

## PLAYAWAY AUDIO BOOK INSTRUCTIONS

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### Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library

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### Overview: The Basics

Playaways are commercially-produced, self-playing audio books that require a AAA battery and ear buds (or headphones) for listening.

Each Playaway should arrive with a battery capable of playing the entire audio book from beginning to end. However, if it does not, it is up to the borrower to replace the battery.

The library offers ear buds free of charge. They are for the patron to keep; the library does not want them back.

The Playaway collection is limited. Borrowers are asked to return the Playaway books promptly so other patrons may borrow them. Playaways are loaned-out for three weeks.

## **Physical Description of Playaways**

The Playaway is a wedge-shaped cartridge with a smooth surface. The library has placed a braille title label is on this side. The function buttons are on the opposite side.

For sake of these instructions, the thicker part of the wedge will be referred to as the top of the Playaway. This is where the AAA battery is housed.

When patrons receive a Playaway book it arrives in a plastic container with a soft form core surrounding the book. When the plastic container is opened the braille labeled side should be facing up.

### **How to Hold a Playaway**

To properly hold a Playaway, the smooth side with the braille instructions on it should rest on the palm of the user's hand. The widest part of the wedge should be closest to the fingertips. With the Playaway cartridge in this position the buttons should now be accessible. All instructions hereafter are based on the Playaway in this position.

### **Locating the Headphone Jack**

The headphone jack is a round hole found on the right side of the Playaway about a fourth of the way down from the top or widest part of the wedge. This is where ear buds, headphones or other external speakers are to be plugged in.

### **Changes in Playaway Function Buttons**

Playaway manufacturers have re-designed the Playaway function buttons since the first titles were produced. Thus, two sets of instructions are given to explain the operation of each layout. Some function button features that were available on earlier-produced titles are no longer available.

Playaways with the original function button layout will be marked with one braille cell, consisting of six dots. This braille cell will be located below the third row of function buttons approximately in the center. For Playaways that have this marking, please follow the first set of instructions titled, "Function Buttons: Original Playaway Layout."

Newer Playaways with the revised function button layout are not marked with any braille characters. For these titles, follow the set of instructions titled "Function Buttons: Revised Playaway Layout."

## Function Buttons: Original Playaway Layout

Playaways with the original layout will have a six-dotted braille cell below the third row of function buttons, approximately in the center of its lower half.

There are three rows of function buttons. The top and bottom rows have three buttons per each row, while the middle row has only two but are separated by an LCD display.

Starting at the top of the wedge:

### Top Row, left to right...

The **Volume Control button** is the square button located in the upper left corner. This button controls ten volume settings. Each time this button is pressed the volume increases until it reaches the highest volume. The next press of this button returns the setting to the lowest or softest setting. A specific volume setting cannot be directly selected. One must cycle through the volume levels to find his/her preferred level.

The **Speed Control button** is the rectangular middle button. This is the longest button in the row. This button controls three speed settings. Press this button to increase the narration speed until the fastest speed setting is reached. The next press of this button returns to the first speed setting.

The **Bookmark button** is located in the upper right corner. This square button allows users to mark specific passages so they can easily return to them again.

To mark a passage for future reference, press the bookmark button.

To remove a bookmark, simply return to that bookmarked passage and press the bookmark button. Now, that passage is no longer bookmarked.

**Note:** When the Playaway is turned off the bookmarks remain in place.

### **Middle Row, left to right...**

The **Skip Back to chapter or Bookmark button** is the square button located on the left side of the middle row. This button is used for returning the narration to the beginning of the current chapter, for going back to the user's most recent bookmarking and for returning the beginning of a previous chapter.

For example, if a user bookmarks a passage in the middle of Chapter 2 and they listen into Chapter 3, (s)he could now use the Skip Back button to do any of the following...

1. (S)he could return to the beginning of Chapter 3 by pressing the Skip Back button once.
2. (S)he could return to their bookmark in Chapter 2 by pressing the Skip Back button a second time.
3. They could return to the beginning of Chapter 2 by pressing the Skip Back button a third time, and so on.

The **LCD Display** is a recessed rectangular window in the middle of the row. This display shows the time remaining in a passage of the book. Unfortunately, this display does not have an audible output.

The **Skip Forward to chapter or bookmark button** is the square button located on the right side of the middle row. This button moves the narration forward to the beginning of the next chapter. If a passage has previously been book marked, pressing this button moves the narration forward to the bookmarked passage.

The Skip Forward button and the Skip Back button function in the same way. Each press of the Skip Forward button moves the narration forward to the next chapter or bookmarked section of the book, whichever comes first.

### **Bottom Row, left to right...**

The **Rewind button** is the square button on the left in the bottom row. Press this button to reverse through the narration. Each press of the button moves the narration back in 15 second segments.

The **Play/Pause/Stop button** is rectangular button in the middle of this row. It is the longest button in this row.

To begin a Playaway book, press this button once. This turns the book on. Press the Play a second time and the narration begins.

To pause the book's narration, press this button once. Press it again to resume listening.

If the Playaway remains in the pause setting for five minutes, the book automatically turns off.

To turn the Playaway off, hold the Play/pause/stop button down until the narration stops. Release the button. The Playaway is now off.

The **Fast Forward button** is the square button in the lower right corner. Press this button to fast forward through the narration while the book is playing.

## Function Buttons: Revised Playaway Layout

The newer, revised Playaways were not given a braille cell below the function buttons.

There are three rows of function buttons. The top and bottom rows have three buttons per each row, while the middle row has only two but are separated by an LCD display.

Starting at the top of the wedge:

### Top Row, left to right...

The **EQ/Equalizer button** is the square button located in the upper left corner. This button controls four pitch or volume settings. Each press of this button adjusts the equalizer mode in the following order:

1. None – No equalizer setting change is made.
2. Loud – Overall sound is boosted.
3. Clear – High end sound is boosted.
4. Hi-Fi – Sound is mixed for best performance.

The **Power button** is the rectangular middle button. It is the longest button in the top row. Press the Power button once to turn on the Playaway. To turn the power off, press and hold the button down for three seconds.

The **Speed Control button** is the square button on the right. This button controls three speed settings. Press this button to increase the speed of the narration. Once it reaches the fastest speed, pressing this button one more time returns the speed to the slowest speed setting.

### Middle Row, left to right...

The **Volume Down button** is the first square button in the middle row. There are 25 volume decrease settings. Each press of the Volume Down button will decrease the volume one level until the lowest/softest

volume setting is reached. Press and hold this button to quickly accelerate through the 25 volume decrease settings.

The **LCD Display** is a recessed rectangular window in the middle of the function button. This display shows the time remaining in a passage of the book. Unfortunately, this display does not have audible output.

The **Volume Up button** is the second square button in the middle row. There are 25 volume increase settings. Each press of the Volume Up button increases the volume one level until the loudest volume setting is reached. Press and hold this button to quickly accelerate through the 25 volume increase settings.

### Third Row, left to right...

The **Chapter/Track Reverse button** is the square button in the lower right corner. Press this button once to go back one chapter at a time. Press and hold this button to increase the rate of the reversal speed.

The **Play/Pause button** is rectangular button in the middle of this row. It is the longest button in this row. Press the Play/Pause button once to start the Playaway. To pause the narration, press this button. Press it a second time to resume listening.

The **Chapter/Track Forward button** is the square button in the lower right corner. Press this button to advance the narration by one chapter. Press and hold the Forward button to increase the rate of the fast forward speed.

## Lanyards

A lanyard may be attached to the Playaway by pulling out a small recessed clip from the bottom of the cartridge. The lanyard can be threaded through this clip. The library does not provide lanyards.

## **Changing the Battery**

The AAA battery provided with each Playaway should have enough power to play the entire text, but if this is not the case the user needs to change the battery his/herself.

To change the battery, hold the Playaway so that the smooth side with the braille label is facing up. The battery is located at the top of the Playaway (the thickest portion of the wedge). Open the battery cover by locating the slight notch or depression along the top edge of the Playaway. Then, carefully pry open the Playaway's end panel by pushing down on the notch while trying to peel the casing away. Applying the tip of a retracted ballpoint pen into this notch can aid in getting enough pressure to release the cover. Once the panel is released, remove and properly dispose of the old battery. Insert the new battery with the flat end (the negative side) to the left. Reinsert and close the battery's casing panel. The Playaway should now be operational once again.

## **Returning Playaways to Library**

Place the Playaway in the foam insert lying inside the plastic container. Keep the ear buds. Place the plastic container inside the provided mailing container. Reverse the pre-paid mailing label so that the library's address is visible. Return the mailing container to a postal mailbox or to a post office.

## **Replacement Charges**

These audiobooks are the property of the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library. Replacement charges will be made for each lost or damaged Playaway title. The replacement charge will be the cost to replace the title and braille the labels.

## Funding for the Library's Playaway Collection



The Institute of Museum and Library Services, a Federal agency that fosters innovation, leadership and a lifetime of learning, and State Library Services, the Minnesota State Library Agency, provided initial funding to the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library for the Playaway Digital Books Project under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).