ESTË Live User Manual

Version 0.75.0 — November 28, 2026

Contents

1. Introduction
2. System Requirements
3. Installation & First Launch
4. Core Concepts
5. Engineer View (Main Mixer)
6. Musician View (Personal IEM Mix)
7. Stage View (Stage Control)
8. Songs & Setlists
9. Settings
10. Audio Effects
11. Click Track / Metronome
12. Regions (CSV Import)
13. MIDI
14. Recording
15. Access Control
16. File Structure on Disk
17. Troubleshooting

1. Introduction

ESTË Live runs the in-ear monitor (IEM) mixes of a band from a Mac, plays the backing tracks, MIDI and click, and records the show. Each musician sets their own in-ear mix from their phone's browser: no hardware monitor mixer is needed.

Typical workflow:

1. Connect the audio interface to the Mac and open ESTË Live.
2. Set up the inputs, one output mix per musician, and the backing tracks (Settings).
3. Musicians scan a QR code and open their mix on their phone, on the same Wi-Fi.
4. Each musician sets the level, pan and mute of every channel in their own mix.
5. You run the main mix (FOH), the transport and the recording from the Mac.

This manual describes what the screen doesn't tell you: how ESTË Live behaves on stage, which actions are refused while a song plays, and what to do when something goes wrong.

---

2. System Requirements

Requirement	Details
Operating system	macOS 13.1 (Ventura) or later
Processor	Apple Silicon or Intel 64-bit
Memory	4 GB minimum, 8 GB for sessions with many backing tracks
Audio interface	Any CoreAudio device (USB, Thunderbolt, built-in)
Network	Wi-Fi shared by the Mac and the phones
Phones and tablets	iOS/iPadOS 16.2 or later; Chrome or Edge 111+, Firefox 113+

Disk space: backing tracks take 100–500 MB per song. A recording takes about 11 MB per minute per input in WAV (32-bit float, 48 kHz), twice that for the stereo FOH mix.

---

3. Installation & First Launch

1. Download the `.dmg` from este.audio, open it and drag ESTË Live into Applications.
2. On first launch macOS asks to confirm opening an app downloaded from the internet: click **Open**.
3. macOS also asks for **microphone** access (it treats every audio input as the microphone, audio interfaces included) and for **local network** access (needed by the phones). Allow both. If you refused microphone access, a yellow banner appears and every input stays silent: see Troubleshooting.

ESTË Live creates its library in `~/ESTE/` and a first song with 6 inputs and 4 mixes (FOH and three in-ear mixes). Rename and resize them in Settings.

---

4. Core Concepts

Channels and mixes

A **channel** is an audio source: an input of the audio interface, a backing track (WAV or MP3), or the click. A **mix** (output bus) is an independent mix sent to outputs of the interface: the **FOH** mix goes to the PA, and each musician has their own **in-ear mix**.

Every channel has a **send** to every mix, with its own **level, pan, mute and solo**. They belong to that mix only: changing them in the FOH tab never changes a musician's in-ears, and the other way round.

```
Channel "Vocals" ─┬── FOH mix        → outputs 1–2 (PA)
                  ├── Singer mix     → outputs 3–4
                  ├── Guitarist mix  → outputs 5–6
                  └── Drummer mix    → outputs 7–8
```

Signal chain

```
Input → Effects (EQ → Compressor → Reverb) → one send per mix (level, pan,
mute, solo)
```

The channel's **pan** (the knob on the strip) applies to the FOH mix only. The in-ear mixes receive the signal before that pan, and each musician places it with the pan of their own send. A stereo backing track keeps its stereo image in every mix.

- Mono sources use equal-power pan on FOH: −3 dB per side at centre, the usual mixer behaviour.
- Stereo sources, and every send pan, use balance: both sides at full level at centre, the opposite side turned down as you pan.

Songs and setlists

A **song** holds everything about one song: the mix of every musician, effects, backing tracks, MIDI tracks, tempo and regions. A **setlist** is an ordered list of songs for a show; a song can be in several setlists.

The Mac's audio setup

The audio interface, sample rate, buffer size and the routing of inputs and outputs belong to **the Mac**, not to the songs: they are set once and every song uses them. Loading a song never changes the interface or the buffer, and songs can be moved to another Mac or interface.

---

5. Engineer View (Main Mixer)

The engineer view is the Mac app's window. It is not available on phones.

Transport and timeline

- **Play** and **Rec** start a stopped transport. Pressing them again while a song plays or records (a double tap, two devices at once) does nothing: the song doesn't jump and the take goes on.
- **Rec during playback is refused**: stop first, then record.
- **Click the timeline** while stopped to choose where Play and Rec start. With a tempo, a **two-bar count-in** plays first; without one, playback starts right there. **Stop** goes back to the start, and loading a song starts it from the top.
- The timeline shows the song's regions. Past the end of the audio the area is striped: the song stops at its end (audio, MIDI or tempo map, whichever is longest), but the regions stay visible.
- The info strip under the timeline jumps between regions and shows bar, beat, time signature and BPM.

Mixes and channel strips

The tabs above the strips choose which mix you are editing. A tab shows a red **M** when that mix is muted and an amber **S** when a channel is soloed in it, so a solo left on another mix is easy to spot. The **MST** strip on the left sets the level of the whole mix (double-click: 0 dB) and mutes it.

On every channel strip:

- **Fader**: from silence to +12 dB, 0 dB at three quarters of the travel. Double-click resets to −6 dB.

- **Meters**: show the real peak of each update, short transients included. The clip LED stays on until you click it.
- **M** and **S** mute and solo the channel **in the selected mix only**. Solo in FOH changes only what the audience hears; solo in a musician's tab changes only that musician's in-ears. Solos are saved with the song, like mutes.
- **Eye** hides the channel from the selected mix: it disappears from that musician's phone and is silent in that mix. Musicians can mute what they see, but only you can hide and show channels.
- **FX** opens the channel's effects (see Audio Effects).

Press `?` for the keyboard shortcuts (Play, Stop, Record, previous/next song, seek).

Panic

Panic (or `Cmd+.`, from anywhere in the window, even while typing) silences every output at once and stops the transport and any recording, which is saved. Only **CLEAR** brings the sound back, so pressing Panic twice never turns the audio on again by mistake. `Esc` only closes dialogs.

Connecting phones (QR code)

The QR button opens the connection codes: **Musician** (choose the mix) and **Stage**. Phones must be on the same Wi-Fi as the Mac. The address is also shown, by IP and by name, with a copy button.

Quitting during a show

ESTË Live asks before quitting when it would interrupt something: playback (or a count-in), a recording (on **Quit** it is stopped and saved first), or connected phones (they lose their mix). This applies to `Cmd+Q`, closing the window, and quitting from the Dock or at logout.

---

6. Musician View (Personal IEM Mix)

The musician opens their mix from the QR code, or at `http://<mac>:3001/musician/<mix name>`. The page works in portrait and shows two columns in landscape. It only controls that musician's own mix.

- **MUTE ALL** silences the whole mix at once, for instance before taking the in-ears out. Press it again to bring it back. It is saved with the song like the rest of the mix: a mix left muted is still muted when the song is loaded again.
- Each channel has a fader, pan, meters and **M** (mute in this mix only).
- ★ pins a channel at the top of the list. Favourites are kept on that phone.
- **RST** puts the channel back to −6 dB, centre.
- Channels the engineer hid from this mix don't appear at all.
- When the engineer changes a level in this mix, the row flashes and the phone vibrates, so the musician knows it wasn't them.
- During the count-in, a panic or a lost connection, a banner says so. After a Wi-Fi drop or a screen lock the page reconnects by itself and keeps showing the mix meanwhile.

---

7. Stage View (Stage Control)

A phone or tablet on stage, open at `http://<mac>:3001/stage` (QR code, **Stage** tab), runs the show without touching the mixes: Play, Rec, Stop, Panic, previous and next song, region navigation, and the setlist.

- **To load a song, hold it for half a second**: a short tap does nothing, so a song isn't changed by accident during a show.
- Songs can't be loaded, and previous/next song is disabled, while the transport plays or records.
- Tap a region to jump to its start.

---

8. Songs & Setlists

Songs

Songs live in the sidebar.

- **Create**: type a name in the field at the top and press Enter. A menu offers a template; by default the new song copies the current mixer.

- **Load**: expand the song and click ▶. Audio files are decoded once and kept in memory. **A song can be loaded only while the transport is stopped**: during playback or a recording the Load buttons, the setlist selector and the Stage view's song list are disabled.
- **Save**: the save button stores the current mix in the song. ESTË Live also saves the active song by itself at Stop, at the end of a song and before loading another one.
- **Reorder**: drag a song by its handle, or use Move up/down in the ⋯ menu.
- The ⋯ menu also has Rename, Duplicate ("(copy)", "(copy 2)"…), Save as template (active song only) and Remove from setlist (the song stays on disk).
- **Unused songs**, at the bottom of the sidebar, lists songs that aren't in the current setlist: add them, load them or delete them from disk from there.

Names are unique. Two songs, two setlists or two templates can't have the same name. Names that differ only in case or symbols count as the same, because they would be stored in the same place ("AC/DC" and "ac_dc", "Gig" and "GIG"). A name in use is refused; changing only the case of a song's own name is fine.

Setlists

The selector at the top of the sidebar creates, duplicates, renames, deletes and switches setlists (deleting a setlist keeps its songs). When you switch setlist, every audio file of its songs is decoded first, with a progress screen, so later song changes are immediate.

Auto-advance (Settings → Tempo & Regions, on by default) loads the next song of the setlist when a song ends.

Templates

A template is a mixer setup (channels, mixes, effects, colours) without audio, MIDI or regions, used to start new songs. ESTË Live comes with Empty, Solo Acoustic, Duo, Full Band (4-piece) and Full Band (6-piece). To make your own, load a song and choose **Save as template** in its ⋯ menu. A user template with the same name can be replaced after confirmation; the built-in names can't be used.

---

9. Settings

Open Settings with the gear button or `Cmd+,`. Nothing changes until you click **Apply** (✓); a dot on the gear means there are unapplied changes.

What belongs to the Mac, what to the song:

- **The Mac:** audio devices, sample rate, buffer size, and the routing of inputs and outputs (mono/stereo, device channels). Routing works **by position**: input 1 of every song uses the first routing row, and so on. A song with more inputs or mixes than you have routed uses the default routing for the extra ones.
- **The song:** names, colours, number of inputs and mixes, backing tracks, MIDI tracks, recording options, tempo, click and regions.

Settings that restart the audio engine (a short gap in the sound): device, sample rate, buffer size, number of inputs or mixes, routing, backing tracks, click on/off or click sound. During a recording they are refused: stop the take first. Everything else (names, colours, tempo, access control…) applies without interrupting the audio. After a restart every mix sounds as before: each channel keeps its level, pan, mute, solo and effects in every mix (a backing track is recognised by its file, so adding an input or removing a track never moves the settings onto another channel), and each mix keeps its master level and MUTE ALL. A channel you just added starts at the default level.

Section	Notes
Audio	The interface is recognised by its identity, not by the number macOS gives it. A chosen interface that isn't connected is shown as "Not connected"; ESTË Live never falls back to another device (the in-ears would end up on the Mac's speakers). The latency badge shows the round trip for the chosen buffer.
Inputs	Two inputs with the same name are allowed, but an amber note points them out: musicians would see two identical names.
Outputs	One row per mix: name, colour, output channels.
Files	WAV or MP3 backing tracks, up to 500 MB each, copied into the song. MP3 tracks start exactly on time: the silence every MP3 encoder adds at the start is removed.
MIDI	MIDI files, output port, channel (Remap to one channel, or Original), **Send state at start** (see MIDI).
Recording	Format (WAV 32-bit float or MP3) and Multitrack (see Recording).
Tempo & Regions	Tempo source, click, auto-advance, regions file.

Access Control	Approval of new phones and how long an approval lasts (see Access Control).

10. Audio Effects

Each channel has an EQ (low shelf, mid peak, high shelf), a compressor and a reverb, in that order. They act before the sends, so they are heard in every mix. **FX** on the strip opens them (the button is lit when an effect is on); each effect has presets, and double-clicking a control resets it.

11. Click Track / Metronome

The click is a channel like the others, called **Click**, that follows the song's tempo.

- **Turn it on** in Settings → Tempo & Regions: choose a tempo source (Manual or MIDI file), enable the click, choose its sound (Digital, Woodblock, Rim) and Apply. The first beat of every bar is louder and higher.
- Turning the click on or off, or changing its sound, restarts the audio engine. **Changing the tempo doesn't**: the click moves to the new tempo while the audio keeps playing, even during a recording. Loading the next song doesn't interrupt the audio either when the two songs have the same mixer layout.
- The click lasts the whole song, MIDI tracks included, also in songs without backing tracks.
- Each musician sets the click's level in their own mix, mutes it or pins it at the top.
- **The audience doesn't hear the click**: when you turn it on, it starts muted and at −∞ in the FOH mix. To put it in the PA, unmute it and raise its fader in the FOH tab.

12. Regions (CSV Import)

Regions are the named, coloured sections of a song (Intro, Verse, Chorus…) shown on every timeline. Make them in ESTË Studio, or import a CSV file exported from Reaper in Settings → Tempo & Regions. A tempo source is needed: positions are in bars and beats.

```
#,Name,Start,End,Length,Color
R1,INTRO,2.1.00,16.1.00,14.0.00,00FF00
R2,VERSE,16.1.00,32.1.00,16.0.00,FFFF00
```

Positions are `bar.beat.ticks` (1-based), colours `RRGGBB`; comma or semicolon separators both work.

---

13. MIDI

Tempo from a MIDI file

A MIDI file can be the song's tempo source (Settings → Tempo & Regions → MIDI File): its tempo and time-signature changes drive the click, the bar display and the regions. The count-in always uses the file's first tempo.

MIDI tracks

MIDI tracks are sent to MIDI ports (keyboards, sound modules, MainStage, lighting desks) in time with the song. **Remap** sends every event on one chosen channel; **Original** keeps the channels written in the file (for multi-channel devices).

Each track plays at the tempo written in its file, including multitrack files where the tempo is in the first track (the usual DAW export). Files prepared in ESTË Studio carry the song's tempo, and Studio updates them when the tempo changes.

Starting in the middle of a song. When playback starts after the beginning (a region, a click on the timeline, the count-in) or jumps while playing, ESTË Live first sends the state the earlier events set, so the keyboard has the right patch and volume wherever you start. This is called *chasing*. For each channel it sends the last Program Change with its bank select, the last value of every controller (pedals included), pitch bend and channel pressure, and the RPN/NRPN settings such as the pitch-bend range. Notes that started earlier are not played halfway. On a jump during playback, what the device already has is not sent again, so jumping inside a section doesn't reload the patch.

Turn **Send state at start** off (Settings → MIDI, per track) for tracks whose Program Changes are one-shot cues, such as starting a video or a lighting effect, which must not fire again when you start from the chorus.

MIDI events are never skipped, not even at the very start of a song right after opening the app.

---

14. Recording

What is recorded

The **FOH mix** (stereo) is always recorded. With **Multitrack** on (Settings → Recording), every input of the audio interface is also recorded as its own mono file. Backing tracks, MIDI and the click are only in the FOH mix. WAV takes are 32-bit float; MP3 takes carry their exact length, so they line up with WAV takes in any DAW.

Recording a take

- Press **Rec** on the Mac or in the Stage view, and **Stop** to end the take.
- Rec from a position other than the start plays a two-bar count-in when the song has a tempo; the take starts at that position, not during the count-in.
- **While recording**, you can't load a song, switch setlist, or apply a setting that restarts the audio engine: stop the take first, so it is never cut by mistake. Panic ends the take and saves it.

Files

Takes are saved in `~/ESTE/songs/<song>/recordings/`. All files of a take start with the same date and time: each input is numbered in mixer order and named after its channel, the FOH mix is named after the song.

```
20260306143000_01_Vocals.wav
20260306143000_02_Guitar.wav
20260306143000_Live Set_FOH.wav
```

Each input always gets its own file, even when two inputs have the same name. A take started in the same second as the previous one gets `-2` after the time (`20260306143000-2_01_Vocals.wav`) instead of replacing it.

A WAV file holds about 4 GB: 3 hours of FOH mix at 48 kHz, 1 h 33 min at 96 kHz (twice as long for an input track). A longer take goes on in `…_FOH-2.wav`, `-3` … with no gap: place the parts one after the other in your editor. MP3 takes have no such limit.

Disk space and problems

ESTË Live never loses a take without telling you:

- **At Rec**, it checks the free space. With room for less than 15 minutes of the take it records and says how much is left; with less than a minute Rec is refused. Rec is also refused, with the reason, when the recordings folder or a file can't be created.
- **A slow disk** (an external drive waking up, a backup running): up to 4 seconds of audio wait for it. If the disk is slower than that, the missing audio is replaced by silence of the same length, so the take stays in time with the backing tracks and the click, and a warning says how much was lost.
- **A full disk or a write error**: writing stops when 200 MB are left, so the files can still be closed. The recording stops, **the music keeps playing**, and a message says where the take ends.
- **At the end**, "Recording saved" appears only when everything went well; otherwise the message lists what went wrong.

These warnings appear on the Mac and in the Stage view, not on the musicians' phones.

---

15. Access Control

By default any phone on the Wi-Fi that opens a mix's address can use it. With **Require approval** on (Settings → Access Control), each new phone must be approved on the Mac first:

1. The phone shows "Waiting for engineer approval".
2. The connection indicator in the header pulses: click it and approve or reject each request (or Approve All).
3. An approved phone gets a key that lasts the chosen time (1, 4, 8 or 24 hours; 8 by default). It reconnects by itself after a reload, a screen lock or a Wi-Fi drop, until the key expires; then it asks again.

A request not answered within 5 minutes is refused, and the phone can try again. The Mac's own window never needs approval.

With approval on, an approved musician can only change their own mix, and the Stage view can only run the transport. **Without approval, any device on the Wi-Fi has full control**, settings included: turn approval on when you don't trust the network.

To protect the show from a misbehaving device on the network, each device can keep at most 8 connections and 2 waiting requests, and is slowed down if it sends too many changes. The limits are far above what a band needs and never apply to the Mac.

---

16. File Structure on Disk

Everything lives in `~/ESTE/` (private to your macOS user). Back it up as a whole.

```
~/ESTE/
├── audio.json          ← this Mac's audio setup (devices, rate, buffer,
routing)
├── .auth.json          ← access control settings and key
├── setlists/           ← one file per setlist
├── templates/          ← your templates
└── songs/
    └── <song>/
        ├── <song>.json ← the song (mixes, effects, tracks, tempo)
        ├── backtracks/ ← backing tracks
        ├── midi/       ← MIDI files
        ├── regions/    ← region files
        └── recordings/ ← takes
```

Backing tracks, MIDI and region files are copied into the song's folder, and a song only opens files from its own folder.

---

17. Troubleshooting

Phones can't connect

1. The Mac and the phones must be on the **same Wi-Fi**. Some hotspots and guest networks isolate devices from each other: use a dedicated router.
2. Try the IP address shown in the QR dialog instead of the name.
3. Check that the macOS firewall allows ESTË Live (System Settings → Network → Firewall).
4. "ESTË needs a newer system to run" on a phone: update it to iOS/iPadOS 16.2, or install a current Chrome, Edge or Firefox.

Red "No audio" banner

The audio engine isn't running, usually because the chosen interface isn't connected; the banner names it. Everything else keeps working, Play and Rec are refused.

- Plug the interface in: the audio comes back by itself within a few seconds. If it doesn't, click **Retry**.
- To use another device, click **Audio settings** in the banner, choose it and Apply.

- After updating from a version before 0.74.0 the banner can appear once: choose the interface in Audio settings and Apply; from then on it is found by itself.

If the interface is unplugged during a show, playback stops within a second and a recording is saved up to that moment. Plugged back in, the audio returns by itself, with every mix as it was; press Play to go on.

Crackles or dropouts

Raise the buffer size (128 → 256), close other audio apps, connect the interface directly rather than through a hub, and check that the sample rate matches the interface.

A channel makes no sound in a mix

Check, in that mix's tab: the channel's **M**, a soloed channel (**S**, amber badge on the tab), the **Eye** (hidden), the mix's own mute on the **MST** strip, Panic, and the routing in Settings.

Meters don't move

- A yellow "Microphone access is off" banner: macOS blocks every input. Click **Open System Settings**, allow ESTË Live under Privacy & Security → Microphone, and restart the app.
- Check the interface and the input routing in Settings.

Regions don't load

Set a tempo source first (Manual or MIDI file), check the CSV format, and with a MIDI tempo load the MIDI file before the regions.

"Some files were not loaded because they are outside the song folder"

A song file edited by hand or copied from elsewhere points to files outside its folder; they are skipped. Move them into the song's `backtracks/`, `midi/` or `regions/` folder and add them again in Settings or in ESTË Studio.

The app doesn't start

Check the system requirements (macOS 13.1 or later). Look in Console.app for messages. As a last resort, move `~/ESTE/` away and start again: ESTË Live creates a fresh library.
