

# WHERE MUSIC LIVES



**BONUS:**  
**THE TRUTHS  
BEHIND  
WIRES**



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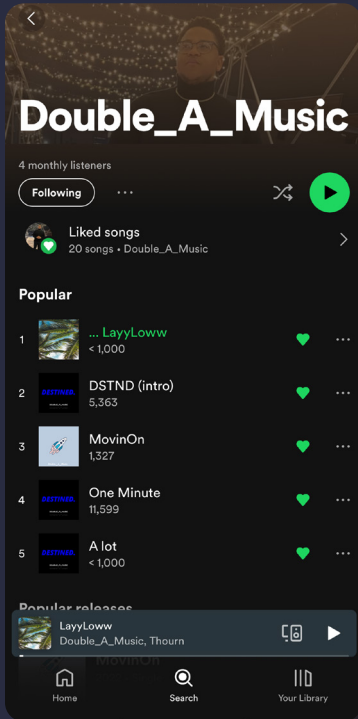
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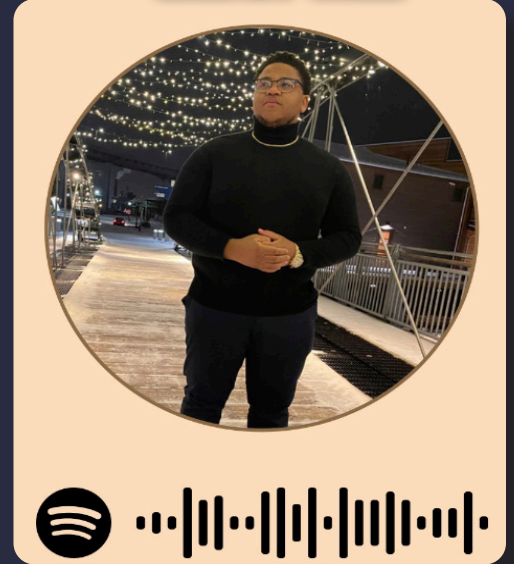
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**SEARCH ME!**



**SCAN ME!**



**Editors Note:** This magazine is for musicians at any stage in their career who are interested in recording or creating digital music for themselves and others. The music industry consists of the individuals and organizations that earn money by writing songs and musical compositions, creating and selling recorded music and sheet music, and presenting concerts. But to make all of this happen you need success and the main part of success in the industry is the quality of production. The uniqueness of this magazine forms from the focus that will be placed on receiving high quality productions without the thousands of dollars that are spent creating a studio. With personal experience on how much research needs to be done and mistakes in buying equipment this magazine will give the complete guide for people starting out to get going smoothly.





PHOTO BY TIMA MIROSHNICHENKO

# ***THE ONLY 'HOW TO' YOU'LL EVER NEED TO BUILD YOUR HOME STUDIO***

## ***WHICH DAW IS MOST SUITABLE FOR YOU?***

There are a couple digital audio workstations (also known as a DAW) that are used to digitize a majority of the music production process. A few of the major ones are Ableton, FL Studio, Logic Pro X and ProTools. Each of them have their strengths that make them suitable for different types of producers. Ableton and FL Studio are best for midi instruments and creating drum patterns on the DAW. On the other hand, ProTools and Logic Pro X are best for recording live instrumentation. So at the end of the day the choice is yours, but I would take those strengths into consideration before picking because they are pretty expensive to obtain, which is also another thing with music production. Our sense of cheap is very different from most other hobbies because music hardware and software is generally just expensive.



***FL STUDIO***



***ABLETON***



***LOGIC PRO X***



***PRO TOOLS***



## WHAT YOU NEED :

### AUDIO INTERFACE

- Focusrite 2i2 Interface => \$160



### SPEAKERS

- Alesis elevate 5 Speakers => \$100



### HEADPHONES

- Ath-m20x headphones => \$40



### MICROPHONE

- Golden age FC1 MK2 Mic => \$120



### MIDI KEYBOARD

- Alesis v25 Midi keyboard => \$110



### XLR CABLE & 1/4 INCH STEREO CABLE

- LiveWire 1/4 Cable & xlr cable => \$40



## CONNECTION IS VERY SIMPLE !

1. To connect the interface all you have to do is plug the USB cord into your computer's USB slots and the same goes for the midi keyboard; they are both provided with their own USB cords as well.



2. Next you plug in the 1/4 inch cables to the back of your interface, the red colored side plugs into the right side, and the black colored side goes into the left side.



3. This process is the same for the back of your speakers.



4. After the speakers are connected, you connect the mic. The XLR cable goes into the interface on the front side where you see three holes so you take the side with the three pins and insert it there.



5. And for the mic, you will plug the other side in until you hear a click.



6. After that you will plug your headphones into the headphone slot in the right upper corner of the interface.



7. Once that is completed everything for your home studio is now set up!

# WHAT DO THE PRODUCERS SAY!

"The focusrite 2i2 is the best interface that I ever encountered in its price range. It provides a simple design, which makes it very easy to use but also its quality in terms of latency are insane for its price."

- Teraun Brown A.K.A. RAUNIIBOY



"These Ath-m20x were my first studio headphones. Although their frequency response isn't the greatest, it is still great for its price and will always be way better than trying to use beats by Dr. Dre to do mixing musically."

- Ashley Linton A.K.A. ANicoleMusic

"The Alesis V25 midi keyboard is so smooth, its keys have a certain texture that feel very realistic, and the overall performance level of the velocity controls are very realistic as well. This is definitely a great starter midi instrument for a home studio."

- Anthourn Walden A.K.A. Thourn



"The Golden age FC1 MK2 microphone was my first condenser microphone. The ease I had when editing vocals with this microphone and all the compliments I got on what microphone I used helped me truly realize how great this budget microphone was."

- Aaron Walden A.K.A. DoubleAMusic



"The first time I heard those Alesis Speakers I thought they were KRK rokits. My ear is pretty good and can detect when a completely mastered song sounds muddy, but with those speakers, it was quite hard to distinguish the difference between them and high-end studio monitors."

- Caryl Reid A.K.A. Beatmanreid

# ESSENTIALS: SOFTWARE

## ***EQUALIZER***

This may be the most important piece of software you have. Using an equalizer gives you complete control over all the frequencies and every single sound that you have, which will also allow you to remove or diminish some of the frequencies that you don't want in your mix.

## ***COMPRESSION***

Compression is an indispensable tool that's found across individual tracks, mix buses, and mastering chains. Compression reduces the overall dynamic range of a piece of audio by detecting when it exceeds a specified level, and then attenuating it by a specified amount. Put simply, it narrows the difference between the loudest and softest parts of a track so that it's more consistent in level.

## ***REVERB***

Reverb allows you to have a realistic sounding recording. It allows you to emulate placing different instruments in different sized rooms, depending on where you would be recording, which then creates an atmosphere for each sound that you choose.

## ***DELAY***

Delay is a time-based audio effect that takes an audio track and plays back delayed duplicates which creates echoes. Using the tool correctly works wonders for vocals and instruments. It works alongside reverb to recreate virtually what instruments and vocals would sound in a natural setting.

## ***SATURATION***

Saturation can be used during mixing to thicken up the sound of a signal; it also provides distortion and subtle overdrive effects while adding ear pleasing harmonics for any sound you need to apply it to.

## ***LUFS METER***

The LUFS meter tool gives you the power to know how loud your mix is. There's a certain threshold where your mix should be throughout the entire song. Traditionally, that value is around -14.3 LUFS and as you reach louder mixes it can reach all the way to -8 LUFS.





# THE INDUSTRIES STANDARD



**ProTools (\$300/year)** - ProTools became the industry standard at a time when consumer computers weren't sufficiently fast or reliable to run the kind of big sessions that you need to be able to run - without crashes - in a professional studio. By pairing software with hardware, ProTools was able to offer a rock-solid performance - and extremely low latency. Since no other DAW is extremely better yet theres no need for switching at this point.



**Universal Audio Apollo 8 (\$3400)** - The main reason The Apollo 8 is one of the industry's standards is simply because the interface sound quality is amazing. The inputs are clean, clear, and full of dynamic range. Combine that with the unison preamps, and getting recordings that sound like the pros is easily achievable. It's certainly many times more expensive than an entry level audio interface, but it's worth every penny. In terms of quality, these are one of the best.



**Spectrasonics products (4 separate pieces of software which sums out to around \$1600 total)** - This company is expensive but so popular in the industry because of its attention to detail with every installation of instruments they chose to dissect. Spectrasonics doesn't take virtual instruments lightly; they account for the changes in volume, tone, pitch, external sounds, feedback, distortion etc. that any instrument would provide based on velocity. I believe their goal is to make sure that you can't humanly hear the difference between the virtual instruments and real instruments. And they have succeeded, hence their popularity.



**ADAM Audio AX series (\$1600 for the pair)** - The ADAM Audio AX Series has been a go-to choice for all sorts of audio applications for over a decade. This particular series carries so much power and is mentioned with some of the best-value studio monitor options available. It's simple, the AX series provides accurate and full-bodied sound from a durable, scientifically thought out and practical design.



**Neumann U 87 (\$3,695)** - The main reason why the Neumann U87 is a well-known industry standard is because of its reliability. Rarely will a U87 ever give out. Beyond its dependability, it also provides a unique warmth that allows its sound to sit well in the mix. Thirdly, The Neumann U87 is also used so much because of its versatility.

# MAKE YOUR CHOICE: SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE ALTERNATIVES

## HIGHER BUDGET ALTERNATIVES

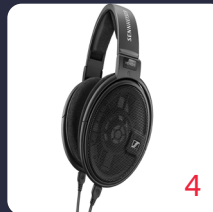
1. SSL 2+ audio interface - \$300



2. Neumann TLM 102 mic - \$730



3. Roland MK2 - \$1230



4. Senheiser HD 660 - \$500

5. KRK rokit G4 5inch (pair) - \$360

## LOWER BUDGET ALTERNATIVES

6. M-audio M-track Solo - \$50



7. Blue snowball - \$50



8. AKAI LPK25 - \$60



9. Mackie cr3-x (pair) - \$80



10. Behringer HC 2000 - \$25



# BONUS :

## THE TRUTHS BEHIND WIRES

Cables are used so much in the music industry. Quarter-inch cables connect your instruments to the amp. XLR cables get your vocals heard, and speaker cables connect your amps to speakers. Without cables there would be no sound! Many professional musicians spend thousands of dollars getting the best instruments they can afford, but don't care much about the cables. After reading this you will know exactly why it's important to spend a little extra for quality cables.

Just like in any other industry, musicians need to do research and pay attention to details when acquiring their gear to make sure that they are working correctly. For musicians, there's a lot to keep track of, from strings to instrument setup, to taking care of your voice, and so on. Buying quality cables falls into this category as well.

Here are some useful features on high-end cables that may seem trivial at first, but make all the difference:

**Durability:** Cables take an abundance of abuse. They are often stuffed into diminutive spaces including bags and cases, sometimes not being packaged opportunistically. They are stepped on frequently on stages and have amplifiers rolled over them. As such, it is essential that the cable have adequate protection. Professional cables tend to have a tougher, thicker jacket to ascertain long life and protection from the rigors of the road and performance mishaps.

**Flexibility:** Wires that are not correctly wrapped are usually all tangled, twisted, or coiled up. Well designed cables are flexible and easy to roll, so that you spend less time straightening out cables that were difficult to roll up properly in the first place.

**Shielding:** Poorly shielded cables provide unnecessary noises. Shielding is how well the cables' internal wires are protected from noise created by other electronics nearby. Quality cables have opportunist shielding to prevent extraneous noises and keep your signal mute so you don't hear random radio stations through your amp!

**Quality of connectors:** Plugging and unplugging you do with your cables give wear and tear to your cables over time. If the connectors are poorly made, there is higher chance of those connectors becoming deformed, cracked, or damaged just due to simple wear and tear. Better cables will have higher quality connectors that are often anodized for increased durability. If the connectors go, the whole cable is most likely a loss.

While it may be true that cables serve the same purpose and offer a negligible difference in sound quality to most ears, the better design and durability of higher end cables, more so than any perceived or expected difference in sound quality, is always worth the extra coin. You wouldn't want your amp to fail at an important label showcase right? The same goes for cables.

CREATED BY: AARON  
MCDILLON WALDEN

