

Questions and Answers

If You Encounter Problems...

Some of the common problems that result in questions asked of me are discussed here:

Netscape and SoundApp:

Q: I've setup Netscape to use SoundApp as the sound helper application. However, whenever Netscape launches SoundApp it reports an end of file error and won't play the files. Why isn't it working?

A: The "file type" popup in Netscape's helper configuration pane is not set properly. "PLAY", which Netscape seems to default to, is a Play List. This setting will confuse SoundApp, since the file downloaded is not a Play List.

To setup Netscape to play Windows ".wav" files via SoundApp, to the following:

1. Open the "General Preferences" dialog and select the "Helpers" pane.
2. Edit the the following entry or create it if it doesn't already exist:
 - a. MIME Type: "audio/x-wav" and Suffixes: "wav".
 - b. Then under "Handled By" click the "Application:" radio button.
 - c. Click the "Browse..." button, find and select SoundApp.
 - d. Using the "File type:" pop-up menu, select "WAVE" for the File Type.
3. Repeat for the "audio/wav" MIME Type.

For other file formats, either edit an existing audio MIME type or create a new one for the desired type. Typically you'll receive an alert from Netscape telling you that it can't find an appropriate plug-in for a type. See the "Formats" section for likely suffixes, for example "au" for Sun Audio files.

MPEG:

Q: Why can't I play MPEG files?

A: SoundApp can only play MPEG files on PowerPC-based computers.

Q: OK, I have a PowerPC computer, but MPEG Layer III playback still doesn't work. Why not?

A: SoundApp can't yet play these on relatively slow PowerPC processor, especially those without Level 2 caches.

Q: Why does SoundApp refuse to play some MPEG audio files but not most others?

A: The MPEG audio files that will not play are most likely encoded using MPEG-2 instead of MPEG-1. MPEG-2 files can include multi-channel information and use a different encoding format for the MPEG bitstream. SoundApp cannot currently play MPEG-2 files.

Sound Playback:

Q: Why do some files (especially MPEG Layer III) start to play then stop?

A: Your computer's processor or disk drive is too slow. MPEG Layer III playback really needs a Level 2 cache to play properly.

QuickTime and Movies:

Q: Why does SoundApp only convert the first few seconds of some QuickTime soundtracks?

A: Currently SoundApp can only convert a single sound track in a movie. Some movies contain multiple sound tracks which contain the rest of the data. You can see these other sound tracks using the "Get Info" feature of Apple's MoviePlayer application.