

Netflix Offers Better Sound With High Quality Audio

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Netflix looks to further close the gap with physical media with the announcement of "high quality audio," an adaptive technology taking advantage of available bandwidth to ensure the best audio experience.



Essentially, Netflix high quality audio ups the maximum bitrate of a 5.1 audio mix from 192 to 640 kbps, and a Dolby Atmos mix from 448 to 768 kbps. As mentioned earlier the technology is adaptive, meaning audio quality goes up or down depending on the network speed on the customer side, similar to the approach the streaming service takes to video quality.

"Based on internal listening tests, listening test results provided by Dolby, and scientific studies, we determined that for Dolby Digital Plus at and above 640 kbps, the audio coding quality is perceptually transparent," a Netflix blog post reads. "Beyond that, we would be sending you files that have a higher bitrate (and take up more bandwidth) without bringing any additional value to the listening experience."

Apparently the move to higher audio quality took place following a 2017 review of the first episode of Netflix exclusive *Stranger Things 2*, when creators the Duffer brothers noted the streamed mix did not sound as crisp as it did on the mixing stage. Netflix brought an "sound expert" on board, and now says the issue has been resolved.

The feature is available now for Netflix viewers.

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