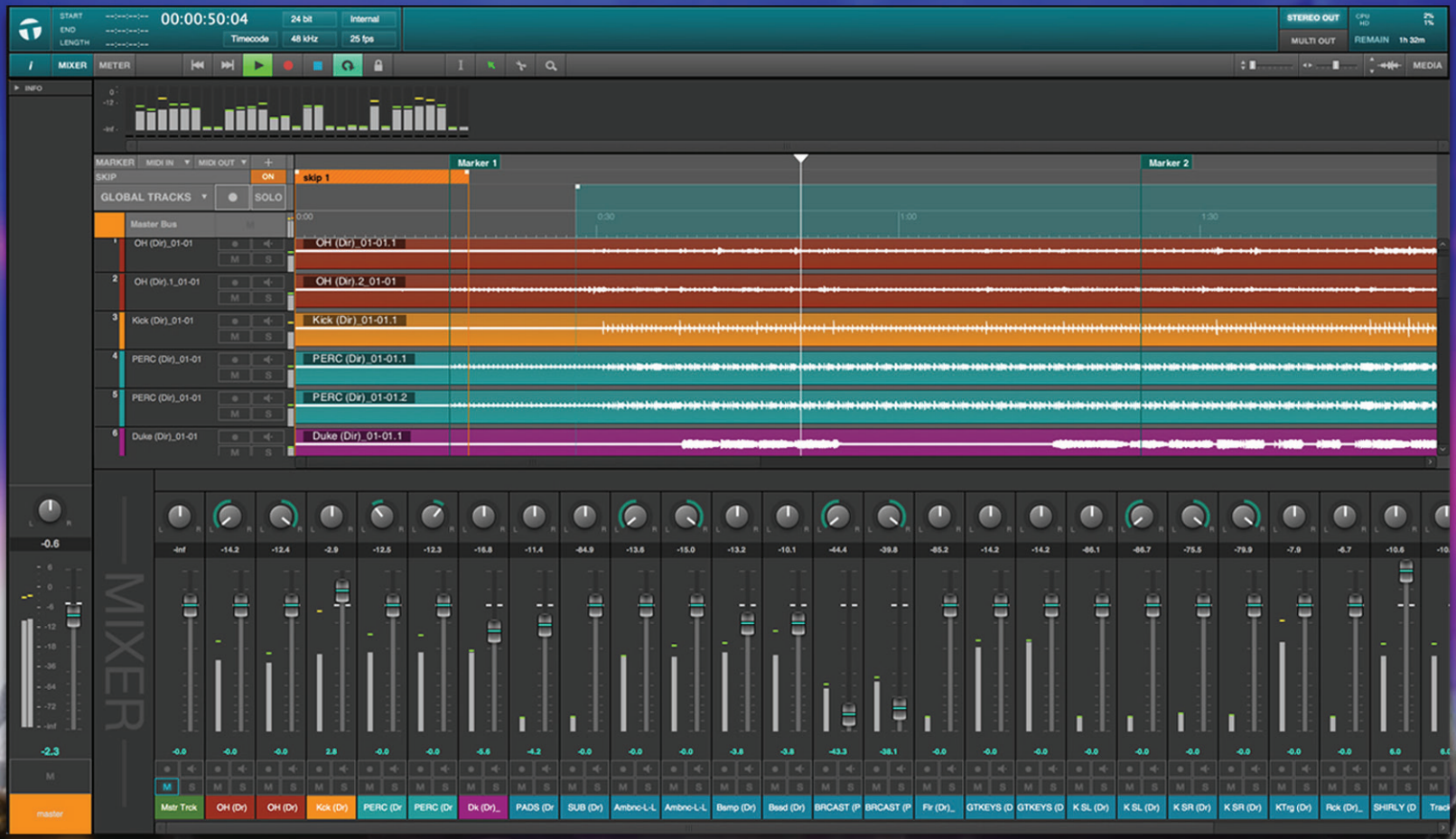
TRACKS LIVE USER GUIDE



WAVES

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GETTING STARTED

Tracks Live is a unique multitrack sound recorder, designed from the ground up to meet the specific needs of live sound engineers. It combines rock-solid operation with an intuitive workflow. It's quick to set up, simple to use, and very flexible.

Tracks Live does all the things you'd expect of a multitrack recorder, so if you're familiar with recorders, you can probably install the software, launch the application, and get to work. You shouldn't run into problems.

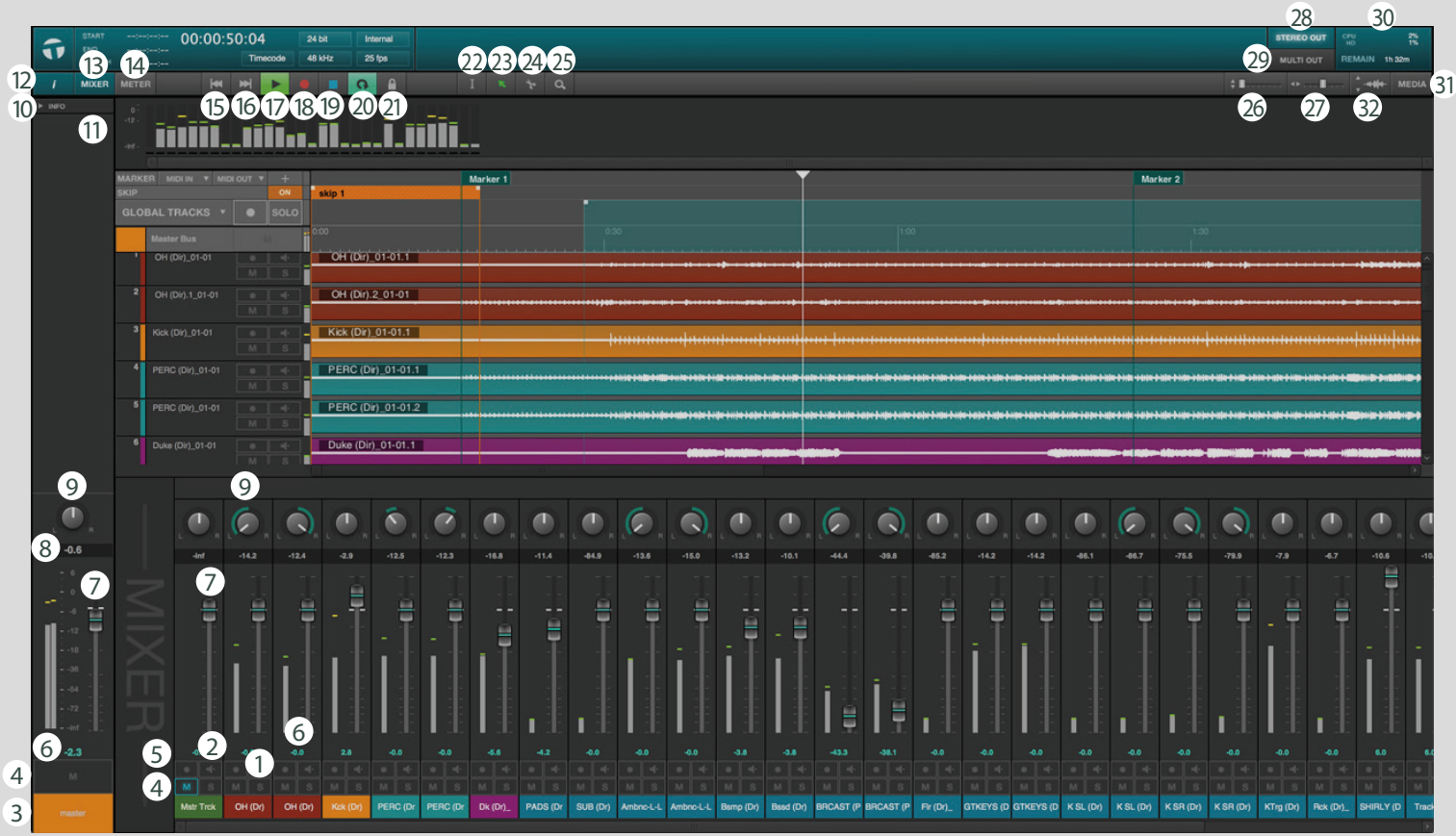
Tracks Live also has a few features that go beyond what you usually see in a recorder. Some of these features aren't obvious when you first open the application, so please consult this user guide in order to learn more about them.

To get the most out of Waves Tracks Live, we suggest that you also become familiar with the Waves support site: http://www.waves.com/support. There you will find an extensive answer base, software updates, and current information about licensing and registration.

Main Window Essentials

All record, playback, edit, and marking functions are carried out in the Main window. It's a very straightforward recording environment, and it's where you will spend most of your time.

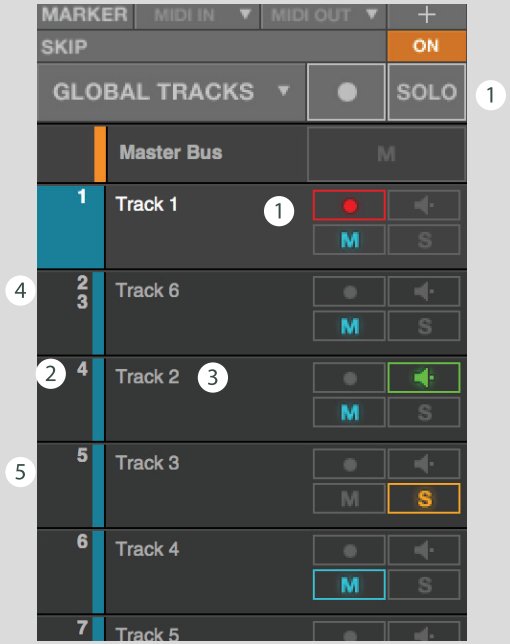
Tracks Live: Main Window



1 Solo Button
2 Input Monitoring Button
3 Track Name
4 Mute Button
5 Record Enable Button
6 Channel Fader Position
7 Channel Fader
8 Peak Meter
9 Channel Panner
10 Info Panel Hide/View
11 Track Color Selector Hide/View
12 Inspector Hide/View
13 Mixer Hide/View
14 Meter Hide/View
15 Transport: Rewind
16 Transport: Fast Forward
17 Transport: Play
18 Transport: Record
19 Transport: Stop
20 Loop Playback
21 System Lock
22 Range Select Tool
23 Object Select Tool
24 Split Tool
25 Zoom Tool
26 Vertical Zoom Control
27 Horizontal Zoom Control
28 Stereo Out Mode Selector
29 Multi Out Mode Selector
30 CPU and HD Usage Indicator
31 Media Button
32 Waveform Zoom Control

A Tracks Live session can consist of up to 256 tracks. You can view the Main window timeline only or see the timeline with a mixer. Alternatively, you can use the Inspector to control a selected track without giving up track space. Enable these views with the buttons on the right side of the window.

1. Solo or record enable tracks individually or with Global Track buttons.
2. Physical input from the I/O device
3. Track name as defined in the Audio System Settings window Double click to rename.
4. Mono track
5. Stereo track



Drag a track to change its position. When you move a track, it gets new I/O assignments that match its new location.

Operation Modes

There are two modes for **monitoring a recording**:

- The **Multi Out** mode sends each track to an output port without creating a stereo mix. Tracks go directly to their I/O ports. When Multi Out mode is selected, the Tracks Live mixer is bypassed and is not visible.

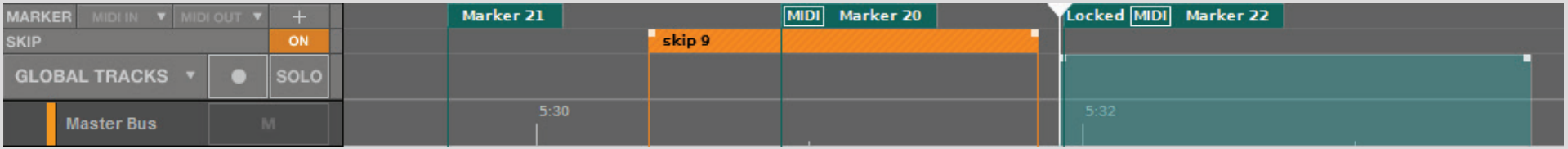
- The **Stereo Out** mode adds a mixer with a stereo out, providing a 2-track monitor or reference mix that can be sent to an external device. When Stereo Out mode is selected, a Master Bus track appears.

Ruler

Above the tracks is the Ruler section. It is divided into four rulers:

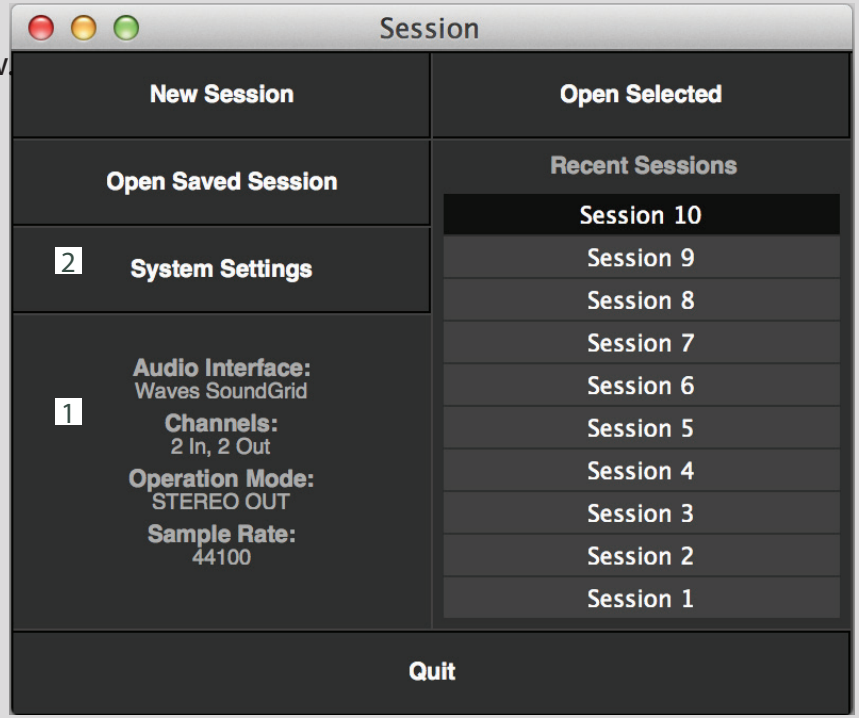
- Marker ruler
- Skip ruler
- Loop range
- Timecode/Time ruler

You can hide the Marker and Skip rulers from the Global Tracks drop-down menu.



Setup

When you launch Tracks Live, you will first see the **Session Setup** window.



Session Setup

Choose between opening a saved session and creating a new one.

To create a new Tracks Live session:

1. Determine if the current System Settings are correct for the new session.
2. If these audio settings are not what you want for the new session, go to **System Settings**.

To open an existing Tracks Live session:

> Open a saved session from a file.
—Or—
Open a recent Tracks Live session.

> Confirm that the current System Settings are correct for the saved session.
If these settings are not the same, then go to the **System Settings** window to set audio parameters.

The **System Settings** button opens the **Tracks Preferences** page. There are four tabs on this page. For now, we are concerned with

Audio System Settings only.

Tracks Preferences

3 Select I/O interface.

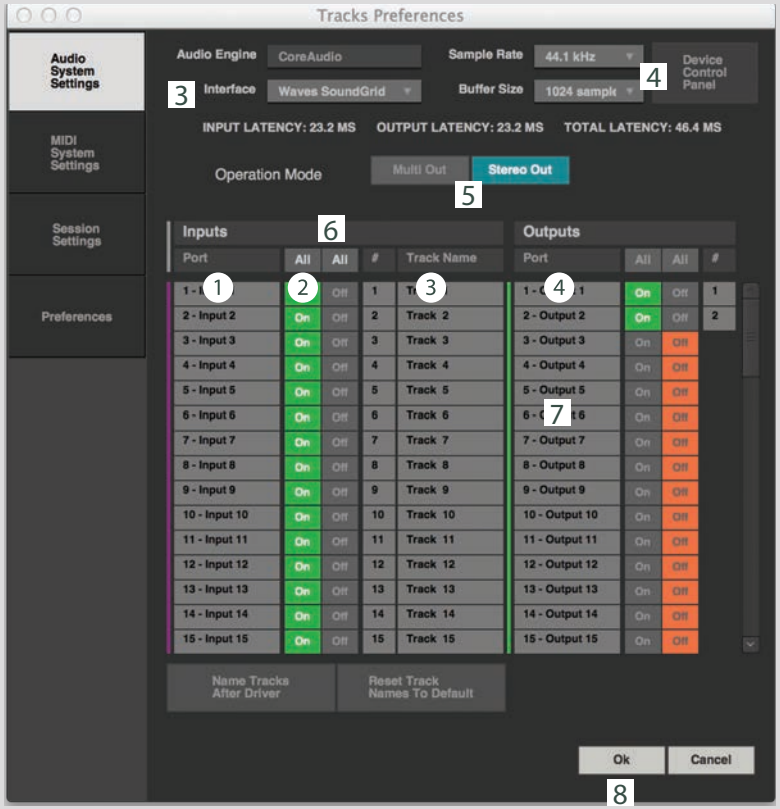
4 Set sample rate and buffer size

5 Select output mode:
Stereo or Multi

6 Configure inputs

7 Configure outputs

8 Click OK to return to the Settings window.



1 Input ports. The number and configuration of input channels is determined by the I/O device.

2 Input ports On/Off selector

3 Recorder input tracks can be named and moved here. Track names will appear in the Main window.

4 Output ports. Number of output channels is determined by I/O device.

Use the Tracks Preferences page to select an interface, set sample rate and bit depth, configure I/Os and tracks, and choose an operation mode. The number of I/O ports determines how many input and output tracks are available. Complete your assignment and click OK. This returns you to the **Session Setup** window.

New Session 9	Open Selected

In the **Session Setup** window:

9 Click **New Session**.
Name the session.

You are now ready to record.

RECORDING

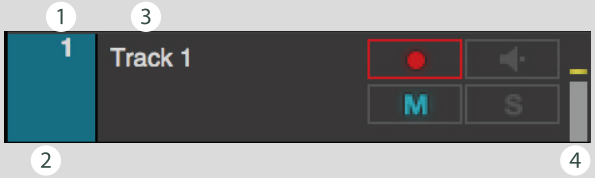
In this section you will find an overview of the recording process. For more information, refer to the Controls and Menus section.

Tracks

Tracks Live can provide up to 256 stereo, 256 mono tracks, or a combination thereof. When you first open a session, the number of tracks is equal to the number of active input ports shown in the Audio System Settings window. Input channels that have been turned off will not appear in the track sequence.

To select a track, click anywhere on its track header.

- Ctrl (CMD) + Click selects multiple tracks
- Shift + Click selects a range of tracks.
- Drag a selected track to re-sequence the track order.
  When you move a track, its input and output ports are reassigned.



1. Track Number
2. Track Color
3. Track Name
4. Track Meter

Track Names

Name a track by double-clicking on the track's name cell.
Tab to move from one name cell to the next.
You cannot rename a track that is Record Enabled.

Adding Tracks

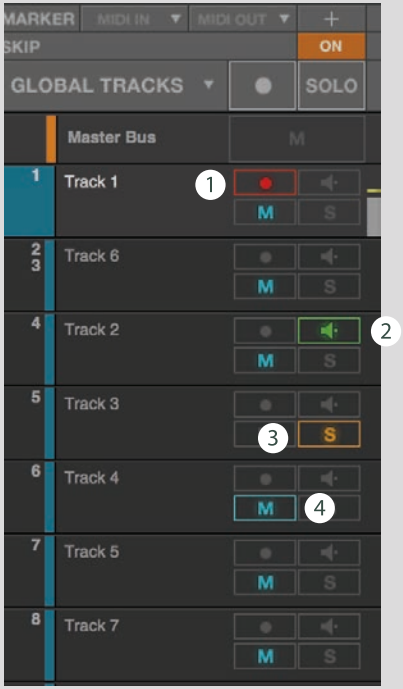
Use the **Tracks** menu to add or remove tracks. A new track is created directly beneath a selected track.

Master Bus

When a session is in the Stereo Out mode, a **Master Bus** appears at the bottom of the tracks section. This bus is the stereo output of the mixer, and is used to send the monitor mix to another destination. The Master Bus is not used in Multi Out mode.

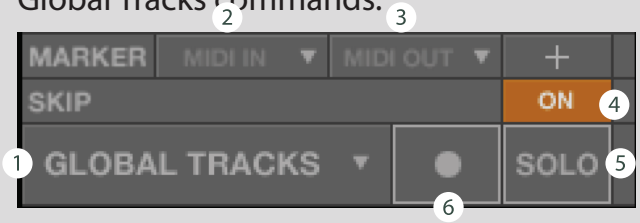
Track Controls

Solo, Mute, Record Enable, and Input Monitoring can be selected on any track.



1. Record Enable
2. Input Monitoring
3. Solo
4. Mute

To set the status of all tracks, use the Global Tracks commands.



1. Global Tracks Drop-Down Menu
2. Marker MIDI Input Port Selector/Activity Indicator
3. Marker MIDI Output Port Selector/Activity Indicator
4. Global Skip Enable/Disable
5. Clear Solo
6. Global Record Enable/Disable Indicator/Button

- Global Solo clears the solos on all tracks.
- In Multi Out mode, the Global Mute button selects/deselects mutes on all tracks. Click twice to clear all mutes when only certain tracks are muted.
- To make a track Solo Safe, Crtl/CMD + click on the track's Solo button, or right-click to access the contextual menu.

Track Meters

Each track has an input meter, to the right of the Solo/Mute section.

Monitoring a Recording

Tracks Live has two modes of operation: Stereo Out and Multi Out.

Use the Stereo Out mode to create a stereo monitor mix while recording. When you select this mode and click on the Mixer button, the Tracks Live mixer window appears. Recording is not affected by the mixer.

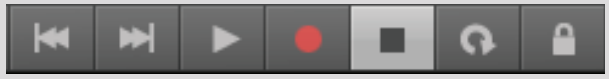
- The mixer has one stereo master bus.
- The mixer's Mute, Solo, Input Monitoring, and Record Enable modes reflect their status in the track.
- The Inspector on the left side of the mixer provides a focused view of the selected track. This is useful when you prefer to see more tracks but still want to control the mix of selected channels.

The mixer is bypassed in Multi Out mode, serving instead as a meter section.

The Multi Out mode is useful when monitoring through an external console or for doing virtual soundcheck. No stereo mix is created. Instead, each track outputs directly to an I/O port.

Starting a Recording

Record Enable readies a track for recording. Use the **Global Enable** button to enable and disable all tracks for recording. The Record



button begins and ends recording on all enabled tracks. You can toggle in and out of recording on a specific track, on the fly, by clicking on its Record Enable button.

If no tracks are record-enabled, pressing the Record button will enable all tracks and initiate the recording. A new recording takes on the name of its track, followed by a take number.

PLAYING BACK

Start and stop playback with the space key, the **Transport** window, or by double-clicking on the ruler.

Rulers

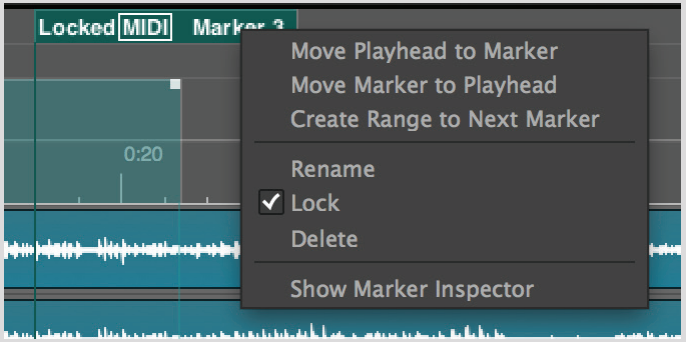
The Ruler section is used to control the playhead, define areas to skip or loop on playback, and set location markers, which can be enabled to trigger or respond to MIDI commands.
Click on the Time ruler section to place the playhead. Double-click on the ruler to immediately play from that location.

1. MIDI Input and Output Port Selectors
2. Add marker button
3. Global Skip On/Off
4. Marker
5. Skip Range
6. MIDI-enabled marker
7. Locked MIDI-enabled marker
8. Playhead
9. Timeline Ruler

Use the drop-down menu on the **Global Tracks** panel to expose and hide the Skip and Marker rulers.

Markers

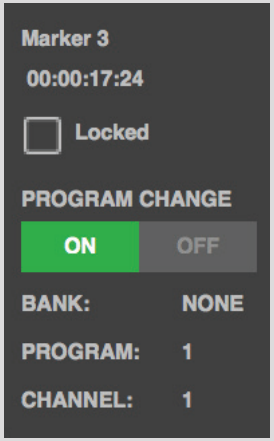
Markers are placeholders or tab points that are used to navigate on the timeline. To add a marker, place the playhead at the desired location and then click the **"+"** button on the left of the Marker ruler, or double-click on the ruler itself. You can set an on-the-fly marker when the playhead is moving.



Slide a marker horizontally to change its location. Right-click to reveal its contextual menu.

Use this menu to manage and position the marker.

Enabling a Marker for MIDI Program Changes



A marker can be used to send and receive program change messages.

- In record mode, a marker is placed on the Markers ruler when Tracks Live receives a program change message from an external device.
- When the transport is in playback or stop mode and Tracks Live receives a program change message, the playhead will relocate to the marker that corresponds to the program change number received on the MIDI port.

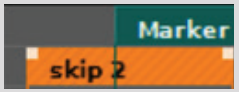
To enable a marker to send/receive program change messages, select **Show Marker Inspector** in the marker's contextual menu. Enable Program Change. The marker will now display MIDI.

Assign ports with the Marker MIDI In and Out drop-down menus in the Global panel. (Only enabled MIDI ports will appear in the drop-down menus.)

Range Controls

Use the Ruler to define timeline ranges you wish to skip or loop.

Skip



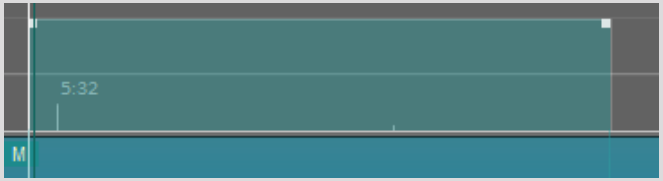
To skip over a range during playback, click-drag in the **Skip** ruler. The resulting yellow band defines what will not be played.

- Change the location of a skip range by dragging.
- Change its duration by dragging on the corner boxes.
- Combine two skip ranges by moving them together.
- Enable/Disable a skip range by left-clicking once.
- Right-click for a contextual menu that provides other Skip options.

To disable all skip ranges, deselect the **Global Skip** button.

Loop Playback

Define a playback loop range by dragging on the Loop ruler.



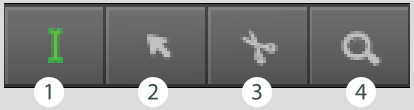
- Change the location of the range by dragging.
- Change its duration by dragging on the corner boxes.
- Right-click to reveal a contextual menu for further adjustments.

Define only one loop range at a time.

Select the Loop button on the transport panel to engage the loop. The playhead will relocate to the beginning of the loop, awaiting a play command.

Main Window Tools

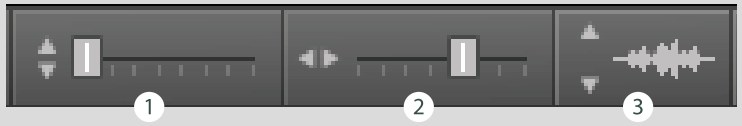
Four tools are located in the top toolbar. Each can be accessed by its toolbar button or by typing its number. Alternatively, right-click on any empty area of the timeline to reveal a menu for quick access to the window tools.



1. **Range Select -** Defines part of a region, a complete region, multiple regions, or any area on the timeline. This tool is most commonly used to select an area to be deleted.
2. **Object Select -** Selects entire regions. CTRL/CMD + click to select multiple regions. CTRL/CMD + Shift to select a range of regions. This tool is also used to copy and move regions.
3. **Split -** Splits a region where the tool is hovered.
4. **Zoom -** Zooms to a selected area. To zoom out, click Ctrl + click with the zoom tool.

Other Zoom Controls

In addition to the Zoom tool, there are three zoom controls at the right-hand side of the toolbar.



1. **Track Height -** Makes all tracks taller or shorter. To resize individual tracks, use the mouse wheel or the track's contextual menu.
2. **Horizontal Zoom -** Zooms in/out horizontally to playhead.
3. **Waveform zoom -** Increases/decreases height of the waveform.

Mouse Wheel Controls

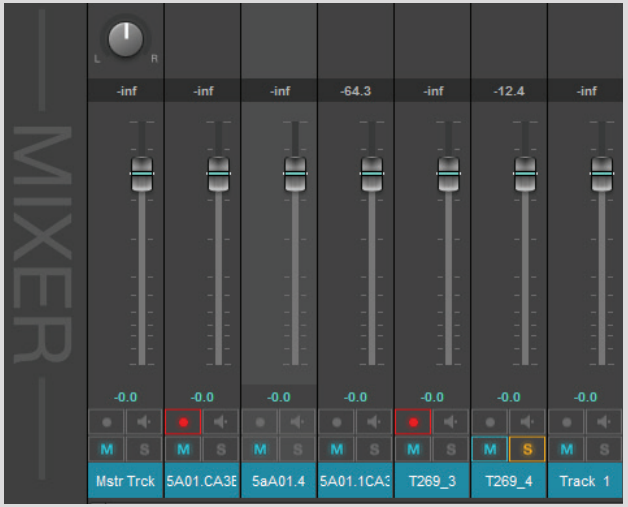
Mouse wheel	Moves the Main window display vertically.
Shift + wheel	Moves timeline horizontally.
CTRL + wheel	Zooms in/out horizontally to playhead (keyboard + and - will also zoom vertically).
ALT + wheel	Changes vertical track size.

Mixer

Tracks Live includes a monitor mixer for creating a reference mix. It is available only in the Stereo Out mode. Use the button on the right-hand corner of the Main page to hide/unhide the mixer.

The mixer is simple and intuitive.

- Channel names reflect track names.
- Controls/displays for mute, solo, record enable, and input monitor mirror those on the tracks.
- Fader and meters range: -∞ to +6 dB. Adjust meter behavior in the Preferences window.

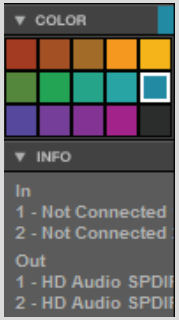


In the Stereo Out mode, the output of the mixer is routed to the Master Bus, which can be sent to an I/O port for monitoring.

Inspector

It is not necessary to view the Mixer pane to control the level and panning of a track. The **Inspector** is a sidebar that displays the channel strip of a selected track. This allows you control a focused track while seeing many tracks in the Main window. It is not necessary to view the Mixer pane to control the level and panning of a track.

Use the button labeled i to open the Inspector.



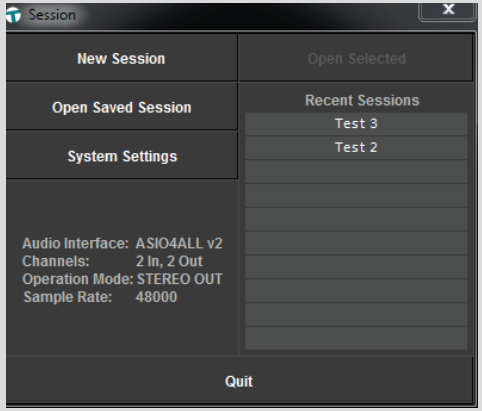
Beneath this panel is a palette that can be used to color-code tracks.

The Info section reveals the input and output routing for the selected track.

CONTROLS AND MENUS

This chapter provides a description of the major windows and controls.

Session Window



The Session window appears when you launch Tracks Live. Here you load your saved sessions and create new ones.

Open Recent Sessions
The ten most recent sessions are displayed in a column on the right. Double-click on a session name and it will load.

Open Saved Session
Opens a browser window from which you load session files. Tracks Live sessions end with the extension "ardour."

New Session
Creates a new session based on the settings shown in the System Status box. This is useful when you want to create a session with the same I/O and audio configuration as the current one.

Current System Settings Display
"The current System status is displayed on the left side of the window. This reports the current setting of the Tracks Live system, not that of the selected session. Tracks Live will issue a request to the I/O device to match its sample rate to the sample rate saved with the session. If the I/O device cannot complete this request, then the session will play at an incorrect speed.

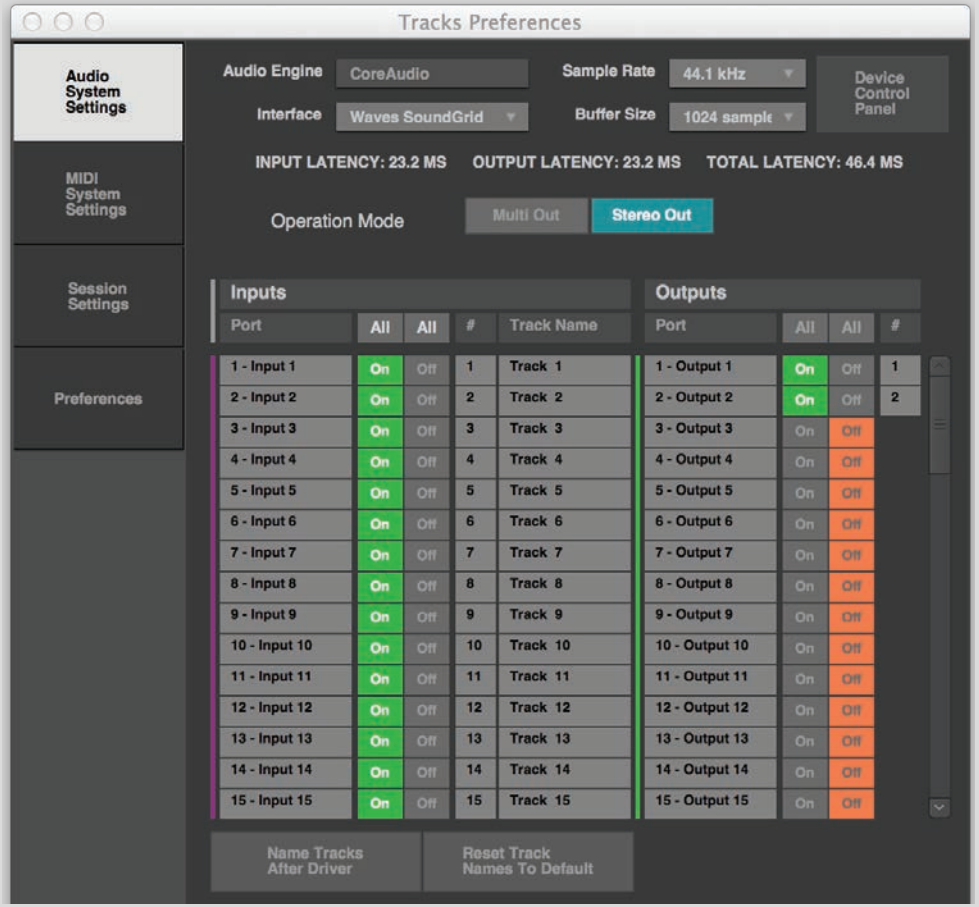
System Settings
Opens the **Audio Systems Settings** tab of the **Tracks Preferences** page, where sample rate, bit depth, and I/O parameters are set. Before creating a new session, confirm that I/O settings, track names, audio parameters and monitoring mode are set correctly. Click OK to confirm settings and return to the Session window, where you can create a new session based on this configuration. The Preferences page is discussed in detail in the next section. You can also access the **Preferences** page by typing [CMD/CTRL + , (comma)].

Preferences Window

The Tracks Preferences window consists of four tabs:

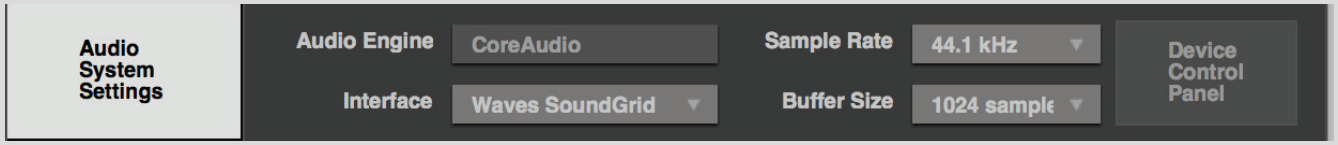
- Audio System Settings
- MIDI System Settings
- Session Settings
- Preferences

Tracks Preferences: Audio System Settings



This section is used to configure hardware I/O devices.

General information concerning the audio engine and interface is shown at the top of the tab.



Audio Engine
This is a fixed value: Core Audio for Macintosh, ASIO for Windows.

Interface
Selects the I/O device. All available devices are listed, as are devices that were available previously but presently are not. Select None to disconnect all I/O devices. Tracks Live automatically detects connected interface devices. When a new interface is detected, it will be added to the list of available interfaces in the drop-down menu.

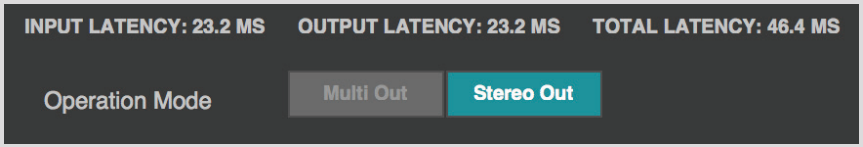
Sample Rate (44.1, 48, 88.2, 96, 172.4, 192 kHz)
Sets the system sample rate. Choosing a sample rate from the drop-down menu sends a request to the I/O device to adjust to the selected rate. If the device cannot meet this request, you will have to adjust the I/O manually using the device's control panel. If the I/O is still unable to adjust to the requested sample rate, Tracks Live will accept the device's sample rate, resulting in incorrect playback speed.

Buffer Size (32, 64, 128, 256, 512, 1024 samples)
Selects the buffer size for the audio engine. Default is 1024 samples.

Device Control Panel
Opens the control panel of the selected (current) I/O device.

Latency
Indicates the system's input, output, and total latency.

Operation Mode
There are two operation modes:

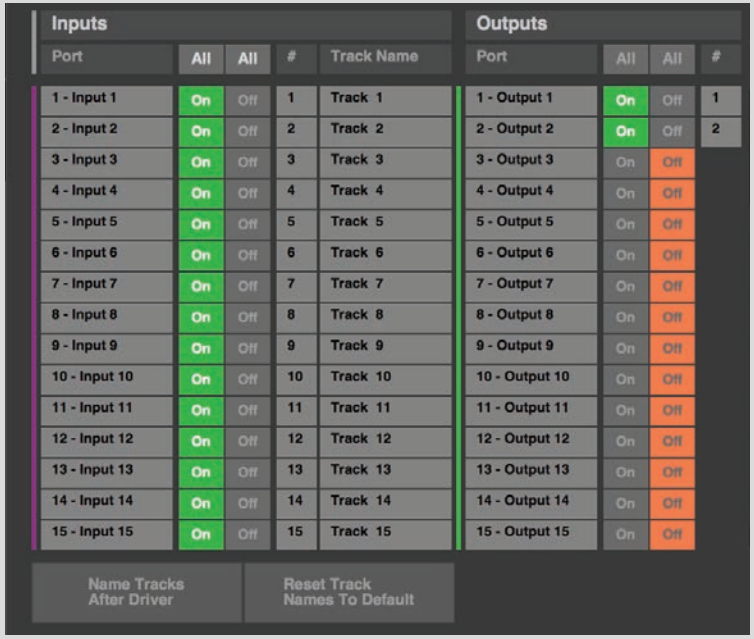


Multi Out Each track is routed to its own port. No internal mixing.
Stereo Out Stereo mix of all tracks is sent via a master bus to an output port.

I/O Configuration

Used to enable and disable input and output ports.

Port names are determined by the I/O. You may apply device port names to newly created tracks, if desired.



Select **Name Tracks after Driver** to assign tracks the names of the corresponding driver channels. To restore original track names, click **Reset Track Names to Default**.

I/O inputs and outputs can be turned on or off, either individually or as a group using the **All** buttons.

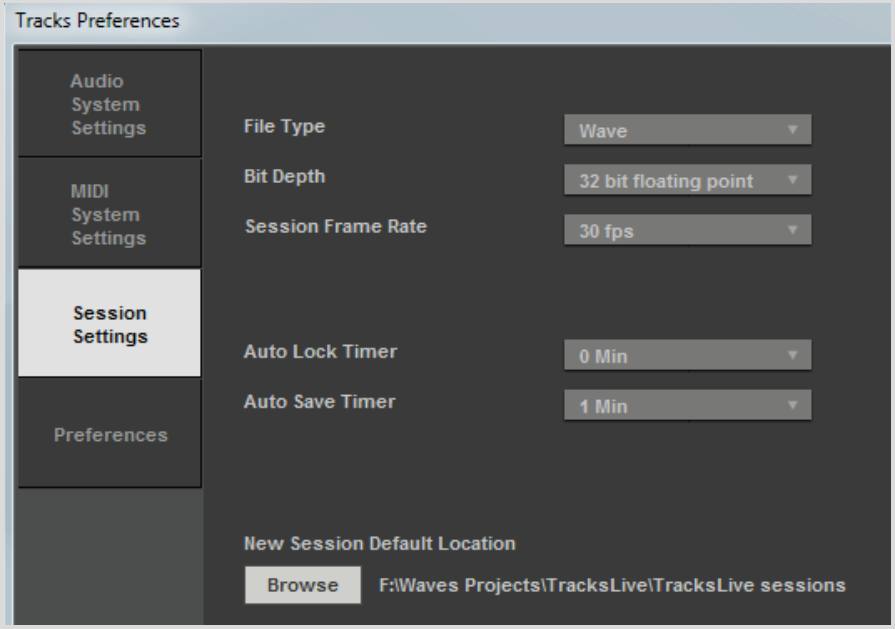
Tracks Preferences: MIDI System Settings

Tracks Live automatically senses connected MIDI devices. When a new device is detected, it is added to the list of available interfaces.

MIDI Ports displays all detected ports

Port On/Off enables a MIDI port. Enabled ports are visible in the MIDI Marker drop-down menu on the Main window.

MTC Input selects MTC input port.

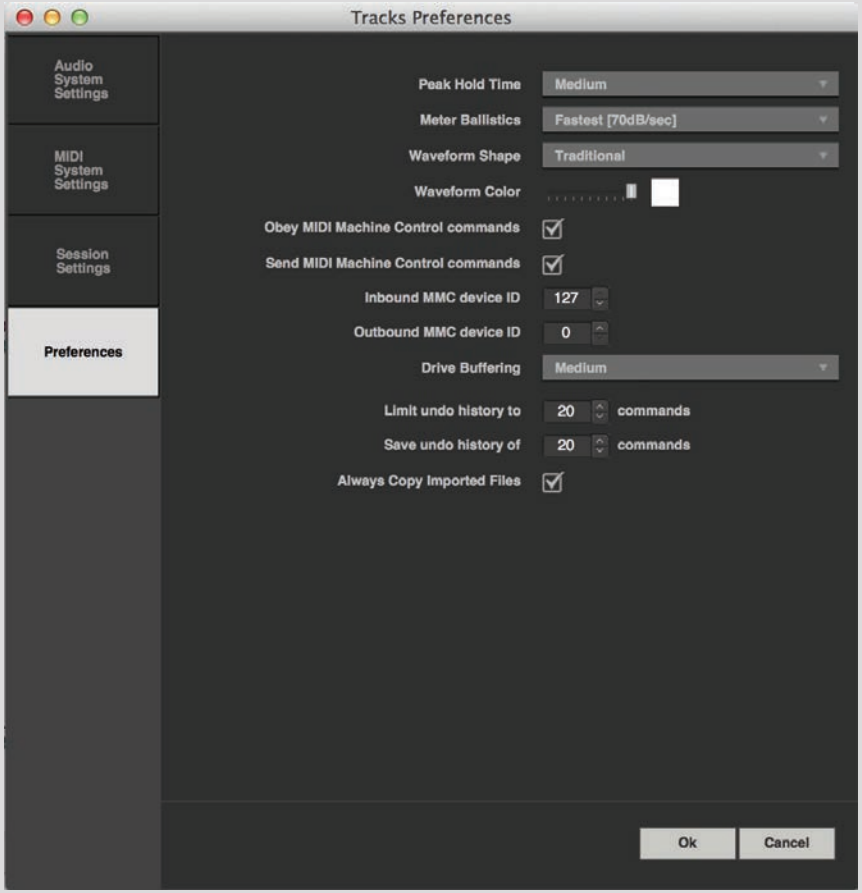


New Session Default Location sets the path for a new session. Recordings share the same path.

Auto Lock Timer sets the amount of time after Record is initiated until Tracks Live will go into a locked state. When the interface is locked, keyboard and mouse input are disabled until the interface is manually unlocked. This prevents accidental interference with ongoing recordings. You can lock the system manually by clicking the Lock button on the Transport panel.

File Type, Bit Depth and Frame Rate are normally determined during setup. However, these settings can be changed while a session is open—all subsequent recordings will bear the new parameters.

Tracks Preferences: Preferences



Most of the Preferences tab is quite obvious, but a few items may need explanation.

Meter Ballistics Sets the speed of the meter bar release.

Drive Buffering Changes the size of the drive buffer to optimize the system for different drive speeds. In general, a smaller buffer yields greater responsiveness. Fast drives can normally use a smaller buffer size.

Slower drives require a larger buffer.

Main Window

Use of the Main window is discussed in the previous chapter. This section describes the window's menus and controls in more depth.

Transport Panel

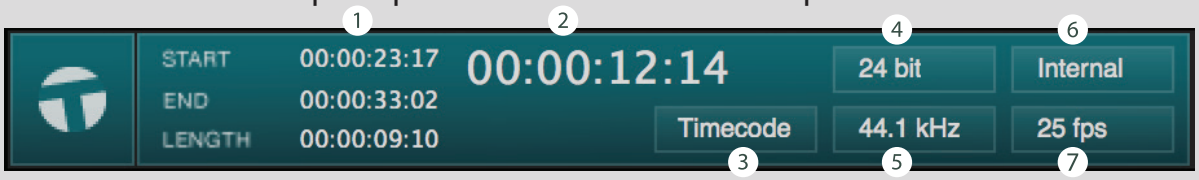
The Tracks Live transport controls work just as you'd expect with any recorder/player.

1. **Previous Marker** moves the playhead to the previous marker. If no markers are present, the playhead moves to the session start time, 00:00:00:00.
2. N**ext Marker** moves the playhead to the next marker. If no markers are present, the playhead moves to the session's end.
3. **Play** starts/stops transport play.
4. **Record** begins recording on all enabled tracks. If no tracks are record-enabled, Record enables all tracks and begins recording.
5. **Stop** stops playback and record.
6. **Loop** enables/disables the loop range as set in the Ruler.
7. **Lock** disables keyboard and mouse input. When Lock is engaged, a **System Locked** window appears, which you can then use to unlock the system. Use **Preferences > Session Settings > Auto Lock Timer** to set the time that elapses between tracks being record enabled and the system entering locked mode.

The Lock function protects you from ruining a recording because of an accidental keystroke or mouse nudge. All commands except Unlock System are ignored. However, Lock is not a security feature that will prevent others from accessing your session. It is not password protected.

Top Bar

The left side of the Top Bar provides information. It also provides control over basic session parameters.



1. Selection Display
2. Playhead Position Display
3. Clock Format Display Selector
4. Session Bit Depth
5. Session Sample Rate Selector/Display
6. Session Timecode Sync Selector/Display
7. Session Frame Rate Selector/Display

The three small displays indicate start, end, and length of selections. The large time indicator indicates playhead location. Select display format with the drop-down menu. There are three more display buttons in this section.

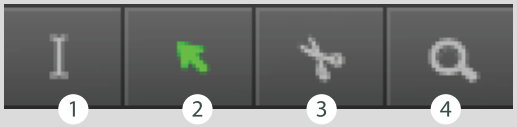
I	Shows/hides the Inspector
Mixer	Reveals the Main Page mixer
Meter	Hides/unhides meters that show an overview of all tracks in the session. In this view, the Main page is hidden.

There are four session setup shortcuts. These are locked when the transport is playing or recording.

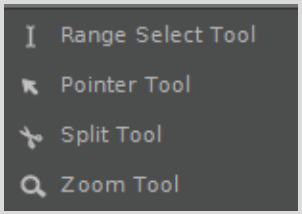
Bit depth/Frame rate	Takes you to the **Session Settings** window
Sample rate	Reveals a drop-down menu of sample rate options
Clock source	Selects system clock source

Tools

Three tools are used to select, move, and cut regions on the timeline. A fourth is used to zoom. Choose a tool using the Top Bar buttons, or with numbers 1–4 on the keyboard.

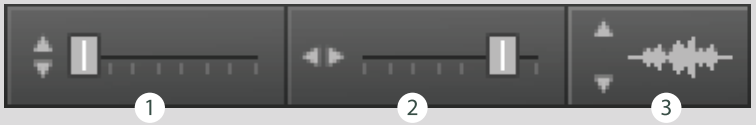


1. **Range Select -** Defines part of a region, a complete region, multiple regions, or any area on the timeline.
2. **Object Select -** Selects entire regions. CTRL/CMD + click to select multiple regions. CTRL/CMD + Shift + click to select a range of regions. This tool is also used to copy and move regions. Grab the end of a region to change its length.
3. **Split -** Splits all selected regions.
4. **Zoom -** Zooms to an area specified by the icon.



You can also choose a tool by right-clicking on any empty part of the timeline.

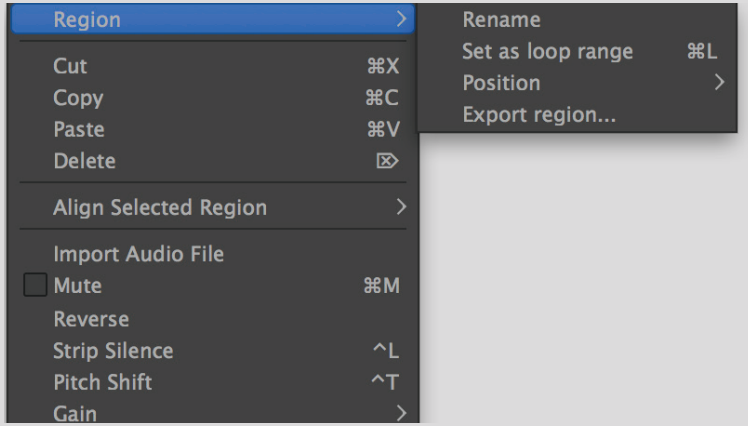
In addition to the Zoom tool, there are three zoom controls on the right side of the toolbar.



1. **Track Height -** Makes all tracks taller or shorter. To resize individual tracks, use the mouse wheel.
2. **Horizontal Zoom Zooms -** in/out horizontally to the playhead
3. **Waveform zoom -** Increases/decreases waveform height

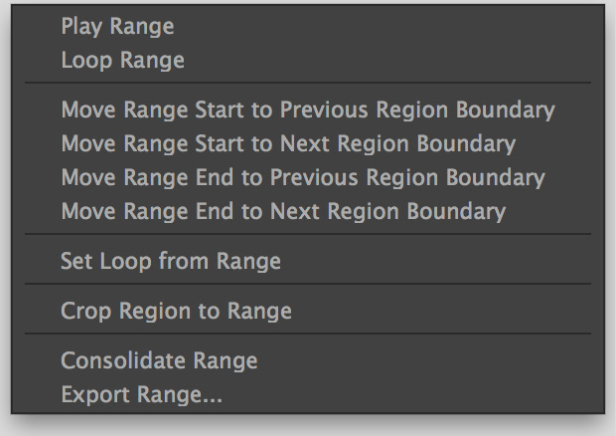
Regions Menus

Region control menus provide additional control over regions and the ranges within them. If a region does not include a selected range, right-click to access this menu.



This menu offers standard cut/paste editing features as well as number of DSP functions. You can also use it to set the entire duration of the region as a range, in order to define a loop or skip range.

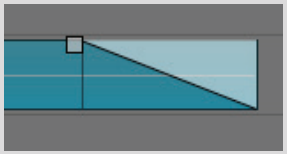
If a region includes a selected range, the Range menu will appear:



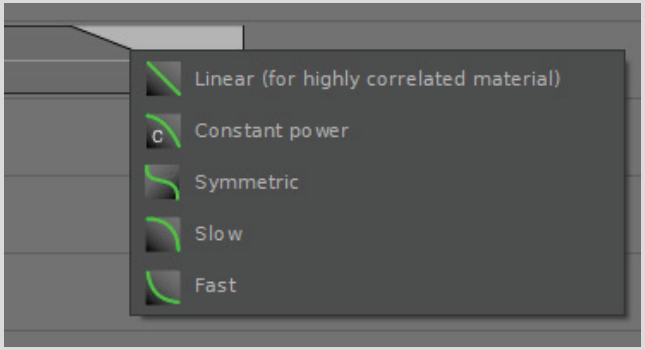
This menu is primarily used to define a range and apply it to functions such as loop, skip, and punch. Numerous file functions can be accessed from this menu.

Fade Menu

Adjust fade length by grabbing the box at the top using the Object Select tool.

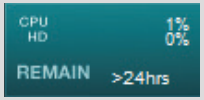


To change the fade type, right-click on the fade to reveal this menu.



System Status Indicators

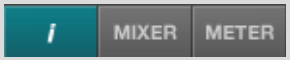
CPU and HD - Percent of CPU being used.

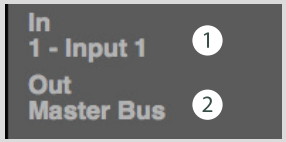


Remain - Remaining recording time,
based on number of currently enabled tracks.

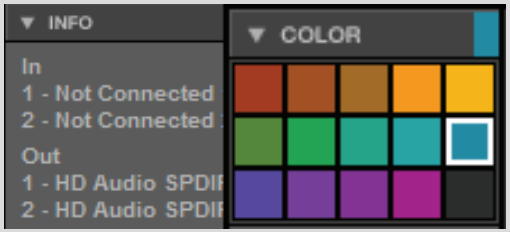
Inspector

The Inspector offers additional information and controls.
Use the button labeled *i* to open the Inspector.



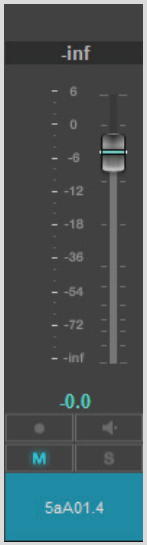


1. Track Input Display
2. Track Output Display



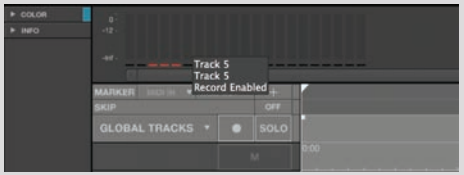
Use the palette to color-code tracks. Select a track, or a group of tracks, and then choose a color.

The Info section reveals the input and output routing for the selected track. Select the Master Bus (Stereo Out mode only) to reveal inputs and outputs for all tracks in the session.



A fader/meter focuses a selected track. This enables you to view and control the level and pan of a track without opening the Mixer view.

Record-Enabled Overview



Above the rulers is a small section that indicates which tracks are record-enabled. Hover over a cell to reveal its track name.
Also in this section is a small meter bridge that indicates playback/record level.

Information Page

This button opens a splash screen that indicates the version of Tracks Live that you are running.

Meter Section

The Meter window provides a clean overview of input level for each track. As in other views, the Inspector is used to control monitor level and pan for a selected track. Meter behavior is controlled on the Preferences tab.