AUDIOBOOK CHECKER

ACX CHECK FOR NARRATORS

23audio

Guide · version 1.0.5 · free

Audiobook Checker tells you if your chapters will pass ACX's sound checks, and what to fix if they won't. It doesn't change your audio.

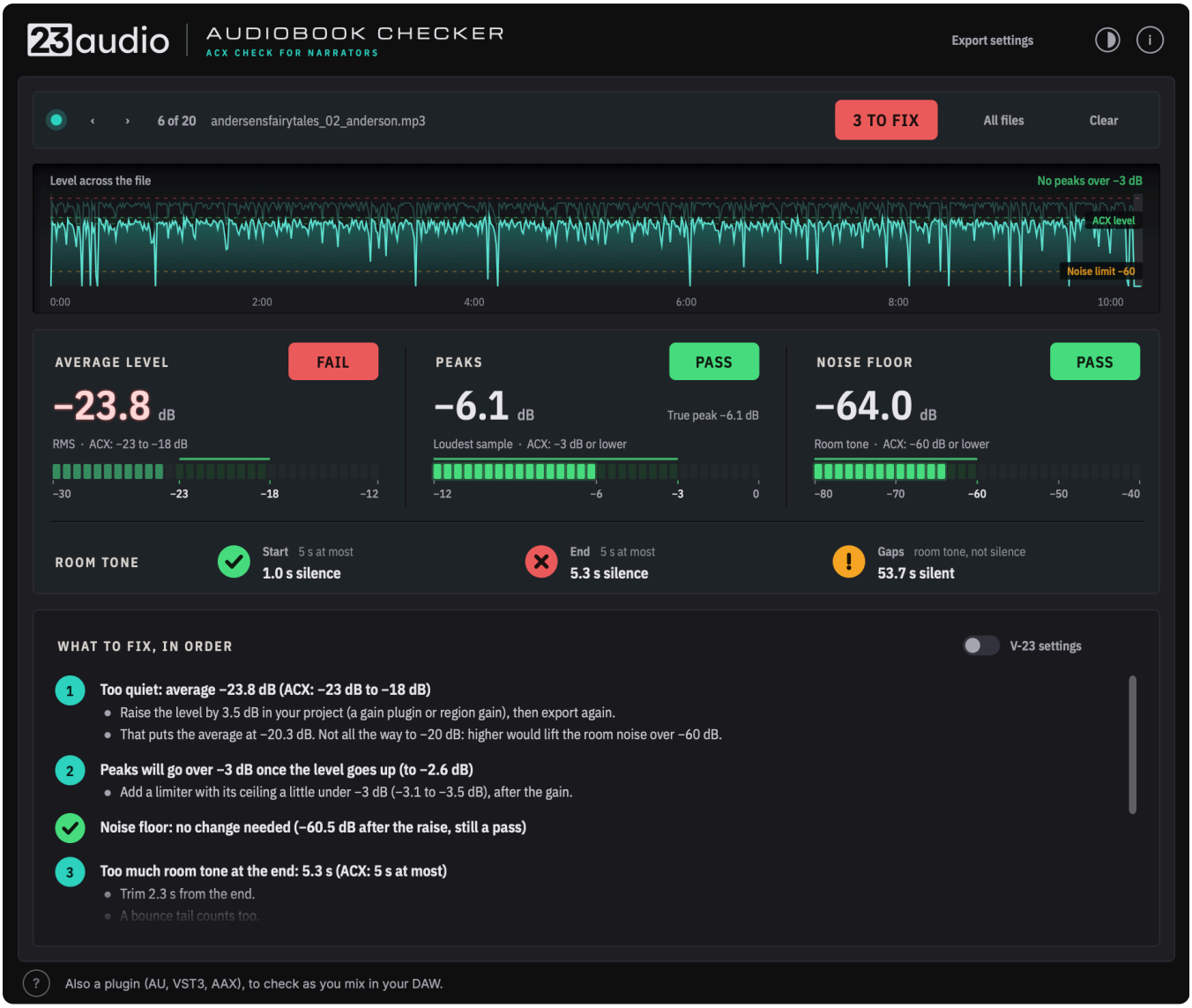
1 Install it

- **Mac:** double-click `Audiobook-Checker-1.0.5-mac.pkg` and follow the steps.
- **Windows:** double-click `Audiobook-Checker-1.0.5-windows.exe`. If a blue "Windows protected your PC" box appears, click **More info**, then **Run anyway**.

2 Check a chapter

1. Export your chapter as you'd send it to ACX (an MP3), or as a WAV.
2. Open **Audiobook Checker**.
3. Drag the file onto the window. You can drag several files, or a whole folder.

The result appears in a second or two.


23audio
AUDIOBOOK CHECKER
ACX CHECK FOR NARRATORS
Export settings
6 of 20
andersensfairytales_02_anderson.mp3
3 TO FIX
All files
Clear
Level across the file
No peaks over −3 dB
ACX level
Noise limit −60
0:00
2:00
4:00
6:00
8:00
10:00
AVERAGE LEVEL
FAIL
−23.8 dB
RMS · ACX: −23 to −18 dB
−30
−23
−18
−12
PEAKS
PASS
−6.1 dB
True peak −6.1 dB
Loudest sample · ACX: −3 dB or lower
−12
−6
−3
0
NOISE FLOOR
PASS
−64.0 dB
Room tone · ACX: −60 dB or lower
−80
−70
−60
−50
−40
ROOM TONE
Start 5 s at most
1.0 s silence
End 5 s at most
5.3 s silence
Gaps room tone, not silence
53.7 s silent
WHAT TO FIX, IN ORDER
V-23 settings
1
Too quiet: average −23.8 dB (ACX: −23 dB to −18 dB)
Raise the level by 3.5 dB in your project (a gain plugin or region gain), then export again.
That puts the average at −20.3 dB. Not all the way to −20 dB: higher would lift the room noise over −60 dB.
2
Peaks will go over −3 dB once the level goes up (to −2.6 dB)
Add a limiter with its ceiling a little under −3 dB (−3.1 to −3.5 dB), after the gain.
Noise floor: no change needed (−60.5 dB after the raise, still a pass)
3
Too much room tone at the end: 5.3 s (ACX: 5 s at most)
Trim 2.3 s from the end.
A bounce tail counts too.
Also a plugin (AU, VST3, AAX), to check as you mix in your DAW.

3 What it tells you

Top right: `PASSES ACX` means the chapter is ready. `2 TO FIX` means two things need fixing.

It checks	What that is	ACX's limit
Average level	How loud the chapter is overall	Between −23 and −18 dB
Peaks	The loudest moments	No higher than −3 dB
Noise floor	The background noise in your room	No higher than −60 dB
Room tone	The quiet before the first word and after the last	No more than 5 seconds
Gaps	The pauses between words	Should be room tone, not dead silence (a warning, not a fail)
File settings	MP3s only	192 kbps or higher, constant bit rate (CBR), 44.1 kHz

Each one gets **PASS** or **FAIL** (peaks a hair over −3 dB get **JUST OVER**, a warning). The line across the top shows the chapter's level from start to finish: red marks are peaks that are too loud. Hover over one to see when it happens.

4 Fix it

Under **What to fix, in order**, each problem is listed with exactly what to do. Do them **top to bottom**, then export the chapter again and drop the new file in.

If it says	Do this
Too quiet / too loud	Turn the chapter up or down by the amount it gives.
Peaks over −3 dB	Add a limiter last, set a little under −3 dB (−3.1 to −3.5 dB) so the MP3 doesn't push them over. If there are only a few, listen to them first: a pop or click is better fixed by hand.
Peaks just over −3 dB	A warning, not a fail: usual after MP3 encoding, and ACX usually accepts it. To be safe, set your limiter a little under −3 dB and export again.
Room noise too loud	Use noise reduction, gently. Next time, record somewhere quieter, closer to the mic.
Too much room tone	Trim the start or end to 5 seconds or less.
Short room tone	Add a second or two of quiet at the start or end.
Dead silence between words	On your noise gate, set the **range** to about −12 dB (in Logic's Noise Gate: the Reduction slider).
Wrong MP3 settings	Export again: MP3, 192 kbps or higher, constant bit rate (CBR), 44.1 kHz.

Got V-23 Voice Processor? Switch on **V-23 settings** to see each fix as V-23 settings.

5 A whole book

- Drag the book's folder onto the window.
- Use the arrows (or the left and right keys) to go from chapter to chapter.
- **All files** shows every chapter with a tick or a cross. It also tells you if your chapters don't match (some mono, some stereo).

- **Copy report** (in All files) copies a summary you can paste into an email.

6 In your DAW (optional)

It's also a plugin, for checking while you mix.

1. Put **Audiobook Checker** last on your main output.
2. Export (bounce) the chapter. Offline is fine.
3. The result appears when the export finishes.

Logic Pro	File › Bounce › Project or Section
Pro Tools	File › Bounce Mix (tick Offline)
Reaper	File › Render
Studio One	Song › Export Mixdown
Cubase	File › Export › Audio Mixdown
Ableton Live	File › Export Audio/Video

Clips in Pro Tools: use it in AudioSuite (AudioSuite › Sound Field › Audiobook Checker), on one clip or a whole edit before you bounce. Select the clip or clips, set the handle length beside **Render** to **0** so only your selection is measured, then click Render. The result shows under **Last clip**. For several clips, choose **entire selection** (not **clip by clip**) so they're checked as one chapter: clip by clip checks each one in turn and keeps only the last.

The plugin can't see your MP3 settings. To check those, drop the finished MP3 into the app.

7 Good to know

- **Bigger or smaller:** drag the window's corner, press **Cmd +** or **Cmd –** (Ctrl on Windows), or click the size at the bottom right. **Light or dark:** the half-circle at the top right. Point at anything and the bottom line says what it is (the **?** turns that off).
- A pass means the sound meets ACX's rules. ACX's reviewers also listen to it.
- Audiobook Checker isn't made or approved by ACX or Audible.
- **To uninstall:** on a Mac, drag Audiobook Checker from Applications to the Bin, and the plugins from Library › Audio › Plug-Ins (Components and VST3). On Windows, go to Settings › Apps › Installed apps › Audiobook Checker › Uninstall.

23audio · 23audio.com · support@23audio.com
Free to use. Using Audiobook Checker means agreeing to the licence agreement shown when you install it (also at 23audio.com/legal/eula).