How Can I Best Enjoy Music and Videos in iTunes?

You can start playing music and videos within minutes of launching iTunes, but to get the very best out of iTunes, you'll need to explore its advanced features. Do you want to make sure that iTunes gives you the highest audio quality that your Mac can deliver — and that you get the best possible sound on your iPod as well? What about building an iTunes library that lets you quickly find the songs you like? You'll probably want to create both unchanging playlists and playlists that update themselves automatically with fresh songs, back up your iTunes library in case disaster strikes your Mac, and use your iPod to carry or transfer essential files as well as your songs and videos.

Getting High-Quality Audio on iTunes and an iPod

If you love music, you'll love the audio quality that iTunes and an iPod can deliver. But to get the very best out of your Mac and iPod, you need to choose the right settings in iTunes and on the iPod.

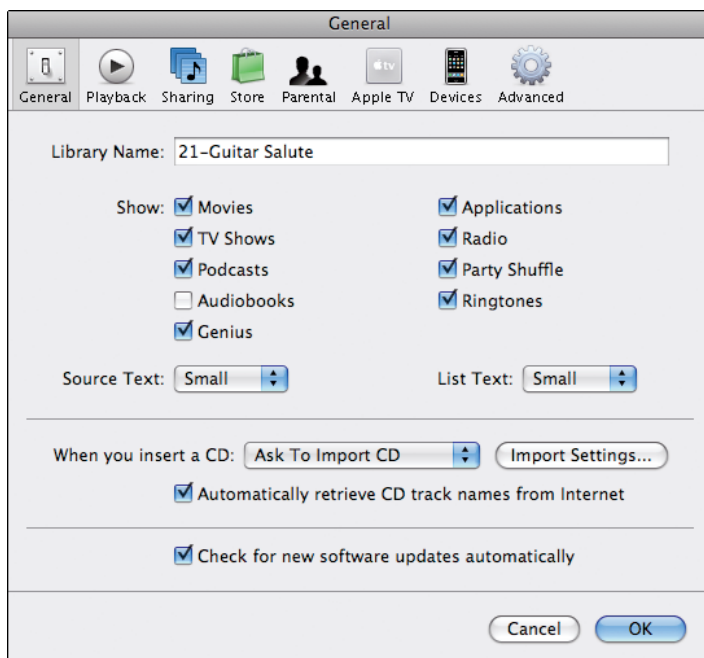## Setting iTunes to deliver high audio quality

You need to do three things to set iTunes to give you high-quality audio:

- Set iTunes to create high-quality audio files from CD
- Choose essential playback settings in iTunes
- Apply equalizations to your songs

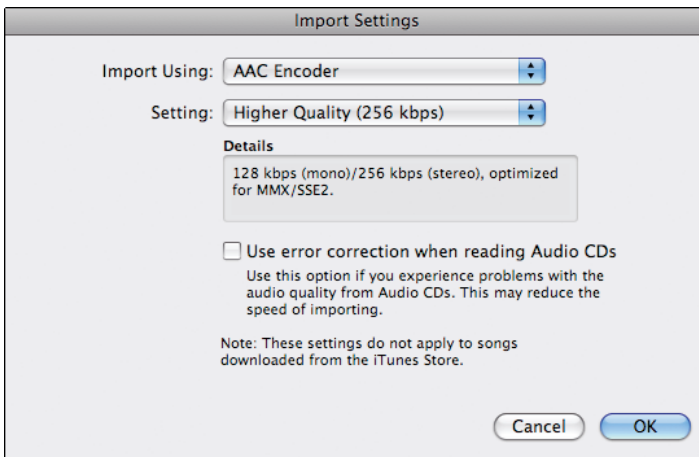### Setting iTunes to create high-quality audio files from CD

Here's how to get the best audio quality when you import songs from CD.

1. **Choose iTunes ⇨ Preferences to open the Preferences dialog box.**

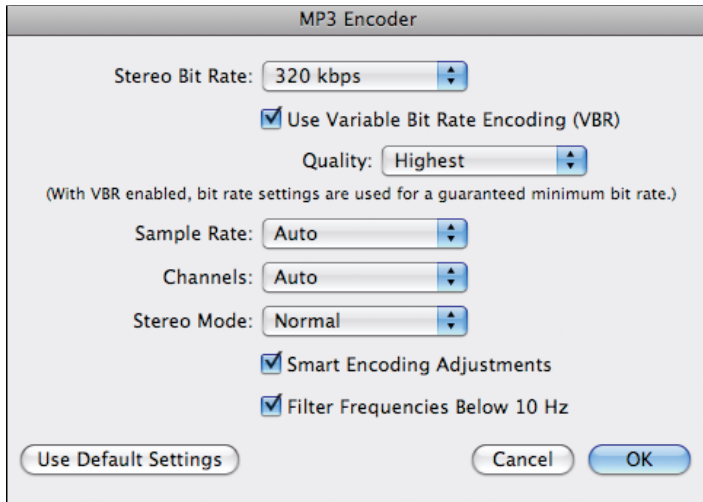2. **Click General in the toolbar to open the General preferences (see figure 1.1).**

1.1 iTunes' General preferences let you control which action iTunes takes when you insert a CD.

3. **Tell iTunes what to do when you put a CD in your Mac.** I find that Show CD is the best choice because it lets you fix any incorrect tag information before you import the CD. Your alternatives are Begin Playing, Ask To Import CD (the default), Import CD, Import CD And Eject, and Show CD.

4. **Select the Automatically retrieve CD track names from Internet check box if you want iTunes to download track names for you.** This is the easiest way to get CD information, but it's a good idea to check that the information is correct before you apply it.

5. **Click the Import Settings button to display the Import Settings dialog box (see figure 1.2).**

1.2 iTunes' Import Settings control the quality of the music you get in iTunes on your iMac and on your iPod or iPhone. If you want high-quality audio, you need to change the default settings.

6. **In the Import Using pop-up menu, choose the encoder for creating the audio files.** See the sidebar "Picking the Best Encoding for Your Needs" for advice.

7. **Choose a quality setting for the encoder in the Setting pop-up menu.** iTunes offers pre-set choices for all encoders except Apple Lossless Encoding. To choose custom settings, click Custom and work in the dialog box that iTunes displays. Figure 1.3 shows the MP3 Encoder dialog box for choosing custom settings for encoding MP3 files.

8. **Select the Use error correction when reading Audio CDs check box if you find your song files contain pops, skips, or dropouts caused by the drive reading them incorrectly, or if you simply want to be sure of getting quality audio files.** Using error correction slows down the importing speed, so you may prefer to clear this check box and test whether the song files come out clean.

8. **Click OK to close the Import Settings dialog box, and then click OK to close the Preferences dialog box.**

MP3 Encoder

Stereo Bit Rate: 320 kbps

☑ Use Variable Bit Rate Encoding (VBR)

Quality: Highest

(With VBR enabled, bit rate settings are used for a guaranteed minimum bit rate.)

Sample Rate: Auto

Channels: Auto

Stereo Mode: Normal

☑ Smart Encoding Adjustments

☑ Filter Frequencies Below 10 Hz

Use Default Settings   Cancel   OK

1.3 Custom dialog boxes such as the MP3 Encoder dialog box let you choose exactly the encoding settings you want.

Choosing essential playback settings in iTunes

Your next step is to choose three settings that make a huge difference to how iTunes plays back the songs. Follow these steps:
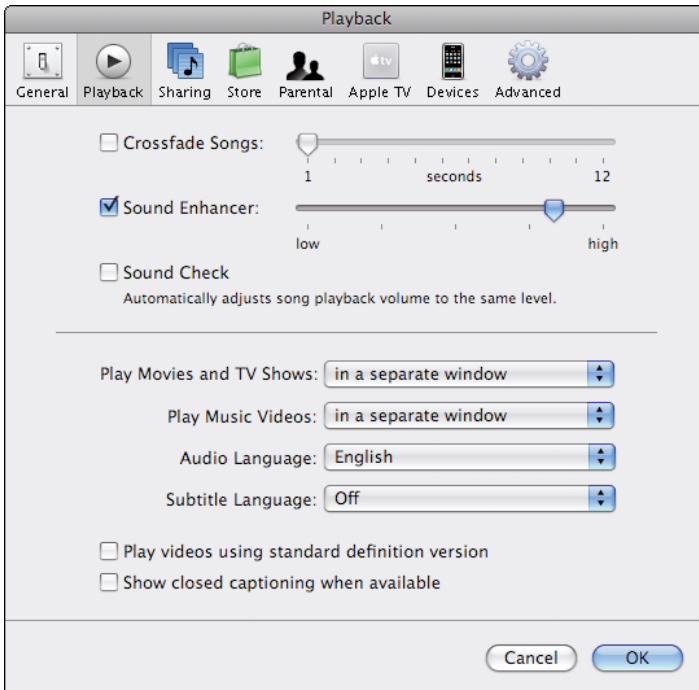
1. **Choose iTunes ⇨ Preferences to open the Preferences dialog box.**

2. **Click the Playback button to display the Playback preferences (see figure 1.4).**

3. **Select the Crossfade Playback check box only if you want to use the cross-fading feature.** This fades from the end of one song to the beginning of the next. If you use this feature, drag the slider to set the number of seconds (from 1 to 12), depending on how much of each song you want to lose.

4. **Select the Sound Enhancer check box if you want to use Sound Enhancer.** This feature performs several audio tricks, such as increasing the stereo separation of the left and right tracks and adding harmonics. Sound Enhancer can make music sound more lively, but at the cost of authenticity. If you use this feature, drag the slider to set the degree of enhancement.

5. **Select the Sound Check check box if you want iTunes to normalize your songs.** *Normalization* involves evaluating the songs in your library for loud and quiet points and reducing the difference between the two. This helps to avoid getting your ears blasted by a loud song that follows a quiet one, but it makes the music much less dynamic and compelling.

Note

Explanations of what the Sound Enhancer actually does tend to vary, but if you've ever used a Loudness button on an old stereo, you may see a similarity between that and Sound Enhancer. But where most Loudness features could only be either on or off, you can adjust the amount of difference the Sound Enhancer makes by dragging its slider.

6. **Click OK to close the Preferences dialog box.** Test the settings you've chosen by playing various types of songs, and change the settings if you don't like the results.

1.4 In the Playback preferences, choose whether to crossfade playback, use Sound Enhancer, and use Sound Check.

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Turn off Sound Check so that you can enjoy your songs with as full a dynamic range as the sound engineer has given them. Unfortunately, to pack songs with enough punch to penetrate our cluttered consciousness on the radio or in public, sound engineers all too often now compress the dynamic range, which makes the music seem louder overall but removes the difference between the "loud" and "quiet" parts.

Picking the Best Encoding for Your Needs

CDs contain music files in an uncompressed format designed for use on CDs. To copy the songs from CDs to your Mac, you use an *encoder* to convert the files to a format suitable for computers. iTunes comes with five encoders, so you can pick the one that's right for your needs. For some of these encoders, you can also adjust the quality setting, or *bitrate*, which also affects the file size.

iTunes comes set to import songs from CD using the Advanced Audio Coding (AAC) encoder at the 128 Kbps bitrate. This is good for general-purpose recording with modest file sizes, but if you want high audio quality, either choose the Higher Quality (256 Kbps) setting, or use the Custom dialog box to set the highest available bitrate, 320 Kbps.

If you use a Mac and an iPod or iPhone, AAC is usually the best format to choose. iTunes, iPods, and iPhones can play AAC files, but most other hardware and software players can't. If you need to play your song files on other players, use the MP3 format instead. MP3 has lower quality than AAC at the same bitrate, so choose at least the Higher Quality (192 Kbps) bitrate for MP3. For best results, use the Custom dialog box to set the highest available bitrate, 320 Kbps.

If you have lots of hard disk space on your Mac and want superior audio quality, try the Apple Lossless Encoding encoder. *Lossless* means that, unlike the AAC and MP3 encoders, Apple Lossless Encoding does not discard any of the data contained in the original music — so the song file should be perfect. Apple Lossless Encoding files take up much more space than AAC and MP3 files, so they're not great for iPods and the iPhone. In fact, the iPod shuffle can't even play Apple Lossless Encoding files.
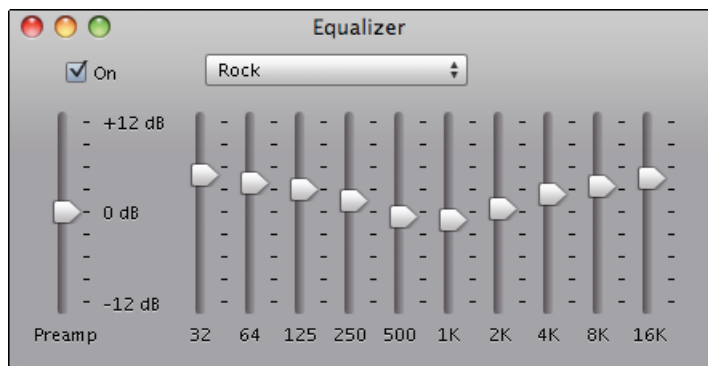
Your last two choices of encoder are WAV and AIFF. These are essentially the same thing: uncompressed audio data, but with different instructions at the beginning of the file. WAV and AIFF both give perfect audio quality but lack the tag information that portable music players need; besides, WAV and AIFF files are so large that few will fit on any but the most capacious portable players.

Applying an equalization to the music you're playing

Your third move toward making songs sound the way you like them is to use the Equalizer. You can either apply an equalization to the music as you listen, just as you might do with a graphical equalizer on a stereo or boom-box, or apply an equalization to any song in your library (see the next section).
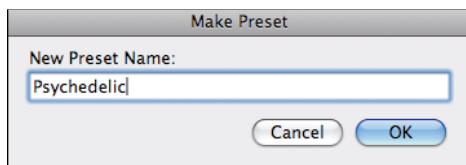
iTunes' Equalizer is easy to use. These are the moves you need to know:

- Choose Window ➪ Equalizer or press ⌘+Option+2 to toggle the display of the Equalizer (see figure 1.5).

1.5 Use the Equalizer to make songs sound the way you like them.

- Select the On check box to turn the Equalizer on, and then choose the equalization you want from the pop-up menu.

- To create a custom equalization, drag the frequency sliders to produce the sound you want. If you want to boost the amplification, drag the Preamp slider up; to reduce the amplification, drag the slider down. Open the pop-up menu, choose Make Preset, type the name in the Make Preset dialog box (see figure 1.6), and then click OK.

- To rename or delete an equalization, open the pop-up menu and choose Edit Presets. In the Edit Presets dialog box (see figure 1.7), select the equalization, and then click Rename (to rename it) or Delete (to delete it). Click Done when you're ready to close the dialog box.

1.6 You can easily create a custom preset to apply an equalization.

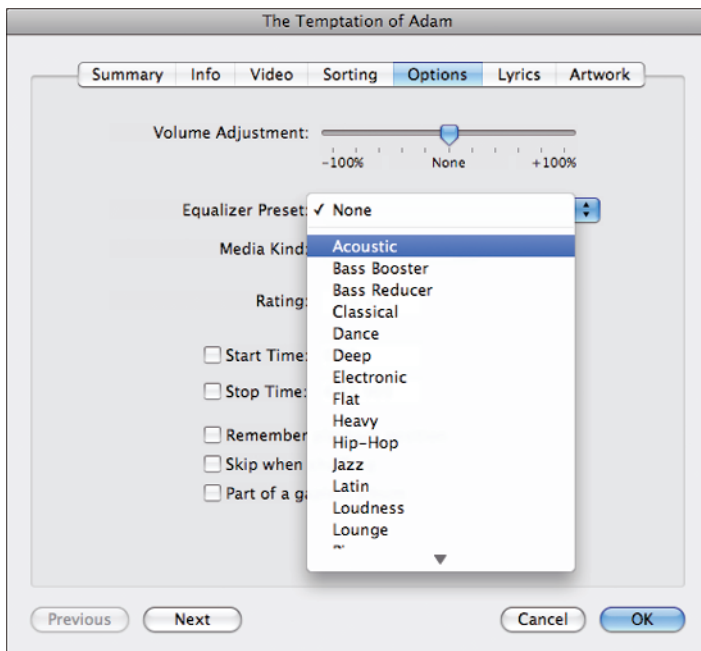**1.7** Use the Edit Presets dialog to rename a preset or delete it.

9

Note Custom equalizations don't carry through to the iPod or iPhone, so if you use one of these devices, it's best to experiment with iTunes' built-in equalizations before creating your own.

Applying an equalization to a particular song

Applying an equalization as you're listening works well, but what's much handier is applying an equalization to each song in your library. This way, whenever you play the song, iTunes uses that equalization automatically. So does your iPod or iPhone (as long as the equalization you choose is one of the built-in ones).

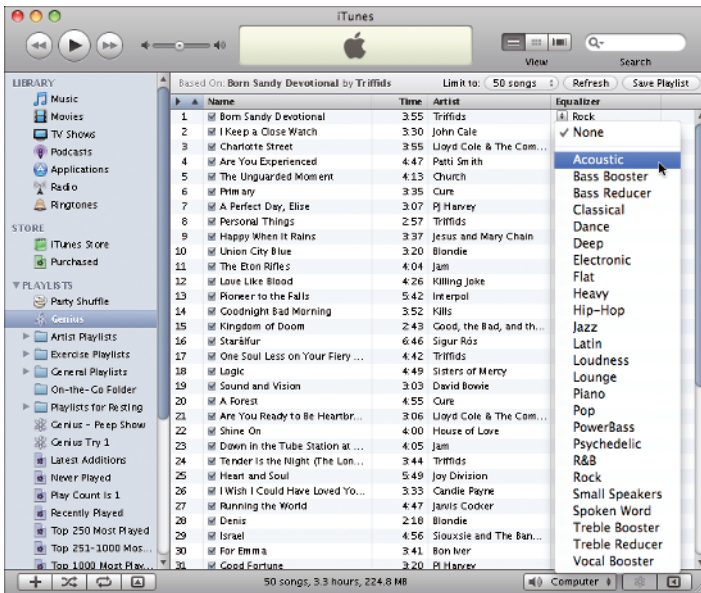You can apply an equalization to any song in your library in one of these ways:

- **Single song.** Ctrl+click or right-click the song, choose Get Info, and then click the Options tab of the Item Info dialog box (see figure 1.8). Open the Equalizer Preset pop-up menu, choose the equalization, and then click OK.

1.8 Choosing an equalization for a single song in the Item Info dialog box.

- **Single song.** Add the Equalizer column to the current view by Ctrl+clicking or right-clicking an empty column heading (after the last column) and choosing Equalizer from the menu. (You can also replace an existing column by Ctrl+clicking or right-clicking its

column heading and then choosing Equalizer.) You can then apply an equalization to a song by using the pop-up menu as shown in figure 1.9.

1.9 Add the Equalizer column to a view to give yourself the easiest way to apply an equalization to a song.

⊙ **Multiple songs, an album, or all an artist's songs.** Select the songs or the album, Ctrl+click or right-click, and choose Get Info to open the Multiple Item Information dialog box. For an artist, click the artist, and then press ⌘+I to open the Multiple Item Information dialog box. Click the Options tab, open the Equalizer Preset pop-up menu, choose the equalization, and then click OK.

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Which equalizations sound best to you will depend on the type of music you listen to, the type of speakers or headphones you use, and the state of your ears, not to mention your personal preferences. Bear in mind that the names of the built-in equalizations are merely suggestions — so if you find you like to listen to speed metal using the Jazz equalization, feel free to do so.

Choosing suitable iPod settings

To get the highest audio quality on your iPod, you need to load high-quality songs, such as those you've ripped from your CDs as discussed earlier in this chapter. You need to turn off the Sound Check feature on your iPod (or iPhone) to prevent it from normalizing the sound. You may also need to apply equalizations on the iPod.

> **Genius**
>
> All iPods and iPhones include decent-quality headphones, but you can improve the audio quality by buying higher-quality headphones that you find comfortable. If you're thinking of upgrading your headphones, also look into buying a headphone amplifier because this can greatly improve the sound you get out of your iPod or iPhone.

Turning off Sound Check on the iPod or iPhone

If you want songs to sound good on your iPod or iPhone, turn off the Sound Check feature to prevent the player from robbing the songs of dynamic range by normalizing the sound.

Here's how to turn off Sound Check on the various models of iPod and on the iPhone:

- **Sixth-generation iPod or iPod nano.** Choose Main menu ⇨ Settings ⇨ Sound Check, and then press the Select button to switch between On and Off.

- **iPod shuffle.** Connect the iPod shuffle to your Mac, then click it in the Devices category in the Source list to display its control screens. On the Settings tab, clear the Enable Sound Check check box, and then click Apply.

- **iPod touch.** Press Home, touch Settings, touch Music, and then touch the Sound Check slider to move it to the On position or the Off position.

- **iPhone.** Press Home, touch Settings, touch iPod, and then touch the Sound Check slider to move it to the On position or the Off position.

Applying equalizations on the iPod or iPhone

If you've applied one of iTunes' built-in equalizations to each song, as discussed earlier in this chapter, your iPod or iPhone automatically applies those equalizations when you listen to the songs.

Keeping Audio Quality High on an iPod shuffle

To keep audio quality high on the iPod shuffle, clear the Convert higher bit rate songs to 128 Kbps AAC check box in the Options area of the iPod's Settings tab. Converting songs to 128 Kbps AAC reduces the amount of space the songs take up, but it costs you audio quality. You lose even more quality if the song you're converting was encoded using an encoder other than AAC (for example, MP3). The conversion also makes synchronization take longer, which is seldom welcome.

When you've applied a custom equalization to a song, however, you'll find that it's not available on your iPod. In this case, you can change the equalization on the iPod or iPhone manually. You may also need to do this for songs whose equalizations are available, simply because songs sound differently through headphones than through your Mac's sound system.

Here's how to apply an equalization on the iPod or iPhone:

- **Sixth-generation iPod or iPod nano.** Choose Main menu ⇨ Settings ⇨ EQ. Scroll to the equalization you want, and then press the Select button.

- **iPod touch.** Press Home, touch Settings, touch Music, and then touch EQ. On the EQ screen, touch the equalization you want, and then touch Music to return to the Music screen.

- **iPhone.** Press Home, touch Settings, touch iPod, and then touch EQ. On the EQ screen, touch the equalization you want, and then touch iPod to return to the iPod screen.

Building a Powerful, Easy-to-Use Library

To make your iTunes library as powerful and easy-to-use as possible, store it in a folder that has plenty of space, and make sure that folder contains the file for each song in the library. For faster searching and enjoyable playlists, tag the files with accurate information, rate the songs so that iTunes knows which you like, and trim off any unwanted parts of songs.

Normally, you'll want to store all your songs in a single library so that you can play them easily. But if need be, you can create multiple iTunes libraries, each containing a different collection of songs.

Choosing where to store your library

iTunes normally comes set to handle your library like this:

- Put all your music and video files in the same folder within your Home folder.

- Keep the folder organized by artist folder, album folder, track number, and track title — for example, /Bruce Springsteen/Greatest Hits/01 Born to Run.m4a. (If there's a disk number, such as Disk 1 of 2, iTunes includes that too.)

- Make a copy of each file you add to the library from another folder, instead of linking to the file in that folder.

This behavior is convenient for many people, but if you have a large iTunes library or your Mac has a small hard disk, you may run short of space. You may also want to store your iTunes library in a different folder so that you (or others) can access the media files from other computers on your network.

Here's how to check and change where iTunes is storing your library and choose other key settings.

1. **Choose iTunes ⇨ Preferences and then click the Advanced button to display the Advanced preferences (see figure 1.10).**

1.10 Use the Advanced preferences to choose where to store your library.

2. **Look at the iTunes Music folder location box to see which folder iTunes is storing your music in.** If you want to change the folder, click the Change button, select the new folder in the Change Music Folder Location dialog box, and then click Open.

3. **Select the Keep iTunes Music folder organized check box if you want iTunes to organize the folder and filenames.** This setting is usually helpful, but it does mean that when you change a tag such as a song name, iTunes changes the filename to match as well.

4. **Select the Copy files to iTunes Music folder when adding to library check box if you want iTunes to copy each file you add from another folder.** If you want iTunes to create a link to the file in that folder instead, clear this check box.

5. **Click OK to close the Preferences dialog box.**

Getting all your media files in the same folder

If you want to be able to back up your iTunes library in a single action, use the Consolidate Library command to make sure all your media files are stored in the same folder.

> **Caution**
>
> There's no easy way to undo consolidation, so before you consolidate your iTunes library, make sure that the drive on which you're storing your iTunes library has plenty of space to hold all the files. The easiest way to see how much space your iTunes library takes up is to click the Music item in the Source list, click All in the Artists list and the Album list, and then look at the readout at the bottom of the iTunes window. Repeat the process for Movies, TV Shows, and any other items that appear in the Source list, and then add the figures together.
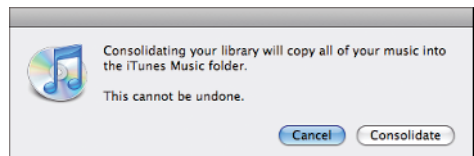
When you give this command, iTunes copies any files that are stored outside your iTunes Music folder into the iTunes Music folder. Normally, it's a good idea to select the Keep iTunes Music folder organized check box in the Advanced preferences before you consolidate your library, allowing iTunes to rename folders and files and generally keep your library straight.

After this preparation, consolidating your library is easy, but copying the files may take some time. Follow these steps:

1. **Choose File ⇨ Library ⇨ Consolidate Library.** iTunes displays the message box shown in figure 1.11.

2. **Click Consolidate.** iTunes copies those files that are located outside your iTunes Music folder into the folder. If you've selected the Keep iTunes Music folder organized check box, iTunes renames files whose names differ from their tag information.

1.11 iTunes double-checks that you want to consolidate your iTunes library because there's no easy way to undo a consolidation.

Tagging songs after adding them to your library

After you've added a song to your library, you can easily change its existing tags or add missing tag information.

If you need to change a tag that's displayed in whichever iTunes view you're using, you can simply edit it in place like this.

1. **Click once to select the song.**

2. **After a short pause, click again to put an edit box around the field (see figure 1.12).** If you don't pause between the clicks, iTunes registers a double-click and starts playing the song.

☑ Don't You (Forget Abo…	4:21	Simple Minds	Glittering Prize	11/13/2005 8:57 AM
☑ Leilani	3:03	Game Theory	Tinker to Evers to Chance	11/9/2005 9:04 PM
☑ Creeping Death	5:08	Apocalyptica	Plays Metallica By Four Cellos	11/16/2005 4:50 PM
☑ Too Little Too Late	4:22	Metric	Live It Out	7/18/2006 3:53 PM
☑ Cadillac Coming	4:38	James Ray	Best	1/13/2006 12:37 PM

1.12 The quickest way to edit a single tag is to open an edit box in the iTunes list.

3. **Click to position the insertion point, type the change, and then press Return to apply the change.**

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If none of iTunes' genres seems right, create a genre of your own. Either open the Genre pop-up menu and choose Custom, or simply drag across whichever genre is currently displayed to select the text. Type the name of the genre you want to create. You'll then be able to use this genre for other songs too.
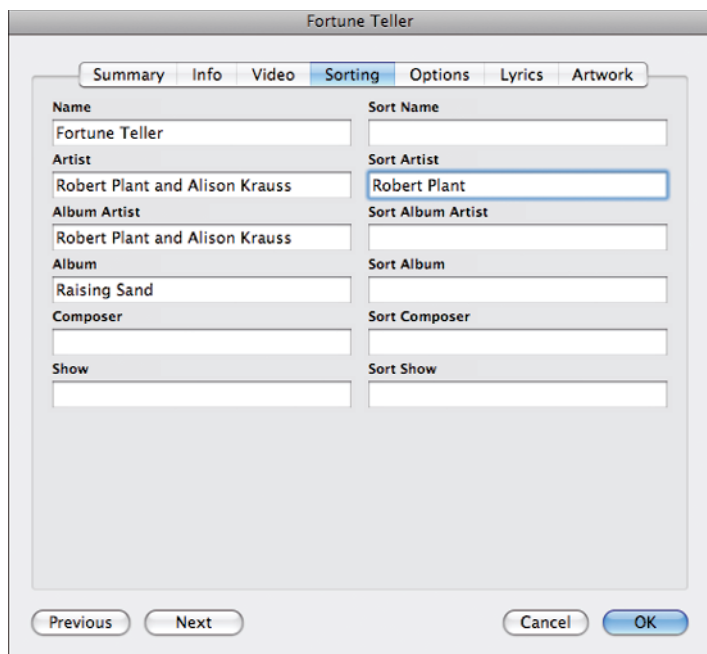
To change several tags on a single song, use the Item Information dialog box like this:

1. **Ctrl+click or right-click the song and choose Get Info to open the Item Information dialog box.**

2. **Click the tab that contains the tags or settings you want to change.** For example, to control how iTunes sorts the songs, click the Sorting tab (see figure 1.13) and use the boxes on it.

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Select the Gapless Album check box if you want to mark the songs as being gapless. This setting turns off cross-fading and is good for live albums, classical music, and spoken-word audio.

1.13 The Sorting tab of the Item Information dialog box lets you add extra information for sorting without changing the tags that appear in the iTunes interface.

3. **When you finish changing the tags and settings, click OK.**

Understanding the less obvious tags

Most of the tag fields, such as Name and Artist, are easy to grasp. Here's a quick run-down of the more puzzling ones:

- ⦿ **Album Artist.** The artist name that you want to use for the album, where it's different from the artist name for the song. For example, you might use Various Artists as the album artist for a compilation album.

- ⦿ **Grouping.** This tag lets you group the movements in a classical music work, but you can use it for other purposes too. For example, instead of creating a Psychedelic Rock genre, use the Rock genre and put Psychedelic in the Grouping tag; or add Grouping tags such as Party or Workout to songs of different genres so that you can pick them out across different genres.

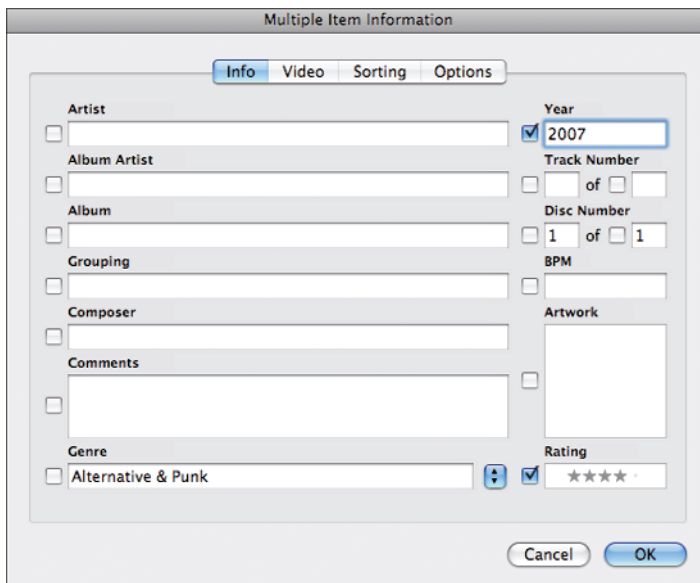- ⦿ **BPM.** Beats per minute — the tempo of the song.

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To find out the beats per minute of songs and add this info to the tags, use a tool such as Tangerine from Potion Factory (www.potionfactory.com/tangerine/) or beaTunes (www.beatunes.com).

⦿ **Sort tags (Sort Name, Sort Artist, Sort Album Artist, Sort Album, Sort Composer, and Sort Show).** These let you control how iTunes sorts songs (and shows) without changing the information iTunes displays. For example, you may want to sort your Beethoven music by "Beethoven" rather than by the names of the various orchestras and conductors. By adding **Beethoven** to the Sort Artist tag, you can do so.

To change one or more tags on multiple songs at once, use the Multiple Item Information dialog box like this:

1. **Select the songs whose tags you want to change.** For example, click the first song, then ⌘+click each of the other songs.

2. **Ctrl+click or right-click in the selection and choose Get Info to open the Multiple Item Information dialog box (see figure 1.14).**

1.14 Use the Multiple Item Information dialog box to change shared tag information on several songs at once.

3. **Change the tags that apply to all the songs you selected, and then click OK.** When you change a tag, iTunes selects the check box next to it so that you can easily track the changes you've made.

Note

To add artwork (such as a CD cover picture) to several songs at once, drag the picture to the Artwork box on the Info tab in the Multiple Item Information dialog box. Amazon.com includes cover pictures for many CDs, but you can also add your own pictures if you prefer.
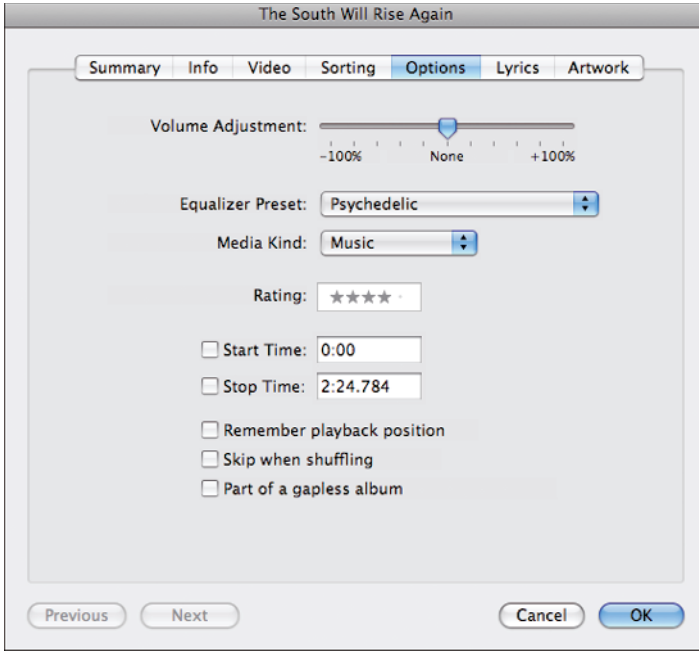
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If you want to apply tags to your songs automatically, visit the Doug's AppleScripts for iTunes Web site (http://dougscripts.com/itunes/) and look through the Managing Track Info scripts.

Trimming off unwanted parts of songs

Do you ever find yourself always skipping the beginning or end of a song? If so, don't suffer through it — use this trick to trim off the unwanted part of the song.

1. **Play the song, and note the time at which you want the song to start or stop.**

2. **Ctrl+click or right-click the song and choose Get Info to open the Item Information dialog box, and then click the Options tab (see figure 1.15).**

3. **Click in the Start Time box or the Stop Time box, and then type the time you want the song to start or stop.** Use the format *minutes:seconds.thousandths* — for example, 3:24.000. Note that it's a period between the seconds and thousandths, not a second colon.

4. **Click OK to close the dialog box.**

5. **Play the song again and make sure the cutoff is right.** If not, open the Item Information dialog box again and adjust it.

6. **Right-click the song and choose Create *Format* Version.** (*Format* here is the encoding for-mat you've chosen in iTunes — for example, Create AAC Version.) iTunes creates a new ver-sion of the file minus the parts you chose to exclude.

7. **If you want, remove the original song file from your iTunes library, leaving the new file.**

The South Will Rise Again

| Summary | Info | Video | Sorting | Options | Lyrics | Artwork |

Volume Adjustment: ————————————
−100%   None   +100%

Equalizer Preset: Psychedelic

Media Kind: Music

Rating: ★★★★ ·

☐ Start Time: 0:00

☐ Stop Time: 2:24.784

☐ Remember playback position
☐ Skip when shuffling
☐ Part of a gapless album

Previous   Next   Cancel   OK

1.15 On the Options tab of the Item Information dialog box, you can set the start time or end time for a song. You can then trim the song file to use this start time or end time.

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You can also use this trimming technique to split a song into different parts, which can be useful when you've recorded a live performance and want to keep only parts of it. First, create a duplicate copy of the song. The easiest way to do this is to Ctrl+click or right-click the song, choose Show In Finder, press ⌘+D to duplicate the song file, and then drag the duplicate to your iTunes library. In iTunes, trim off the first part of the song from one file, leaving the second part, and then trim off the second part of the song from the other file, leaving the first part.

Separating your music with multiple iTunes libraries

Normally, iTunes puts all your songs into a single library. But here's a neat feature: You can create separate music libraries if you want. For example, you may prefer to keep your classical music separate from your popular music, put a library on an external drive to save space on your Mac's hard drive, or maintain a family-friendly library as well as one that includes harder-edged material.

Creating a new iTunes library

First, create a new library. Here's how to create one:

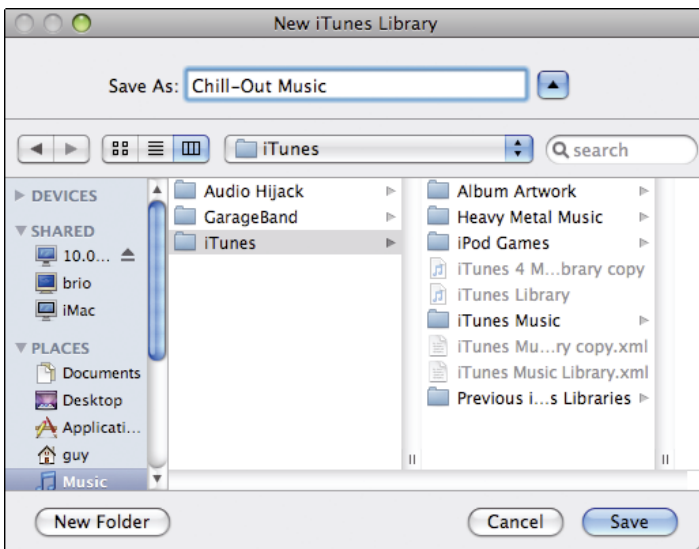1. **Quit iTunes if it's running. Press ⌘+Q or choose iTunes ⇨ Quit iTunes.**

2. **Hold down Option and click the iTunes icon on the Dock to display the Choose iTunes Library dialog box (see figure 1.16).** Keep holding down Option until the dialog box appears — a quick Option+click doesn't usually do the trick.

3. **Click the Create Library button to display the New iTunes Library dialog box (see figure 1.17).**

1.16 The Choose iTunes Library dialog box is your springboard for both creating and selecting separate iTunes libraries.

1.17 Give your new iTunes library a descriptive name so that you can easily identify it.

4. **Type a descriptive name for the library (for example, Chill-Out Music) in place of iTunes' suggestion (iTunes 1, iTunes 2, and so on), choose the folder in which to store the library, and then click the Save button.**

5. **iTunes opens using the library you just created, so no songs appear in it.** You can now add songs to the library as usual:

   ● **Insert a CD and rip its songs to audio files.**

- **Drag audio files from a Finder window to the library.**

- **Choose File ⇨ Import, select the folder containing the files, and then click Open.**

After you've added songs to the library, you can use the library as normal. For example, you can play songs back, add them to playlists, or create Smart Playlists that draw on the library.

Note

iTunes suggests saving each library in the folder specified in the Advanced preferences. By default, this is the ~/Music/iTunes/ folder unless you change it. If you've got plenty of hard disk space, this folder is a good choice. But if you want to put the new library in another folder, expand the New iTunes Library dialog box and navigate to that folder.

Selecting the library you want to load

To switch from one library to another, you use the Choose iTunes Library dialog box you saw a moment ago.

1. **Quit iTunes if it's running.** Press ⌘+Q or choose iTunes ⇨ Quit iTunes.

2. **Hold down Option and click the iTunes icon on the Dock to display the Choose iTunes Library dialog box.** Keep holding down Option until the dialog box appears.

3. **Click the Choose Library button to display the Open iTunes Library dialog box.**

4. **Select the library you want, and then click the Open button.**

   When you want to switch to another library, simply quit iTunes, and then hold down Option as you restart it.

Note

If you open iTunes without holding down Option, iTunes opens the last library you used.

Enjoying Music and Visualizations with iTunes

As soon as you've got a good selection of songs in iTunes, you can relax and enjoy them — together with iTunes' stunning visualizations if you like.

iTunes could hardly be simpler to control with the mouse, but you can also control it using the keyboard — even when iTunes isn't the active window.

When iTunes has the focus (is the active application), you can control it using the keyboard shortcuts shown in Table 1.1. (If iTunes doesn't have the focus, the quickest way of switching the focus to iTunes is to hold down ⌘ and press Tab until the iTunes icon is selected, then release ⌘.)

Table 1.1 Keyboard Shortcuts for Controlling iTunes

Action	Keyboard shortcut
Play/pause	Spacebar
Next song	Right Arrow or ⌘+Right Arrow
Previous song	Left Arrow or ⌘+Left Arrow
Rewind	⌘+Option+Left Arrow
Fast forward	⌘+Option+Right Arrow
Next album in the current list	Option+Right Arrow
Previous album in the current list	Option+Left Arrow
Increase the volume	⌘+Up Arrow
Decrease the volume	⌘+Down Arrow
Mute or unmute iTunes	Option+Left Arrow
Display or hide iTunes main window	⌘+Option+1
Display or hide Graphical Equalizer	⌘+Option+2
Zoom to or from mini player	⌘+Ctrl+Z
Minimize iTunes	⌘+M
Select the Find box	⌘+Option+F
Turn the Visualizer on or off	⌘+T
Switch the Visualizer to or from full-screen mode	⌘+F

Sharing Music

Enjoying music on your own is great, but even better is sharing the music you like with other people — and letting them share music with you.

iTunes lets you share music in two different ways. First, you can share all or part of your library with other iTunes users on your local network, and they can share with you. Second, you can share a playlist with the whole wired world by publishing it to the iTunes Store.

How to Get Exactly the Visualizations You Want

The Visualizer is great, but you can make it even better by using the following secret key presses to adjust the behaviors, color schemes, and color themes:

- Press W to start the next behavior, or Q to revert to the previous behavior.
- Press A to change to the next color scheme, or press S to go back to the previous scheme. The color scheme is a set of colors within the color theme (see the next paragraph).
- Press Z to switch to the next color theme, or X to switch back to the previous theme. The color theme is the overall mix of colors, so pressing these keys produces a bigger difference than changing the color scheme.

When you find a Visualizer configuration you like, save it by pressing a key combination from Shift+0 to Shift+9 (which lets you save ten different configurations). Press the number without Shift to launch that configuration.

Press R to switch to a random configuration, or press D to reset the Visualizer to its defaults.

Press F to toggle the frame rate display on and off, T to toggle frame-rate capping at 30 frames per second, and I to toggle the display of song information on and off.

Genius

iTunes lets your Mac share music with five other computers per day. Any further computers see a message saying that your Mac is not accepting sharing or that it accepts only five different users each day, so please try again later.
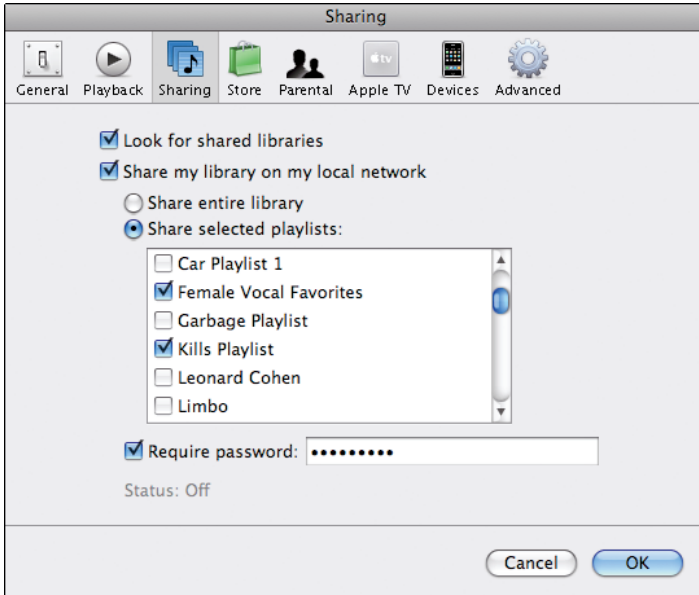
Sharing music on the network

Your first step for sharing music is to share it with other iTunes users on your local network. Sharing works with iTunes on both Macs and PCs.

Setting iTunes to share music and look for shared music

You can set up sharing and looking for music others are sharing in a single step:

1. **Choose iTunes ⇨ Preferences to open the iTunes Preferences dialog box.**

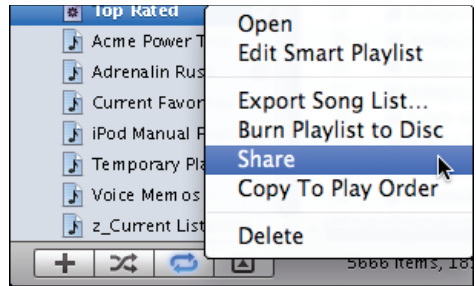2. **Click the Sharing button to display the Sharing preferences (see figure 1.18).**

1.18 Setting up sharing and looking for shared music in iTunes' Sharing preferences.

3. **Select the Look for shared libraries check box if you want iTunes to show the songs other people are sharing.**

4. **Select the Share my library on my local network check box if you want to share some or all of your songs.** iTunes enables the controls beneath this check box so that you can choose which songs to share:

   ● To share all your songs, select the Share entire library option button. To share only a selection of songs, select the Share selected playlists option button, and then select the check box for each playlist you want to share.

   ● If you want to protect your shared songs with a password, select the Require password check box and type the password in the box next to it. A password is useful on a larger network where you need to stay within iTunes' five-computers-a-day limit for sharing. On a smaller network (for example, at home), a password may be a hindrance rather than a help.

5. **Click the General button to display the General preferences, and then type the name you want to give your shared library in the Library Name box.** This is the name under which your shared songs appear in the Source list on other people's computers.

6. **Click OK.** iTunes closes the dialog box and starts sharing the songs you chose.

Changing the selection of playlists you're sharing

If you chose to share some playlists rather than share all your music, you can quickly share another playlist or stop sharing a playlist you're sharing. Ctrl+click or right-click the playlist in the Source list (see figure 1.19), and then click Share to either remove the check mark next to it (if the playlist was shared) or to place a check mark next to it (if the playlist wasn't shared).

1.19 The quick way to share or stop sharing a playlist is to Ctrl+click or right-click it and choose Share from the menu.

Playing songs that other iTunes users are sharing

Once you've selected the Look for shared libraries check box (as discussed earlier in this chapter), iTunes automatically displays the library names in the Shared category of the Source list (see figure 1.20). If the Shared category has a sideways disclosure triangle next to it, click the triangle to display the shared libraries.

Click a library to display its contents in your current iTunes window, or double-click it to display its contents in a new window.
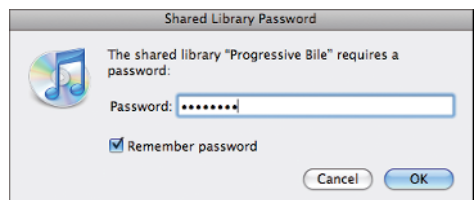
If the library is password-protected, iTunes displays the Shared Library Password dialog box (see figure 1.21). Type the password, select the Remember password check box if you want iTunes to remember it so you don't have to type it again, and then click OK.

After you connect to a shared library, you can find and play music using the same techniques as for your own library. For example:

1.20 Libraries others are sharing appear in the Shared category of the Source list.

- Click the disclosure triangle next to the library to toggle the display of its playlists on or off. If you display the playlists, you can click a playlist to show only its contents, as in figure 1.22.

1.21 Connecting to a shared iTunes library that's protected by a password.

1.22 Browsing a single playlist in a shared library.

- Choose View ➪ Show Browser to display the browser so that you can browse by artist or album.

- Search for songs using the Search box.

- Sort the shared songs or playlists into a different order by clicking the column headings.

- Clear the check box of any song you don't want to play.

However, because of copyright restrictions, you can't copy songs to your Mac, add them to playlists, or burn them to CD or DVD.

When you finish using a library, disconnect from it by clicking the Eject button next to its name in the Source list.

Sharing an iMix playlist on the iTunes Store

When you create a great playlist, you may want to share it more widely than people on your local network. To put the playlist in reach of every iTunes user on the planet, publish it as an iMix on the iTunes Store.

Genius
There's one serious limitation to sharing playlists as iMixes: Because you're sharing the list and order of songs rather than the song files themselves, you can include only songs that are available on the iTunes Store. This limitation makes sure that anybody who downloads your iMix can listen to all the songs, so it's reasonable enough — and iTunes warns you when songs you've included in your playlist will be removed from the iMix.

When you've created a playlist that you want to make into an iMix:

1. **In the Source list, click the playlist.**

2. **Choose Store ⇨ Create An iMix.** Unless you're already signed in to the iTunes Store, iTunes displays the Sign In To Publish Your iMix dialog box.

3. **Sign in as usual using your Apple ID or your AOL screen name and password, and then click the Publish button.** iTunes displays the iMixes screen, showing which songs from your playlist are available for the iMix. Figure 1.23 shows an example.

1.23 Set up your playlist as either a regular iMix or a Sport iMix, give it a catchy title, and provide a description.

4. **Check through the songs left in the iMix after the iTunes Store has removed those that aren't available.** If the iMix won't work in its reduced form, click Cancel, return to iTunes, and then fix it.

5. **If the iMix is best for sports, click the Sport iMix option button instead of the iMix option button.**

6. **Change the title for the iMix in the Title box if necessary.** You may want to give the iMix a more explicit and descriptive name on the iTunes Store than your playlist needed on your Mac.

7. **Type a description for the iMix in the Description box.** This is optional, but a good description helps draw listeners to your iMix.

8. **Click Publish.** iTunes displays the iMix Received screen to let you know that it has published the iMix to the iTunes Store.

9. **Click Done.** If you want to see your iMix on the iTunes Store, wait until you receive the e-mail message telling you that the iMix has been posted, and then click the link in the message.

Note

The iTunes Store keeps each iMix for a year before removing it automatically.

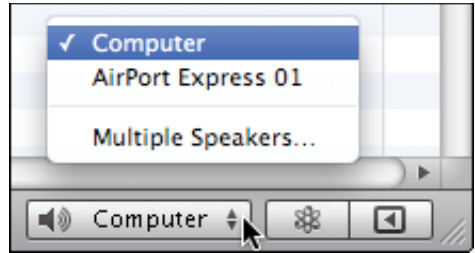# Playing music through AirTunes

If you have an AirPort Express wireless access point, you can plug your speakers into it and play music through them from iTunes. You can send the music from any computer running iTunes — Windows PCs as well as Macs — either across the wireless network or via a wired Ethernet network.

To play music across a wired network, you need to turn on the AirTunes over Ethernet feature like this:

1. **Click the Desktop, choose Go ⇨ Utilities, and then double-click AirPort Utility to open AirPort Utility.**

2. **Click the AirPort Express in the list box, and then click Manual Setup to reach the configuration screen.**

3. **Click the Music button in the toolbar.**

4. **Select the Enable AirTunes over Ethernet check box.**

5. **If you want to restrict use of the speakers to people who know a password, type the password in the iTunes Speaker Password box and the Verify Password box.**

6. **Click Update.**

7. **Press ⌘+Q or choose AirPort Utility ➪ Quit AirPort Utility.**

To start playing the music through AirPort Express, click the Speakers pop-up menu button in the lower right corner of the iTunes window, and then choose the AirPort Express from the menu. The Speakers pop-up menu button (see figure 1.24) appears only when iTunes detects an AirPort Express within striking distance.

1.24 Use the Speakers pop-up menu to switch between your computer's speakers and speakers connected to an AirPort Express.

Genius

What's even better than playing music through AirPort Express is playing music through AirPort Express *and* speakers connected to your Mac at the same time. To do this, click the Speakers pop-up menu in iTunes, and then click Multiple Speakers. The Remote Speakers dialog box opens. Select the check box next to each set of speakers you want to play music through, and then click Close.

Note

If the Speakers pop-up menu button doesn't appear in iTunes even when an AirPort Express is available, choose iTunes ➪ Preferences, and then click the Devices button to display the Devices preferences. Select the Look for remote speakers connected with AirTunes check box to make iTunes look for the AirPort Express. While you're here, you can also select the Disable iTunes volume control for remote speakers check box if you want to prevent iTunes from controlling the volume on the speakers, and select the Allow iTunes control from remote speakers if you want the remote speakers to be able to control iTunes. Click OK when you've made your choices.

Making Videos That Work with iTunes

To enjoy iTunes as fully as possible, you'll want to use it to watch videos too. You can buy movies, TV shows, and music videos from the iTunes Store, but most likely you'll want to create your own videos as well.
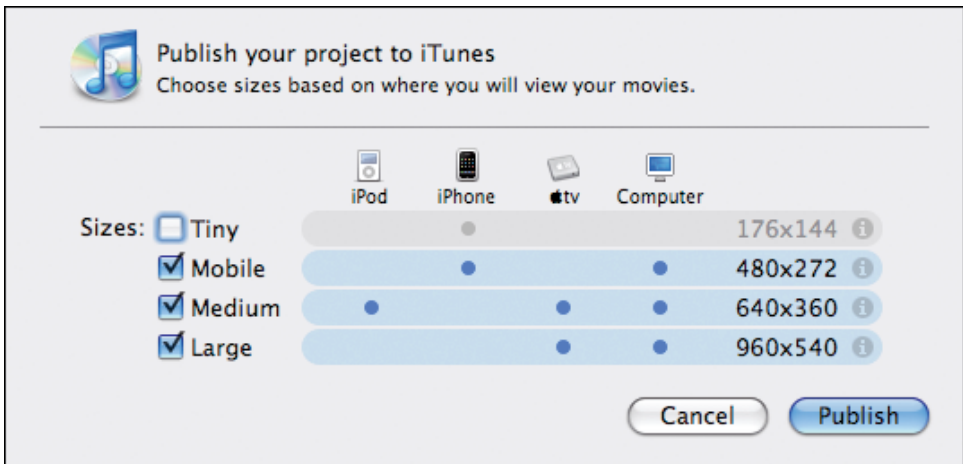
Note

The Apple TV can also play any video that you can play on an iPod.

Creating videos from iMovie

If you've created your own movies in iMovie, you can easily export versions that you can play in iTunes or on an iPod. Follow these steps:

1. **Launch iMovie, and then open the movie you want to export.**

2. **Choose Share ⇨ iTunes to open the Publish your project to iTunes sheet (see figure 1.25).**

1.25 iMovie makes it easy to create versions of your movies that will play in iTunes, on the iPod or iPhone, or on Apple TV.

3. **Select the check box for each size you want to create.** The blue dots show which of the four devices — iPod, iPhone, Apple TV, and Computer — the sizes are suitable for.

> **Note** Even though it plays on the iPhone, the Tiny size looks poor on almost any device. The Mobile size gives far better results, but the file size is five times as large.

4. **Click Publish.** iMovie exports the version or versions you chose, adds it or them to iTunes, and activates iTunes.

5. **In iTunes, click the Movies category in the Source pane, and then test the movies you created.**

> **Note** See Chapters 4, 5, and 6 for detailed coverage of iMovie.

Creating videos from DVDs

Another tempting possibility is to create videos from your DVDs. That way, you can play the videos from iTunes without needing the DVD, enjoy them on an iPod or iPhone during your commute, or connect the iPod or iPhone to a TV via a cable and share them with your friends.

For legal reasons, Apple doesn't provide tools for creating videos from DVDs. Instead, you need to use a third-party application such as HandBrake (http://handbrake.fr). After ripping files from the DVD, drag the files to your iTunes library to add them to it.

Making the Most of Playlists

Listening to an entire album at a time is easy enough, but often you'll want to make your own arrangements of songs. iTunes lets you create unchanging playlists, in which you choose the songs and their order, and Smart Playlists, in which iTunes chooses the songs and their order for you.

Creating unchanging playlists

Sometimes you'll want to create playlists that contain only the songs you choose, in exactly the order you prefer them. For example, you might create a playlist for working out or running, with different tempos and rhythms to drive on your efforts; or you might create a chill-out playlist.

Displaying iTunes Content on an Apple TV

If you have an Apple TV, you can connect it to your wired or wireless network so that you can play back content from iTunes on your TV's screen and speakers.

First, pair your Apple TV with iTunes like this:

1. Turn on your TV and the Apple TV.

2. On your Mac, double-click the Source list in iTunes to expand it (if it's collapsed), and then click Apple TV. iTunes prompts you for the passcode for the Apple TV.

3. Type the passcode that appears on the TV screen into iTunes, and you'll be in business.

Now that the Apple TV is paired with iTunes, you can browse your iTunes library and your iPhoto library from the Apple TV. Select the content you want to play back — for example, a TV show from iTunes or a slideshow from iPhoto — and set it playing.

Here's how to create an unchanging playlist like this:

1. **Start a new playlist in one of these ways:**

1.26 You can start a playlist by clicking the Create a Playlist button.

   ● Click the Create a Playlist button (the + button) in the lower left corner of the iTunes window (see figure 1.26).

   ● Choose File ➪ New Playlist or press ⌘+N.

   ● Select the first few songs you want to add to the playlist, and then either drag them to open space at the bottom of the Source list or choose File ➪ New Playlist from Selection. Alternatively, press ⌘+Shift+N.
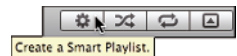
2. **In the edit box that iTunes displays, type the name you want to give the playlist, and press Return.**

3. **Drag songs to the playlist.** You can also drag an entire album, an artist, or an existing playlist to the new playlist.

4. **Click the playlist to display its contents, then drag the songs into the order you want.**

Creating Smart playlists

Unchanging playlists are easy and fun, but what's often even better is having iTunes build Smart Playlists for you — playlists that iTunes fills with songs matching the criteria you set. You can either keep the iTunes' initial selection of songs or let iTunes update a Smart Playlist automatically with new songs you add to your library.

Here's how to create a Smart Playlist. The example produces a playlist of favorite songs from the years 2000 to 2005 drawn from the Rock genres, and excluding any song that's marked as being in a compilation album.

1. **Choose File ⇨ New Smart Playlist or Option+click the Create Playlist button in the lower left corner of the iTunes window (see figure 1.27).** iTunes opens the Smart Playlist dialog box.
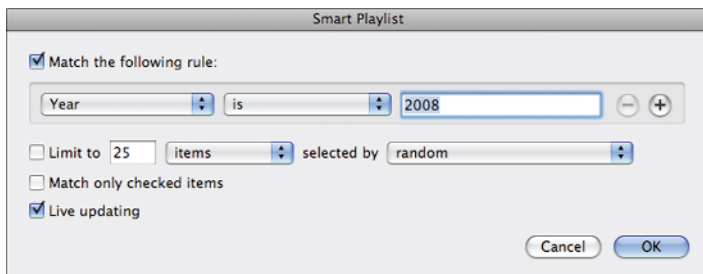
2. **Set up the first condition for the playlist.**

1.27 Option+click the Create Playlist button to start creating a new Smart Playlist.

Genius

You can also start creating a new Smart Playlist from the keyboard by pressing ⌘+Option+N.
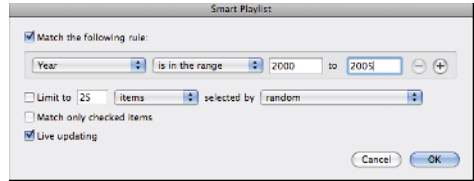
- **Open the first pop-up menu and choose the field you want to use for the first condition.** For the example, choose Year. Figure 1.28 shows the choices that become available when you do this.

1.28 Setting up the first condition for the example playlist.

- **Open the second pop-up menu and make a suitable choice from the list.** Your choices here depend on the field you selected in the first pop-up menu. In the example, you can choose from "is," "is not," "is greater than," "is less than," and "is in the range"; choose "is in the range." The first line of the Smart Playlist dialog box changes to provide two boxes so that you can enter the range of years.

- **In the third control or set of controls, enter the details of the condition.** In this example, enter the years **2000** and **2005**, giving the condition "Year is in the range 2000 to 2005" (see figure 1.29).
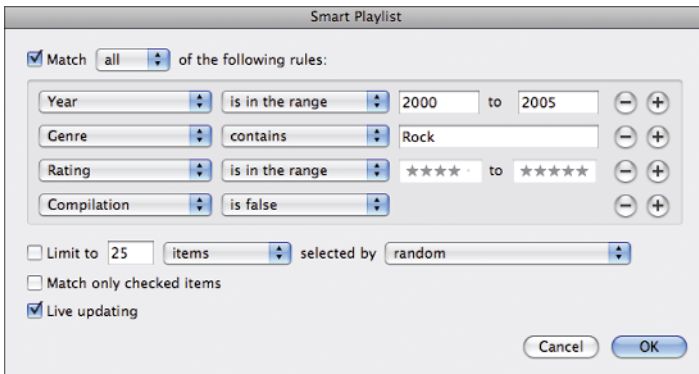

1.29 When you make a choice, the Smart Playlist dialog box changes as necessary to show the relevant options.

3. **If necessary, click the Add button at the right end of the first line of controls to add a second line, and then choose settings for the second condition.** These are the settings you would choose to create the example playlist:

   - **Open the first pop-up menu and choose Genre.**

   - **In the second pop-up menu, leave the default selection — Contains — selected because this is what you need.**

   - **In the text box, type** rock**.** If iTunes automatically suggests Rock as you type, press the Right Arrow key to accept the suggestion.

4. **If necessary, add further conditions.** The example playlist needs two more conditions (see figure 1.30):

   - Rating is in the range ★★★★ to ★★★★★ (four stars to five stars).

   - Compilation is false.

1.30 The Smart Playlist with all its four conditions in place.

5. **If you want to limit the playlist to a certain length or number of songs, select the Limit to check box and specify the limit.**

- **Type the number in the first box, and then choose Minutes, Hours, MB, GB, or Items in the first pop-up menu.**

- **In the second pop-up menu, choose how to select the songs — for example, by least often played, by highest rating, or simply at random.**

6. **Select the Match only checked items check box if you want to include only songs whose check boxes you've selected.** This setting lets you clear a song's check box and be sure it won't show up in your Smart Playlists.

7. **Select the Live updating check box if you want iTunes to update the Smart Playlist for you automatically.**

8. **Click OK to close the Smart Playlist dialog box.** iTunes creates the playlist, gives it a default name (such as Rock), and displays an edit box around the name.

9. **Type the name you want to give the Smart Playlist, then press Enter.**

Organizing Your Playlists into Folders

iTunes automatically adds each playlist to the Playlists category in the Source list, putting the Smart Playlists (with their distinctive cog icon) first in alphabetical order and then the regular playlists, also in alphabetical order.

When you've created more than a handful of playlists, you may find the Source list growing awkwardly long. To cut it down to size, you can create playlist folders and put your playlists in them. If you want, you can create a whole structure of playlist folders and subfolders.

To create a playlist folder, choose File ⇨ New Folder or press ⌘+Option+Shift+N. Type the name for the folder in the edit box that iTunes displays around the default name ("untitled folder") and press Return.

To create a subfolder, just click the existing folder first before giving the New Folder command.

When your folder is ready, drag a playlist to move it to the folder. Within the folders, iTunes sorts the Smart Playlists first, and then the playlists, both in alphabetical order.

To rename a playlist folder, double-click its name to display an edit box. Type the new name and press Return.

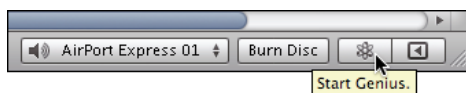To delete a playlist folder, Ctrl+click or right-click it and click Delete.

To create a new playlist or Smart Playlist within a folder, click that folder, and then give the New Playlist command or New Smart Playlist command.
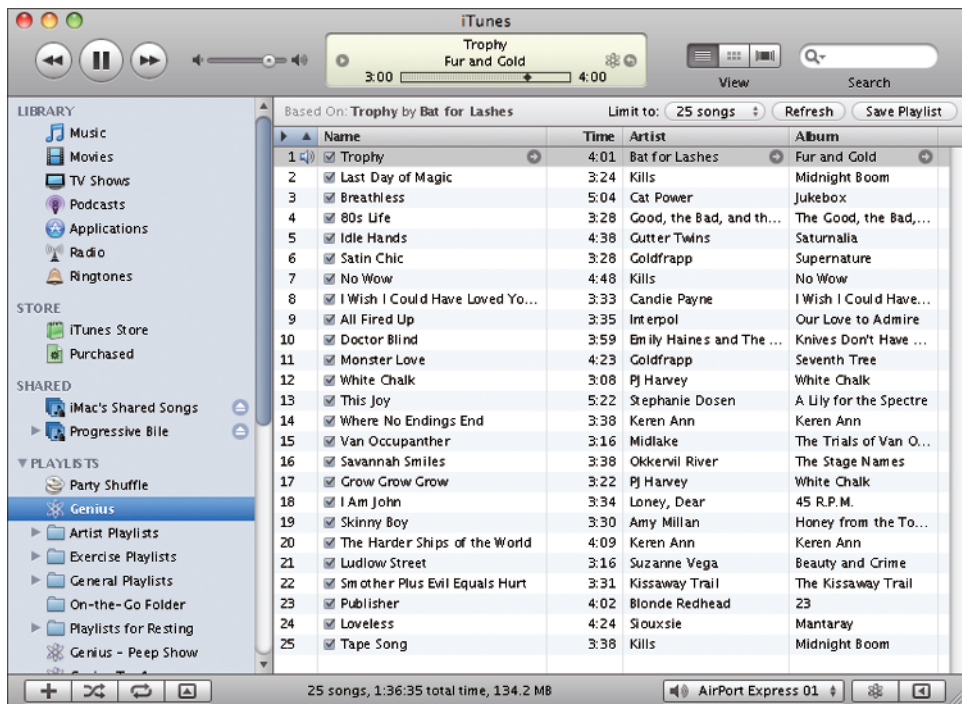
Creating Genius playlists

When you want to create a Smart Playlist quickly, you can use iTunes' Genius feature. The Genius is essentially a pre-configured Smart Playlist that analyzes the song you pick as a starting point and chooses a set of related songs.

Using the Genius could hardly be simpler:

1. **In your library, or in a playlist, select the song on which you want to base the Genius playlist.**

2. **Click the Start Genius button in the lower-right corner of the iTunes window (see figure 1.31) or the Genius symbol in the iTunes track readout at the top of the window.**

1.31 Click the Start Genius button to create a playlist based on the current song.

3. **iTunes creates the Genius playlist (see figure 1.32) and starts it playing.** Adjust the playlist as needed:

1.32 You can quickly change the number of songs in the Genius playlist or refresh it with new songs.

- To change the number of songs, open the Limit to pop-up menu and choose a different number: 25 songs, 50 songs, 75 songs, or 100 songs.

- To refresh the playlist but keep it based on the same song, click the Refresh button.

- To base the playlist on a song in the playlist, click that song, and then click the Start Genius button.

- To save the playlist, click the Save Playlist button. iTunes saves the playlist under the name of the first song. To change the name, double-click it in the Source list, type the new name, and then press Return.

Burning Discs and Backing Up Your Library

When you've created a playlist, you can burn it to a CD so that you can play it on just about any CD player in the world. You can also create a higher-capacity MP3 CD that will play on MP3 CD players and computers.

iTunes also lets you burn a DVD containing a playlist or a series of DVDs containing a backup of your full library.

Burning a playlist to CD
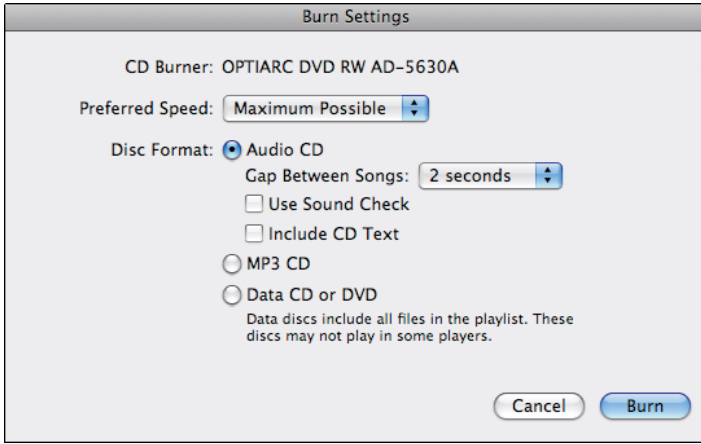
Here's how to burn a playlist to disc:

1. **In the Source list, click the playlist you want to burn to CD.**

Note
iTunes gives the CD the same name as the playlist, so if you want to give the CD a different name, rename the playlist before burning the CD. You can restore the playlist's original name after the burn if you want.

2. **Click the Burn Disc button that appears toward the lower right corner of the iTunes window.** iTunes displays the Burn Settings dialog box (see figure 1.33).

3. **Choose the burning speed in the Preferred Speed pop-up menu.** Usually, it's best to choose Maximum Possible to let iTunes use the burner's fastest speed; but if you find the discs you burn contain errors, try throttling back the speed.

1.33 iTunes' Burn Settings dialog box lets you tell iTunes which type of CD you want to create.

Genius

If your Mac has two or more burner drives, you can use the CD Burner pop-up menu in the Burn Settings dialog box to choose which drive to use. If your Mac has a single burner drive (as most Macs do), CD Burner appears as a readout rather than a pop-up menu.

4. **Select the option button for the type of disc you want to create:**

- **Audio CD.** This is the type of CD you can play in any CD player, from a basic boom-box to a top-of-the-line deck. An audio CD can contain up to around 80 minutes of audio. The audio is uncompressed, so it's full quality.

- **MP3 CD.** This is a CD that contains only MP3 files — you can't include other types of audio files (such as AAC or Apple Lossless Encoding files). The amount of music an MP3 CD can contain depends on the MP3 bitrate, but you can get up to about 11 hours at decent quality (128 Kbps) or fewer hours at higher quality. MP3 CDs play only in MP3 CD players and computers, not regular CD players.

- **Data CD or DVD.** This is a computer CD or DVD that happens to contain only audio files. You use this type of disc for backup or file transfer. Data CDs or DVDs play only on computers, not in regular CD players or in most regular DVD players.

5. **If you chose to create an audio CD, choose the next three options:**

- In the Gap Between Songs pop-up menu, choose the number of seconds for iTunes to put between songs: Either choose None, or a number of seconds between 1 second and 5 seconds. A gap of 2 seconds or so helps when you're ripping the CD with iTunes or another audio program.

- Select the Sound Check check box only if you want to even out the volume across the CD. The advantage of this normalization is that you don't get a CD with some songs far quieter than others. The disadvantage is that normalization compresses the dynamic range of the songs, which makes them sound less dramatic and can make the CD seem monotonous.

- Select the Include CD Text check box to put CD text — artist and song information — on the CD. Some CD players (especially car CD players) can display CD text, which is handy for keeping track of what you're listening to.

6. **Click Burn to close the Burn Settings dialog box.**

7. **When iTunes prompts you to insert a blank disc, do so.** iTunes then burns the playlist to the disc.

8. **Eject the disc and label it.**

Genius

Before you give the disc to someone else or file it away for backup, test it to double-check that the burn was successful. If you burned an audio CD, test it either in your Mac or any CD player. If you burned an MP3 CD, use your Mac or an MP3 CD–capable CD player. If you burned a data CD or DVD, use your Mac or another computer.

Note

To help discourage copyright infringement, iTunes lets you burn any playlist to disc only seven times. Once you hit this limit, you can create another playlist and burn that one up to seven times. The replacement playlist can contain the same songs in the same order as the original, so this limitation is only an inconvenience.

Burning a playlist to DVD for backup or file transfer

iTunes can also burn a playlist to DVD as long as your Mac has a DVD burner drive. DVDs are great for backing up your library or for transferring files from your Mac to another computer. You can't play music from audio DVDs in most non-computer DVD players.
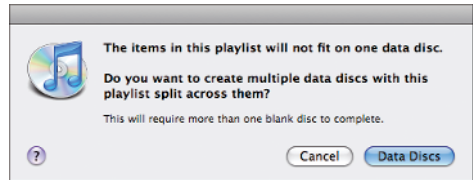
Here's how to burn a DVD:

1. **Click the playlist in the Source pane, and then click the Burn Disc button.**

2. **Choose the Data CD or DVD option button in the Burn Settings dialog box.**

3. **Insert a disc when iTunes prompts you to do so, and then click the Data DVD button in the confirmation dialog box that appears (see figure 1.34).**

4. **If the playlist you've chosen is too long to fit on the DVD, iTunes warns you (see figure 1.35).** Click the Cancel button if you want to slim down the playlist until it fits on the DVD. Click the Data Discs button if you don't mind breaking the playlist among two or more DVDs.

5. **When the burn is complete, eject the disc and label it.** Then put it back in your Mac and make sure its contents are all present and correct.

1.34 iTunes double-checks that you want to create a data DVD.

1.35 iTunes warns you if the playlist won't fit on the DVD you've provided.

Note

If you've chosen a low-capacity, single-layer DVD by mistake, cancel the burn so that you can eject the disc and substitute a higher-capacity, dual-layer DVD.

Ejecting a Disc After Canceling a Burn

If you cancel a burn, the disc stays in your Mac, but it appears in neither the Devices list in iTunes nor in the Sidebar in the Finder. To eject the disc, use Disk Utility like this:

1. Click the Desktop or the Finder icon on the Dock, and then choose Go ⇨ Utilities to open a Finder window showing the Utilities folder.

2. Double-click Disk Utility to open Disk Utility.

3. In the left box, click the entry for the DVD drive, and then click the Eject button on the toolbar.

4. Choose Disk Utility ⇨ Quit Disk Utility to quit Disk Utility.

Exporting and Importing Playlists

Another way of sharing a playlist is to export it from one computer and import it on another. When you export a playlist, iTunes simply creates a list of the songs in the playlist — it doesn't include the song files themselves. Then when you import the playlist on another computer, iTunes adds to it only the songs that are available on that computer.

These restrictions mean that exporting and importing playlists work best when you're using the same library. For example, if you put the same set of songs on your MacBook and your iMac, you can export a playlist from the iMac and use it on the MacBook without problems.

Here's how to export a playlist:

1. Click the playlist in the Source list.
2. Choose File ➪ Library ➪ Export to open the Save dialog box.
3. Change the playlist's name if necessary, and select the folder in which to save the file.
4. Choose XML in the Format pop-up menu. XML is the best choice when you're sharing a playlist with another computer running iTunes. The other formats — Plain Text and Unicode — are useful for exporting playlists to applications that can't read XML.
5. Click Save.

To import a playlist, choose File ➪ Import, select the playlist in the Import dialog box, and then click Open. If the playlist contains songs that your library doesn't have, iTunes warns you.

Restoring your music library from backup

After restoring your music library by inserting your first backup disc in your Mac's optical drive and following the prompts, you may need to delete extra copies of playlists. iTunes puts the playlists from each backup into a separate folder named Restored Playlists and the date (in YYYY-MM-DD format) and time (in HH:MM:SS format), so you end up with folders named like this:

- Restored Playlists 2008-12-11 11:12:44
- Restored Playlists 2008-12-11 11:20:53

Check that the latest playlists are the ones you want, and then delete the rest. (If you delete the wrong ones, no great worry — you can restore them again from your backups if necessary.)
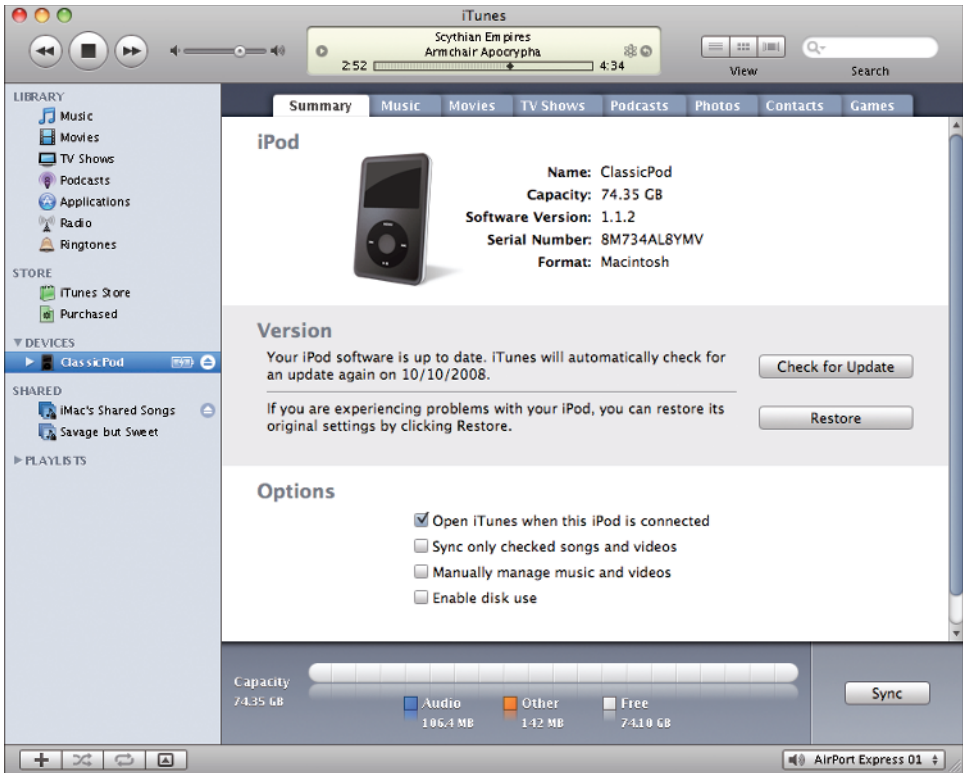
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If you have an iPod high enough in capacity to store your entire library, you can use your iPod as a backup. Unless you lose (or damage) both your iPod and your Mac at the same time, you can restore your library to your Mac from the copy your iPod contains. But you can't use iTunes to restore your library from your iPod. Instead, you need to use third-party software such as iPod Access (www.ipodaccess.com), iPodRip (www.thelittleappfactory.com), or Senuti (www.fadingred.org/senuti) to restore the library from the iPod to your Mac.

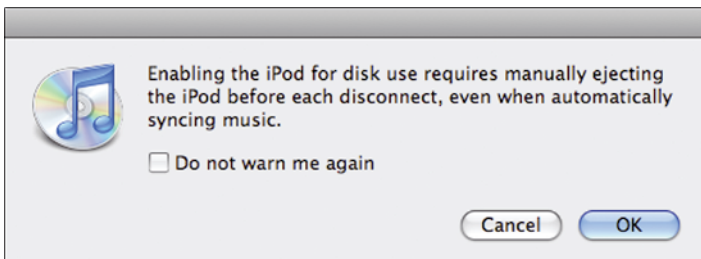# Using Your iPod to Carry Files

Your iPod is great for playing back music and (except for the iPod shuffle) video, but you can also use it to carry files with you. This is handy both for keeping your essential documents with you and for transferring large files from one computer to another.

Here's how to set up your iPod for carrying files:

1. **Connect your iPod to your Mac.** If iTunes isn't already running, Mac OS X launches it. Your iPod appears in the Devices category in the Source list, and iTunes displays the control screens for the iPod.

2. **Click the Summary tab (for an iPod classic or iPod nano) or the Settings tab (for an iPod shuffle).** Figure 1.36 shows the Summary tab for an iPod classic.

3. **Select the Enable disk use check box.** iTunes displays a dialog box warning you that you need to eject the iPod manually (see figure 1.37).

4. **Select the Do not warn me again check box, and then click OK.** The dialog box closes.

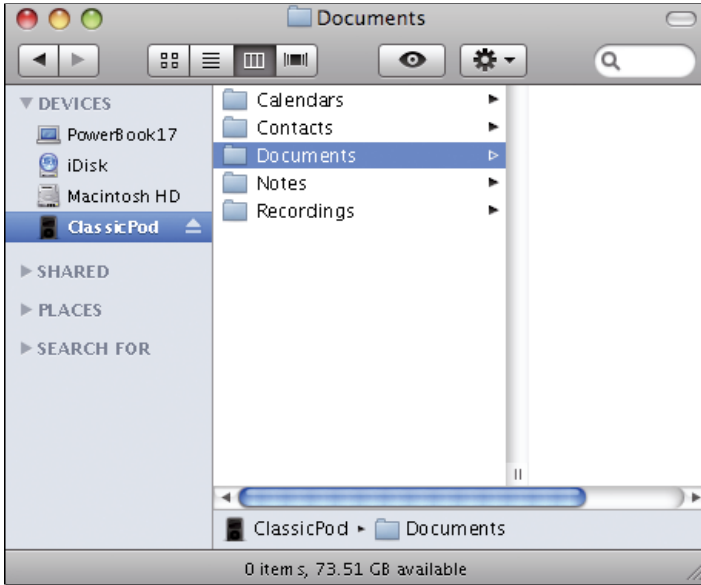5. **Click Apply.** iTunes turns on disk mode for the iPod and synchronizes the iPod.

1.36 To use your iPod to carry files, select the Enable disk use check box on the Summary tab or Settings tab.

1.37 Tell iTunes you're prepared to eject your iPod manually before you disconnect it.

Your iPod now appears as a drive in the Finder (see figure 1.38), and you can store files and folders on it as you would any other removable drive.

1.38 Creating a folder on the iPod in a Finder window.

> **Caution**
>
> When you display the iPod's contents in a Finder window, you'll see several folders, such as Calendars, Contacts, and Notes. You won't see your songs and videos, which are hidden in an invisible folder named iPod_Control. Don't store your files in one of the iPod's folders. Instead, create one or more folders of your own.

After you enable disk mode on your iPod, you must eject it before you disconnect it. To eject the iPod, click the Eject button next to its item in the Source list in iTunes or in the Sidebar of a Finder window.

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>
> If you have an iPod touch or an iPhone rather than one of the smaller iPods, you can't use this technique to store and move files. Instead, look at third-party software such as DiskAid (www.digidna.net/diskaid) or PhoneView that lets you put files on an iPod touch or iPhone.