

How to improve the quality of the audio in your streaming apps

When you load your music streaming app of choice onto your mobile device, your audio quality settings are worth taking a minute or two to configure. If you don't have these set to as high a quality as possible, you're missing out on the best audio experience your streaming apps can offer.

Because they are managed separately for streaming music over cell and Wi-Fi networks and for downloading tracks to your device for offline listening, there is a tradeoff. Increased sound quality and fidelity means more data gets used (which might be a concern if you're not on an unlimited cellular plan), bigger file sizes (which take up more room on your device), and a longer wait for downloads. But even if you have to compromise some settings, it's a good idea to at least see what your options are.

I've included instructions for four well-known music streaming services. If yours isn't included here, you should at least be able to use these as a template for checking if your app of choice has these options.

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`underline-gray-63` `[&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-13`
`dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-63">Downloads have similar`
`quality options.`

- From the **Home** tab in the Spotify app on Android or iOS,

tap your profile avatar (top left), then **Settings and privacy**.

- Scroll down to and select **Audio quality**.
- Free users have four options for streaming over Wi-Fi and over a cellular connection: **Automatic** (which adjusts the setting based on your internet connection), **Low**, **Medium** (or **Normal**), and **High**. (You may see **Very High** in the list of options, but you can't select it.) As per Spotify, the Low setting is the equivalent of 24kbps, Medium of 96kbps, High of 160kbps, and Very High of 320kbps.
- If you're a Premium subscriber, the **Very High** option is enabled, and you can download tracks, which has its own quality setting with the same five options.

There's also an **Auto-adjust quality** toggle switch that will temporarily reduce audio quality when you have a poor connection to avoid interruptions; otherwise, your configured setting applies.

If you want to store tracks on your device but are worried about file transfers affecting your data plan, turn off the **Download using cellular** (or **Download using mobile data**) toggle switch, which is near the bottom of the page. This means downloads, of whatever quality, only happen over Wi-Fi.

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Downloads.

**a: hover]: shadow-highlight-franklin
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gray-e9 dark: [>a: hover]: shadow-
underline-gray-63 [>a]: shadow-underline-
gray-13 dark: [>a]: shadow-underline-
gray-63">YouTube Music will keep sound
quality "always high," if you want it to.**

**YouTube Music quality settings are only
available if you're a Premium
subscriber.**

- Open the Home tab, then tap your
profile avatar (top right), and
choose Settings.**
- The audio quality options for
streaming and downloads are split up**

here. Pick Playback and restrictions to set the streaming quality over Wi-Fi and cellular connections or Downloads and storage to set the quality for tracks downloaded to your device.

- You can choose from Low, Normal, High, and Always high for streaming and from Low, Normal, and High for downloads. The official support page lists Low as up to 48kbps, Normal as up to 128kbps, and High and Always high as up to 256kbps. (YouTube Music, like Apple Music, uses AAC.)

While YouTube Music doesn't specify this anywhere, presumably, the Always high setting will maintain that top level of quality irrespective of the strength of your internet connection, while choosing High means the quality will be lowered if needed.

There's also a setting here for stopping downloads over cellular networks: on the

Downloads and storage page, enable
Download over Wi-Fi only.

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Amazon Music options depend
on your subscription.**