

# PC Tutor Times



Spring 2005, Volume VII, Issue 1

## All About MP3 files, Music Download Websites and Music Players

### What is a MP3 File?

Computers can be divided into two parts, hardware and software. One can not live without the other. The hardware is what you can touch and feel. A monitor, keyboard, mouse and the computer are all examples of hardware. Software is written by computer programmers and is a set of instructions to be performed. For example, how does a computer know to open an email message when the user double clicks on it? Answer, because the programmer told the computer to do that in his/her instructions which are saved in files.



iTunes Software

Another use for files is to store data. When a user types a document and saves it for future use, that information is saved in a file. The word processing software knows how to save and retrieve information from that document file. The same goes for music. In order to save a song in digital form the data that makes up the song must be saved in a file for future playback. One type of song file is [MP3](#).

### Email Tips

[When do I use TO, CC and BCC in an email message?](#)

### Search Engine Tips

[Google is great! What else does it have to offer?](#)

### Congratulations Grads!



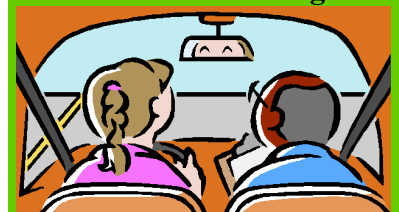
[GE Center For Financial Learning](#)

[Yahoo's Students and Recent Grads](#)

[Job Search Tactics for Recent College Grads](#)

[Sample Interview Questions](#)

### Summer Time Driving



[America' Scenic Byways](#)

[AAA's Fuel Gauge Report](#)

[AAA's Fuel Cost Calculator](#)

### Weekly Chores

[Update AntiVirus software](#)

There are many different types of files that can save song information but the most popular is MP3 because it is a universal format that does not have any copyright protection built into it. MP3 has also evolved into a generic name for song files. Other song file formats are: AAC and M4P (Apple), WMA and WAV (Windows), which would have to be saved to a CD and then reimported back into the computer to make a MP3.

As with all aspects of computers there is a trade off for using MP3. Since MP3 compresses the data that is stored in the file (to make the file smaller so it takes up less space on computers and Music players) you will lose some audio fidelity. Most listeners will not notice the loss of fidelity unless a very high amount of compression is used. Generally speaking if you keep your MP3 files at 128 bit or higher (160 bit is even better) your ear will not be able to hear the audio that is lost in the compression process.

In summary, MP3 files are simply song files that can be played on a computer, saved to a CD and played on any CD player, or transferred to a music player which is also called a MP3 player (just as the [Sony Walkman](#) was a portable music player for cassette tapes and later CDs).

## Music Download Websites

So the next logical question is where does one get MP3 files. There are two legal ways to get MP3 files. The first is to take all your own CDs, albums and tapes and turn them into MP3 files. This can be easy (CDs) or hard (albums and tapes) depending on your level of computer expertise and the time you can spend on the project. For example with CDs you simply put them into your CD drive in your computer and iTunes Software could turn all the songs into MP3 files.

The second way, which is much easier, is to purchase songs from a music download website, usually for .99¢ each. The two most popular ones are [Apple's iTunes Music Store](#) and [Napster](#) (This is not the old *Napster* which used to be an illegal MP3 sharing service.). With *iTunes* you purchase songs for .99¢ each or \$9.99 per album and with *Napster* you either purchase songs for .99¢ or subscribe to their *Napster To Go* service on a monthly basis and have access to all their songs. [Click here](#) to see *Napster* price plans. (Note: With *Napster To Go* if you want to put a song onto a CD you will have to purchase it, you can not do that with their monthly subscription plan alone.)

[Update Windows](#)  
[Update Microsoft Office Applications](#)  
[Backup your data](#)  
[Disk Cleanup](#)  
[Scan for Spyware](#)  
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## PC Tutor Web Site

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*Napster Software*

Again there is a trade off when deciding on which music download website to use. For example, *Apple* makes it difficult for the songs you buy from them to play on other music players. Each website's downloads come in a propriety, copyright protected file format, not MP3. So in order to get a MP3 file from the download you will have to save the song you purchased to a CD and then reimport them back into your computer as a MP3 file.

**Parent note:** There is a third, illegal, way to get MP3 files. That is to install software on your computer (*Kazaa*, *Bearshare*, etc.) that finds and retrieves MP3 files from other people's computers. Not only is this stealing music (the song creator will not get a royalty) but you are opening up your computer and your network to all sorts of trouble from viruses and spyware. The music industry is trying to stop these services with lawsuits. In the past few years they have started to sue people who participate in this kind of activity. Parents, if your kids are not using a pay service to get their songs then be warned, they might be getting them illegally and you could be held liable (the music industry sues the owner of the ISP account used to gain access to the Internet). See [www.respectcopyrights.org](http://www.respectcopyrights.org) for more information.






## Music Players

Music players (aka MP3 Players) today are what the *Sony Walkman* was in the 80's and 90's. They are basically little computers designed to play song files. You transfer the song files from your computer to the device either using a dock, cable or memory card. The most popular music player is the *Apple iPod*. It works seamlessly with the *iTunes software* and *iTunes Music Store*. The *iPod* is so popular that it currently has about 90% of the music player market.





The *iPod* comes in many different sizes depending on how many songs and photos (yes, the top of the line *iPods* also hold photos so you can give slide shows to your friends and relatives) it can hold.

Configurations	iPod shuffle	iPod mini	iPod Special Edition	iPod	iPod photo
<b>Model</b>	 <a href="#">M9724LL/A</a> (512MB) <a href="#">M9725LL/A</a> (1GB)	 <a href="#">M9800LL/A</a> (4GB silver) <a href="#">M9802LL/A</a> (4GB blue) <a href="#">M9804LL/A</a> (4GB pink) <a href="#">M9806LL/A</a> (4GB green) <a href="#">M9801LL/A</a> (6GB silver) <a href="#">M9803LL/A</a> (6GB blue) <a href="#">M9805LL/A</a> (6GB pink) <a href="#">M9807LL/A</a> (6GB green)	 <a href="#">M9787LL/A</a> (20GB)	 <a href="#">M9282LL/A</a> (20GB)	 <a href="#">M9829LL/A</a> (30GB) <a href="#">M9830LL/A</a> (60GB)
<b>Storage<sup>(1)</sup> and song capacity<sup>(2)</sup></b>	512MB (120 songs) or 1GB (240 songs)	4GB (1,000 songs) or 6GB (1,500 songs)	20GB (5,000 songs)	20GB (5,000 songs)	30GB (7,500 songs) or 60GB (15,000 songs)
<b>Battery life<sup>(3)</sup></b>	Up to 12 hours	Up to 18 hours	Up to 12 hours		Up to 15 hours of music playback; up to 5 hours of slideshows with music
<b>Display</b>		1.67-inch (diagonal) grayscale LCD with LED backlight	2-inch (diagonal) grayscale LCD with LED backlight		2-inch (diagonal) 65,536-color LCD with LED backlight
<b>iPod Ports</b>	USB connector, stereo minijack	Dock connector, remote connector, stereo minijack			Dock connector, remote connector, stereo headphone jack, composite video and audio through headphone jack
<b>Connectivity</b>	USB 1.1 and 2.0 through integrated USB connector	USB 2.0 and FireWire 400 (with FireWire cable, sold separately) through Dock connector	USB 2.0 and FireWire 400 through Dock connector		USB 2.0 and FireWire 400 (with FireWire cable, sold separately); Composite video (with AV cable, sold separately) and audio through headphone jack or line out on the iPod photo Dock
<b>Charge time</b>	About 4 hours (2-hour fast charge to 80% capacity)				About 5 hours (3-hour fast charge to 80% capacity)
<b>Audio support</b>	MP3 (8 to 320 Kbps), MP3 VBR, AAC (8 to 320 Kbps), Protected AAC (from iTunes Music Store, M4A, M4B, M4P), Audible (formats 2, 3, and 4) and WAV	AAC (16 to 320 Kbps), Protected AAC (from iTunes Music Store), MP3 (16 to 320 Kbps), MP3 VBR, Audible (formats 2, 3, and 4), Apple Lossless, WAV, AIFF			
<b>Photo support</b>					Syncs iPod-viewable photos in JPEG, BMP, GIF, TIFF, PSD (Mac only) and PNG formats

### *iPod* Models

With *Napster* you have your choice of many different music players, see [Napster To Go Compatible Players](#) and [Napster Compatible Players \(not](#)

## Featured Napster To Go Compatible Players



### iriver H10

- 5GB of internal storage
- Color display
- Displays digital photos
- Built-in FM tuner and FM recorder
- Rechargeable, removable battery lasts up to 12hrs

[Firmware/Driver Updates](#)

[GET ONE](#)



### Creative Zen Micro

- 5GB of internal storage
- Built-in FM tuner and FM recorder
- Rechargeable, removable battery lasts up to 12hrs
- Micro sized (WxHxD: 2" x 3.3" x .7")

[Firmware/Driver Updates](#)

[GET ONE](#)



### Dell Pocket DJ

- 5GB of internal storage
- Rechargeable battery lasts up to 10hrs
- Backlit LCD displays track info
- Sleek design measuring 3.5 x 2.1 x .5 inches and weighing only 4.4 ounces

[Firmware/Driver Updates](#)

[GET ONE](#)

Products displayed at Shop Napster site are always subject to availability by territory, inventory or other factors.\*

### Additional Napster To Go players

Audiovox SMT5600 Smart Phone

Zen Portable Media Center [Firmware/Driver Updates](#)

Dell DJ 20 [Firmware/Driver Updates](#)

Dell DJ 30 [Firmware/Driver Updates](#)

Gateway MP3 Photo Jukebox [Firmware/Driver Updates](#)

iriver H320 [Firmware/Driver Updates](#)

iriver PMC-120 [Firmware/Driver Updates](#)

Samsung Napster YH-920GS - [Napster To Go Firmware Upgrade](#) **Coming Soon**

Samsung YH-999 Portable Media Center

Look for players with:



See Special Offers with [Napster To Go](#) and MP3 Players [GO](#)

## Napster Players

If you desire to buy your music one song at a time or to take your entire music collection with you where ever you go, then music download websites and music players are for you.