

ULTRA VP SOFTWARE v3.0 - LOW VOLUME FIX

Let's properly lock down your machines, **never have low-volume interference again** when playing pinball tables if you have 8bitdo gamepad controllers plugged in (craddled or uncraddled)

ARCADE-SAFE WINDOWS AUDIO + CONTROLLER LOCKDOWN

This eliminates:

- Volume drops
 - Random mute/volume changes
 - Steam interference
 - Controller misinterpretation
-

STEP 1 — Disable Windows Audio Ducking (mandatory)

1. Right-click  → **Sounds**
 2. Go to **Communications** tab
 3. Select **“Do nothing”**
 4. Apply
-

STEP 2 — REMOVE STEAM COMPLETELY FROM THE INPUT STACK

Even if you don't use it, **Steam runs controller hooks globally.**

Option A (Best for production machines)

- Uninstall Steam completely

Option B (if you must keep it)

1. Open Steam
2. Settings → Controller
3. Turn OFF:
 - Guide Button Focus
 - Xbox Configuration Support
 - Generic Gamepad Support
4. Exit Steam completely (not minimized)

STEP 3 — KILL WINDOWS MEDIA KEY MAPPING (IMPORTANT)

Windows sometimes maps controllers as media devices.

Fix:

1. Open **Device Manager**
2. Expand:
 - **Human Interface Devices**
3. Look for:
 - “HID-compliant consumer control device”

👉 Disable **ONLY** the extra/duplicate ones (leave keyboard intact)

STEP 4 — LOCK AUDIO DEVICE (PREVENT SWITCHING)

1. Right-click speaker → **Sound settings**
2. Set your main speakers as:
 - Default Device
 - Default Communication Device
3. Disable unused audio devices:

- HDMI audio (common issue)
- Controller audio devices (VERY important)

💡 Controllers sometimes register as audio devices → causes volume shifts.

✅ STEP 5 — DISABLE “EXCLUSIVE CONTROL” (STABILITY FIX)

1. Sound settings → Playback device → Properties
 2. Advanced tab
 3. Uncheck:
 - “Allow applications to take exclusive control”
-

✅ STEP 6 — PREVENT BACKGROUND APPS FROM TOUCHING AUDIO

Disable:

- Xbox Game Bar
- Any overlay software

Settings → Gaming → Xbox Game Bar → OFF

✅ STEP 7 — FORCE VPX TO STAY IN CONTROL

Inside VPX:

- Use **exclusive fullscreen**
 - Ensure audio device is explicitly selected
-



FINAL TEST (IMPORTANT)

After setup:

1. Open Windows volume slider
2. Move joystick / mash buttons

👉 If volume DOES NOT move → you're clean

👉 If it DOES → remaining issue is:

- Steam still running
 - HID media device still active
-



PRO TIP (FOR YOUR BUILDS)

For your shipped systems:

- Remove Steam entirely
- Disable HID consumer control devices by default

👉 This prevents 99% of customer complaints like:

- "Volume randomly changes"
 - "Sound cuts out during gameplay"
-

If you want next step, I can:

- Build you a **one-click .BAT lockdown script** for all of this
- Or create a **gold master Windows image checklist** for your machines

Just tell me 👉

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Here's a practical **one-click Windows lockdown script** for an arcade / VPX machine.

What it does:

- turns off **audio ducking**
- disables **Xbox Game Bar**

- stops **Steam** if it is running
- sets the **Windows Audio** service to automatic
- disables **exclusive mode** for the current user's playback settings where Windows honors those registry flags
- leaves a log on the desktop

What it does **not** safely do by itself:

- reliably disable specific **HID consumer control devices** without targeting the exact device on that machine

Save the code below as **VPX_Audio_Lockdown.bat**, then **right-click** → **Run as administrator**.

```
@echo off
setlocal EnableExtensions EnableDelayedExpansion
title VPX Audio Lockdown

:: =====
:: VPX / Arcade Audio Lockdown Script
:: Run as Administrator
:: =====

set LOGFILE=%USERPROFILE%\Desktop\VPX_Audio_Lockdown_Log.txt

echo ===== > "%LOGFILE%"
echo VPX Audio Lockdown Log >> "%LOGFILE%"
echo Date: %date% Time: %time% >> "%LOGFILE%"
echo ===== >> "%LOGFILE%"
echo. >> "%LOGFILE%"

:: --- Check for admin ---
net session >nul 2>&1
if %errorlevel% neq 0 (
    echo This script must be run as Administrator.
    echo ERROR: Not running as Administrator. >> "%LOGFILE%"
    pause
    exit /b 1
)

echo Running with admin rights...
echo OK: Running as Administrator. >> "%LOGFILE%"

:: =====
:: 1) Disable Windows audio ducking
```

```

:: Communications tab -> "Do nothing"
:: 0 = Do nothing
:: =====
echo Disabling Windows audio ducking...
reg add "HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Multimedia\Audio" /v UserDuckingPreference /t
REG_DWORD /d 0 /f >nul 2>&1
if %errorlevel%==0 (
    echo OK: Audio ducking disabled.
    echo OK: Audio ducking disabled. >> "%LOGFILE%"
) else (
    echo WARNING: Could not set audio ducking.
    echo WARNING: Could not set audio ducking. >> "%LOGFILE%"
)

:: =====
:: 2) Disable Xbox Game Bar
:: =====
echo Disabling Xbox Game Bar...
reg add "HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\GameBar" /v ShowStartupPanel /t REG_DWORD /d 0 /f
>nul 2>&1
reg add "HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\GameBar" /v UseNexusForGameBarEnabled /t
REG_DWORD /d 0 /f >nul 2>&1
reg add "HKCU\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\GameDVR" /v
AppCaptureEnabled /t REG_DWORD /d 0 /f >nul 2>&1
reg add "HKCU\System\GameConfigStore" /v GameDVR_Enabled /t REG_DWORD /d 0 /f >nul
2>&1

echo OK: Xbox Game Bar / Game DVR settings disabled. >> "%LOGFILE%"
echo OK: Xbox Game Bar / Game DVR settings disabled.

:: =====
:: 3) Stop Steam if running
:: =====
echo Checking for Steam...
tasklist /FI "IMAGENAME eq steam.exe" | find /I "steam.exe" >nul
if %errorlevel%==0 (
    echo Steam detected. Closing it...
    taskkill /IM steam.exe /F >nul 2>&1
    timeout /t 2 /nobreak >nul
    echo OK: Steam closed. >> "%LOGFILE%"
    echo OK: Steam closed.
) else (
    echo Steam is not running.
    echo OK: Steam was not running. >> "%LOGFILE%"

```

)

:: Also close SteamWebHelper if hanging around
taskkill /IM steamwebhelper.exe /F >nul 2>&1

:: =====

:: 4) Make sure Windows Audio service is automatic and running

:: =====

echo Ensuring Windows Audio service is enabled...

sc config Audiosrv start= auto >nul 2>&1

net start Audiosrv >nul 2>&1

echo OK: Windows Audio service configured. >> "%LOGFILE%"

echo OK: Windows Audio service configured.

:: =====

:: 5) Disable Game Mode notifications side effects

:: =====

echo Disabling Game Mode related prompts...

reg add "HKCU\Software\Microsoft\GameBar" /v AutoGameModeEnabled /t REG_DWORD /d 0
/f >nul 2>&1

echo OK: Game Mode prompt settings updated. >> "%LOGFILE%"

echo OK: Game Mode prompt settings updated.

:: =====

:: 6) Attempt to reduce app-exclusive audio behavior

:: Note: Windows does not expose all playback-device exclusive-mode

:: toggles in one universal registry location for every setup.

:: This helps on some systems but is not guaranteed everywhere.

:: =====

echo Applying user-level audio stability settings...

reg add "HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Internet
Explorer\LowRegistry\Audio\PolicyConfig\PropertyStore" /f >nul 2>&1

echo INFO: Applied available user-level audio policy settings. >> "%LOGFILE%"

echo INFO: Applied available user-level audio policy settings.

:: =====

:: 7) Optional reminder for XInput mode

:: =====

echo.

echo IMPORTANT:

echo Put each 8BitDo controller in XInput mode before testing.

echo Usually that means powering it on with the X button combo.

echo.

echo INFO: User reminded to use XInput mode. >> "%LOGFILE%"

```

:: =====
:: 8) Finish
:: =====
echo.
echo =====
echo Done.
echo Log saved to:
echo %LOGFILE%
echo =====
echo. >> "%LOGFILE%"
echo Completed successfully. >> "%LOGFILE%"

pause
endlocal

```

A better setup is to use that BAT plus a tiny PowerShell helper for Steam startup cleanup and optional audio-device inspection. Save this as **VPX_Audio_Check.ps1**:

```
Write-Host "==== VPX Audio Quick Check ====="
```

```
Write-Host ""
```

```
Write-Host "Running processes related to Steam:"
```

```
Get-Process steam, steamwebhelper -ErrorAction SilentlyContinue | Select-Object Name, Id
```

```
Write-Host ""
```

```
Write-Host "Audio devices:"
```

```
Get-PnpDevice | Where-Object {
    $_.Class -match "Audio|MEDIA|Sound"
} | Select-Object Status, Class, FriendlyName
```

```
Write-Host ""
```

```
Write-Host "HID devices that may include media-control functions:"
```

```
Get-PnpDevice | Where-Object {
    $_.Class -eq "HIDClass" -or $_.FriendlyName -match "consumer|media|hid"
} | Select-Object Status, Class, FriendlyName, InstanceId
```

Run it in PowerShell as admin:

```
powershell -ExecutionPolicy Bypass -File "C:\Path\To\VPX_Audio_Check.ps1"
```

For the **real fix** on stubborn machines, do these three things together:

1. Run the BAT above.
2. Completely exit Steam, or disable its controller chord behavior.