

# HOW TO EXPORT MULTI-TRACK FILES FROM iOS GARAGEBAND



*GarageBand* is Apple's free music-making app for their computers, tablets, and phones. Working from almost anywhere, singer-songwriters can use the built-in mic on their iOS device to first capture a guitar or piano part and then record their vocal on another track. Recording each part to a separate track provides greater flexibility as you further develop the song and have it mixed & mastered before releasing it to your audience.

While many people already know how to save their finished song as a single stereo file to iTunes, fewer may be familiar with the process of properly exporting multi-track files from iOS GarageBand to collaborate with other musicians, producers, and mix engineers. You can't assume that everyone you work with (now and in the future) will always have the same gear or operating system, so it's important to provide audio files of decent quality that can be accommodated by most systems now and in the next few years.

Regardless of how many tracks you record, [there are basic requirements to consider](#) but for a typical singer-songwriter project featuring just your vocal and an accompanying instrument, remember these three things when recording:

- **Record your tracks dry.** Do not apply reverb or delay/echo when recording, as the effects will be printed to the resulting audio signal and cannot be removed later. I know it sounds cool right now but these effects should be added during the mixing stage instead where they can be made to sound even cooler.
- **Avoid clipping.** GarageBand displays a meter to monitor your input level when you use the Audio Recorder.
- **Use a tuner** before every take to make sure your instrument stays in tune.

**When it's time to export your recorded audio files, we need to ensure two more important items are being addressed:**

- Make sure each multi-track file is exported from the start of your song on Bar 1, Beat 1.
- Export each track using the same sample rate and bit-depth.

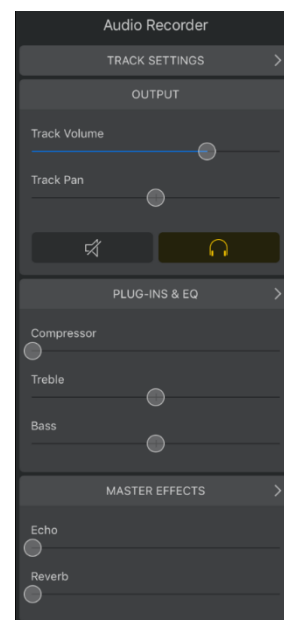
Both items can be addressed by following these steps to export individual multi-track files from GarageBand on iOS 11<sup>1</sup>:

1. Tap your first track to select it.
2. Tap the **Mixer button** (faders icon) to view the mixer controls.



3. **Solo** the track by tapping the **headphones icon**. This should mute all other tracks except this one.
4. **Disable any effects** by sliding the **Echo** and **Reverb** sliders to the left. The EQ (**Treble**, **Bass**) and **Compressor** settings should be left alone, except when necessary, as the results will be printed as part of the exported audio and cannot be removed later.
5. Tap **My Songs** to save your project.

Figure 1: Solo track with effects disabled



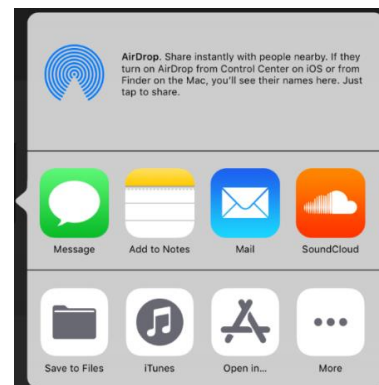
<sup>1</sup> Separate instructions are also available for iOS 10.

6. GarageBand uses the song's title as the file name when exporting. With multiple tracks to export, *temporarily rename the song* to include the name of the part you're exporting (e.g., MySong-Guitar, MySong-Vocals). This will make it easier for everyone to identify the different files later.
7. **Press & hold the project name** to display the command buttons.
8. Tap the **Share** command.
9. Select **Song** to only export a single audio file and not the entire project.



10. For the audio quality, select **Uncompressed (WAV) 44.1 kHz/24-bit** or **Uncompressed (AIFF) 44.1 kHz/24-bit**. Note: 24-bit audio resolution can be enabled under the **Settings** menu. If 24-bit audio is unavailable on your device, 16-bit audio will be used instead. This setting should be made *before* you record your audio. If the audio was already recorded at 16-bit resolution, there's no reason to change it to a higher resolution now.
11. Tap **Share**.
12. Tap **Save to Files**.
13. After GarageBand prepares the file for export, select **iCloud Drive** as the location. While you can save to iTunes, it will be easier to save directly to iCloud where you can more easily share the resulting files with other people online.
14. Tap **Add**. Your audio file is now saved in high-quality WAV or AIFF format, dry with no effects.

Figure 2: Save to Files. iCloud Drive



**Repeat the process for each additional track you need to export**, remembering to only solo one track at a time, removing any effects, and temporarily renaming the song's title each time to reflect that part.

When finished, your iCloud account will include multiple files (one for each exported track) that you can now share with your collaborators. These files can be imported into a standard Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) such as Pro Tools, Logic, Reaper, etc., where they should all start on Bar 1, Beat 1, and share the same sample rate and bit-depth.

For 2 or 3 tracks, this process (while tedious) will work well and ensures fewer headaches further down the road. There are other tutorials and resources available online for exporting files from GarageBand on your Mac; I wanted to address iOS.

***Are you or another music friend an Android user?*** I recommend the Soundcamp app for Samsung phones and created a separate video demonstrating how to achieve similar results. Watch the video here: <http://bit.ly/recio-soundcamp>

What other questions or concerns do you have about getting your song mixed?  
I'd love to hear about your music! Get started here: [www.mixedbyrecio.com/contact](http://www.mixedbyrecio.com/contact)