Tascam SERIES 208i

Tascam SERIES 208i USB Audio Interface Instruction Manual

Model: SERIES 208i | Brand: Tascam

1. INTRODUCTION

The Tascam SERIES 208i is a 20-input, 8-output USB audio/MIDI interface designed for studio, home, and live recording environments. It offers high-resolution 192 kHz/24-bit audio quality for Mac, Windows, and iOS devices. This manual provides detailed instructions for setting up, operating, and maintaining your SERIES 208i interface.

Key Features:

- Four transparent, natural-sounding, ultra-low noise TASCAM Ultra-HDDA mic preamplifiers.
- Two optical S/MUX expansion ports supporting up to 16 channels of audio input (20 total inputs).
- Eight 1/4-inch analog line outputs for versatile monitoring, including up to 7.1 surround audio.
- Built-in DSP effects: reverb, compressor, and four-band EQ.
- MIDI input and output for connecting external MIDI devices.

Figure 1.1: Front view of the Tascam SERIES 208i USB Audio Interface.

2. SETUP

Follow these steps to set up your Tascam SERIES 208i audio interface.

2.1 Unpacking and Inspection

Carefully remove all components from the packaging. Verify that all items listed in the packing list are

present and undamaged. If any items are missing or damaged, contact your dealer immediately.

2.2 Connecting the Hardware

1. **Power Connection:** Connect the included AC adapter to the DC 12V input on the rear panel of the SERIES 208i. Plug the adapter into a power outlet.

2. **USB Connection:** Connect the SERIES 208i to your computer (Mac or Windows) using a standard USB cable. The interface is USB 2.0 compatible.

3. **Microphone/Line/Instrument Inputs:** Use XLR cables for microphones, 1/4-inch TRS cables for line-level devices, or 1/4-inch TS cables for instruments (guitars, basses) to connect to the combo jacks on the front panel.

4. **Line Outputs:** Connect your studio monitors or other audio playback devices to the 1/4-inch balanced line outputs on the rear panel. The SERIES 208i features 8 individual line outputs for versatile routing.

5. **Headphones:** Connect your headphones to one of the two 1/4-inch headphone jacks on the front panel.

6. **MIDI Devices:** Connect external MIDI keyboards, controllers, or sound modules to the MIDI IN and MIDI OUT ports on the rear panel using standard 5-pin MIDI cables.

7. **Optical (S/MUX) Inputs:** For expanding your input count, connect compatible ADAT or S/MUX devices to the OPTICAL IN (S/MUX) ports. Each port supports up to 8 channels.

8. **Word Clock:** For synchronization with other digital audio equipment, connect a word clock cable to the WORD IN/OUT ports.

Figure 2.1: Front panel connections for microphones, instruments, and headphones.

Figure 2.2: Rear panel connections for line outputs, MIDI, optical, and power.

2.3 Software Installation

Before connecting the SERIES 208i to your computer, it is recommended to download and install the latest drivers and control software from the official Tascam website. This ensures optimal performance and access to all features.

3. OPERATING THE INTERFACE

This section details the basic operation of your Tascam SERIES 208i.

3.1 Powering On/Off

After connecting all cables, turn on the SERIES 208i using the power switch located on the rear panel. The unit will power up and establish a connection with your computer.

3.2 Input Gain and Level Setting

Each input channel on the front panel has a dedicated GAIN knob. Adjust this knob to set the input level

for your microphone, instrument, or line-level device. The SIG (signal) and PEAK indicators will help you monitor the input level. Aim for the SIG light to illuminate consistently and the PEAK light to flash only occasionally during the loudest parts of your performance to avoid clipping.

Individual +48V phantom power switches are provided for each microphone input, allowing you to use condenser microphones. Ensure phantom power is only enabled for microphones that require it.

3.3 Monitoring

The SERIES 208i features a large MONITOR VOL knob to control the overall output level to your studio monitors. The MONITOR BALANCE knob allows you to blend between the direct input signal (for zero-latency monitoring) and the playback signal from your computer. Two independent headphone outputs with their own volume controls are also available.

Figure 3.1: Connecting a microphone to the interface for recording.

3.4 Tascam Control Software and DSP Effects

The Tascam Control software provides comprehensive control over the SERIES 208i's internal mixer and DSP effects. This software allows you to manage faders, processing, and audio routing directly from your computer, eliminating computer latency for monitoring.

The built-in DSP processor includes digital reverb, compressor, phase invert, and a four-band EQ per channel. These effects can be applied to inputs for monitoring or recording, reducing the load on your computer's CPU.

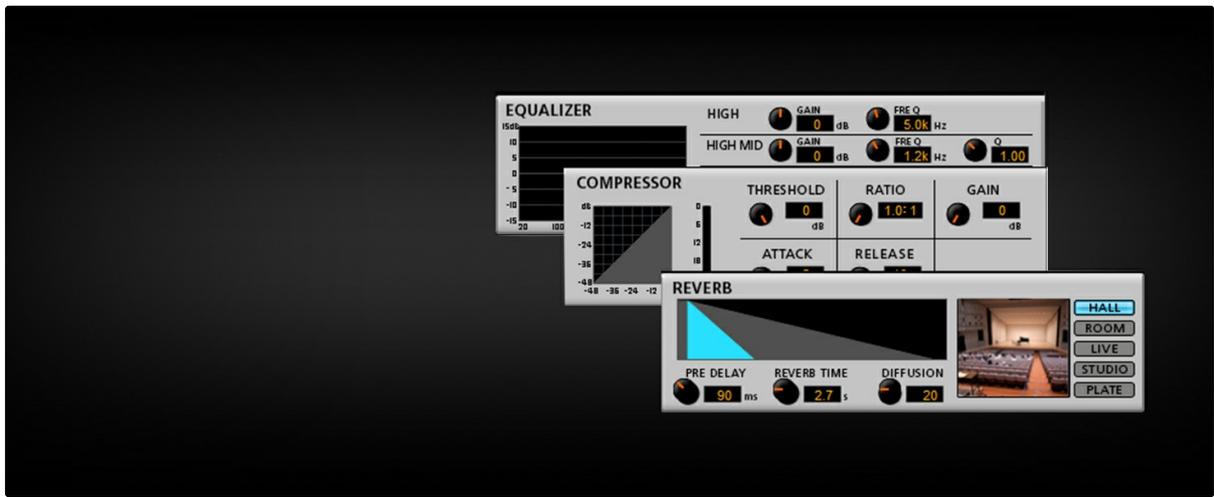*Figure 3.2: Tascam control software for mixing and effects.*

Figure 3.3: Interface showing built-in DSP effects like EQ, compressor, and reverb.

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Video 3.1: An official product video demonstrating the Tascam SERIES i audio interfaces, highlighting their features and use in a studio environment. This video showcases the premium audio quality, control software, DSP effects, and expandability of the interfaces.

4. EXPANSION CAPABILITIES

The SERIES 208i offers robust expansion options to grow with your recording needs.

4.1 Optical S/MUX Inputs

The two optical S/MUX input ports allow you to expand your system by adding up to 16 additional channels of audio input. Each optical port can accept up to 8 channels of audio from compatible devices, such as the Tascam SERIES 8p Dyna microphone preamp.

Figure 4.1: Demonstrating expandable input capability for future growth by connecting to another unit.

4.2 Word Clock Synchronization

For professional studio setups requiring precise synchronization, the SERIES 208i includes Word Clock IN/OUT connectors. This allows you to sync the interface with other digital audio equipment, ensuring stable and accurate audio transfer.

5. BUNDLED SOFTWARE

The Tascam SERIES 208i comes with a suite of powerful software to help you start recording, mixing, and mastering immediately.

- **Steinberg Cubase LE & Cubasis LE:** Record and produce music with Steinberg Cubase LE for desktop and Cubasis LE for iPad, providing a comprehensive DAW experience.

- **IK Multimedia Amplitube TASCAM Edition:** Achieve great guitar and bass tones with a wide range of virtual amplifiers, cabinets, and effects.

- **IK Multimedia T-RackS TASCAM Edition:** Master your tracks with professional-grade mixing and mastering tools.

- **iZotope Neutron 3 Elements:** Utilize iZotope's world-class mixing and analysis tools to achieve a clear, well-balanced mix.
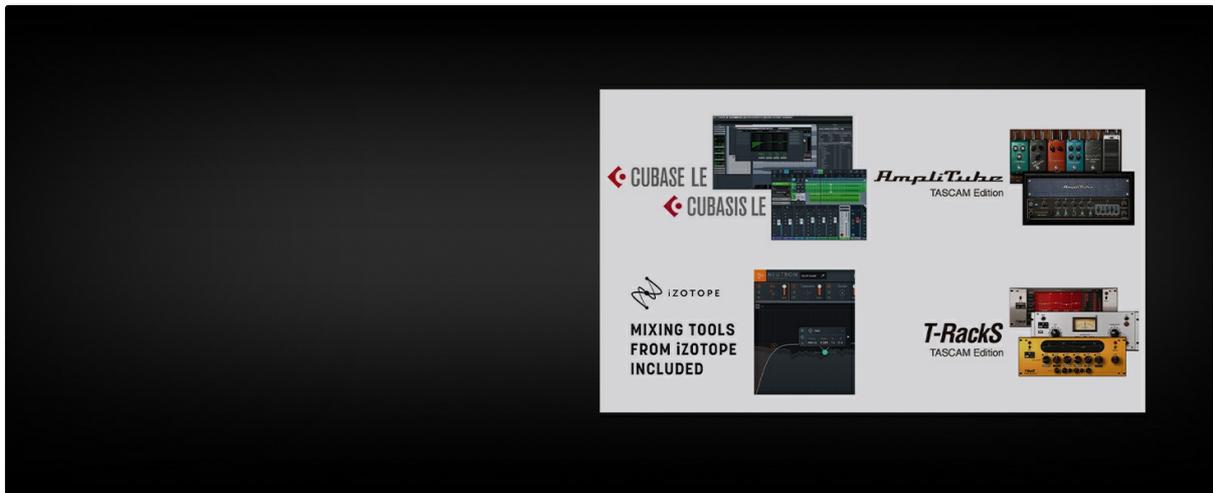

Figure 5.1: Overview of bundled software for immediate project initiation.

6. SPECIFICATIONS

Feature	Specification
Item Weight	4.67 pounds
Product Dimensions	11.7 x 2.6 x 6.3 inches
Item Model Number	SERIES 208i
Brand	Tascam
Connectivity Technology	USB
Number of Channels	16 (expandable to 20 via S/MUX)
Hardware Interface	USB
Operating System Compatibility	Windows, Mac, iOS
Color Name	Silver
Compatible Devices	Tablet, Computer

7. TROUBLESHOOTING

If you encounter issues with your Tascam SERIES 208i, consider the following common solutions:

- **No Power:** Ensure the AC adapter is securely connected to both the interface and a working power outlet. Check the power switch on the rear panel.

- **No Sound/Input Signal:**

    - Verify all audio cables are correctly connected and not damaged.
    - Check the input GAIN knobs on the interface; ensure they are turned up sufficiently.
    - Confirm that the correct input is selected in your DAW or Tascam Control software.
    - For microphones, ensure +48V phantom power is enabled if required.

- **No Output Sound:**

    - Check the MONITOR VOL knob and headphone volume controls.
    - Ensure your studio monitors or headphones are powered on and connected correctly.
    - Verify that the SERIES 208i is selected as the audio output device in your computer's sound settings and your DAW.
    - Check the routing in the Tascam Control software to ensure outputs are correctly assigned.

- **Latency Issues:** Adjust the buffer size in your DAW's audio settings. Lower buffer sizes reduce latency but require more CPU power. Utilizing the SERIES 208i's direct monitoring feature and internal DSP effects can also help eliminate latency.

- **Software/Driver Issues:** Reinstall the latest drivers and Tascam Control software from the official Tascam website. Ensure your operating system is up to date.

8. MAINTENANCE

Proper care and maintenance will ensure the longevity and optimal performance of your Tascam SERIES 208i.

- **Cleaning:** Use a soft, dry cloth to clean the exterior of the unit. Avoid using abrasive cleaners, solvents, or waxes, as these can damage the finish.

- **Environment:** Operate the interface in a clean, dry environment away from direct sunlight, excessive heat, dust, and moisture. Avoid placing liquids near the unit.

- **Ventilation:** Ensure adequate ventilation around the unit to prevent overheating. Do not block any ventilation openings.

- **Storage:** When not in use for extended periods, disconnect the power adapter and store the unit in a safe, dry place.

9. WARRANTY AND SUPPORT

For detailed warranty information, product registration, and technical support, please visit the official

Tascam website or contact your local Tascam dealer. Keep your purchase receipt as proof of purchase for warranty claims.

Online resources often include FAQs, driver downloads, and firmware updates that can resolve many common issues.