

Stonebridge Mastering

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Please find below a list of mixing and final mix recommendations that we ask our clients and their engineers to observe. Stonebridge Mastering is dedicated to bringing higher quality recordings to those we associate with. If you become interested in associating with our studio, then please get in contact with us. The information below is covered in more detail in our video *"How to record an album that lives up to your artistic vision"* which can be found on Google Video by searching for mixing warm up, or by clicking the "Preparing Your Audio For Mastering" button on our website's home page.

MIXING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Keep all peaks below -3dB (dBFS) on your individual track meters, master bus meters and between every device and every plug-in. The one possible exception is between your pre-amps and your AD converters, and then the level should only be above -3dB if you are absolutely positive your converters can handle it, and only if you absolutely must push it to that level to get your pre-amps to their sweet spots.
- Use one delay, several delays, no delay, reverb with pre-delay (and/or panned to the opposite speaker than the dry track), to create depth in the mix. Delay times should be set between 12 and 40 milliseconds (there should be no echo) unless using it for an echo effect.
- Please use subtractive EQ, and at the very least, use tasteful bass roll-offs (high-pass filters) on every track that is not a bass instrument.
- Please error on the side of too much punchiness, or too much dynamic. If your client is expecting the mastering studio to add punch and dynamic then the mixing job is not complete. We can add punch, but it will probably be at the expense of something else.
- Please avoid attempting to reach the fullness of a commercially released album. Using a reference CD of your client's favorite recordings in mixing is a good concept if done very carefully and mindfully, but it often leads down a slippery slope. You will want to concentrate on getting a good balance. After all, those recordings are mastered.
- Please avoid adding excessive high frequency with EQ (especially to hi-hats, cymbals and acoustic guitars). We have noticed this as a common problem.
- Audition parallel compression for your client on their drum bus or bounced drum tracks.

FINAL MIX PREPARATION

- Please copy the final 24-bit mix-downs in .wav format to a high quality CD-R or DVD-R like the Apogee Golds or Taiyo Yudens, burned at your burners slowest burning speed, or copy them to a high quality USB drive. We can accept any sample rate, or bit-rate, but we prefer 24-bit. Double check that there are no effects on the master bus.
- Please do the fade-ins and fade-outs the way your client wants before sending them to us, unless they elect for us to do them.