# pactl Sound server control

## CONCEPTS

pactl talks to a PulseAudio server. On PipeWire the pipewire-pulse service answers the same protocol, so these commands work unchanged.

**Card** hardware, profile
↓ has
**Sink** output, port
↓ fed by
**Sink input** app playback stream
↓ monitor
**Source** input or sink monitor

Names or numeric indexes both work for devices; indexes change after restarts, names do not. @DEFAULT_SINK@ and @DEFAULT_SOURCE@ avoid looking names up.

## INSPECT

**pactl info**
Server, version, default sink/source

**pactl list short sinks**
Output devices, one per line

**pactl list short sources**
Input devices and monitors

**pactl list short cards**
Sound cards

**pactl list short sink-inputs**
Playback streams

**pactl list sinks**
Full detail: ports, volume, state

## DEFAULT DEVICE

**pactl get-default-sink**
Print default output

**pactl set-default-sink** *<sink>*
Change default output

**pactl set-default-source** *<source>*
Change default input

## DEFAULT DEVICE (cont.)

**pactl set-sink-port** *<sink>* *<port>*
Switch speakers / headphones

## VOLUME AND MUTE

**pactl get-sink-volume** *<sink>*
Show volume

**pactl set-sink-volume** *<sink>* **50%**
Absolute volume

**pactl set-sink-volume @DEFAULT_SINK@ +5%**
Raise by 5 points

**pactl set-sink-volume @DEFAULT_SINK@ -5%**
Lower by 5 points

**pactl set-sink-mute** *<sink>* **toggle**
Toggle mute

**pactl set-source-volume** *<source>* **80%**
Mic level

**pactl set-source-mute** *<source>* **toggle**
Mute the mic

## STREAMS

**pactl move-sink-input** *<id>* *<sink>*
Send a stream to another output

**pactl set-sink-input-volume** *<id>* **30%**
Per-app volume

## CARDS AND DEVICES

**pactl set-card-profile** *<card>* *<profile>*
Change profile (e.g. HDMI, A2DP)

## MODULES

**pactl load-module** *<name>* **[args]**
Load; prints module index

**pactl unload-module** *<id or name>*
Unload by index or name