

## SLOWGOLD 8 QUICK START

Greetings, musician. We have attempted to make SlowGold as easy to set up, understand and use as is humanly possible, but we feel that a few minutes spent scanning this document will alert you to the full capabilities of the program, and alert you to a couple of tips and tricks that may prove useful. If you want an ultra-fast into, just go to the Getting Started section of this document – 4 easy steps should get you going in under a minute! Then read the rest of this document at your leisure to enjoy the full capabilities of SlowGold.

### WHAT IS SLOWGOLD?

SlowGold is a tool to help singers, musicians and translators work with audio sources – mp3 files, cd tracks and other audio formats (see Specifications).

The main task that SlowGold is designed for is **transcription** – which might be

- **Guitarists** or other **musicians** transcribing a solo into tablature or music notation.
- **Musicians** figuring out the chords to a song
- **Singers** transcribing the lyrics to a song
- **Translators** translating an audio speech into a text file in a target language
- A **transcription services** department or company transcribing audio files into text files

Another important use is **play-along**, in which a performer might want to play along with the original recording at, say, 70% of the original speed, gradually increasing the speed until full mastery is achieved.

---

### MAKE IT EASY!

The approach that SlowGold takes to helping with these important activities is basically to **Make It Easy**. Specifically, that amounts to:

- Easily open the vast majority of audio formats and devices. Keep this feature up-to-date with rapid response to new, popular formats
- Make it easy to chop up any audio file into manageable chunks by dropping, dragging, annotating and deleting *loop points*. Each loop (or selection of multiple loops) can be played in looped mode at a variety of speeds without changing the pitch.
- But still, make it possible to change the pitch if that's what you *want* to do:
  - the **key change** ability is great for singers who want to sing along with recordings in the singer's own key
  - the **fine-tuning** ability is perfect for working with recordings that might not be tuned exactly to A-440 (or to whatever your instrument is tuned to) – *tune the recording to your instrument, instead of the other way around.*
- Save all changes automatically
- Have automatic help always on-board: hover over any on-screen item to read a clear explanation
- Automatically download track names from the Internet for CD tracks
- Allow for easy (and customizable) use of keystrokes, mouse clicks, a graphical interface and even midi (yes, you could sample and perform in realtime with

- Make it so easy to get started that it doesn't even need an installer!

## GETTING STARTED

### 1. Installation

*There is no installation* other than putting the SlowGold program where you want it to be!

**Macintosh** users will probably want to drag the SlowGold 8 application into your Applications folder.

**PC Users** can put SlowGold 8.exe anywhere – your desktop, or your Program Files folders are good places. Note that you can right-click the icon and choose *Pin to Start Menu* or *Pin to Taskbar* to give you easy, immediate access to SG.

### 2. Open SlowGold

Locate the SlowGold icon in folder, directory, start menu or taskbar, and double-click it.

### 3. Choose Music To Work With

If an audio CD is in the drive when SlowGold starts, SlowGold will attempt to find the CD's track names online (once it has found the track names, they are stored on disk, so you won't need a connection to see the track names).

The CD track names will be displayed in the *CD Window*. Click on a track name to select it (it may take a short while for the CD to spin up before you see any activity in the SlowGold screen).

**Why Do Some CDs say “Unknown CD”?** When the CD format was created, the designers of the format forgot to include the track names on the CD! So, CDs contain only digital audio tracks, but no descriptions of those tracks. SlowGold tries to find the CD and track names from an online database by sending the track lengths to that database, but many CDs cannot be found there. If that is the case, SlowGold labels the CD “Unknown CD”

If there is no CD in the drive, the *CD Window* will be empty – you can load an audio file into this area in any of these ways:

- choose **Open** from the **File** menu
- drag a music track from iTunes or the **Windows Media Player**
- drag a music track from the **Finder** (Mac) or **Windows Explorer** (Windows).

A graphical representation of the selected audio source appears in the *Waveform* window.

**Note:** Even though SlowGold endeavors to support all popular audio file formats, there are some audio formats not yet supported. If you get a message indicating that the format of the file you've chosen is not supported, you can usually open the file in iTunes and then right-click the file to save as WAV, mp3, or some other file format supported by SlowGold. There are also various free audio file format converters available through sites such as download.com.

### 4. Play With The Music

At this point, you should be able to toggle playback by pressing the Space bar, and use the **Speed** and **Pitch** Sliders to hear how SlowGold transforms playback.

Next, we'll look at the SlowGold display in detail to see the easy tools it gives you for transcribing or playing along. After that, we'll take a detailed look at using Loop Points to make it easy for you to focus on bite-sized musical segments.

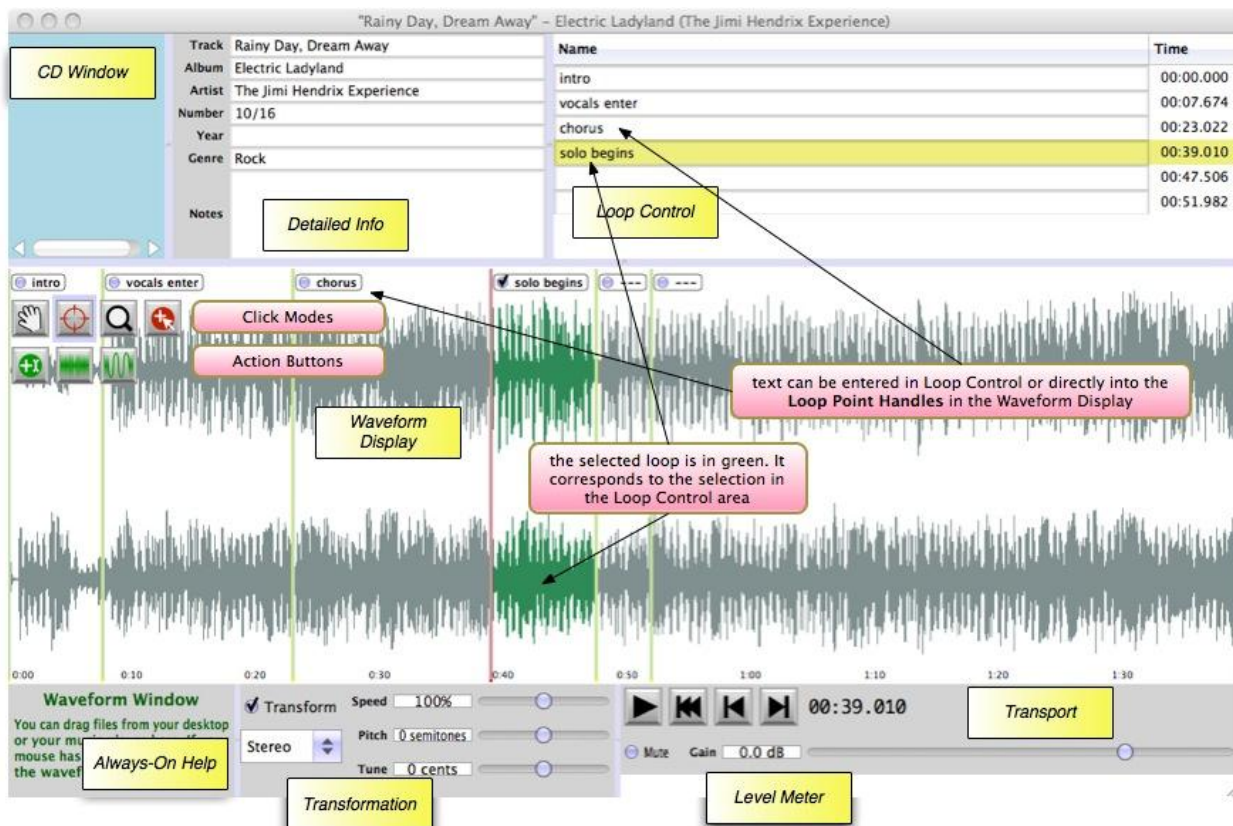
## A Note to Windows 7 and Vista Users – Playback Pitch is too high

In some instances, you may notice that the speed of playback in SlowGold 8 is too high. We are working on making this seamless, but in the meantime, there is a very easy workaround to this problem [here](#).

## THE SLOWGOLD SCREEN

Image 1 shows SlowGold in use, transforming a portion of a CD track. In this case, the user has created two loop points (in addition to the automatically-created one at 00:00.000), and selected the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 3 loops. Before we examine the functions of each of the panes, note what may be the most important pane, the **Always-On Help** pane in the lower-left corner of the screen. The contents of this pane changes as you move the mouse cursor over various areas of the screen. It gives concise descriptions of the use of whatever is under the mouse.

Also one general note: you can resize any of the panes to your preference by clicking and dragging the borders between panes.




## Waveform Display

This shows you an interactive graphical view of the audio in the source you've chosen. Here's a mini-walkthrough that highlights a couple of things to notice.

### 1. Start with an audio source selected.


Either put a CD in the drive and click a track in the CD Track List window, open an audio file through the File Open menu, or drag an audio file into SlowGold.

## 2. Create 2 or 3 loop points in the file


Click the rightmost button  in the top row to put the mouse into “Create Loop Point” mode, and click several times in the graph. Each time you do so, you should see a new vertical line with a little white “flag” on top appear in the Waveform display.

## 3. Another way to create Loop Points


While music is playing, you can create a loop point at the current playback point by clicking on the **Add Loop Point**

Button . Or, even easier – just hit the L key!

## 4. Exit Create Loop Point mode (if you’re in it)

Do this either by clicking any of the other Mode buttons in the waveform display 

## 5. Drag your loop points around by the handles

Notice how the handles can be used to fine-tune the position of a Loop Point 

## 6. Zoom around

If you have a mouse with a mouse wheel, notice that the mouse wheel can be used to zoom around rapidly in the audio file. Alternatively, you might try clicking the Magnifying Glass icon in the Waveform Display, and then clicking in the Waveform itself. Notice that shift-clicking zooms out.

## 7. Other things to notice about Loop Point Handles

a. Each one has a checkbox that can be used to select or unselect the loop that starts there

b. You can enter text in them directly

This is the same text that is displayed in the Loop Control pane.

Now that you’ve become familiar with the Waveform Display’s capabilities, let’s continue on with our survey of the SlowGold panes.

## 8. Deleting a Loop Point

The easiest way is to select the loop point in the upper-right window, the Loop Control pane, and hit Ctrl-X (for Cut).

You can also create loop points while the music is playing, by clicking the leftmost button in the 2<sup>nd</sup> row – the Add Loop Point button.

You can select one or more sections to play back by selecting the first then Ctrl-clicking on another.

## CD Window

If there is a CD in the CD drive, the tracks will be listed here. If it is possible for SlowGold to retrieve the track names from the Internet, it will. Otherwise, it will list Unknown CD as the title, and track numbers instead of track names.

Clicking on any track number or name in this pane will select it, and its waveform should begin filling the Waveform Display pane, and be ready for immediate playback with the **Space bar** or **Play** button.

If there’s no CD in the drive, then this area will be blank. You can also drop an audio file from iTunes, the Mac Finder, the Windows Explorer, and some other programs into this area (or, in fact, any part of the SlowGold screen) to load it as an audio source.

## Detailed Info

This displays the meta-information associated with the audio track. It may come from an online source if the selected source material is a CD track, or it may have been read directly from an mp3 file.

Entries you make in the Notes area are saved.

## Loop Control

This area lists all the loop points that have been made for the current source material, ordered by time. You can type anything you want into the text field to the right of the timestamp – usually, this will be either a description like “start of solo” or perhaps it will be a line of the song’s lyrics like “I read the news today, oh boy.”

You have a lot of flexibility in **selecting** single or multiple loops in this window (and in the Waveform Display). To select a single loop, just click the timestamp. To select a group of loops that are adjacent to each other, click the first and then shift-click the last. You can even add or delete non-adjacent loops to the **current selection** by Command-clicking timestamps.

The **current selection** is always in looped playback mode – if non-adjacent segments are selected, playback will skip over unselected segments in between. To play the entire track of source material, select all the the loops by clicking in this area and hitting **Ctrl-A/Select All** (Cmd-A on the Mac).

## Transformations

This is where you control the speed and pitch of the playback. You can also bypass the entire section of processing (with the checkbox) to hear the digital audio straight from the source.

Settings here are remembered on a per-track basis.





## Transport

This contains the Play/Pause button and a button that jumps the playback position to the start of the current selection.

## WHAT ABOUT ALL THE OTHER BUTTONS?




### WAVEFORM DISPLAY CLICK MODE BUTTONS

These buttons (the top row of buttons) don’t immediately cause any changes to occur. Instead, they determine what will happen when you click in the Waveform Display graphic

-  **Drag Mode**  
You’ll be able to click on the waveform and move it from right to left within the display window.
-  **Set Playback Position Mode**  
The Playback pointer will be moved to wherever you click in the graphic, as long as it is in a selected segment.
-  **Zoom Mode**  
Clicking will zoom into the graph where you clicked; shift-clicking will zoom out.
-  **Create Loop Point Mode**

A loop point will be created wherever you click in the graphic.

## WAVEFORM DISPLAY ACTION BUTTONS

-  **Insert Loop Point at current Playback Position**  
Click this while the music is playing (or stopped) to drop a loop point at the playback position
-  **Zoom out full**  
This zooms out to display the entire audio file in the Waveform Windows.
-  **Zoom selection to fill window**  
This is very handy when you're working on a section – this expands it to fill the entire waveform window.  
  
The buttons in the transport section just jump to various parts of the current track, and select them.

## TIPS AND TRICKS!

- Would you like to use different keys, or even MIDI messages, to control SlowGold? Well, that is easy to do – just go to the **File menu** and choose **Edit Keyboard Mappings...** or **Edit Midi Mappings....** In either case, you'll be able to attach any triggers you like to any Slowgold actions.
- The **Open recent->** function in the **File** menu can be very handy for opening any of the files you've recently worked with.
- You can customize many aspects of the **Waveform Display** from the **Display menu**.
- Another super-easy way to enter a lot of loop points is to just play the audio file and press the "Ctrl" key and "=" key everytime the music comes to a place where you want to insert a loop point, like the beginning of musical phrase. You could also use whatever other keys you might choose to map to "Create Loop Point".

## BASIC MENUS

SlowGold has both Basic and Advanced menus. The Basic menus are those

Note that most menu commands can also be activated with keystrokes, and these shortcut keys are indicated in the menus, to the right of the menu items.

### FILE

#### Open...

Opens a dialog to let you choose any audio file (in the supported formats) to work with. Or, you can simply drag these files from the file system or iTunes onto any portion of the SlowGold screen.

#### Close

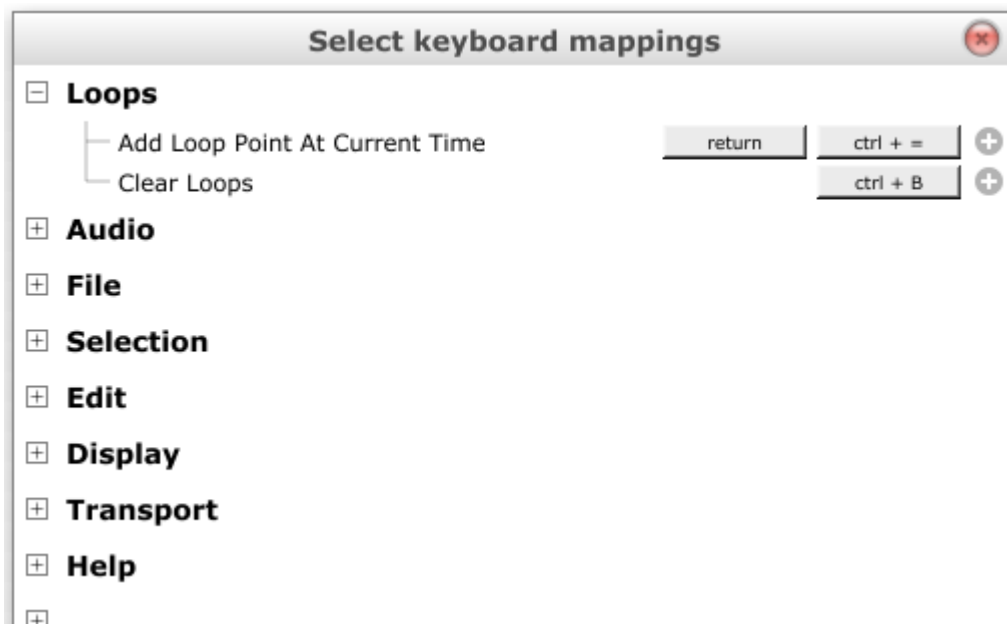
Closes the current file and clears the Waveform Display

#### Eject All

Ejects all CDs from all disk drives

#### Edit Keyboard Mappings

This gives you a way to tailor the behavior of SlowGold to your preferred way of working.



This screen lists many of the functions of SlowGold – and it shows which keys can be used to control them. You can map multiple keystrokes to any function. For instance, the above screen shows that you can add a loop point at the current playback time **either** by pressing the Return key, or by holding down the Ctrl and the = key at the same time.

To *remove* a keyboard mapping, just click on the mapping and select **Remove this command mapping** from the popup menu.

To add a new mapping, click the + button next to the function you want to control.

## **Edit Midi Mappings**

This functions just like editing keyboard mappings, except that it takes MIDI signals as controls instead of keystrokes.

## **Show Advanced Menus**

This displays additional menu choices which are not normally needed for everyday operation. Those menu choices are listed in the next section.

## **Open Recent**

This displays files which you've recently opened in SlowGold, enabling you to get back to them easily.

---

## EDIT

### **Undo**

Undoes the last loop point operation – cut, paste, clear or move

### **Redo**

Redoes the last operation that was undone

### **Cut**

Deletes the selected loop point(s), and copies it into the Edit buffer.

### **Copy**

Copies the selected loop points into the Edit buffer

### **Paste**

Pastes any loops that are in the Edit buffer

---

## AUDIO

### **Toggle Audio Mute**

If audio is on, turns it off. If audio is off, turns it on.

### **Nudge Volume Up**

Makes the output volume a little louder.



## Nudge Volume Down

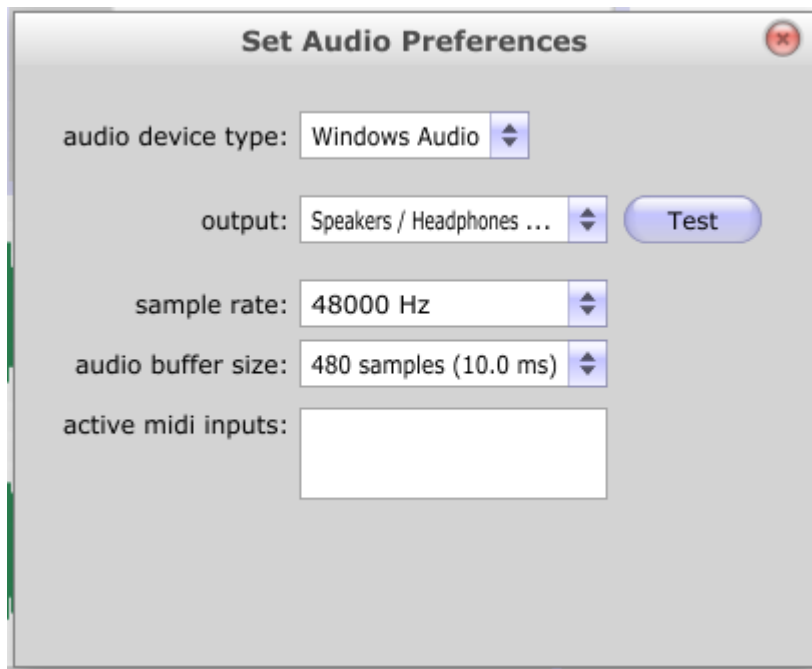
Makes the output volume a little quieter.

## Enable Transforms

If this is checked (the default), then slowdown and pitch transposition are enabled; if unchecked, the original audio is played back unchanged.

## Audio Preferences...

Opens up the following dialog, which allows you to select the active audio output, midi input (if controlling via midi) and other parameters controlling how playback occurs:



---

## TRANSPORT

### Toggle Start/Stop

Starts and stops playback.

### Add Loop Point at Current Time

This is probably the most useful way to add loop points – to just create them as the music plays. However, you'll probably do this with the keyboard (return), as that is fastest and most convenient.

### Clear Loops

Deletes all loop points in the current song except for the one at the beginning of the song.

---

## SELECT

### Select All

Selects all the Loop Points in the song

### Select None

Clears all loop points from being selected.

### Invert Selection

This deselects any currently-selected loops, and selects all the others.

### Loop This Segment / Loop Entire Track

If you don't have all the loops in a track selected, this selects them all. So far, that's not very different from Select All. The difference occurs in the following step – this will select only the loop that contains the current playback point. This can be handy if you're listening to a song and suddenly say to yourself, "hey, I want to listen to *this* section over and over again". It is easiest to do this using the keyboard shortcut (by default, Ctrl-T) instead of the menu item.

---

## ADVANCED MENUS

---

## EDIT

The follow commands are commands that set the mouse mode in the Waveform Display window – they are equivalent to the top row of buttons

### Set Time Mode

The Playback pointer will be moved to wherever you click in the graphic, as long as it is in a selected segment.

### Drag Mode

You'll be able to click on the waveform and move it from right to left within the display window.

### Add Loop Point Mode

A loop point will be created wherever you click in the graphic.

### Zoom In Mode

Clicking will zoom into the graph where you clicked; shift-clicking will zoom out.

---

## AUDIO

### Reset Volume

Sets the Volume slider to 0.

---

## TRANSPORT

### **Show Pre-Fader Levels**

When this is checked, the volume indicator lights show the volume levels of the transformed sound before being affected by the volume controls. In the default state, when this is checked, it shows the levels after being processed by the volume control.

---

## SELECT

### **Toggle...**

### **Unselect...**

---

## DISPLAY

This menu contains commands that let you customize the SlowGold screen – mainly the Waveform display. You can freely experiment with these

### **Show Time Gridlines**

SlowGold shows lime-green vertical lines at regular intervals in the waveform by default. By unchecking this menu choice, you can hide them

### **Show Stacked Waveform**

This switches the waveform display between a stereo display and one in which both sides of the signal are displayed in a single chart

### **Follow Cursor**

When this is checked, playback always shifts the waveform display to show the playback cursor. Otherwise, the waveform display does not change during playback

### **Show Help Pane**

Actually, the Help pane in the lower left corner of the screen is always visible – this just toggles whether help text appears in that pane as the mouse hovers over any element.

### **Show Tooltips**

When selected, the help text appears next to the cursor when the cursor hovers over a control for several seconds.

### **Show Loop Point Selection Buttons**

This affects whether checkboxes are displayed at the top of the Loop Point lines in the grid or not.

### **Show Loop Point Labels**

### **Show Grid Times at Top**

This moves the grid times from their normal position near the bottom of the Waveform Display to the top.

### **Command Bar At Left Side**

Moves the command buttons (the 2<sup>nd</sup> line) between the left and right sides of the display.

### **Command Bar At Top**

Moves the command buttons (the 2<sup>nd</sup> line) between the top and bottom edges of the display.

### **Modes At Left Side**

Moves the mode buttons (the 1<sup>st</sup> line) between the left and right sides of the display.

### **Modes At Top**

Moves the mode buttons (the 1<sup>st</sup> line) between the top and bottom edges of the display.