

M-AUDIO Pro Tools + Mbox

M-AUDIO Avid Pro Tools + Mbox High-Performance 4x4 Studio Bundle User Manual

Model: Pro Tools + Mbox

1. INTRODUCTION

This manual provides essential information for the setup, operation, and maintenance of your M-AUDIO Avid Pro Tools + Mbox High-Performance 4x4 Studio Bundle. The Mbox is a high-quality audio interface designed to integrate seamlessly with Pro Tools software, offering professional-grade audio recording and mixing capabilities for both Mac and PC systems. Please read this manual thoroughly before using the product to ensure proper functionality and to maximize your experience.

2. SAFETY INFORMATION

- **Power Source:** Use only the specified power adapter or USB connection for the device. Ensure the power source matches the voltage requirements.
- **Water and Moisture:** Do not expose the Mbox to water, rain, or moisture. Avoid placing liquid-filled objects on or near the unit.
- **Ventilation:** Ensure adequate ventilation around the unit. Do not block ventilation openings.
- **Heat:** Keep the unit away from heat sources such as radiators, heat registers, stoves, or other heat-producing appliances.
- **Servicing:** Do not attempt to service this product yourself. Refer all servicing to qualified service personnel.
- **Cables:** Protect power cords from being walked on or pinched, particularly at plugs, convenience receptacles, and the point where they exit from the apparatus.

3. PACKAGE CONTENTS

Verify that your package contains the following items:

- M-AUDIO Mbox Audio Interface
- Pro Tools Software Installation Disc/License Card
- USB Cable

- User Manual (this document)
- Registration Card

If any items are missing or damaged, please contact your retailer or M-AUDIO support immediately.

4. PRODUCT OVERVIEW

4.1 Front Panel

The front panel of the Mbox provides access to input gain controls, monitoring options, and headphone output.



Figure 1: M-AUDIO Mbox Front Panel. This image displays the front of the Mbox audio interface, featuring two input channels (01 and 02) each with gain knobs, signal/clip indicators, and buttons for Sft-Lmt (soft limiter), Front/Rear input selection, and Pad (-20dB). Channel 02 also includes a guitar input option. Central controls include a Multi-function button, +48V phantom power button, Volume knob, Dim button, Mono button, and a headphone output with its own volume control. A power indicator LED is also visible.

- **Input 01/02 Gain Knobs:** Adjust the input level for connected microphones or instruments.
- **Sig/Clip Indicators:** Lights green when a signal is present, red when the signal is clipping.
- **Sft-Lmt (Soft-Clip Limiter):** Engages a soft-clip limiter to prevent digital clipping on hot signals.
- **Front/Rear Input Select:** Switches between the front panel instrument input and the rear panel mic/line input for each channel.
- **+48V Phantom Power:** Activates phantom power for condenser microphones connected to the XLR inputs.
- **Multi-function Button:** Assignable button for various Pro Tools functions.
- **Volume Knob:** Controls the overall output level to your studio monitors.
- **Dim Button:** Reduces the monitor output level by a fixed amount.
- **Mono Button:** Sums the stereo monitor output to mono.
- **Headphone Output:** 1/4-inch stereo jack for connecting headphones, with an independent volume control.

4.2 Rear Panel

The rear panel houses the primary input and output connections for your Mbox.



Figure 2: M-AUDIO Mbox Rear Panel. This image shows the rear connections of the Mbox audio interface. From left to right, it features a USB 2.0 port, MIDI In and Out ports, S/PDIF digital audio In and Out ports (RCA), two Monitor Outputs (1 and 2, 1/4-inch TRS), and two Mic/Line Inputs (01 and 02, XLR/TRS combo jacks).

- **USB 2.0 Port:** Connects the Mbox to your computer for data transfer and power.
- **MIDI In/Out:** Standard 5-pin DIN connectors for connecting MIDI devices.
- **S/PDIF In/Out:** RCA coaxial connectors for digital audio input and output.
- **Monitor Outputs 1/2:** 1/4-inch TRS balanced outputs for connecting to studio monitors.
- **Mic/Line Inputs 01/02:** XLR/TRS combo jacks for connecting microphones (XLR) or line-level instruments (1/4-inch TRS).

5. SETUP

5.1 Hardware Connections

1. **Connect to Computer:** Use the provided USB cable to connect the Mbox USB 2.0 port to an available USB port on your computer. The Mbox is bus-powered via USB.
2. **Connect Monitors:** Connect your studio monitors to the **Monitor Outputs 1/2** on the rear panel using 1/4-inch TRS cables.
3. **Connect Microphones/Instruments:**
 - For microphones, connect via XLR cables to the **Mic/Line Inputs 01/02**.
 - For line-level instruments (e.g., keyboards), connect via 1/4-inch TRS cables to the **Mic/Line Inputs 01/02**.
 - For guitars or basses, use the 1/4-inch instrument input on the front panel and ensure the **Front** button is engaged for the respective channel.
4. **Connect MIDI Devices (Optional):** If using MIDI controllers or instruments, connect them to the **MIDI In** and **MIDI Out** ports.
5. **Connect S/PDIF Devices (Optional):** For digital audio connections, use RCA coaxial cables to connect to the **S/PDIF In/Out** ports.

5.2 Software Installation

1. **Install Drivers:** Before connecting the Mbox, it is recommended to install the latest drivers. Visit the M-AUDIO support website to download the most current drivers for your operating system (Mac or PC). Follow the on-screen instructions for installation.
2. **Install Pro Tools:** Insert the Pro Tools installation disc or download the software from your Avid account. Follow the installation wizard. You will need to activate your Pro Tools license using the

provided license card or your Avid account.

3. **Restart Computer:** After installing drivers and software, restart your computer to ensure all changes take effect.

6. OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

6.1 Powering On/Off

The Mbox is USB bus-powered. It will power on automatically when connected to an active USB port on your computer. To power off, simply disconnect the USB cable or shut down your computer.

6.2 Input Gain Adjustment

1. Connect your microphone or instrument to the appropriate input.
2. Open your Digital Audio Workstation (DAW), such as Pro Tools, and create a new audio track.
3. Arm the track for recording and begin playing your instrument or speaking into the microphone.
4. Adjust the corresponding **Input Gain Knob** on the Mbox front panel. Aim for a strong signal level without consistently lighting the red **Clip** indicator. Occasional flashes are acceptable, but continuous red indicates clipping.
5. Engage the **Sft-Lmt** button if you are recording hot signals to prevent harsh digital clipping.
6. If using a condenser microphone, press the **+48V** button to supply phantom power. Ensure this is off for dynamic microphones or line-level inputs.

6.3 Monitoring

- **Studio Monitors:** Adjust the main **Volume Knob** on the Mbox to control the playback level through your connected studio monitors.
- **Headphones:** Connect headphones to the front panel 1/4-inch jack and use the dedicated headphone volume knob to set the listening level.
- **Dim Button:** Press the **Dim** button to temporarily reduce the monitor output volume, useful for quick conversations without changing your main volume setting.
- **Mono Button:** Press the **Mono** button to sum the stereo output to mono. This is useful for checking phase compatibility and mix translation.

6.4 Using with Pro Tools

Once Pro Tools is installed and the Mbox drivers are recognized, Pro Tools should automatically detect the Mbox as its primary audio interface. Verify this in Pro Tools' Playback Engine settings (Setup > Playback Engine). The Mbox is designed for deep integration with Pro Tools, allowing for low-latency monitoring and direct control over various functions.

6.5 Using with Other DAWs

The Mbox can also be used with other Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) that support ASIO (Windows) or Core Audio (Mac) drivers, such as Logic, Live, Cubase, and more. In your chosen DAW's audio settings or preferences, select the Mbox as your input and output device.

7. MAINTENANCE

- **Cleaning:** Use a soft, dry cloth to clean the exterior of the Mbox. Do not use abrasive cleaners, solvents, or waxes.

- **Storage:** When not in use for extended periods, store the Mbox in a clean, dry environment, away from extreme temperatures and direct sunlight.
- **Cable Management:** Ensure all cables are neatly organized and not under tension to prevent damage to connectors or the unit.

8. TROUBLESHOOTING

- **No Sound Output:**
 - Check all cable connections (USB, monitors, headphones).
 - Ensure the Mbox is selected as the audio output device in your computer's sound settings and your DAW.
 - Verify the Mbox **Volume Knob** and headphone volume are turned up.
 - Check if the **Dim** button is engaged.
- **No Input Signal:**
 - Ensure your microphone or instrument is properly connected to the correct input.
 - Adjust the corresponding **Input Gain Knob**.
 - Verify the correct input is selected in your DAW and the track is armed for recording.
 - If using a condenser mic, ensure **+48V** phantom power is engaged.
 - Check the **Front/Rear** input selector button for the correct input source.
- **Cracking or Clicking Sounds:**
 - Increase the buffer size (latency) in your DAW's audio settings.
 - Ensure you have the latest Mbox drivers installed.
 - Close other applications running on your computer that may be consuming CPU resources.
 - Try a different USB port or cable.
- **Pro Tools Not Recognizing Mbox:**
 - Ensure Mbox drivers are correctly installed and your computer has been restarted.
 - Check Pro Tools Playback Engine settings (Setup > Playback Engine) to ensure Mbox is selected.
 - Try disconnecting and reconnecting the USB cable.

9. SPECIFICATIONS

Feature	Specification
Item Weight	3.31 pounds
Product Dimensions	8.87 x 7.56 x 2.32 inches
Item Model Number	Pro Tools + Mbox
Compatible Devices	Personal Computer
Audio Resolution	Up to 24-bit/96kHz
Connectivity	USB 2.0
Inputs	2 Mic/Line (XLR/TRS Combo), S/PDIF, MIDI In

Outputs	2 Monitor (TRS), Headphone, S/PDIF, MIDI Out
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10. WARRANTY AND SUPPORT

M-AUDIO products are covered by a limited warranty. For detailed warranty information, please refer to the warranty card included with your product or visit the official M-AUDIO website. For technical support, driver downloads, and additional resources, please visit the M-AUDIO support page or contact their customer service directly.

Online Support: www.m-audio.com/support