playerctl Media player remote

START HERE

`playerctl play-pause`
Toggle playback

`playerctl metadata title`
Current title

`playerctl next`
Skip track

`playerctl -l`
List players

`playerctl previous`
Previous track

`playerctl -p <name> play`
Target one player

`playerctl status`
Playing or paused?

`playerctl volume 0.1+`
Louder

playerctl command → D-Bus → **MPRIS** session bus → selects → **Player** Spotify, VLC... → plays → **Audio** output

CONCEPTS

playerctl talks to any MPRIS media player over D-Bus (Spotify, VLC, mpv with a plugin, browsers), so one command controls them all.

Without -p, the command acts on the first player that supports it; playerctld (below) makes that the most recently active one.

Volume is a fraction from 0.0 to 1.0, not a percentage, and position is in seconds.

PLAYBACK

`playerctl play`
Start playing

`playerctl pause`
Pause playback

`playerctl play-pause`
Toggle play and pause

`playerctl stop`
Stop playback

`playerctl next`
Next track

`playerctl previous`
Previous track

`playerctl position 30+`
Seek 30 seconds forward
A trailing - seeks back: position 30-

`playerctl position 90`
Jump to 90 seconds

`playerctl position`
Print the position in seconds

`playerctl open <uri>`
Open a file or URL in the player

`playerctl loop None|Track|Playlist`
Set the loop mode

PLAYBACK (cont.)

`playerctl shuffle On|Off|Toggle`
Set or toggle shuffle

VOLUME

`playerctl volume`
Print the volume (0.0 to 1.0)

`playerctl volume 0.5`
Set volume to 50%

`playerctl volume 0.05+`
Raise volume by 5%

`playerctl volume 0.05-`
Lower volume by 5%

Not every player accepts volume changes; use pactl for the system volume.

CHOOSING PLAYERS

`playerctl -l`
List running players

`playerctl -p <name> <cmd>`
Control a specific player

`playerctl -p vlc,spotify <cmd>`
Try players in order
Acts on the first listed one that supports the command

`playerctl -a <cmd>`
Apply to all players

`playerctl -i <name> <cmd>`
Ignore a player

`playerctl -p %any,<name> <cmd>`
Use %any as a fallback slot

`playerctl -s <cmd>`
Suppress diagnostic messages

`playerctl -v`
Print the version

CHOOSING PLAYERS (cont.)

`playerctld daemon`
Start the activity-tracking daemon
Orders players by last activity, so the default target is the one you used last

METADATA

`playerctl status`
Playing, Paused or Stopped

`playerctl metadata`
Print all track metadata

`playerctl metadata <key>`
Print one value
Keys: artist, title, album, or any raw key such as mpris:length

`playerctl metadata artist`
Current artist

`playerctl metadata mpris:artUrl`
Album art URL

`playerctl -a status`
Status of every player

FORMAT AND FOLLOW

`playerctl metadata -f "{{artist}} - {{title}}"`
Custom output line

`playerctl -F metadata -f "{{artist}} - {{title}}"`
Print on every change
Blocks and keeps running; ideal for status bars

`{{ playerName }}`
`{{ status }}`
Player name and status variables

`{{ position }}`
`{{ volume }}`
Position (microseconds) and volume

FORMAT AND FOLLOW (cont.)

`{{ duration(mpris:length) }}`
Format microseconds as mm:ss

`{{ duration(mpris:length - position) }}`
Time remaining

`{{ uc(status) }} / {{ lc(artist) }}`
Change case

`{{ trunc(title, 30) }}`
Cut text to 30 characters

`{{ default(artist, "unknown") }}`
Fallback for a missing value

`{{ emoji(status) }}`
Show status as an emoji

`{{ markup_escape(title) }}`
Escape markup for bars like polybar

Quote the format string so the shell leaves the braces alone.

RECIPES

Status bar line

```
playerctl -F metadata \
  -f '{{ emoji(status) }}
{{ artist }} - {{ title }}'
```

Pause everything, then play one

```
playerctl -a pause
playerctl -p spotify play
```

Keyboard media keys (i3 config)

```
bindsym XF86AudioPlay exec
playerctl play-pause
bindsym XF86AudioNext exec
playerctl next
bindsym XF86AudioPrev exec
playerctl previous
```

Notify the current track

```
notify-send "$(playerctl
metadata -f '{{artist}} -
{{title}}')"
```