

29 aug 2025

Auscultare: podcast + audiobook player

App description

Plays MP3 and remembers where you've left

Listen without distractions to longer audio files (MP3) such as podcasts or audiobooks you've downloaded. It remembers where you've left and how many times you've played a file.

How to use this app:

- download your favourite podcast or audiobook as MP3 *
- launch the app
- tap '+'-button to open MP3
- resume playing by tapping files from the recently played list
- swipe played files to remove them from the list

* How to download podcasts and audiobooks?

Podcasts and audiobooks are just files. You can download them manually or by using a small tool/script that does this automatically. I released a simple script that you could use:

<https://willem.com/en/2025-01-27-podcast-downloader/>

I designed the app by hand to be kind on your battery by being free from bloat. It uses modern, native Android code so it integrates well. It works 100% offline and works without a subscription or ads. Its source code is open and released under free/libre software license GPL v3, granting you the permission to modify and extend the app. Find the backstory and source here:

<https://willem.com/en/2025-08-29-Auscultare-podcast-audiobook-player/>

Auscultare Podcast + Audiobook Player

Building a native Android app that remembers where you've left
29 AUGUST 2025

Enjoy distraction free listening to longform audiofiles like podcasts and audiobooks using this app I made. Tired of bloated apps full of ads, subscriptions or 'suggestions', I wanted an app that gets out of my way by doing one thing only, and one thing very well. This is Auscultare.

Latin for (attentive) listening, 'Auscultare' is an Android app I made that plays MP3 files and remembers where you've left and how many times you have played a file. This is great to enjoy long form audio like podcasts or audiobooks. Progress tracking helps you chunk up long in-depth interviews like the [Lex Fridman] podcast or [Deep Questions by Cal Newport]. The play counter helps you rotate music podcasts like [Tiesto's Clublife] so you don't have to listen to the exact same thing when going to the gym or ^{going} for a run. working out in

[image] → three screenshots  lock, white, black

Auscultare: the podcast and audiobook player that tracks progress and play count, featuring a minimal light and dark design and perfect integration with Android (like lock screen play controls, bluetooth headsets and audio casting)

Premium ~~Native~~ Android Development x Unix Philosophy

While there are numerous apps that can play you some audio, I felt that none of them ticked all these boxes:

- simple, clear and compact: make the program do one thing well, avoid feature bloat.
- composability: use the app with files from different sources and play on numerous outputs like Bluetooth headset or speakers with dedicated controls.
- minimalist design: use as little design as possible and use user interface controls and concepts people know. Use as little text as possible to prevent language from forming a barrier.

Premium

✓

- nativeness: the app must feel and look like it is part of Android itself. The only way to do this right is by using the same tools and code as Google does. You feel the app's exceptional performance, the sleek and crisp looks, and you'll get first class integration and the best battery life.
- free/libre: While you may not care about open source code, free (as in freedom or libre) apps tend to be more respectful to their users as they are created by people to serve people, not corporations. Making money on software isn't necessarily bad, but the ever growing hunger for more money drives the development of 'features' that trick, nudge or force you to spend more. By offering the source code with the app, I provide proof that I have no hidden agenda.

[image]

Making the app I want using Android Studio and Kotlin

Download the app & source

You can download the app and its source code using the following links

- Source code (GPL v3): <https://source.willem.com/auscultare/>
- Google Play: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.dsd164.auscultare>
- F-droid: (not available yet)

If you want to support development consider downloading the Google Play version of the app for which I charge a small fee, or use the "by me a coffee"-button on the bottom of this page to do a small donation. Alternatively, you can download and compile the app from source.

[image]

Auscultare: made with love to get out of your way so you have more time for other things like going for a run!

Conclusion

Knowing what I wanted and unwilling to compromise, I used modern tools to build a podcast and audiobook player app for Android. By publishing it and releasing it I allow others to enjoy it, too. Happy listening!