

# Step-By-Step Guide for Tascam DP-24SD & DP-32SD

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## 1. Contents

1. Contents.....	1
2. About this guide.....	4
2.1 Acknowledgements.....	4
2.2 Contents.....	4
2.3 Disclaimer.....	4
2.4 How to .....	4
2.5 Notes.....	4
2.6 Scenarios.....	4
2.7 Terminology.....	5
3. Terminology.....	5
3.1 AudioDepot.....	5
3.2 Bounce bus.....	5
3.3 Bounce mode.....	6
3.4 Bus.....	6
3.5 Compression.....	6
3.6 Delete Unused.....	6
3.7 Dry signal.....	6
3.8 Dynamic effects.....	6
3.9 Effects (FX).....	7
3.10 EQ.....	7
3.11 F1, F2, F3 & F4 function buttons.....	8
3.12 Factory Reset.....	8
3.13 File.....	8
3.14 Firmware.....	8
3.15 Folder.....	8
3.16 Guitar effect.....	9
3.17 High-impedance.....	9
3.18 History levels.....	10
3.19 IN & OUT marker point.....	10
3.20 Initialise.....	10
3.21 Jog/Data wheel.....	10
3.22 Machine.....	10
3.23 Marker point.....	10
3.24 Master file.....	10
3.25 Mastering mode.....	11
3.26 Mixdown mode.....	11
3.27 Monitoring.....	11
3.28 Monitor select.....	12
3.29 Multitrack mode.....	12
3.30 Normalise.....	12
3.31 Overdubbing.....	13
3.32 Panning.....	13
3.33 Pan vs Balance.....	13
3.34 Phantom power.....	14
3.35 PSU.....	14
3.36 Quality settings.....	14
3.37 Rec Safe.....	15
3.38 Recording levels & overloads.....	15

3.38.1 Levels.....	15
3.38.2 External level controls.....	15
3.38.3 Overload/clipping.....	16
3.39 Reset.....	16
3.40 Scroll.....	17
3.41 SD-card contents.....	17
3.41.1 UTILITY folder.....	17
3.41.2 AudioDepot folder.....	17
3.41.3 MUSIC folder.....	18
3.42 SD-card lock.....	19
3.43 Send bus.....	19
3.44 Send effect.....	19
3.45 Send levels.....	19
3.46 Song folder.....	20
3.47 Song settings.....	20
3.48 Stereo & panning.....	20
3.48.1 Mono signals.....	20
3.48.2 Stereo signals.....	21
3.48.3 Handling stereo on the machine.....	21
(i) Live mixing or Bouncing.....	21
(ii) Recording to a pair of mono tracks.....	21
(iii) Recording to a stereo track.....	22
3.48.4 Reverb effects.....	22
(i) External effect.....	22
(ii) Internal effect.....	23
3.49 Stereo bus.....	23
3.50 Sub-folder.....	23
3.51 Time remaining indicator.....	23
3.52 Undo/Redo.....	24
3.52.1 Single-level (history levels set to 1).....	24
3.52.2 Multi-level (history levels set to 10).....	25
3.53 Wet signal.....	27
4. How to access the sd-card with the USB link.....	28
5. How to add a 2 <sup>nd</sup> recording to your 1 <sup>st</sup> recording.....	28
6. How to bounce.....	28
7. How to change quality settings.....	29
8. How to change undo history levels.....	30
9. How to connect inputs & outputs.....	30
10. How to connect the sd-card to your computer.....	32
11. How to copy the master file to a computer.....	32
12. How to copy/backup songs to a computer.....	33
13. How to copy/export tracks to a computer.....	33
14. How to copy/import tracks from a computer.....	34
15. How to copy/restore songs from a computer.....	35
16. How to create a song with current settings.....	36
17. How to create a song with settings from a template.....	36
18. How to create a template song.....	37
19. How to create a template song with factory settings.....	37
20. How to create a template song with non-factory settings.....	38
21. How to disconnect the sd-card from the USB link.....	39
22. How to disconnect the sd-card from your computer.....	39
23. How to display Bars & Beats on time position line.....	39
24. How to display Hours, Mins & Secs on time position line.....	40
25. How to edit text names.....	40
26. How to edit tracks.....	40

27. How to erase a song.....	42
28. How to find the firmware version number.....	42
29. How to hear reverb without recording it.....	42
30. How to line up tracks in time (with a sync pulse).....	42
31. How to line up tracks in time (with no sync pulse).....	44
32. How to load a song.....	45
33. How to master.....	45
34. How to mixdown.....	47
35. How to move the sd-card from computer to machine.....	48
36. How to move the sd-card from machine to computer.....	48
37. How to overdub.....	49
38. How to pan in bounce mode.....	50
39. How to pan in multitrack & mixdown modes.....	50
40. How to playback tracks.....	51
41. How to position the transport.....	52
42. How to record.....	53
43. How to record FX - Dynamic effects.....	53
44. How to record FX - EQ effects.....	53
45. How to record FX - Guitar effects.....	53
46. How to record FX - Send effects.....	54
47. How to record mono sources to mono tracks.....	55
48. How to record stereo sources to mono track pairs.....	57
49. How to record stereo sources to stereo tracks.....	60
50. How to redo (with history levels set to 1).....	62
51. How to redo (with history levels set to 10).....	62
52. How to reset to factory settings.....	63
53. How to scroll the transport to a precise point.....	63
54. How to send mono signals to an External Send Effect.....	64
55. How to send signals to an External Send Effect.....	65
56. How to send signals to the Internal Send Effect.....	66
57. How to send stereo signals to an External Send Effect.....	67
58. How to set & delete IN & OUT marker points.....	68
59. How to set & delete marker points.....	69
60. How to turn the machine off.....	69
61. How to turn the machine on.....	70
62. How to undo (with history levels set to 1).....	71
63. How to undo (with history levels set to 10).....	71
64. How to upgrade the firmware.....	72
65. Scenario: Recording your first mono song.....	75
66. Scenario: Recording over your mono song (overdubbing).....	79
67. Scenario: Recording your first stereo song.....	82
68. Scenario: Recording over your stereo song (overdubbing).....	86
69. Scenario: Recording external reverb in bounce mode.....	89
70. Scenario: Recording external reverb in multitrack mode.....	92
71. Scenario: Recording internal reverb in bounce mode.....	94

## 2. About this guide

This step-by-step guide complements the [DP-24/32 Tutorial](#) video series on YouTube. The videos will give you a better understanding and overview of the machine, but the guide is useful as a reference or as a quick-start where detailed explanations can be skipped as necessary.

As with the videos, it is specifically for the Tascam DP-32SD Digital Multitrack Recorder (portastudio). It can also be used with the DP-24SD, which just has less tracks in a fixed mono/stereo layout, and the older DP-24 or DP-32 models, although their CD and MIDI functions are not covered.

Corrections and feedback are welcomed; my email is on the [PhiLiZound Recordings](#) website.

The guide may be re-issued over time with corrections and/or new sections; the version number is shown as a 3-digit suffix to the filename in the footer.

### 2.1 Acknowledgements

Many thanks to [Kristi Kelty](#) for her kind support & encouragement in starting this guide. Thanks also to supporters and donators on the [Tascam forum](#) and my [YouTube channel](#).

### 2.2 Contents

Use the Contents list to find topics within the guide; it is has been structured for easy navigation both online and when printed as opposed to being read linearly from cover-to-cover. Cross-references are clickable for online use, and topics are arranged (mostly) in alphabetical order for easier navigation when printed.

### 2.3 Disclaimer

All information presented here is based on my personal experience & understanding of the Machine, and is correct to the best of my knowledge. There is no affiliation with Tascam, and no endorsement from them. No responsibility can be taken for any damage or loss of data.

### 2.4 How to ...

These sections form the bulk of the guide and are arranged in alphabetical order. Cross-referencing is used to reduce repetition, although this may entail some ‘jumping around’ until you are familiar with the more common operations. You may find the Scenarios sections easier to follow at first.

### 2.5 Notes

Background info within steps is denoted by a different colour and prefixed with ‘Note:’; they can be ignored if you just want to follow basic steps with no explanations. More background info is in the Terminology section, so cross-reference links to these can be followed or ignored as reqd.

### 2.6 Scenarios

These sections are copies of the relevant How to ... sections, collated into a linear set of steps for specific scenarios. This makes them fairly lengthy, but they may be easier to follow if the scenario

is close enough to what you want to achieve. They all start with a set of assumptions describing the scenario so you can adapt them as reqd.

## 2.7 Terminology

This section contains terms & detailed descriptions in alphabetical order. They are mainly in the context of the Machine although some cover more generic recording principles. They are cross-referenced from other sections so you can choose to read or ignore them when following the steps.

## 3. Terminology

### 3.1 AudioDepot

This is a Folder on the sd-card used as a temporary holding location for audio wave files to be transferred between the machine and a computer.

The folder is only used for transferring *individual tracks* for a song; if you want to transfer a *whole song* for backup purposes, see [How to copy/backup songs to a computer](#) & [How to copy/restore songs from a computer](#).

You can display the folder contents by pressing Menu, scrolling to AudioDepot, then pressing F4.

To transfer individual tracks from the current song to a computer, the tracks first have to be converted by a process called 'Export'. This collates various internal files within the Song folder and creates a single wave file for each track in the AudioDepot folder. These files can then be copied to a computer for further processing; see [How to copy/export tracks to a computer](#).

To transfer individual tracks from a computer to the current song, the files from the computer should be copied to the AudioDepot folder. Then they need converting into song tracks within the Song folder by a process called 'Import'; see [How to copy/import tracks from a computer](#).

None of the files in the AudioDepot folder are actively used when recording or playing back, so can be deleted to make room on the sd-card.

### 3.2 Bounce bus

This Bus is very similar to the Stereo bus but is only active in Bounce mode. It is also a stereo bus (lower-case 'stereo') in that it comprises a left & right bus; see [Stereo & panning](#).

In Bounce mode, source track & input signals for the bounce are routed to the Bounce bus instead of the Stereo bus, and the Bounce bus output goes to the bounce destination track(s) instead of the stereo output sockets. The internal Send effect is also routed to the Bounce bus instead of the Stereo bus. This is how bouncing is able to mix tracks & inputs (with send effects if reqd), and record the result back to another track.

You can monitor this signal via Monitor select.

meter bars is fixed; no controls will affect it. In contrast, the monitor level shown on the L/R meters is affected by other controls depending on the monitor select setting.

### 3.28 Monitor select

This button allows you to monitor (see Monitoring) one of 4 different signals within the machine:

- The stereo signal from the Stereo bus, i.e. the signal going to the stereo output sockets.
- The mono signal from Send bus-1, i.e. the signal going to the Effect Send-1 output socket *and* the internal Send effect.
- The mono signal from Send bus-2, i.e. the signal going to the Effect Send-2 output socket.
- The stereo signal from the Bounce bus, i.e. the signal going to the destination track(s) in Bounce mode.

Whatever is being monitored appears on the L(ef)t/R(igh)t meter bars at the right-hand side of the Home screen, so you can measure the levels and check for overloads.



The signals also go via the Monitor Level knob to the monitor output sockets and the headphone socket, so you can hear the signals if reqd. This is optional as they will always appear on the L/R meter bars regardless of the monitor knob setting.

Monitoring uses left & right signals so you will see & hear a stereo 'spread' (if there is one) from the Stereo or Bounce buses. The Send signals are mono so these will always appear in the centre of the stereo field and the L/R meters bars will be in step with each other.

### 3.29 Multitrack mode

This is the default power-on mode where normal track recording and processing takes place. The typical work-flow for multi-track recording is to record one or more tracks first, concentrating on recording the best sound for each and using the track faders for monitoring purposes, and then proceed to Bounce mode or Mixdown mode to mix, process and sculpt the sound as reqd.

The Mixdown/Mastering button cycles through Mixdown mode, Mastering mode (if a master file exists) and Multitrack mode.

### 3.30 Normalise

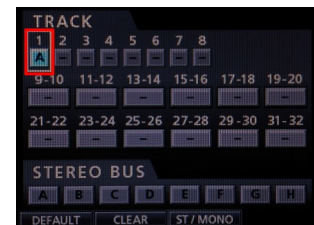
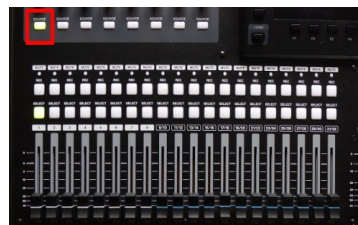
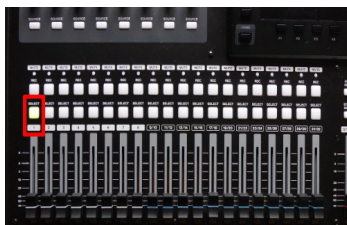
An effect available in Mastering mode for increasing the volume level of a song such that the loudest point is the maximum possible before clipping. Unlike Compression, it does not alter the dynamic range (the difference between the loudest and quietest parts), so the perceived volume after normalising may still sound quieter than commercial recordings. Normalising is an 'offline' process so takes very little time, unlike the other mastering effects which need a real-time recording pass to complete.

## 47. How to record mono sources to mono tracks

1. If the machine is on, turn it off; see How to turn the machine off.
2. Plug your source mono instruments and/or mics into any of the 8 inputs A-H, and plug in headphones or monitor speakers as reqd; see How to connect inputs & outputs.
3. If an instrument needs a High-impedance input, such as an electric guitar with passive pickup, use input H and set the slide-switch at the back to the Guitar position.
4. Turn machine on; see How to turn the machine on.
5. If any mic needs phantom power, press the phantom power button for the corresponding input; see Phantom power.
6. If you want to create a **new** song for the recordings, see either How to create a song with current settings or How to create a song with settings from a template.  
If you want to add recordings to an **existing** song, load it first if it isn't already loaded; see How to load a song.
7. Once your current song is correct as shown on the home screen, press Assign button to show the Assign screen, then press F2(Clear) if reqd. to clear all previous assignments.



8. Repeat the following steps to connect/route each mono source to a mono track for recording:
  - Press a mono track Select button for recording the source, e.g. 1.
  - Press the Source button for the input to be recorded on that track, e.g. A.  
The chosen input letter should appear highlighted inside the box for the chosen track.
  - This is a toggle action; to un-assign the input, press the same source button again.



9. Press the Home button and confirm each input letter is shown against its assigned track no. on the meter bars.



Note: In Jog/Play mode, the ABS (Absolute) time display increases in accuracy by showing 1/10th frames, i.e. from 'hh:mm:ss ff' to 'hh:mm:ss ff.f', where 'f' denotes 'frames' (there are 30 frames in each second).

The BAR time display (see How to display Bars & Beats on time position line) is always bars-beats regardless of Jog/Play, so this is not very useful if an accurate time position is reqd. To switch to absolute time, see How to display Hours, Mins & Secs on time position line.

2. To decrease the time resolution of the Jog/Data wheel, press the Cursor Left button repeatedly until the desired value is reached; minimum is 1/60th second (approx 16ms).
3. To increase the time resolution of the Jog/Data wheel, press the Cursor Right button repeatedly until the desired value is reached; maximum is 1/300th second (approx 3ms).
4. To locate a specific sound in a track, press the track's Select button to show a region of audio on either side of the transport position **for that track**. Repeated pressing of a stereo track's Select button toggles the display between its left & right signals.

Note: The left/right buttons also control the horizontal zoom for the audio graph, and the up/down buttons define its vertical zoom.

5. To set marker points at the current position, see either How to set & delete marker points or How to set & delete IN & OUT marker points.
6. To switch to the default resolution, either press the F1(TimeLine) button to see the TimeLine display, then F1(Waveform) to return, or press the Jog/Play button to exit the mode.

Note: The max resolution in Jog/Play mode is still not accurate enough to 'wind' the transport to a marker point in order to delete the marker; to do this, use one of the 'jump' methods in How to position the transport.

## 54. How to send mono signals to an External Send Effect

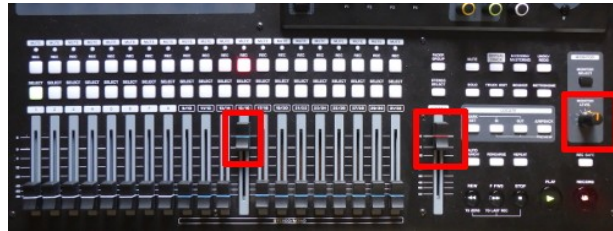
1. If the machine already on, turn it off; see How to turn the machine off.
2. Turn off the external effect unit.
3. If you are already using the machine's internal Send effect, connect a cable from the Effect Send-2 socket to the input of your external effect. If not, connect the cable to **either** Effect Send-1 or Effect Send-2 sockets.
4. If the output of your external effect is mono, connect a cable from there to one of the machine's inputs.
5. If the output of your external effect is stereo, use 2 cables to connect its left & right output signals to any of the 4 pairs of inputs, A & B, C & D, E & F or G & H (the pairs must be adjacent, but do not use other pairings such as B & C).

Note: a **reverb** effect unit usually outputs stereo signals for added realism; this applies even if the effect input is mono. In real-life, echoes from the surroundings appear from all directions, so retaining this 'stereo field' makes the reverb more realistic; see Stereo & panning.

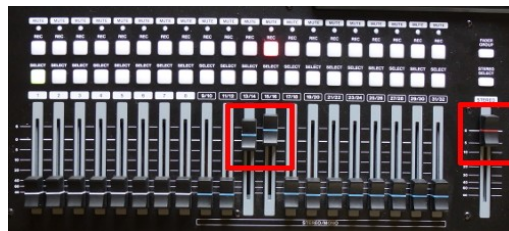
6. Turn on the machine; see How to turn the machine on.



11. To hear yourself in the monitors, turn up the fader for track 15/16, the master stereo fader and monitor level knob gradually to a reasonable level on your headphones or monitor speakers while singing/playing.



12. Use Rewind or Fast Forward to position at start of song and press Play.
13. Turn up the track fader for track 13/14 so you can hear the original recording, and adjust both faders 13/14 & 15/16 as reqd. for a reasonable balance in your monitors while singing/playing.



14. When happy with the levels, press Stop, wait for machine to stop, then press Rewind and position to start of song.
15. Press Record and start singing/playing in time with the original recording.



16. When finished, press Stop and wait for the machine to finish writing to the sd-card; this may take a few seconds.
17. Press the Rec button on track 15/16 to un-arm it.
18. Rewind to the reqd. start position and play/review the recording.  
The faders on track 13/14 & 15/16 control the relative playback levels of the original recording and the overdub.
19. You can record more overdubs, mono or stereo as reqd. by repeating the corresponding sections but using different destination track(s) for the overdub.