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## Focusrite 18i20 3rd Gen

# Focusrite Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen Audio Interface User Manual

Model: 18i20 3rd Gen

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Focusrite Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen is a versatile rack-mount audio interface designed for music production and recording. It offers 18 inputs and 20 outputs, including ADAT and SPDIF connectivity, providing clear, high-quality sound for various studio setups. This manual provides essential information for setting up, operating, maintaining, and troubleshooting your Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen.

## 2. SETUP

### 2.1 Unpacking and Inspection

Carefully unpack your Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen and ensure all components are present: the unit, power cable, USB cable, and rackmount ears. Inspect the unit for any physical damage.

### 2.2 System Requirements

The Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen is compatible with macOS and Windows operating systems. Ensure your computer meets the minimum system requirements for stable operation.

### 2.3 Software Installation

- Download Drivers:** Visit the Focusrite website to download the latest drivers and Focusrite Control software for your operating system.
- Install Software:** Follow the on-screen instructions to install the drivers and Focusrite Control. This software is crucial for managing the interface's routing, monitoring, and settings.

### 2.4 Hardware Connections

Before connecting the unit, ensure your computer and the Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen are powered off.

- Power Connection:** Connect the provided power cable to the unit and a suitable power outlet.
- USB Connection:** Connect the Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen to your computer using the supplied USB cable (USB 2.0).

- **Audio Inputs:** Connect microphones, instruments, or line-level devices to the appropriate input jacks on the front and rear panels. The unit features 8 mic preamps and additional line inputs.
- **Audio Outputs:** Connect your studio monitors or headphones to the main monitor outputs or headphone outputs. Additional line outputs are available for routing to other equipment.
- **Digital Connections:** Utilize ADAT and S/PDIF ports for expanding your input/output count with compatible digital devices.



## ALL THE INPUTS AND OUTPUTS YOU'LL EVER NEED

Record multiple instruments at once directly through the eight available line inputs, allowing you to multi-track and capture the live performance. Enough inputs to make any space into a fully fledged recording studio. With super low latency and class-leading drivers, you will have no problems capturing audio in the moment that is well-polished and true to the original source.

Figure 2.4.1: Rear panel connections of the Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen, illustrating the array of analog and digital input/output ports for comprehensive studio integration.

### 3. OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

#### 3.1 Powering On and Basic Operation

After all connections are made, power on the Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen. Launch your Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) and select the Scarlett 18i20 as your audio interface.



Figure 3.1.1: The Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen in a typical studio environment, connected to a laptop for recording and playback.

### 3.2 Input Gain and Monitoring

- **Adjusting Gain:** Use the gain knobs on the front panel to set appropriate input levels for your microphones and instruments. The gain halos around the knobs indicate signal presence and clipping.
- **Direct Monitoring:** Utilize Focusrite Control to set up direct monitoring, allowing you to hear your input signal with zero latency before it reaches your DAW.

### 3.3 Using "Air" Mode

The Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen features a switchable "Air" mode on its mic preamps. This mode emulates the sound of Focusrite's original ISA mic preamps, adding a brighter, more open quality to your recordings, particularly suitable for acoustic instruments and vocals.

### 3.4 Recording Instruments

The interface includes high-headroom instrument inputs, ideal for direct connection of guitars and basses. These inputs are designed to capture the full dynamic range of your instrument without unwanted clipping.



## GET THE PERFECT GUITAR TAKE

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There's no need to sacrifice your tone with two high-headroom instrument inputs to plug in your guitar or bass. Capture your sound with clarity and have your audio stand out in all its glory without any unwanted clipping or distortion thanks to our Gain Halos.

Figure 3.4.1: An electric guitar connected to the Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen, demonstrating direct instrument recording capabilities.

### 3.5 Playback and Mixing

The Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen supports playback at up to 24-bit/192kHz, ensuring crystal-clear audio reproduction. Use Focusrite Control to manage output routing to your monitors and headphones for mixing and mastering.

## 4. MAINTENANCE

### 4.1 Cleaning

To clean the unit, use a soft, dry, lint-free cloth. Avoid using abrasive cleaners, solvents, or waxes, as these can damage the finish and internal components. Ensure the unit is powered off and disconnected from all cables before cleaning.

### 4.2 Firmware Updates

Periodically check the Focusrite website for firmware updates. Keeping your device's firmware up-to-date ensures optimal performance, compatibility, and access to new features. Follow the instructions provided by Focusrite for any update procedures.

## 4.3 Environmental Considerations

Operate the Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen in a clean, dry environment, away from direct sunlight, excessive heat, and moisture. Ensure adequate ventilation around the unit, especially if rack-mounted, to prevent overheating.

## 5. TROUBLESHOOTING

If you encounter issues with your Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen, consider the following common troubleshooting steps:

- **No Power:** Ensure the power cable is securely connected to both the unit and a working power outlet. Check the power switch.
- **No Sound (Input):**
  - Verify that the input source is connected correctly and functioning.
  - Check the gain knob for the input channel; ensure it is not set to minimum.
  - Confirm that the correct input is selected in your DAW and Focusrite Control.
  - Ensure phantom power (+48V) is enabled for condenser microphones.
- **No Sound (Output):**
  - Check monitor and headphone connections.
  - Verify volume levels on the unit, in Focusrite Control, and in your DAW.
  - Ensure the correct output is selected as your playback device in your computer's sound settings and your DAW.
- **Connection Issues:**
  - Try a different USB port on your computer.
  - Ensure the USB cable is not damaged and is securely connected.
  - Reinstall the Focusrite drivers.
- **Software Not Recognizing Device:**
  - Ensure the latest drivers are installed.
  - Restart your computer and the Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen.
  - Check your computer's device manager (Windows) or Audio MIDI Setup (macOS) to see if the device is recognized.

For more detailed troubleshooting or specific technical support, please refer to the official Focusrite support website or contact their customer service.

## 6. SPECIFICATIONS

Feature	Specification
Product Model Number	AMS-SCARLETT-18I20-3G
Interface Type	USB 2.0
Supported Sample Rates	44.1kHz, 48kHz, 88.2kHz, 96kHz, 176.4kHz, 192kHz
Microphone Inputs (Frequency Response)	20Hz - 20kHz ±0.1dB

Feature	Specification
Dynamic Range (A-weighted)	111dB
THD+N	<0.0012%
Noise EIN	-128dBu (A-weighted)
Maximum Input Level (at minimum gain)	9dBu
Operating Systems	macOS, Windows
Channels	18 Inputs, 20 Outputs (including ADAT, SPDIF)
Voltage	240 Volts

## 7. WARRANTY AND SUPPORT

### 7.1 Warranty Information

Focusrite products typically come with a manufacturer's warranty. For detailed information regarding the warranty period, terms, and conditions applicable to your Scarlett 18i20 3rd Gen, please refer to the warranty card included with your product or visit the official Focusrite website.

### 7.2 Technical Support

Should you require technical assistance, have questions about your product, or need to report a fault, please visit the official Focusrite support page. You can find FAQs, driver downloads, and contact information for their support team there. Always provide your product's serial number when contacting support for faster assistance.

Official Focusrite Support: [focusrite.com/support](https://focusrite.com/support)