Setting up with SoundID Reference

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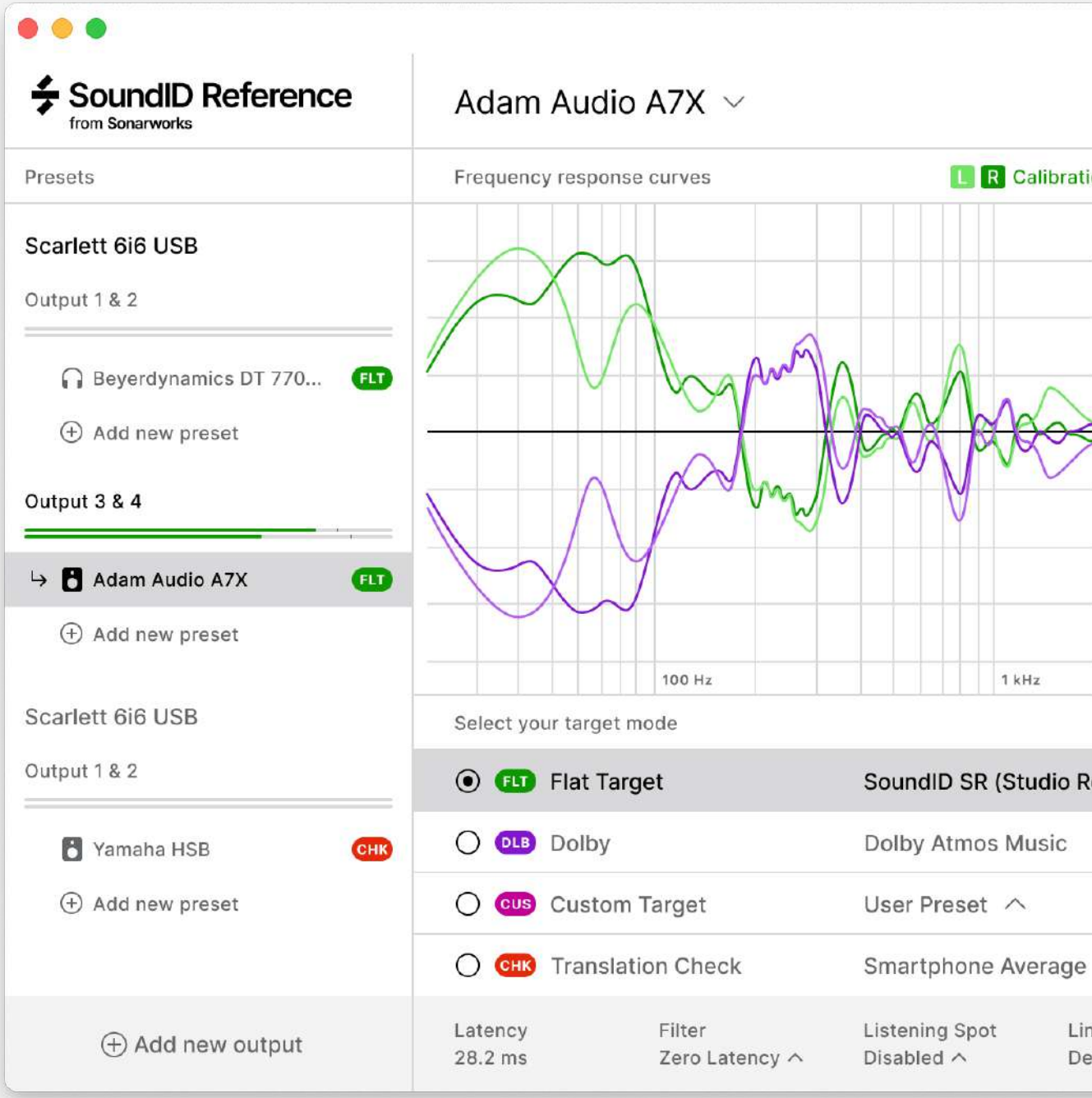


SoundID Reference

In this ⟶ QuickStart Guide

Launching a free trial

SoundID Reference is available for a free and fully featured 21-day trial. If you haven't purchased or trialed the software yet, follow the steps below to get started with a free trial:

1. Download and install the SoundID Reference software

2. Launch the SoundID Reference app and click on Sign up

3. Use the social login options, or enter your Email and Password details manually

4. Go to your email inbox, and look for a new message from Sonarworks Accounts.

Click on the link in the email to verify your email address

5. Once you've logged into your account, click on Activate trial on this device

Setting up on headphones

In this article:

System & hardware requirements

→ Supported operating system: Windows 10 (or later); macOS 10.14 Mojave (or later)

→ SoundID Reference software installed (download here)

→ Supported headphones, see the full list of 400+ supported models here

Applying calibration on your system

With the software activated, the next step is to load the calibration profile for your headphone model and apply calibration on your system. The SoundID Reference standalone app and DAW plugin feature a headphone selection wizard to help you find the brand/model of your headphones.

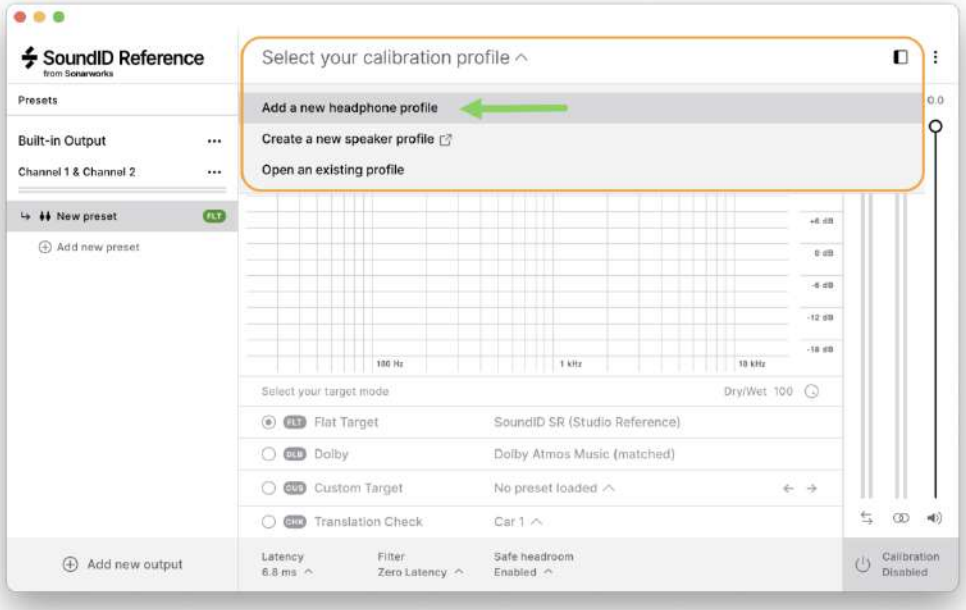
The headphone selection wizard is identical in the standalone app and the DAW plugin. Identify what is the best fit for your system and workflow, and follow the guides below:

1. SoundID Reference standalone app.

System-wide calibration for your entire computer audio. Follow this guide to get started: Applying calibration with the standalone app.

2. SoundID Reference DAW plugin.

Perfect for music production and mixing process, featuring a Zero Latency filer. All major plugin formats are supported: AU, AAX, VST2, VST3. Follow this guide to get started: Applying calibration with the DAW plugin



Note! If your headphone model doesn't appear on the list, it is not supported. We do NOT recommend using a profile of a similar model - the results will be inaccurate. Instead, you can submit a model request here, or look into our individual calibration service.

DSP and calibration target settings

Once you have the basics configured (output device/ channels and calibration profile), you can proceed to explore the DSP settings, Target Modes, and other features in the app. All changes you make from here will be saved as a part of your Preset configuration in the Output Panel:

→ Frequency Response Curves - select which curves are being displayed

→ Filter Type - Zero Latency, Mixed, and Linear Phase options

→ Custom Target - make target adjustments with a parametric EQ

→ Translation Check - simulate your mix translation on different devices

Setting up on speakers

In this article:

1. System & hardware requirements
2. Speaker measurements
3. Applying calibration on your system
4. DSP and calibration target settings

System & hardware requirements

→ Supported operating system: Windows 10 (or later); macOS 10.14 Mojave (or later)

→ SoundID Reference software installed (download here)

→ Stereo speaker system (2.0), with additional subwoofer possible

→ Audio interface with +48v Phantom Power

→ XLR to XLR audio cable

→ Measurement microphone (using a Sonarworks microphone is recommended):

- → Sonarworks measurement microphone - available in Sonarworks Store
- → Third-party measurement microphone, learn more here

Note! USB microphones are NOT supported.

Speaker measurements

To begin, launch the SoundID Reference Measure app. The 4-stage measurement process will take around 20-30 min to complete:

1. Hardware setup - setting up your hardware, I/O, and audio settings

2. Listening spot - establishing the dimensions of your listening area

3. Room response - a series of 37 measurements of your room and speakers

4. Results - once the measurement process is complete, the results will be displayed

Hot tips:

→ If you're getting stuck, use this guide: Stereo speaker measurement troubleshooting guide

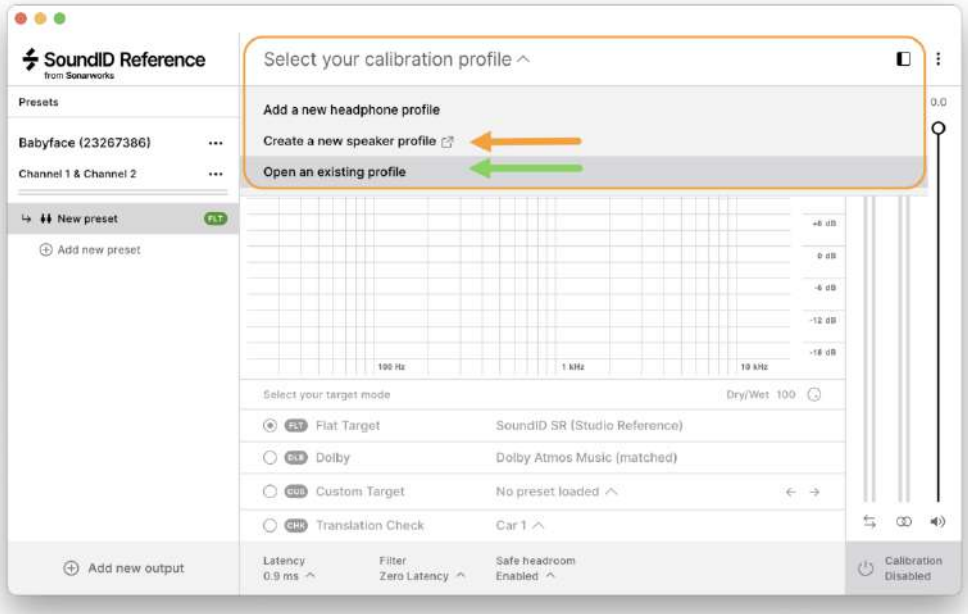
→ If you're using a subwoofer, see how to set it up in 2.0 stereo here: Measuring a subwoofer in a 2.0 stereo setup

→ Using a microphone stand is not necessary, the mic can be hand-held

→ If you are unsure which are the midrange drivers in your speakers, see this article: Measuring a subwoofer in a 2.0 stereo setup

Applying calibration on your system

After the speakers have been measured, calibration can be applied in 2 different ways. Identify what is the best fit for your system and workflow, and follow the guides below:



1. SoundID Reference standalone app

System-wide calibration for your entire computer audio (local files & players, browser, gaming, etc.). Follow this guide to get started: Applying calibration with the standalone app

2. SoundID Reference DAW plugin

Perfect for music production and mixing process, featuring a Zero Latency filer. All major plugin formats are supported: AU, AAX, VST2, VST3. Follow this guide to get started: Applying calibration with DAW plugin

DSP and calibration target settings

Once you have the basics configured (output device/ channels and calibration profile), you can proceed to explore the DSP settings, Target Modes, and other features in the app. All changes you make from here will be saved as a part of your Preset configuration in the Output Panel:

→ Frequency Response Curves - select which curves are being displayed

→ Filter Type - Zero Latency, Mixed, and Linear Phase options

→ Listening Spot - calibrates the stereo image for speakers

→ Limit Controls - apply calibration range and ceiling

→ Custom Target - make target adjustments with a parametric EQ

→ Translation Check - simulate your mix translation on different devices

Applying calibration with the standalone app

In this article:

Installing the SoundID Reference app

The main module of SoundID Reference products is the SoundID Reference app. It is used for logging into your user account, downloading new headphone profiles, and, most importantly, calibrating the sound of all local and online music playback - streamed music, local files playback, gaming, or browser media.

SoundID Reference installer (download here) will install the SoundID Reference app in the default location:

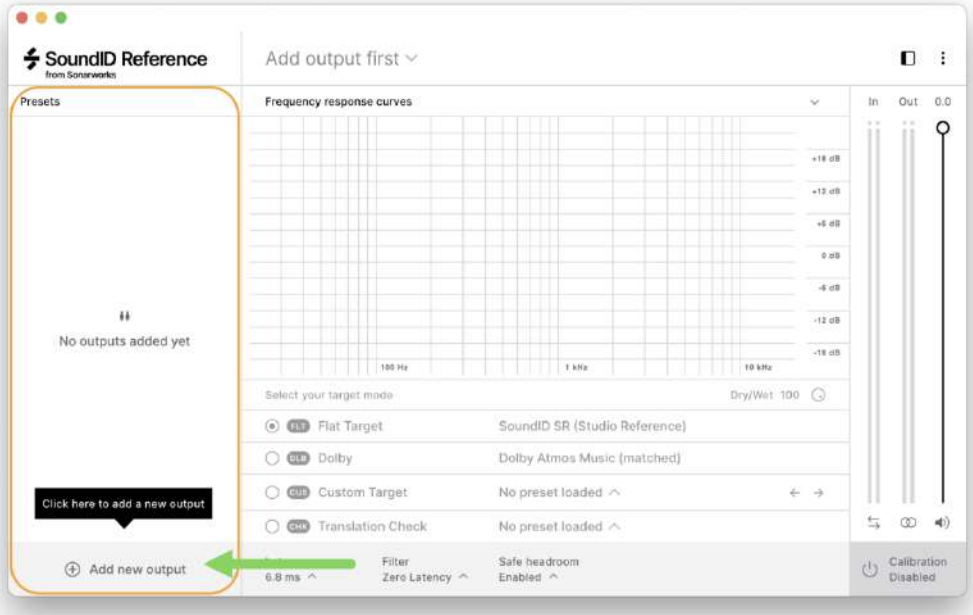
→ macOS: /Macintosh HD/Applications

→ Windows: C:\Program Files\Sonarworks

Setting up your output devices

To calibrate your system, you'll first have to set up an output Preset for your output device, channels, and driver type using the Output Panel. You can set up any output combination you prefer, using your audio interface, DAC device, or the built-in headphone port:

1. Launch the SoundID Reference standalone app
2. Navigate to the Output Panel and click on Add new output
3. Select the audio device to be used for this Preset
4. Select the output channels and verify the signal using Play a test tone
5. Click on Add output to complete the process



Note! [WIN] There are 4 different driver types available for the standalone app on Windows. Each has its own advantage, and you can use a different driver type for each Preset you create. Learn more here: Audio driver types in SoundID Reference app [WIN]

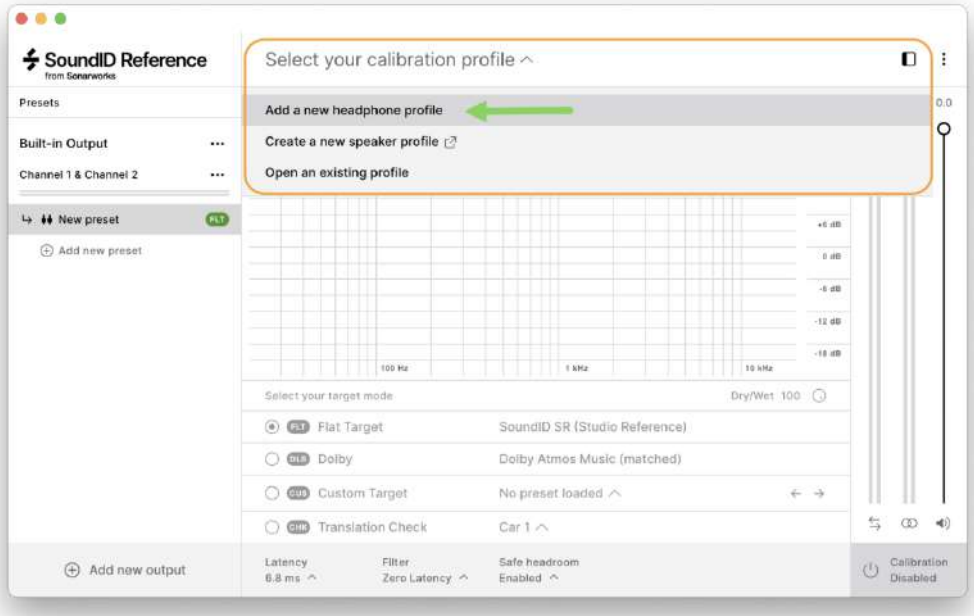
Loading a headphone calibration profile

Headphone calibration profiles are pre-made and ready to use in SoundID Reference, with 400+ models supported. See the full list of supported headphones here or simply start a free trial to view what's available.

1. Create an Output Preset as shown above, or select one you've already created

2. Click on Select your calibration profile > Add a new headphone profile

3. Locate your headphone model, and click on Yes, continue



After the profile has been loaded, it becomes a part of your Output Preset. Any time you switch to this Preset, the headphone profile you previously selected will be loaded automatically.

Creating and loading a speaker calibration profile

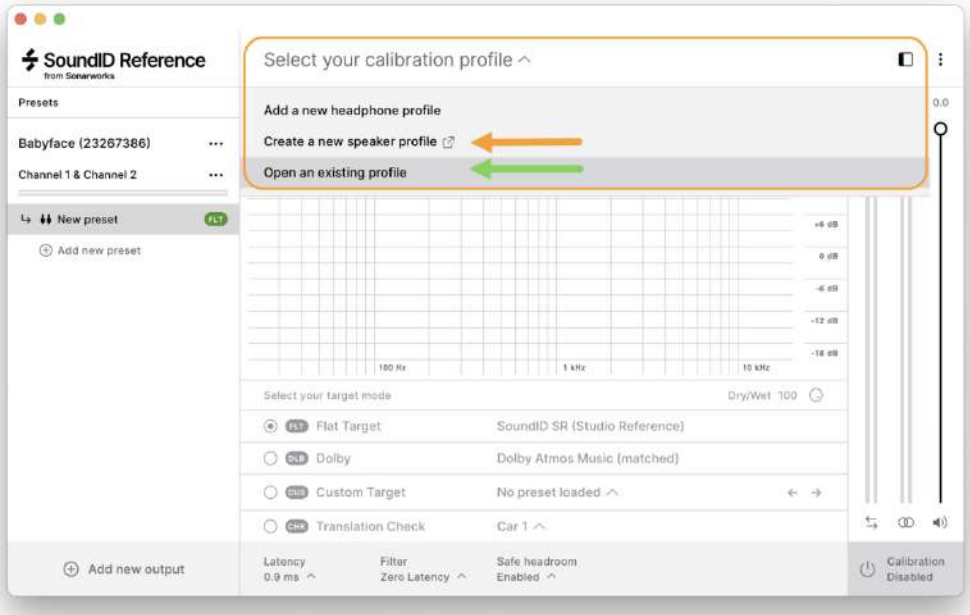
For speaker calibration, you will first need to measure your speakers using the SoundID Reference Measure app and a measurement microphone (available in Sonarworks Store):

1. Create an Output Preset as shown above, or select one you've already created

2. Click on Select your calibration profile > Create a new speaker profile, and the Measure app will guide you through the process

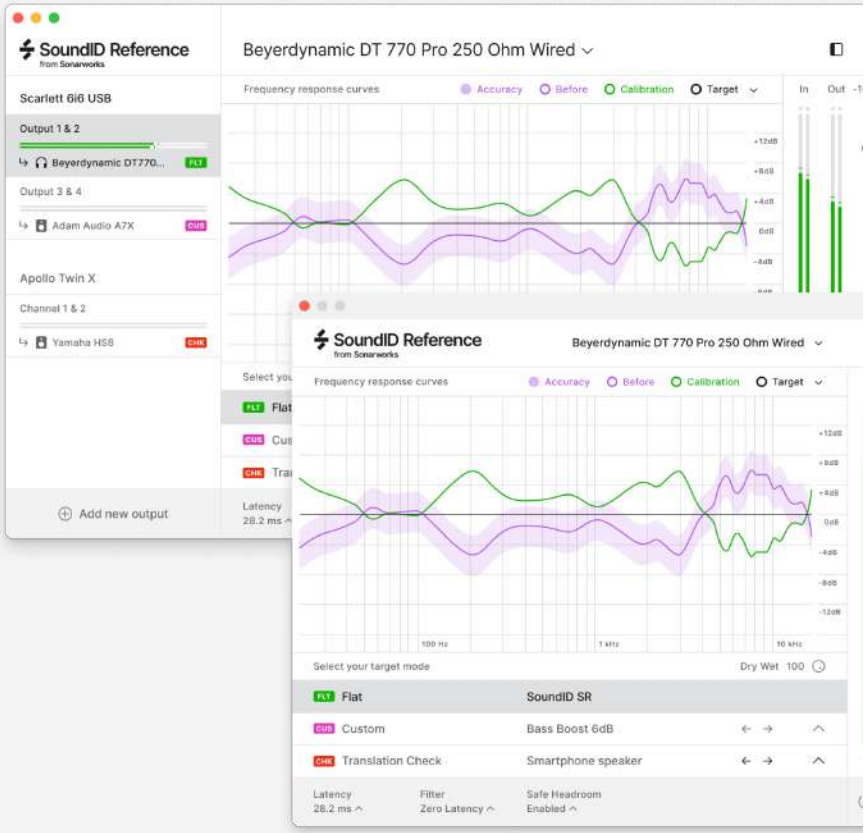
3. Click on Select your calibration profile > Open an existing profile to open the Sonarworks Projects directory, where all calibration profiles are stored by default

4. Select a speaker calibration profile (.swproj file) and click Open



Important! Only headphone profiles are pre-made and readily available in SoundID Reference. There are NO pre-made profiles for speakers. Each speaker system has a unique individual setup layout and room properties, so each speaker setup has to be measured individually. To learn how to measure your speakers, go here: Setting up on speakers.

Applying calibration with the DAW plugin



In this article:

Installing the SoundID Reference plugin

Sonarworks headphone and room calibration can be applied in DAW (e.g. Cubase, Logic Pro X, Pro Tools, etc.) using the SoundID Reference plugin format. The plugin can also be loaded in other apps/platforms that feature plugin hosting capability in one of the formats specified below. For example, some advanced music playback apps, like Audirvana, can host plugins too.

SoundID Reference installer (download here) will install these plugin formats on your computer: AU, AAX, VST2, VST3. Here are the default install directories:

macOS:

→ Macintosh HD/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST/SoundID Reference VST Plugin.vst

→ Macintosh HD/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3/SoundID Reference VST3 Plugin.vst3

→ Macintosh HD/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components/SoundID Reference AU Plugin.component

→ Macintosh HD/Library/Application Support/Avid/Audio/Plug-Ins/SoundID Reference AAX

Plugin.aaxplugin

Windows:

→ C:\Program Files\VSTPlugins\SoundID Reference VST Plugin x64.dll

→ C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3\SoundID Reference VST3 Plugin.vst3

→ C:\Program Files\Common Files\Avid\Audio\Plug-Ins\SoundID Reference.aaxplugin\Contents\x64\SoundID Reference.aaxplugin

Note! [WIN] Custom install locations can be assigned on Windows by clicking on Customize during the installation.

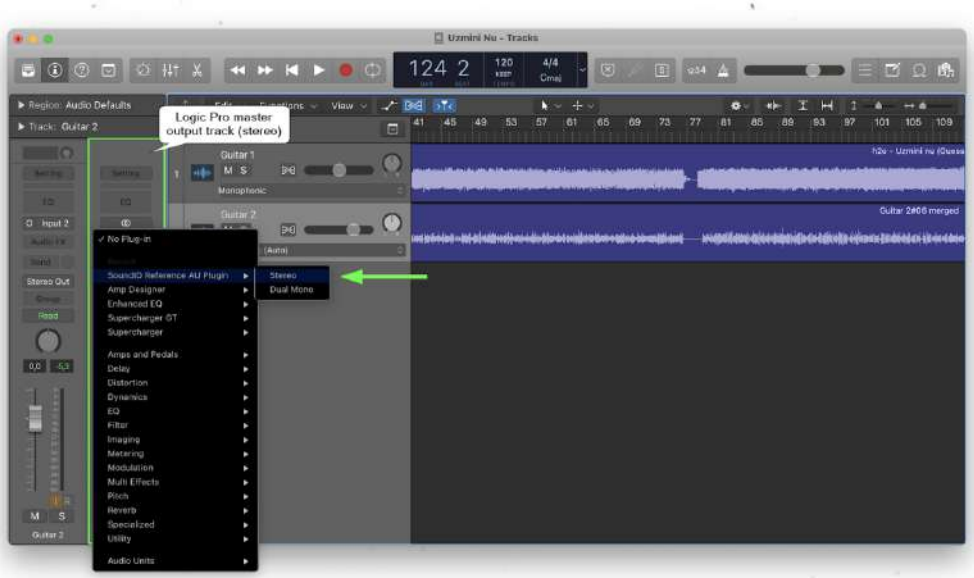
Loading the plugin in your DAW

In most cases, your plugin host app (e.g. DAW) will then recognize the plugin automatically on start-up. However, if it doesn't, please make sure that the plugin is located in the correct folder and your host software is scanning the same folder. More troubleshooting details can be found here.

1. Create a new session or open an existing project in your DAW

2. Find or open your audio mixer view and locate the stereo master bus (the master output channel). If your new session does not have a master bus (e.g. Pro Tools), please create one

3. Insert the SoundID Reference as the LAST plugin on the master bus. The example below shows how to load the plugin in Logic Pro X:

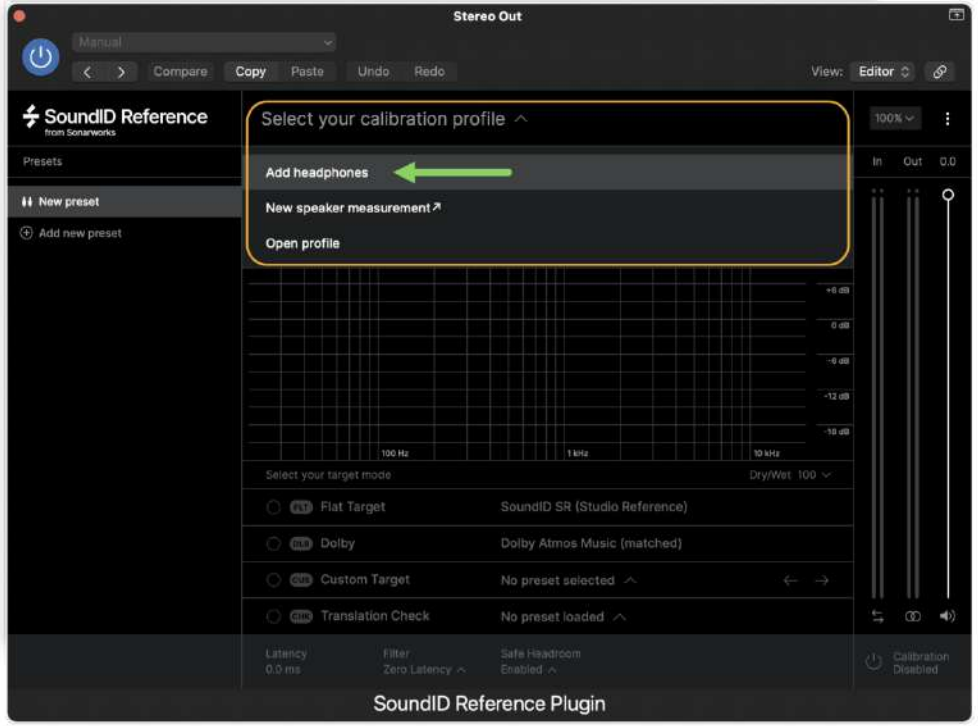


Loading a headphone calibration profile

Headphone calibration profiles are pre-made and ready to use in SoundID Reference (all editions), with 400+ models supported. See the full list of supported headphones here or simply start a free trial to view what's available.

1. Click on Add new preset
2. Proceed to Select your calibration profile > Add headphones
3. Find your headphone model listed in the app and select the profile

After the profile has been loaded, it becomes a part of your Preset. Any time you switch to this Preset, the headphone profile you previously selected will be loaded automatically. Learn more here: Presets in SoundID Reference DAW plugin.



SoundID Reference Plugin

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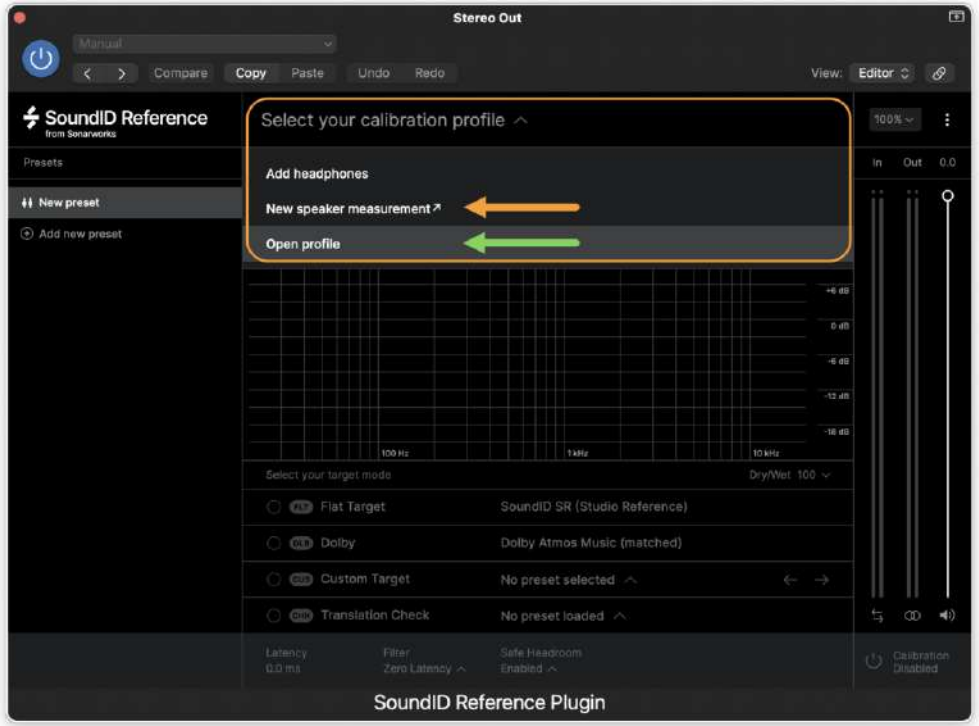

SoundID Reference Plugin

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Important to know when using the plugin

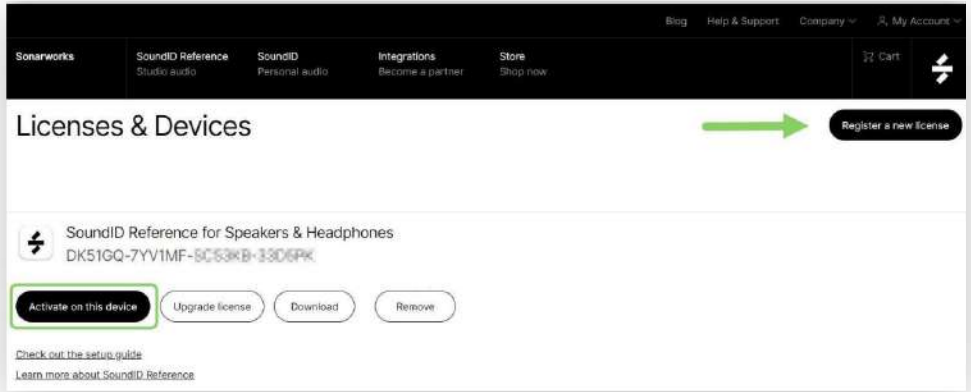
→ Keep the SoundID Reference plugin active on the master bus throughout the entire recording, mixing, and mastering process.

→ Bypass the plugin when rendering your project! SoundID Reference plugin functions as a solution for your individual monitoring setup only. For that reason, it should be hard-bypassed when rendering your project (turn it off completely in the channel strip) to avoid imprinting your unique calibration EQ curve on the track. Learn more here: Render-bypass workflow with the SoundID Reference DAW plugin.

Registering and activating a license

If you have already purchased a license for SoundID Reference, the next step is to register it in your Sonarworks Account. Registering a license will allow you to activate the license and manage your active devices, see further upgrade options, downloads, and more.

1. Log in to your account, or Sign up if you haven't created an account yet
2. Click on Register a new license
3. Enter your license activation key
4. Click on Activate on this device to activate your license



If you require additional assistance, reach out to us by submitting a support request here.