

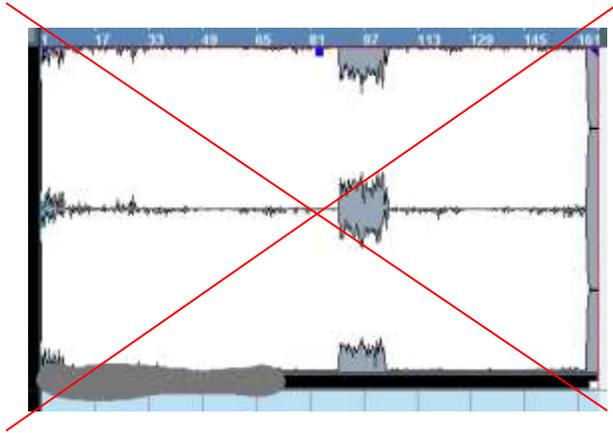


Preparing Your Track For Professional Mastering

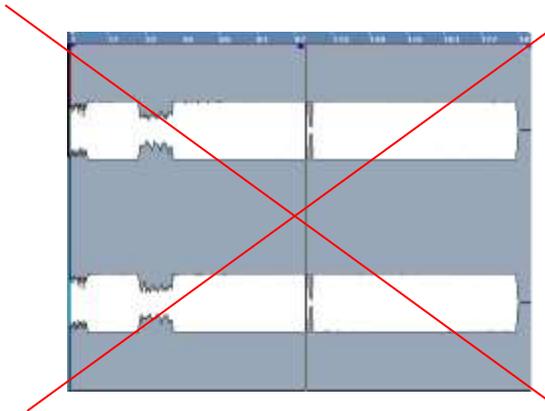
When you send in your finished track for professional mastering, we recognize you want speedy, professional, high quality, affordable, and intensely helpful service. These are the foundations of our core values.

It is all too common that we run into issues with the premasters we receive that create road blocks for the mastering process; issues which are preventable. Here is how you can help us deliver on our core values.

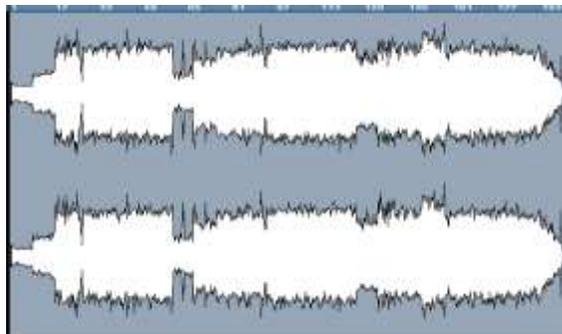
- Ensure your mixdown is the absolute best you can achieve
 - It is a smart music production practice to listen to your mix on at least 3 different sound systems so you have the best idea of what your track actually sounds like. Since mastering enhances, polishes, adds life, and brings up the volume of your music, if there issues in your mixdown, mastering tends to make them painfully obvious. If your high hats are too loud they can sound sharp, if your bass is too loud it can sound muddy. Occasionally productions can mysteriously have clicks or pops (audio artifacts), mastering tends to bring those to the forefront as well. We do everything we can to give you a brilliant, tonally balanced, and vibrant master; if we notice anything that is beyond our ability to fix we may send a request back to you to make an adjustment in your mixdown.
- Take off all compression and limiters on your master channel
 - During the mastering process whole track compression and limiting are a key part of getting punchy, warm, full bodied sound. If you send us a premaster with compression and/or limiting on your master channel we run the risk of over compression. Over compression means distortion, muddy sound, loss of punch on the low end bass, and loss of sparkle on the high end treble.
 - occasionally producers use compression as an effect (for pumping etc), if this is really important to the feel of your tune it's best to send two premasters with and without compression to increase the mastering engineers options.*



Above: Levels Maxed



Above: Brickwall limiting with no dynamics



Above: No transients/dynamics clipping, lots of headroom to work with

- Ensure your premaster is not clipping
 - Bring the master volume down enough so there are no transient spikes clipping in your waveform. Mastering engineers need ‘headroom’ to do their work and if

there are sound transients hitting or exceeding the 0db ceiling it can inhibit our ability to give you the finished product you want.

- Leave about 3 seconds of dead air space before and after your track to prevent unwanted clicks or reverb/delay tails cut off early at the end.
- Send your premasters at absolute minimum 44.1k/16bit. We recommend 44.1k/24bit because we're audiophiles and better quality is truly the way.

Mastering is all about taking a great sounding mix and bringing it up to commercial quality, it's all about making sure everything sounds great first. If you find yourself wanting to rely on having the mastering engineer to make your track sound good or 'save' your track then that's a red flag that there are mixdown issues. Your best interest as an artist/label/etc is always as high of quality as possible. As your mastering engineer we take your music quality very seriously and are happy to be your partner, guide, and liason for achieving your goals.