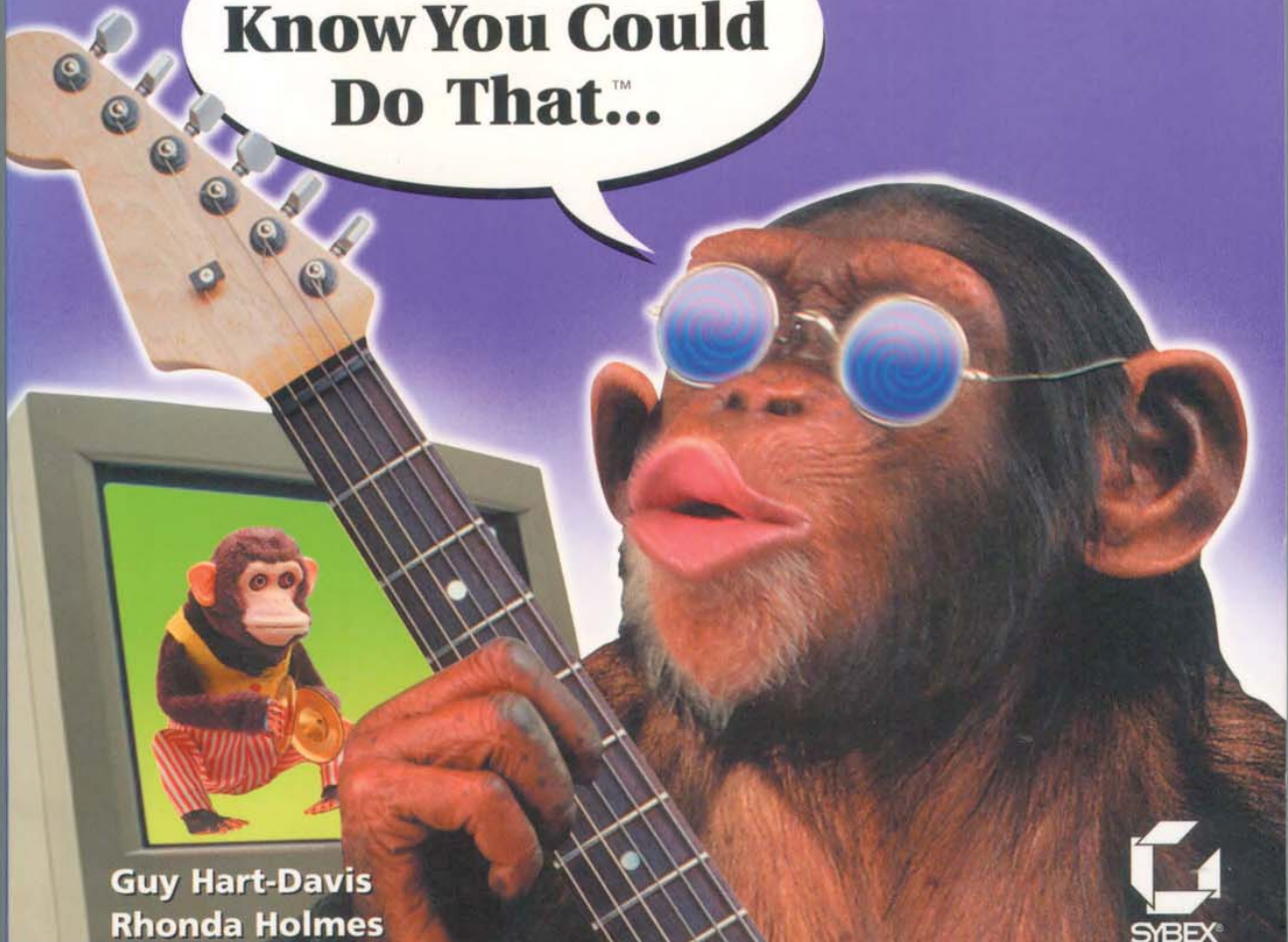


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Enter MP3. Providing almost CD-quality audio together with a decent rate of compression, MP3 solves both the quality problem and the file-size problem. Recorded at a decent sampling rate (as you'll see in a bit, you can use various sampling rates when recording MP3 files), MP3 provides the high-quality sound that audiophiles demand, but with enough compression that the resulting files can easily be transferred from one computer to another and from a computer onto Palm-size PCs and dedicated hardware MP3 players.

That's the key feature of MP3—quality with portability. But wait, there's more.

In addition to the audio information stored in an MP3 file, there's also a *tag*—a container with various slots to hold key pieces of information about the MP3 files. A typical tag would contain the artist's name, the title of the song or audio item, the title of the album (if applicable), the genre, the year, and an optional comment.

Tags are great because they give you the power to sort your MP3 files by any of the pieces of information in the tags. As you'll see later in this book, most of the MP3 jukeboxes let you sort your collection of MP3 files by the information in the tags. So you can easily pull up everything in your Techno-Industrial, Nippon Pop, or Christian Metal collection.

Compare that to WAV files. WAVs have a filename and nothing else. You can sort them by filename, but you haven't a hope in hell of sorting them by genre or artist. And WAV files of a quality comparable to MP3 files are the same size as CD tracks. MP3 wins hands down.

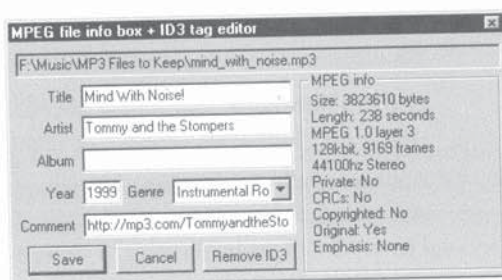
What Can You Do with MP3?

Briefly put, you can easily create MP3 files from already-recorded music or audio (for example, from CDs) or audio you create yourself. You can save the files on your computer; play them back either on the computer or on portable players; sort them into collections or databases; and distribute them easily via the Internet (or other computer networks) or on conventional portable media such as CDs or removable disks (Zip, Jaz, Orb, and others). In essence, you can become a music creator *and* publisher. David Geffen, move over.

14 Check and Set Track Information with Winamp

Winamp lets you quickly view and change the track information, called tag information, that each MP3 file can store.

In the Playlist Editor, right-click a track and choose File Info from the context menu to display the MPEG File Info Box + ID3 Tag Editor dialog box (shown below) with the information for the track. (From the main window, you can display this dialog box by double-clicking the track title.) Change the information as appropriate and then click the Save button to save it to the MP3 file. You can also click the Remove ID3 button to remove the tag information from the MP3 file.



15 Choose Visualizations for Winamp

Winamp's Vis display provides *visual entertainment* (read: graphics that look way cool when you're totally spaced) keyed to the frequencies of the

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