

Simple GTK Radio

Description

Simple GTK Radio (SGR) is an internet radio streaming application. It is used to listen to the many thousands of radio stations that are streamed onto the internet. There are many of these type of applications available but this one was designed with simple functionality in mind. Although this tutorial is probably not needed it will explain some of the features that may not be obvious.

Graphical User Interface

The GUI is simple in design with all the main controls right in front of you. Lets have a look at each control from left to right.



This is the station button. This will display a list of stations associated with the loaded playlist. A single click will start playing the selected station.

You will also notice at the top of the station list an option to load more playlists, if they exist. The default playlist with a small selection of stations has been included in the package.

Click on this icon to enter a radio station URL. You can type or paste the URL, either works. A good source for radio stations is at <http://www.shoutcast.com/>.

The play icon will play the first station in the loaded playlist. It will also commence playing the station if you had previously stopped it.

The stop button stops playing the song.

Play the previous station in the loaded playlist.

Play the next station in the loaded playlist.

This records the current playing station. It launches a terminal and saves the songs as singer.song.mp3 in the specified directory. The directory is specified in preferences. To stop recording either press CTRL-C or simply close the terminal, the song will continue to play. If you close the main application, recording will continue until you close the terminal. If your PC has enough power, and you have a good fast internet connection, you can record many stations at once.

This button will play a station for a selected period of time then it automatically changes to the next station in the selected playlist. The default setting in Preferences is 30 minutes.



Save the current station to a selected playlist. Clicking on the button will open a dialog with the station name and URL. Select the playlist on the combobox and click on the disk to save it. To create a new playlist, delete the text in the playlist combobox, type your new playlist name and click on the disk. The playing station will be added to your new playlist.



This button opens the current playlist in your nominated text editor for manual editing.



This button displays the last five songs played. You can also view the playlist log.



This open up a dialog where you can set your preferences.



Quit the application.



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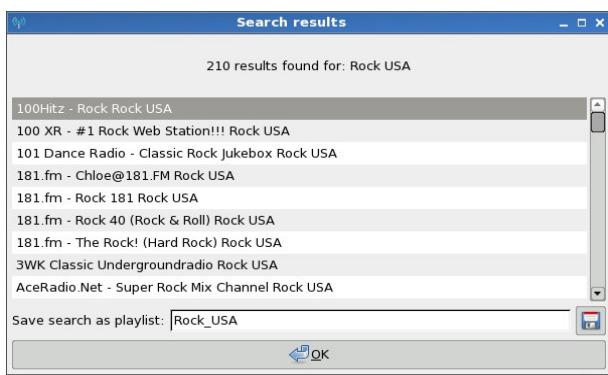
Sets the sound volume level.



Now this search function is quite brilliant. Type in some search criteria and hit enter or click on the magnifying glass. It will search through all of your playlists, not just the one loaded. It will display a list of stations that meet your criteria very quickly. To play any of the stations, simply double click on it. There are times when a station may not play, it's generally because the station is not streaming. Not all stations stream 24/7.

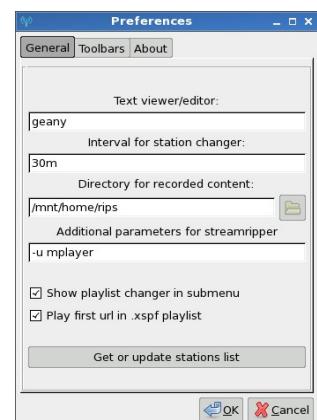
The Search GUI

If you were to type **Rock USA** into the search box, you would be presented with the following



results. Note there are 210 results found in this case. This is because it's searching a large station list that has been downloaded from Radio Sure. More on this later.

Also notice the Rock USA has been renamed to Rock_USA. This can be changed to any name you like. If you click on the disk to the right, this entire list of results will be saved as a playlist called Rock_USA. How cool is that.



Preferences (General)

Clicking on the preference button will invoke this dialog:

This where you can define your Text editor.

Time before the station changes automatically

The folder where to save your ripped music.

Some additional parameters for mplayer.

Placing a tick in the “Show playlist changer in submenu” activates the ability to change playlists if you have more than one. If this is not ticked then you will not see the menu entry and always be presented with the one playlist called default.



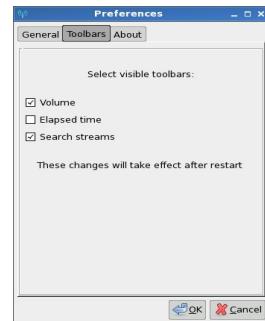
The “Play first url in .xspf playlist” checkbox, instructs the application to play the first stream if multiple streams are found for that station. If you untick the box you will need to manually select one of the stream in a combobox.

The “get or update stations” button will download the latest Radio Sure list. The Radio Sure list seems to be updated quite frequently, generally on a daily basis. There is no provision in the application to delete the previous playlists so it would be wise to manually delete the old ones from time to time. The search function will search all of your playlists and this included all of your old Radio Sure lists. Not deleting the old list will increase the search time and waste disk space.

Toolbars

In preferences under the Toolbars tab you will see this dialog.

There are three tick boxes that allow you to show or hide the Volume, Elapsed time and Search box.



About

The about tab displays information about the application and a link to the Puppy Linux Forum page for simplegtkradio, Credits, and Licence.

Play Music

The application comes with a default playlist so if you want to play any of the stations in the default playlist simply click on the stations button and choose one. You can stop playing music by clicking on the stop button. To commence, click on the play button. Clicking on the forward and back buttons will play the next and previous stations respectively.

Playlists

Adding a new playlist is achieved by clicking on the save button, the floppy disk. Be aware this will only work if you are listening to a station. The following dialog will launch.



In the “Add to playlist” field it will display all of the playlists in alphabetical order. You can add the current station by clicking on the disk.

To make a new playlist, simply type the name in the “Add to playlist” field. When you click on the disk the current station will be added to the new playlist.

You won't be able to load the new playlist until the main GUI has been reloaded. You will also have to tick “Show playlist changer in submenu” in the preferences dialog.

You can change the stream name but don't change the stream URL or the station won't play.

Edit a Playlist

You can edit any of your playlists by clicking on the edit button . Your current playlist will be loaded into your text editor, the default editor is geany. From here you can add or delete stations but remember to maintain the correct format which is “URL #Information” The information is normally the station name, genre and location eg:

<http://player.arn.com.au/alternate/gold1043.m3u> #Gold 104.3 FM - Melbourne, Australia Rock-Classic Australia

Search

One of the frustrations with internet radio players is the difficulty in finding stations. Being able to download the big Radio Sure list makes life very easy. The list, once downloaded, has over 23,000 stations included from all over the world.

For searching purposes, the more information in the playlist description, the better results you will achieve. Once you have downloaded the Radio Sure list try typing “USA Country” into the search box and press enter. You should get something like this:



In this instance I got 264 hits. Now before you quickly click on the disk to save this entire list as a playlist called **Country_USA**, consider how difficult it will be to scroll through 264 stations. Don't worry the application will load them, in fact many more. It is probably better to double click on any stations you fancy then add them one at a time from the main GUI.

Clicking on the OK button only closes the dialog.

Recording

Recording is the responsibility of the user. All persons associated with the creation of this application accept no liability whatsoever for damages to your equipment or copyright infringements.

Sources

There are many other sources where you can obtain radio station URL, as mentioned above Shoutcast and Icecast are two good ones. You do need to be careful when adding URL because there are many formatting variations and not all of them will play. Another reason they may not play is because the station is down or not streaming. Not all stations stream 24/7.

<http://www.shoutcast.com/>

<http://dir.xiph.org/>