

What is a DAW?



In simple terms, a *Digital Audio Workstation* is a device where you create and manipulate digital audio.

Before the era of personal computing, a DAW would be a complex piece of (expensive) hardware which was only within reach of music studios or artists of name and fame.

A good example of an early DAW is the Fairlight CMI (Computer Musical Instrument), released in the late 70's of the previous century. This Fairlight was also one of the first to offer a digital sampler. The picture at the left of this page is its monitor with a light-pen input.

These days, the name "DAW" is often used for the actual software used to produce music, like the free [Ardour](#), [LMMS](#), or the commercial [Ableton Live](#), [FL Studio](#), [Cubase](#), [Pro Tools](#), etcetera.

But "Digital Audio Workstation" also applies to the computer on which this software is running and whose software and hardware is tailored to the task of creating music. To make it easier for musicians who use Linux, you can find a number of custom distributions with a focus on making electronic music, such as [StudioWare](#) (Slackware based), [AV Linux](#) (Debian based), [QStudio64](#) (Mint based), so that you do not have to spend a lot of time configuring your Operating System and toolkits.

Overview of DAW related content

Page	Description	Tags
Slackware Live DAW: Compensating Latency	Slackware Live DAW: Compensating Latency Overview of Latency and its Sources Audio data is moved in "chunks", called buffers, which contain a number of audio samples. The buffer takes time to fill up, due to the fact that a system runs at a fixed sample rate. The size of the buffer is determined by the	howtos , multimedia , daw , audio , author 0xbf
Slackware Live DAW: Connecting MIDI Devices	Slackware Live DAW: Connecting MIDI Devices Introduction MIDI devices can be connected using a MIDI cable into a MIDI port of an audio interface, or with a USB cable directly to a computer. In either case the MIDI connection will be handled by ALSA so the MIDI connections may not be present in JACK/QJackCtl's connection graph. There are several methods of bridging MIDI from ALSA into JACK.	howtos , daw , multimedia , midi , author 0xbf
Slackware Live DAW: Minimizing Latency	Slackware Live DAW: Minimizing Latency When is Minimal Latency Actually Needed? Low latency in a digital audio workstation is needed when providing live playback to the artist. If audio coming from the monitor is delayed from the action of playing an instrument or singing, it interferes with the artist's ability to keep in time. This applies to recording a musician or vocalist with live monitoring, playing a live show with software instruments, mixing a live show through a DAW, or any other wo...	howtos , multimedia , daw , audio , author 0xbf

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Sources

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