

The KAudioCreator Handbook

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The KAudioCreator Handbook

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Abstract

KAudioCreator is an audio CD ripper by KDE.

Chapter 1

Introduction

KAudioCreator is an audio CD ripper by KDE. With it you can easily rip your audio CDs to mp3 or ogg files or other formats, depending on whatever encoder you have installed on your system.

KAudioCreator is a frontend to `cdparanoia` (for ripping the CD data to wav files on your hard disk) and many encoders which encode (compress) these wav files. Currently `lame` for mp3, `oggenc` for oggs and `flac` (lossless compression) are supported out of the box (you may still need to install these encoder packages from your distro). But you can add more encoders with the program (if you have them installed).

In general ripping an audio CD is a 2 step process:

- first the CD tracks/songs are ripped to the computer into wav files (lossless, uncompressed) and then
- in a second step these wav files (usually one per song) are compressed into mp3 or ogg format or other formats like the lossless flac.

For the 1st step, the ripping of the CD, KAudioCreator uses `cdparanoia`. Nearly every distro has a pre-compiled package, so install it, if you haven't done so already.

For the 2nd step you need `lame` (for mp3), `oggvorbis` (for ogg) or other encoders to be installed. All these programs are usually provided for whatever linux distribution you may have, so it is most likely not necessary to compile anything yourself. You just might need to install any of these packages. You only have to install the encoder package you want to need. If you for instance don't need flac, there is no need to install it.

What encoder/file format to use? The [What encoder](#) chapter gives you a small introduction about encoders, audio quality and compression factors.

One word to copy protected audio CDs: As already said, KAudioCreator uses `cdparanoia` to rip the audio data from the CD. This program is not designed to crack any copy protection. So unless your CD/DVD-player firmware circumvents the protection, you will fail to rip protected audio CDs. In any case KAudioCreator itself cannot handle or work around any protection mechanism. You better avoid buying copy protected audio CDs!

This handbook will tell you how to rip a CD with this program. Beside the usual explanation of the programs commands and settings, there is a special section with a [full walkthrough example](#). At first you will learn how to set the general settings. This includes your CD drive (device ID), the folder for temporary files, the main destination folder, in which a subfolder named according your choice from the CD parameters will be created for each CD, the encoder to use (like `lame` for mp3s or `oggvorbis` for oggs) and among other settings whether you want to use `freedb` to fetch the data for your CD from the Internet or whether you want to enter all data manually.

While the setup has only to be done once (you can however tweak it as often as you like until you find a suitable setup for yourself), you will then learn the daily business of ripping a CD to the

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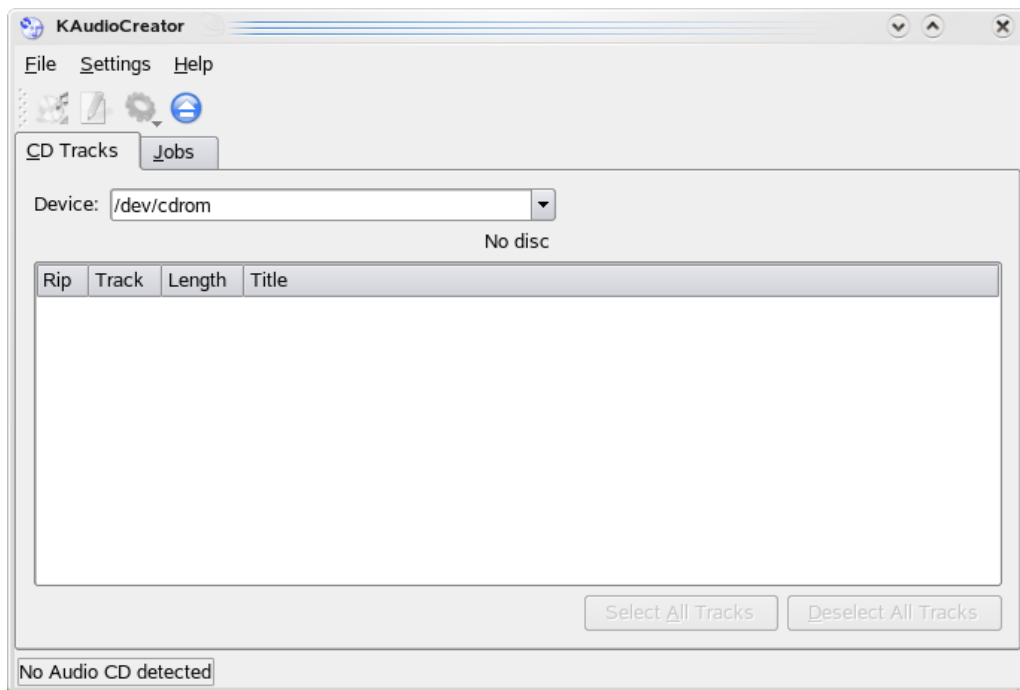
harddrive. It is (hopefully) then when you will understand and learn to like the lean approach of the interface you may have stumbled over at first.

Last remark, KAudioCreator is a very flexible program which can invoke many encoders. Therefore this handbook does not cover every possible command and setting. Use it as a starting point to explore the program yourself if you feel the need for more than what is covered here. Usually more information about the encoder programs (app-name) which are called by KAudioCreator can be obtained by opening a console and typing **man app-name**, **app-name -help**, **app-name --help** or **app-name -h**.

Chapter 2

Using KAudioCreator

After the start of the program, it should look somehow like this screen:



This is the main window after starting the program.

2.1 A short list of KAudioCreator features

- can encode to many formats - depends on what encoder programs you have installed (mp3, ogg, flac etc.)
- can fetch CD information from freedb via the Internet or you can work completely off line, entering everything manually
- can add tags to the created files - depends on what format you encode to
- set folder names and song names according free adjustable combinations of CD information

Chapter 3

Command Reference

This is just a brief list of the commands of the main window. See the [full walkthrough example](#) for more details how to use this program and screenshots with descriptions about the program configuration tabs.

3.1 The main KAudioCreator window

3.1.1 The File Menu

File → **Eject CD (Ctrl+E)**

Opens the drive bay and ejects the CD.

File → **CDDDB Lookup (Ctrl+D)**

Starts the CDDDB lookup of the CD data according your settings from the **Lookup** tab on the **CDDDB** page. (Can be local or online, in the later case you have to connect to the Internet first.)

File → **Edit Album... (Ctrl+A)**

Opens the Album Editor window.

File → **Select All Tracks (Ctrl+Shift+A)**

Selects all tracks for processing (ripping and, if set up, encoding).

File → **Deselect All Tracks (Ctrl+Shift+D)**

Deselects all tracks for processing.

File → **Rip Selection (Ctrl+S)**

Starts the ripping and, if an encoder is selected on the **Encoder Configuration** tab in the settings dialog, the encoding.

File → **Rip (Ctrl+R)**

Opens a sub-menu with a list of the available encoders, so you can rip a selection with another encoder than the standard one. Note, that the encoder should have been configured on the **Encoder Configuration** tab in the settings dialog.

File → **Remove Completed Jobs (Ctrl+J)**

Remove the completed jobs from the **Jobs** window.

File → Encode Files from disk (Ctrl+F)

Opens a file browser so you can select an already ripped file to encode rather than rip and encode a complete CD.

File → Quit (Ctrl+Q)

Quits KAudioCreator.

3.1.2 The Settings and Help Menu

KAudioCreator has the common KDE **Settings** and **Help** menu items, for more information read the sections about the [Settings Menu](#) and [Help Menu](#) of the KDE Fundamentals.

Chapter 4

Choosing the encoder or file format

This chapter is about audio quality, encoders and compression rates and helps you to choose the right encoder

If you don't want to lose any audio information you need a lossless audio format. Beside flac there are others like shorten or monkey, which may be available for your distro. The down side is that the compression rates will be low and hardly any commercial device can play these files.

Between the audio formats which do lose information due to data compression according their psychoacoustic model, mp3 and ogg are the most common. ogg may today have a slight advantage over mp3 in audio quality on lower bit rates (up to 128 kbps), but above that rate the differences become less important, as both encoders produce very good audio quality.

In short:

flac

- + lossless compression
- + free
- + very good audio quality (lossless)
- - low compression rate (probably only around 2.x)
- - hardware player support not existing (afaik)

ogg

- - loss of audio information (amount depends on final bit rate)
- + free
- + good to very good (high bit rates) audio quality
- + high compression rate (depending on resulting audio quality)
- - poor hardware player support

mp3

- - loss of audio information (amount depends on final bit rate)
- o 'not so' free, lame comes for free with most distros but there are license issues
- + good to very good (high bit rates) audio quality, though slightly lower at lower bit rates compared to ogg

- + high compression rate (depending on resulting audio quality)
- + good hardware player support

As mentioned before, mp3 and ogg both are audio formats with which you will lose sound information in the end. You cannot revert back to the original once you have the mp3/ogg files. You can create wav files of these and even burn them back onto a CD to play them on a CD-Player (while DVD-players usually can play both, wav and mp3, mostly not ogg) but the wav files generated from a mp3 or ogg will not be as good as the original. In reality, depending on your HiFi system and the compression rate you chose when creating the mp3s/oggs, you might not even hear a difference. However, if you do not want to lose any sound information but still want to compress your wave files, you should take a look into flac, shorten or monkey. But these encoders will not compress much better than the factor of 2.x .

In most cases you will decide between ogg and mp3. Go for

ogg - if you want to listening to the music only via your computer or a computer based music server and/or you already have one of the few ogg playing players.

mp3 - if you want to listen to your music on other devices as well, like standard DVD players, portable players (USB stick, flash card, HD) or special car stereos. Today, early 2009, most of these devices only support the mp3 format.

Qualitywise both audio formats should be just fine, depending the compression rate you choose. For mp3 (and most likely ogg too) a bit rate of 128 kbps results in a compression rate of 11 compared to the original wav file which is stored on the CD. That might be good during travel but is not sufficient for a good home HiFi stereo system. 192 kbps is a good compromise even for you HiFi system in your living room. This would give you a compression rate of 7.3 .

Already years ago experts were not able to differentiate a 256 kbps mp3 from the CD original and that was in a blind test with a HiFi system which you might never be able to effort. That still will reduce the storage space of the original wav by the factor of 5.5. On most modern systems you can as well use variable bit rate. Here the encoder varies the bit rate depending the complexity of the music according to its psychoacoustic model. The lame setting '--preset extreme' generates a file with a VBR (variable bit rate in opposite to CBR, constant bit rate) of 224 to 256 kbps, depending the complexity of the music. This will compress the original by a factor up to 6.3 and will play on nearly everything currently on the market.

Unless you have an extremely expensive equipment (we are talking of thousands of Euros or US Dollars) and an extremely well trained ear, you will most likely not hear a difference to the maximum possible CBR rate of 320 kbps. Even that would still result in a compression rate of 4.4 . By the way, the setting '--preset extreme' will in fact use 320 kbps for complex music parts while compressing less complex music much higher to achieve the average bit rate of 224 to 256 kbps.

A short list of audio quality parameters and resulting compression rates for lame (mp3s) (check lame --help for more):

- '--preset medium' = This preset should provide near transparency to most people on most music
- '--preset standard' = This preset should generally be transparent to most people on most music and is already quite high in quality. Good enough for high quality home HiFi systems.
- '--preset extreme' = 224 to 256 kbps VBR, compression rate up to 6.3 . Uses up to 320 kbps for complex music parts and way less for less complex parts of the song. Good enough for high quality home HiFi systems. This should be the preferred choice.
- '--preset extreme -b 256' = 256 kbps CBR, compression rate around 5.5 . Uses always 256 kbps for complex and not so complex music parts of the song. Some older players need CBRs. Good enough for high quality home HiFi systems.
- '-h' = 128 kbps CBR joint stereo, compression rate about 11 . 128 kbps for all parts of the song. Good enough for kids music, portable players and, well, car stereos. Not good enough for better home Hifi systems, though.

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- '--preset insane' = 320kbps CBR. This preset will usually be overkill for most people and most situations, but if you must have the absolute highest quality with no regard to filesize, this is the way to go.

Chapter 5

CD info parameters

The CD information you enter or the program fetches automatically from freedb via the Internet, is available as a list of parameters within the program which can be parsed to/used with KAudioCreator and the encoder programs in order to create folder and file names and or generate tags in the song files.

When used with encoder programs, often you have to use a combination of program switches from the encoder program and these parameters here. The manual or help of the encoders will tell you the switches for these programs.

E. g. to add the CD title to a tag when encoding mp3s with lame you have to add the `-tt` switch from lame followed by the title parameter from KAudioCreator. The result looks then like `'... -tt {title} ...'`.

This is a summary of the parameters from KAudioCreator you can use (= button name in the wizard):

- `{albumartist}` - album artist (Artist)
- `{albumtitle}` - album title (Album)
- `{artist}` - song artist (Track Artist)
- `{albumcomment}` - album comment (Comment)
- `{comment}` - song comment (Track Comment)
- `{extension}` - file extension like mp3 or ogg (Extension)
- `{genre}` - music genre (Genre)
- `{title}` - song title of current track (Track Title)
- `{number}` - number of current track (Track Number)
- `{~}` - standard linux shortcut for the users home folder (Home Folder)

Chapter 6

freedb - what's that?

You are not alone with your wish to listen to your music independently of your audio CD. People all over the world are ripping their CDs and converting it into a different format. Everybody makes the same experience: The most time consuming part in this process is the input of the CD data. So some smart people had the idea, that it would be much more efficient, if only one person would do this for every CD and the rest could just fetch the CD data and save the typing work.

That's what freedb is, a free database where audio CD rippers can input/upload the infos of a CD so that everybody else can download this information rather than typing it into the computer each by themselves. Note, we are only talking text here: CD title, artist, song names etc., not the audio file itself.

So is it legal and save to use?

Yes, it should be legal, but I am not a lawyer. However, nobody can prevent you from issuing the CD information which is openly available on the CD anyhow. And better, without the CD the info is more or less pointless, so no damage can be done to the artists or the audio companies. You can obtain all the information anyhow by strolling through a CD shop, physically or online.

Save to use? Well, for retrieving the CD information, you do not need to reveal any personal data yourself. There are freedb mirrors in many countries and you can even download the database to work off-line. (Be warned, now in early 2009 it is already a 620 MB tar.bz2 file!). You are asked to setup a mail address to fetch data, but this can be a faked one. I would actually recommend this, to ensure that your mail address is not accidentally be slipped to public and you are ending up getting lots of spam mail. The initiator of the service claim they will not track or store your data (so why asking for it anyhow??) and then, many mirrors are in the hands of trusted institutions.

In KAudioCreator you have to actively check a box to enable smtp (sending of an address) and you can specify a different (faked) address to use with freedb other than the one the system is set up with. The way the configuration is designed, it seems, that the email address is not used when retrieving data from the server. (But I am not the programmer, haven't checked the code.)

However, to be able to give feedback the initiators of freedb ask that in case you submit data (about a new, not yet listed CD or a correction of an existing entry) you should do so with a valid email address. It's a great service, so respect this wish in case you want to and have something to contribute! There shouldn't be anything to worry beside the fact that your mail address might fall into the wrong hands and you receive (more) spam. (You may just not want to use your 'best' address). Please read carefully the corresponding FAQ and How-To's at freedb.org if you think you have a CD which data has not yet been submitted to the database.

There are mirrors of the master database in many countries. When you set up KAudioCreator to use freedb, please use the mirror nearest to you. This saves bandwidth on the net and balances the load between the servers.

Visit freedb.org to get an up-to-date list of mirrors for online retrieval of CD information every time you rip a CD or to download the full database or (usually monthly created) updates of the database.

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Oh, how does it work?

Well due to some magic a (not so) unique ID is automatically generated from the CD data when it is entered/present in the drive. That might be the number of tracks and their length and/or other things. See freedb.org for more information. Funny enough but unfortunately, the created ID does not seem to be unique for each CD. So sometimes a CD has to be sorted into a wrong category, out of the 11 defined by freedb, because there is already a CD with the same key in the database for the correct category. For backward compatibility they don't want to change the key generation. However, that should be only exceptional. :-) Check freedb.org for the categories before submitting. For instance the category rock holds pop and rap CDs as well, as there does not exist a category pop or rap.

Chapter 7

Questions and Answers

1. *What ripper (program) is used to extract the songs from the CD into wav files on my computer?*

Well, I haven't scanned the source but rumor has it, that `cdparanoia` is used for that. That has always been the best choice for ripping audio CDs. Note, that you have to install the `cdparanoia` package from your distro, if it isn't already.

Meanwhile `cdda2wav` has caught up and there might be areas, like mixed mode CDs, where it has surpassed `cdparanoia`. For simple CD ripping `cdda2wav` uses now the same library as `cdparanoia`. However, this info is of not much use for you as you cannot change the CD ripper in KAudioCreator. In case you have problems ripping a CD and you want to try `cdda2wav` you have to use another program like `grip`, a ripper using `gtk` and which let's you define the ripper program you want to use.

2. *What encoders/file formats are supported? Can I create mp3 or ogg files?*

You can choose the encoder and therefore the file format you want to turn the ripped wav files into. On first opening you will find pre-defined entries for `lame` (mp3s), `oggenc` (oggs) and `flac` (a lossless compression audio format) on the encoder setup tab. But you can add other encoders on that tab as well.

Note, that you have to install the encoder package from your distro for the encoder you want to use first, before you can use the encoder. (That's required even for the pre-defined encoders!). Take a look at the [What encoder](#) chapter for more information about encoders.

After installation of an encoder you can get more information about its switches by typing something like `lame -help` or `lame --help` in a console (e.g. `konsole`). While 'lame' has to be replaced by the name of the encoder you installed.

3. *The program is not working, no encoded files are produced.*

There are many possible reasons for that. Check the CD/DVD drive device ID setting, access/read permission and whether you have installed `cdparanoia` and the audio encoder of your choice (`lame` for mp3s, `oggenc` for oggs, `flac` etc.). Try invoking both programs from a command line in a terminal. That might give you a hint what's wrong.

Check if you don't try to rip a copy protected audio CD. Verify it on the cover of the CD. This won't work!

There is a chapter with a [full walkthrough example](#). Even if you want to use different settings it might give you a hint how to proceed.

Chapter 8

Example from a first start over the basic setup to the first rip of a CD

Do you have read the complete handbook, understood everything and somehow still unsure what to do? Well, no problem, follow this step by step example and you will get enough information to adjust just those areas which will the program make do exactly what you want.

In this example we will start the program for the first time, set everything up and rip our first CD. We will use lame '--preset extreme' to create mp3s with a VBR (Variable Bit Rate) of 224 to 256 kbps in average and ID3V1 tags.

You need to have cdparanoia and lame installed on your system. Both programs should be available as a pre-compiled package for your linux distribution. However, you might need to ask a search engine to find a suitable package of lame, as sometimes it is considered to be not totally free. In any case you might not need to compile from source which, of course, you always can.

The structure how we organize our music on the hard disk is:

- main dir name for all CDs : /usr/share/cd
- in that for each CD a subdir named : cdartist - cdtitle - year
- in the subdir the song names : track# - tracktitle

In summary : /usr/share/cd/cdartist - cdtitle - year/track# - tracktitle

Please make sure, that the folder /usr/share/cd exists and that you have write permission on it (e.g. try to copy something to it with konqueror).

The example is divided into 2 sections:

- the first covering the basic setup of KAudioCreator, something you might only do once and
- the second describing the process of actually ripping a CD, which you will have to repeat for every CD you rip.

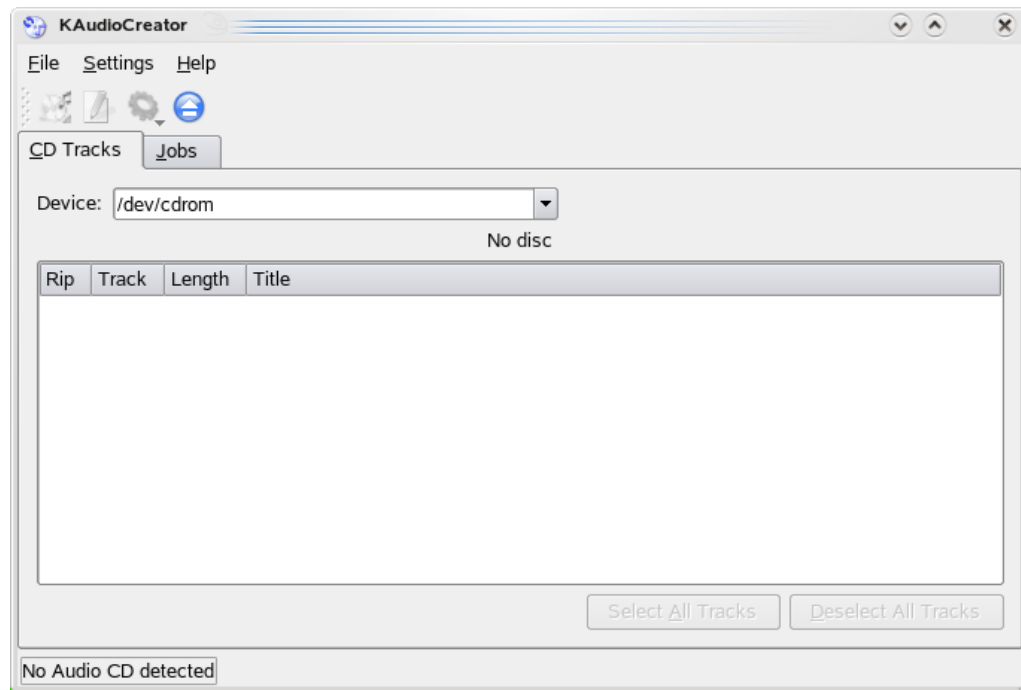
8.1 E 1 Basic Setup

Here we set the encoder to use to compress the music (lame) and so the audio file format (mp3) as well as the resulting audio quality (--preset extreme => VBR 224 to 256 kbps). You define where the files will go and what structure will be used to store them. We set the program to use freedb to get the CD data via Internet as we are lazy.

While you can always change any of these settings, you will most likely don't change them every time you rip a CD once you found a convenient setup.

E 1.1 Step 01: Setting the device ID for your CD/DVD drive/writer

On the main window:



set **Device:** to `/dev/cdrom`

The device ID is parsed to the ripper program so it can read the CD data/songs.

Often `/dev/cdrom` is a symlink to the actual device ID from your drive. If that does not work or you have more than one CD/DVD drive, you can give the exact device ID. If you can access your drive with other programs, take a look into `/etc/fstab` and try the device entries for CD-ROM and or DVD-drives listed there.

If there is nothing in there, you first have to check the kernel version of your machine

Your machine is running kernel 2.6:

If you happen to have one of the common ATAPI (or IDE) drives, with kernel 2.6 the device ID will range from `/dev/hda` to `/dev/hdd`. The master on channel 2 is a good starting point: that would be `/dev/hdc`. If your hard disks are all S-ATA, `/dev/hda` will probably do the trick. Native SCSI drives will start from `/dev/sda` unless you have S-ATA hard disks, which come first in the list, so depending on the number of disks the CD/DVD drive will start at `/dev/sdb` or `/dev/sdc`.

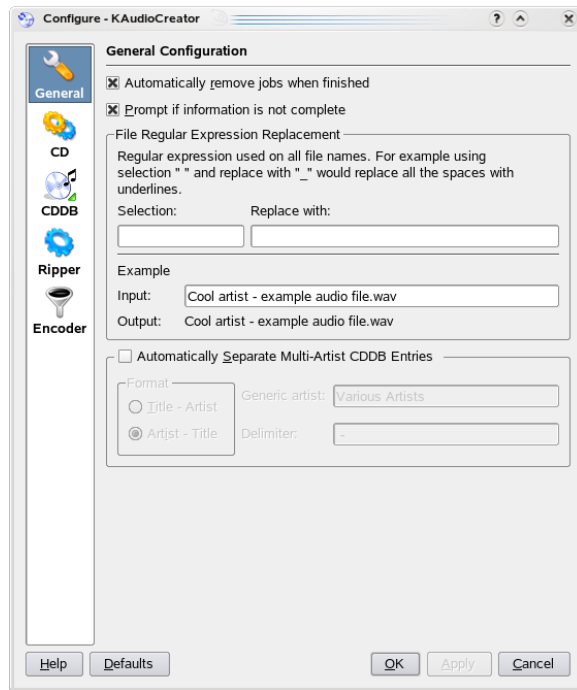
Running kernel 2.4:

CD/DVD drives are accessed via SCSI, so the devices start at `/dev/sda`.

E 1.2 Step 02: General Configuration Tab

Settings -> Configure KAudioCreator... -> General

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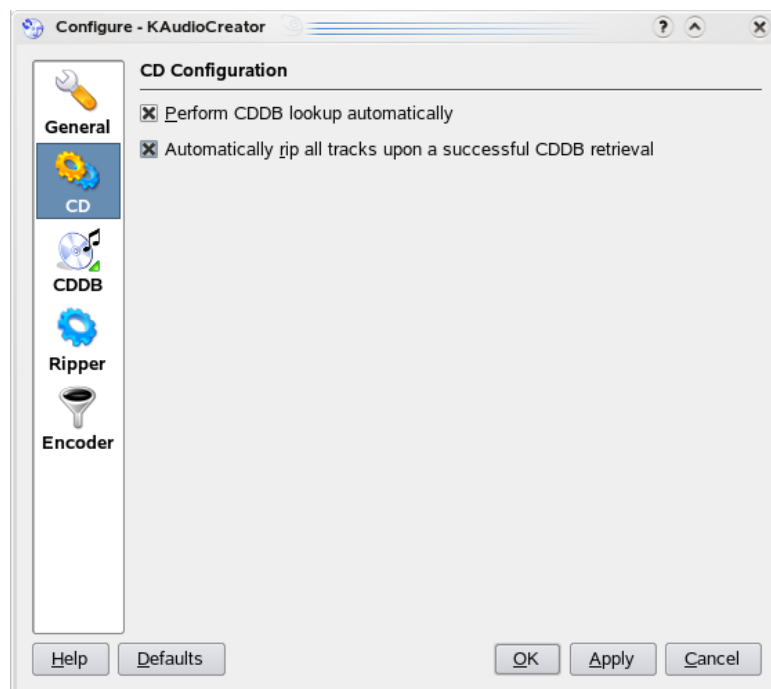


The **General Configuration** tab. There is not much to do here. You could define some additional formatting though. For our example, just enter/leave everything as shown in the screenshot.

Just check **Prompt if information is not complete**, so you will get informed when some infos for generating tags are not available.

E 1.3 Step 03: CD Configuration Tab

Settings -> Configure KAudioCreator... -> CD



The **CD Configuration** tab. Just check both entries. We are lazy and want that the CD data is fetched automatically via the Internet from a freedb server.

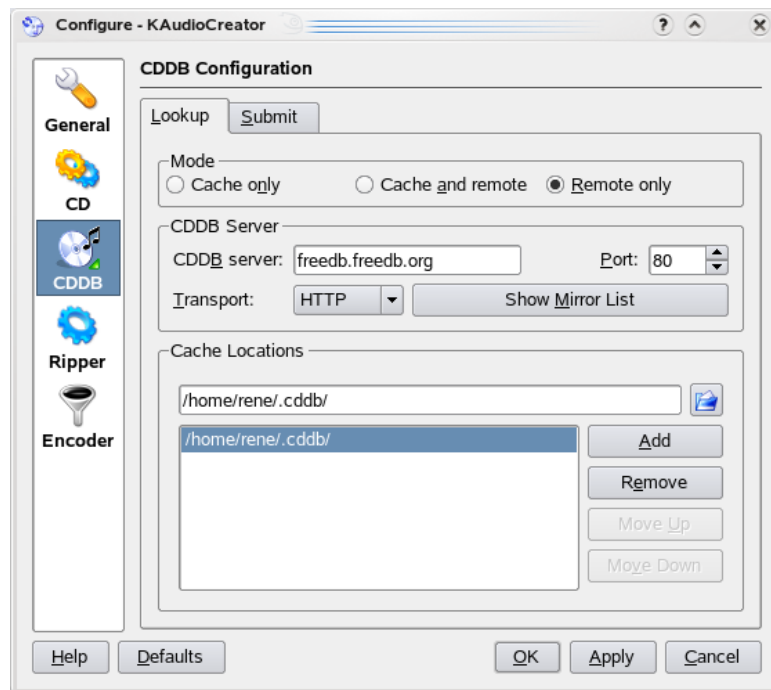
Note, you need to be online when ripping the CD to be able to access the freedb server.

The second box is convenient, as if a CD entry is found, the CD will be ripped immediately. That's low risk, because if you are later unhappy with the database entry and the resulting directory/file names or tag entries, you can easily change them. The folder and file names with konqueror->rename and the id3 tags with kid3, the KDE tagger.

Further note apart from this example: If you want to enter everything manually uncheck the boxes and freedb will not be used. You can use freedb locally in off-line mode if you download the database before. However, this will be over 620 MB so think twice if it's worth it. To use freedb in off-line mode, you need to check the boxes here, at least the first one. The mode is set on the following tab.

E 1.4 Step 04: CDDB Configuration Lookup Tab

Settings -> Configure KAudioCreator... -> CDDB -> Lookup tab



CDDB, that's freedb for us. The settings used for the data lookup, for retrieving the CD information from the freedb server via the Internet. How does the system know what data to get? Read [the section about freedb](#). Just set everything as in the screenshot.

Short explanation:

Mode: We haven't downloaded the database, so we want to work remote with the Internet server only.

CDDB Server: Please go to freedb.org and look up a mirror near you. This way the load is balanced between the mirror servers. However, as a first try, this setting should work.

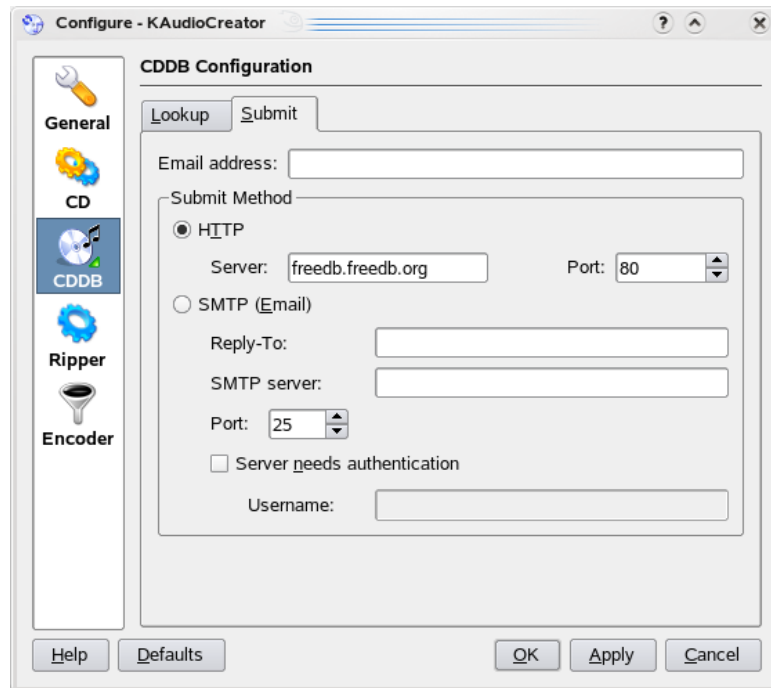
Port and Transport: There are 2 combinations, which even the mirrors should understand.

- Port=80 and Transport=HTTP
- Port=8880 and Transport=CDDB

Both work equally regarding the server, but as many firewalls are blocking Port 8880 by default, you may have better luck with Port 80, as the HTTP port is usually open for browsing the Internet.

E 1.5 Step 05: CDDB Configuration Submit Tab

Settings -> Configure KAudioCreator... -> CDDB -> Submit tab

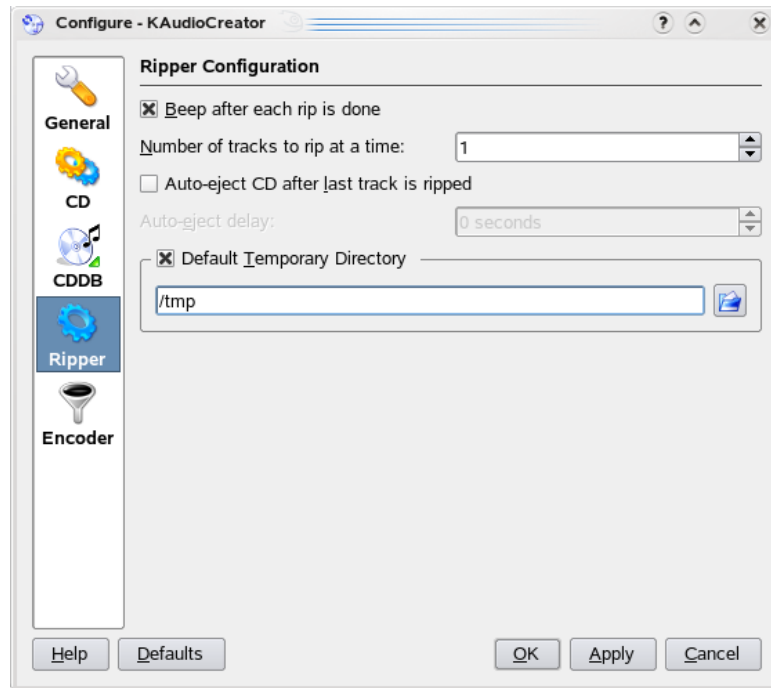


In this example we don't want to submit any CD data to the freedb server. Uncheck the first box and that should it be.

Note beside this example: If one day you find a CD which is not yet known by the freedb server or you find an error in a CD entry, you can submit the new or updated data. Check the first box at the top of this tab and then either use your mail address known to your system which KAudioCreator has already detected or check the lower radio button and enter a new mail address. Please read [the section about freedb](#) first. You are asked to provide a mail address when submitting new or updated entries to the server and you should read the information on freedb.org about revision counts when sending updated information in case you found an error.

E 1.6 Step 06: Ripper Configuration Tab

Settings -> Configure KAudioCreator... -> Ripper



Just take the settings from the screenshot. (If you don't choose the standard folder `/tmp` make sure that the folder exists on your system!)

Beep after each rip is done : check this to get an audible feedback from the progress.

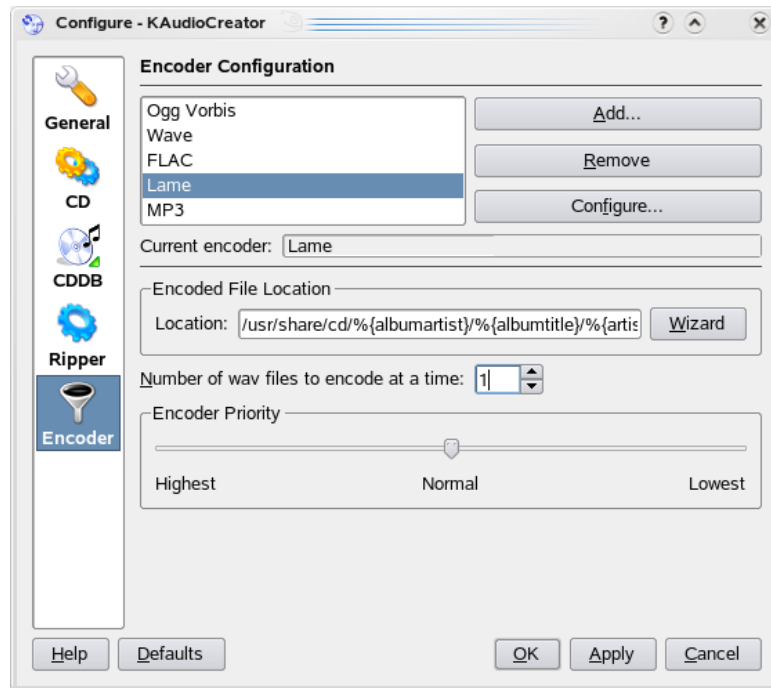
Number of tracks to rip at a time : sorry, cannot think of a reason to do more than one with one drive? Reading and encoding parallel? Just don't know, try for yourself.

Auto-eject CD after last track is ripped : check this to eject the CD after the end of the process.

Use Custom temporary directory : If you check this, you can/must specify the path/folder where the wav files are ripped into. This might be handy if you only have space on another drive. If not checked the files will be created in your home folder. Remember this path if you want do something with the wav files themselves.

E 1.7 Step 07: Encoder Configuration Tab

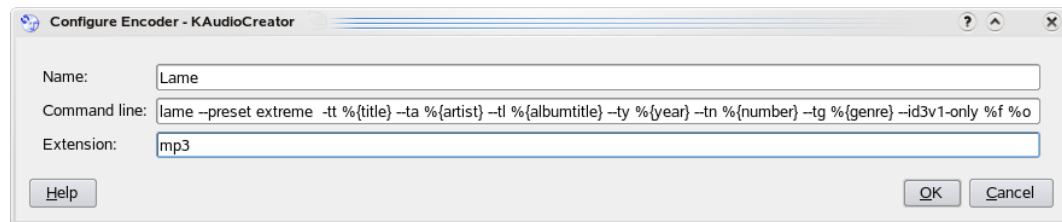
Settings -> Configure KAudioCreator... -> Encoder



Finally the encoder configuration. We will use lame. Here we have a little bit more to do:

Click on **Lame**

Click on the **Configure...** button



Enter everything as in the screenshot. The command entry is a bit long, so you may have to scroll a bit to the right.

The settings are more or less self explaining. There is a space between '--preset' and 'extreme'.

'--preset extreme' defines the audio quality of the mp3s. As mentioned before, this is a setting for very good audio quality, sufficient even for very good HiFi Stereo systems. The resulting bit rate is about 224 to 256 kbps in average. The achieved compression factor is 6.3. A good balance between audio quality and space consumption.

Note the '--id3v1-only' entry to limit the tag creation to V1/V1.1 tags. Delete it if you want id3v2 tags as well. kid3 is a very good id3 tagger for KDE in case you want to manipulate tags later. %f and %o should be the internal variables for the input file (incl. the full path) and the output file name (incl. the full path).

Click **OK** to close and apply the settings.

Encoded File Location - Back on the **Encoder Configuration** tab, we define here the destination folder including the folder name for the files from the ripped CD. These are variables which will be filled with the corresponding CD data everytime you rip a CD. The CD data can be entered manually or fetched via Internet (CDDb). As already configured in this example, we will use freedb and fetch the data automatically. Play with the Wizard, but in the end for this example the entry should be:

```
'/usr/share/cd/{albumartist} - {albumtitle} - {year}/{number} - {title}.{extension}'
```

Set the rest as in the screenshot. A few comments for future use outside this example:

Number of wav files to encode at a time: If you have a dualcore or quadcore machine or even a multi-processor machine, you can try to encode more than one file at the same time.

Encoder Priority: for the experts only, increase the priority for faster encoding.

That's about it, we have just finished the basic setup of KAudioCreator. This configuration is used as the default for every CD rip. If you have chosen your music organization structure wise you will never have to change it again.

8.2 E 2 Ripping a CD

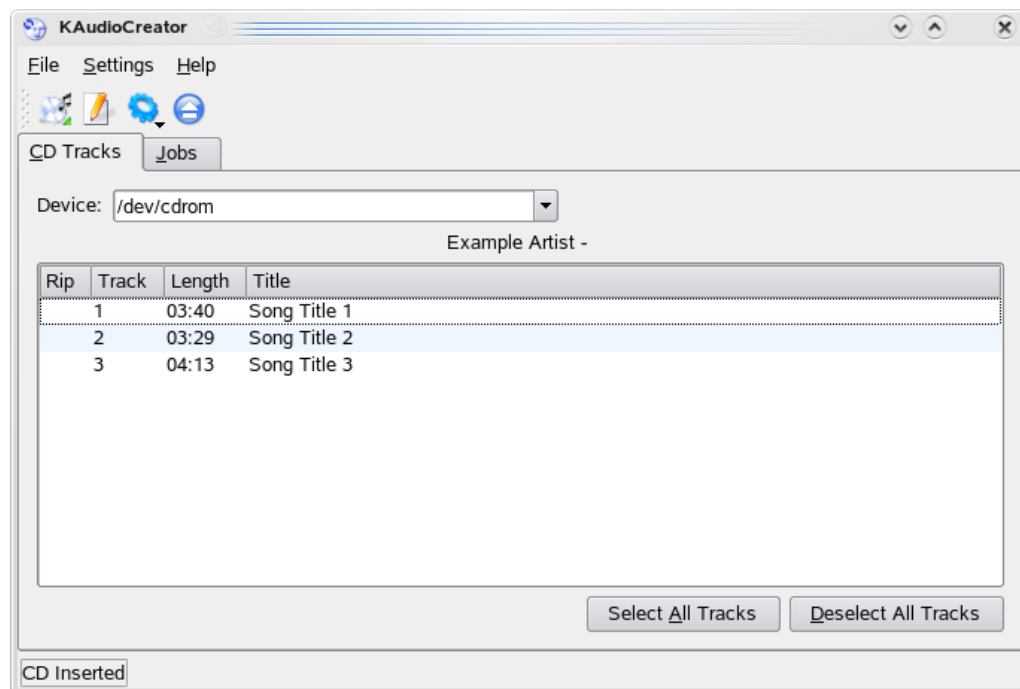
This section will describe the process of ripping a CD onto the harddrive. We will create mp3 files. The folder structure, the way the music is organized on the hard disk, was described and setup in the previous section. So connect to the Internet now, as we are lazy and want to fetch the CD data from freedb! The process described in this section has to be repeated for ever CD you want to rip.

As we use a CD, which is not already listed in freedb, the screenshots might look a bit different as the ones you will encounter for a CD which could successfully fetched from freedb. Therefore you will learn to enter the CD data manually rather than fetching it from the Internet but comments will be made to point out the differences.

Don't try too hard to look for the CD we use in this example. It's a 'special' handbook-writer edition.

E 2.1 Step 01: Ripping a CD.

The main window with an audio CD in the drive:



If you haven't done so far, insert the CD into the drive which device ID you specified here on this main window.

After a short moment the tracks and their length should be listed on the window, as in the screenshot. That is, if the CD could be identified as an audio CD and read by cdparanoia.

If that's not happening, check the [Questions and Answers](#) section for help or go back to the previous section covering the basic setup.

Attention: if the CD could successfully fetched from freedb, all song titles will already be filled out and above the track list, the artist and album name will be shown.

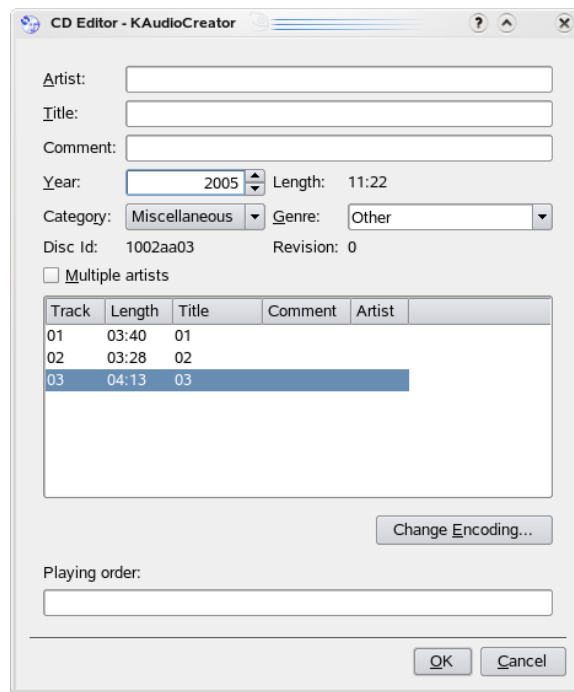
In case that there are more than one entry in the database which matches the 'unique' CD key for your CD, a popup window will appear and you can select the database entry which you think fits best for your CD.

If you have not checked the box for automatically querying freedb (**CD Configuration** page in the settings dialog), you can trigger this manually with the first button from the button bar. If you don't have a local database but fetching from the Internet you need to be connected to the net.

E 1.2 Step 02: The Album Editor - Enter the album data and the first song title

Double click anywhere in the first, blue 'highlighted' row (track 1):

The Album Editor window pops up.



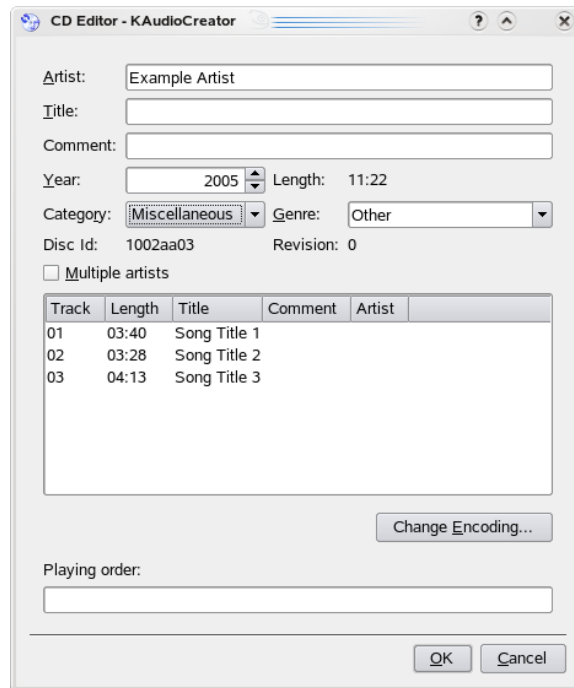
Enter the album data for your CD according the pattern in the next screenshot. The song title in the Track 1 row of the Current Track box, the rest of the CD data in the Album box.

No need to enter the artist in the Current Track box, unless of course, you have a sampler with different artists for each song.

The lower comment field can be used for individual comments for each song, where as the Album comment field can be used for comments which should be the same across all songs.

Attention: of course, when you have successfully fetched the data from freedb the Album Editor is not empty but already holds the data as shown in the following screenshot. However, it is always a good idea to open the Album Editor once to check whether you are happy not only with the artist and album name (e.g. all words start with capital letters or not...) but to check if there are any unwanted comments.

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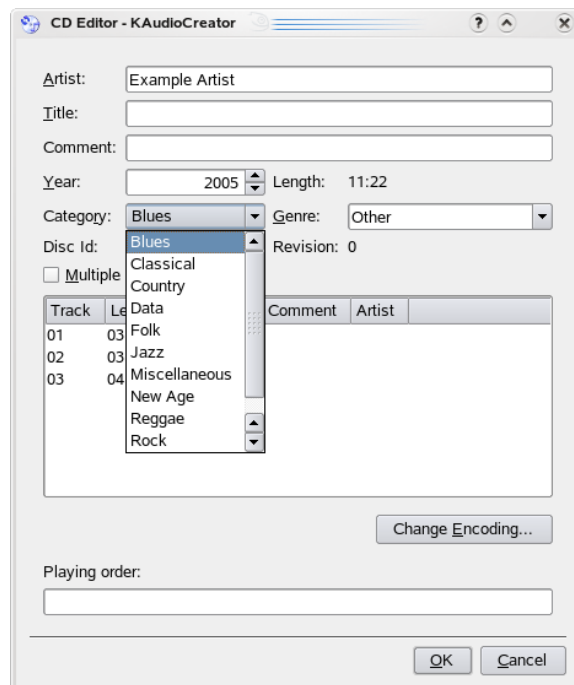


Note: In this example we are using only id3v1 tags. This limits the length of the fields to 30 characters for the artist, album and song title and only 28 characters for the comment field. If you want to create id3v2 tags, you can use unlimited field length, well, at least what KAudioCreator allows here. Haven't checked. You set this option on the encoder configuration tab, take a look into the Basic Setup section for this.

You can change the tag information of the created files later at any time with a tag editor. Kid3 is a good one for mp3 files with which you can create id3v2 tags, too.

Tags may not be supported by all encoder/file formats. Check the encoder help for more information about this.

Selecting the music category:



We are asked to select a music category for the album. Don't mix this up with the genre for the id3 tags. These are the 11 categories which are defined by freedb to pre-sort the CD IDs. As our CD is not in any database (how could it the way we use the program), we have to choose one so in case we would submit the CD data, it would be sorted correctly into the freedb database.

Just choose one of the entries which seems to match the style of the CD you rip. It's not important for this example, we don't submit the CD data anyways. For more info go to freedb.org and read about the categories. Pop or Rap for instance are listed under Rock.

After hitting OK, you come back to the main window again. Just double click on the row of the second track.

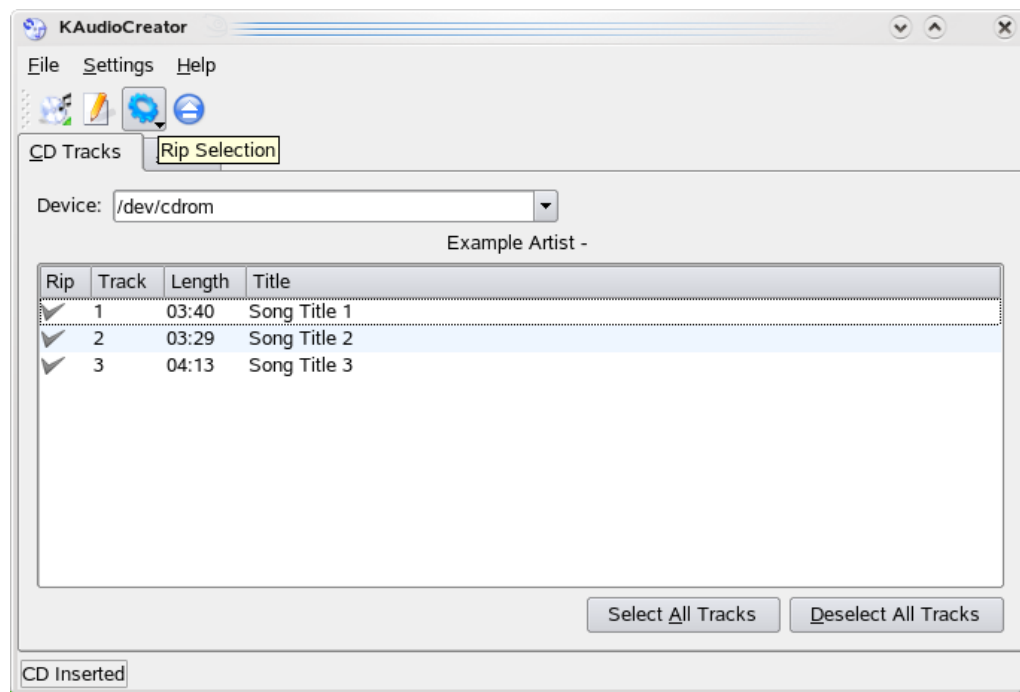
Again the Album Editor window pops up and you can see, that the Album box is already filled out with the data we entered for the first track. So just enter the field entries in the Current Track box. The song title for sure and other information if you want.

Click into the next row on the main screen and proceed this way until you entered the track data for all tracks on the CD.

Attention: this popup will not show up, if you have fetched the data from freedb. It was already sorted into one of these categories in the database.

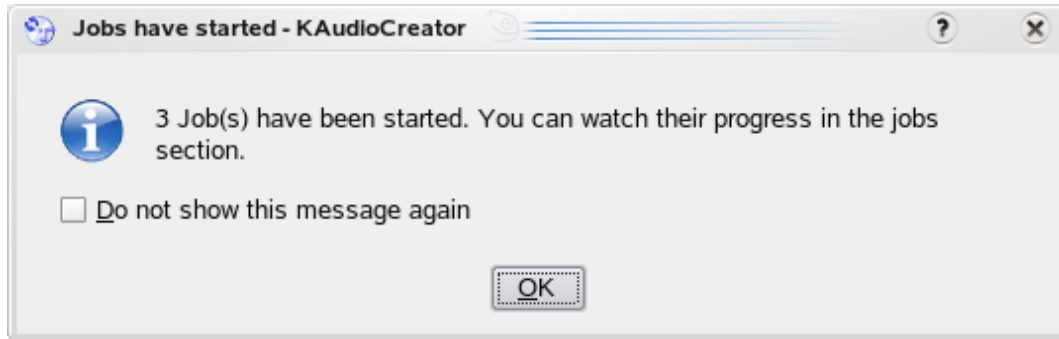
E 2.3 Step 03: Start ripping

Hit the **Rip Selection** button as shown on the screenshot



It's the 3rd button on the toolbar. Note, that the artist and album is shown above the track list.

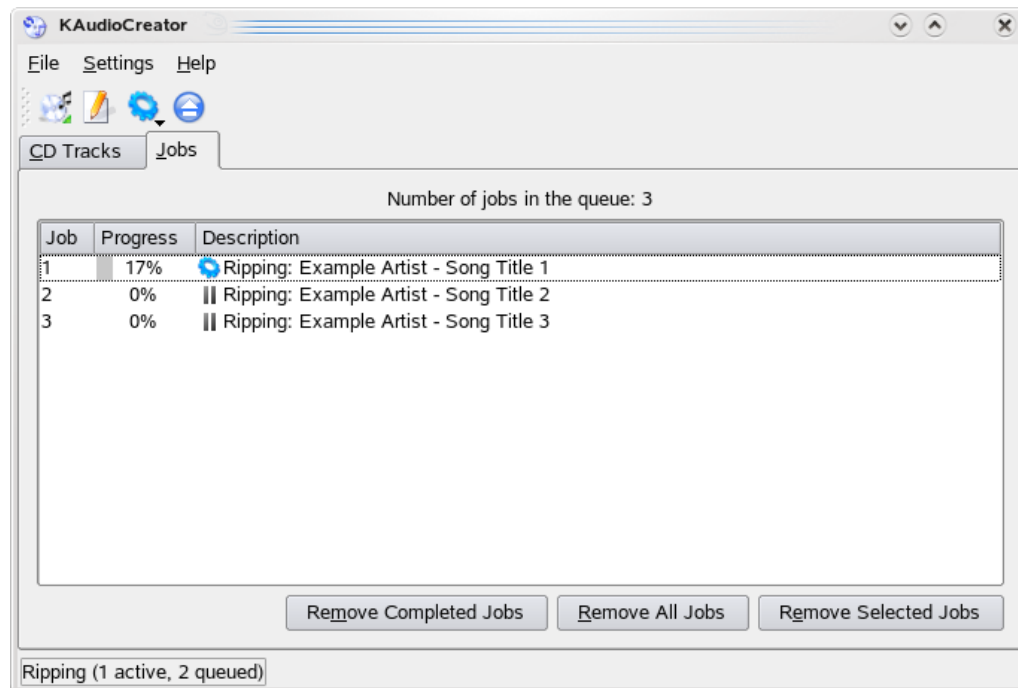
Further note, that there is a check sign in front of every track row. Only the tracks which are marked that way will be processed. A single click on the track row will toggle the track selection. Ensure, that all tracks are selected or use the button **Select All Tracks** at the bottom of the screen (not shown on screenshot) to select all tracks at once.



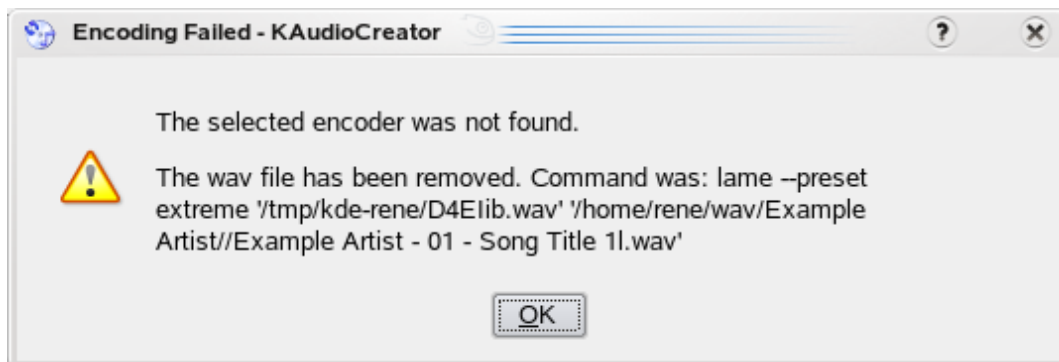
Once you have started the ripping process by clicking on the **Rip Selection** button, this confirmation window pops up. Hit OK and then we will take a look at the jobs window to follow what's going on.

E 2.4 Step 04: Following the progress on the jobs window

Hit the **Jobs** tab to switch to the jobs window. It's on the upper left of the screen, right under the toolbar with the buttons.



That's the job control window. The first track is just ripped to the hard disk. A program status is shown on the lower left screen in the status row.

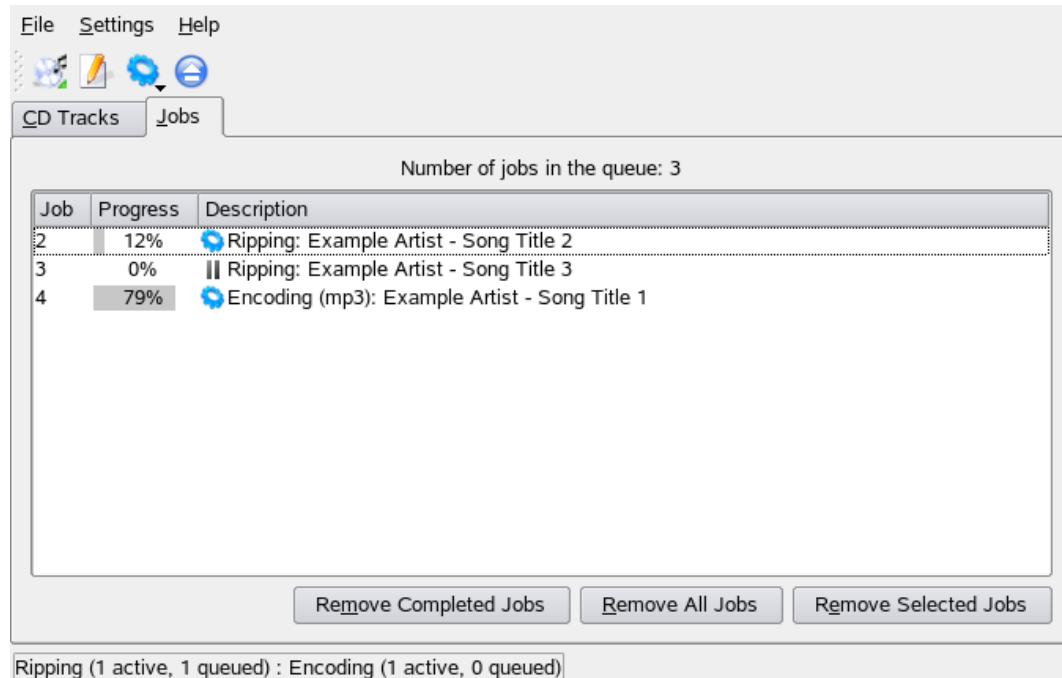


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You will see this error message when you try to encode with/invoke an encoder which you haven't installed yet. Tracks that could not successfully encoded will get marked with a red 'x' on the job list, too.

By the way, the path for the tmp file and the destination path is not what we set up here in the example. So have you checked that you have write access to both, the folder for the temporary files and the destination folder? ;-)

Let's do that again...

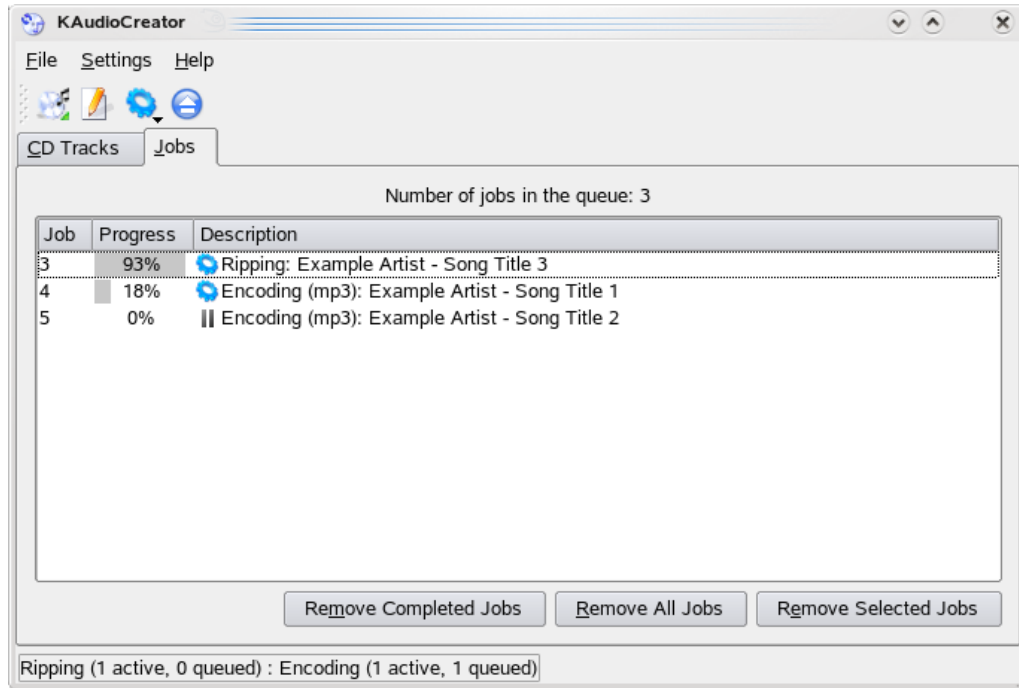


Now it becomes clear, why the error occurred just after the rip of the first song was finished.

Job one, ripping the first track, is gone (finished) but we have a new entry: Job 4 which is the encoding of track 1 to mp3. So ripping and encoding is done parallel. See the status message on the bottom of the window, it's enhanced now.

I could not find a configuration setting to suppress this behavior. The only thing that seems to be configurable is the number of parallel rips and encodings. I don't know, what this means on lower end machines. The AMD64 used here didn't seem to have a problem ripping and encoding a track (two different though) at once.

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Now we are ripping the last track while encoding another one and having one in the encoder queue. After the last track is encoded, a small pop up message is shown on the upper left of the window for a short time.

That's it, ready for the next CD. Enjoy listening to your music...

Chapter 9

Credits and License

KAudioCreator

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