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› Gustard A26 DAC MQA Dual AK4499EX AK4191 with Streamer/Renderer XMOS DSD512 PCM768K MQA384K IIS Balanced Audio Decoder(Black) A26 Black 1 User Manual

## KGUSS A26

# Gustard A26 DAC User Manual

Model: A26 | Brand: KGUSS

## INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Gustard A26 DAC is a high-fidelity digital-to-analog converter designed for discerning audio enthusiasts. It features dual AK4499EX DAC chips and an AK4191 modulator, ensuring exceptional audio performance. The A26 also includes streamer and renderer capabilities, allowing for versatile integration into modern audio systems.

Key features of the Gustard A26 include:

- Dual AK4499EX & AK4191 DAC Chips for superior sound quality with independent power supply and grounding.
- Integrated Streamer/Renderer supporting Roon, UPnP, and HQ Player NAA for high-quality online audio streaming.
- Precision Clock Synthesization with K2 ultra-low noise clock synthesizer, minimizing interference from input sources.
- FPGA Exclusive Technology for advanced signal routing, clock management, and decoding.
- Discrete LPF Circuits designed specifically for the AK4499EX, allowing for fine-tuned audio performance.
- XMOS XU216 Solution supporting high-resolution audio formats up to PCM768 (with MQA-support) and DSD512.
- Dual Toroidal Transformers for dedicated digital and analog power supply, reducing interference.
- Adjustable brightness OLED display and touch panel for user-friendly operation.
- Full-functional remote control for convenient operation.

## WHAT'S IN THE BOX

Upon opening the package, ensure all the following items are present:

- 1 x Gustard A26 DAC Unit
- 1 x AC Power Cable
- 1 x USB Cable
- 1 x Remote Control

- 1 x Warranty Card



Image: The Gustard A26 DAC unit shown with its included remote control, power cable, USB cable, and warranty card.

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Video: An unboxing demonstration of the Gustard A26 DAC, showing the contents of the package and initial handling of the device.

## SETUP

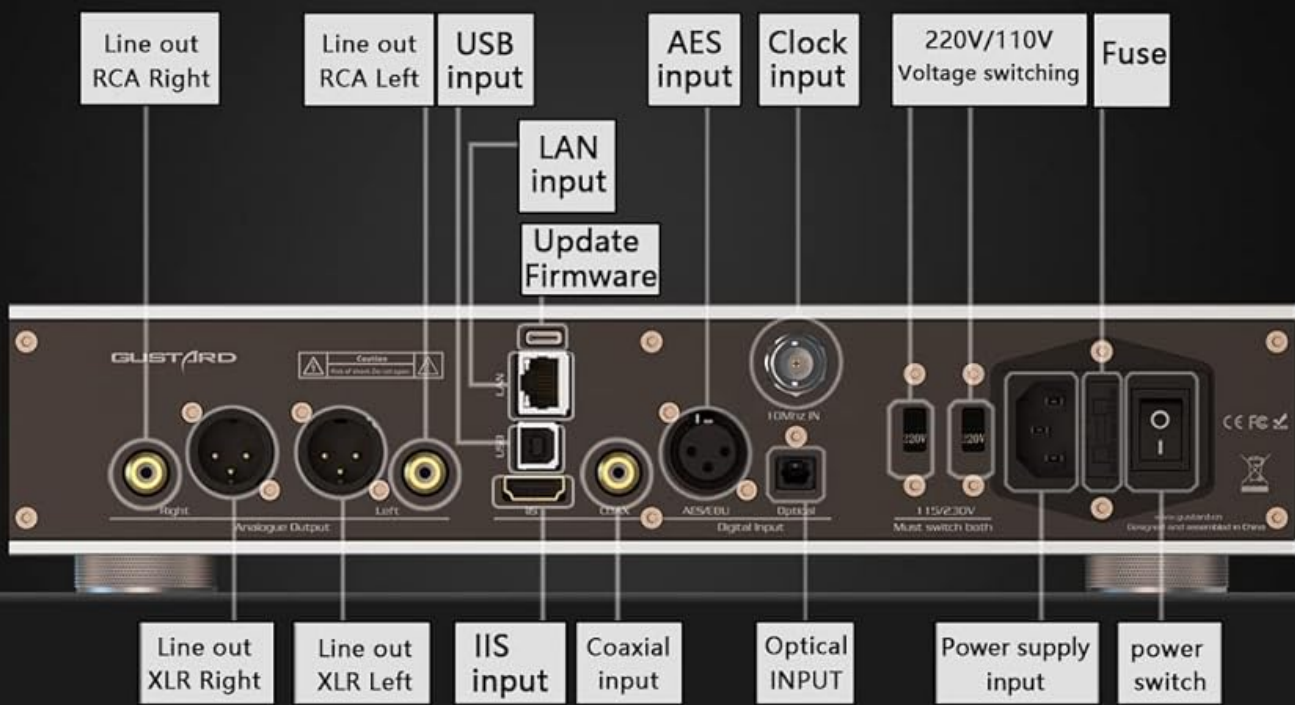
### Connecting the Device

Before connecting the Gustard A26, ensure the unit is placed on a stable, level surface with adequate ventilation. Identify the various input and output ports on the rear panel.

**Equipment size**



## Back Panel



Interface	PCM	MQA	DSD (Native)	DSD (DoP)
USB.IIS.LAN	44.1kHz-768kHz 16bit-32bit	Full decoding	DSD64-DSD512	DSD64-DSD256
AES.COAX.OPT	44.1kHz-192kHz 16bit-24bit	Full decoding	Not support it	DSD64

Image: Rear panel of the Gustard A26 DAC, illustrating the various input and output connections including RCA, XLR, USB, LAN, IIS, Coaxial, AES/EBU, and Optical ports. Dimensions of the unit are also shown.



Image: A detailed diagram highlighting the various connections on the rear panel of the Gustard A26, including Line out RCA (Right and Left), Line out XLR (Right and Left), USB input, LAN input (for firmware updates), IIS input, Coaxial input, Optical input, AES input, Clock input, 220V/110V Voltage switching, Fuse, Power supply input, and Power switch.

- Power Connection:** Connect the supplied AC power cable to the power supply input on the rear panel. Ensure the 115V/230V switch is set correctly for your region before plugging into a wall outlet.
- Audio Output:** Connect the A26 to your amplifier or pre-amplifier using either the balanced XLR outputs or unbalanced RCA outputs.
  - RCA pinout: 1-Ground, 2-Hot, 3-Cold
  - XLR pinout: 1-Ground, 2-Hot, 3-Cold
- Digital Inputs:** Connect your digital audio sources (e.g., computer, CD player, streamer) to the appropriate digital input ports:
  - **USB:** For connecting to a computer. Supports DSD64-DSD512, PCM 44.1K-768K, MQA 8X.
  - **LAN:** For network streaming (Roon/UPnP/HQPlayer NAA) and firmware updates. Supports DSD64-DSD512, PCM 44.1K-768K, MQA 8X.
  - **IIS:** For high-quality digital audio transmission. Supports DSD64-DSD512, PCM 44.1K-768K, MQA 8X.
  - **COAX/AES/OPT:** For traditional digital audio connections. Supports DSD64 (DoP), PCM 44.1K-192K, MQA 8X.
  - **10M Clock In:** For external clock synchronization (50Ω BNC, 0dBm-20dBm, square wave 0.2-3.3V, sine wave 0.5-3.3V).

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Video: A demonstration of connecting the power supply, USB input, and RCA line outputs to the Gustard A26 DAC.

## OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

### Front Panel Controls

The Gustard A26 features a clean front panel with essential controls and an OLED display.



Image: A diagram illustrating the front panel controls of the Gustard A26, including the Waiting/using switch (power button), Screen, '+'

and '-' buttons, and Input/menu button.

- **Power Button (Waiting/using switch):** A short press toggles the unit between standby and active modes. The unit defaults to waiting (standby) when powered on.
- **Screen:** The OLED display shows current input, format, sample rate, and volume level.
- **'+' and '-' Buttons:**
  - In the main screen: Adjusts the volume.
  - In the menu: Changes the value of the selected item.
- **Input/Menu Button:**
  - Short press: Switches between input channels.
  - Long press: Enters or exits the menu system.

## Remote Control Functions

The included remote control provides full functionality for operating the A26 DAC from a distance.



Image: A diagram of the Gustard A26 remote control, detailing button functions: 1. Standby, 2. Menu, 3. Back, 4. Choose option (left/right arrows), 5. Change value (up/down arrows), 6. Save and exit (central key to mute/unmute), 7. VOL-/VOL+, 8. Control decoder products, 9. Control the amplifier, 10. Control player products.

- **Standby (1):** Toggles power on/off.
- **Menu (2):** Enters the menu system.
- **Back (3):** Navigates back in the menu.
- **Navigation Arrows (4, 5):** Use left/right arrows to choose options, and up/down arrows to change values within the menu.
- **Central Key (6):** Saves settings and exits the menu. Also functions as mute/unmute.
- **VOL-/VOL+ (7):** Adjusts the volume level.
- Additional buttons (8, 9, 10) are for controlling other compatible Gustard decoder, amplifier, and player products.

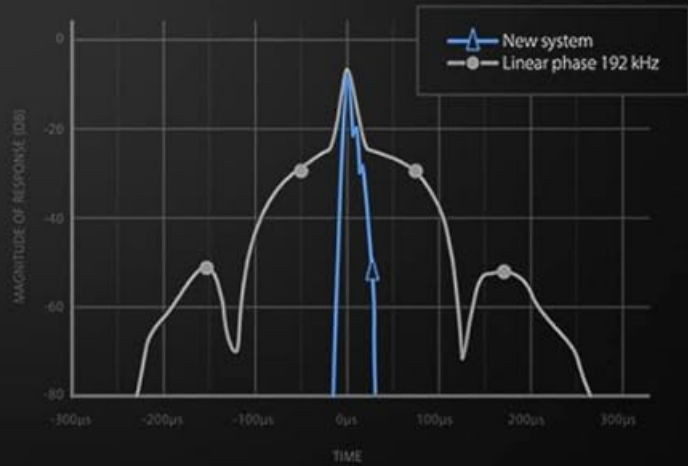
## MQA Playback

The Gustard A26 supports MQA (Master Quality Authenticated) playback, allowing you to experience audio as the artist intended. MQA technology captures and authenticates the original studio master, then folds it into a smaller file size for streaming or download. The A26 can fully unfold MQA files, delivering the highest possible sound quality.



## Before MQA

Common digital audio filters impair time resolution, causing 'ringing' both before and after a transient.

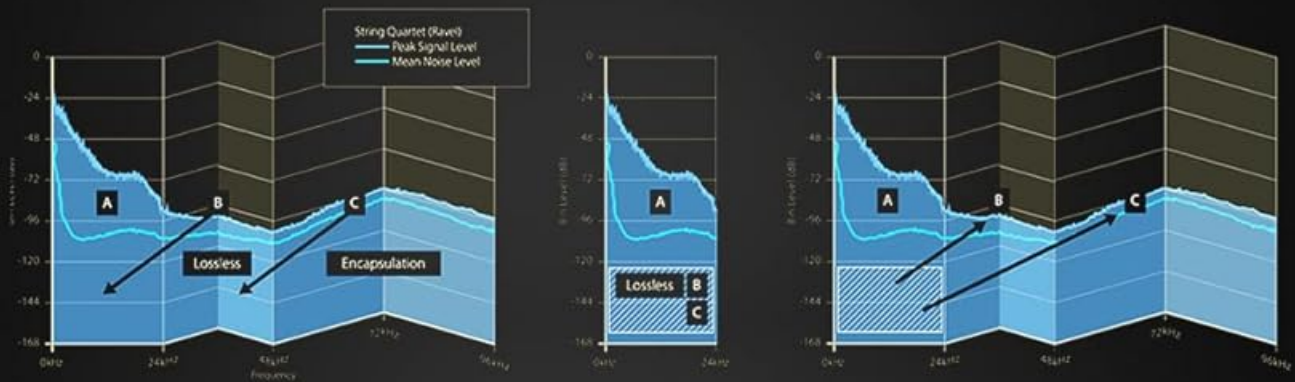


## With MQA

MQA reduces this pre- and post-ringing by over 10 times compared to a 24/192 recording.

## 2 Packaging the sound

Once the recording has been de-blurred, MQA uses a process we call 'Music Origami' that cleverly makes this large, high-resolution file manageable and compatible with any service or playback device. On an ordinary player, MQA will play at better than CD quality. With an MQA decoder the full, rich studio sound is unfolded.



## Music Origami

1. Very high frequency content (C) is 'encapsulated' and hidden away below the noise floor of B.
2. The high frequency information (B) is losslessly compressed and hidden beneath the noise floor of A.

3. Section A behaves like a normal CD-quality file and will play on any device. The stored additional detail (B and C) is ignored.

4. On an MQA-enabled device, the full recording is unfolded to deliver the original performance.

reduces pre- and post-ringing compared to common digital audio filters.

## A BREAKTHROUGH BORNE FROM SCIENCE

Our hearing is incredibly adept at determining where a sound is coming from. As sounds reach us, microseconds apart, our brains build a 3D sonic 'picture'. It's this same capability that allows us to position the individual instruments by their sound at a live performance. It's also why live music feels so powerful and emotive, and why recorded music often feels flat in comparison. MQA is the first technology to capture this crucial timing information – to transport you to the original performance.



Image: A diagram illustrating the "Music Origami" process of MQA, showing how high-frequency content is encapsulated and how the full recording is unfolded by an MQA-enabled device.

### SPECIFICATIONS

Category	Specification
DAC Chips	Dual AK4499EX & AK4191 Modulator

Category	Specification
Input (IIS/USB/LAN)	DSD64-DSD512, PCM 44.1K-768K, MQA 8X
Input (COAX/AES/OPT)	DSD64 (DoP), PCM 44.1K-192K, MQA 8X
LAN Protocols	Roon/UPnP/HQPlayer NAA
10M Clock In	50Ω BNC, 0dBm-20dBm, square wave 0.2-3.3V, sinewave 0.5-3.3V
Frequency Response	20-20kHz ( $\pm 0.2$ dB)
Dynamic Range	>127dB
Signal-to-Noise Ratio	>126dB
Crosstalk	-139dB @1kHz
THD+N	$\leq 0.0001\%$ @1kHz
IMD	$\approx 0.001\%$ @-1dbfs
RCA Output	2.5Vrms (VOLUME FIXED) 100Ω
XLR Output	5.0Vrms (VOLUME FIXED) 100Ω
Power Supply	AC115V/230V 50/60Hz
Power Consumption	<30W
Dimensions (W*L*H)	330mm * 260mm * 65mm (protrusion not included)
Weight (with package)	7kg
Case Material	Sandblasted aluminum alloy

Features	Output
• AK4499EX DAC & AK4191 Modulator	• Frequency Response: 20-20kHz /+ -0.2dB
• roon bridge,upnp...	• Dynamic range: >127dB
• Clock synthesization with precision oscillators.	• Signal-to-noise ratio: >126dB
• Exclusive technology over FPGA.	• Crosstalk: -139dB @ 1kHz
• 6 PCM filters & 2 DSD filters & DSD Direct mode	• THD+N: <=0.0001% @1kHz
• Parallel hybrid I/V convertors.	• IMD: ≈0.001% @ -1dbfs
• Specifically designed LPF circuits.	• RCA: 2.5Vrms (VOLUME FIXED) 100Ω
• XU216 from XMOS, supports up to PCM768(with MQA-support) & DSD512.	• XLR: 5.0Vrms (VOLUME FIXED) 100Ω
• Two specific toroidal transformers for audio application.	• XLR pinout: 1-Ground 2-Hot 3-Cold
• Independent regulators and filters.	• XLR pinout: 1-Ground 2-Hot 3-Cold
• Adjustable brightness with power saving mode.	
• Remote & Touch Panel.	
Input	Others
• IIS/USB/LAN: DSD64~DSD512, PCM 44.1K-768K, MQA 8X	• Power Supply: AC115V/230V 50/60Hz
• COAX/AES/OPT: DSD64(DoP), PCM 44.1K-192K, MQA 8X	• Power Consumption <30W
• LAN: Roon/UPnP/HQPlayer NAA (more in the future)	• Size: 330mm (Width) * 260mm (Length) * 65mm (Height) (protrusion not included)
• 10M Clock in: 50 Ω BNC, 0dBm-20dBm, square wave 0.2-3.3V, sinewave 0.5-3.3V	• Packing size: 420mm (Width) * 360mm (Length) * 175mm
	• Weight: 7Kg (with package)
	• Sandblasted aluminum alloy case: Silver or Black version

Image: A comprehensive table detailing the features, output specifications, input capabilities, and other general specifications of the Gustard A26 DAC.

## MAINTENANCE

To ensure the longevity and optimal performance of your Gustard A26 DAC, follow these maintenance guidelines:

- **Cleaning:** Use a soft, dry cloth to clean the exterior of the unit. Avoid using abrasive cleaners or solvents, as they may damage the finish.
- **Ventilation:** Ensure the unit has adequate airflow around it. Do not block the ventilation slots.
- **Firmware Updates:** Periodically check for firmware updates to improve performance and add new features. Note that currently, the A26 firmware upgrade only supports Windows. Please contact the seller for details and instructions on how to perform updates.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

If you encounter any issues with your Gustard A26 DAC, refer to the following common troubleshooting steps:

- **No Power:**
  - Check if the power cable is securely connected to both the unit and the wall outlet.
  - Verify that the power switch on the rear panel is in the 'On' position.
  - Ensure the voltage switch (115V/230V) is set correctly for your region.
  - Check the fuse on the rear panel. If blown, replace it with a fuse of the same type and rating.

- **No Sound Output:**

- Confirm that the correct input source is selected on the A26.
- Check the connections between the A26 and your amplifier/pre-amplifier.
- Ensure the volume level on the A26 is not set to minimum or muted.
- Verify that your amplifier/pre-amplifier is powered on and set to the correct input.

- **Distorted Sound:**

- Check the quality of your input digital signal.
- Ensure all cables are securely connected and not damaged.
- Verify that the sample rate and format displayed on the A26 match your source.

- **Network Streaming Issues:**

- Ensure the LAN cable is securely connected.
- Verify your network connection and router settings.
- Restart the A26 and your network equipment.

If the problem persists after attempting these steps, please contact HIFI College customer support for further assistance.

## WARRANTY AND SUPPORT

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The Gustard A26 DAC is covered by a warranty provided by HIFI College. HIFI College aims for 100% customer satisfaction and offers support for their products.

- **Warranty Coverage:** The product enjoys a one-year warranty. For specific details regarding warranty terms and conditions, please refer to the included warranty card or contact HIFI College directly.
- **Customer Support:** HIFI College is ready to answer any questions you have 24/7. They are responsible for repair and shipping costs during the warranty period.
- **Official User Guide:** For a more detailed technical manual, you can download the official User Guide in PDF format: [Download User Guide \(PDF\)](#).