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## [Rhythmbox Review](#)



Rhythmbox Logo

*Audio player and media organizer for the GNOME Desktop.*

Rhythmbox Music Player is an audio player that plays and helps organize digital music. It has been inspired by iTunes, but it is a free software, designed to work well under the Gnome desktop. It uses the GStreamer media framework which enables comprehensive audio support for a large number of digital formats. Rhythmbox also offers a number of features designed to make the playback experience a pleasant one. Rhythmbox is found on most distributions; unfortunately, only as an older version. This is a result of being an actively developed process. For example, the Ubuntu software channel spreads at this time version 0.9.6 of Rhythmbox, while the latest version is 0.9.8. If you're an Ubuntu user and want to install the latest version of Rhythmbox, visit the getdeb site, click the download link and select GDebi as the package manager. Ignore any warnings, if any, and you'll have the program installed and ready to run within seconds. The first time Rhythmbox is started, it will present a welcome screen, followed by a configure screen which asks you to choose the media folder. After completing the wizard, you will be able to browse and play your favorite music, using the program's main components. In the upper part of the main window, you'll notice the menubar, which contains menus that enable you to perform various tasks in the program. Underneath the menubar, there's the toolbar which provides access to player functions such as play, play previous/next, enable continuous or random play and volume level. When a track is being played, the track name is displayed, as well as the artist and album names. Underneath them, you'll notice a time slider which allows you to change the playing position of the song. Now, for the most important parts of the main window: The source list allows you to access your music library, Internet radio, your playlists and audio CDs. The source lists can contain the list of queued tracks, the player library, Internet Radio sources, Podcast feeds, audio CDs music, songs from portable players such as iPod or DAAP Music shares discovered on the LAN. Another important part of the main window is the statusbar, which displays additional information regarding the number of songs, duration and total size and the duration of the selected song. The statusbar can be toggled on or off by selecting View / Statusbar. Also, the player's main window can be switched to a minimized mode by selecting View / Small Display. This view mode will only enable access to the menubar and the player functions. There's also a party mode available, which will switch the main window to full screen. The Library is the main source available in Rhythmbox, it's the database that contains all the music files you imported from your hard drive or removable media. What's interesting, however, is that the library can also contain music files available over remote network services such as public/authenticated FTP, NFS or Windows shares. To find your favorite tracks more easily, Rhythmbox offers a search function, which enables you to find and filter tracks by a search term. Another convenient way to search through your media is by using the Browser, which is basically a two or three pane view which enables easy navigation among music genres artists and albums. The Radio source will list several Internet Radio stations, each broadcasting a different genre of music. I'm not sure where these radio stations come from. Either the author has included them into Rhythmbox's install package, or, the program has fetched the top 20 stations from the Shoutcast website. Moreover, you can add your own Internet stations and even add them into existing genres. To broadcast the radio stations by their music genre, simply go to View / Browse or press Ctrl + B. The Podcast source enables you to subscribe to podcast feeds and automatically download and play an episode once it has been made available. Podcasting is a new way to broadcast audio content over the Internet, split into several episodes and distributed through an XML feed. Other sources include DAAP Share, a

network protocol which enables sharing your media files with your network neighbors. You can share media also with users who use DAAP compatible software such as iTunes. The DAAP shares are automatically scanned for at Rhythmbox start-up and displayed in the Source list. If sharing and the DAAP plugin are enabled, your library and playlists will also be published at start-up. This way, you can easily listen to music stored on other people's computers and they can easily listen to yours. Other plugins include Last.FM, which submits song info to your last.fm account and plays last.fm streams, Magnatune Store plugin, which enables Rhythmbox to play and purchase from the Magnatune online music store, while Jamendo is a plugin similar to Magnatune, only that it plays and downloads albums from the Jamendo music store. If you were to listen to every song on both Magnatune and Jamendo for 24 hours a day, never repeating a song, it would take over 80 days to hear them all. There's also a Lyrics plugin which tries to fetch the lyrics for the current song and a visualization plugin which will display a nice animation while playing a song. The LIRC plugin enables Rhythmbox control over an infrared remote control, while the last plugin, Cover Art, will try to fetch album pictures from the currently loaded albums. Since the 0.9 version, Rhythmbox also supports creating audio CDs from your playlists. **The Good** Rhythmbox is an audio player for the Gnome desktop which supports playing and organizing digital music. Its interface is somewhat similar to Apple's iTunes but it has been released as a free application. It uses the GStreamer media framework which supports a large number of formats. It also offers a useful set of features which makes Rhythmbox a powerful and easy to use audio player. **The Bad** just wish the preferences dialog had a bit more options to customize. **The Truth** Rhythmbox is a very good audio player with useful features; unfortunately, there are a few players that offer the same functionality as Rhythmbox, and then some, so it's hard to choose Rhythmbox as your default player, unless you like a more simple player or you're on a slow PC. *Check out some screenshots below:*