

Audio File Formats

Music

Which format to use for recording, for delivery and for the web.

Lossy formats discard data permanently; re-encoding compounds the damage.

Format	Type	Use for
WAV / AIFF	Uncompressed	Recording, mixing, mastering
FLAC / ALAC	Lossless compressed	Archiving, audiophile delivery
MP3	Lossy	Universal compatibility
AAC / M4A	Lossy	Better than MP3 at the same size
Opus	Lossy	Best for streaming and voice
OGG	Lossy	Open, used in games

Standard rates: 44.1 kHz / 24-bit for music, 48 kHz for video. Record at 24-bit; 16-bit is for delivery only.