you really can pick either. The main exception is if you really want to use Logic then you need to buy a Mac, whereas Sonar/Cakewalk and FL Studio products are PC only. But do not get too hung up at this stage. Choose what you feel most at home with, and what fits comfortably in your budget.

Make sure it has plenty of RAM. If you think that you are on the limit, then investigate whether you could easily add a bit more (you'll have to check the model of your computer on one of the big memory upgrade sites).

If you want to make backing tracks for videos and can see yourself getting into some serious video editing, then do consider a computer with separate graphics capability and dedicated graphics memory rather than relying on the standard built-in video card.

However if you buy any modern laptop or desktop off the shelf it is more than likely going to be just fine for home studio recording.

Given that there is lots of music making hardware now that works on both standard computers and iPads and even iPhones, I would not let the consideration of the computer worry you too much.

Don't try and future proof.

Buy what you need today. Who knows what will be available in three-five years' time?

Audio Interfaces (or Sound Cards)
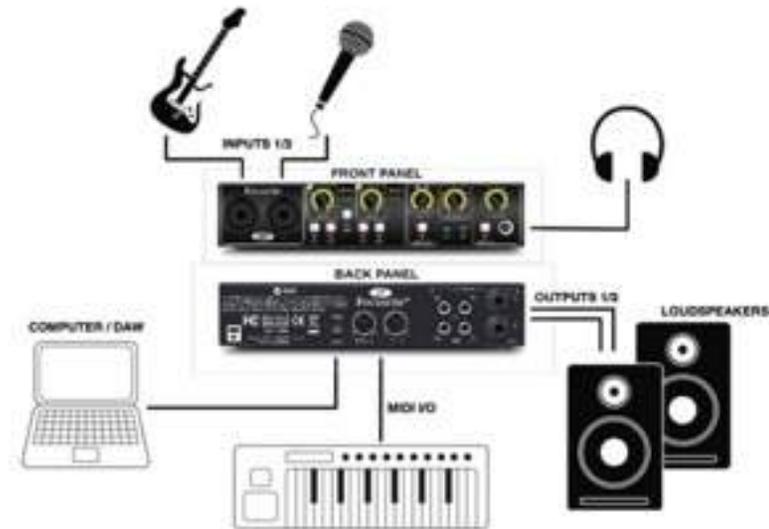
Quick Link: **How To Choose An Audio Interface**

If you want to record anything on your computer you have to have some way of getting the sounds in to your recording software, and then if you want to listen back you need some means of hearing it. That

is the basic point of a sound card. So even the most lowly laptops and tablet computers have a simple built in card and most of these can record and play back. But that is as far as it goes. And the quality is usually at best average.

You can drastically improve the quality of your recordings and what they sound like by investing in a decent **USB audio interface**. And this is where the fun and confusion begins!

In my experience this is what you need to know if you haven't owned one before: once you have an audio interface successfully installed it should work with any audio production software. So don't worry too much about making the wrong decision, because whatever you buy it should work with any software you pick in the future.

It's a bit like installing a new printer. You know that once you have the printer set up correctly you can print from any program just by selecting that printer in the options box? You don't worry about what software you might install in the future, you just assume it will work smoothly with the printer. Well, the same is true of the audio interface and recording. Think about it like that hopefully it makes choosing one a bit simpler.

So now you have decided to buy an audio interface to kick start your studio, it is easy to get overwhelmed by the choice. If you are just starting out, then I recommend you begin with a really good quality 2-channel interface like the one above.

It should have at least one microphone preamp with phantom power if you want to record vocals and/or acoustic instruments, a Hi-Z guitar input if you want to connect your electric guitar, and the ability to switch to line level so you can record a keyboard or other line level instrument.

Phantom power is essential if you want to work with condenser microphones - and I would recommend that you do. Make it a 'must have' if your budget will stretch to it.

Unless you absolutely know right now that you will want to record several things all at once then you don't need any more than two input channels for the time being.

If you definitely want to connect a **MIDI controller** or device that has standard MIDI ports (and many controllers you buy now are USB only) then you may also want MIDI i/o on the interface too.

Buy the best you can - but focus on quality rather than quantity! If in the future you find you want more inputs and outputs then if you have invested in a good branded interface it will always hold a

reasonable second-hand value when you want to upgrade. Conversely, consider looking for a used bargain on eBay or similar.

Then as long as the interface has stereo outputs and a headphone output your choice is made. (By the way if you know right now that you only want to record from a microphone you might choose just to invest in a **USB Microphone** rather than the expense of an interface + mic and all the cables. More later if you are not sure).

Stick, if you can, with a good well-known brand because the back-up and after sales service will be much better. Spend more on quality and less on multiple inputs you don't need! Finally look at the software that comes with the interface to help you make the final decision. For example some interfaces come with Pro Tools Express, which is a great way to get started with this industry standard software, others might come with a cut-down version of Cubase or Ableton Live. For complete beginners

Ignite by Air is a really good starting point as it is simple and yet has some very nice features that will ensure you can get up and running quickly.

Microphones

Quick Links: **In Depth Guide To Mic Types**
The **Best Studio Condenser Microphones**

My advice here is buy one good quality condenser microphone. Perfect for getting a really accurate recording of vocals and most acoustic instruments. If you buy one great mic and work on your mic placement and recording techniques you will learn plenty.

Bear in mind that studio condenser microphones are sensitive so while they will give a nice accurate recording they will have a tendency to pick up unwanted background sounds. Make sure you have a nice quiet space where you can set up your studio and maybe experiment with constructing a knock-up recording booth using absorbent materials. It is amazing what you can achieve with a couple of blankets and some kind of frame or old clothes airer.

Once you have your mic picked out, the most essential accessory that you will almost certainly have to buy as well is the mic stand - studio mics should not be hand held because of their sensitivity so budget for a stand when buying the mic. You will also need a good quality XLR microphone lead (assuming both your interface and your mic have XLR connections).

Other accessories to consider, but not immediately essential, are a shockmount (which will protect your mic from picking up knocks and vibrations), a pop filter if you are going to record vocals and lastly a portable vocal booth that clips onto the mic stand. (These portable booths used to be so expensive but

are now mass produced and easily available: check out the range at Editor's Keys or sE Electronics).

If you only have a dynamic mic, don't panic - this will be fine for recording vocals. It may not have the same frequency response at the top end, but you can still get good results and this is a much better 'live' mic if you want to perform on stage as well and

can only afford one microphone right now. Also you may have to go with a dynamic mic if your audio interface does not have phantom power - or you mainly want to record the output of your guitar amp.

How do you choose which microphone? Things to look out for and compare when delving into the specs to compare mics are: the pick-up pattern (cardioid, figure of 8, omni) and the frequency response.

Omnidirectional   Cardioid   Figure 8
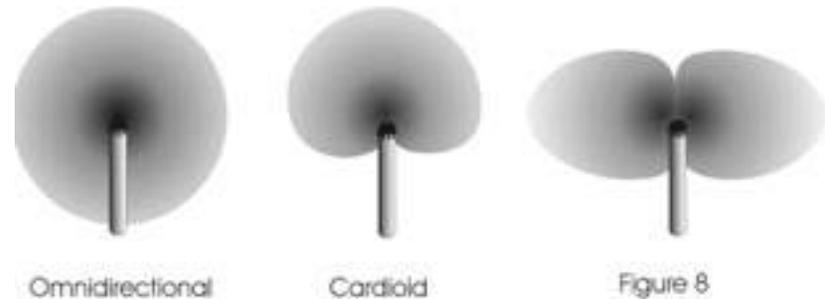
What is a pick-up pattern? This is the specific area around the microphone where it 'hears' the best. A mic works best when the sound source is placed inside its pick-up pattern area. The three most

common are: omni-directional (the mic records all the way round, great for meetings and 'ensembles'); cardioid (the mic records much better on one side than the other - ie quite directional - so great for vocals and general use); and Figure-Of-Eight or Bi-directional (good for recording conversations between two people facing each other with the mic between them).

USB Microphones

Quick Link:

The **Ultimate Guide To USB Microphones** - a comprehensive guide to the best selling USB microphones including videos, and audio recordings. Absolutely essential to help you pick the right USB mic whatever you budget.

I've put this in a separate section - although it is related to the audio interface and the standard microphone - to help you make an important decision.

Basically a **USB microphone** is a mic with a built-in audio interface. It is designed to plug straight into the USB port of your computer without the need to buy anything else. These used to be quite specialist with Samson being the 'inventor' of the concept, but now every major microphone manufacturer makes a USB

microphone and they can be a fantastic one step solution.

If you buy a USB microphone you simply connect it to your computer then any recording software you have should be able to 'find' the microphone as an input. You are effectively bypassing your internal soundcard (or any other interface you might have) and recording directly from the mic.

Now the USB microphone is the most fantastic invention and if you are not interested in recording an electric guitar or hooking up the line output of a synth or other keyboard then it offers a very cost effective solution. BUT beware of one thing! Many USB microphones are just RECORDING microphones. They make a nice quality recording and are perfect for video voiceovers and podcasting, but you 'monitor' or 'listen' to the recording you made through your existing soundcard.

This means if you want to record yourself on top of backing tracks or sequences you have created on your computer you will not be able to listen to the tracks running in the software at the same time as making a recording without experiencing what is known as 'latency' or delay. For this reason, I would strongly recommend that you look for a microphone that has a headphone socket so that you can 'direct monitor' (listen to yourself while recording).

The other big misunderstanding is some people buy a really good audio interface and then buy a USB microphone to record through it. That is losing the point of buying the interface in the first place! Think about it as a direct choice between [Audio Interface + conventional microphone] OR [USB Microphone]. NOT [USB audio interface + USB mic]!

If you do opt for the USB mic, then re-read the section about accessories in the section on microphones. Some USB mics come in a pack with a stand etc, others don't. You WILL need a stand at least if you buy a condenser microphone.

MIDI Controller Keyboards

Quick Link: How to **choose the best MIDI controller**

So far we have talked about recording - either vocals or instruments. We have been concerned with getting sounds into your computer one way or another. MIDI is related but very different.

Most music production software allows you to enter notes and other instructions via a **MIDI controller**. Usually this is a silent keyboard that just has a set of keys, and maybe pads, sliders or knobs and buttons. Other MIDI controllers are a matrix of pads. Most now connect directly via USB and are usually plug and play - though you may need to install drivers for the more complex controllers.

In my experience the notion of MIDI controllers, in fact the whole concept of MIDI, causes some confusion. One common issue is when you are putting your home recording studio together and you buy an audio interface and a MIDI controller. How do they work together? This will depend on whether or not your audio interface has got MIDI i/o as well.

The most likely scenario is that you connect up the audio interface, and then you connect your MIDI controller to a separate USB port. Now assuming both items have been correctly connected, when you start up your audio production software they should both be available to use. I have been asked many times if you can use a USB controller **alongside** a USB audio interface. Yes you can. You simply go into the settings panel of your software and make sure you have selected the audio interface for recording and playback, and then you select the MIDI controller for MIDI input.
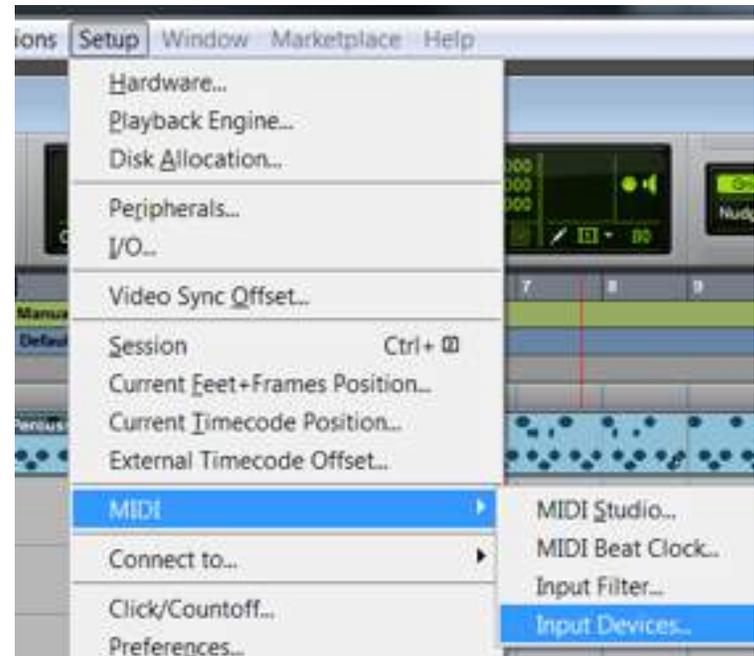
The "problem" you might have is that if your audio interface has got MIDI then the software will automatically select the MIDI input on the audio interface instead of your controller. You try and create a MIDI track and nothing happens! This is easily fixed - just open up the software settings and make sure you have selected the controller as the input. (*Hint:* Think of it again a bit like having two printers attached to your computer - if the default

printer is switched off and you try and print nothing happens until you select the other printer.)

Another option would be to power the controller keyboard via USB (or external power socket) and then connect the standard MIDI port from the controller to the MIDI in of your audio interface with a MIDI lead. In this case you WOULD select the default MIDI input device as the audio interface. (This may not be an option if your keyboard is USB only). You might want to experiment with this to see if you can drive down any latency issues you may experience.

The other really common confusion is how on earth you can have a keyboard that doesn't make any sound itself. Well the keyboard is transmitting your "performance". Which notes have you pressed, how long have you held them down, whether you have moved faders and sliders. Then the sounds come from "virtual instruments" in your software. If you have an audio interface connected then you will hear

the sounds via the output of your interface. (See the section later on headphones and speakers).

If you are still a bit confused, think about how you use a standard keyboard to type letters. The word processing software can then show you words on the screen (or garbage if you can't type too well...) based on which keys you pressed in which order. It also understands other controls like [Ctrl-C] for copy and so on.
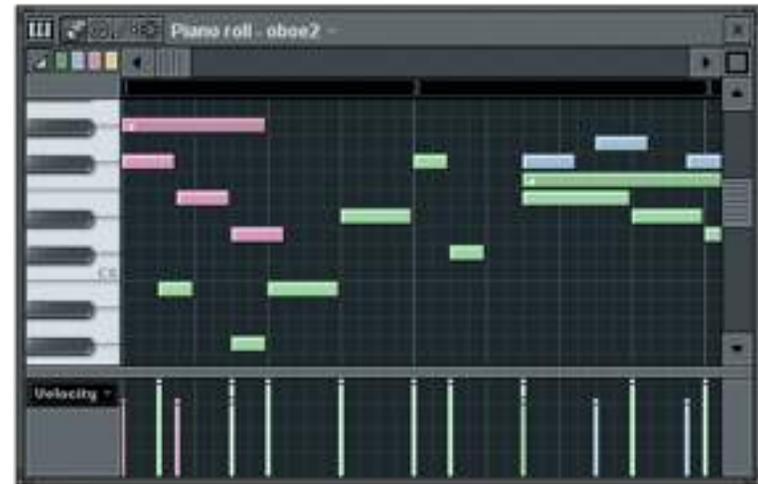
The MIDI keyboard is really very similar, it is

outputting a stream of information about your performance and the music making software can then "record" this performance information for you to edit after if you hit the wrong notes or want to make changes, copy and paste phrases, transpose etc. Just as on a word processor you can change the colour of the font and the size, in MIDI software you can directly edit the data and change the instruments that play back the notes. You'll get the hang of it!

So now you know what a MIDI controller is, do you need one? What if you can't play a note on a keyboard to save your life? I would say even if you only have a very basic knowledge of keyboards then a small controller will save you lots of time in entering notes and phrases. There are then plenty of ways to edit what you have played on screen. Even if it is not your main instrument, it is a useful way of programming drum tracks and bass lines. If you are planning to use notation or score-writing software in

any way then a MIDI keyboard is the fastest way to work and I would almost say essential.

That said, most software has different ways of entering notes, from drag and drop to pencil tools and using your standard computer keyboard, so if you are not 100% sure right now, postpone the decision. If I could only buy one thing and I wanted to record vocals etc then I would spend my money on the audio interface instead. On the other hand if I wasn't going to actually record any instruments but wanted to generate tracks using MIDI programming

then I would go for the MIDI controller as my first purchase.

MIDI Interfaces

Quick Link: **How To Connect Your MIDI Keyboard**

If you already possess a multi-timbral keyboard or a **digital piano** then it should be possible to connect that up to your computer and use it as a MIDI controller. Or it may be that rather than buy a 'silent' keyboard you'd prefer to own one that you could use **standalone** without your computer.

Hopefully if either of these is the case, you already made the decision to make sure the audio interface you chose had MIDI input and output. If so, then you can now easily connect your piano or keyboard up using standard MIDI leads. Connect the "MIDI out" of the keyboard to the "MIDI in" of the interface and vice versa. (The signal is going OUT of the keyboard and IN to the computer).

What if you don't have MIDI on your audio interface? Then you will need to purchase a special MIDI-USB interface. Look for a good quality branded one for the most reliable performance. Most MIDI interfaces just plug and play very simply. Many also work seamlessly on iPad too, so look for one that says it is iPad ready for the ultimate versatility.

Once the interface is installed and hooked up to your keyboard (and again remember connect Out->In and In->Out) when you start up your software you should find the interface is listed in the MIDI device control panel ready for you to select.
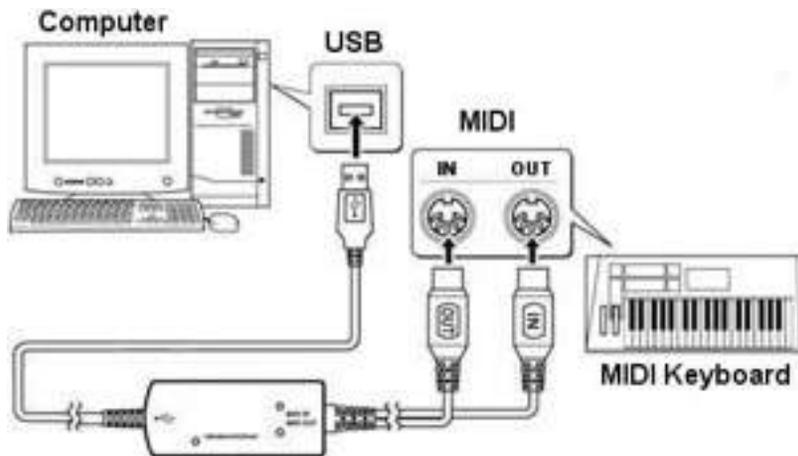
Recording Guitar

Quick Link: **How To Record Your Guitar** On Your Computer

We get so many guitarists contacting us who want to get started with recording that it seemed appropriate to give the guitar a section of its own. Just to repeat golden rule #2 - **get the hardware right first**! There are thousands of great guitar apps out there but none of them will be any good if you can't get a decent recording from your guitar.

If you have an electric or semi-acoustic guitar with 1/4-inch TS output then you really need to start by investing in an audio interface. Look for one that has a specially designed input for guitar (most of them do). That way you'll be able to get a nice quality recording without needing other equipment like a DI box. Many software programs give you virtual amps and other processing effects on the computer itself, so you don't need to connect your amp - just your guitar. Then you listen to what you are doing through headphones or speakers.

If you are an acoustic guitar player, then you will want a condenser microphone, well positioned, to record yourself. Read the section again about choosing an audio interface with phantom power, and the section on microphones. The other option is to consider a good quality USB microphone as an alternative to buying interface + mic.

Finally, many guitarists do want to record the output of their amp. In that case, the classic microphone to place in front of the cab is a dynamic microphone (a Shure SM58 or equivalent). So you will need either an audio interface + dynamic mic, or a dynamic USB Microphone.

Some acoustic guitarists like the effect of hooking up their semi-acoustic via one channel with the 1/4" output and then placing a condenser microphone in front of the guitar on the second channel to pick up the ambient sounds of the fret board and the natural reverb. This is where your two-channel audio interface plus condenser microphone set up will really score.

Speakers and Headphones

Quick Link: The **Ultimate Guide To Choosing Studio Headphones**. You will need to hear what you are recording and playing back, so a reasonable set of headphones and/or studio monitors (speakers) are a must. Let's look first at headphones.

You will often hear about either closed-back or open-back headphones (Also referred to sometimes as simply "closed" and "open"). This distinction addresses the design of the part of the headphone that covers the area behind the driver in a straight line away from the side of your head.

Closed headphones prevent sound from escaping. The downside of this design is that it traps pressure inside the headphone, which creates false low frequencies. These bass frequencies are fine for most professional uses (and even desirable in consumer products), but less desirable for critical listening.

However, when you are trying to record vocals or acoustic guitar (for example) over a backing track, you do not want any "bleed" - ie you don't want to be making a recording of the sound coming out of the headphones. So a pair of closed headphones may be essential to get a recording without bleed if you cannot afford the really high-end open headphones which do have good sound insulation.

For critical listening, headphones with an open back often provide a more accurate frequency balance, with the trade off of providing slightly less isolation - in other words great for working on your mix but less good for recording acoustic instruments and voice.

There is a bit of a trade-off here between critical listening and recording.

Extremely well engineered open-back headphones provide almost the same isolation as high quality closed back headphones, and if you can afford them

that would be the solution, but it is a luxury you'll have to pay for.

As a reasonable compromise for those on more of a budget, there are some excellent "semi-open-back" headphones that are affordable, well balanced, and provide enough isolation for professional tracking applications.

In the long run you may well need more than one set of headphones for recording and monitoring. In the short run check out the semi-open designs.


The other way to monitor your sound is with a set of studio monitor speakers. Here you are looking for the most accurate representation of your recordings and mixes as possible. Whether you're recording, editing, mixing, or mastering audio, your studio monitors will ultimately determine how well your project translates to headphones, car audio systems, TVs, and wherever else your work may be listened to.

If this is your first set up then it is most likely you will be looking for a pair of "active" studio monitors. Active monitors have their amplifiers built in so you do not need to buy any external amplifier. Also, the internal amplifier is specifically matched to that speaker for the best sonic performance so you don't have additional headaches on deciding what to purchase.

Unless you already have a specific reason to prefer a passive system, you'll probably appreciate both the convenience and performance you get from an active studio monitoring system.

You have to position a stereo pair of studio monitors so they form an equilateral triangle with your head when you're seated in your mix position. In other words, you place them so that they're as far away from you as they are to each other. This will result in the most accurate frequency response and clearest stereo image. The size of your speakers should be appropriate for the size of your room. If you're mixing

in a small space, then you'll get much more accurate results with smaller monitors.
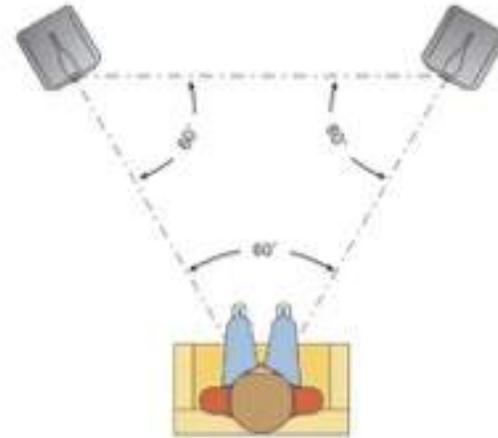
Remember that technically speaking, studio monitors aren't trying to sound "good". They're trying to sound as accurate and precise as possible. The ideal set of studio monitors should reveal every detail in your mix, both good and bad, while portraying an accurate balance across the entire frequency range.

Keep in mind that it's almost impossible to tell how a set of studio monitors will sound in your room. Even if you invest time in auditioning a set at a store or a

friend's studio, the acoustics of your room play a huge role in what you'll hear when you're mixing. You can make note of certain characteristics, but don't expect them to sound exactly the same. You may have to spend a bit of your budget (or use your ingenuity with what you have lying around) to acoustically treat your studio with some absorbent materials to reduce reflections.

You will find that for most recording you will need to use headphones rather than monitors, as you can end up with terrible feedback loops if you have your mic positioned anywhere near your monitors! You have been warned...

Cables

Many people ask me what cables you need to connect your equipment together, so I thought I'd include a bit here about this. In general, though, there is no once answer fits all situations. You have to look at what outputs and inputs you have to determine the connections you need to make. So do have a look at your manuals and at the actual sockets themselves to make an educated guess at least!

The most common types of sockets are 1/4 inch jack, RCA and XLR.

XLR   RCA/PHONO   1/4" JACK

The other thing that causes confusion is the difference between 'balanced' and 'unbalanced' signals. Balanced signals - most commonly used to connect microphones and high-end monitors - are important in sound recording and production. The balanced signal reduces susceptibility to external noise. Balanced connections use three-conductor

connectors, usually the XLR or TRS phone (1/4-inch jack connector with additional ring).

XLR connectors are usually used with microphones because of their durable construction, while TRS jack plugs are often used for mixer inputs and outputs or some monitors because of their smaller profile. (Though higher end monitors have balanced XLR inputs). TRS stands for Tip-Ring-Sleeve. These cables look like a standard guitar cable with 1/4 inch jack except they have extra rings on the actual jack

to carry the extra signal and should be clearly labelled as balanced.

If all this sounds a bit confusing, don't worry. Check the manuals carefully for your audio interface and monitors, and if the interface has balanced outs and the monitor has balance inputs then make sure you purchase the appropriate balanced cables. Use a professional XLR mic cable to connect your microphone to your interface and all should be good.

Audio Production Software

Now we have got our hardware set up, it's time to think about the software. However even at this point I would be cautious about spending hundreds of pounds straight off. Most audio interfaces and controllers come with some kind of audio production software that should get you going. Use this opportunity to make sure your system is really well set up. Next up, try downloading a few demos to get a feel for the kind of thing you want to do. Even now, don't go mad! Remember rule #1? Get one software package, follow the basic tutorials, and really get it to work.

If you are a classical musician or you know for certain that you want to write using notation, then you should try Finale and Sibelius. Both are very expensive applications but are extremely powerful. But both also have cut down versions as well and for simpler arrangements they are usually all you need. Both have demos you can download and try. The other notation option is Notion - very reasonably priced with great sounds and the benefit of an app so you can seamlessly integrate your work on your laptop and your iPad.

For more general audio production, you need to look to a DAW (Desktop Audio Workstation) also commonly referred to as sequencing software or audio production software. The big players are as follows: Logic and Digital Performer are Mac only, Sonar (Cakewalk) is PC only, while Pro Tools, Cubase, Ableton Live, and Studio One are all dual platform. They are all fabulous programs and will get the job done for you. Which one should you go with though? That's a question only you can answer by trialling each one, or maybe just go for one and sticking with it. Most producers have their favourites but all these DAW's are excellent for writing, recording, editing, mixing, and mastering.

Will your final choice be the deciding factor in how your songs turn out? No! The software is a tool but it won't write the song for you!

Other software you could take a look at is Propellerhead Reason which is dual platform (a whole virtual studio in a box complete with sequencer) or FL Studio (PC only). Or if you want something a bit different, Band In A Box from PG Music is the longest running music software and is actually a brilliant creative tool.

But for those on a tight budget, sticking with the software that came with your hardware and trying out free applications like Audacity can force you to really learn the basics and get creative.

Turning Equipment On & Off

I haven't got room in this intro guide to get much into production techniques and how to actually use the equipment I've looked at. However I thought I would include this vital final section about turning your equipment on and off. It is so exciting to get new stuff, but it would be easy to blow your new speakers without a little thought first!

If you are using monitor speakers or lots of interconnected equipment it is really important to switch them on and off in the correct order. Turning equipment on and off when the powered speakers are still switched on can result in a nasty audible 'thump' or 'bang' which can damage your equipment.

Follow these simple rules:

Turning on your equipment:

- Lower the levels (volumes) of all equipment (including monitor, amps, audio interface output) to silent

- Turn on all the equipment except the monitors one by one

- Turn on the monitors and gradually raise their volume

Turning off your equipment:

- Lower the levels of all the equipments including the monitors to silent

- Turn off the monitors (speakers)

- Turn off the rest of the equipment one by one

Golden rule: The monitors (amp/speakers) should be the last thing to be turned on and the first thing to be turned off and ALWAYS with the levels completely down.

And Finally ...

Congratulations on getting this far. I really hope you have learned something and are ready to get started with your set up.

If you have the time to **share the love**, then please leave a comment on our **Facebook Page**, tweet me **@MusicRepo**, or connect with us on **Google Plus**. I'd love to know what you think and what you want to do next.

While you're there if you **follow us** then you'll be the first to hear as we add new information to help you with your home studio recording.

I wish you every success in your recording adventures. All the best!   *Jane x*

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