

PROJECT ZERO

recording studio

Information & guidelines



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Welcome

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Thank you for considering **Project Zero Studio** as your partner for an exceptional musical experience! We understand how important your music is to you, and we acknowledge that choosing the right studio is a significant decision.

Rest assured, we are committed to making sure this becomes the perfect choice for you, resulting in a new release you'll be proud of for years to come.

This guide has been thoughtfully designed to ensure a seamless production process and to prepare you for your time at Project Zero Studio.

While the information in this document provides general guidelines, we understand that every artist is unique, and we remain flexible to cater to your individual needs.

If you have any inquiries or uncertainties, we encourage you to get in touch with us.

Let's dive into this musical adventure together!



Contact Information & Location

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Y-PRODUCTIONS BV
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BELGIUM

BE 0683.958.777

E-mail: yarne@projectzerostudio.com
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Opening times: Mon-Sat 9:00 - 17:00

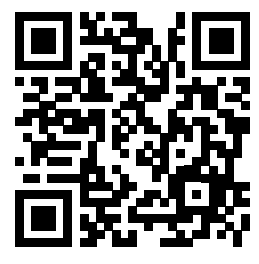
To ensure effective and efficient communication, we kindly request that you primarily use email as the preferred method of contact. For quick and practical matters, feel free to utilize our provided phone number.

Please note that important communication should be limited to email, and we do not accept business related messages through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, or any other non-professional channels.

By adhering to these communication guidelines, we can maintain clear and organized interactions throughout our collaboration.



Waze



Google Maps

Booking and financials

We highly recommend scheduling your desired recording time well in advance, as our bookings are typically made 3-6 months or more ahead.

To confirm your booking, kindly make a 50% deposit of the agreed-upon quote after receiving your deposit invoice. The remaining 50% will be invoiced before the delivery of the final files. In your confirmation email, please provide your full name, address, and, if applicable, your company name and VAT number to facilitate accurate invoicing.

Please note that the quote you received represents a project price, and any unused or extra days/hours will not be considered in the final invoice unless discussed otherwise.

Once a transaction is completed, it is considered final and non-refundable for any reason whatsoever. However, if you need to reschedule, you can do so with a minimum notice of 3 months before the original schedule.

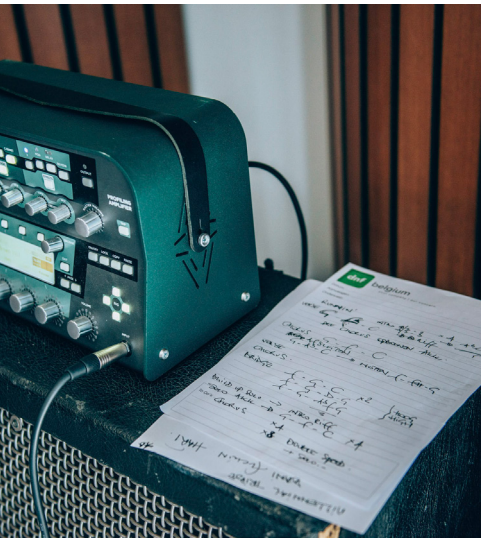
Preproduction, often underestimated yet incredibly vital, stands as a cornerstone of the production process. Paying meticulous attention to this phase significantly enhances the likelihood of a successful outcome for your project.

While preproduction can be undertaken easily at home, its importance should not be underestimated. Should you find yourself overwhelmed and wish to entrust this responsibility to us, kindly inform us well in advance. This allows us to seamlessly integrate preproduction into our planning and provide you with a tailored quote.

Our team is dedicated to ensuring every aspect of your production is handled with care and expertise, ensuring a remarkable outcome for your project. Don't hesitate to reach out, and we'll gladly assist you in crafting a remarkable production experience!



Songwriting



The foundation of a successful mix lies in a well-written song. It is essential to create purposeful arrangements and deeply contemplate the elements present in your composition.

By carefully crafting your arrangements, you allow each element to serve a specific purpose and contribute to the overall musical narrative. Thoughtful consideration of the various components within your song enables the mix to come together seamlessly, enhancing the impact and emotional resonance of the final product.

Remember, a good mix starts with a well-structured and thoughtfully composed song. So take the time to refine your arrangements and give your music the best possible chance to shine in the mixing process.

Tempos and structures

To ensure a smooth and efficient process, we kindly request the following information for your project:

Tempos:

- If your song has a fixed tempo, please inform us of the meter and tempo (in BPM).
- If your song has a variable tempo, create a tempo map in your preferred DAW. Export a MIDI track (.mid) and send it to us, making sure to include a 2-bar count-off before the actual song starts.
- Pro Tip: If you use Guitar Pro for notation, you can convert your GP file to a MIDI file compatible with our DAW.

Song Structure:

- Most songs follow a specific structure, such as riff 1, riff 2, pre-chorus, chorus, bridge, etc.
- Please indicate the number of bars for each part of your song.
- Alternatively, you can set markers in your preferred DAW and implement them in your MIDI track.
- Having the tempos, structures, and MIDI track information allows us to streamline the production process and work efficiently on your project. If you have any questions or require further assistance, feel free to reach out.

Name	Bars Beats
Synth Intro	3 1 000
Clean Intro	15 1 000
Clean Intro + Lead	23 1 000
Riff 1	47 1 000
Clean 2	63 1 000
Clean 2 + Lead	79 1 000
Riff 2	95 1 000
Riff 3	111 1 000
Riff 4	129 1 000
Riff 4 + Solo	137 1 000
Riff 2	153 1 000
Riff 5	169 1 000
Riff 1	179 1 000
Riff 1 var	187 1 000
Riff 5	195 1 000
Transition	205 1 000
Clean 3 + Lead	207 1 000
Climax Opbouw	224 1 000
Climax	236 1 000
Climax Akkoorden	252 1 000
Climax	268 1 000
Outro	284 1 000

Guide Guitars

As we begin the recording process with drums, it's essential to provide guide guitars for the drummer to play along with, in addition to the click track that will be auto-generated using the tempo map you've shared earlier.

To ensure the best results, we recommend using inexpensive audio interfaces and amp simulators, which are readily available. We encourage you to take the time to learn how to use these tools effectively to achieve a quality sound.

Please note that these guide guitars will not be included in the final album, but it's crucial that they sound relatively pleasant and are well-timed. This enables the drummer to focus on delivering an excellent performance without being distracted by poor-quality or out-of-sync guide guitars.

To maintain consistency, please ensure that these recorded guitars align precisely with the tempos and structure you have provided.



Extras

While these extras may not be mandatory, they can significantly enhance the recording process. Being well-prepared is always beneficial, as it ensures a smoother and more productive experience.

Guide Drums/Bass/Vocals/Leads/Production:

Having comprehensive guide tracks for drums, bass, vocals, leads, and overall production can be extremely advantageous. If possible, consider recording the entire album once as a practice run before the official recording. This allows for improvements and a clearer vision of how the final songs should sound. Rehearsals may not always offer the same perspective as a full song playback, which is valuable for understanding the outsider's experience.

Additionally, recording beforehand can help identify and address any misunderstandings or issues, such as wrong notes, grooves, or clashing harmonies. Resolving these concerns ahead of time saves precious studio time, ensuring that the recording process remains focused and efficient.

Tabs/Midi Drums/Lyrics:

Documenting and solidifying musical ideas in tabs, MIDI drums, and lyrics before entering the studio is crucial. This preparation does not stifle creativity; rather, it provides a solid framework from which to build upon during the recording process. With a well-defined structure, there's room to experiment and enhance the music without wasting valuable studio time.

“Experimentation is for professionals; improvisation is for amateurs”

Recording

Now that preproduction is complete, we're ready for the real recording process. At Project Zero Studio, we typically use the "overdubbing" approach, where each instrument is recorded separately. This method, employed by modern recording studios, allows us to give each instrument the attention it deserves, ensuring exceptional results.

For a seamless recording experience, we almost always record to a click track. We strongly advise practicing with a click track at home before your studio session. If you're new to this approach, it might be challenging, but it will greatly benefit the final outcome.

With careful preparation and adherence to the overdubbing process and click track, we can achieve outstanding recordings that truly capture the essence of your music.



Drums

Preparation

- Practice your parts with a metronome before the studio session. Recording yourself can help you assess your timing and tightness.
- Experimentation is welcome, but consistency is essential. Play the song exactly the same way when recording multiple takes for seamless editing. This includes fills!

Instrument & Equipment

- You can use our free Tama Granstar shell kit or bring your own.
- Remember to bring stands, snares, cymbals, pedals, sticks, etc. Ensure all equipment functions properly and doesn't produce excessive noise.
- Start the first recording day with brand new beater skins for a professional acoustic drum sound. The drum kit matters less than the quality of the skins.
- We'll handle drum kit tuning on the first day, so no worries if you're unsure about it.



Skins

- Either Evans or Remo skins work fine. You can choose and purchase them yourself, or we can buy an appropriate set for you and include it in the final invoice.
- Kick: Preferably a skin without a rubber rim for the beater head, with a large enough porthole for microphone placement.
- Snare: Use a coated beater skin, single layer for a ringy long snare, double layer for a dry beefy snare.
- Toms: Choose clear skins for punch and attack, coated for more fine details. Single layer for long resonating toms (slower tempos), double layer for a fast attack and decay (faster tempos).

Recording

- We'll typically do multiple full takes of the song before focusing on detailed part-by-part recordings with punch-ins.
- Time permitting, we can experiment with different parts and fills.

Edits & Samples

- For professional production, some edits and samples are usually necessary, but we approach this tastefully.
- We don't mindlessly put you on the grid or completely replace your performance with samples. The human touch remains, unless the production style requires otherwise.

Our aim is to create a top-notch recording while maintaining the authenticity of your performance.

Guitars & bass

Preparation

Practice and master your parts; and commit to solos before the studio session (experimentation, not improvisation!).

Instrument & Strings

- A well-set-up guitar is crucial; consider having it set up by a professional luthier (Rammeloo Guitars, J-Axe Guitars).
- Choose appropriate strings for proper intonation; most reputable brands work well.
- Use the Stringjoy tension calculator to find the right gauge set for your guitar and tuning.
- For optimal sound, change strings after approximately 2 hours of use, or at least every half day for guitars and every day for bass. Consider replacing only the most used strings.
- Evertune bridges are recommended for recording rhythm guitars; they ensure consistent tuning. Floating bridges for rhythm guitars are generally a really bad idea.

Amplifiers, Pedals & Cabinets

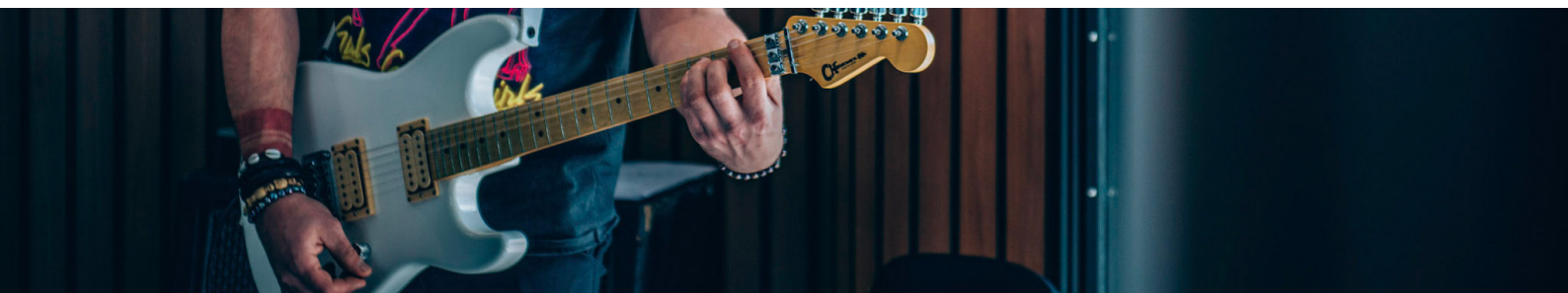
- Bring your rig or use our great tube heads and amp sims. We have a splitter to blend up to 6 different amps.
- Our custom Cathedral cabinet offers various speakers for your ideal sound.
- We can experiment with delay, reverb, chorus, and effect pedals. However, dedicated FX within the DAW usually yield better results (tempo match, automation, etc.).

Recording

- We typically record guitars and bass on a riff-per-riff basis, repeating riffs that are the same by copy/pasting where needed.
- Tightness is crucial; you may play the entire riff multiple times to achieve the desired result.
- Guitar and bass editing happens “on-the-fly” during recording; we avoid post-recording edits.
- While your band may have two guitarists, we typically have one guitarist play the riff for both the left and right takes during recording. This approach allows us to achieve the tightest sound possible and capitalize on the strengths of both guitarists.

By having one guitarist record both parts, we ensure a seamless and cohesive performance, enhancing the overall quality and impact of the final result. This method also streamlines the recording process, enabling us to focus on achieving the best possible performance without unnecessary duplication.

Rest assured that our approach is designed to bring out the best in your music and deliver an exceptional final product.



Vocals

Preparation

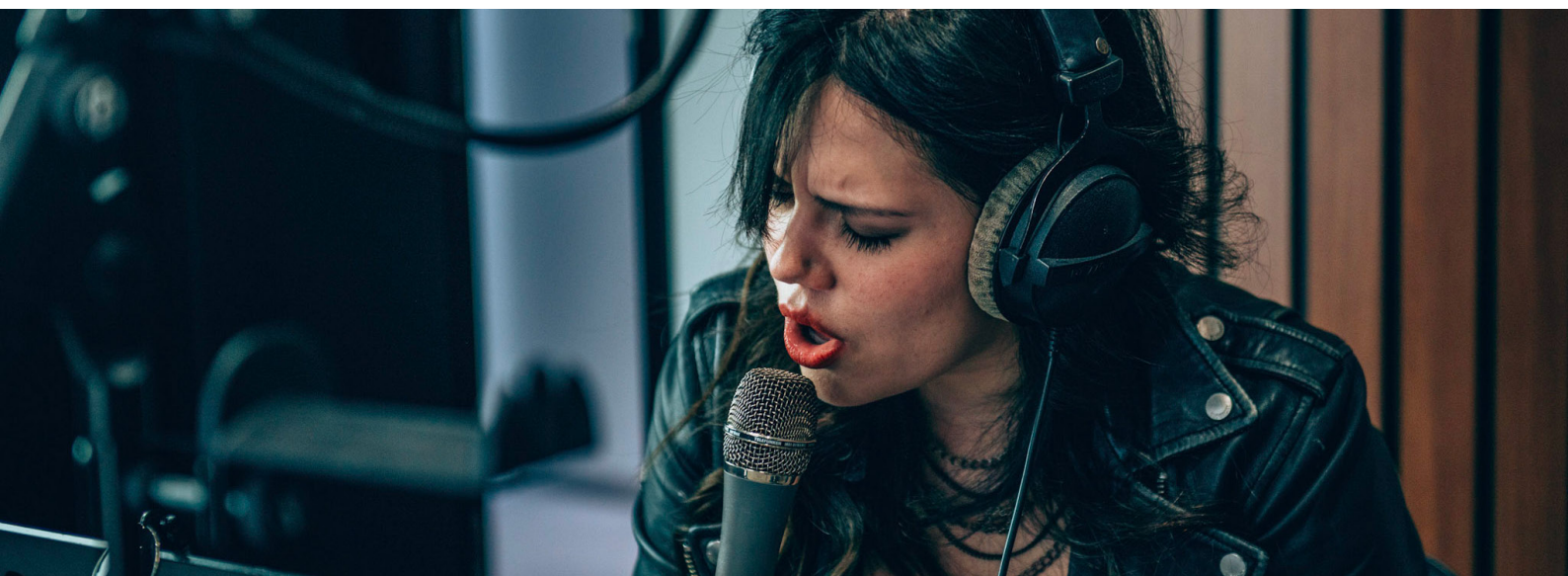
- Prior to entering the studio, finalize your lyrics and timing and provide them digitally to us for reference during recording. Indicate any specific stylistic variations or emphasis you desire.
- Minimize alcohol and smoking, as they can be detrimental to your voice. If you smoke and want to quit, consider quitting at least 6 weeks before recording, as it may temporarily affect your vocal performance and mood.
- Our studio offers a variety of high-quality microphones, so there's no need to bring your own.

Recording

- We typically begin with a full take as a warm-up, followed by recording paragraph per paragraph or sentence per sentence. Doubles and harmonies are often done on the fly, but let us know if style-switching strains your voice, and we'll adjust our approach accordingly.
- Be prepared for 2-4 hours of daily singing. Recording vocals can be taxing on the voice, so communicate any discomfort or strain, as preserving your vocal health is paramount. Protecting your voice and ensuring you can continue singing the next day are our top priorities.

Edits

- After recording, we'll align your doubles and layers to create a seamless performance. We'll also fine-tune clean vocals where necessary.
- Our goal is to capture your best vocal performance while safeguarding your vocal health. With careful preparation and attention to your needs, we'll produce exceptional vocals that truly bring your music to life.



Other

If there are any other instruments that need to be recorded, let us know in advance so we can schedule accordingly.

After completing the recording process, we'll move on to the mixing phase. The duration of mixing varies depending on the project, but typically, we allocate 2-3 weeks for the initial version.

During mixing, we prefer minimal disturbances from the artist as it involves a "try until it's right" approach. Once we are satisfied with the first version, we'll offer a listening session, but it's not obligatory.

You'll receive instructions on how to listen to the mix and provide feedback when we send you the first version. You are entitled to 3 free revision rounds. Any additional revisions will incur a charge of €60/hour, and revisions are usually delivered within 3 working days after receiving your feedback.

Please note that once we reach this stage, edits and song changes are no longer feasible. The focus will be on achieving the best possible mix based on the recorded material.

Our priority during mixing is to deliver a top-notch product that aligns with your artistic vision.



File delivery

When we are hired to mix tracks that were not recorded at Project Zero Studio, we kindly request that you follow these guidelines for file delivery:

File Format

Please provide your multitracks in a lossless audio format such as WAV or AIFF. Do not use compressed audio formats such as MP3 or AAC as they may degrade the audio quality.

Please ensure that all files that were recorded as mono are still mono.

Naming Convention

Name each track in a clear and concise manner. Use a naming convention that includes the instrument or vocal part followed by the function. For example, "Vox MAIN," "Vox BACK," "Guitar RHYTHM L," etc.

File Organization

Please organize your tracks into folders first by song, then by instrument or group.

Label each folder with a clear and concise name such as "Drums," "Bass," "Guitars," "Keyboards," "Vocals," etc.

Recording Quality

It is important that each track is recorded at the same sample rate and bit depth. Please ensure that your recordings are not distorted or clipped, and that there is no background noise or unwanted sounds.

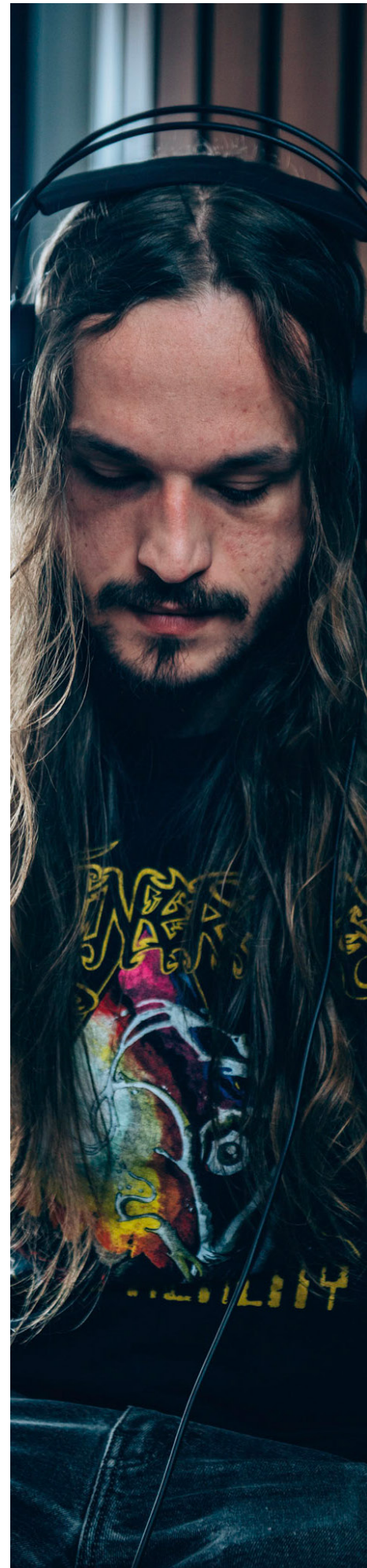
Tempo and Time Signature

Please provide the tempo and time signature of your song to ensure proper synchronization of tracks during the mixing process. If your songs have variable tempos, please include a midi file with embedded tempo mapping.

It is essential that all of your multitracks are of the same length and are in proper synchronization. This means that each track should begin and end at the same point in time.

Delivery Method

You may upload your files to a file sharing service such as Dropbox, Google Drive, etc. and share the download link with us. We'd prefer it if you do not use download links with an expiration date such as WeTransfer.



MIDI

Drums

If you are providing MIDI drum tracks, please also include a MIDI mapping document. This will help us ensure that the drum sounds in your mix are accurately reproduced and aligned with the correct drum sounds in our system.

The MIDI mapping document should include the following information:

- **MIDI note numbers:** List the MIDI note numbers that correspond to each drum sound in your track. For example, “C1 = Kick drum,” “D1 = Snare drum,” “F#1 = Hi-hat,” etc. (Please double check and be consistent between songs!)
- **Drum kit name:** Identify the drum kit name used in your MIDI tracks.
- **Note velocity:** Include the range of note velocities used in your track.

Please provide the MIDI mapping document as a separate file along with your MIDI drum tracks. You may use a spreadsheet or a simple text document to create this document.

Following these guidelines will help us ensure that the drum sounds in your mix are accurately represented, and that we can work efficiently with your MIDI drum tracks.

If you have any questions or concerns about providing MIDI drum tracks and mapping documents, please don't hesitate to contact us. We're happy to help.

Bass

If you are providing MIDI bass tracks, please follow these guidelines to ensure the best possible results:

- **Note Range:** The MIDI bass track should be programmed within an appropriate note range. It is important to avoid extremely high or low notes, which can cause issues with the sound quality and clarity of the bass track.
- **Note Velocity:** The note velocities used in the MIDI bass track should be consistent with the style of music and the desired sound.
- **Rendered WAV:** Please also include a rendered WAV version of the bass track, along with the MIDI track. This will give me a better idea of the desired sound for the bass, and allow us to make any necessary adjustments to achieve the best possible mix.

By following these guidelines, you can help us achieve the best possible sound for your MIDI bass tracks. If you have any questions or concerns about providing MIDI bass tracks, or if you need assistance with programming or editing your MIDI tracks, please don't hesitate to contact us. We're happy to help.

Mastering is the final step in the audio production process, where a skilled audio engineer enhances and optimizes the mix to achieve a polished and cohesive sound. It involves adjusting the overall tonal balance, dynamics, stereo image, and loudness to ensure the music translates well across different playback systems and platforms. Mastering prepares the tracks for distribution and delivers a professional, consistent, and impactful listening experience for the audience.

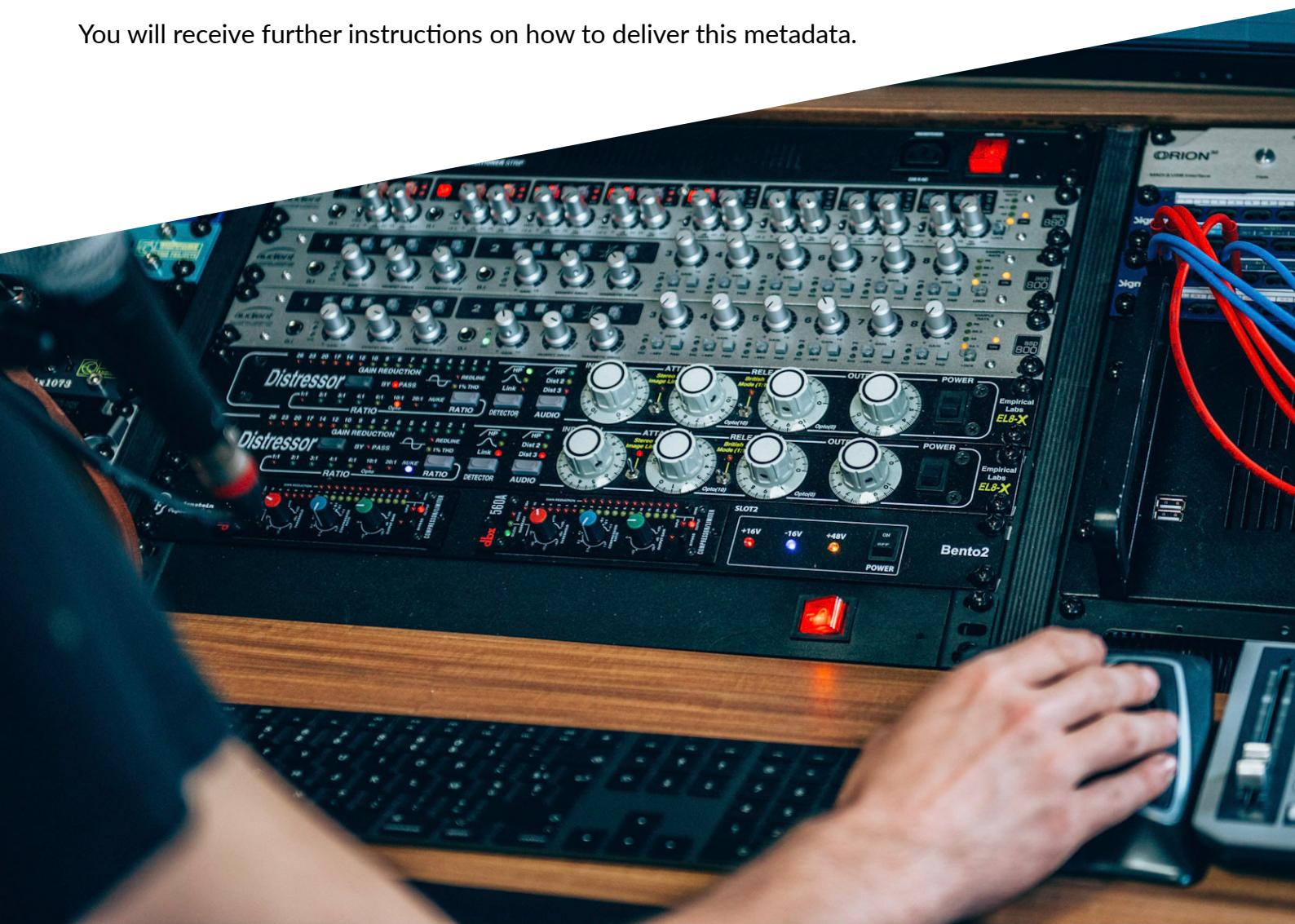
When we are tasked with mastering as well as mixing, it is scheduled during the mixing period.

We always deliver:

- DDP for CD pressing
- Digital WAV files (44.1kHz/16bit)
- Streaming WAV files (44.1kHz/16bit)
- MP3 files for personal or Bandcamp use
- Vinyl mastering in FDR (Full Dynamic Range)

All metadata will be embedded in these files.

You will receive further instructions on how to deliver this metadata.



Masterfiles and deliverables



Congratulations on reaching the final stage of your project! Below, you'll find an explanation of the different folders and file formats in your masterfiles to help you choose the right files for specific applications:

DDP_Bandname_Albumtitle: Contains all the necessary files for CD pressing, including ISRC codes and CD-text. The audio files are .wav 44.1kHz/16bit, with a loudness level between -8 and -4dB(LUFS). Use the included DDP Player for a final check.

DIGITAL: Use these .wav 44.1kHz/16bit files for digital releases like iTunes or Bandcamp. They have the same loudness level and master as the CD.

MP3: These .mp3 44.1kHz/16bit files with 320kbps are for personal use only. Avoid uploading them anywhere except for secure platforms, such as sending out demos for label purposes.

STREAMING: Use these .wav 44.1kHz/16bit files for streaming services like YouTube or Spotify. Failure to use these files on streaming platforms may result in poor audio quality.

VINYL: Send these .wav 44.1kHz/24bit Full Dynamic Range files to your vinyl pressing plant. They include two long audio files (side A & B) along with a pdf of song data.

PQ-Sheet: Contains CD-text for your CD production.

STEMS: If you requested stems, they will be available here. Stems group audio sources for rehearsal, backing tracks, or future remastering.

MULTITRACKS: If you requested multitracks, they will be found in this folder. Multitracks are unmixed audio sources for remixing or audio practice.

EXTRA: Any additional requests you made will be in this folder.

Please download the entire MASTERFILES folder at your earliest convenience and make backups. Double-check each file for accuracy. While we've reviewed the files, human errors can occur. If you spot a mistake, notify us immediately.

We wish you the best of luck with your release! These files are now your responsibility, and we're here to support you with any additional needs.

We understand the evolving landscape of the music industry, where video has gained immense significance in connecting with audiences and enhancing the overall musical experience. To cater to this demand and provide our artists with a comprehensive creative solution, we are thrilled to announce the expansion of our services to include professional video production.

Our team is dedicated to delivering top-notch video services that seamlessly complement your audio production, ensuring that your music stands out in today's competitive landscape.

Our range of video services includes:



Music Video (Filming and/or Editing)

Enhance your music's impact with a professionally crafted music video. Our team can handle both filming and editing, bringing your song to life through captivating visuals and storytelling.

Playthrough Video (Useful to do during the scheduled recording)

Capture the energy and skill of your performance with a playthrough video. Filmed during your recording session, this video showcases your musicianship and the creative process behind the music.

Lyric Video

Engage your audience with a lyric video, featuring synchronized lyrics displayed in an eye-catching and artistic manner. A lyric video is an excellent way to connect with your listeners and share the essence of your song.

Visualizer

Transform your music into a mesmerizing visual experience with a dynamic visualizer. This animated video complements your audio, creating a captivating visual representation of the music's mood and atmosphere.

Our video services are tailored to complement and enhance your music, providing you with a comprehensive package to captivate and engage your audience on multiple levels. Let's bring your artistic vision to life through both audio and visuals, making your music an unforgettable experience for your fans.

Here we will lay out essential guidelines and instructions to ensure a smooth and successful collaboration throughout your project. These rules are designed to optimize the recording, mixing, and mastering processes while safeguarding the integrity of your music. By adhering to these guidelines, we can achieve the best possible outcome and create a remarkable musical experience that aligns with your artistic vision. Let's work together to bring your music to its fullest potential and make your project an extraordinary success.



Who & When?

The planning you will receive will inform you of who is expected to be present and when. While other band members are welcome to come to the studio, there is a strict 4-person limit (including the engineer) in the control room to avoid distraction. Those not involved in the recording process can relax in the waiting room, where they can enjoy magazines or play the PS1.

Security, Theft & (Purposeful) Destruction of Property

The studio is equipped with security cameras and an alarm system. In cases of suspected theft and/or destruction of property, we reserve the right to review recorded footage and take further legal action. While accidents are covered by insurance, we appreciate your extra care around expensive equipment and the infrastructure.

Food & Drinks

Lunch break is 30-60 minutes and is taken whenever convenient (usually between 11:00 – 13:00). We offer a fridge, coffee machine, microwave, and water cooker for your use. Complimentary coffee, water, and tea are provided for our artists. There are several lunch places and take-away options in Laakdal, along with a large supermarket within walking distance. Food is not allowed in the control and live rooms, but you may have closed container drinks in the live room.

Parking & Loading

We have a small front area and a large back area dedicated for parking. Please use the front area only for loading and the back area for longer-term parking. Our parking can accommodate around 10 cars, with the driveway to the back area approximately 270 cm wide. After loading, please store your (flight) cases in the dedicated storage closet, basement, or in your car. Be extra careful while loading to avoid scratching the walls or flooring.

Waste & Cleanliness

Separate trash bins are provided for general waste, plastics, and guitar strings. Please use the correct bin for each type of waste. We have two toilets and one shower available for artists, and we kindly request that you keep these facilities clean. Please maintain cleanliness in the kitchen and dining area, and cleaning wipes are provided for your convenience. Personal hygiene is important, so remember to wash your hands after using the facilities. A shower is also available if you're sweaty.

Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs

Smoking indoors is strictly prohibited, but we offer a dedicated, sheltered smoking area outside. Please dispose of your cigarette butts in the ashtray provided. Alcohol is permitted in reasonable quantities, but we encourage you to keep consumption to a minimum for safety and optimal music performance. Unprescribed drugs are strictly prohibited on the premises. If we observe that you are clearly intoxicated, we reserve the right to send you home without a refund.

By following these rules, we can create a respectful and focused studio environment where your creativity can thrive. Let's make this journey of music-making an exceptional and harmonious one.

Marketing, Pictures & Socials:

Promotion matters in the music world, so capture videos, pictures, and stories for your socials, tagging @projectzerostudio whenever possible. We'll also share your posts and tag you back.

Obtain consent before posting content with our employees, and please avoid sharing unfinished work to maintain a positive impression.

Credits:

Include the agreed-upon credits in your posts, e.g.: Produced, recorded, mixed & mastered by Yarne Heylen at Project Zero Studio.

Extras:

For stems, clicktracks, or any other needs, inform us upfront to schedule and quote accordingly. Discuss guest performances in advance for proper planning.

Tell Your Friends!

If you enjoyed working with us, kindly spread the word and leave a review on our Google page. Your support means the world to us.

Thank you for choosing Project Zero Studio, and let's create music that leaves a lasting impact together!

