

Glossary of Terms for Popular Audio File Formats

- **AAC (.aac)** - "Advanced Audio Coding", next generation audio codec that seeks to preserve audio quality at lower bitrates.
- **AIFF (.aiff)** - default sound file on Macintosh computers
- **audiophile** - one with extreme interest in high quality sound
- **bitrates** - speed at which audio data travels per second
- **BURN-Proof** - short for "Buffer Underrun Proof". If a data stream is interrupted while burning, the cd creation process is often ruined. BURN-Proof combats this by connecting the data seamlessly between the recorded point and the recording start point
- **burning** - term for writing data to a cd
- **codec** - short for "compression/decompression", basically a system of rules to transform a file.
- **.cda** - a way of displaying audio tracks, much like a menu
- **CDDB** - "Compact Disc Database", online lookup tool for retrieving album, artist, and track information
- **cd-r** - short for "cd-recordable", this media type allows you to record audio or data files and does not allow erasing.
- **cd-rw** - short for "cd rewriteable". These discs can record and erase audio and data up to 1,000 times.
- **cd text** - disc and track info embedded on an audio CD
- **constant bit rate (CBR)** - bit rate remains the same throughout the audio file. Compare with variable bit rate (VBR)
- **converter** - software program that transforms one file format to another
- **decoding** - making a format readable. The term usually refers to the process of converting MP3 to WAV
- **disc-at-once (DAO)** - single session burning process that cannot be interrupted and does not allow any data to be added once burned on a disc. Does not add 2 second gaps between tracks as does track-at-once recording
- **Encoding** - the process of converting any audio format to MP3
- **ID3** - small file that can be attached to an MP3 that contains album, artist, track, and other info.
- **jitter correction** - jitter occurs with digital audio extraction (ripping) or when digital audio is converted to analog. This correction feature helps restore the audio to its original condition
- **kbps** - "kilobytes per second", a measurement that is used to judge the size of an audio file.
- **MP3 (.mp3)** - MPEG Layer III, digital audio compression format achieving smaller file sizes by eliminating sounds the human ear can't hear or doesn't easily pick up.

- **mp3pro** - audio codec that attempts to achieve the same audio quality in smaller file sizes than MP3
- **normalizing** - the process of making audio files the same volume
- **OGG Vorbis** - open source audio codec designed to compete with MP3.
- **psychoacoustics** - study of what sounds the human ear can detect.
- **RA** (.ra) - "Real Audio" file type from Real Networks.
- **ripping** - also called digital audio extraction, this is the process of taking CD audio and recording it to a computer in any file format.
- **RM** (.rm) - "Real Media", file type from Real Networks.
- **track-at-once** (TAO) - this burning process can write tracks individually, up to 99 total. Automatically places 2 second gaps between tracks.
- **variable bit rate** (VBR) - encoding process where the codec makes the choice for how many bits are used on each segment of music. More complex segments get more bits.
- **WAV** (.wav) - uncompressed audio format -- the standard audio file used on PCs.