APM STEMS GUIDE

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SUMMARY

Stems are essential for every track. Many production companies do not use tracks unless the stems are available. Stems need to be organized as simply as possible for clients.

Please direct any inquiries to metadata@apmmusic.com.

STEM AUDIO FILE SPECIFICATIONS

We typically expect **5-10 stems per track** (may be more or less).

Stems should be interleaved **stereo files** (not mono or separate left and right channels), **post mix** and **grouped** together by instrument. For example: one stem for all drums rather than kick, snare, toms etc.

Ideally, any **melodies** should be on a separate stem, e.g. rhythm and lead guitar should be separated. It should also be possible for the underscore to be recreated from the stems, so anything taken out for the underscore should be on a separate stem.

All stems should **start from beat 1 bar 1** and should be **the same length** as each other and the full track.

The aim of the process is to start from where you left off, so when the stems are imported into any DAW, with the faders in a straight line, we get your mix exactly as you left it, minus any mastering across the full mix.

You should take off any dynamics from the master channel before printing stems and make sure the mix does not exceed 0db, so when the stems are added back together they should not exceed 0db, ideally around -3db to leave room for mastering.

STEM METADATA FILE FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

METADATA FILE OPTION 1: "Stems Only"

- Submit this CSV in addition to your regular release CSV for stems accompanying new releases
- Submit this CSV for delivery of stems related to past releases

FIELD NAME	REQUIRED Y/N	FORMATTING	EXAMPLE	FIELD FORMAT	COLUMN LOCATION
LIBRARY ID	Y	APM's Library Prefix	APM	String	A
CD ID	Y	APM Album Number. Consists of the PMA library prefix, a hyphen, and a 4-digit number. If there are 2 or more Albums, the additional Albums are indicated with a /2, /3, etc.	APM-0017	String	B
TRACK NUMBER	Y	The track number that corresponds to the stems you are submitting. All stems for a single track should have the same track number.	1	Number	C
TRACK SUB-INDEX	N	Leave this blank unless your tracks have a Sub-Index. Sub-Index is 1 or 2 digit number (with no preceding zeros). The Sub-Index starts at the number 2 (the main track does not have the Sub-Index of 1).		Number	D
STEM NAME	Y	Describes the instrument or group of instruments, and will be what the client sees to notify them of what the stem contains.	Drums	String	E
AUDIO FILENAME	Y	Must link exactly to an audio file of the same name. "Audio Filename" can be anything, as long as it is unique to a single stem, for a single track. APM will process and rename the audio files in a standard format for our clients. Must include the filetype extension (.wav or .aif).	BRP_Drums.WAV	String	F

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Library ID	CD ID	Track Number	Track Sub-Index	Stem Name	Audio Filename
2	APM	APM-2480	1		Drums	BRP_Drums.WAV
3	APM	APM-2480	1		Bass	BRP_Bass.WAV
4	APM	APM-2480	1		Piano	Piano_Session2.WAV

METADATA FILE OPTION 2: "New Data and Stems"

- Submit your new releases and their stem data in one single CSV
- See METADATA FILE FORMAT & SUBMISSION GUIDELINES for full detail on the metadata submission format: https://www.apmmusic.com/sites/default/files/pdf/apm-metadata-guidelines.pdf

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Library ID	CD ID	CD Title	CD Description	Track Number	Track Sub-Index	Song Title	Track Title	Stem Name	Audio Filename
2	APM	APM-2480	Jumpy Rock	Jumpy rock with con	1		Jumpy Rock Play	Jumpy Rock Play		BRP_main.wav
3	APM	APM-2480			1				Drums	BRP_Drums.WAV
4	APM	APM-2480			1				Bass	BRP_Bass.WAV
5	APM	APM-2480			1				Piano	Piano_Session2.WAV

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS & DELIVERY

ASSET	DELIVERY FORMAT	DELIVERY METHOD	REQUIREMENTS	FILE NAME	FILENAME DESCRIPTION	FILENAME EXAMPLE
Metadata File Option 1: STEMS ONLY	CSV, XLSX or XLSM	Library Portal	Separate Unique file for each album/CD. Columns: A-F. See example (Do not zip for upload).	AkCD-STEMS_ONLY.csv	LIBRARY_SUBLIBRARY_CD#(4 digits)	APM_APM_0001-STEMS_ONLY.csv
Metadata File Option 2: NEW DATA & STEMS	CSV, XLSX or XLSM	Library Portal	Separate Unique file for each album/CD. Columns: A-DX. See example (Do not zip for upload).	AkCD-NEW_DATA_&_STEMS.csv	LIBRARY_SUBLIBRARY_CD#(4 digits)	APM_APM_0001-NEW_DATA_&_STEMS.csv
Stem Audio	WAV or AIFF	Library Portal	48 kHz, 16 or 24 bit, Stereo, WAV or AIFF (Do not zip for upload)	stemname.wav or stemname.aif	Filename must match "Audio Filename" column in CSV. Each Filename must be unique per submission.	BRP_Drums.wav

STEM NAME BEST PRACTICES

• "Stem Name" is the name of instruments or group of instruments.

    • This is a text field with no validation, use your best judgement

    • The goal is to communicate the contents of the stem track as easily and clearly to the client/editor

• Single Instrument examples:

    • Electric Guitar

    • Bass

    • Synth

    • Lead Guitar

    • Rhythm Guitar

- Group of instruments examples:
  - Drums
  - Percussion
  - Strings
  - Horns
- Multiple Instrument examples:
  - Multiple guitars:
    - Guitar 1
    - Guitar 2
    - Lead Guitar
  - Multiple vocals:
    - Lead Vocal
    - Backup Vocals
    - Vocal Harmony