Computer Recording Basics

Live the dream! Never before has it been this easy and affordable for you to record, produce, and distribute your own music. Don't let anything intimidate you or slow down your passion for making music. If you have talent, a willingness to learn, and a desire to create, then all you need are a few key components, and you can build and use a recording studio.

What Do I Need?

Computer

Most modern studios rely on Mac® or Windows® computers. In general, Macs and Windows PCs are equally capable of recording and editing audio and MIDI. Your choice should depend on the operating system you prefer and the audio interface and software you plan to use. Keep in mind that if you're planning to use a FireWire interce, you'll need a computer that has, or can add, a FireWire port. Almost all modern computers have USB ports.

The following minimum system requirements are for PreSonus Studio One™ version 1.5 and higher. If you want to use other software, please check its minimum system requirements with the developer. (Note: PreSonus hardware and software does not support the Linux operating system at this time.)

Mac

- Operating System: Mac OS X 10.5.2 (Leopard) or later

- Minimum Hardware: PowerPC G4 1.25 GHz or Intel Core Solo 1.5 GHz processor; 1 GB RAM

- Recommended Hardware: PowerPC G5 or better or Intel Core 2 Duo or Intel Xeon processor or better; 2 GB or more RAM

Windows PC

- Operating System: Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7

- Minimum Hardware: Intel Pentium 4 1.6 GHz processor or AMD Athlon 64 (Turion); 1 GB RAM

- Recommended Hardware: Intel Pentium 4 2.8 GHz EM64T or better or AMD Athlon 64 3000+ or better; 2 GB or more RAM

Audio Interface

This essential device converts analog audio to digital audio and vice versa, so you can record to and play back from a computer. In many cases, the interface also includes MIDI input and output. PreSonus makes a wide variety of USB and FireWire interfaces; the AudioBox™ USB and FireStudio™ Mobile (discussed below) are great choices for small studios and mobile musicians but if you need more channels and features, be sure to check out the rest of the PreSonus FireStudio family, including the StudioLive™ digital mixers, which feature built-in FireWire interfaces.

All currently available PreSonus interfaces, as well as the older FireBox™ and FP10, are compatible with Mac OS X 10.4.11 and later, including 10.6 (Snow Leopard), and with Windows XP SP2 and later, including Windows 7. If you are using Snow Leopard or Windows 7, make sure you have the latest drivers for your interface.

PreSonus™

PreSonus
Audio Box USB

A great choice for mobile musicians and podcasters, the two-in, two-out AudioBox USB is bus-powered, compact, ruggedly built, and works with virtually any PC or Mac recording software. It connects to your computer via USB 1.1 and boasts high-performance Class A XMAX™ mic preamplifiers and professional-quality, 24-bit converters. And like all PreSonus interfaces, it works with almost any modern recording application and comes with PreSonus Studio One Artist DAW software for Mac and Windows.

PreSonus
FireStudio Mobile

Just 4.5 lbs., the bus-powered FireStudio Mobile connects to your computer via FireWire 400 and is built to travel. It features 10 input and 6 outputs, including 6 line inputs and 2 mic/instrument inputs with Class A XMAX preamps, plus S/PDIF digital-audio I/O, and a stereo headphone output. You also get MIDI I/O. The FireStudio Mobile is the only bus-powered interface that delivers true 48V phantom power. And of course, it comes with PreSonus Studio One Artist DAW software for Mac and Windows.

Recording Software

When you are just getting started or your needs are simple, you should choose software that is easy to learn but has the features to let you grow. We recommend PreSonus Studio One Artist, which lets you work quickly and stay focused on your inspiration. Incredibly easy to learn, it offers unlimited tracks and plug-ins and delivers features not normally found in entry-level DAWs. Access powerful editing tools without wading through menus.

Load and save audio clips, MIDI files, effects, and virtual instruments by drag-and-drop—Studio One makes it easy. For those who want more advanced features, including video sync, mastering, CD/DVD burning, digital release, and support for VST, Audio Units, and ReWire, we recommend Studio One Pro, which adds professional features while remaining streamlined and easy to use.

Speakers and Headphones

If you want to record quality sound, you need to hear what you are doing. Quality speakers and headphones are amazingly affordable, so invest in the good stuff. Normally you should mix on speakers, but you'll need headphones for tracking, especially if your studio is packed into a small room. And of course your neighbors will appreciate you using headphones on those late night sessions.

PreSonus™

Microphones and Instruments

You need to generate and capture sound somehow! A few good mics, properly placed, can make the difference between a good-sounding recording and an obviously amateur effort.
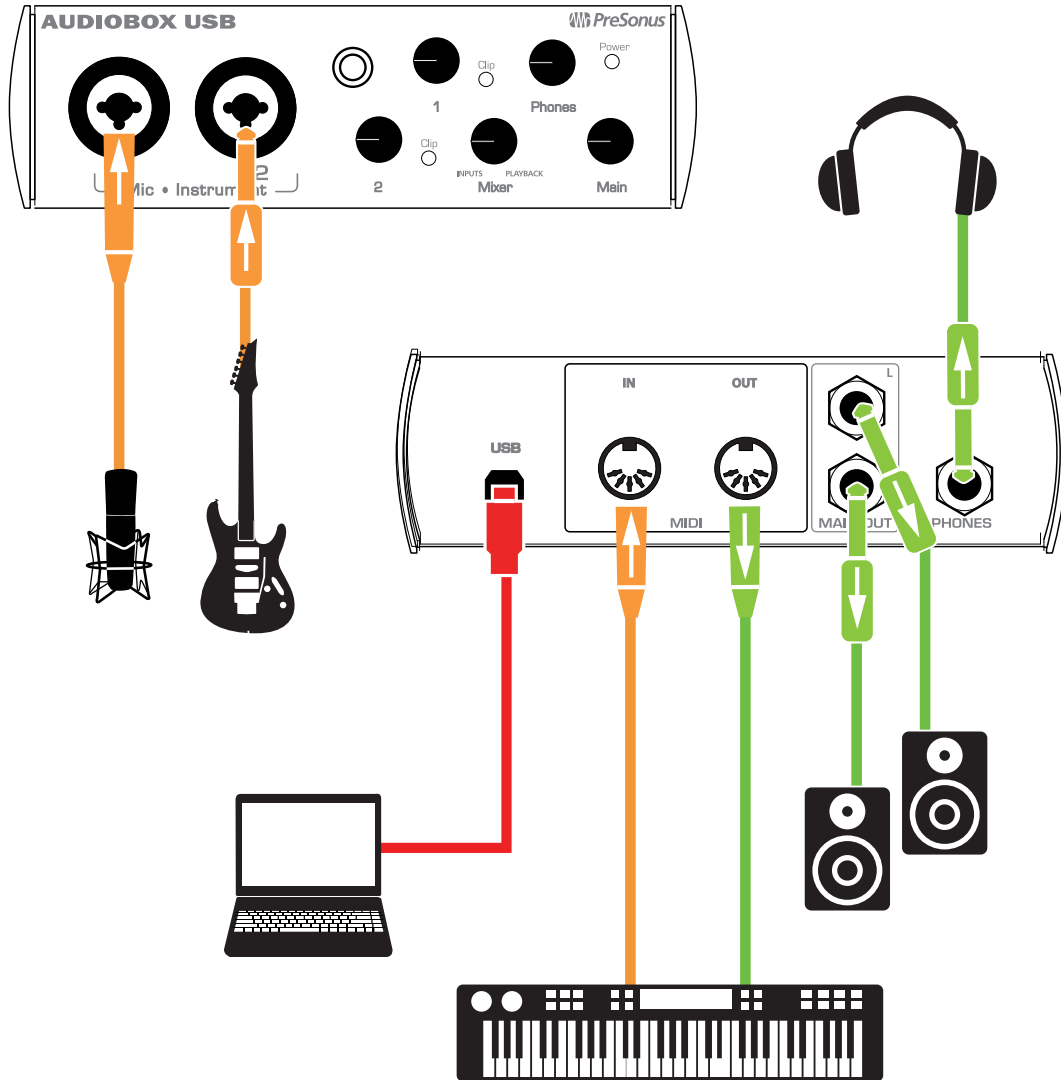
MIDI Controller

Most studios have at least one MIDI keyboard controller for playing synthesizers and virtual instruments. Some keyboards also include knobs and faders for controlling effects and other features in your recording software. MIDI control surfaces are a convenient way to adjust levels and effects parameters and control your software's recording transport (Record, Play, Pause, and so on). The PreSonus FaderPort™ control surface connects via USB and provides a touch-sensitive, motorized, 100 mm Alps fader for writing fades and automation in real-time. It also controls your DAW's recording transport, solo, window selection, and much more. And it is very affordable!

PreSonus™

Audio Box Basic Hookup

FireStudio Mobile Basic Hookup

FIRESTUDIO™ mobile

ic • Instrum   1   2   Phones   Main

A   1394   MIDI – S/PDIF

Left   7   5   3
MAIN   LINE INPUTS
ont   8   6   4

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