

Failsafe Media Company

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CD-ROM Premastering Format Specifications

The following guideline for masters submitted on CD-ROM, is designed to help you decide the best format for your software. Conforming to these guidelines will help assure that discs replicated from your masters will perform to your requirements and expectations.

All masters submitted to Failsafe must be "closed" or unappendable. Most commercial authoring programs will give you the option to write the disc as "disc-at-once", this option will close your CD-ROM after writing is completed.

DOS Windows 3.11

ISO 9660 (level 1) is the preferred standard for writing discs targeted for the DOS and Windows 3.1/WFW 3.11 operating systems. 11 characters maximum for Volume Label, 11 characters maximum for the [8.3] file system. Legal characters are: A through Z, 0 through 9, _ (underscore). CDs produced with this standard offer the greatest amount of cross- platform compatibility.

Windows 95/98/NT

ISO 9660 (level 3) is the preferred standard for writing discs targeted for the Windows 95/98/NT operating systems. 32 Character 11 characters maximum for Volume Label, 32 characters maximum for file names. Legal characters are: A through Z, 0 through 9, (underscore). 64 Character ISO 9660 (Joliet) is the preferred standard for writing discs targeting operating systems supporting 64 character file names. 11 characters maximum for Volume Label, 64 characters maximum for file names. Legal characters are: A through Z, 0 through 9, (underscore).

Macintosh

Apple HFS is the preferred standard for writing discs targeted for the Apple Macintosh operating systems. 31 characters maximum for Volume Label, 31 characters maximum for file names. No naming restrictions. The Apple HFS standard creates CD-ROMs that perform like native Macintosh volumes. Discs manufactured under this specification will only function on Apple platforms and do not conform to ISO standards.

Windows/Macintosh

Hybrid is the preferred standard for writing discs that will perform natively in Windows and Macintosh operating systems. Disc is partitioned in two allowing an ISO9660 portion and an Apple HFS portion.

Unix

ISO 9660 (Rockridge) is the preferred standard for writing discs targeted for Unix operating systems. 11 characters maximum for Volume Label, 256 characters maximum for file names. For Unix file systems allowing mixed case file names. Legal characters are Aa through Zz, 0 through 9, and (underscore).

Multimedia

CD-ROM/XA A non-operating systems specific standard for writing encoded audio and video combined with computer data files. The CD-ROM/XA standard should NEVER be used for mastering data CD's. Encoded audio and video refers to non-platform specific audio and video striped to the CD, not audio and video computer files such as: QuickTime, AVI, or Wav files. Anyone mastering with this standard should be fully aware of the intended application and intricacies of this standard. Failsafe strongly advises against using CD-ROM/XA for the distribution of standard computer data, i.e. programs, software, archived data, etc.

Master Creation Tips

“CD/DVD Master” is the disc you provide to your CD/DVD Vendor for Replication or duplication of that media. Here are some helpful tips for creating a high quality master:

- Always use high quality media. All media is not the same. Do your research and choose a brand that will produce a high quality disc consistently.
- Avoid burning from a network source. If your source files are on a network drive, copy the files to your local hard drive before burning a disc. If you cannot move the files to your local drive, please use the “Copy to Hard Drive First” feature. Your burning software will create a temporary image file during the burning process. When the burn is complete, the temporary file is deleted.
- Always avoid burning on a laptop computer running on battery power. Fluctuations in available power may yield poor results.
- Always “Finalize” your disc. If you use the drag and drop interface that is built into some operating systems (Windows XP), be sure to select the “Finalize Disc” option. This will increase the “Read” compatibility in other CD-ROM drives.
- Do not use the packet-writing method to burn master disc. This method is most common with burner drives that have “re-write” capabilities. It is similar to the “drag and drop” method described above. This burn method produces discs that cannot be read on many CD-ROM drives.
- We cannot accept a master that is burned to a Re-Writable (CD-/RW or DVD+RW) disc.
- Avoid impact or movement of the drive during burn. This causes the laser to skip or jump a track, which will produce errors or a bad disc.
- Use “burn-proof” feature if available. This feature allows the drive to slow down the burn speed in the event the computer cannot supply data fast enough. This can increase the total burn time, but the quality of the disc will be greater.
- Avoid having multiple applications open when burning, especially those that access the internet or network. This can hinder your computer’s ability to “feed” data to the burner drive at the proper rate. There are exceptions and variables to all the statements above.