

# How to Make Music Sound Like Hi-Res Audio Without Spending a Lot of Money

With just a few smart choices and simple upgrades, you can dramatically improve your audio experience without having to spend a fortune on expensive equipment.

Listening to Hi-Res music doesn't have to be expensive. With a few smart choices and simple upgrades, you can dramatically improve your audio experience without spending a fortune on expensive equipment.

## 1. Download and play lossless audio formats



If the audio itself is highly compressed, expensive hardware or a professionally installed audio setup is not an issue. There are many different audio formats. If you want to listen to Hi-Res music, you have to listen to lossless audio formats.

While compressed audio formats like MP3 and M4A require less storage space and are available in all music streaming apps, you'll have to skip them if you want to enjoy high-resolution music.

Use lossless audio formats like FLAC, ALAC, or WAV. These audio formats require more storage space because they are uncompressed and contain more data. You can find lossless music on streaming services like Amazon Music HD, Tidal, and Apple Music.

Make sure your playback device supports these formats. Many modern devices do, so this upgrade may not cost you anything extra.

## 2. Replace original headphone pads



The original ear pads on most headphones are made of cheap, wear-and-tear materials. Replacing them can significantly improve comfort and sound quality. Look for memory foam ear pads with a velvet coating for better balance and durability. Then, experiment and test to find the pads that fit your head and create a tight seal around your ears. This will improve bass response and reduce outside noise that can interfere with your listening experience.

## 3. Use a wired connection instead of a wireless connection



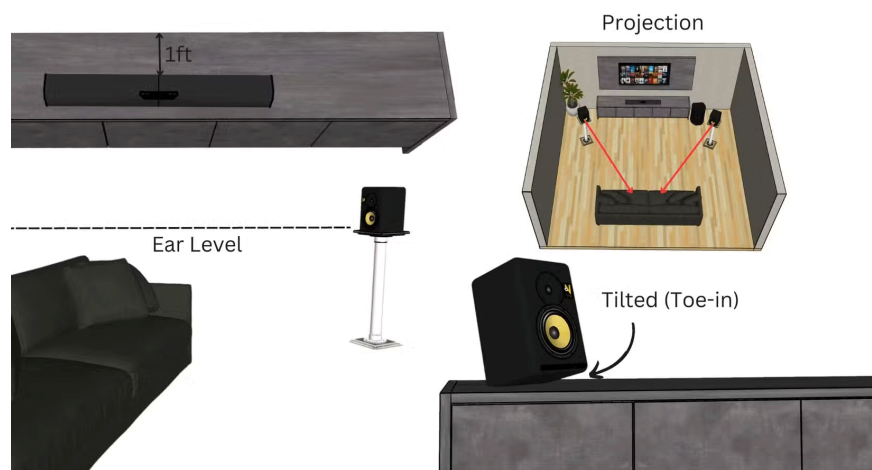
Most Bluetooth audio devices compress music to reduce signal bandwidth and deliver a consistent experience. This ensures faster response times and longer battery life. While convenient, compression reduces audio resolution. Many higher-end wireless headphones and speakers support LDAC, but unless you're willing to pay for it, you'll want to stick with a wired connection when playing Hi-Res music.

## 4. Experiment with EQ software

No audio device sounds perfect out of the box. Equalizer (EQ) software lets you tweak audio frequencies and customize your listening experience. You can start with free EQ tools like Equalizer APO (Windows) or eqMac (macOS). Many smartphones also have built-in EQ settings.

Boost the bass for electronic or hip-hop tracks and boost the treble for classical or acoustic tracks. When using EQ on Hi-Res audio, keep in mind that too much bass can make the treble sound muddy, and too much treble can make the sound harsh or unpleasant to listen to over time. Aim for a balanced approach that complements your audio type and personal preferences. Experiment with small adjustments and test them on different tracks to find the ideal setting for your ears.

## 5. Adjust speaker position



Speaker placement has a huge impact on sound quality. Even the best speakers won't work well if they're not placed properly. Here's how you want to place your speakers:

1. Place the speaker at ear level for optimal sound transmission.
2. Keep them equidistant from your listening position to maintain a balanced stereo effect.
3. Avoid placing the speaker too close to a wall or corner, as this will cause bass distortion.
4. The speaker angle is slightly inward for a more focused sound field.

Experiment with different positions until you find the layout that works best for your room.

## 6. Speakers with built-in dampers

Cheap speakers often vibrate or resonate, which distorts the sound. Adding damping material inside can help reduce these problems. You'll need to open up the speaker's cabinet/case and line the inside with foam or polyfill. These materials absorb unwanted vibrations, creating a cleaner sound.

## 7. Buy a cheap DAC



If you've done everything on this list and you're still not happy with the sound quality, you'll need to buy a dedicated DAC (Digital-to-Analog Converter). Most built-in DACs in phones and laptops prioritize cost over performance, which can impact sound quality. Upgrading to a dedicated DAC can transform your listening experience.

A good DAC uses 'audio-specific components,' making them the most expensive upgrade on this list. However, some DACs are relatively cheap for what they offer. For an affordable DAC, check out the FiiO JadeAudio KA3 for phones and laptops, or the AIYIMA+DAC+A1 for speaker setups.

Improving the sound quality of your music doesn't have to be a huge budget. Try these tips and rediscover your favorite songs in a whole new way! Great sound doesn't have to require expensive equipment; it's about making the most of what you have.

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