UltraStar Deluxe

Manual for Beginners (Windows)

(for grown-up children too and at least pedagogically valuable)

Topic:

How to install Ultrastar Deluxe and to add new songs?

Firstly I'd like to introduce you the team which will lead you through this guide:

Professor Intelligent:

She knows almost everything; at least she is said to. Therefore she can give you plenty of useful information and she'll always be there to give you some advice. Her tips and hints mostly are very detailed and you need a little background information to understand. As a typical professor she often does not manage to avoid terminology. But don't be afraid! Her assistant will endeavor to help you.

Assistant Mr. C. Monkey:

He is the assistant of Professor Intelligent. While the professor spends her whole time developing UltraStar Deluxe, he is for example busy with creating this manual. Professor Intelligent teached him a lot, but also knows all about making her terminology understandable. Therefore he provides the best help for beginners.

Doctor Evil:

Whenever you have got a problem you can be sure, that it is caused by Dr. Evil. Still, even he is useful because you are introduced to common mistakes and their reasons. Unfortunately he is also responsible for grammatical or translational mistakes you'll find in this guide.

If you have a suggestion for further problems or other questions you'd like to read about in this manual, please write a mail to:

canni0@users.sourceforge.net

Introductory notice to all enthusiasts:

In this guide we will just show you how to add already EXISTING songs to the program, not how to create them yourself. Please don't be too disappointed.

The USDX Team wishes you a lot of success. (Last updated 23th December, 09)

Contents

 Enjoy!

Lesson 1: "All beginnings are difficult" or "How to install UltraStar Deluxe"

"Hello, dear beginners. Yes, I once was called so too, but this is going to be changed after having read this guide. You already managed to install UltraStar Deluxe and you want to add new songs by now… or haven't you installed it yet? Well, I'll explain it to you. Those of you who already did may jump to Lesson 2."

1. We recommend that you download UltraStar Deluxe from the official website. You'll always get the most recent version there: www.ultrastardeluxe.org

2. As a beginner you probably chose the automatic installation progress. You just have to follow the instructions which lead you through the installation process.

During the installation you are already able to add some songs, designs and other stuff automatically. You also can do some adjustments as language or screen resolution.

The installation is finished then.

"While installing UltraStar Deluxe you should make sure that you are logged in as an administrator or that you have at least the authorization to access the corresponding folders to save the files. If you decide to download some more content from the internet (e.g. songs) then you'll have to make sure that the installation process has the permission to access the internet (catchword: Firewall). During the download there will be some error warnings if the providing servers do not answer in a destined time. However this doesn't infect the program's functions."

Lesson 2: "Dilligent collecting" or "What do I need to add songs?"

The txt- file

"To sing many more songs in UltraStar you need some additional things, for sure. Firstly there's the question of what components a song consits: on the one hand there are the lyrics you want to sing. Furthermore there is the pitch of the note which has to be compared with your singing so that you can score your points. Last but not least Those notes have to appear in the right position and to have the right length. You see: a song is quite complex. But what you need on any account anyhow is the song itself; after all you want to hear something, don't you? Don't worry; we will take the tour step by step."

1. All necessary information of a song, I already mentioned, is saved in a txt- file, that you can view and edit with any word processing program (e.g. Editor, WordPad, Word, Notepad++ and so on). Creating such a txt-file takes plenty of time. Therefore we will concentrate on what you have to do when this txt-file already exists.

2. Where do I get such a file which contains all the necessary information?
   There are a lot of opportunities to get these files: for example at boards or various websites. If you're searching for more sources, feel free to use a search engine.

   Txt-file database website:
   www.usdb.animux.de

Just create an account by filling out the set form with an imaginary username, your e-mail address and a password that you should use only at this website.
After registering and logging in, you can search for songs and download the txt-files.

"The good thing is that this method is also appropriate for beginners. You don't have to understand most of the parts of the txt-file. Nevertheless there are a few things you should know because they will be very helpful for later work. The txt-file is split into "header" and "body". The header contains the so called "TAGs" which the program uses to identify the song. Those are for example the song's title, the artist, genre or the language. In the header you can also find technical information as beats per minute (BPM), the start of the lyrics in milliseconds (GAP) and (important for the further process) the exact name of the audio file (MP3). The TAGS are introduced by a number sign (#). The body contains the lyrics, the entries and other information (that is irrelevant for you)."

"If a song is at least singable and if the entires are accurate depends on the quality of the txt-file. Therefore you should pay attention to the ratings of the txt-file before downloading. It makes your work easier and saves yourself from setbacks."

Hint: Activate the option "only [SC]-Songs" in the search filter so the database shows you only verified txt-files that are good to sing.
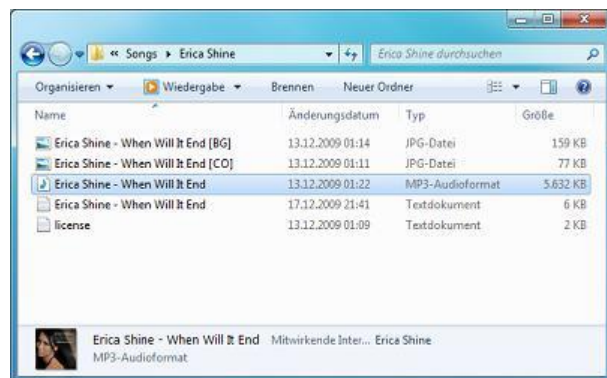
The audio file

"So, we've got the txt-file by now. At least we need an audio file now. You can buy it online or rip it from your private CDs. Theoretically you can also use and convert your Singstar DVDs but this is another subject. Another possibility is to convert videos from streaming-platforms like YouTube. There are plenty of converters which can "transform" a YouTube-link into an mp3-file. Feel free to use a search-engine."

1. In order to not to lose the track we store all the collected data in a new folder. You should name the folder according to a schema like "Interpreter – Title". You can immediately copy / paste the new folder to the right directory[1]:
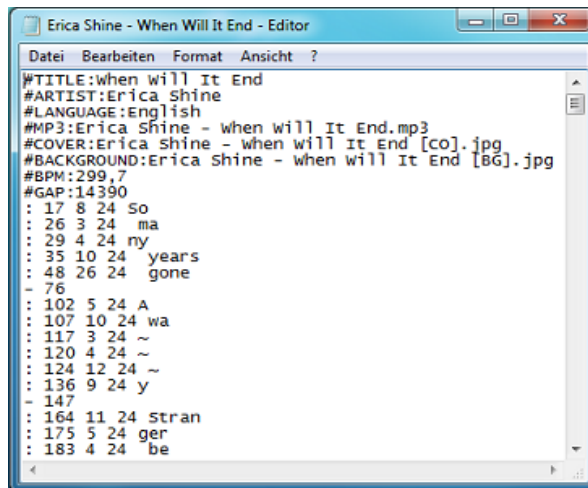Standard:
C:\Program Files\UltraStar Deluxe\Songs

If you want to, you can also add a video, a background image or a cover. You should at least treat a cover to your song. It looks much nicer while playing the game. The image above shows a typical UltraStar-song folder.

---

[1] Displacing folders takes two steps: First you "cut" the folder by right-clicking at the folder and choosing "Cut". Then you change to your song directory, right-click in an empty space and choose "Paste". Now the folder should appear.

2. Now you have to tell the program where the audio file can be found. Therefore you open the txt-file in the same (!) folder. Search for the line that begins with "#MP3". Everything that comes after the colon names the title of the audio file. Comparing the song folder of the former page with the file's name in the txt-file, you'll notice that there is the extension ".mp3". This tiny but important information is often hidden by the operating system but mustn't be forgotten.


```
Erica Shine - When Will It End - Editor

Datei  Bearbeiten  Format  Ansicht  ?

#TITLE:When Will It End
#ARTIST:Erica Shine
#LANGUAGE:English
#MP3:Erica Shine - When Will It End.mp3
#COVER:Erica Shine - When Will It End [CO].jpg
#BACKGROUND:Erica Shine - When Will It End [BG].jpg
#BPM:299,7
#GAP:14390
: 17  8 24  So
: 26  3 24   ma
: 29  4 24  ny
: 35 10 24   years
: 48 26 24   gone
- 76
: 102  5 24  A
: 107 10 24  wa
: 117  3 24  ~
: 120  4 24  ~
: 124 12 24  ~
: 136  9 24  y
- 147
: 164 11 24  Stran
: 175  5 24  ger
: 183  4 24   be
```

3. Now you can change your file's name so it fits in with the name in the editor or you change the corresponding part in the txt-file. It is just Important that they're identical. If the file-endings are hidden you have to watch out that you don't give the file its extension once more (Erica Shine- When Will It End.mp3.mp3). You have to make sure that you NEVER leave out the extension in your txt-file but exclude it in the folder if the file-endings are hidden (if .mp3 is missing at the end).

File extensions:

"To make sure that the names are equal you can let your OS show you the file extensions."

You can do this at "Extras" → "Folder options" → "View". Then click "Advanced Settings". Now clear the "Hide extensions for known file types" check box, and then click OK.
Hint: If you are using Windows Vista or Windows 7 you have to press the "Alt" key before the menu-bar with "Extras" appears.
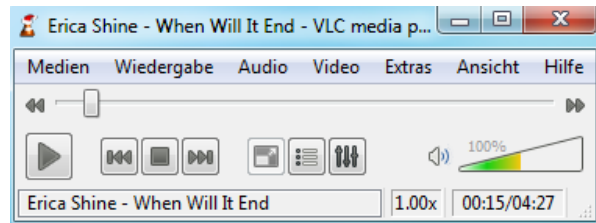

"If the song does not appear in UltraStar Deluxe although you put all the necessary files in the right subfolder in your "Song"-directory and you already adjusted the file's names, this is for about 90% due to the fact that the audio-file's name is not exactly equal to the name in the txt-file."

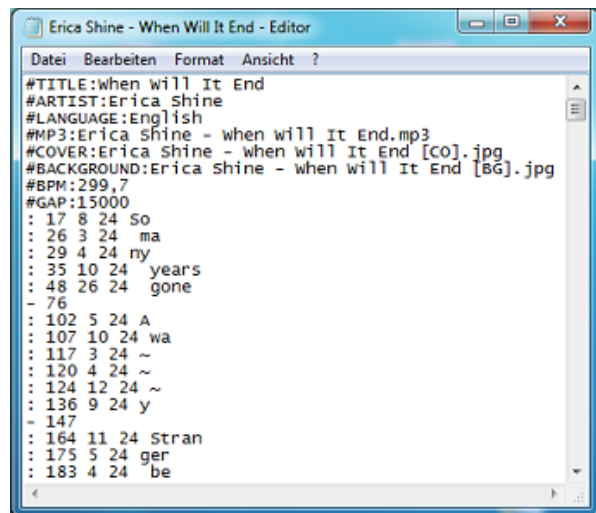Lesson 3: "A good sense of hearing?" or "How to adjust the lyrics to the audio-file"

"So actually we have collected everything we need for pasting the song. The song should appear in UltraStar Deluxe by now. Unfortunately we aren't completely done yet. We have to do some precision work now and adjust the beginning of the lyrics with the audio-file. Professor Intelligent already told you that the GAP value in milliseconds is responsible for that. We will now try to find out how to figure out a broadly defined and then a better and exact value."

1. The easiest way is to play the file in a media-player (e.g. VLC Player, Windows Media Player, iTunes and so on) and to pause when the singing starts. It's ca. o. approx. 15 seconds in this case.

2. Now we've got an approximate value: 15 seconds. You have to pay attention that you name o. set the GAP value in to milliseconds. To translate the seconds into milliseconds you add three zeros at the end or you multiply the value with 1000. So 15 seconds equal to 15,000 milliseconds which is our GAP value. You open the txt-file and replace the old value with our new value.

"The replacing "fortunately" has often caused, that the song does not appear anymore in UltraStar Deluxe. As I'm getting tired of this fault, please pay attention that you don't change the txt-file's structure and that you don't add some unnecessary spaces or something like that. And what is almost more important: Don't forget to save the file before closing it and starting UltraStar Deluxe.
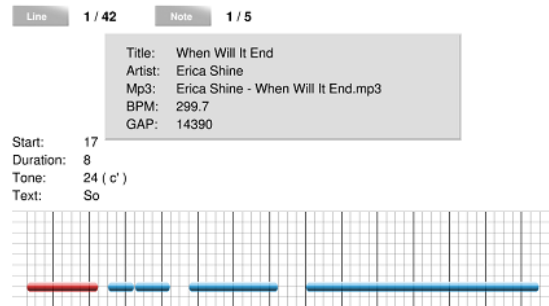
"If you'd started the song now it should already almost fit. But almost is too little for us. We're going to do the precision work "ingame"."

1. Therefore choose the recently added song without starting it.

   Hint: Use the "J"-key to find the song and to filter e.g. the artist or the title.

2. Now press the "E"-key to open the built-in editor.

Editor controls:
Use the following keys to exactly adjust the entrances:

"(" (open bracket) to increase the GAP by 10 milliseconds

Hold shift and press "(" (open bracket) to increase the GAP by 1,000 milliseconds (1 second)

")" (close bracket) to decrease the GAP by 10 milliseconds

Hold shift and press ")" (close bracket) to decrease the GAP by 1,000 milliseconds.

Press "Space-bar" to play the first note and to check the result

Press "S" to save your adjustments

"If the lyrics start too late, you have to decrease the GAP value. If the lyrics start too early, you have to increase the value. Increase or decrease the GAP as long as it fits with your audio-file and you hear the first note is placed rightly o. correctly when pressing the space-bar. When you're satisfied with the result you can directly check if everything fits by choosing the song in-game. But don't forget to save with "S" before."

"Further controls can also be quite helpful. Take a look at the "documentation.pdf" which can be found in the main directory of UltraStar Deluxe. You'll find help and further details at page 22ff."

"Have you finished the first test? If it unfortunately didn't REALLY work, then you've got probably another version of the song than the creator of the txt-file. There are for example Single-, Album-, or Live-versions of the song. Take another look at the song database and check, where the txt-file comes from, and what background information the author gives. For sure it is also possible, that the creator wasn't THAT experienced and the txt-file is unusable because of its bad quality. Indications for a "bad" txt-file COULD be a BPM under 100 but it doesn't have to. The BPM value gives information about the song's speed and therefore the lyric's speed. If the lyrics become asynchronous while playing the song, it usually isn't the GAP's fault which is only responsible for the beginning of the lyrics."
Another reason why the txt file might appear asynchronous is a variable bitrate of your audio file. Just check if the audio file is encoded with a constant bitrate (CBR) instead of a variable bitrate (VBR). If not you can convert the file with an audio encoder (like MediaCoder)

Have fun with your new songs and UltraStar Deluxe!