

# HIFD Winamp configuration

## Winamp V5.58+

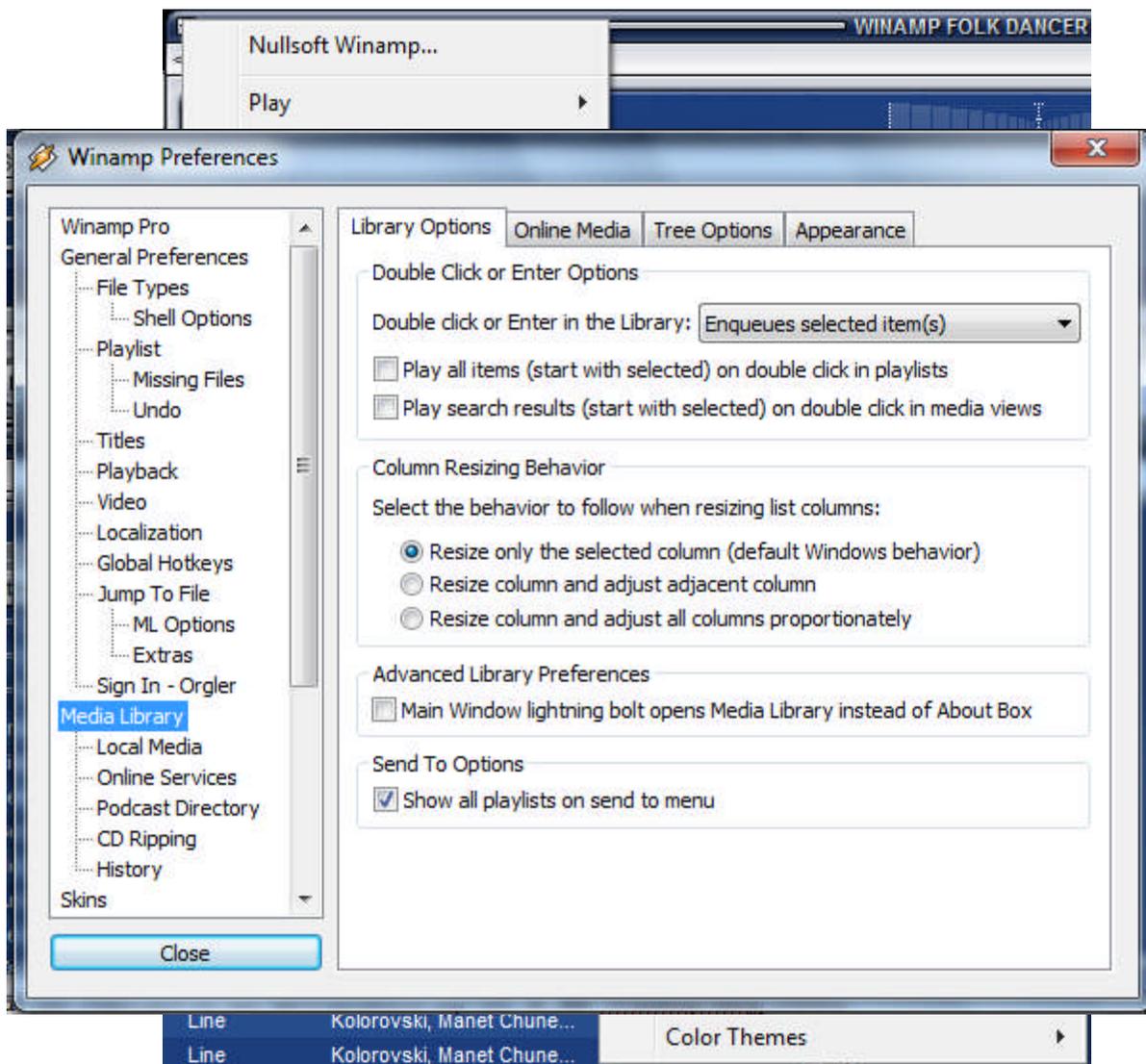
*These configuration suggestions are designed to make it user friendly for recreational dance groups. The specific configuration for the Houston International Folk Dancers is detailed in this document. The mandatory configuration has been found to make Winamp much more friendly, but final configuration should be tailored to local tastes and problems. I have tried to put the important information first.*

1. To use the extra controls, the main Winamp window must be expanded and widened. The hidden controls and displays allow you to start a dance with a delay, and set memory and pause points.
2. When installing Winamp there are a number of things you probably do not need for recreational dance groups usage. By omitting them you may increase stability and speed. Here is a short list of possible omissions. These can be uninstalled later if they cause problems.
  - Visualization – Makes pretty pictures which have nothing to do with the dance
  - Video – Displays video information
  - Dashboard
  - Hot Keys – Most have been disabled in this skin, and single letter hot keys cause problems.
  - Shoutcast – Network streaming
  - Podcasts
  - Bookmarks
  - Winamp add ons
  - Online Services
  - Playlist Generator
3. When installing Winamp several things also have to be installed
  - The Modern Folk Dancer skin – Removes unneeded and dangerous features
  - [Safety Menus replace standard menus](#). (recommended)
  - A tempo shifting plug-in – Tempo control (optional) [Chronotron Pro](#) or [Procrustes](#) recommended.
  - [Playlist Undo](#) – This allows you to undo goofs when making a playlist. Written by Dr.O (mandatory)
  - [MouseWheel Blocker](#) – prevents wheel on mouse from changing volume. Written by Dr.O (recommended)
  - KatMouse found at <http://www.code-scout.net/katmouse/> - Makes mouse wheel work properly in all windows (recommended).
4. The [safety menus](#) remove the misleading “Play” options from most menu items. Play unfortunately clears the playlist, so removing it prevents accidental list clearing. This actually removes the play menu item from all Winamp skins. The only deficit is that it is not currently implemented for any other languages than US English.
  - To install the safety menus click on the link and put the contents of the downloaded zip file in the Winamp\Lang folder. You may have to create the Lang folder.
  - Go to the setup menu and click on Options/preference/localization
  - Click on Winamp-en-us-folk-dancer
  - Click on switch to

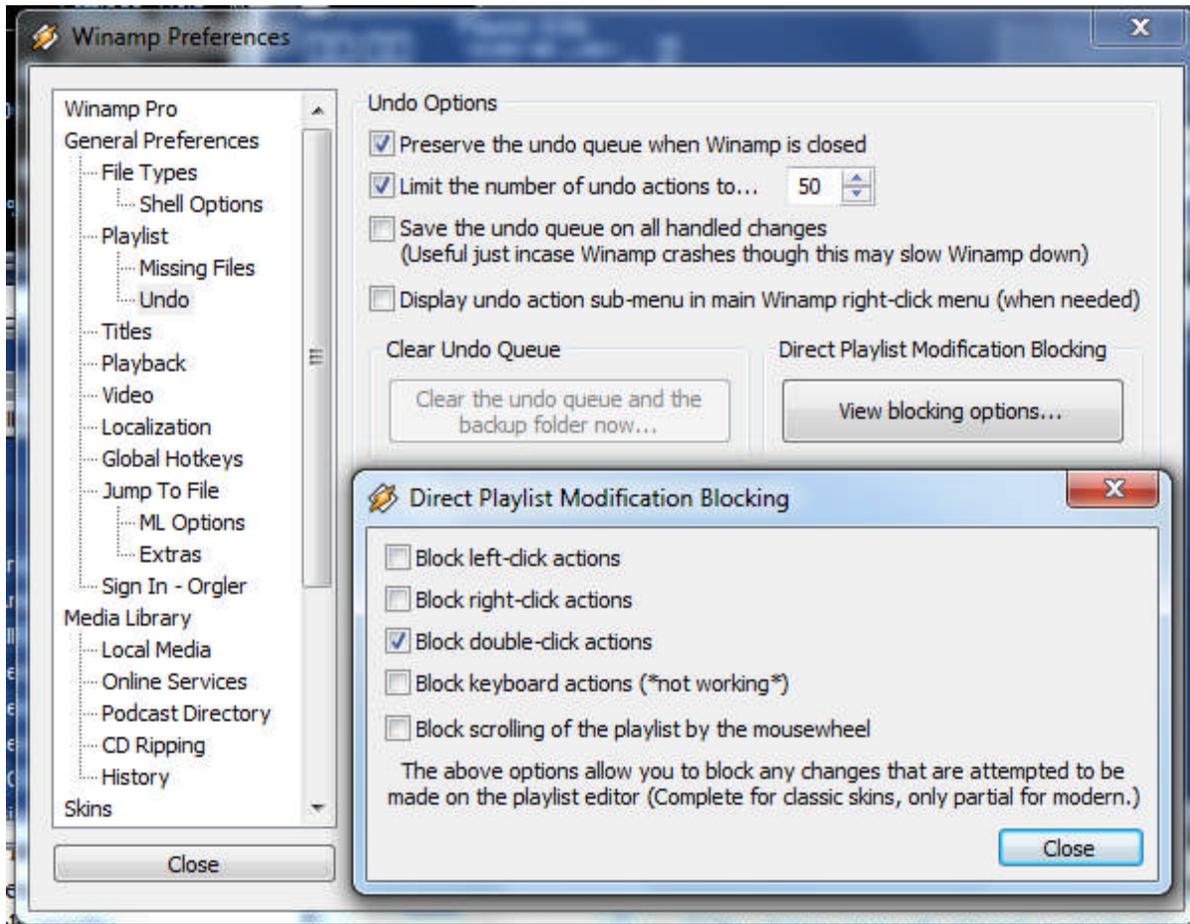
Winamp-en-us-locked is another language pack available that locks a large number of features. If that is selected users will not be able to change many things. However once it is selected, the only

way to remove it is to delete the language file and restart Winamp, or switch skins and press CTRL-P. Perhaps I will eventually close this hole and make a password control.

- To get to the setup menus click on the small button in the upper left corner, then on Preferences.



- Setup the Media Library preferences** (Options/Preferences/Media Library tab:library options)
  - Double click or Enter in Library: **Enqueues selected item(s)**
  - **Uncheck** Play all items
  - **Uncheck** play search results.



7. Setup the safety features (General Preferences/Playlist/Undo)

- You must first install the playlist Undo plugin.
- Click on Undo, located under Playlist
- Click on View blocking options
- Check on Block right-click action (optional.)
- Check on Block double-click actions (mandatory) This prevents starting dances by accidental double clicking
- You may wish to also check the Save the undo queue on all handled changes

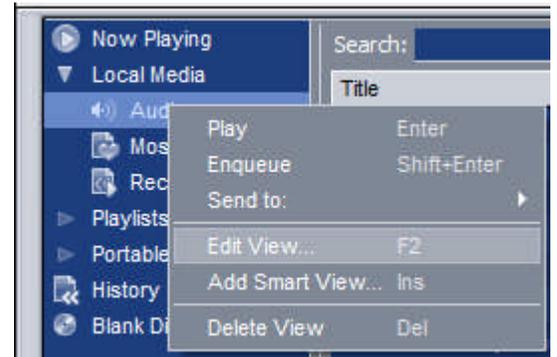
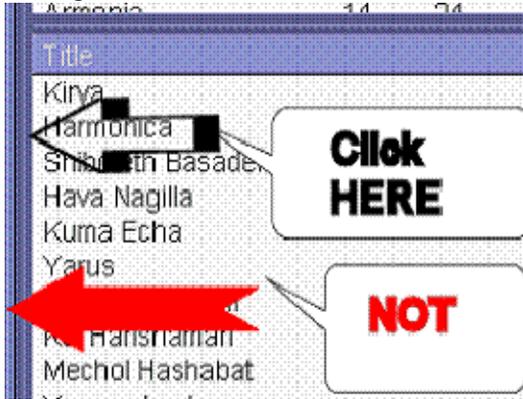
8. Setup the desired fonts and font sizes (General Preferences/Playlist)

- Font size **14** or whatever looks good on the screen.
- Use font: either Times New Roman or Arial are good (Avoid fancy fonts)
- Also make sure that **Manual Playlist Advance** is **not** checked.

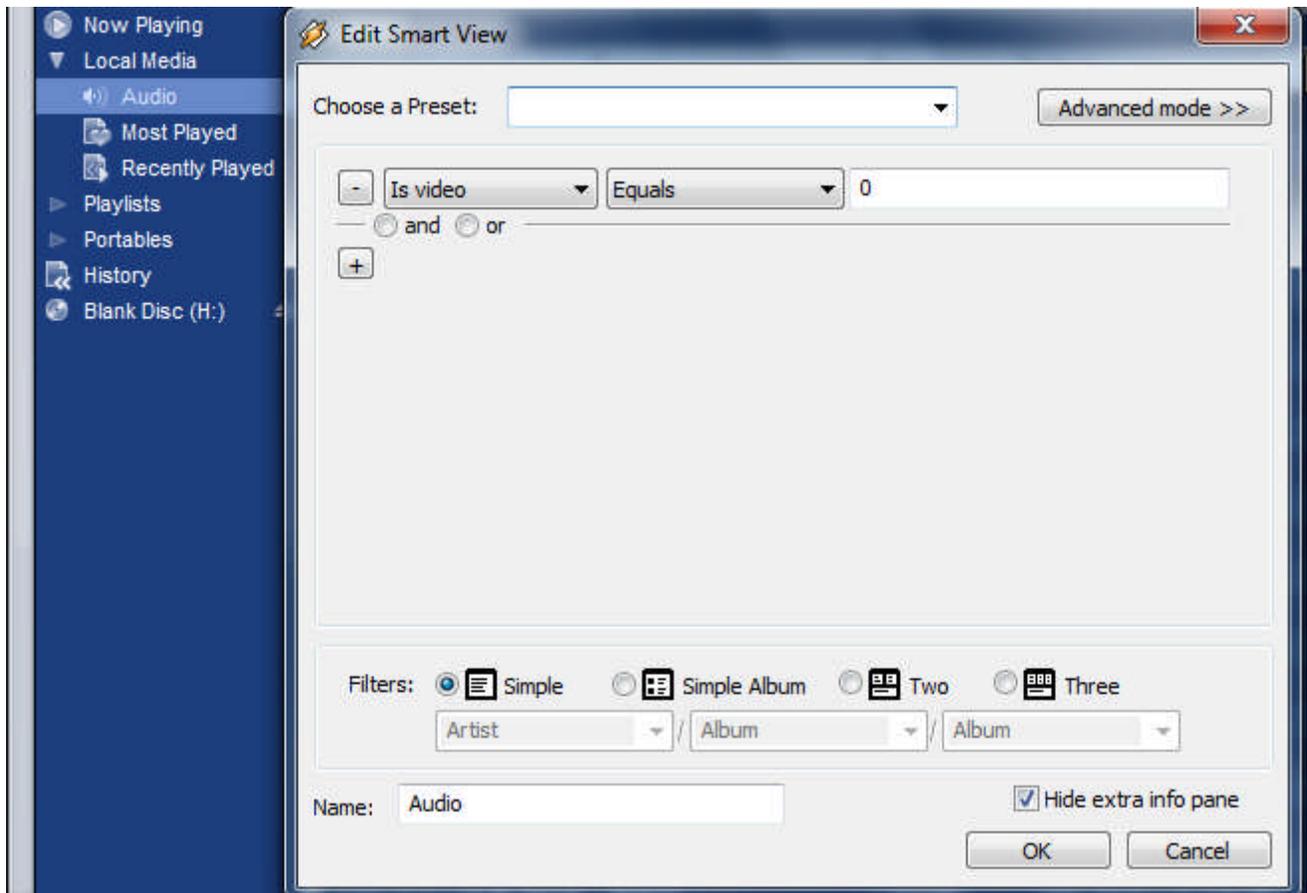
9. If you add a track with the name **\*\*\*STOP\*\*\*** it will stop Winamp when it is encountered. It is suggested that that it be a short blank track.

10. Remove the extra windows from the library (mandatory) The extra windows are handy, but if you accidentally double click on an item in those windows it will enqueue all of the dances which contain that item. So if you double click “Romanian” you will end up with a playlist that has every Romanian dance.

- Open the extra window in the Media library by grabbing the edge of the list and pull to the right.



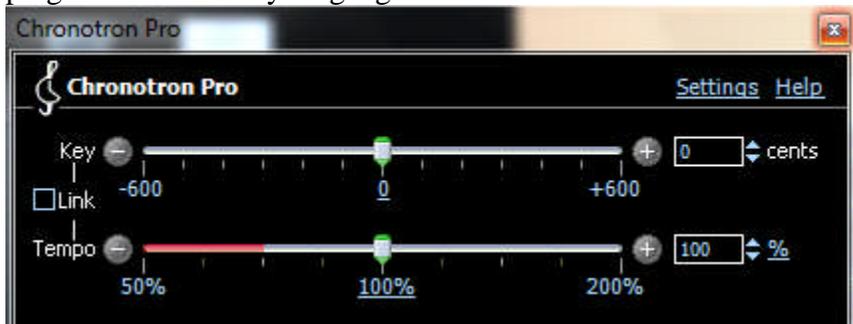
- Right click on the library entry and then click on Edit View
- Click on Simple and also check Hide extra info pane
- The filter panes can be useful, but the first time someone double clicks on the “All” line and enqueues all of your dances you will be sorry. It may take several minutes or more to recover.



11. Setup the display order for the playlist. (General Preferences/titles) (recommended)
  - Advanced title display “%title% [ - %artist% ] [ - \$cut(%genre%,4) ] [ - \$abbr(%comment%) ] [ - %album% ]” is what HIFD sometimes uses.
  - The fields are %title%, %album%, %genre%, %comment%, %artist%
  - \$abbr(field) abbreviates the field
  - \$cut(field, #) cuts the field down to # characters
  - The square brackets [] go around things that are only displayed if the field is not blank.
  
12. HIFD puts all dances into a single folder, and sets this folder as the default.
  - Go to Media Library - Local Media/Watch Folders
  - Setup your local folder that contains all of your dances.
  - Whenever you add or remove dances you just need to click **Rescan Now**
  - This is much easier than adding or removing dances individually.
  
13. Setup the internet (General Preferences)
  - Select your internet connection. If you wish to minimize interruptions select “Not connected...” (optional) Some computers insert clicks into the music when connected or trying to connect to the internet.
  - Winamp may waste time trying to download things like album covers and other information, so turning off the internet may save you a lot of time.
  - iTunes has this really annoying habit of trying to download everything, and you can't turn it off. But in Winamp you can remove online services, which should kill this type of nonsense.
  
14. History. Winamp can keep a complete history of what you have played.
  - To configure it go to Preferences/Media Library/History
  - You can select how long the history covers.
  - Since sometimes dances are started and then not finished because they are the wrong version you may wish to limit tracking to items which are either 50% finished, or totally finished.
  - You can view the history in the optional library window.
  
15. There are many things that Winamp has that are not necessary for folk dancing. You can remove them by either deleting them after installation.
  - If you use the optional window in the library users may find all of the options confusing.
  - You can right click on Most Played, Recently Added, Recently Played, Never Played, Top Rated and delete them if you do not wish to see this information.
  - You can remove other things by removing the plug ins. You do not need any of the plugins under visualization.
  - Under General Purpose plug ins you can safely remove Nullsoft Music Usage Database.
  - Media Library plug ins you can remove
    1. Now Playing
    2. Playlists – keep it if you want to edit a separate playlist while running a program
    3. Add-ons
    4. Bookmarks
    5. Online services
    6. Portable Music Player if you do not need it

16. Setup the tempo shifting plugin (Plug-ins/DSP) I have tested the plugins on a variety of files including FLAC, MP4, Wave, and MP3, mono and stereo. I have tested at 80% slowdown, and maximum slowdown. It seems that all of the plugins have problems, and there is only one clear winner for all applications. Most plugins can change tempo by a maximum of 50%. FLAC files seem to present problems to many plugins.

- Click AVM-Software and then the desired plug-in.
- Most of these plugins crash when switching tracks, except if you have set delay of 2s or more. This seems to be a Winamp problem, and not just a plugin problem.
- Do **not** use Take it Easy because it definitely crashes Winamp. It also has caused files to stop playing long before the end. **Not recommended** because of the crashing.
- Chronotron Pro – Very good sound with separate pitch and tempo control. Does have some burbling at extremely large slowdown values. No disable button. It is the only slowdown plugin that can be attached to a Winamp window so the whole group can be moved. This is a nice touch. Shareware \$59 with 15 day trial. It kills the spectrum display. This is the newer version on their website. **Highly Recommended** The latest version of Winamp 5.58x has a bug in the FLAC decoder which prevents this from working. A workaround is to use the 5.57x version of Winamp, or to save the in\_flac plugin from 5.57x and install it in the 5.58x version. I have provided a copy of the in\_flac plugin with the safety language files.



- Procrustes does a very good job of shifting tempo on most file types while maintaining pitch, but has no pitch shifting. I found that upon a reinstall it had trouble with FLAC and MP4 files. This might be fixable by installing older MP4 and FLAC input plugins. It works well with WAV and MP3. It does have some roughness at very large slowdown settings. No disable button, but right clicking puts it back to 100% (disabled). This is one of best sounding of the free plugins. The new version is **recommended** but the old version had multiple problems and would sometimes crash, or not work with mono files.
- Pacemaker – Is very rough on V5.32, but sounded much better on previous versions, with separate controls, and more burbling at large slowdown values. Can be disabled, and remembers settings for each track. Freeware, but does crash Winamp, when going to the previous track. It does crash at maximum slowdown, or when switching tracks. Newest version is on author's website at <http://www.surina.net/pacemaker/download.html> It can not be adjusted for FLAC and goes to the maximum speedup. Wave files do not sound very good. In addition to crashing it also gets stuck occasionally when switching to another track, and Winamp must be killed. **Provisionally Recommended** because of the crashing. It seems to work for modest slowdowns if you set a 2s delay, and do not have FLAC files.
- Fourier Pitch control – Fair sound, better than Slow me Down, but not as good a Procrustes. Smooth sound, but volume pumps up and down as if someone had turned up

the tremolo.. Controls are linked in an annoying fashion. Below 80% slowdown, the pitch also is lowered in tandem. It kills the spectrum display for FLAC files. **Recommended** if it suits your needs.

- [Slow me Down](#) is quite variable in quality, but it has separate pitch shifting and can be turned off to have no effect. Does not slowdown FLAC files. The best sound is with MP3 files, and is acceptable. MP4 has very poor sound. I have crashed Winamp when switching dances, but not on V5.52. The company who made this plugin also markets a very high quality program to do the same thing, but they provided the Winamp plugin as a poor quality teaser. It is claimed to only work on Winamp V2. The author does not have a better version on their website, and they provide no support. **Recommended Provisionally** if you use MP3 or wave files.
- Atomix – Changes speed up to 20%, but not pitch. Does not work with Mono files or any file other than 44kHz. It displays the number of beats/min, which is a nice touch. It kills the spectrum display for FLAC files. It has crashed when switching tracks. **Not Recommended** because of limitations and crashing.
- [NULLSOFT DSP effects](#) – Good sound, and works quickly. Unfortunately changes both pitch and tempo. Can be turned off. No speed indicator. Many other effects including pitch control available. Is should be the most reliable because it is by the Winamp team. Kills the spectrum display. **Recommended** if it suits your needs.
- Audiomaker – Poor sound, and seems a bit flakey. **Not recommended.**

17. Lyrics plugins – There are a number of these. Be careful as some trash the files. Some only work over the web. This is an area which is extremely nonstandard. Lyrics entered in iTunes are generally now shown in any of the Winamp plugins. A simple plugin which shows only text files might be the best until the jungle has been cleared.

- Mini lyrics – appears to be stable, but is difficult to use shareware with annoying reminders.
- Winamp lyrics – trashed an MP3 file when lyrics were stored in a tag. Shareware limited trial
- Lyrics plugin or gen lyrics03 – Simple, but only stores lyrics on the web.

18. Setup the media library: - This is how HIFD sets up their media library. You may wish to do it differently.

- HIFD has labeled the dances as active or inactive by prefacing them with either A\$ or I\$. Culls are labeled Cull\$. To implement this, smart views are created labeled Active and Inactive.
- Open the smart view by clicking on the left side of the Library window, and pull to the right to open the smart view window.
- To create a smart view right click on Local Media, and click on **Add Smart view...**
  - Active smart view. Type in the label **Active**
  - Click on the plus sign.
  - Then fill in the fields to select only files with A\$ (filename, contains, A\$)
  - Finally if you want to have the filter tools at the top of the library window, Click on the Filter tab and select the desired filters.
- Then create the inactive smart view for files that contain I\$.
- Delete unwanted views (optional)
- For each of the smart views format the items shown in the window.

- Right click on the “Title, Artist...” titlebar, and set the order of the items. Title, Artist, Genre, Album, Length are the suggested order.
19. Now click on the arrow under the Config label to bring up the configuration drawer.
    - You can set various “comfort features” Some suggestions are:
    - Options/SONGTICKER – Disable scrolling
    - Menus – Unclick the box to hide the text information at the top of each window.
    - Color themes
      - i. Easily visible ones are Windows Classic, Default, City Night, Mono Dark, MonoLite
      - ii. Garish but OK – Good ol Winamp, Rain Forest
      - iii. For people with vision problems you might find a good one. De gustibus non disputandum
    - Options/MISC - Detach Vis Window & Detach Video
  20. In Winamp 5.5 the ratings are now very easily changed by clicking on them. If you want to use the ratings, and prevent them from being easily changed, put the cursor over the ratings column and press Ctrl-Shift-r. Then disable clicking.
  21. You can prevent users from permanently changing most configuration entries by making the Studio.xnf file readonly. This will lock most features so they return to the defaults when Winamp is restarted. This includes the location and size of windows. However the playlist and media library can still be permanently be made visible or invisible with the PL and ML buttons. This worked for older versions of Winamp, but may not work for the latest versions.
  22. At present the Wiamp search function can find any information in any field. So if you search on aaa and the file name has aaa, it will find that file. So be careful.what you put in which field. This could be used for cross references.
  23. If you put files named picture.png, and logo.png in “c:\program files\winamp” they will be displayed in the central main part of the Winamp main window. If you put a file named decorations.png, it will overlay the Main window as a decoration when selected. The decorations are displayed as is with no modifications. The pictures and logo should be in pure white against a transparent background for best visibility with all color schemes. They should not be taller than 40pixels, but they can be any width. The picture is displayed on the left, and the logo on the right when the main window is made wider.
  24. Winamp displays the remaining time in the rest of the playlist. However as of this time this feature fails in older versions of Winamp when the full path name of a file is longer than 129 characters. The only way to fix this is to put all files in a folder at the root of a hard drive, and possibly truncate the filenames. This has been fixed with release (5.6..)

# HIFD standard dance format

To insure that we have all of the information we need, a naming format has been established.

File Names: status\$name of dance – country – source – genre – comment

Space, minus, space “ – “ are used as separators except for the status which is immediately followed by a dollar sign.

- The status is either A, I, or cull for active, inactive, or cull
- Name of dance is the actual dance name with diacritical marks. This is followed by extra information in parentheses such as the region, or translated name. The names should follow the library convention of putting common articles such as A, the, La, der, die, das... at the end of the name after a comma.
- Country is the country of origin. Some are marked with generic names such as Gypsy.
- Source is the FD teacher, Artist or band leader, band, record label or record title. 78, CD, Tape, LP, MP3 are used to identify the club source
- Genre is the type of dance: Line, Circle, Couple, Set, Individual
- Comment: Easy, Intermediate, Advanced. This could then be followed by extra comment information

These fields are loaded into tags in the file when appropriate.

- STATUS tag – status (A, I, cull) private tag
- TITLE – name of dance
- ARTIST – country of origin (Argentina, Germany, Bulgaria...)
- ALBUM – source, This will be the album or record name and numerical code
- GENRE – genre (line, couple, individual, mixer...)
- COMMENT – comment (Easy, Advanced, Intermediate)
- ALBUM ARTIST – This should have the performers names
- SUBTITLE – Dance choreographer

Wave files have no tags, but virtually all compressed formats support the tags. STATUS is a user defined tag, while all others are universally available. Files that have tags should have the names with diacritical marks in the tags, but the filename may have the diacritical marks removed.

Additional tags such as DATE, TRACK number may be filled with the appropriate information. Copyright notices will be preserved and a DOWNLOAD tag preserves the source of the music.

Winamp has been setup so that A\$ is recognized for active dances, and I\$ for inactive dances. This way all can be available, but the inactive are normally hidden. The A and I are stored in a private STATUS tag.

For example a file might be named:

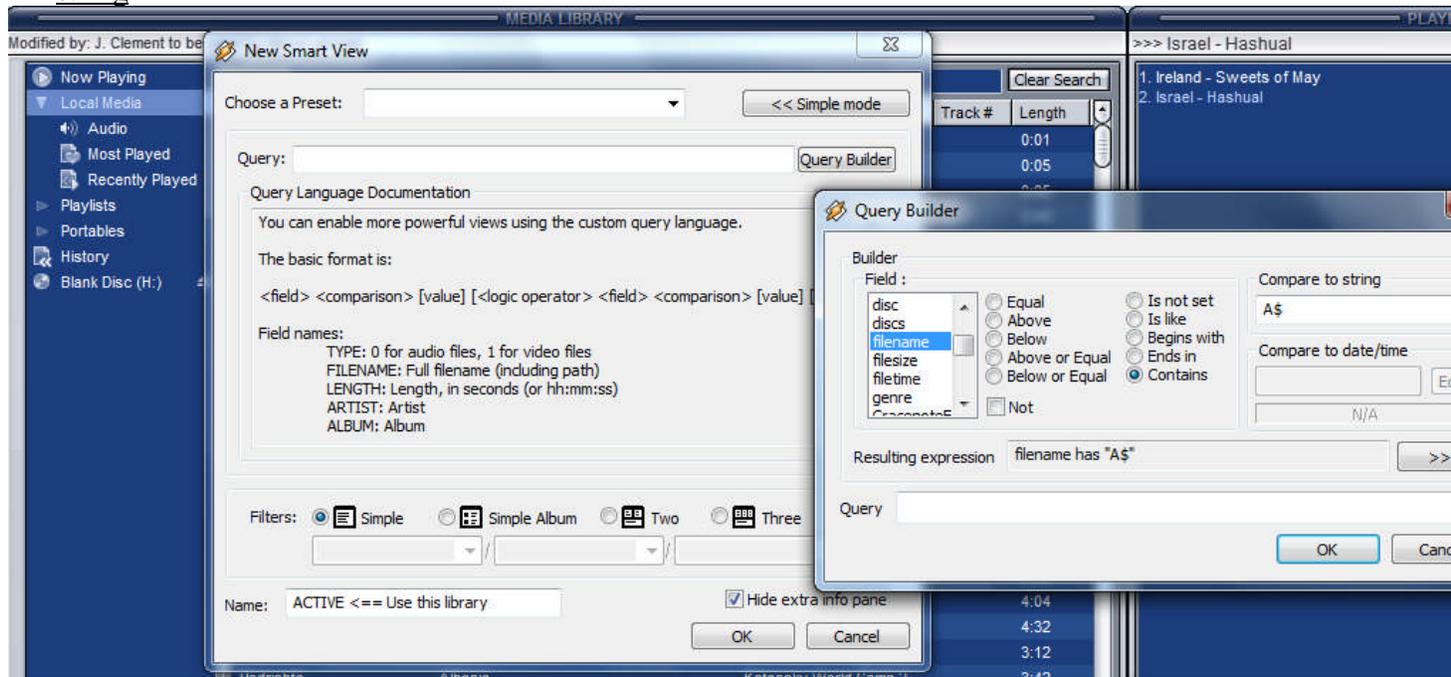
A\$Ada's Kujawiak #1 (Na Wierzbowym Listku) - Poland - Ada, Weslowski Ens, Farewell To My Country, Sxl 0203 LP - Couple – Intermediate

A\$Čačak (East) - Serbia - Koenig Balkan Arts BA 702 45 - Line – Easy

For this file the TITLE tag would be: Čačak (East) ARTIST:Serbia ALBUM: Koenig Balkan Arts BA 702 45 GENRE:Line COMMENT:Easy

We setup the library list to recognize only active dances by doing the following.

- In the extra left hand library window right click on Local Media and then click on Add smart view
- Click on Advanced Mode
- Then fill in the Name:
- Click on Simple and on Hide extra info pane
- Then click on Query Builder and select filename, Contains, and enter A\$ for the Compare to string



- Finally the new library can be moved upward by dragging it.

FOOBAR2000 has handy editing tools that can load tags from file names and vica versa. FOOBAR also has no limitations so it can transcode files from one format to another very quickly. If you buy the licensed version of WINAMP it can also do your transcoding quickly. Tags can be set by Winamp manually for multiple files by right clicking on the selected files and clicking on Edit Metadata. ANT Renamer is a free program which can be used to rename groups of files and suppress or add diacriticals.

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