

GRAPHIC GUIDELINES AND TECHNICAL AUDIO SPECIFICATIONS FOR VINYL RECORDS

GENERAL GRAPHIC GUIDELINES FOR VINYL RECORDS

TO ALLOW US TO PROVIDE YOU WITH THE BEST SERVICE POSSIBLE, PLEASE FOLLOW THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES IN SUBMITTING YOUR ART!

Incomplete, incorrect, or illegible art files will result in production delays, and possibly poor presentation of final product. Unless you've arranged it with your rep beforehand, we require that all graphic arts are to be received in a Pirates Press template.

We have graphic art templates available for almost everything we manufacture.
Please call or email your sales rep or art@piratespress.com for templates or more information.

File formats

It is necessary for all files received by Pirates Press to be presented in a high quality file format such as .PS, .EPS, or .PDF formats. **GIF or JPEGs are NOT ACCEPTABLE.** Due to this specification, it is necessary for all files delivered to PIRATES PRESS to be saved at 300dpi, with all text converted to outlines, and all images embedded. This will ensure that your artwork will be uploaded in its complete state for prepress/print production and printed with the utmost quality and image integrity.

All files should be submitted on a CD-R or DVD or sent to us via AIM or our FTP Site (please contact us for more information).

Colors

All used colors should be in the model CMYK or direct (spot) colors must correspond to the Pantone scale. The model RGB must not be used in your files in any case! All direct (spot) colors must correspond to the Pantone scale, and you must specify them on your paperwork as well as on the template. Please note that due to differences in label and jacket paper stock, matching label colors to jacket colors is difficult and we strongly suggest using direct (spot) colors to best accomplish this.

Custom

Any (pantone) overprinting should be set up in its own layer within your file. In addition, Foil Stamping, Embossing, and Dye-cutting must also be set up in its own layer within the file and **MUST** be in vector format. Please use an indexed spot color or one of the CMYK values (100% C,M,Y or K) to represent that part of your file. **MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE A LEGEND IN THE PRINTING LAYER EXPLAINING THE PURPOSE OF THE ADDITIONAL LAYER(S) AND ANY COLOR REPRESENTATIONS USED IN YOUR FILE.**

Please contact us at art@piratespress.com or call BEFORE submitting files if you have ANY questions about this.

Packaging

Any jobs requiring special folding, special packaging or sticker placement of any kind, must be accompanied by a diagram or schematic. These are accepted in .jpg or .pdf format and should be submitted WITH your artwork, and if at all possible, emailed to your sales rep prior to placing the order to ensure there are no additional charges for such services.

NOTE: BECAUSE OUR RECORDS ARE MANUFACTURED IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC, ALL VINYL ORDERS MUST HAVE THE WORDS "MFG IN CZ BY PIRATES PRESS" APPEAR SOMEWHERE ON THE JACKET OR CENTER LABEL. ALTHOUGH WE PUT THIS PHRASE ON ALL BOXES WHICH SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO COMPLY WITH THE LAW, FAILURE TO DO SO MAY CAUSE DELAYS IN RECEIVING YOUR PRODUCT AND ADDITIONAL COST ASSESSED BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

FTP UPLOAD INFO:

piratespress.com user: piratespress.2 pw: 2a314d	piratespress.com user: piratespress.3 pw: d34db
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As a final reminder: **PLEASE ZIP OR STUFF ALL YOUR ART INTO ONE FILE LABELLED WITH YOUR CATALOG # (i.e. PPR009_ART.zip).**

TECHNICAL AUDIO SPECIFICATIONS FOR VINYL RECORDS

Recommended Playing Times

Below is a general guideline for the lengths of music that can be put on one side of vinyl. Please follow them for the best possible sound reproduction.

You may use more time per side if needed, but please note that the sound quality will become less with more added time.

STANDARD PLAYING TIME			HIGH VOLUME MUSIC PLAYING TIME		
Diameter	33 RPM	45 RPM	Diameter	33 RPM	45 RPM
7"	8 to 8.5 min	6 to 6.5 min	7"	4-5	3-4
10"	14 to 15.5 min	10.5 to 11.5 min	10"	9 to 10 min	6 to 8 min
12"	18 to 20 min	14 to 15.5 min	12"	12 to 13 min	8 to 9min

Input media

DAT, CD, CD-R. FTP (Stuffed/Zippered .wav files) (for other input-media please inquire.)

For the best result on vinyl records, you should know the following points before preparing your master:

- We always try to transcribe the recording in the highest possible level (as loud as possible) given the limitations of the medium.
- The worst possible format is a 7" record at 33rpm. There is a high possibility of high end frequency loss and also distortion using this format. Be advised.
- Try not to exceed the playing lengths above, as longer playing times lead to a dramatic decrease in the recording level and dynamism.
- Try to place demanding or prominent tracks at the beginning of the side of the vinyl record not at the end, as the conditions for recording and subsequent reading of vinyl records worsens with the decreasing diameter towards the middle of the record.
- Try to avoid using psychoacoustic processors in an excessive degree.
- If possible, check the master using a correlation measurer (it must not be in the red field or in negative values) and a frequency spectrum analyzer (signal must not contain unreasonably large elements at the bottom and mainly the top end of the zone).
- The lowest frequencies of the acoustic zone which are below 300 Hz have to be in phase.
- Filter away all sub-acoustic signals below 20 Hz and above 20 kHz to avoid possible problems during recording and reproduction..
- If your recording substantially differs from natural sounds, which is caused by spreading out the energy in the acoustic zone, there is a risk of audible changes occurring in the sound during the transcription as a result of certain limits following from the principles of the mechanical recording and the reproduction. (for example – singing adjusted by variable processors, electronically generated effects etc.)
- Please advise us of any potential length issues, special effects, anomalies, or anything else that could pose a problem when cutting your record.

We need a completed tracklisting and IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) form with your order. These forms can be obtained from your sales rep. Any order submitted without a these forms will be refused.

How to prepare your masters for vinyl records

Vinyl is a very specific product. To get the best results from your master it has to be prepared very carefully so that the final product lives up to your expectations. There are many things that you can do with your music and the final master that can help create much better end results. Here are a few tips and pointers that can help us make the best possible record for you, at the same time decreasing the chance that the master will be claimed back by our studio technicians due to issues that your master may contain.

- One of the most important things that some people don't understand is that the loudness of the vinyl is not dictated by the loudness of your master. Having a louder master doesn't necessarily mean that your record will be louder, in some cases a loud master will mean that there is a greater chance that your record will be distorted or that the studio technicians will have to adjust the sound to be able to cut the record. The loudness of the record is decided upon by taking into consideration a few important factors:
 - The length of each side - if the tracks or the whole side is longer than we recommend then the only way to fit all of that music on one side is to DECREASE the volume. The shorter the side the more chance there is that we can increase the volume. However, a short side again does not necessarily mean that the record will be loud, there are more factors that effect the loudness
 - The style of music - if the music involves strong bass, high vocals, loud guitars or drums, then again they engineer has to somehow compromise. In most cases he will lower the volume of the record to accommodate the loud or strong sounds, or he may have to filter away some of the sounds so that the excess signals do not ruin the cut. If there are a lot of generated effects as well this could also effect how they can cut the record (ie effect pedals, sound effect generators, unnatural sounds, pure electronic sounds).
 - The format of the record - the smaller the record the less amount of music you can fit on it. I know that sounds very logical, but it has to be taken into consideration if you intend to have a loud record or good definition of the music. If you are worried that the tracks will be too quiet then maybe think about using a larger format.

So, please try and make sure that your master has a peak level of around 0db ONCE IT HAS BEEN NORMALISED. Try to prevent digital clipping within the master (you may need to use a separate program to show you the wave forms - you download and try a great freeware program called AUDACITY from <http://audacity.sourceforge.net> if you are looking for some clever software to help you out, or there are other freeware programs available). Repeating what was stated above, a loud master doesn't mean you will have a loud record. If the DIGITAL master is quiet and the music, length and format of the record allow us to increase the volume then we will do all that we can to make sure that the record is as loud as possible.

Here are some more tips on what to do to get a good sounding record:

- If you have tracks that are more dynamic, demanding and rich then try to make sure that these tracks are placed at the beginning of each side. The quality of any record decreases as the groove speed decreases (ie as you get closer to the centre of the record) so its always good to have the best tracks at the start of each side. Please note that as far as sound quality is concerned a 33rpm 7" has the worse sound of all possible formats.
- Try to avoid using psycho-acoustically generated sounds as much as possible.
- Make sure that any sub-bass sound of all tracks is in MONO. If you have stereo sub-bass then this could cause major problems when cutting. If the sound changes drastically

when you make the sub-bass mono then the master is not really suitable for making a vinyl record.

- Try and filter away as much of the frequencies below 20Hz or above 20kHz. This will allow the engineer to cut a much better record. By using a spectrum analyser you will be able to see what frequencies your master contains and then you can adjust the final master accordingly.
- If you want your record to play as loud as possible then try to follow the tips and pointers as outlined above, but also state on the order form that you want a loud cut. Of course there is a chance that on lower level record players and/or old pick-ups/needles the record may sound distorted or in some cases may jump. This is not the fault of the record, but more the fault of the equipment that is being used to play the record. If you are more interested in a good quality sounding record without any risk of distortion then ask for a STANDARD cut and the engineer will not push the cutting process to its limits but will use standard values to ensure that the record sounds amazing.

Here is a list of recommended side times for each format and each speed. These are recommended times using standard setup values and volume levels. It is possible to have longer side lengths but as explained above this would mean a decreased overall volume level or a decrease in dynamics. Please note once again that the WORST FORMAT POSSIBLE is a 7" at 33rpm. If you can, please try to choose a 7" at 45rpm, or there is a big risk that the final record will lack high level frequencies and could also be distorted.

STANDARD VOLUME PLAYING TIMES			HIGH/LOUD VOLUME PLAYING TIMES		
Diameter	33 RPM	45 RPM	Diameter	33 RPM	45 RPM
7"	8 to 8.5 min	6 to 6.5 min	7"	4 to 5 min	3 to 4 min
10"	14 to 15.5 min	10.5 to 11.5 min	10"	9 to 10 min	6 to 8 min
12"	18 to 20 min	14 to 15.5 min	12"	12 to 13 min	8 to 9 min

A final note: If your master is badly prepared and sounds bad then the chances are that your record will also sound bad. We cannot change the way your music sounds, and we cannot make distortion that is on the master disappear (without a *separate* pre-mastering session, which we can also offer you). To a certain degree what you send us is what you will be getting on your records. We ALWAYS do the best that we can with what we are given, and if possible when problems arise we try to explain what can be done from our side or what has to be done from your side to solve the issue.

We are not here to be critical in any way as to what you decide to place on your records, but at the end of the day what we do want is for you to be happy with the final product. We are very passionate about vinyl and how it is made and that's why we are willing to spend that little bit of extra time on each order to ensure that everything turns out just how you expected, in some cases even better than you could have wished for.

Please let us know if you need any more help or advice, we are more than willing to help you out.