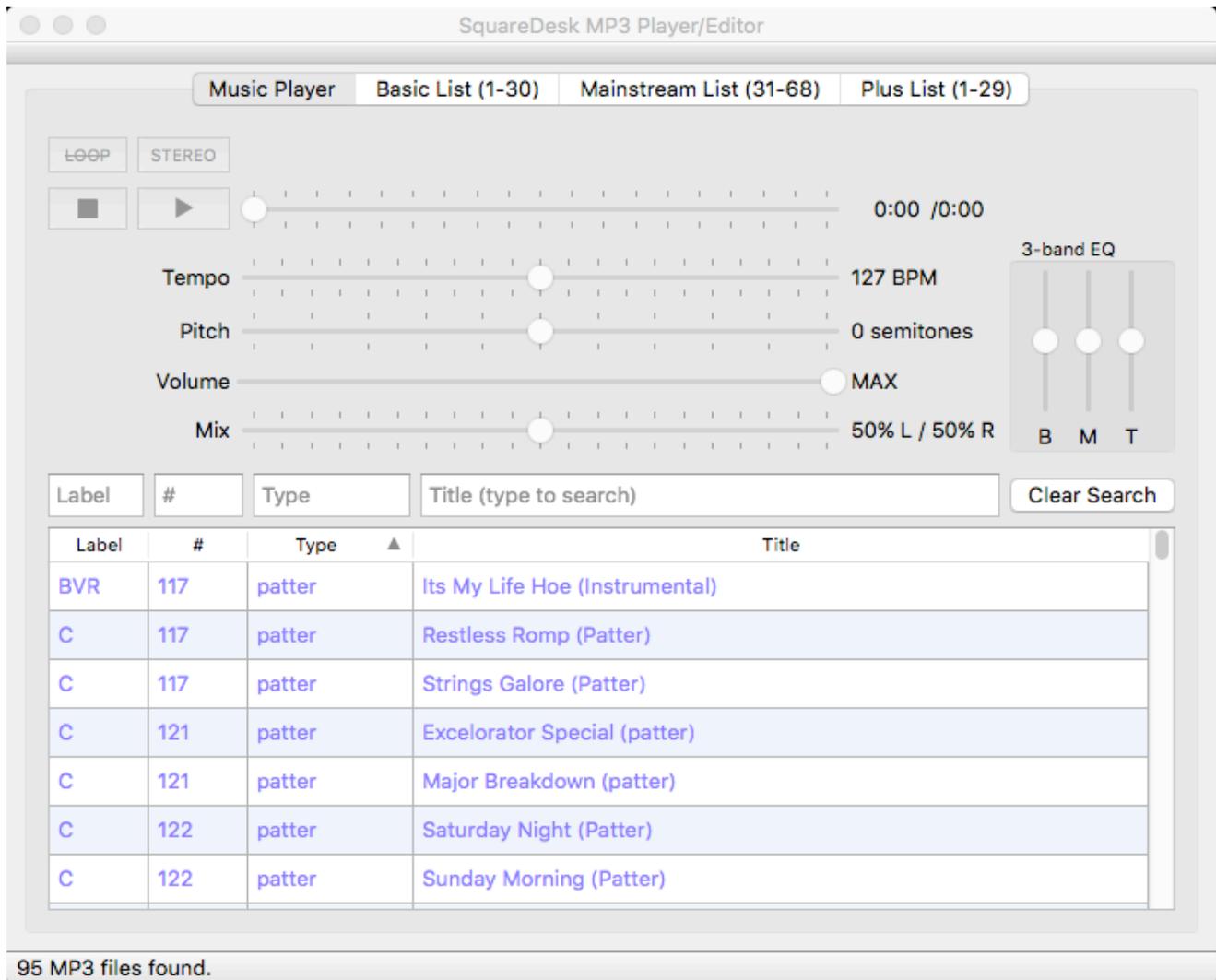


Quick Introduction to SquareDeskPlayer 0.4.0



Overview:

SquareDeskPlayer is the first version of SquareDesk, a fully-featured music player and lyrics editor, designed for square dance callers and round dance cuers. SquareDeskPlayer contains a powerful MP3 player with independent pitch and speed controls, a quick-search facility, and a 3-band equalizer. It will eventually be merged with a separate MP3 Lyrics Editor I have written, which will provide singing call lyrics (and round dance cues) editing, karaoke-like dynamic highlighting, and more. Once I reach the V1.0 milestone, the code will be released as Open Source under a suitable license, so that others can develop new features as well.

I'm looking for general comments, specific comments, suggestions, and especially bug reports. Any feedback you can provide would be helpful!

Getting started with SquareDeskPlayer to organize and play MP3 files on your Mac:

- 1) Install SquareDeskPlayer by double-clicking on the DMG file, and dragging the SquareDeskPlayer icon to the Applications icon. If you ever need to uninstall, drag SquareDeskPlayer from your Applications folder to the Trash.
- 2) Although you can open individual MP3 files using \mathbb{S} -O, it's a lot easier to choose music from the list in the bottom pane. Type \mathbb{S} -, (Command-comma), and set a Music Directory path for your music

(SquareDeskPlayer will remember your choice here). In that Music Directory, create subdirectories for each type of music. You can use any subdirectory names you prefer, but the names “patter”, “singing”, “singing_called”, and “xtras” will be colored specially in the music selection pane.

- 3) Music filenames should look like this: “RR 123 – Lovin' You.mp3”, where RR123 is the label and record number, and “Lovin' You” is the name of the song. If you follow this naming convention, and most of the record labels are using this convention (or something close to it), the music selection pane will let you sort by individual fields.
- 4) Type something into the Label, #, Type, or Title fields to search your music titles for matches. Anything containing the string you type in will remain in the music selection pane. Click Clear Search to go back to showing all your music.
- 5) Double-click on a music file to load it. Note that double-clicking will not start playback immediately (unless you want it to, see the discussion of Autostart Playback below).
- 6) You can then play/pause the music, and change tempo and pitch and volume independently. There's also a 3-band EQ to play with. The Mix slider (aka “Balance”) is designed for balancing music/cues in round dances, where music is on the L channel, and cues are on the R channel.
- 7) Most functions are also found in the pull-down menus at the top. In addition, there are keyboard shortcuts for most common operations (see the Keyboard Shortcuts section below).

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions):

Q1. What does the LOOP button do?

A1. If LOOP is on, the playback head will automatically jump from the 90% point back to the 10% point. Patter records default to turning LOOP on, so you don't have to worry about running out of patter music. You should make sure it's OFF for singing calls.

Q2. What does the STEREO/MONO button do?

A2. For those callers with stereo speaker setups, you'll want to stick to Stereo mode. If you have only one speaker, you probably want audio from both L and R channels to play on that speaker. To do this, choose MONO mode, or select Force Mono from the menu.

Q3. What is 3-band EQ?

A3. SquareDeskPlayer provides 3 bands of equalization: B (Bass), M (Midrange), and T (Treble). Adjust these to your taste.

Q4. What does the Autostart Playback menu item do?

A4. If you enable this feature, double clicking on a song will load it AND it will start playing immediately. SquareDeskPlayer will remember your preference for this feature.

Q5. What's coming in the future?

A5. A Lyrics editor/player for singing calls will be merged into a future version of SquareDeskPlayer (right now, the Lyrics Editor is a separate application). I'd also like to get a simple Tip Timer in there. I'll probably add some simple playlist features.

I'm intentionally not adding a whole lot of features. My philosophy is to keep it simple, and cover 90% of the what you want to do with 10% of the functions. I think you'll find that SquareDeskPlayer is a lot smaller, simpler, and easier-to-use than the other players out there. And, it runs natively on Mac OS X (I intend to release a PC version as well).

Q5. Have you tested SquareDeskPlayer on all versions of Mac OS X?

A5. No. It seems to work fine on 10.10 (El Capitan). Feedback on other versions would be appreciated!

Keyboard shortcuts:

// FUNCTION	MAC	PC
// -----		
// FILE MENU		
// play/pause	space	space, Alt-M-P
// rewind/stop	S, ESC, END, Cmd-.	S, ESC, END, Alt-M-S, Ctrl-.
// rewind/play (playing)	HOME, .	HOME, . (while playing)
// open	⌘-O	Ctrl-O, Alt-F-O
// quit	⌘-Q	Ctrl-F4, Alt-F-E
//		
// MUSIC MENU		
// skip/back 15 sec	⌘-RIGHT/LEFT, R/L	Ctrl-RIGHT/LEFT, Alt-M-A/Alt-M-B
// volume up/down	⌘-UP/DOWN, UP/DOWN	Ctrl-UP/DOWN
// mute	⌘-M, M	Ctrl-M
// go faster	⌘-+, +	Ctrl-+, +
// go slower	⌘--, -	Ctrl--, -
// force mono		Alt-M-F
// clear search	⌘-/	Alt-M-S
// pitch up	⌘-U, U	Alt-M-U
// pitch down	⌘-D, D	Alt-M-D

NOTE: In many cases, the ⌘ key is optional on Mac OS X.

Known bugs in version 0.8.0:

The song timer (e.g. 1:23/4:56) numbers jiggle around a little during playback.

Mono mode doesn't work correctly with MIX. The Mix should be before the conversion to mono, but right now it's after. Rounds with cues on one channel will not work properly in Mono mode.

There are still a couple more bugs in there, I'm sure.... If you find any, please report them!

For comments and bug reports, please send email to:

squaredesk@zenstarstudio.com