

# Quickstart Guide

v.2 - 3/19/2012

**SOUND**  *streak*  
The Internet Recording Studio

## Introduction:

While SoundStreak is a powerful production tool, it is also simple to use. This Quick-Start Guide tells you everything you need to know to conduct a session on SoundStreak. For more detailed explanations of features and capabilities see the SoundStreak User's Guide.

**Because SoundStreak's service is enabled by our servers, our software will open only when a broadband internet connection is active** (see *Appendix 1: Technical Requirements* for details). You will also need a microphone and headphones that can be connected to your computer (a USB headset like those used for Skype calls can be used, but will not provide professional grade capture or playback). Speakers can be used for playback, but are not recommended unless your microphone is isolated or muted, as you will experience feedback problems.

## How SoundStreak Works:

We have found that a basic understanding of how SoundStreak works helps new members of the SoundStreak Community get the most out of their sessions. A more detailed description is available in the full user documentation.

Both Production and Talent versions of the SoundStreak software have similar interfaces, which include a script window and synchronized media players. Session participants are able to communicate over a built-in voice patch, which is automatically started at the beginning of your session. Production controls virtually every aspect of the session including: selection of backing assets, recording and playback, posting end editing of scripts, and selection of takes for transfer.

SoundStreak's patented technology allows you to use the Talent computer as a recording device. Rather than streaming takes during recording, they are saved on the Talent hard drive as individual files. During recording, Production hears the take over the voice patch, much as they would over a phone-patch or ISDN. When recording is stopped, a low-resolution version of the take (optimized for transfer speed) is sent to Production, arriving within seconds. This low-resolution version is intended to allow a quick review of the performance, and both Production and Talent will notice a degraded audio quality. When Production selects a take for transfer, the uncompressed, full-resolution file is uploaded from the Talent computer to the SoundStreak server and then downloaded to the Production computer. Once a take has been transferred, both Talent and Production will hear full audio resolution during playback. This means that during a normal SoundStreak session, you may hear takes at three levels of quality: voice-patch, low-resolution and full-resolution.

This workflow means you never have to compromise again. You can use any Mac with an internet connection as the Production or Talent machine – no special hardware or software is required. You always get highest-quality, full-resolution output delivered to where you need it. Voice patch and synchronized media players give you all the advantages of collaboration and read-to-picture regardless of where Talent – or Production – is located.

We hope you enjoy SoundStreak, and welcome your input and comments. You can contact us through the support page at [www.soundstreak.com](http://www.soundstreak.com) or by emailing us at [support@soundstreak.com](mailto:support@soundstreak.com).

## Talent Instructions:

SoundStreak is designed to be extremely easy for Talent to use so you can focus on your performance. The entire session is accomplished with the following steps:

### 1. Start the SoundStreak application on your Mac (select "Talent" mode)

Because SoundStreak's service is enabled by our servers, our software will open only when an internet connection is detected (see *Appendix 1: Technical Requirements* for details). You will also need an active user account to install or open our software (SoundStreak accounts are free – see [www.soundstreak.com](http://www.soundstreak.com)).



### 2. Set your mic level

You can set your mic level before or after the session has begun. *Appendix 2: Talent Mic Setup* contains pointers on how to connect and place a variety of mics. If your mic, preamp or interface has an input level control, we advise using this control to set levels, leaving the Input Level slider in SoundStreak at 100%. If you do not have a control for levels outside of your computer, use the slider in SoundStreak. The right-hand meter always displays input levels from your mic in dBFS, with clipping occurring at 100%, or the top of the red range. Meters display source levels and not affected by playback levels.

SoundStreak's Talent software includes a feature called "cue track," designed to allow performers to hear themselves live in their headphones when using some

gear configurations. Most but not all interfaces feed audio back to the headset without first passing it through down-stream devices (including your computer's sound board). In most cases, this means the cue track -- the live feed of your mic back to your headphones — is controlled from the interface.

In some cases however, the cue track is actually traveling downstream to the computer and then being fed to the headphones. This will be the case in configurations where the mic and headphones are not connected through the same path (to the same interface), or in some models of interface which allow for separate up- and down-stream signal paths. In such cases, performers must turn on their cue track through SoundStreak to hear themselves as they read.

To activate the cue track feature in SoundStreak, simply uncheck the "mute cue track" box underneath the audio settings (this box is checked by default). In some cases, the round trip from the mic to the headphones will introduce significant latency, which many users find annoying. If you are experiencing this problem, simply check the "mute cue track" box to turn the feed to your headphones off.

***Note that muting the cue track has no impact at all on recordings, backing audio, Voice Patch, or playback. It affects only real-time playback of the mic into the headphones.***

### 3. Accept Production's invitation

When Production is ready, they will launch a session. An "invitation" will appear on your screen. Click "accept." This starts your session, and you can now speak to Production through the built-in voice patch, using your mic and headphones.



#### 4. Perform

That's it! Production controls recording and playback – once you have set your level, you don't need to do anything (except perform) for the rest of the session.

You will see and hear a four-second count-in before recording starts for each take (this can be disabled in the Producer's preferences window). Production can load video or audio backing tracks into the player on the left side of your screen, and script material into the script window on the right. Your player is synced to Production's, so they will see and hear the same things you do during recording and playback. Production will hear your performance over the voice-patch. As soon as the take is finished, a reduced-resolution version will be transferred to Production within seconds; when they hit playback you will both be hearing this version. *Note this is not a full resolution copy, so both Talent and Production will hear reduced audio quality until the high-resolution take is transferred.* If production transfers the take, a full-resolution, uncompressed version will be transferred to their machine and archived on the SoundStreak server. Playback on your machine will be full-resolution once the transfer has been completed.

That's everything you need to know to do a session as Talent – Production and SoundStreak will do the rest. Your takes will be captured locally on your computer and automatically transferred to Production without any further action from you.

**A final note:** to ensure all takes are properly transferred, only Production can end the session. Please do not quit the SoundStreak software until they have done so (if you try to quit before Production ends the session, SoundStreak will remind you to wait).

We hope you enjoy SoundStreak, and welcome your input and comments. You can contact us through the support page at [www.soundstreak.com](http://www.soundstreak.com) or by emailing us at [support@soundstreak.com](mailto:support@soundstreak.com).

## Production Instructions:

SoundStreak is designed to streamline production workflow while eliminating the need for compromise in quality, reliability or ease of use. To accomplish these goals, we have simplified the user experience wherever possible, and have made the Production end responsible for virtually every aspect of the session so that Talent can focus on performing.

*If you have not yet read the “How SoundStreak Works” section at the beginning of this document, we recommend you take a moment to do so. This brief explanation provides a useful context for this section.*

The following instructions are all that is needed to conduct a SoundStreak session immediately (for more detail see the full SoundStreak User’s Guide”):

### 1. Start the SoundStreak application on you Mac (select “Production” mode)



Because SoundStreak’s service is powered by servers, our software will open only when an internet connection is detected (see *Appendix 1: Technical Requirements* for details). You will also need an active user account to install or open our software (SoundStreak accounts are free – see [www.soundstreak.com](http://www.soundstreak.com)).

In environments employing enterprise-grade firewalls, your IT manager may need to enable connections to our server’s IP address. SoundStreak is designed so that all communication flows through our servers, so you will only need to do this once regardless of how many Talent you work with or where they are located. For details on IP addresses used and other security topics, see *SoundStreak Security Summary* on the support tab of [www.soundstreak.com](http://www.soundstreak.com)).

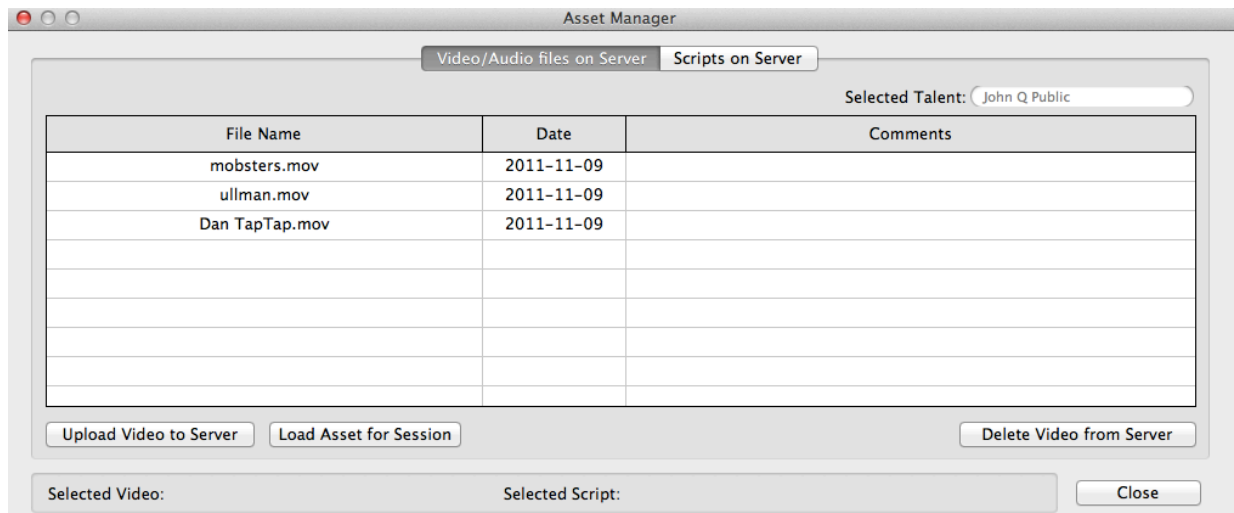
## 2. Load session assets (optional)

SoundStreak supports read-to-picture as well as the use of video or audio files as backing tracks during recording. You can also load scripts in the script area, and edit them in real time during the session.

If no backing assets are loaded, SoundStreak will record “wild” by default. If you have loaded assets already and want to record wild, check the ‘Record without Asset’ box to the right of the record button.

You can load assets before or during a session. You can also play them back in SoundStreak before connecting to talent, and can switch between backing assets as many times as you wish during a session (the proper asset will be automatically played with the take during playback).

Each SoundStreak community member has their own secure asset manager on the SoundStreak servers. Video and audio files are loaded for use during session from your asset manager. To ensure security, all backing assets are deleted from both Talent and Production computers at the end of each session.



To upload files to your asset manager:

- a. Open SoundStreak in Production mode (you do not need to be in session to work with the asset manager)
- b. Click “Asset Manager” and select the “Video/Audio files” tab
- c. Click “Upload Asset to Server”
- d. Navigate to the audio or video file you want to use as a backing track and click “open”

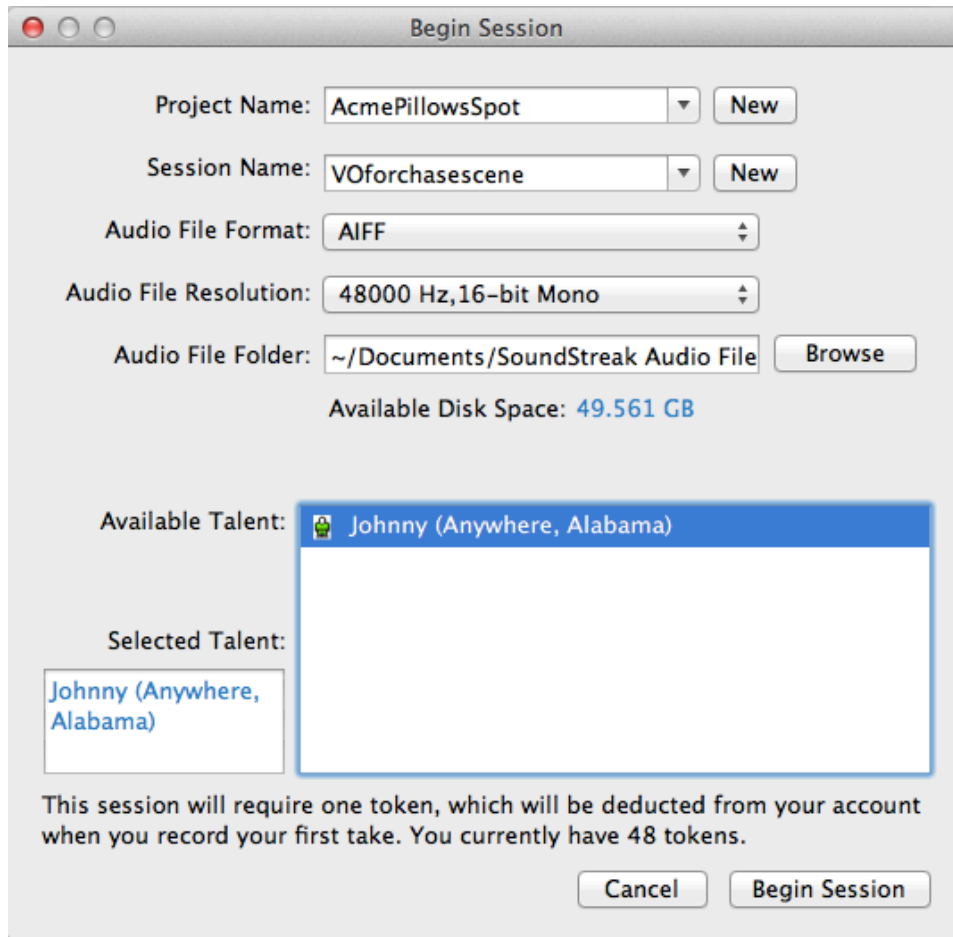
*You can upload as many assets as you like to your asset manager, and keep them there as long as your account is active. To ensure security these assets can be deleted but cannot be downloaded, and can be accessed only through your private SoundStreak account.*

Optionally, you can load an asset for playback in SoundStreak even when not in session – to do so, use the “Preview Asset Locally” button. The asset will be downloaded to your computer and loaded for playback in your SoundStreak Media Player, and will be deleted when the session is over (or if you don't do a session when you exit the application).

### 3. **Begin a session**

Click “Begin Session” to configure and launch your session. This will open the Session Setup dialog. This dialog defines all of your session parameters (default parameters can be set in your preferences area):

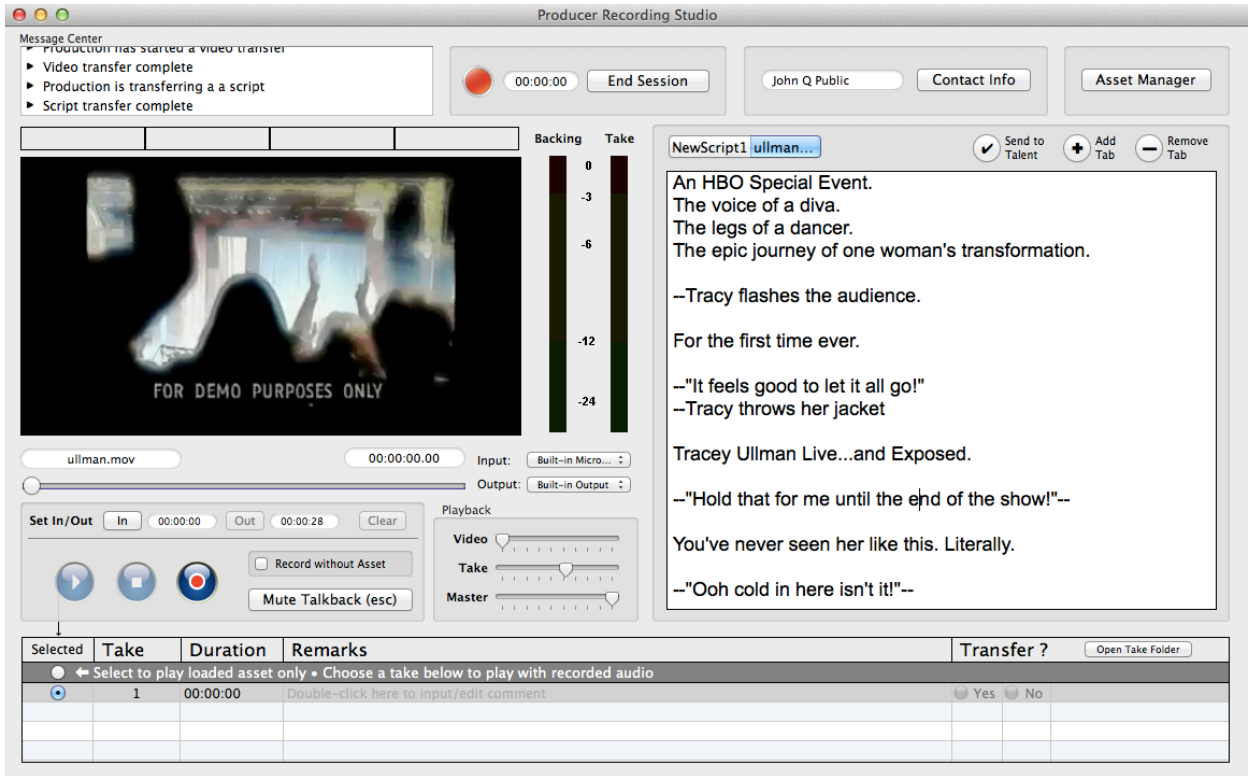
- a. Enter (or select existing) Project and Session names. This will determine take file names and folder name for session takes in your file system.
- b. Select file format for takes (AIFF, WAV, BWF)
- c. Select file sampling rate and bit depth (up to 96 KHz, 24-bit)
- d. Select your Talent. The “available talent” window shows only those community members currently logged in as Talent and not yet in session. To protect privacy, this window shows user-defined “screen names” (actual Talent name is displayed once you are in session).
- e. Click “Begin Session.” This will close the Session Setup dialog and automatically issue an invitation to your selected Talent.



When Talent accepts your invitation you are in session. A voice patch will be automatically established, and if you have already selected assets for session they will be downloaded to Talent’s computer.

#### 4. Record a take

When you start a session, the Take List at the bottom of the Production screen will show a single, empty take, labeled “1.” To record a take, select the radio button to the left of this take and click “Record.” Both Talent and Production will get a 4-second count-in; when “Recording” is shown, Talent audio is being captured. If you are using backing assets recording will stop automatically when the backing asset ends. You can also stop recording at any time by clicking the Stop button.



When each take is finished, a new take is added to the top of the list and automatically highlighted for recording.

The take List will show the take duration, and you can enter notes in the “Remarks” column (Talent does not see these remarks). All of this information will be stored on SoundStreak’s servers, and will be included in the session summary you will receive later.

## 5. Review and assess take

After recording is stopped, a low-resolution version of the take will be transferred to the SoundStreak server and to the Production computer. This file is optimized for transfer speed rather than audio quality, and is intended to allow session participants to assess the read or other aspects of the performance. When transfer is completed, the play button will change from grey to blue, indicating the take is ready for playback.

*Note: To avoid confusion, playback on Talent and Production is always at the same resolution. Until transfer of the uncompressed take is complete, all participants will hear reduced audio quality.*

## 6. Mark selected takes for transfer

You can mark any take you want to keep (“buy takes”) for transfer. Only takes marked for transfer will be sent to Production and archived on the SoundStreak servers, although copies of both transferred and un-transferred takes are kept on the Talent computer until manually deleted. The status of each take – Yes/No for transfer and transfer status – is visible in the take list.

Selected	Take	Duration	Remarks	Transfer ?	Open Take Folder
<input type="radio"/>	4	00:00:28	Good read	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Transferred - HI Res
<input type="radio"/>	3	00:00:28	Timing off	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	To be deleted
<input type="radio"/>	2	00:00:28	Hilarious!	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Transferred - HI Res
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	1	00:00:17	Not so good	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	To be deleted

When a take is marked for transfer, upload of the uncompressed audio file from talent to the server begins immediately. Transfer time depends on the recording settings and length of the take, as well as on the upload speed of Talent’s internet connection. When the take has arrived at the server, download to Production starts immediately. When the progress indicator in Production indicates transfer is complete, playback will be of the uncompressed file in its original format.

*Note: If Talent has limited upload speed on their internet connection (less than approx. 1 MB/sec), transferring takes may cause disruptions to the quality of the voice patch. This will not impact the quality of the recordings, nor will it impact playback of the low- or full-resolution takes. If you experience quality problems with voice patch while transferring takes, we recommend marking your transfer*

*decisions in the Take List and waiting until you have completed the session to mark selected takes for transfer*

## **7. End the session**

That's it. When you have the takes you want, simply click "End Session." To prevent loss of takes, SoundStreak will not allow you to end a session until each take has been marked "yes/no" for transfer, and all buy takes have been completely transferred to Production. For the same reasons, Talent is prevented from exiting the session or the SoundStreak application until Production has successfully ended the session.

## **8. Get on with your day**

When the session is ended, you will have the takes on the machine from which you ran the SoundStreak session. These takes can be found in your Takes Folder, in a folder named for the Project+Session+Date. The location of this folder is user-selected, but the default location is: <user>/documents/SoundStreak Audio Files/ProducerSoundStudio. This folder can also be opened in Finder by clicking on the "Open Take" button.

At the end of the session, you will receive a "session summary" by email. This email will contain the details of the session you have just completed (who, when, number of takes, etc.). It will also contain individual links to uncompressed versions of each transferred take on the SoundStreak Archive Server. These links will automatically initiate a download of the selected take to whatever computer it is activated from. This is an easy way to send buy takes to an edit room or remote location without having to email them or use FTP.

We hope you enjoy SoundStreak, and welcome your input and comments. You can contact us through the support page at [www.soundstreak.com](http://www.soundstreak.com) or by emailing us at [support@soundstreak.com](mailto:support@soundstreak.com).