Apple says HomePod and HomePod Mini will support lossless audio after future update

In a new support document on its website, Apple dives a little deeper into the details around the upcoming launch of lossless audio on Apple Music.

Apple now says that both the HomePod and HomePod Mini will support lossless audio after a future software update. That'll be good news to people who've invested in one or a pair of Apple's smart speakers. Two HomePods grouped in stereo playing a lossless source? Yeah, that's going to sound wonderful. Apple isn't yet giving any timetable for when this software update will be released, however.

The document also clarifies that the Apple TV 4K will only support standard lossless audio when the ALAC files become available in June. Apple has said that in most cases, the "Hi-Res Lossless" tier will require external devices like a USB DAC.

Apple uses the document to tout its "commitment" to providing customers with the best possible listening experience. It talks up both AAC – claiming that the format has become "virtually indistinguishable from the original studio recording" as encoding methods have evolved – and its Apple Digital Masters initiative. I continue to think that Apple is much more excited about spatial audio and Dolby Atmos mixes coming to Apple Music than anything to do with lossless itself.

The document also reiterates what Apple told *The Verge* earlier this week in regards to the AirPods Max: when listening to audio via the Lightning-to-3.5mm cable, the company says it'll sound fantastic, but it won't technically be "lossless" due to an analog to digital conversion that occurs in the cable. Apple again confirms that lossless quality will be exclusive to Apple Music:

> ***Can I redownload my iTunes purchases in lossless?***
>
> *If you subscribe to Apple Music, you can redownload music in lossless only from the Apple Music catalog.*

The straightforward answer to the question as written is really a flat "no," but obviously Apple wants to nudge people towards its subscription service. Apple Music will offer over 20 million songs in lossless quality at launch in June, and that total will reach over 75 million by the end of 2021.

https://www.theverge.com/2021/5/22/22448933/apple-music-lossless-homepod-mini-support-confirmed