

Napster FAQs

Is Napster really using that much bandwidth?

Yes, it really is and its usage seems to have been growing exponentially. Key links were being driven to their limits by Napster traffic (98% with, 60% without). Remember, much of the bandwidth Napster uses is other people connecting to your machine and moving data off campus, often without you even knowing that the connection is happening.

In a test done by ITS staff, one song was downloaded and within half an hour, three people had connected to the machine to upload that same file. So, that one 5MB download just became 20MB. At the same rate, that one song would result in 720MB of file transfers in one day. Multiply this by more than 5000 ResNet connections and an even larger number of office connections, and you will begin to understand why we were concerned.

Isn't there some way to make it work slower without completely blocking it?

Traffic shaping is one tool that we might have used. However, in order to slow Napster, we would have had to slow all traffic, since the Napster family of programs is designed to aggressively work around any simple steps taken to limit its use. The program can use different ports and appear as different protocols, so any restriction on it would impact those other services as well.

Also, slowing its use does not alleviate the very real security concerns we have about the program. Default installation still turns your computer into a server, without any indication of who you are allowing to connect and what files you are sharing.

Why isn't our network fast enough that this program doesn't matter?

NYU has been active in the development of the Internet and networking technologies for several decades. Our external network connections are as fast as any peer institutions and we are constantly working to add additional bandwidth.

However, Napster usage drove our normal network traffic to a level far exceeding our growth projections for the coming year. ResNet was engineered to serve many users' general needs, primarily to allow students in dorms to access resources in support of the educational mission of the university.

The university governance structure provides a variety of channels for you to reshape the

planning and spending decisions if you believe a greater investment is warranted. [Your student government](#), University Senators, Deans, and even advocacy groups, such as [Computer Advocacy @ NYU](#) all participate in the dialog. Meanwhile, the University continually examines new technologies and works to improve all aspects of the education and residential experience over time.

In the long run, many techniques will be applied to improve the net capacity, but some take longer than others to implement.

How is Napster different from any other program I use to download files?

In traditional protocols such as ftp or http, the file is transferred once, then the person uses the file for its intended purpose locally. Napster *in its default configuration* makes the machine of every person who downloads a file into a fileserver for that file, rapidly multiplying the network bandwidth consumed by each file transfer. These transfers go on for as long as the user has the Napster software installed, perhaps after the person even remembers that they downloaded that particular song.

Other programs let me download files, even MP3's. Why aren't you blocking other programs?

No other protocol or program is as poorly behaved, is as risky, or has overloaded NYU-NET to the extent that Napster has. If one did we would have to take similar actions to preserve the network.

Is NYU blocking any other sites?

At any given moment there are likely to be several security blocks in place against remote systems or networks. In some cases they were attacking NYU's networks so vigorously we needed to block them to preserve functionality; in cases network managers refused to deal with ongoing but slower paced attacks and we were left with no other way to protect the network.

Why are you censoring us?

Generally, when people refer to censorship, they mean blocking certain content. We have blocked a particular technology based on its impact on our network, not on the content of the data used by that technology. No content based decisions are being made.

How can I tell if I am using Napster or have it on my computer?

- Does it have something to do with Real Audio?
- Is it a Virus?

In order to be using Napster, you would have had to install it, or have one of your friends install it for you. If you want to be sure, or if you use a shared computer and wish to know whether someone else installed the software, you can follow the instructions below.

Windows

Click on the Start button, choose Programs, and then search for a folder called Napster. If it is present the program was installed.

If the program is currently running on your computer, you should see an small icon for it in the Windows "system tray", a small box on the right side of your menu bar, near the clock.

To remove Napster:

1. If the program is running, right-click on the icon in the system tray and quit the application. Just clicking on the X in the upper right corner of the Napster window does *not* quit the application.
2. Click on the Start button, choose Control Panels, and then Add/Remove Programs. In the Add/Remove Programs window, there will be a listing for Napster.
3. Click on the listing for Napster, and then click on the Remove button. You may be asked to restart your computer once the removal is complete.

Macintosh

Use the Find or Spotlight feature to look for a folder called Macster or Rapster and just drag that folder to the Trash. If there are any Preferences associated with the program, you can drag those to the Trash as well.

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