Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus: How to Install the Sound Card

SUMMARY:

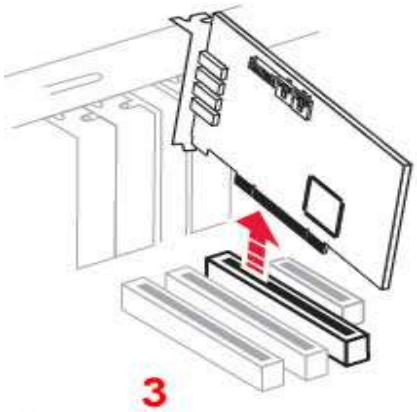
- **Applicable to:** Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus (SB1740)
- This article provides the steps to install the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus sound card into your PC.

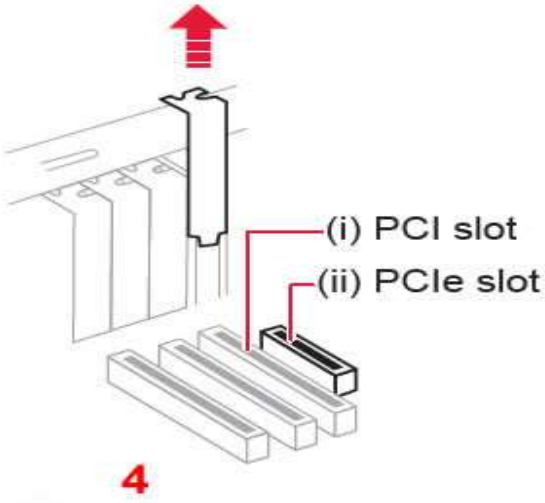
1. Remove the computer power cable.

2. Remove the computer cover.

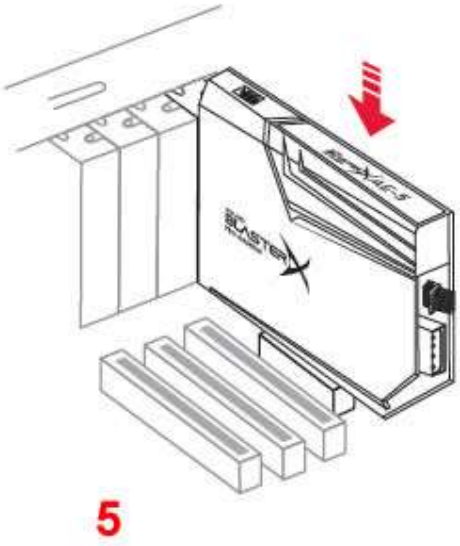
3. Remove the existing sound card.

4.





5. Gently but firmly insert the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus sound card into the PCIe slot.

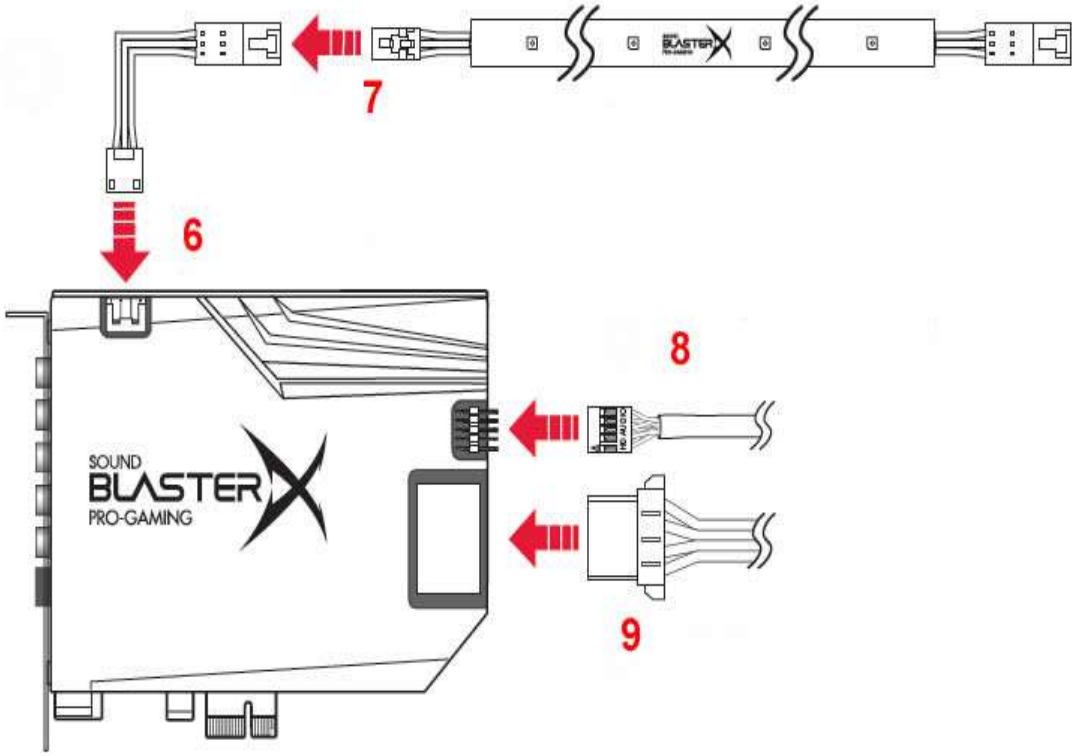


6. Connect the extension cable.

7. Connect the LED strip.

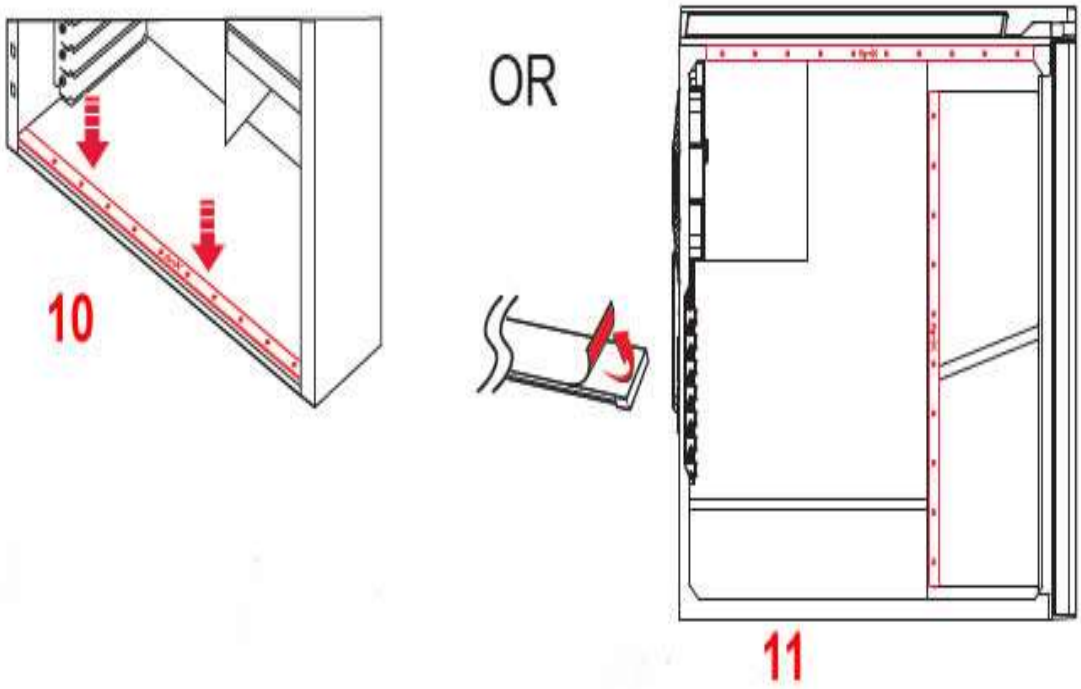
8. Connect the front panel HD audio connector.

9. Connect the power connector for the RGB lighting.



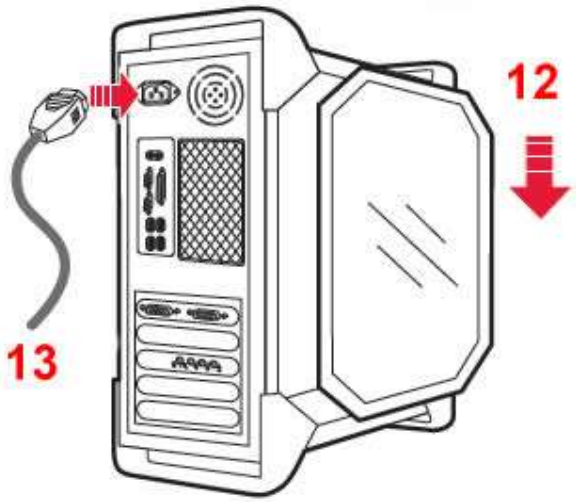
10. Place the strip directly on the inner steel frame; OR

11. Use the double-sided tape to paste the strip on plastic/aluminum surfaces.
    (The LED strip comes with magnet and double-sided tape on the back.)



12. Replace the outer casing.

13.



Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus: Frequently Asked Questions

SUMMARY:

- **Applicable to:** Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus (SB1740)
- Frequently asked questions about the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus.

1. **Is the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus EMI shielded?**
   The Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus complies with FCC Part 15 Class B/CE EMC certification.

2. **What are the differences between the Standard and Pure edition of the Sound BlasterX AE-5?**
   The Standard edition has a black metal casing while the Pure edition has a white one.
   The Pure edition includes 4 RGB LED strips in the package while the Standard only has 1 RGB LED strip included.
   There is no technical difference between these two.

3. **What are the differences between Sound BlasterX AE-5 and Sound BlasterX AE-5 Plus?**
   The Sound BlasterX AE-5 Plus is similar to Sound BlasterX AE-5 in terms of design and technical specifications. Below are the key differences:
   - Sound card RGB logo indicates "AE-5 Plus" instead of "AE-5".
   - The AE-5 Plus only supports Sound Blaster Command, not SB Connect. Lighting control is available in Sound Blaster Command.
   - Encoder options for Dolby and DTS connect have been added on AE-5 Plus via Sound Blaster Command.

- Scout Radar is no longer available on AE-5 Plus.

4. **What are the differences between Sound BlasterX AE-5 Plus (Standard Edition) and Sound BlasterX AE-5 Plus (Pure Edition)?**
   The color of the Standard Edition is black while the Pure Edition is white. Also, the Standard Edition only includes 1 RGB LED strip while the Pure Edition includes 4 RGB LED strips in its packaging.

5. **How many RGB colors can be supported by the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus Aurora Reactive Lighting System?**
   The Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus Aurora Reactive Lighting System can display up to 16.8 million customizable colors.

6. **What type of DAC is used by the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus?**
   The Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus uses a Sabre^{32} Class Premium ESS type of DAC for accurate audio reproduction.

7. **What is the difference between a DnR and SnR?**
   DnR and SnR are practically the same. Since the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus uses an "ESS" type of DAC, therefore "DnR" is used for the purpose of consistency. There is no added advantage of using DnR or SnR.

8. **What type of Headphone Amp is used by the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus?**
   The Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus is the first sound card to feature Xamp, our custom-designed discrete headphone amplifier. Each channel has its dedicated amp that amplifies the audio.

9. **What are the benefits of having a discrete headphone amp?**

   - Improves overall sound experience by making the audio lively.
   - Provides music layering (depth).
   - Provides more audio details.
   - Gives you a wider sound stage.

   Note: You may experience one or more benefits above depending on the type of track you are playing.

10. **What does Scout 2.0 consist of?**
    Scout 2.0 consists of Scout mode and Scout Radar.

11. **What is the difference between Scout mode and Scout Radar?**
    In first-person gaming, the Scout Mode allows you to hear enemy's footsteps while the Scout Radar captures visually a radar visual of your enemy on a mobile device.
    The radar is generated based on the captured sound events at close proximity.

12. **How does the Scout Radar communicate with the Sound BlasterX AE-5?**
    The Scout Radar has to be installed in a mobile device. Sound BlasterX AE-5 has to be installed in a Windows PC. Both the mobile device and PC should be connected to the same network.

13. **What is the function of the molex connector on the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus?**
    The molex connector provides ample power to drive the RGB lighting effects of the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus and its LED strips.

14. **What are the specifications of the molex cable that powers up the RGB lighting effects?**
    The Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus requires a 4-pin molex peripheral connector from the PC's power supply.
    PC power supply connection types may vary. Consult your PC manual to check the type of connections that are available on your PC power supply.

15. **Can I still use the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus without the RGB lighting effects?**
    Yes; the RGB lighting effect is optional. You can still use the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus as a sound card without the RGB lighting effects.

16. **Is the Audio Control Module (ACM) of the Sound Blaster Zx/ZxR compatible with the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus?**
    The ACM of the Sound Blaster Zx/ZxR is not supported by the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus.

17. **What is the length of the RGB LED strip included in the package?**
    The length of the RGB LED strip is 30cm (starting from the first LED until the last LED of the strip).

18. **Can I use a 3rd party RGB LED strip on the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus?**
    The bundled RGB LED strips are designed to work well with the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus. Using 3rd party RGB LED strips might not be able to give you the best possible experience that our proprietary LED strips can provide.

19. **How many LEDs can be found in one RGB strip?**
    There are 10 LEDs in a RGB strip.

20. **Can the Sound BlasterX AE-5 support Dolby and DTS encoding for optical out?**
    No; the Sound BlasterX AE-5 does not have Dolby and DTS encoding for optical out.

21. **Can the Sound BlasterX AE-5 Plus support Dolby and DTS encoding for optical out?**
    Yes; the Sound BlasterX AE-5 Plus supports Dolby and DTS encoding for optical out.

22. **Does the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus require a 6-pin PCIe connector?**
    No; the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus does not require a 6-pin PCIe connector.

23. **Does the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus support DSD (Direct Stream Digital) for its Sabre^{32} class DAC chip?**
    No; DSD is not supported.

24. **Does the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus support EAX?**
    Yes. It supports EAX 5.0

25. **Does the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus support Alchemy?**
    Yes. It supports Alchemy.

26. **Does the Scout radar works with a PC that uses a LAN cable connection?**
    Yes. The Scout Radar works with a PC that is connected to a LAN (cable) connection provided they are on the same network.

27. **Can I use Scout Radar when playing online games that are hosted by game servers/platforms?**
    Using Scout Radar on certain gaming servers/platforms is not recommended as it may result in your gaming account being suspended/banned. If in doubt, please check with your game administrator beforehand.

Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus: Technical Specifications

SUMMARY:

- **Applicable to:** Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus (SB1740)
- Technical Specifications of the Sound BlasterX AE-5/AE-5 Plus.

Interface:	PCIe
Audio/DSP processor:	Sound Core3D
Channels:	5.1 discrete speaker out 7.1 virtual headphone surround
DAC:	ESS ES9016K2M SABRE^{32} Ultra DAC ESS9016K2M as the Front channel DAC Sound Core3D's internal DAC for its surround channels
Dynamic Range (Stereo DAC), DNR (SNR):	122dB
THD+N (Stereo, DAC)	0.00032%

Sampling Rate (DSP Playback)	16-bit / 16.0, 44.1, 48.0, 88.2, 96.0kHz 24-bit / 44.1, 48.0, 88.2, 96.0kHz 32-bit / 44.1, 48.0, 88.2 96.0kHz
Sampling Rate (Direct Mode Playback)	16-bit / 48.0, 96.0, 192, 384kHz 24-bit / 48.0, 96.0, 192, 384kHz 32-bit / 48.0, 96.0, 192, 384kHz
Sampling Rate (Recording)	16-bit / 16.0, 44.1, 48.0, 88.2, 96.0kHz 24-bit / 44.1, 48.0, 88.2, 96.0kHz
Headphone Amp (custom-designed discrete headphone amp Xamp)	Supported Headphone Impedance: 16 - 600Ω SNR: 116dB THD + N: 0.0009% Output impedance: 1Ω Headphone impedance range: 16 - 600Ω
Connectivity	1 x 1/8" Mic In/Line In (Software selectable, default as Mic In) (3.5mm) 1 x 1/8" Headphone/Headset Out (default as Headphone) (3.5mm) 1 x 1/8" Front Out (3.5mm) 1 x 1/8" Rear Out (3.5mm) 1 x 1/8" Center/Sub Out (3.5mm) 1 x TOSLINK Optical Out 1 x Intel HD audio front panel header 1 x RGB LED Header (support 5V RGB strips)
Power	PCIe bus power +5V for Aurora lighting (requires 4-pin molex peripheral connector from PC power supply)
Headphones Power Output	@ 16 ohms: 232mW @ 600 ohms: 46.8mW
Operating Temperature:	0°C to 45°C

Product Dimensions (L x W x H):	145 x 20 x 128 mm
Product Weight:	215g
What-U-Hear:	Yes
ASIO support:	Yes (Playback and Recording)
Software	
For Windows:	Software Driver Package Sound BlasterX AE-5 Drivers with ASIO support Creative Online Registration Creative Uninstaller Creative Software AutoUpdate Creative System Information Sound Blaster Connect (AE-5) Sound Blaster Command (AE-5/AE-5 Plus) Creative Host OpenAL Creative ALchemy Creative Smart Recorder (separate download) Creative WaveStudio (separate download)
Minimum System Requirement	For Windows® OS: Intel® Core™ i3 AMD® equivalent processor Intel, AMD or 100% compatible motherboard **AE-5/AE-5 Plus:** Microsoft® Windows 11, Windows 10 32/64 bit, Windows 8.1/8.0 32/64 bit, Windows 7 32/64 bit. 1GB RAM >600 MB of free hard disk space Available PCIe slot.

Sound Blaster: General Audio Troubleshooting

SUMMARY:

- **Applicable To:** All Sound Blaster products
- This article provides a general troubleshooting check list on sound device with no audio playback.

Minimum System Requirements

To ensure the compatibility of the audio device with your computer, check the audio device's minimum system requirements stated in our product webpages.

Software Package

For the latest software package, always download it from support.creative.com instead of using the bundled installation CD (if included).

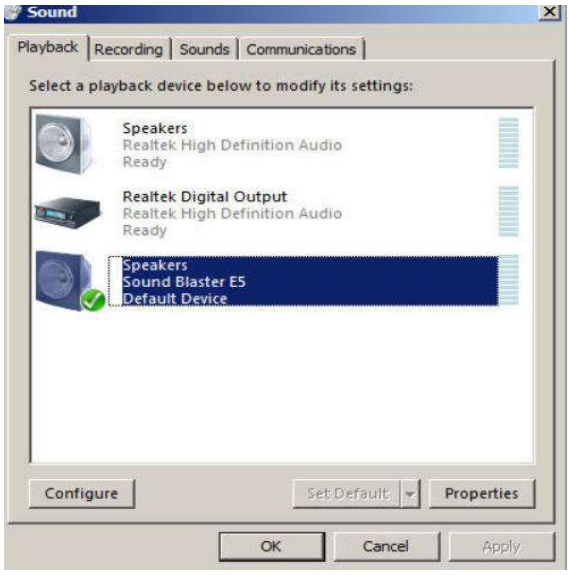
Detection

For bus-standard such as PCI/PCIe or USB-based connection, the Sound Blaster has to be detected by the Operating System with the relevant custom driver/software installed.

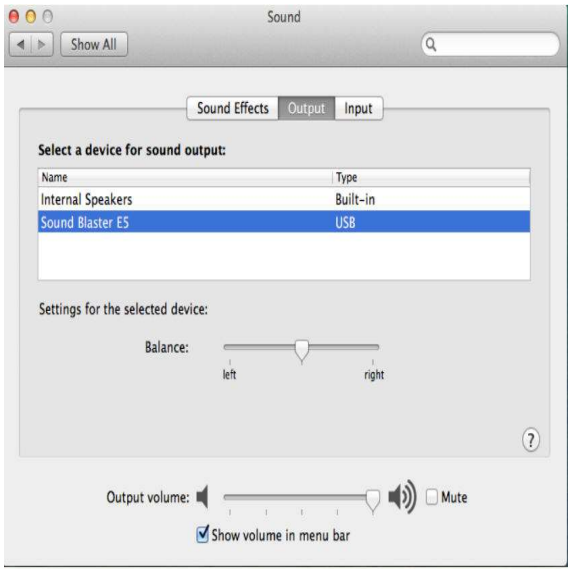
Default Playback

Select the appropriate audio end-point of the Sound Blaster where the sound is being tapped for playback.

Windows:



Mac:



Physical Connection

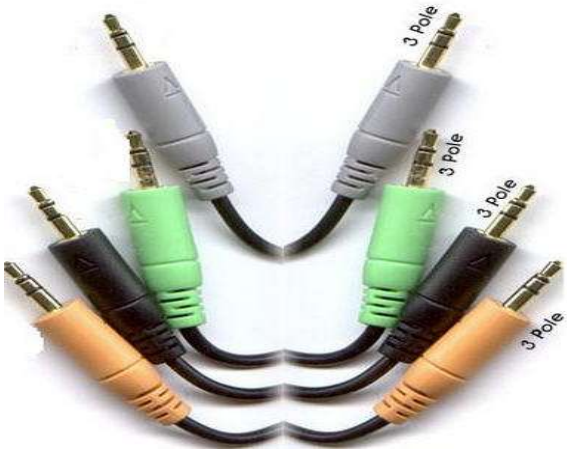
For analog speaker connection, making sure the cable plugs are inserted into the appropriate jacks of the Sound Blaster.

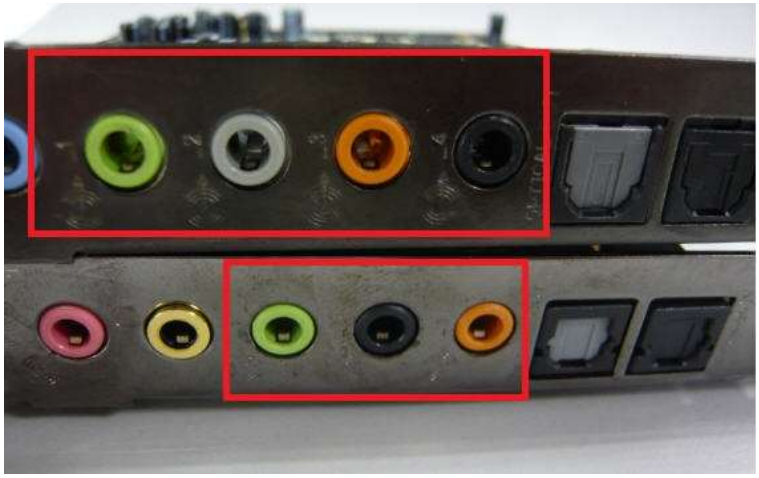
For 5.1 speaker system:

- Line Out 1 (green) - Front stereo channels
- Line Out 2 (black) - Rear stereo channels
- Line Out 3 (orange) - Center & Subwoofer channels

For 7.1 speaker system:

- Line Out 1 (green) - Front stereo channels
- Line Out 2 (grey) - Side stereo channels
- Line Out 3 (orange) - Center & Subwoofer channels
- Line Out 4 (Black) - Rear stereo channels





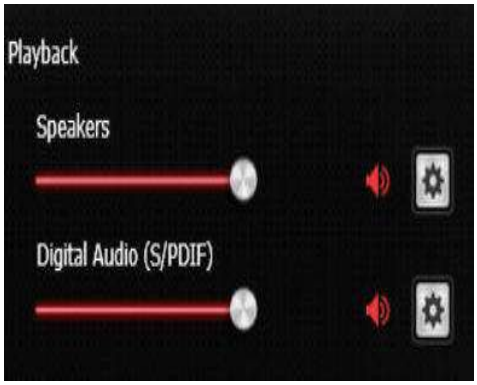
For SPDIF connection, make sure the Optical/Coaxial Out of the Sound Blaster is connected to the SPDIF input of the speaker or receiver and not vice versa.

For Sound card products, optical passthrough supports up to 5.1 channels only.

Configurations

Select the appropriate speaker configuration that matches the physical speaker connection.

Check that the playback is not muted and that it is not set at minimum level.



Playback priority

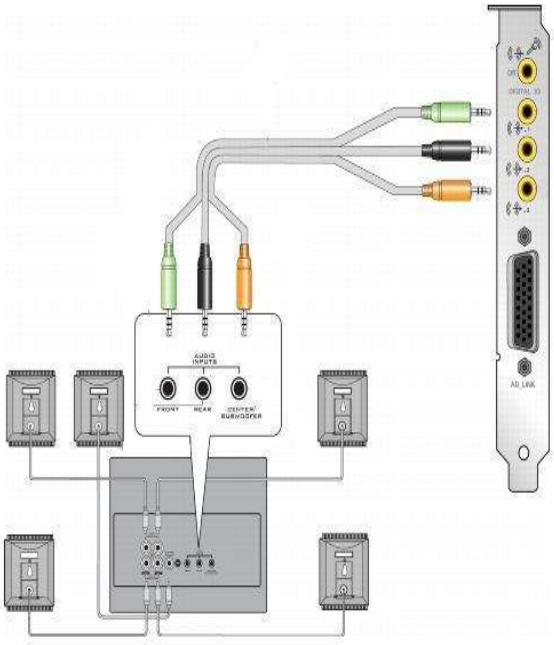
Depending on the models, some Sound Blaster support playback priority if 2 or more audio sources are played simultaneously.

Stop the audio source with higher priority to allow playback of the intended source with much lower priority.

For example, disconnect the Line-In connection (higher priority) to allow Bluetooth audio (lower priority) to stream through the Sound Blaster.

Problem Isolation

To isolate the root cause of no audio, simply disconnect the speaker system from the Sound Blaster.



Instead, connect the speaker to a working portable music player. If there is still no audio, the problem should be inherited at the speaker end.

If the audio is working for the speaker, then the problem is originated at the Sound Blaster side.

Headphones will mute the speaker when it is connected to the Headphone out of most Creative soundcards. To isolate the problem, try to disconnect the headphones. (Make sure to bring the volume down before disconnecting, and then turn the volume up gradually.)