

# WSJT-X AUDIO FILE SAVE PROBLEM AND FIX

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## Introduction

Long story short, even though WSJT-X's default menu "**Save**" setting is "**None**" (no audio \*.wav format file recordings should be saved), this is not so. While doing some Windows 10 housekeeping on an older computer, I noticed that a huge chunk of the hard drive had been used up, which turned out to be a staggering 82,000+ \*.wav audio files saved in WSJT-X's default **save** directory (which is hidden, so it's wasn't obvious what was wrong). This was the accumulated result of several years of 24/7 WSPR beacon monitoring, and was also causing the program to crash frequently with a cryptic audio file write or access issue message, which also had me puzzled since it shouldn't be writing any audio files in the first place! But it's even more problematic with FT8 because of rapid fire 15 second audio tracks being constantly written to the hard drive (I'm not a Linux user but I assume the same problem exists). This is also very stressful on mechanical hard drives and switching to a solid state drive would be something to consider for die hard WSJT-X users.

Because later versions of the Windows operating system allow for virtually an unlimited number of data files to be written per directory and sub-directory, even multi-terabyte (TB) hard drives will fill up and just stop working—eventually. So, if I had been using a TB hard drive a missing 100 GB would probably go unnoticed, but it was really obvious on my much smaller one. I'm not into social media et al, and have no idea if this issue is well known and documented on the various Amateur Radio digital groups, but here's how I sort of solved this problem of mine for Windows versions of WSJT-X (but this fix will only work for a while).

## Step 1

Run WSJT-X and select **File > Open log directory**. From the Windows file browser window open the "**save**" folder (double mouse-click on it). You should see a lot of audio files therein even though the "**Save**" menu option is "**None**" (the default setting). If you've been regularly using **File > Delete all \*.wav and .c2 files in SaveDir**, then you probably won't have as many, but most WSJT-X users probably don't do any regular housekeeping (I obviously didn't).

Unless you have some specific reason to keep them, say for later signal data analysis, you really don't want thousands of small audio files to gradually "eat up" your hard drive. However, if there are a lot of them in the folder then it will take a long time (deleting 82,000+ very short files took about an hour) and it really stressed my hard drive! But if you remember to do this on a regular basis you don't need to make any further program changes, and I wish that this was an option within WSJT-X to do this automatically for you. We shouldn't have to think and/or work harder than the computer programs we use, eh? So read on if you want to semi-fix this issue.

**26 March 2019 Note: JS8Call, by Jordan Sherer, KN4CRD, which is based on the WSJT-X source, doesn't have this problem. So it seems that it's an operating bug within the WSJT-X program proper and not an operating system issue.**

## Step 2

We need to tell WSJT-X to use a visible/top level accessible "save" subdirectory; this could be inside the root WSJT-X directory (C:\WSJT-X\save), or in the documents directory (C:\User\Documents\WSJT-X\save). You can do this using WSJT-X's **File > Settings > Audio** and click the select button next to the "**Save Directory**". Select a new location (already created or you can create a new folder) using newly open file explorer window.

## Step 3

But even after doing this, I found that the "Save" options flag still wasn't getting the "idea", and so I had to cycle the "Save" options to "**Save decoded**" and back to "**None**". The WSJT-X program also had to be elevated to Administrator privilege (see <https://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ff431742.aspx>). If you watch the contents of the new redefined "save" directory, you should see an audio file being written and then deleted. I still can't figure out why the program does this unless it requires this file to decode signals. These changes worked on all my Windows 10 64-bit computers but the 32-bit versions just refused to "cooperate" and kept writing hundreds of FT8 audio files, so a daily execution of **File > Delete all \*.wav and .c2 files in SaveDir** is required else the hard drive filled up to capacity.

**26 March 2019 Note: This “fix” is only temporary and eventually WSJT-X just can’t keep up and loses the ability to keep up and record, decode and delete files, so the regular, manual deletion of the audio files for now.**

### **Conclusion**

Obviously, this is something that the WSJT-X programmer(s) has to address. I don’t like any files being written when they shouldn’t be, and I certainly don’t like the use of hidden directories and sub-directories for storing data since both Windows and Linux seem to do things programmers didn’t intend or anticipate. Well, I do hope this helps someone “out there”—73