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[Yahoo! Rips and Burns for Free](#)

Radio in the Jukebox

No effort is made when it comes to listening to music on your computer today. It is enough to download one of the tons of audio players, add the songs and press play. However, when most people thought that having a good audio player was enough, new concepts have broken into the market, taking the music listening experience to a new level. Listening to online radio or buying music online directly from the player are habitual activities nowadays. Interactivity is the big name in this picture. Yahoo!'s services are well known to computer users. They give you free email (with a very generous storing limit), instant messenger, videos, music, games. Pleasing the customer seems more than a rule for Yahoo!, it seems like a good way of doing business. Music Jukebox is giving you another taste of music listening. The application is user-oriented and tries to offer him/her as much as possible. Although you can use it for free, signing up for the Plus version will bring more advantages (more radios to choose from, CD burning unleashes higher speeds, supports CD label printing, sound boost experience). However, let's see what we can get for free. The dynamic interface is user friendly and equipped with almost everything you need for audio experience. Listening to music can be made either from the local files stored on your computer, from an Audio CD or from an online radio, due to LAUNCHcast Radio. Immediately after installing the application, a wizard will guide you into configuring the player. Actually, all it'll do is to import music from your computer. The two options available here allow you to choose the folders the music should be added from or let the application scan the entire computer and add all the music it finds. This being done, you can proceed to managing the music and create your playlists. Y! Unlimited feature of the application is your online recommendation center. It'll recommend music based on your ratings. The more details you add to your profile (the Yahoo! account) the better the recommendations. Additionally, you can take a peek at other user's music tastes and get a preview of the sounds. For the ultimate experience, you can subscribe to the service and benefit from full preview of the songs. The database is more than 2 million songs large and the monthly fee is \$6. Also, you benefit from "to go" music (transfer the music to a portable player) and access your music from any PC. All the songs in Y! Unlimited section are less than \$1 and can be bought regardless of the subscription. My Music section of the navigation panel in the left hand side of the application window contains all the music you have access to. That includes both the purchased items and the songs on your computer. This section lets you rate the songs and also provides information on the "burnability" of the song. In the upper part of the screen there are the albums in the list. You can view the songs either by artist, album, song or browse them by genre. In the right hand side of the window there is the Now Playing panel that shows all the songs that have been played. Each time you listen to something it'll be automatically appended to this list, regardless of the fact that it is already included. Also, if you want to add some songs into a playlist, you will have to drag and drop them into the Now Playing sections and then perform the same operation in the playlist window. Or you can simply skip the middle step and drop them into the left hand pane, under the desired playlist. Download Manager keeps track of all the music downloaded from the Internet directly into Yahoo! Music Jukebox. The items included cover the burnable downloads purchased individually and the subscription music. Accessing the tons of radio stations with Yahoo! Music Jukebox is a matter of a few clicks. LAUNCHcast Radio support allows you to choose your favorite radio station and listen to it for free (as long as it is not intended for Plus version). The alternatives here cover practically everything from low beats and chill to rock, country or folk. Portability is not overlooked by the Jukebox and a special section for easy adding of music to portable devices is available. You are informed of the total capacity of the drive as well as of the amount of free space available. The synchronization process can be made automatically at connecting the portable device. But for the first time you will have to select the music to be copied: all items in My Music folder or only elements in the playlists you created. Also, you can create a playlist just for the portable device. Speaking of portability, you can burn your music to CD in either MP3 format or Audio CD. In this case, the Now Playing window is unavoidable and in order to add the tracks to be burned you have to pass them through it. If you want to add files from a disc you can use the Import function available. All the tracks will be automatically imported to My Music. But

before hurrying into that make sure that all the settings are right. In CD section under Preferences menu you will find all the options you need for a quality rip. You get to choose the format of the outcome (MP3, OGG, WAV or FLAC) and make all the adjustments for quality to be preserved in the two lossy formats. Combined with Yahoo! Messenger, the Jukebox lets you listen to all your friend's music, browse their profiles and share your playlists as well as exploring theirs. Keep in mind though that all the listening is done online and no actual file can be transferred or copied to and from other users. With a wireless network you can extend the application's capabilities even more by listening to music on the home stereo or share it between the other computers in your home. The procedure is simple, just select Network Music from the Preferences menu and check Turn on Network Music. Dynamic and filled with useful options, Yahoo! Music Jukebox comes absolutely free and with few restrictions. The online dimension is brought directly on your desktop with the least effort.

The Good The application is free to use and gives you the chance to learn what others are listening to. The song prices are as low as \$0.99/song and with the incorporated download manager you can keep tabs on all the purchased music. If you're not into buying music, free radios covering almost all the musical genres are at your disposal. Portability lets you synchronize all the music with the portable device, be it an iPod or just a meagle memory stick. Audio CDs can be easily converted into MP3, OGG, WAV or FLAC and stored on your computer. The operation in reverse is also possible and the two end choices are either Audio CD or MP3 disc.

The Bad The application is sluggish. When moving from one window to another it lags a split of a second to obey your wish. In my case, the Now Playing window is a total nag. I do not want to see what is currently playing as simple ingress in the playlist window or My Music and see what band is making my ears burp with pleasure. The progress bar during the burning operation is not in a visible place as its location is at the bottom side of the application window.

The Truth All in all, the software is good. There is still work to be done as the radio experience is shaded by the poor stream quality and the lagging when moving from one section to another is not helpful at all. Hopefully, future releases will support more skins in order to be able to personalize it even more. However, the rip and burn options work as they should and if you add the network abilities of the application, there are few reasons not to like it. Also, as more and more details on your preferences are gathered, the recommendations will increase in accuracy and in almost no time all the recommended music will be to your taste.

Here are some snapshots of the application in action: