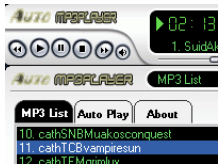


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[Auto MP3 Player](#)

Looking good, being good.

At the same time with more and more freeware software hitting the market everyday the paid software needs to be better each passing day so that it should resist the fierce competition. Especially when it comes to small software, the „king of the hill” can change many times in a very short period of time as the main judge – the public - easily changes its style, preferences, likes and dislikes so it's almost a war resembling the madness of fashion. Today I searched for both nice-looking MP3 players and also paid ones and I must admit there is a huge pile of software which is actually being sold for both decent and in-decent prices. I picked up the Auto MP3 Player just because I first thought it had some sort of connection with „cars and stuff”, which it definitely does not. I was really curious what can a software producer do such as to seriously relate an MP3 player to cars and generally speaking, the auto industry; I was kinda sad to see that such thing did not happen, at least not for the Auto MP3 Player. Luckily, despite my first sigh, I encountered a very nice, easy-to-use and functional MP3 program, so I instantly decided to give it a spin. **The Looks** The Auto MP3 Player has been created in the minimalist style: small, yet very readable windows with bright green text on black background (I guess this makes everything so readable despite the apparent too small size), light-grey general coloring, round and slightly 3D buttons, simple and nice volume and seek bars and very intuitive icons for the rest of the GUI. The only things that differ from this appearance are the menus and the autoplay screen which looks rather like Mac OS – and therefore very good: each menu has its own small icon, drawn in bright and happy colors, very pleasant for the users' eyes. The autoplay new task-window has a grey and white horizontal stripes background, all looking very neat and even with 3D checkboxes, sliders and closing X-mark in the upper-right corner. It is very obvious that the creators of Auto MP3 Player really wanted a very classy GUI and I can't help saying that they really succeeded in their task as the way Auto MP3 Player looks is really and eye-catcher. The Auto MP3 Player has 2 windows: one for the playlist and the autoplay task and options and the other one functioning as a command center, having the transport control buttons and the display each MP3 player has (or at least, should have) for artist and song names. As I was telling you some lines above, the text in Auto MP3 Player is bright green and thus very readable even if it is rather small, due to the space limitations. Scrolling text is a default feature and the active elements are highlighted (they light up when set to active, the same as the shuffle and repeat buttons). The only thing which I wasn't fine with was that the 2 main windows in Auto MP3 Player have different widths and this cannot be changed; this would not be such a drama should the 2 panes stick to each other and be able to move as one. In the minimized mode, the Auto MP3 Player is displayed like a small and really cozy bar with commands, scrolling text, elapsed time and repeat/shuffle; nevertheless, not even in this mode can the playlist be minimized and for some users this might be uncanny. **The Works** Besides being a music playback software, the Auto MP3 Player can also become a handy tool you'd like to keep and use in your home, because it has some very nice wake, shutdown, sleep and reboot options. As a matter of fact, the Auto MP3 Player integrates itself so well in the Windows shell, that it can operate functions like sleep or wake, even hibernate. Thus, you can transform the usual MP3 player in some sort of clock which will play a playlist containing tracks of your own choice instead of the common alarm. Auto MP3 Player supports shortcuts which are Ctrl-based constructions (Ctrl+P for play, Ctrl+S for stop and so on) so it is easy to operate even without the need for a mouse; and if we came to the mouse and mouse actions, a very nice drag and drop support has been developed for the Auto MP3 Player as the user can extremely easily load

either a single file or huge directories in both the player's main window and directly in the playlist without the need to operate the usual commands for adding files. Even more, deleting files from the playlist is very easy, just using the Del key; file selection is also complex, as it is in Winamp: you can select multiple files, holding Ctrl adds/removes to selection while Shift determines the ends of the selection, and - if needed - the "invert selection" option is always at hand. Auto MP3 Player will easily save or load *.m3u playlists, thus being compatible with most similar players around. The "auto" tasks are easily added/created or edited in the dedicated panel and one indeed has a lot of settings there, from annual playbacks to second-precise timing, time-related fading and custom playlist loading options. Various system actions can be performed (as I was telling you): turn off, hibernate, standby, reboot and log off so one can easily set the Auto MP3 Player's behavior according to personal needs or habits. Technically, you can set the PC to sleep at night and have the Auto MP3 Player wake your system up – and most likely, you as well - when playing a loud and martial music at 07:30 which can be very convenient compared to the annoying sound of the alarm clock. In my opinion, if I were to forget about the "non-stick" windows and their different widths I'd say Auto MP3 Player lacks 2 things to be a really awesome software: an EQ and the system tray feature, or at least the possibility to hide/dock the playlist in the minimized mode. I am a fan of "clean taskbars": I rejoice a lot when software which do not require my constant attention (such as music players) are able to be minimized to tray and leave the space in the taskbar free for other (more important) applications. **The Good** The best thing is that Auto MP3 Player works very easy and its generic principles do not differ from those present in major similar softwares, thus making it reach wider and thus, the possibility to attract new devoted users becomes higher. **The Bad** The Auto MP3 Player is really a good software: too bad it does not feature EQ and tray-icon. These are the only not-that-OK things I can say about it. **The Truth** The truth is that Auto MP3 Player does not have as many features as other 20\$ similar softwares (i.e. Winamp) can deliver. Nevertheless, I still say it's a good software that's worth its money and - at least – extensive trying out. Take a look to the screenshots below and see what all is about: