

JPlayer How To

Introduction.

JPlayer is a Java app to play audio files that have been produced by Scott Studios TLC program for playing in SS32. If you have library of these audio files and you copy them to a pc with an ordinary sound card, you can use this app to provide backup audio at the transmitter if the STL fails or the studio automation stops working. Or, you might want to have your own semi-professional player for a home jukebox. JPlayer honors all embedded metadata providing two song overlap and descriptive display of text and timing.

Your pc must have Java version 8 or newer installed for JPlayer to work. All audio should be in one folder, although sub folders for the categories are allowed. There should be SPxxxx.WAV files in these folders.

Set up.

Because it's Java, there is no 'installation' into Windows. Simply download the JPlayer.zip file and unzip to a preferred location on the hard drive. Double click on the jPlayer.jar file to start. A pop-up will ask you to find the configuration file or start a new station. From new station you will get a series of pop-ups to find the Audio and Schedules folders, and have you set normal starting parameters. Once the config file has been written, please close the app and relaunch it.

Similarly, there's no installation into Linux. On my Raspberry Pi I have a folder made in the home directory called 'JPlayer'. Download and double click on the JPlayer.zip file and the XArchiver app starts. Click on the Action Menu and select Extract. A pop-up allows you to set the folder it extracts to. Select the JPlayer folder. Leave the rest of the Extract options as they are and click on Extract at the bottom of the app. Use the file manager to go to the JPlayer folder. Double click on the jPlayer.jar file to start. A pop-up will ask you to find the configuration file or start a new station. From new station you will get a series of pop-ups to find the Audio and Schedules folders, and have you set normal starting parameters. Once the config file has been written, please close the app and relaunch it

The un-zipped file contains demo versions of the default.skd file in the Schedules folder plus a default database (default.mv.db) and another file (ScottPlayer.sid) in the root folder. Do not try to play the default.skd. The default.skd file can be looked at with a text editor. The schedule is all audio. No special commands like AXWAIT that might be in your version of the default.skd, so if your file has those events, they need to be deleted before you use it in JPlayer. Replace my default.skd with yours or a dated .skd file like used in SS32. Do not delete the other two files. The default database file is used when you make a search database and the ScottPlayer.sid contains a sample of the messages that can be sent with metadata when streaming with the BUTT encoder (not included).

Operation.

Simple operation starts with the Play button. Today's schedule or the default will start playing nearest the current time. When the schedule runs out, the next available schedule will load and keep playing. If there is a soft sync on a song (like my SimpleSkd app provides), the schedule will jump to that song if running late. The Next button will advance to the next song in the schedule. The Stop button does an immediate stop of the current song playing.

The Auto/Man button toggles for continuous play or waiting for the Play button before continuing. The Play Hook radio button allows for a quick play of the end of the song for the amount of time you entered when originally setting up the app. The countdown bar changes color near the end of the song, flashing Cyan at 30 seconds and Yellow at 20 seconds, then changing to red for the last 10 seconds. When a song is at the EOM, the Next button will go Orange and be unavailable until the song has ended, because there will already be two songs playing a third cannot start.

The Menu Bar has options for File, Search/Insert and Window.

The File Menu has options to Change/Reset Station, Create TOC, Create Search Database, Import SPOTDTA.asc and Exit. Change/Reset Station stops the audio and presents pop-ups like you had when doing the original set up. To create the search DB, do the next in order: Create TOC asks you to find the Audio folder, then reads the metadata for each song and makes the SPOTDTA.asc file of the entire library. Create Search Database asks for a name you want for the database, then copies the default database to one with *yourname.mv.db* in the root folder. Import SPOTDTA.asc will populate the database you created with all the Title and Artist info from your library. Exit shuts down the app, saving the size and location of the window and the text for the stream messages used with BUTT.

The Search/Insert Menu makes a list of songs ordered by titles or artist names. When you first try after launching the app, you'll be asked to select the database. You can make multiple databases, so you'll need to choose which one you want. This is the database that will be used until you relaunch the app. A list will appear and you can click on a song, click on the Insert button at the bottom for each song you want to insert, the click on Done to insert them. A search box is available at the top of the list where you can enter one or more characters of the title or artist, click Search or press Enter on the keyboard and the list will change showing a filtered list. To get back to the full list before clicking Done, just delete all the characters in the box and click Search or hit Enter.

The Window Menu has two sub menus for Player and Stream Msg. The Player Menu has options for Reset Window, Show Info and Hide Info. Reset Window make the app appear at the original smaller size at the center of your display. Show Info enlarges the window to give you more detail. Hide Info will put the app window back to where it was before you used Show Info. If all else fails, use Reset Window. Stream Msg has the option to show and edit StreamMsgs that are added to the Title and Artist metadata text the gets output to a file called BUTT.txt in the root folder. Clicking Update will re-write the ScottPlayer.sid file and return to the player window you had previously. BUTT can use the text in BUTT.txt to add to the mp3 stream BUTT creates. This is used if you are streaming the player output on the web (like I do). Icecast2 is a good stream server to use with BUTT. If you're not streaming, this can be ignored.

That's it. Pretty simple to use for playing the TLC audio files with overlap and metadata displayed. If you need to create schedules for this player, my SimpleSkd app lets you create a database, assign attributes like Bin, Tempo and Power for each song, set some rules for selection like Bin sequence and song and artist minimum replay times. It just make audio schedules, no automation features like AXWAIT or satellite cues. Handy for home juke box use.

Thanks for trying JPlayer. You can email me at philofjava@gmail.com with comments and such. I'll help when I can.