

From Installation To Your First Show In 15 Minutes

User Guide

This guide takes a brand-new DjMirror Pulse user from a fresh install to a working live show in about fifteen minutes: launch the app, get audio flowing, fill the screen, drive playlists and visuals from the keyboard, and know where to go next (controller, DMX lights,...

DjMirror Pulse User Manual Series

Source: docs_user_manuals\QUICK_START_GUIDE.md

Revision 2026.10 • Release 1.0.743

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: The 15-Minute Plan

Chapter 2: Minutes 0–2 — Install And Launch

Chapter 3: Minutes 2–5 — Get Audio Flowing

Chapter 4: Minutes 5–8 — Drive The Picture From The Keyboard

Chapter 5: Minutes 8–11 — Your Content: Playlists And Artists

Chapter 6: Minutes 11–13 — A Few Useful Settings

Chapter 7: Minutes 13–15 — Prove It: The Pre-Show Checklist

Chapter 8: Where To Go Next (After The First Show)

Chapter 9: Troubleshooting (First-Night Edition)

Chapter 10: Quick Recipe Card (Your First 15 Minutes)

It uses only the defaults the product ships with. Follow-up material lives in [KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS REFERENCE](#) (all shortcuts), [VISUALIZERS GUIDE](#) (the five visualizers), [MIDI HID CONTROLLER GUIDE](#) (hardware control) and [DMX Rig Configuration Guide](#) (stage lights).

Chapter 1: The 15-Minute Plan

Minutes	Goal	You will do
0–2	Launch, survive the first run	Open the app, find Settings, go fullscreen
2–5	Audio in	Select the input device, play music, see the analyzers move
5–8	Picture out	Cycle styles, masks and background videos from the keyboard
8–11	Your content	Point playlists at your own videos/images, show an artist card
11–13	Make it yours	Keep a style, set volumes and silence to sane values
13–15	Prove it works	Run the pre-show checklist, know the escape keys

Nothing here needs a controller, DMX hardware, a license key or a network. Defaults are enough for the first show.



Figure 1: your booth, your visuals, a full floor.

Chapter 2: Minutes 0–2 — Install And Launch

1. Install and open **DjMirror Pulse** on Windows or macOS, following the prompts shown by your installer.
2. On first launch the app creates its content folders from the bundled **Visuals.zip** if they do not already exist. The default root is **Documents/Visuals/**, with **Videos**, **Images**, **Avatars**, **Logos** and **Styles** inside. If you or your installer changed the documents location, use that configured location instead.
3. For ordinary use, change settings in the app. If you need to edit configuration files, the effective **config.json** is **not necessarily next to the executable**: on Windows it is **%AppData%\DjMirror\DjMirrorPulse\config.json**; on macOS it is **~/Library/Application Support/DjMirror/DjMirrorPulse/config.json**. The file beside the app is a shipped template. Command-line flags override the effective file. See [Config & CLI](#) before editing it. Useful flags for later: **--server --port 8080** (control API) and **--client http://SERVER:8080** (follow another machine).
4. Press **Ctrl+W** — fullscreen, no window chrome. Press again to come back (windowed = half size, centered). Do every check below in fullscreen at least once: that is how the audience will see it.

Trial notice: the first run starts a 14-day trial of the **Standard** tier (Professional/Enterprise features show as locked). You don't need a key for this guide. Activation is covered in the License & Activation Guide.

Chapter 3: Minutes 2–5 — Get Audio Flowing

1. Open **Settings** → **AUDIO Device**.
2. Set **Main Audio Device** to the device carrying your mix (DJ mixer USB out, or system loopback if you play music on the same laptop). Set a **Fallback Audio Device** too — the app switches over instead of going silent if the main one disappears mid-show.
3. Set **Capture Input Volume** (0.0–2.0) to about 1.0 and **play music**.

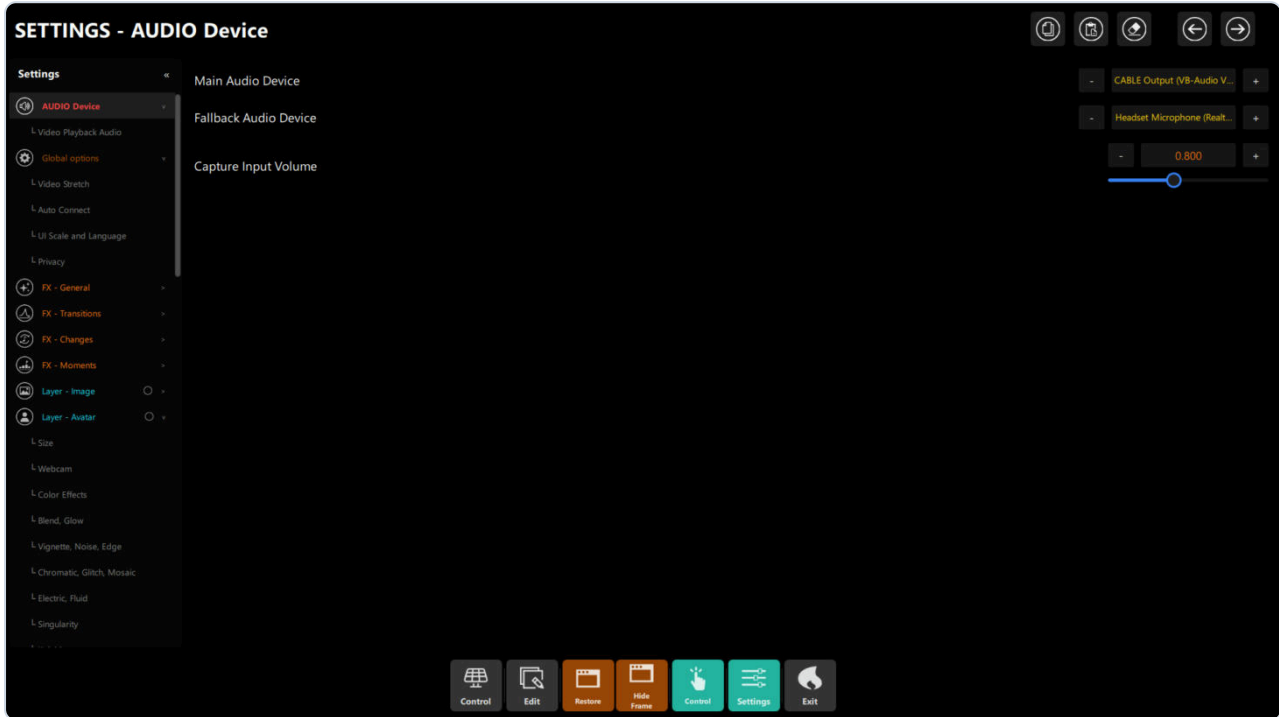


Figure 2: Settings → AUDIO Device — the Main and Fallback devices (use the – and + buttons to step through the list) and the Capture Input Volume. The sidebar entry below it, **Video Playback Audio**, is for audio that comes from played videos. 4. Watch the audio indicators / peak meters: bars should dance with the music. If they barely move, raise the capture volume or the OS input level; if they pin at maximum, lower it. Clipping input = ugly visuals all night. 5. Leave silence-detection settings at their defaults for now. Tune them only if silence is falsely detected or missed; see [Audio Setup & Beat Sync](#) and the [DMX guide's silence detector section](#).

If you use Ableton Link (Pro/Enterprise), enable Link in both apps on the **same local network**, then open **Settings** → **Ableton Link** and choose a clock source. The default **Audio analysis** keeps the usual audio tempo and beat tracking; choose a Link mode only when you want the Link session to drive or supplement the beat grid. See [Audio setup & beat sync](#) for the source modes, beat policies, downbeat and phrase controls, and troubleshooting. Link is not needed for the first show — the audio beat tracker is enough.

Chapter 4: Minutes 5–8 — Drive The Picture From The Keyboard

All shortcuts are **Ctrl**-only, application-wide, case-insensitive. The window must have OS focus (click it once).



Figure 3: one tap switches the whole look.

Shortcut	Effect
Ctrl+F4 / Ctrl+F3	Next / previous style (visual theme, wraps around)
Ctrl+F2 / Ctrl+F1	Next / previous mask (shape overlay)
Ctrl+Down / Ctrl+Up	Next / previous background video
Ctrl+I	FPS indicator — confirm smooth rendering, then hide it

Exercise (do it now, 2 minutes): **Ctrl+F4** five times (watch the whole look change), **Ctrl+F2** three times, **Ctrl+Down** through four videos. Then the double-hit — **Ctrl+F4** + **Ctrl+F2** together on a beat: that is your transition move for the whole night. If **F1**–**F4** change brightness instead, hold **Fn** or flip Fn-lock.

Chapter 5: Minutes 8–11 — Your Content: Playlists And Artists

Playlists are plain `.txt` files — one media filename per line — living beside their media in the **Visuals** folders:

- `Documents/Visuals/Videos/<name>.txt` → `videoPlaylist`
- `Documents/Visuals/Images/<name>.txt` → `imagePlaylist`
- `Documents/Visuals/Avatars/<name>.txt` → `avatarPlaylist`

1. Copy a few clips into `Visuals/Videos/` and make a `<MySet>.txt` file in that same folder. Put one exact media filename on each line.
2. Select the playlist in the app and step with `Ctrl+Down` / `Ctrl+Up`. Test every entry before the show; remove misspelled or missing filenames.
3. **Artist card:** `Ctrl+Right` / `Ctrl+Left` steps through artists (and resets the card timer); `Ctrl+R` brings the card back without changing artist. Set the night's headliner now.

Styles are standalone files too: `Visuals/Styles/<name>.json` (visualizers + layers + shaders + screen FX). Switching with `Ctrl+F3` / `Ctrl+F4` never edits the file — experiment freely.

Style pack sharing / booth handoff: when a look uses custom media (logo, avatar, an image or video from the current playlist), export it as a `.style` bundle before moving it to another booth or archiving it. The package is just a ZIP that contains the `style.json` plus any bundled assets under `Images/`, `Videos/`, and `Avatars/` (with metadata/thumbnail sidecars when present). Importing the package recreates the style and copies the media into `Documents/Visuals/` so the look is ready to play without manual re-linking. Use this for backup, venue templates, show packages, and moving a ready-made set between laptops.

Chapter 6: Minutes 11–13 — A Few Useful Settings

- **Output levels:** brightness/saturation/opacity for the layers you use. Small room? Lower is better — bright projections on a near wall fatigue eyes fast.
- **Video audio:** **Settings** → **AUDIO Device** → **Video Playback Audio** — enable it and choose the output device, only if the show's audio comes from played videos.
- **Silence:** leave defaults today; tune per venue before any DMX show.
- **Masks:** **Settings** → **Layer - Mask** if a mask needs sizing for your projector.

Most settings persist automatically, although not all are stored in `config.json` (for example, the audio devices are runtime settings). You normally do not need to edit configuration files; see [Config & CLI](#) if you need to locate or change one.

Chapter 7: Minutes 13–15 — Prove It: The Pre-Show Checklist

1. **Ctrl+W** fullscreen — no chrome, no cursor, no FPS overlay (**Ctrl+I** off).
2. Music playing — peak meters dance, visuals react.
3. **Ctrl+Down** through the **entire** playlist — no missing files, no vertical surprises.
4. **Ctrl+F4** + **Ctrl+F2** transition — deliberate look change, wraps fine at list ends.
5. Artist card: **Ctrl+Right** to the headliner; let it hide; **Ctrl+R** brings it back.
6. Escape keys rehearsed: **Ctrl+W** back to windowed for emergencies. **Never touch** **Ctrl+Q** (instant quit, no confirmation) during the show.

Chapter 8: Where To Go Next (After The First Show)

Next step	Guide	When
Play without the mouse	Keyboard Shortcut Reference Card	Tape it to the laptop lid
Hands-on control	MIDI & HID Controller Setup	When you buy a controller (DDJ, Traktor, pads)
Light the room	DMX Rig Configuration Guide	Small rig first, then movement + scenes
Stream / project	NDI & Spout Output Guide	OBS, vMix, Resolume on same or remote PC
Multi-room	Multi-Screen & Client-Server Guide	One operator, many screens
Automate / integrate	HTTP & WebSocket API Reference	Show control from scripts and apps
Sound-savvy visuals	Visualizers Deep Dive	Pick the right visualizer per event
Touch control	OSC Integration Guide	TouchOSC, DAWs, Resolume Arena
Unlock tiers	License & Activation Guide	Trial ending, Pro/Enterprise features

Chapter 9: Troubleshooting (First-Night Edition)

Symptom	Likely cause	Fix
No visuals react to music	Wrong input device, or capture volume ~0	Settings → AUDIO Device: correct Main device, volume ~1.0, OS input level up
Meters pinned at max	Input too hot	Lower capture volume / OS input level
Ctrl+F1 – F4 change brightness	Laptop Fn/media keys	Hold Fn or enable Fn-lock
Shortcut does nothing	App window not focused	Click the DjMirror Pulse window once
Black flash between videos	Missing file in the .txt playlist	Step through the whole playlist in soundcheck; fix filenames
Card won't come back	Timer hidden + wrong keys	Ctrl+R (not arrows) brings it back unchanged
App quit mid-show	Hit Ctrl+Q next to Ctrl+W	Left hand only for Ctrl+W ; stay clear of Q
macOS combo dead	OS shortcut conflict	System Settings → Keyboard → Shortcuts, disable overlap

Chapter 10: Quick Recipe Card (Your First 15 Minutes)

- **0–2:** Launch → locate the configured **Visuals/** folder → **Ctrl+W** fullscreen.
- **2–5:** AUDIO Device → main + fallback → play music → meters dance.
- **5–8:** **Ctrl+F4** styles · **Ctrl+F2** masks · **Ctrl+Down** videos · double-hit transitions.
- **8–11:** Own files into **Visuals/** + **.txt** playlist → step it fully → **Ctrl+Right** headliner.
- **11–13:** Levels sane · video-audio if needed · persist automatic.
- **13–15:** Checklist §7 → escape **Ctrl+W** → hands off **Ctrl+Q**.