

TrackFlow User Manual

Version 1.0 (Mac & PC)

1. Introduction

Welcome to Panic-Proof Performance.

TrackFlow is a professional backing track engine designed specifically for live musicians. Unlike standard media players, TrackFlow prioritizes stability, safety, and immersive audio routing.

It solves the three biggest problems of gigging with a laptop:

1. **Accidental Misfires:** The "Gatekeeper" system ensures you never start a song until you are truly ready.
2. **The Mono Compromise:** TrackFlow allows you to run true stereo backing tracks to the house while keeping a stereo click track in your ears.
3. **Awkward Silences:** Smart transition tools and auto-countdowns keep the show moving seamlessly.

2. Quick Start Guide

Get up and running in under 5 minutes.

1. **Add a Song:** Click the **Add Song** button (or press A) and select an audio file (WAV, MP3, FLAC, AIFF).
2. **Edit Details:** Double-click the song in the list to open the editor. Set the Title, Artist, and BPM.
3. **Routing Setup (Crucial):**
 - Click the **Settings** (Gear Icon).
 - Select your audio device (ASIO for Windows / CoreAudio for Mac).
 - **Audio L/R:** Route to your Main PA Outputs (e.g., Output 1 & 2).
 - **Click L/R:** Route to your Headphone/IEM Outputs (e.g., Output 3 & 4).
4. **Cue & Go:** Select a song and press Enter to Cue it (it turns Orange). Press Spacebar to arm the Gatekeeper.

3. Interface Modes: Visual Safety

TrackFlow uses a high-contrast border system to tell you exactly what state the engine is in, even on a dark stage.

- **Edit Mode (Green Border)**
 - **Status:** Safe / Idle.
 - **Capabilities:** You are free to load playlists, add/delete songs, and change audio device settings.
 - **When:** When the engine is stopped.
- **Run Mode (Red Border)**
 - **Status:** HOT / LIVE.
 - **Capabilities:** Restricted for safety. The interface locks down to prevent accidental playlist loading or device changes while audio is live.
 - **Exit:** To exit Run Mode immediately, hit the **Panic Button (ESC)**.
- **Red Text Warning (Playlist View)**
 - **What it means:** If a song title appears in **RED** text, it means **no Intro Silence has been set**.
 - **Why it matters:** If your backing track has a "1-2-3-4" count-in recorded on the main track, the audience will hear it!
 - **Fix it:** Double-click the song and use the "Tap to Set" button to mute the FOH intro.

4. The "Gatekeeper" System

The **Gatekeeper** is your safety net. It prevents you from double-clicking a song and having it blast instantly. Every song has a **Trigger Type**:

- **Trigger "M" (Manual)**
 - **Behavior:** The Gatekeeper screen appears and **waits**. It displays "*Waiting for manual start...*"
 - **Action:** Press Enter (or tap your Foot Switch) when you are ready to start.
 - **Use Case:** Start of a set, or after banter/talking breaks.
- **Trigger "0 - 10" (Auto-Countdown)**
 - **Behavior:** The Gatekeeper screen appears and immediately begins a visual countdown (e.g., "5.0", "4.9"...).
 - **Action:** Audio starts automatically when the timer hits 0.0.
 - **Use Case:** Tight, radio-style transitions between songs where you want a specific gap without touching the computer.

5. Performance Workflow & Foot Switches

TrackFlow is designed to be "Hands-Free." You can drive the entire show using a standard Bluetooth or USB Foot Switch (such as AirTurn or PageFlip).

Key / Action	Function	Context
Space	Play / Confirm	Starts the Cued song. Confirms the "Gatekeeper" wait screen.
Enter	Cue Song	"Arms" the selected song to be played next.
ESC	Panic Stop	Immediately cuts audio and exits Run Mode.
N	Next / Skip	The "Singer" Button. Smoothly stops the current song and immediately cues the <i>next</i> song. Great for cutting an outro short.
Ctrl + F	Quick Search	Instantly jumps to the search bar. Type a few letters and hit Enter to cue a request.

Setting up a Foot Switch:

Most pedals send standard keyboard commands. Configure your pedal to send **Space** (for Play) and **N** (for Next), and TrackFlow will work out of the box.

6. Song Management (Edit Dialog)

Double-click any song to access advanced features.

Intro Silence (The "Audience Saver")

If your backing track has a click count-in that the audience shouldn't hear:

1. Click **Preview**.
2. Click "**Tap to Set**" (Red Button) exactly when the music starts.
3. **Result:** TrackFlow will mute the **Main Output** for that duration, but the **Click Output** remains audible to the band.

Fade In

Check the "**Fade In**" box to smoothly fade the audio in after the silence period, preventing abrupt starts.

Adding a Click Track

You can attach a separate audio file for the click track.

- **Main File:** The backing track (Music, Synths, BG Vocals).
- **Click File:** The guide track (Click, Cues, Guide Vocals).
- **Sync:** TrackFlow locks these two files together sample-accurately. They always start and stop together.

7. Administrative Tools

- **Setlist Reports:** Click the **Report Icon** to export a .csv file of your setlist (including song titles, artists, and lengths) for venue royalty reporting.
- **Save / Save As:** TrackFlow saves your playlist as a .trackflow file. Note that this file stores the *paths* to your audio, not the audio itself. Keep your audio files in a consistent folder structure.

8. Why Stereo Matters

Many bands use a "Mono Splitter" cable (Left=Click, Right=Tracks) because their software can't handle complex routing. This forces your entire band into mono, making you sound small and flat.

The TrackFlow Advantage:

By using an interface with 4 outputs (like a Focusrite 4i4 or similar), you can send:

- **Outputs 1-2:** Full Stereo Backing Tracks -> Front of House.
- **Outputs 3-4:** Stereo Click/Cues -> Monitor Mixer.

This gives your audience an immersive, album-quality experience with wide synths and panning effects, instantly separating you from the competition.

TrackFlow Support

For updates and support, visit: trackflow.jkfstudios.com