

Create Volume-Spanning Playlists On the Sansa Fuze

By Chris Morton



The Problem

The Sansa Fuze has its own internal memory, representing one “disk” (0). However, the device also accepts a microSDHC (uSD) expansion card, which represents a second “disk” (1). Both disks are also referred to as *volumes*.

A conventional .m3U playlist (or an .m3u8), when copied to a Fuze, does not recognize songs stored across both volumes. A different method must be used, then, for a single Fuze playlist to play back songs physically stored on either volume.

For example, Albert King - Stormy Monday.mp3 may be stored in the Fuze’s internal memory (volume 0). Eric Clapton - Can’t Hold Out Much Longer.mp3 may be stored on the uSD expansion card (volume 1). Your goal might be to create a single *Blues* playlist that references both songs physically stored on the two separate volumes.

Notes:

- Even if you do not yet own a uSD expansion card (available up to 32 GB), you can use these instructions to create Fuze playlists for a single (internal) volume only.
- The Fuze uses two different USB modes, MTP and MSC. Using Windows Explorer with the Fuze connected to your PC, some items are visible in one mode but not the other.

A Solution

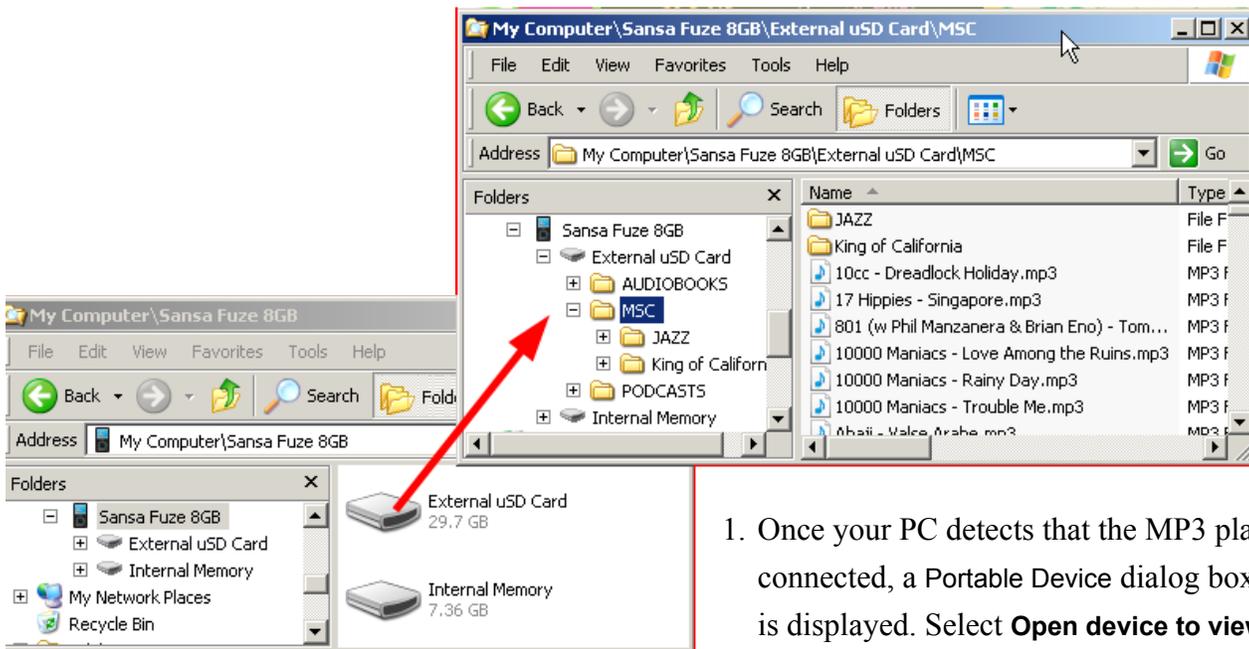
Windows Notepad (or other text editor) may be used to create playlists. Including spaces, the songs must be entered in a playlist *exactly* as their respective MP3 files are physically named, such as the examples cited above. This can be both time consuming and prone to error. Without maintaining some sort of separate, digital catalog* detailing which MP3 is stored on which Fuze volume, here is an easy way to generate an accurate playlist comprising MP3s stored across both volumes.

*The author uses a master Excel spreadsheet for this purpose.

Turn on your Sansa Fuze.

1. Press the **[Home]** button on the Fuze, then navigate to **Settings > System Settings > USB Mode**.
2. Select **MTP**.
3. Attach the Fuze to a USB port on your computer.

To prepare the list of desired files stored on the Fuze's *internal* volume:



1. Once your PC detects that the MP3 player is connected, a Portable Device dialog box (not shown) is displayed. Select **Open device to view files using Windows Explorer**, and then click **[OK]**.

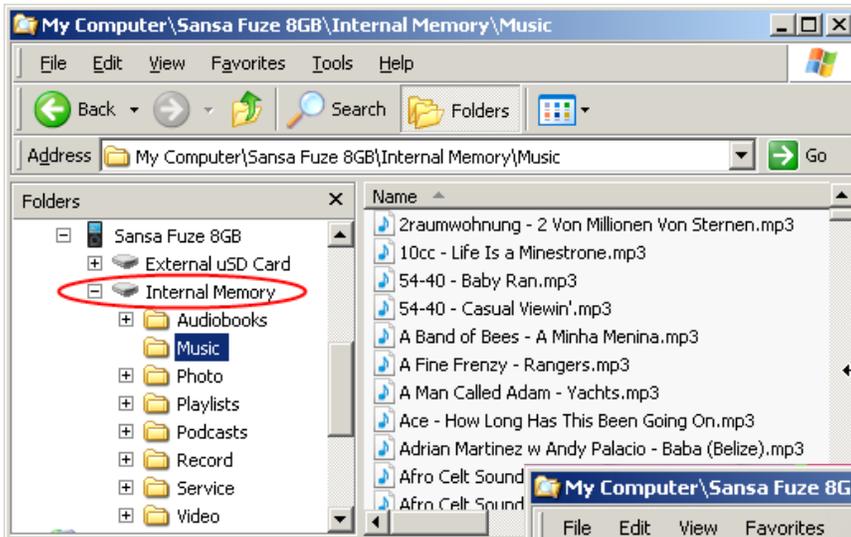
Note: An Explorer window entitled My Computer\Sansa Fuze xGB appears.

IMPORTANT: There are both Internal Memory and External uSD Card icons displayed.

2. Right-click the External uSD Card icon in the My Computer\Sansa Fuze Explorer window, and then select **Open** from the context menu.
Notes: A new Explorer window entitled My Computer\Sansa Fuze\External uSD Card now appears. You should now have two Explorer windows open.
3. Click the MSC folder in the External uSD Card window to display its contents (shown above).
4. Select **View > Details** from the Explorer menu bar in the External uSD Card window.
5. Move the External uSD Card window aside. You'll move an item to it a few steps from now.

- Referring to step 1 on the previous page, now double-click the Internal Memory icon in the My Computer\Sansa Fuze xGB Explorer window.

Note: The second Explorer window is now titled My Computer\Sansa Fuze\Internal Memory.

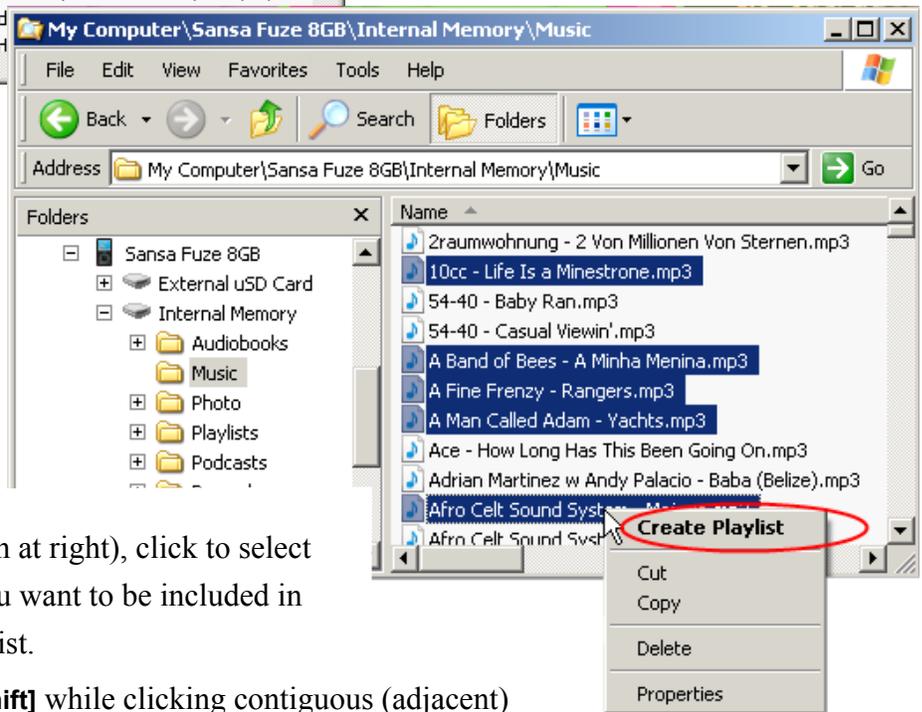


- Double-click the Music folder in the Internal Memory Explorer window.
Notes: The Explorer window is now titled My Computer\Sansa Fuze\Internal Memory\Music. The MP3 files stored on the Fuze's internal volume should now be displayed in the right pane of the Explorer window (shown at left).

- Select **View > Details** from the Internal Memory menu bar.

- In the right pane of the Internal Memory window (shown at right), click to select those MP3s you want to be included in your new playlist.

Note: Press **[Shift]** while clicking contiguous (adjacent) files. Press **[Ctrl]** while clicking individual files that are non-contiguous. Press **[Ctrl] + [Shift]** to select a group of files that are non-contiguous along with another selected file or group of selected files.

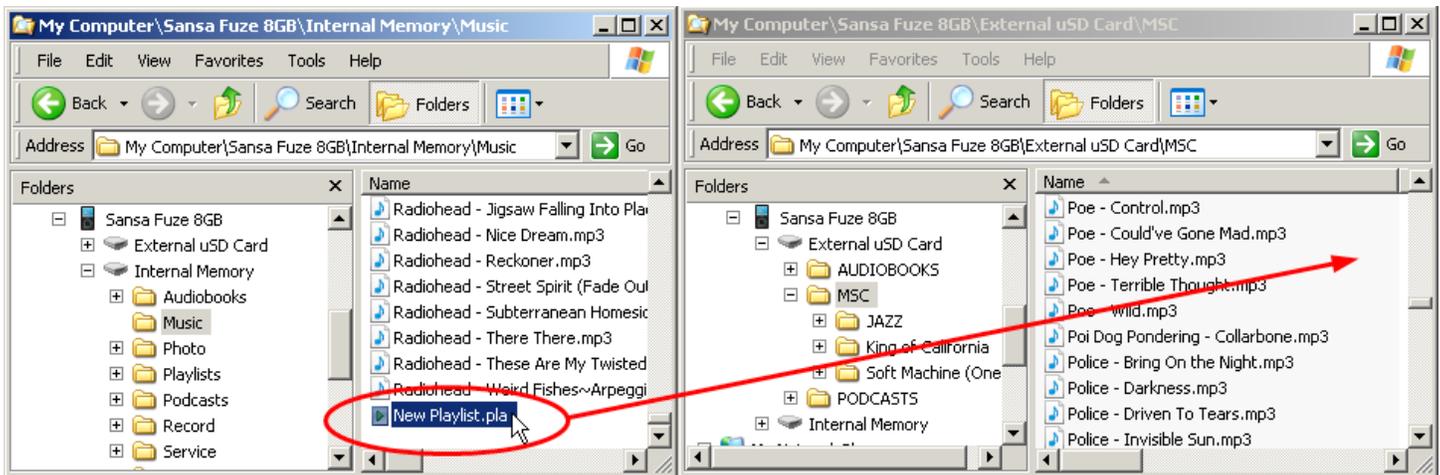


- Right-click one of the songs you have selected and then select **Create Playlist** from the context menu that now appears.

Note: The **Create Playlist** menu option is only visible in this USB mode (MTP).

Wait several moments while a .PLA file is created on your Fuze.

11. Scroll to the bottom of the Internal Memory\Music window (shown at left, below).



12. Position this Explorer window side-by-side with the (now expanded) External uSD Card\MSC Explorer window you created in step 2 (shown at right, above).

13. Making a note of the new .PLA file name (highlighted in red, next page), drag and drop it from the Internal Memory\Music window (left) to the MSC folder in the External uSD Card\MSC window (right).

14. Close the Internal Memory\Music window (left, above).

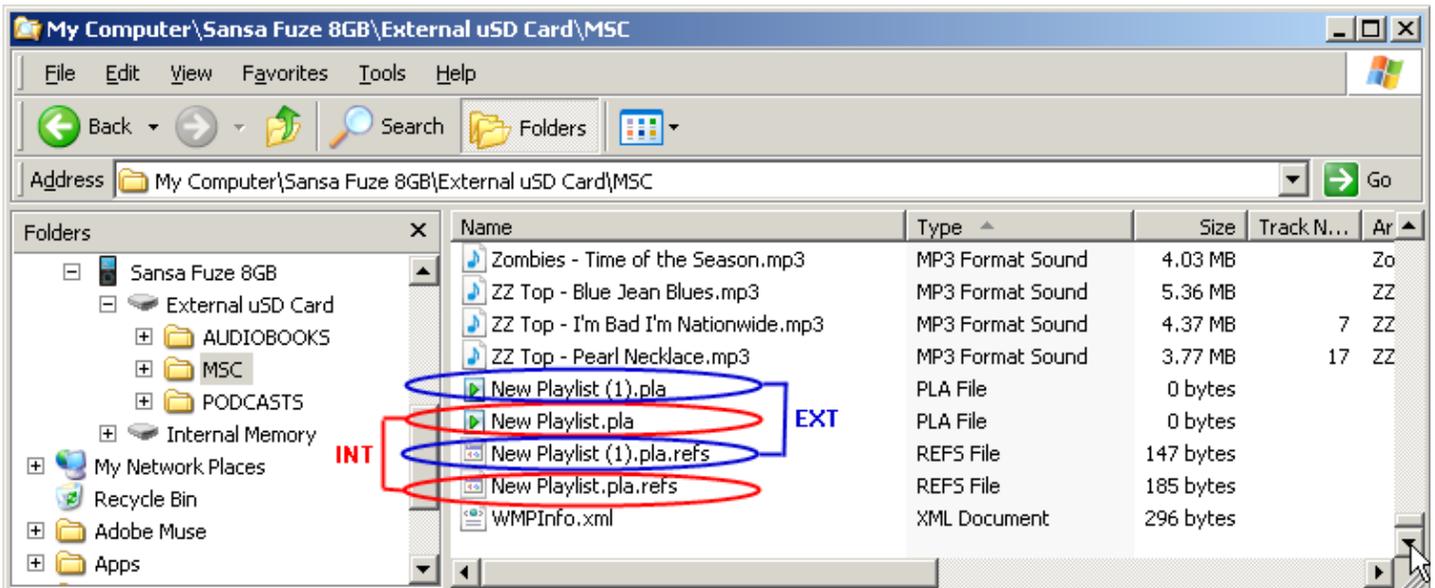
To prepare the list of desired files stored on the Fuze's External uSD Card volume:

1. Repeat steps 9–11 in the External uSD Card\MSC window (right, above).
2. Make note of the second .PLA file name (highlighted in blue, next page).
3. Close the External uSD Card\MSC Explorer window.

Now combine the multiple .PLA playlists into one, as follows:

1. Disconnect the Fuze from your computer. Wait patiently while it refreshes its media database.
2. Press the **[Home]** button on the Fuze, and then navigate to **Settings > System Settings > USB Mode**.

3. Select **MSC**.
 4. Reattach the Fuze to a USB port on your computer.
 5. Once your PC detects that the Fuze is connected, a dialog box is displayed (not shown). Select **Open folder to view files using Windows Explorer**, and then click **[OK]**. Do this for both Fuze volumes.
- Note: Two Explorer windows should now be displayed. The Internal Memory volume is reflected as a single alpha character, e.g., J:\ (a different letter will likely be used on your PC). The External uSD Card volume is designated as *<alpha character + 1*), e.g., K:\.
6. Minimize the J:\ Explorer window.
 7. Select **View > Details** in the K:\ Explorer window, and then click once on its **Type** header bar to sort its files.
 8. Scroll as necessary to locate the .PLA files.



Note that there are corresponding .REFS files for the two .PLA files. After you detached the Fuze, switched it to MSC mode and then reattached it, you're now able to see the .REFS files in Windows Explorer. Next you'll combine them using Notepad.

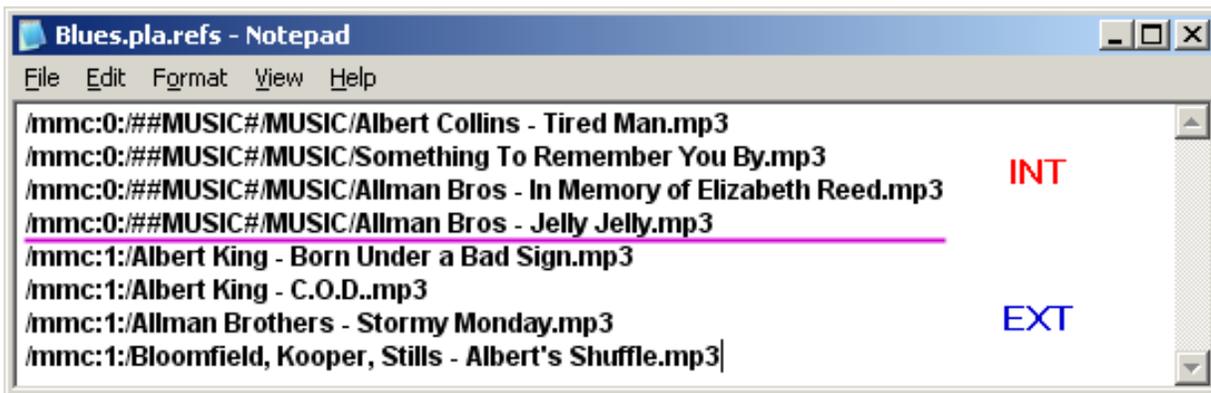
9. Click **Start > Run**, enter Notepad, and then press **[Enter]**.

Note: The Windows Notepad application is now running.

10. Drag the .REFS file that corresponds to the External uSD Card volume (highlighted in blue, previous page, and labeled New Playlist (1).pla.refs) and drop it in the Notepad window.
11. With Notepad now the active window, press **[Ctrl] + [A]** to select its entire contents, and then press **[Ctrl] + [C]**.
12. Select **File > New**.
13. Drag the other .REFS file that corresponds to the Internal Memory volume .PLA file (highlighted in red on the previous page and labeled New Playlist.pla.refs), and drop it in the Notepad window.

Note: You should see a number of entries that begin `/mmc:0:##MUSIC#/MUSIC/`. These represent MP3s stored in the Fuze's internal memory.

14. Place the cursor on a blank line directly below the displayed contents, and then press **[Ctrl] + [V]**.



Note: You should see a number of entries that begin `/mmc:1:/`. These represent MP3s stored on the Fuze's external uSD memory card.

15. Select **File > Save As** and, using quotation marks and the same double file extensions, rename your new master playlist to whatever name you prefer, e.g., Blues.pla.refs.
16. Back in the Explorer window, right-click one of the .PLA files and then select **Rename** from the context menu.
17. Skipping the .refs portion, enter the same name you chose in step 15, e.g., Blues.pla.

18. With the exception of the two Blues playlist files, delete all of the remaining New Playlist.pla and New Playlist.pla.refs work files.
19. Reopen the J:\ Explorer window and position it next to the K:\ Explorer window.
20. Drag the Blues.pla and the Blues.pla.refs files from the K:\ Explorer window to a blank location within the J:\ Explorer window.
21. Close both the J:\ Explorer and K:\ Explorer windows.

You can now disconnect the Fuze from your PC (the following steps are recommended when its USB mode has been switched to MSC):

1. Double-click the **Safely Remove Hardware** icon located in the Windows Tray.

Note: The **Safely Remove Hardware** dialog box is now displayed.
2. Select the **USB Mass Storage Device** that represents your Fuze and then click **[Stop]**.
3. Click **[OK]** to confirm that you want to stop this device.
4. Click **[Close]** to close the **Safely Remove Hardware** dialog box.