

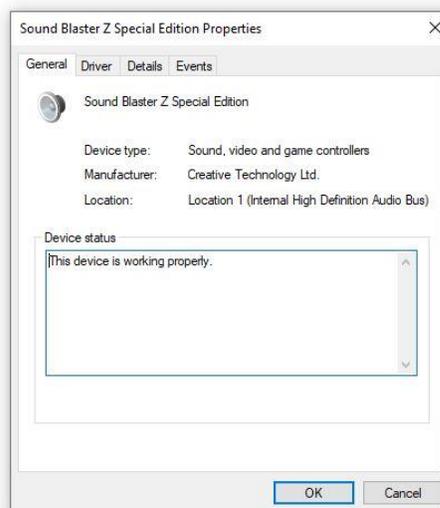
Sound Blaster Z/Zx/SE: Troubleshooting Guide

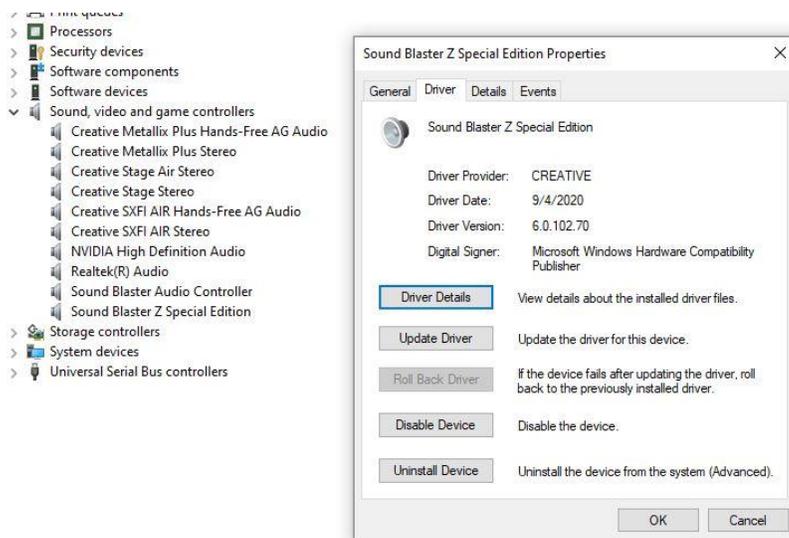
Unable to launch or install the Sound Blaster Command application:

- Note that the Sound Blaster Command supports the following OS: Microsoft Windows 10 32/64 bit, Microsoft Windows 8.1/8.0 32/64 bit, Microsoft Windows 7 32/64 bit
- Make sure that the sound card is inserted into the PCI-e slot (Shut down the PC first before inserting the card).
- The software also requires a minimum of 1 GB of RAM and more than 600 MB of free disk space.

Sound Blaster Command software unable to detect sound card:

- Restart the PC.
- Verify sound card is detected in Windows Device Manager with no exclamation or question marks.
- The Driver Provider under the Driver Tab must be CREATIVE otherwise it would mean that the Creative Audio Driver is not installed.





- Try inserting the sound card into another known-working PCI-e slot or try reseating the sound card (Shut down the PC first).
- Uninstall and reinstall the software application (Sound Blaster Command).
Important: Make sure to select the Creative Audio Driver during the installation process.

I have new Creative 2.1 analog speaker system (eg. SB Kratos, A250, Inspire T3300 etc.). My physical connection is correct and the left and right satellite speakers work but the subwoofer does not produce bass.

- Make sure the Bass level knob on the subwoofer is properly adjusted.
- Try to adjust the Bass under SBX Acoustic Engine in the Sound Blaster Command.
- Go to Sound Blaster Command > select **Speakers** as your Default Playback and select **Stereo** as your Speaker configuration instead of 2.1 surround.

No Sound from Speakers:

- Check for physical connections and make sure the speaker is switched ON.
To verify connections, refer to [SID 127837](#).
- Ensure that "Speakers" endpoint is selected as the Default Playback either in Windows or in Sound Blaster Command.
- Ensure that "Speakers" output is selected in Sound Blaster Command.

- Ensure that playback is not muted in Sound Blaster Command.

No Sound from one or more satellite Speakers:

- Check for physical connections. To verify connections, refer to [SID 127837](#).
- Select the correct Speaker configuration type in Sound Blaster Command.
- Go to speaker calibration in Sound Blaster Command and make sure all channels are set to their default values.

No Sound from Headphones:

- Check if your Headphones is connected to the correct port on the sound card. It must be connected into the Headphones port.
- Ensure that "Speakers" endpoint is selected as the Default Playback either in Windows or in Sound Blaster Command.
- Ensure that "Headphones" output is selected in Sound Blaster Command.
- Ensure that playback is not muted in Sound Blaster Command.

Missing "Line-In" recording input in Sound Blaster Command > Recording (Other Input) or in Mixer

- Connect your audio source into the Mic/Line-In combo jack on the sound card using a stereo cable (3.5mm)
- Make sure "Line-In" is selected in Sound Blaster Command > Recording > Multipurpose Input Select.

Unable to record from Line-In source:

- Connect your audio source into the Mic/Line-In combo jack on the sound card using a stereo cable (3.5mm).
- Make sure "Line-In" is selected in Sound Blaster Command > Recording > Multipurpose Input Select.
- In the Sound Blaster Command, go to Recording > Other input > Set "Line-In" as your default recording.

Noise in Microphone monitoring/recording or bad mic input quality:

- In Sound Blaster Command > Recording > Microphone, reduce Microphone Boost to 0 dB and gradually increase it depending on your microphone's sensitivity.
- In Sound Blaster Command > Recording > Adjust applicable 'Voice Clarity' settings. Choose an acceptable 'Mic EQ' preset from any of the 11 listed. Make sure Direct Mode is OFF.
- Make sure you have the latest Creative audio driver installed.
- Try using another microphone to isolate the problem.

Getting software application errors, crashing or being unresponsive:

- Check if PC meets minimum system requirements of the sound card.
- Change PCI-e slot.
- Confirm detection in Windows Device Manager.
- Consider uninstalling and reinstalling the Sound Blaster Command software application.
- Restart PC.

After doing the steps above and issue still persists, contact Creative customer support with the log file from Sound Blaster Command. To obtain the log file:

1. Launch Windows Explorer.
2. Type "%TEMP%" into the Windows Explorer address bar.
3. Scroll down the list and look for "creative-sbcommand-log-file.txt". Attach this file when writing to Creative Support.

This log file will just capture the sequence of events of the Sound Blaster Command software. It will not capture user information or other application information.

You may notice the following symptoms when performing Windows update:

- Intermittent sound card detection / Unable to detect sound card.
- Audio cut off.
- Audio distortion.

- Other forms of unwanted noise (such as crackling or clipping noise).

Applies to: Systems that use conventional hard disk drives.

Cause: In most cases, Windows update increases CPU and disk utilization. It can result in audio playback issues (as listed above) as the system redirects its resources and priority away to support the update activities. Windows may also temporarily disable its audio component during an update.

To verify if there are updates happening in your system:

1. Click the **START** button, choose **SETTINGS**, and then select **Update & Security**.
2. On the left menu, click **Windows Update**, and check what it says under Update Status.

Recommendations:

- Stop the playback and let Windows finish all the updates. Afterwards, reboot the PC.
- Try to avoid performing any unnecessary background tasks/activities which require high CPU and disk utilization when playing music/movies/games locally.

You may notice the following symptoms when your computer's System utilization is high (CPU, Memory, Disk usage):

- Audio cut off
- Audio distortion
- Other forms of unwanted noise (such as crackling or clipping noise)

Applies to: PC or mac

Cause: Background-running applications, tasks or ongoing software updates may require high system utilization which causes spike in CPU, Memory, or Disk usage momentarily.

It can result in audio playback issues (as listed above) as the system redirects its resources and priority away to support these update activities.

Recommendation: Allow any software or online update to complete first or wait for your background application tasks to finish before attempting to play your audio.

Sound Blaster Z/Zx/SE sound card has intermittent detection issues:

- Relocate the sound card to a PCIe x1 slot
- Install the latest software package for the sound card.
- Ensure the mainboard of the PC has the latest BIOS version.

Microphone has stopped working:

- Ensure you have the latest driver installed.
- The dedicated 3.5mm Microphone port supports 3-pole. Try using a TRRS to TRS adapter if you are using a 4-pole microphone.
- Ensure that your microphone privacy settings are enabled. To verify in Windows, go to Settings > Control Panel > Privacy > Microphone > make sure that "Allow access to the microphone on this device" and "Allow apps to access your microphone" are turned ON. For macOS, select Apple menu > go to System Preferences, click Security & Privacy, then click Privacy. Select Microphone. Tick the checkbox next to an app to allow it to access the microphone (eg. Sound Blaster Command).
- Ensure that Direct mode is turned OFF when using microphone monitoring.
- Ensure that the mic recording volume is not muted. Check the settings in the Sound Blaster Command app (Recording > Microphone). Adjust the volume.
- Ensure that the mic is not muted on the lower right corner of the Sound Blaster Command interface. Adjust the volume.
- In Sound Blaster Command, ensure that Line In is not set as the default recording device or not selected under Recording > Multi-purpose Input Select.
- Bypass the ACM (if you are using one). Use a Mic/Audio splitter cable to connect your headset into the mic and headphones ports of the Sound Blaster Z/Zx/SE. Note that the headphone port on the sound card supports 3-pole jack only which means it can provide audio playback but no microphone function.
- To isolate the problem, connect a standalone 3.5mm microphone into the microphone port and test your mic.
- If possible, try another headset, microphone or even a mic/audio splitter cable.