Music on the Mac Part 2: How do you get it there in the first place?

Richard Ellis McCallum of A&E IT concludes his feature on Mac music

In the last issue, I wrote about the sound quality of Apple Music, the all-encompassing music service provided by Apple. I asked if there was a better way to store, play and control music on a Mac and all your Apple devices. Well, quite simply, there is and if you already have a CD collection, it's free but, strictly speaking, illegal too!*

Our software tool of choice is Apple's own iTunes because it's included with every Mac and iOS device. Arguably there are better music rippers out there such as XLD, but for the purposes of seamless operation, iTunes remains the best choice for people new to the art of CD ripping.

So with the software sorted, what hardware is required? You need an internet connection, your Mac and an optical (CD) drive. Earlier Macs had them built-in but for later models you need to buy Apple's own Superdrive (around £65) or any one of a myriad of third-party brands for around £35.

So let's assume you have a large CD collection that you want to store on your Mac. The first thing to consider is the sound quality/ file size ratio. The average CD takes up around 700MB burned to the disc. But by compromising on the sound quality, you can reduce this considerably. For me, though, it's a no-brainer – ripping is a time-consuming process, so do it once and do it properly at maximum quality.

With iTunes running on the Mac, go into iTunes Preferences then click 'Import Settings'. From the drop-down menu select 'Apple Lossless', then 'Okay'. As the name implies, this will deliver the best-sounding files which should be indistinguishable from the CD itself.

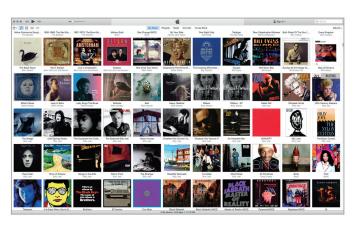


With your Mac connected to the internet, insert your first CD into the optical drive. iTunes will connect to an online music database and retrieve all the track information for you. It will then ask if you want to import the music. Start the process and watch as iTunes copies off all the music files and imports them ready for playing. It can do this faster than playing the CD, so the process can be quite quick. If you allow an average of five minutes per disc then you can roughly estimate how long your entire collection will take. If you're fussy like me, you can then add album art and edit all the information about the artist and music afterwards. Then just sit back and enjoy your music.

If it all sounds too difficult or time consuming, I can help rip your whole collection. Email **gethelp@aande.it** for information any time. You'll never have to listen to poor quality, compressed music again.

Finally I'd just like to wish everyone a HNY. If you got blessed with new Apple toys for Christmas then please consider having them set up properly by using our 24/7 online booking service. Visit the website for full details.

*The Intellectual Property Office is not aware of any cases of copyright holders having prosecuted individuals for format shifting music solely for their own personal use. Source: Daily Mail



Guess what sounds better in high resolution.

Then guess who can make it happen.

