

DIGITAL MEDIA LAB

at the NEW LENOX PUBLIC LIBRARY

How to Convert LPs & Cassettes to MP3s

1 Plug the USB into the Computer

Find the USB cord attached to either the LP or Cassette Converter, and plug it into the computer you are using. An iMac's USB ports are on the back of the machine; you can also use one of our Macbooks.



The LP Converter (left) and Cassette Converter (right)

2 Prepare Your LP or Cassette

Put the LP on the turntable platter, or the cassette in the deck. No need to start playing yet. For a full-sized album (a 33), make sure the button on the left is unpressed. This button controls the speed at which the album will spin, which affects the sound quality. (If you pick the 45 speed while trying to record a 33, your singers will end up sounding like chipmunks!)

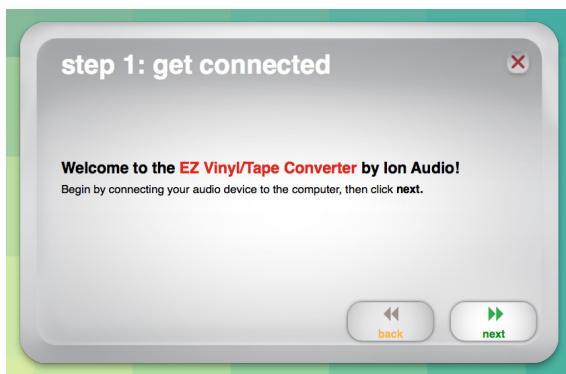


The left button, shown pressed down for a smaller 7-inch "45," usually containing single songs

3 Launch EZ Vinyl Converter



Find the EZ Vinyl Converter icon in the dock, and click it to launch the software.



Go ahead and click "Next," because you've already connected your Converter to the computer.



An LP—in this case, the Lincoln-Way A Cappella Choir's "Songs of Christmas," c. 1987—on the turntable platter of the LP Converter.

4 Get Your Music Ready

On the Cassette Converter, find the song or songs you would like to convert by pressing the play, rewind, fast-forward and stop buttons until you find it. To listen, use the

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headphones. Stop the cassette just before your starting point.



Once you raise the arm on the LP Converter, it will begin to rotate the album. You will be able to hear the music (very quietly) if you place the arm into a groove.

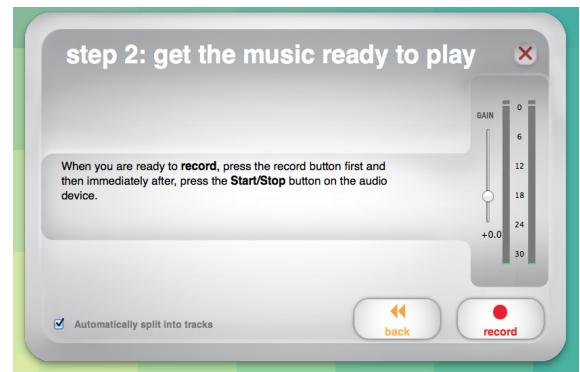


This makes starting your recording a bit tricky. If I am recording a full album, I will place the cartridge needle as far to the edge of the LP as I can, to give myself enough time to turn back to the computer and press “Record” before it begins. If I am recording one song, I might place the needle at the end of the song before it. This way, I will listen for the song’s end, and press “Record” during the silence in between songs. It does take a bit of practice to get it just right. Don’t worry—making mistakes won’t hurt anything. You can always go back and try again!

5

Begin Recording

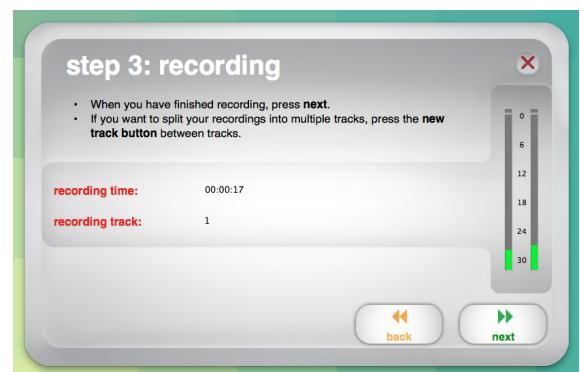
On the screen shot below, you’ll see a selection box for “Automatically split into tracks.” The software can sense silence in between tracks, and split each song into individual files for you. (This is helpful, except when it isn’t—sometimes the software will accidentally split apart songs,



or group two together. It’s helpful, but not perfect.) If you leave the box unchecked, it will record your LP or cassette into one big file. (You can always edit your music files using GarageBand, Audacity or Adobe Audition if you need.)

You will also see the big “record” button on the bottom right of this dialog box. Once you’re comfortable with where you are starting to record on your LP or cassette, press that button. It will begin to record immediately.

You have two options when beginning to record something: Play your music first, and then record—or press the “record” button first, and then begin your music. This is personal preference.



The above screen shot shows what you will see while your music is being recorded. “Recording Track” will always show “1” if you are recording everything together; if the software is splitting the tracks for you, it will show the number of the track it is on.

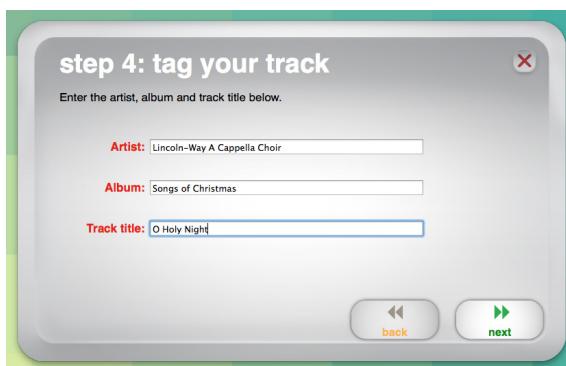
Once you are finished recording, press “Next.”

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Title Your Album, Artist(s) & Track(s)

On the next screen, you will be able to type in the Artist, Album, and Track Title(s). If you have more than one track, multiple title entry text boxes will appear. (If you have more or fewer track title boxes than you have tracks, this is when you will notice that the software may have split apart one song or lumped together two. You can always edit titles later in iTunes if that happens.)

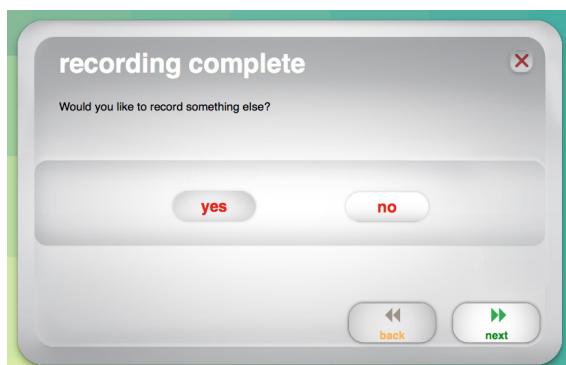


Once you are finished writing in your information and have double-checked it for spelling and accuracy, click “Next.”

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Complete Your Recording

If you would like to record something else, click “Yes” and begin the process again. If you are finished recording, click “No,” and the software will send your MP3s to the iTunes music folder, and close itself.



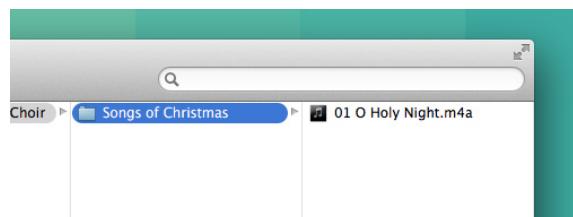
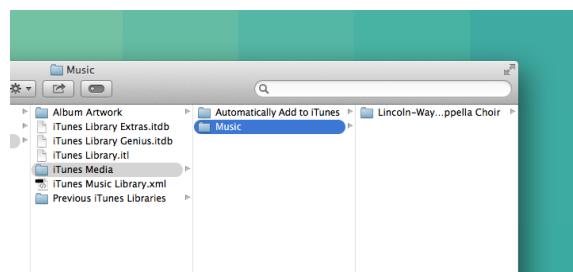
Find Your Files

The EZ Converter software automatically saves the new digital music files under the iTunes folder as .m4a files. An .m4a file is just another type of music file. To find your

music files, look for the “Music” folder on the desktop.



Double click it to open the Music folder. Your album's folder will be labeled with the Artist name you have given it, with the Album folder inside.



Inside the album folder, you will see a list of your .m4a files. Copy and paste them onto your external drive (flash/thumb drive, external hard drive, CD-R, etc) to save them and take them home.