Preferences

The Preferences dialog is divided into three sections. The left-hand section contains a list of icons, which, when clicked, display preferences for that pane. The bottom section contains two buttons: Cancel, which closes the dialog without saving changes, and OK, which closes the dialog while saving changes. The largest section in the top-right contains the preferences for the selected pane. Each check box also has a command-key equivalent. This section also has two buttons. The Revert button causes the current pane's values to revert to the values the pane had the last time it was opened. The Use Defaults button sets the preferences in the current pane to the "factory default" values, which are the ones set when SoundApp is first run. Balloon help is available for all the preferences for quick reference. A detailed explanation of each preference follows. Although there are many options here, they can all be left to their default values for regular usage.

General Pane

The General pane contains preferences that are applicable to the program as a whole. The following is a list of the preferences and a description of what each does:

• "Auto Quit When Done," if enabled, will cause SoundApp to quit after processing the files dropped onto its icon or passed via AppleEvents, e.g., from a WWW browser. All sounds will be processed before quitting, including any sounds sent to it while processing a previous set of sounds. When this preference is disabled, SoundApp will remain open until it is explicitly quit.
• "New Untitled Play List On Startup," if enabled, will create a new untitled, empty play list when SoundApp is opened without any files to process,
• "Auto Play Drag-Created Play Lists," if enabled, will automatically play a play list created by dragging files onto SoundApp's icon with the play list key held down,
• "Display Status Window," if enabled, will display a floating Status window while sounds are being processed. "Remember Position," which is only enabled when "Display Status Window" is checked, will cause SoundApp to remember the position of the Status window when you move it and display it at that location whenever you launch SoundApp.
• "Display Controls Palette," if enabled, will display a floating window with tape player-like controls.
• "Change File Type," if enabled, will cause SoundApp to change the file types of sounds it processes if they are set incorrectly. This frequently happens when transferring files from other systems. "Change Creator To SoundApp", which is only enabled when "Change File Type" is checked, will similarly change the creator of sounds to SoundApp. This will cause files that you double-click on in the Finder to launch SoundApp. Sound files will also be displayed using SoundApp's colorful icons in the Finder.
• "Process Sounds In Any Resource," if enabled, will cause SoundApp to search through all files dropped onto it looking for 'snd ' resources in each file. This will slow down scanning of large folders or disks.
• "Ignore Unknown Files" causes SoundApp to ignore files dropped onto it for which it cannot determine the file type. Otherwise, they are reported in the Errors dialog.

Play Pane

Preferences in the Play pane pertain only to the playback of sound files. The following is a list of the preferences and a description of what each does:

• "Play a/µ-Law As 8-Bit," if enabled, will play µ-law and a-law files at 8-bit resolution by performing linear interpolation. This will usually be the best setting for Macintoshes that are not capable of 16-bit playback. "Smart a/µ-Law Playback," which can only be enabled when "Play a/µ-Law As 8-Bit" is checked, will pre-scan µ-law and a-law files to determine the best scaling factor for playback at 8-bit resolution. Enabling this preference slows down sound processing, but will result in better quality playback. It tries to scale the samples to prevent clipping of the converted samples while maintaining the highest dynamic range.
• "Default Sampling Rate" sets the sampling rate at which headerless sound files will be played. This is usually used for uncompressed SoundCap files, since they do not store the sampling rate information.
• "Double Buffer" determines how sounds are played. Setting this to "Don't" causes the entire sound file to be loaded into RAM first before it is played. Obviously, this can require large amounts of RAM, but it can also take longer for playback to begin due to the time it takes to load the sound into memory. Setting this to another value causes SoundApp to asynchronously load small parts of the sound at a time and play

them. This allows playback of large files with minimal RAM and starts playing sounds faster. However, it requires your Macintosh to do a lot more work. If playback skips during double-buffered playback, try changing the size of the buffer.
• "Volume" is the system-relative volume SoundApp will use while playing sounds. Values over 100% can amplify quiet souds but can lead to distortion for louder files.

Convert Pane
Preferences in the Convert pane pertain only to the conversion of sound files into output files. The following is a list of the preferences and a description of what each does:

• "Convert a/µ-Law As 8-Bit" and "Smart a/µ-Law Conversion" perform the same operations as their Play pane counterparts, but for conversion.
• "DOSify Output Filenames" will create output files using the archaic MS-DOS 8.3 character filename format. You might want to use this option if you are transferring sounds to a PC.
• "Append '.type' Suffix" adds a three-letter file type suffix to output file names for compatibility with other operating systems. "DOSify" also appends a suffix. Suffixes are only appended to file formats not native to the Macintosh.
• "Dragging From Play List Copies" causes SoundApp to tell the Finder to copy the file instead of SoundApp converting it when you drag an item from a Play List to the Finder.
• "Output Location" determines how the output files are created. "Auto-Create Folder" will create a folder where the first file is located, and place all output files there. "Prompt For New Folder" will display a dialog asking where to save the files, and "Prompt For Each File" will do the same for every output file. In this latter case, no folders are created. "Prompt For Existing Folder" will allow the selection of an existing folder in which to save the output files. Finally, "Use 'Convert To' Folder" will place files in a folder specified in the box below it. For all these options, if there is insufficient disk space, it will prompt for another place to save the files.
• If the "Use 'Convert To' Folder" option is set above, the "Set" button will allow a folder to be selected where all output files will be saved.

CD Audio Pane
Preferences in the CD Audio pane apply only to the conversion or playback of tracks from an audio CD disc. The following is a list of the preferences and a description of what each does:

• "Monopolize CPU While Importing" changes the behavior of SoundApp during the conversion of a CD audio track to not yield to background tasks while converting. If problems are encountered while importing CD audio data, the user is advised to try toggling this option.
• "High-Speed Import" causes the conversion process to read audio data from a disc faster by using the capabilities of a multi-speed CD-ROM drive. This can be disabled if problems are encountered while importing.
• "Input Method" determines how SoundApp reads each block of audio data from a disc. "Normal" is the fastest method, but could have problems with some CD-ROM drives or drivers. "Overlap on Sync Loss" is slower because it re-reads some previously read data in order to ensure a continuous stream without pops or clicks.
• "Fetch Track Names Automatically" causes SoundApp to connect to a CDDB server to fetch track names for the tracks and label them in the Play List.
• "Host:" allows the CDDB hostname to be set.
• "Name Format" controls how tracks are named based on information from the CDDB.

MIDI Pane
Preferences in the MIDI pane apply only to the playback of MIDI files. The following is a list of the preferences and a description of what each does:

• "MIDI Driver" allows the selection of the MIDI output method. QuickTime utilizes QuickTime 2.0 or later to have the Macintosh CPU generate the music. If you only get piano sounds, make sure you have QuickTime Musical Instruments installed. OMS uses the Open Music System from Opcode Systems to direct MIDI data to an external MIDI synthesizer.

• "Ignore SysEx Messages" is only available if OMS is selected. If enabled, SoundApp will ignore all System Exclusive messages. This will send less data to the MIDI synthesizer, but will strip all GS and XG extended commands.

• "Send Reset Before Playing" will send a GM Reset command to the synthesizer before playing any MIDI file.

• "Use Playback Volume" will enable changing the relative volume of MIDI files played via OMS using SoundApp's playback volume.

• The "Set" button allows the OMS output device to be selected using the standard OMS device selection dialog. The box next to the button contains the name of the currently selected output device. If no device is selected the first available device will be used.

MOD Pane

Preferences in the MOD pane apply only to the playback of MOD files. The following is a list of the preferences and a description of what each does:

• "MOD Driver" allows the selection of the internal MOD routines used to play MOD files. The entries prefixed with Prefer cause that driver to be used if it can handle the file; otherwise, SoundApp will attempt to play the file with the other driver. The "Sound-Trecker" driver is the driver used by the popular Sound-Trecker program by Frank Seide. Many people feel it has superior sound quality. The "ZSS" driver is the Zerius Sound System and can handle more file formats, particularly the popular S3M (ScreamTracker) format.

• "Real-Time Filter" performs smoothing on the generated sound which results in higher quality playback. However, it is more demanding of the Macintosh CPU. If playback skips, try disabling this preference.

• "16-Bit" causes MODs to be played back at 16-bit resolution for better sound quality.

• "Use System Memory" causes SoundApp to allocate memory for MOD playback via the temporary memory allocation facilities. This may cause problems for some machine configurations. Disabling this preference will require SoundApp's memory partition as designated in the Finder's Get Info window to be raised in order to play MODs.

• "Stereo Mode" determines how MOD files are played. "Mono" plays the files in single channel mode. "Stereo" plays them in typical MOD stereo. "Enhanced Stereo" is like "Stereo" but with better channel allocation. Stereo output requires more CPU processing. If playback skips, try setting this preference to "Mono."

• "Playback Rate" determines the sampling rate at which MODs are played. Higher values sound better, but are more demanding to process. If playback skips, try lowering this value.

• "Volume" sets the relative volume of MOD playback. Higher values are louder, but may cause clipping (distortion). This setting is an integer in the 0 to 255 range and is relative to the System volume, which can be set in the Play pane.

Keys Pane

Preferences in the Keys pane control what happens when various modifier keys are held down while dragging files onto SoundApp. "None" means no special keys are held down; i.e., the files are just dropped onto SoundApp's icon. Other values mean that key is held down while dragging files. No two operations can use the same key.

• "Play" controls playback of sounds. Default is "None."

• "Convert" controls conversion of sounds.   The default is the shift key.

• "Dialog" controls the display of the Conversion Parameters dialog at the start of a conversion. (Note that both the "Convert"   and "Dialog"   keys must be held down in this case.)

• "Play List" causes files to be placed in a new Play List. The option key is the default.