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File formats we work with are WAV, AIFF, FLAC (lossless) and DDP Image. Please avoid lossy compressed data or any forms of transcoded files. Audio-CDs are also not recommended, as they offer no CRC check. Please use data CDs or our FTP (login on request). For any other formats, may it be analogue or digital ones, please ask.

For bit rates please note that 16 bit works, 24 is optimum, 32 is quite redundant. Please look for headroom on your recordings! If not strictly artistically important, don't go higher than -10 dB RMS in loudness. On every master above this mark we cannot guarantee a cut, pressing and playback result without distortions. If you use 24 bit PCM, you have a headroom of at least 48 dB available, before you reach a signal-to-noise-ratio which is still higher than the physically given one of vinyl itself! Save your transients. If you really insist on your musically or artistically relevant compression, provide us an uncompressed version with headroom and a second one with your favourite style of compression, saturation or limiting.

Sampling rate has to be 44100 Hz or higher. The frequency range of a record is at least 20 to 20000 Hz. The Neumann SX74 cutter-head we use can produce frequencies out of the spectrum of a human ear. But most of the common pick-ups and record players are not able to reproduce all ever possible grooves. Especially high frequencies at hot levels can lead to unwanted distortions and artefacts due to tracing failures. This process also depends on the radius where the music is picked up: the closer the playback reaches the inner diameters, the slower the needle runs through the grooves, the lower may be the possibility of quality playback at the high end. So to speak, the frequency response of a vinyl record is permanently changing while playback. We recommend not to cut too close to the inner diameters for a perfect result, especially on 33 RPM. Further, it helps to cut material with a sensible high-end on the outer diameters, at the beginning of a record's side.

We recommend to use de-essers on vocal tracks with a lot of sibilance. They may produce bursts of high frequencies leading to distortions. Those appear very annoying as a human ear is very used to analyze human sounds itself. We may use a de-esser on your provided sum, but applying it while your mixdown offers a much more transparent result.

The stereo information (side signal in MS coding) should be 6dB lower than the mono information (mid signal in MS coding). In short, the stereo field should never be louder than half of the mono level. For very loud cuts a distance of at least 9 dB is useful to avoid tracing problems. Also, it is not recommended to work with any important stereo content below 200 Hz. While mono grooves are working horizontally, all stereo information is written vertically into the vinyl, so the modulation is much more limited there to prevent the needle from skipping. Correlation not above 90° for LPs, not above 60° for loud maxi single cuts.

About play times per side: The levels we cut depend primarily on the running length of the material. Every groove needs its space, and loud bass grooves take the most of the space, followed up by a wide stereo signal. The louder you want the cut, the less space you've got, the shorter the sides have to be. And vice versa, lower cuts offer more space and so playtime per side.

Estimated side lengths, depending on cutting level, for 12"es:

- maximum levels, approx +6 dB: 6 min at 45 RPM, 8 min at 33 RPM
- sufficient levels, approx +4 dB: 8 min at 45 RPM, 11 min at 33 RPM
- maximum recommended playtime time for dj use (with the need to gain up a bit), approx 0 dB: 11 min at 45 RPM, 15 min at 33 RPM
- maximum playtime (to make sense on vinyl), approx -6 dB and lower: 18 min at 45 RPM, 24 min at 33 RPM

Of course you can go longer, but at some point noise and crackles will be heard through the music's low parts, and so we don't recommend to cut this way. Also note that the times above are for usual music signals with a straight running full spectrum of bass until the low end. It CAN be possible to place more playtime into the groove at the same levels, if you have a lot of low-level parts or parts with less or without bass, such as spoken word or acoustic instruments without low frequencies. The cutting process uses a variable groove distance, which is applied to an automated cutter head transportation. So, loud bass-heavy parts of music need more disc space than low or bass-less parts.

Please set your fadings thoughtfully and apply the material with exactly the pausings/gaps you want to have on the vinyl. If you or your artist/studio didn't apply these, let us know if you need no silence, usual common amounts like 2-4 seconds or your however preferred amount.

The so-called „spirals“, the optical spacings through wider grooves between the tracks can be cut everywhere you want, not related to actual silence on the audio signal. You may also send a long file per side with markers for the spirals. This makes it even easier for us, as we cut with one file per side whatsoever.

Additional analog mastering on request.