



MERIDIAN sooloos

Ensemble Setup Guide

Sooloos Ensemble System Setup Guide:

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What You Should Have

Your Meridian Sooloos system should include the following components and accessories:

- 1 Control 10 system controller with LCD screen (optional)
- 1 Ensemble music server
- Box of short Ethernet cables and connectors

The Control 10 has a 17-inch touchpanel (from which you operate the system), a CD drive for importing discs, an Ethernet port for communication with the rest of the system, a S/PDIF digital audio output, a Meridian Speakerlink output and Meridian communications port. It has an external, universal-voltage power supply.

The Ensemble is the system's data storage, communications hub, and audio-output centre. It has an Ethernet port, a serial port, and stereo analogue outputs for four zones (and a coaxial digital output for Zone 5). Its power supply auto-selects the correct AC voltage.

What Else You Will Need

For the system to work, you will also need the following:

- A DHCP router connected to the Internet.
- An Ethernet cable connection from the router to your Sooloos Ensemble.
- A stereo RCA or 75-ohm coaxial digital audio or Meridian Speakerlink cable to connect your Ensemble or Control to your preamplifier, preamp/processor, receiver, or Meridian speaker.
- An AC power outlet (preferably surge protected) for each component.

THE ROUTER

Sooloos is a network-based system that will work only if every component has a solid, reliable network connection. That means you need a good, and properly-functioning, router. To minimize problems, we recommend the following

- Avoid using a router supplied by your ISP (Internet service provider — cable company, telephone company, etc.), as we have seen common issues with them.
- If you have an old router, go ahead and get a new one. It's a minor expense that can save you a lot of headaches.
- For additional network stability, you can optionally give the Meridian Sooloos system its own dedicated router to isolate it from the rest of the network. In this case, the Sooloos router needs to have a different network id than the main router, which may require router configuration. This is discussed later in Advanced Configuration.
- If you are going to control the system from web browsers or export /import files, the computers that do so will need to be connected to the same router as the Meridian Sooloos system or to one of the network ports on the Source. You can connect Meridian Sooloos components individually to the router, or just the Source to the router and the others to the Source, or any combination.
- Connecting the Meridian Sooloos system to a wireless router means that wireless devices that connect wirelessly to this router – iPhones, iPod Touches, laptops, or desktop computers – can also communicate with, access, and control your Meridian Sooloos system.

CABLES

The Meridian Sooloos system comes with several Ethernet cables you can use to connect the components over short distances. They are fitted with Neutrik EtherCon connectors, which provide a more secure physical attachment than ordinary RJ-45 connectors. The network ports on the Meridian Sooloos components will also accept standard RJ-45 plugs, however, and we supply kits for optional conversion of RJ-45 to EtherCon connectors on pre-made cables (see separate sheet for assembly instructions or select “assembly instructions” at: <http://meridian-sooloos.com/r.php?p=ethercon>).

The most important consideration for any other Ethernet cables you use in setting up the system is that they be in good physical condition. Worn or crimped cables can cause difficult to diagnose, possibly intermittent, network problems. Broken locking tabs mean a cable can easily fall out. We therefore suggest that you use new cables.

Analogue audio cables should be well-shielded and sturdy. While nothing exotic is required, you should be aware that different cables may influence the sound: discuss recommendations with your retailer. For the purposes of setup, ordinary cables should work fine, and the outputs on the Source can drive lengths up to 30m/100ft or more without difficulty. The longer the run, however, the greater the opportunity for interference pickup, especially hum from nearby AC wiring.

The S/PDIF digital audio connection requires a 75-ohm coaxial cable that, again, should be well-shielded and sturdy. Any coaxial cable sold specifically for video or digital audio connection should work for setup, but, again, discuss digital cable quality and potential influence on performance with your retailer. **Do not use an ordinary analogue audio cable.** Despite similar RCA plugs and overall appearance, an analogue audio cable probably will not have the correct electrical characteristics for digital audio, which can cause a degraded or failed connection.

Meridian Speakerlink connections transmit a stereo AES Digital audio signal as well as Meridian communications signals on standard CAT 5 cable. They can transmit signals up to 300 feet and so are ideal for distributed audio applications.

POWER

Connect your Meridian Sooloos components' power cords to a surge protector, power conditioner, or uninterruptible power supply (UPS) to protect the equipment from voltage spikes and drop-outs on the AC line.

Equipment Location

Although you probably will find it convenient to put the Ensemble near your main audio or A/V system (or, in a multiroom system, with the other audio distribution equipment), Meridian Sooloos components can go anywhere a wired network connection is available, provided only that they are all connected to the same router. Just be sure the Ensemble is an area that is well ventilated and not too hot, since the Ensemble system requires adequate ventilation – as is the case with most high-performance components.

Installation and Testing

The best way to install your Meridian Sooloos system is in stages, beginning with it isolated from other devices in your system or on your network.

INITIAL SETUP

1. Remove the Meridian Sooloos components from their boxes and place them where you can easily connect the Ensemble and Control to your router.
2. Attach the IEC power cord to the external power supplies of the components. Then plug the multipin connector on the other end into the matching socket on the back of the components.
3. Plug the power cords into surge-suppressed AC outlets.
4. If you are going to attach the Ensemble directly to the same router that serves other networked devices in your home, it is a good idea to turn all those components off to rule out any bad network interaction during initial setup. It is also a good idea to turn the router off, then on again to allow it to reboot. If you are going to run the Meridian Sooloos system off a dedicated router, just make sure that it is powered up and not connected to anything else.
5. Connect the Ensemble and Control to LAN ports on the router. **Be careful not to connect either to the WAN port.**

6. If your Ensemble was supplied with Hard Drives installed, proceed to the next step. If your Ensemble was supplied without Hard Drives installed, please visit the support section of the Meridian-Sooloos website to download the Hard Drive Installation and Formatting Guide before proceeding to do so. After installing and formatting the drives, proceed to the next step.
7. Now turn on the Ensemble and Control by rocking the power switch on each component. The pilot LED on the Ensemble should come on, and the Control screen should brighten; after a few seconds, the Sooloos logo should come up on the screen. If any of this does not occur, check the power connections and try again.
8. You will eventually see the message "Touch Anywhere to Calibrate the Screen." (If this message does not come up within 2 minutes, check all Ethernet connections and the power to the router; also make sure that the Ensemble and Control are connected to LAN ports on the router, not its WAN or Internet port.) Once the message appears, tap the screen and follow the resulting directions.
9. The system will continue loading, and after a while a screen will come up with **Home Page**. Tap **Settings**, and then tap **Devices**. This will bring up a warning. Tap **Continue**.
10. That will bring up the **Devices** panel listing information about the components in your system. You should see entries for the Ensemble and Control. If you do not see all of your Meridian Sooloos components in the list, check all network and power connections, refer to the troubleshooting section of this guide.
11. Once you see all your components listed, you are ready to complete your installation.

TEST CONNECTION TO THE INTERNET

1. When you see all of the Meridian Sooloos components listed, tap **Test Internet** at the bottom of the **Devices** panel. You should almost immediately get a message that the system has connected successfully with the Sooloos server via the Internet. (If you don't get that message, you have a network problem between the router and your cable/DSL modem that needs to be resolved.)
2. Return to the Home page
3. Tap the **Music** button at the left to open the cover browser.

IMPORT A CD

1. Insert a CD into the disc slot at the base of the Control. (Be careful of homemade CDs with unusually thick or poorly applied labels, which could get stuck in the drive. If a disc gets stuck, rock the power switch on the Control off and then on again to restart it, and the disc will eject as it reboots.)
2. The disc will spin up, and the system will display a message that it is identifying the CD.
3. Once it has identified the CD, the system will display its metadata, which you can edit on the screen if you like.
4. When you are satisfied with the metadata, tap the **Continue** button at the bottom right of the window. (Pressing the **Cancel** button will abort the import and eject the disc.)

5. The system will display a set of import-progress windows. A brand new or very clean CD will typically take 5 to 7 minutes to import. The more scuffs, scratches, or dirt on the disc surface, the longer the import will take, as the importing software works to extract the data as accurately as possible.
6. When the import is finished, the Control will eject the CD and display a message that it is transferring the data to the Ensemble, which will take a minute or two.
7. The system will open the information screen for the album you just imported.

Note: Because the graphics display and importing processes are both very processor-intensive, system navigation on the Control suspends during CD import to ensure stability and accuracy.

The system can be controlled during import by pointing any web browser on any computer, iPod Touch, or iPhone on the network to <http://my.sooloos.com/xxxxxxxxx>, where the x's represent the serial number of your Ensemble component. This serial number can be found on the Devices page of your Control. CDs can also be imported through the Control PC or Control Mac applications from computers on the same network as your System, leaving your Control free for you to navigate your collection.

The download link to Control PC or Control Mac can be found in the import tab of the web control interface.

CONNECT TO YOUR AUDIO SYSTEM

You're almost done.

1. Make sure your audio system's preamplifier, preamp/processor, or receiver is turned off. (Never make or break audio connections with the audio system live.)
2. Connect the Zone 1 Left and Right audio outputs on the Ensemble to an unused input on your preamplifier, preamp/processor, or receiver. If you are making an analogue connection, you will need an ordinary pair of RCA audio cables. For a digital connection from either the Ensemble or Control, you will need a single 75-ohm digital coaxial cable with RCA plugs at each end. (See "What Else You Will Need: Cables," page 3.) For a Speakerlink connection to Meridian Speakerlink enabled device, you will need a Cat 5E cable.

Note: If using a digital output zone, you will need to use the Quick Zone Selection, which appears at the bottom of the Browse Music window. The S/PDIF out of the Ensemble appears as Zone 5 in the zone display and the Control 10 will be listed as a zone. Tapping a zone will highlight and select it.

3. Turn the audio system on and select the input connected to the Meridian Sooloos system.
4. Go to the Meridian Sooloos music browser and tap an album cover.
5. Tap a song.
6. Tap **Play Now**.
7. Turn up the volume, and you should hear music.

Advanced System Configuration

Tapping Settings on the Sooloos Home screen opens window with many options. One is Devices. Tap this button. Besides the Test Internet function described on page 5, this window provides advanced setup options that enable you to update the system software, set IP addresses for the Meridian Sooloos components, and set device priorities. It is unlikely that you will need to use any of these, and some of them you should avoid except in highly unusual circumstances. In all cases, approach these controls with caution.

UPDATE SYSTEM

Press the Update System button to force a system software update. This will bring up a warning message. If you tap Continue, the system will connect with the Sooloos server via the Internet, then download and install new system software if any is available. Otherwise, the system checks for updates and downloads them automatically. When an update is available, you will be notified in the Messages screen on the Home page.

IP ADDRESS CONFIGURATION

Meridian Sooloos components are shipped from the factory set to obtain IP addresses automatically from a router via DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol). If necessary, you can use the Device Configuration facility in the Control Device Manager to turn off DHCP and assign static IP addresses. However, unless you have consistent problems, we recommend that you not do so. **It is never a good idea to turn off DHCP for Meridian Sooloos components and manually assign static IP addresses unless you fully understand networking and IP Addressing.** If you must change an IP address setting, do the following:

1. Tap the required device in the Devices window
2. Tap to de-select "DHCP" in the window to reveal IP address boxes.
3. Enter the required values using the keypad.
4. When you've completed all the fields, tap the **Apply Changes** button.

USING A SEPARATE ROUTER

For additional system stability, you can connect your Meridian Sooloos system to a separate router instead of simply using a switch. In this case, however, you need to be careful to assign the Sooloos router to a different network address block to that of the main router. For example, if the main network has addresses of the form 192.168.1.x, then the Sooloos router would have to be set to *anything but* 192.168.1.x: for example, 192.168.2.x. This is carried out in the router's configuration settings.

Hard Drive Backup

1. Connect a computer, either PC or Mac, to the same network as the Meridian Sooloos system.
2. Open any web browser
3. Type <http://my.sooloos.com/xxxxxxxx> in the URL field, where the x's represent the serial number of your Ensemble component. This serial number can be found on the settings page of your Control.

4. Under the “Export Music” tab you will find links to download Control PC or Control Mac
5. Download, install, and run Control PC or Control Mac
6. Go to the “Export Music” tab
7. Select the files to back up
8. Hit “Run Backup,” select a drive to back up to, then click on “Run Backup”

Troubleshooting

Almost all problems with Meridian Sooloos systems turn out to be due to network issues rather than with the components themselves. The most common symptom is a prominent, persistent “Searching Network for System Core” or “Searching Network for Storage” message that doesn’t go away after a couple of minutes. It means that the Control cannot locate the other component, either because a connection has failed or because the router has not assigned IP addresses to one or more Meridian Sooloos components. Here are some steps you can take to isolate and resolve the issue:

1. Check all cables and connections. You can waste hours chasing gremlins while the problem all along is just a crimped, broken, or detached cable.
2. Turn off all Meridian Sooloos components.
3. Reset your router (disconnect the power 10 or 15 seconds, then plug it back in).
4. Wait 1 minute, then turn on the Meridian Sooloos devices.
5. Wait for the descending beep sequence.
6. If after several minutes you do not hear any beeps, contact Meridian Sooloos.
7. If you do hear the beeps, turn on the Control.
8. When it reaches the Home screen, tap **Settings**, then **Devices** then **Continue** in the warning dialog.
9. You should now see your Meridian Sooloos components listed in the System Configuration window, with their serial, ip address ,version numbers, etc.

IF YOU DO NOT SEE ANY DEVICES

It is likely that the Control has not been assigned an IP address via DHCP and cannot see the other components, or none of the components have received an IP address. Test as follows:

1. Check the connection between the Router and Control.
2. If the connection is good, reboot the Control by turning it off and back on and return to **Devices**.
3. If devices are still missing, turn off all the components by rocking their power switches.
4. Restart your router and wait one minute.
5. Turn all the components back on and go to **Devices**.
6. If devices are still missing from **Devices**, check all connections again, repeat the procedure, and call Meridian Sooloos if the problem persists.

IF YOU DO NOT SEE SOME DEVICES

The components not in the list probably have not been assigned IP addresses via DHCP. Proceed as follows:

1. Check the connections between the unlisted components and the Ensemble. Replace any suspect cables.
2. Turn off all Meridian Sooloos components by rocking their power switches.
3. Restart your router and wait one minute
4. Turn all of the Meridian Sooloos components back on and return to Devices.
5. If some components are still missing from the list, check all connections again, repeat the procedure, and contact Meridian Sooloos if the problem persists.

CONTACTING MERIDIAN SOOLOOS TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Web contact form: visit <http://www.meridian-audio.com> and choose “Contact Us” from the “About Us” menu.

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REAR VIEW OF SOOLOOS ENSEMBLE: