

Arranging For Singers-B

I Can't Get Sound!!!

Okay.

Here's where we take care of the one thing almost everyone has issues with – getting sound out of your computer.

to begin with...

Your object is to get sound from the program you are using to the sound output you want to use. On our Passage Lab computers, there are three places to get sound:

- Built-In Output – this is where the sound comes out of the computer's built-in speakers.
- Built-In Headphones – this is where you plug in your headphones at the back of the computer, using a minijack plug.
- M-Box 2 – this is the audio/MIDI interface used for the ProTools program. It has a standard ¼-inch headphone jack

how sound is directed...

On the computer, there are several ways to access the sound:

- Through the **Sound Preference** in System Preferences
- Through the **Audio/MIDI Utility** in the Utilities Menu
- Through the **sound preferences in the program**

To get to the **Sound Preference** panel, you go to the Apple menu (farthest upper left on your screen) and choose System Preferences. From there, you will find **Sound** all the way to the right in the Hardware section. The Sound window will show you what sound choices you have – in our case, Built-In and M-Box 2. This is the overall system sound

for the computer, and its volume control can be found on the right-hand side of the menu bar. The icon looks like a little speaker with sound waves. Mac people will probably be familiar with this; PC people maybe not so much. If the slider is all the way down, there will be no little sound waves, and it will be muted, so be sure and check that the volume is up there.

The **Audio MIDI Setup utility** can be found in Utilities, which is a folder inside the Applications folder. To find it, click on the Desktop to get to the Finder. From there, go to the Go menu, and choose Utilities – or, an easier way is to use the key command Shift-Command-U. Audio MIDI Setup gives more detail about what’s happening with sound, and it also lets you know what MIDI connections are active. You can choose from here which output you want to be active – Built-In Audio or M-Box 2.

Your individual audio program will also have its own sound preferences, so once you check the first two, if you still don’t have sound you will need to go there. Every Mac program (or *application*) has a set of Preferences which let you decide how you want that application to work – on a PC they’re often called Options. Not all audio applications keep the Audio/MIDI settings in Preferences – Finale gives it a menu item – but many do. GarageBand does, so you will go to the upper left where it says GarageBand in the menu, and under that you will see Preferences. There is also a Key Command to open Preferences, which is Command-Comma. In the Preferences window that opens up, choose Audio/MIDI. This will show you where GarageBand’s inputs and outputs are set. Choose the one you want.

At this point you should have sound.

If you are playing the controller keyboard, and you’re not getting sound, check that:

- The power plug in the back is plugged in
- The MIDI cable is plugged in – it should be in MIDI Out, and the other end should be plugged into the M-Box 2 into MIDI In.
- If these are all right, try turning the power on and off on the controller.

if the computer is still testing you...

Do not worry.

The first thing you should do is **save your work**.

You should save it and name it first thing when you start, and then re-save it from time to time as you go along. This will make sure that the work you have done so far is not lost in case of a freeze or crash. If the computer still refuses to act right –

- Save your work, and **quit and restart the program**.
- If it still doesn't act right, restart the computer.

Go to the Apple menu and choose Restart.

If it will not restart, you will need to do a hard shut-down, which means holding down the Power button on the back of the iMac until it shuts down. Wait a minute for the disk to spin down, and then press the Power button to start it up again.

general computer issues

If you run into other problems, like the mouse or keyboard not working, **check your cables**. The mouse and keyboard are connected to the computer with USB cables and sometimes they become unplugged, so always **check your cables first**. This goes for audio equipment or any other peripherals you may have as well. A lot of time and aggravation can be avoided by checking cables. With audio and MIDI equipment, remember that **Out Goes To In, and In Goes To Out**. That sounds really simplistic, but sometimes you'll find your MIDI cable going from In to In, and then wonder why it doesn't work, and audio cables as well. By keeping that simple rule in mind, you can save yourself a lot of trouble. Keep your **signal path** in mind – where does it start, where does it go to, where does it end?

The MIDI keyboard sends information OUT to the M-Box,

which receives it through the IN,

then sends it OUT to GarageBand,

which receives the information through its IN, processes the information (by sending it through its sound source)

and then sends the resulting sound OUT to the designated OUTput.

If you keep these things in mind, you will have a successful, happy computer musical experience!