PODCASTING WITH AUDACITY

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Introduction

Welcome to the Quick Reference Guide for creating a podcast using the Audacity software on a PC. These instructions are intended to help novices learn how to create a podcast; however, if you've created a podcast before and just need a refresher on how to do a few tasks or are new to Audacity then these instructions will still be able to help you.

To create a podcast you will need the following equipment:

PC
A Microphone
Audacity
Your Creativity!

Note: You can use Audacity on a Mac. This guide is formatted for PC but the basics are applicable for Mac users also. See http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/mac

Why Podcast?

If you've never created a podcast and aren't sure how one would help you, here's a brief overview of why you might want to make one.

What's a podcast?

A podcast is a sound file that users can download from the internet. A podcast is created by a podcaster (you!) who usually has something he or she wants to share. Though the word podcast comes from Apple's iPod, a podcast can be listened to on any mp3 player as long as it is in the appropriate file format.

What are podcasts used for?

Podcasts are usually created by people who want to share something with the world. This can be either their opinion, new music, their opinion on new music, or any other ideas they have that can be distributed through audio format on the internet. Podcasts are also being used by many schools to put class lectures in a portable format.

Who can make podcasts?

Anybody! With the proper equipment, a microphone and sound editing program, anybody can sit down and create a podcast in no time.

Audacity Set-Up

Installation

- 1. Download Audacity and Install Audacity at http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/windows
- Next, download and install the LAME MP3 encoder. This will allow you to export your file as an MP3 file http://lamel.buanzo.com.ar/Lame_v3.99.3_for_Windows.exe

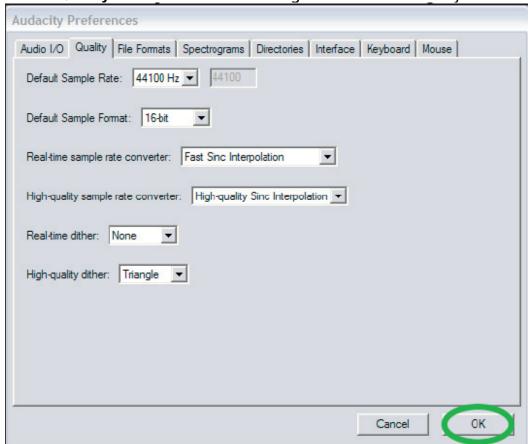
If you want to Use Audacity on a Mac download the LAME files from here http://lamel.buanzo.com.ar/Lame_Library_v3.98.2_for_Audacity_on_OSX.zip

Configuration

Audacity should be ready for use, but in case the settings were changed check to make sure Audacity is ready for recording.

- 1. Open Audacity by either clicking the **Start** button then **All Programs** then **Audacity** or double click the Audacity logo on the desktop.
- 2. Click **Edit** at the top of Audacity and then **Preferences**.
- 3. On the Audio I/O tab make sure the Recording Device is your recording device and Channels says 2 (Stereo).

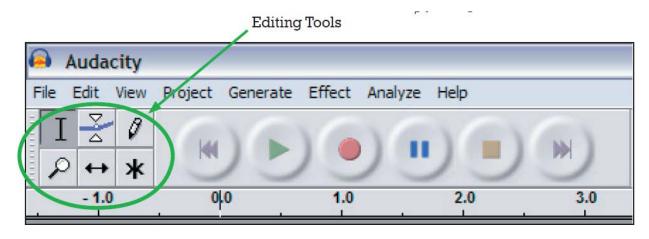
4. On the Quality tab make sure the settings are the same as they are below:



5. Click **OK** to go back to Audacity

Audacity Intro

In order to record your podcast you will be using the audio editing program Audacity. If you've never used Audacity don't worry about learning the software: it's as easy as editing a Word document. All the critical commands such as delete, copy, and paste are the same as they would be in a word document.



In order to efficiently edit your document you will find the following buttons handy:



Skip to Start: goes to beginning of track; deselects selected portions of track



Play: plays track or selected audio

Shift + Play: pressing the shift button on your keyboard and clicking the play button at the same time will continuously play the selected audio track



Record: records voice; opens new audio track



Pause: pauses track during playback; if you pause the track while recording you will continue recording audio to the same audio track



Stop: stops recording or playback; if you stop recording you will open a new audio track if you click record



Skip to End: goes to end of track; deselects selected portions of track



Selection Tool: this tool allows you to select audio



Time Shift Tool: this tool allows you to move audio to different parts of the audio track

The four other tools on the toolbar are not covered; those tools are for more experienced users and aren't nearly as fun or easy to use. Check the Help menu.

Delete: to delete selected audio, hit the delete key on your keyboard

Copy: to copy selected audio, hold down the Control Key (ctrl) and hit the C key on your keyboard

Paste: to paste audio into your project hold down the $Control \ Key$ (ctrl) and hit the V key on your keyboard

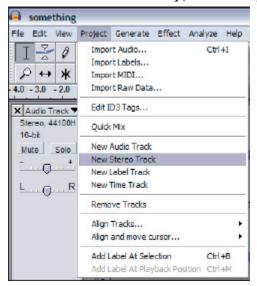
Adding tracks

Tracks are what the audio you are recording are stored in. An empty track looks like this:



A new track is opened automatically for you if you stop recording and then click the Record button again.

To add a track manually, click Project then New Stereo Track from the toolbar.



Prepare to Start Recording

Recording Checklist

Before you set yourself up for a long stay in the recording booth make sure you have everything you'll need for creating your podcast:

- Water make sure you keep your throat nice and ready to record your vocals
- Extra audio clips if you need any extra audio clips in your podcast make sure you know how to get to them.
- Outline of show prepare an outline for your podcast! You'll want to have at least a basic idea of what you'll be talking about to make the recording process much easier.

Saving Recording

- 1. Open Audacity.
- 2. Click File then Save Project As...
- 3. On the left hand side click **Desktop**.
- Click the Create New Folder icon on the top of the dialog box.
 Name this folder something you will remember, like your name.
- 5. With your new folder selected, click **Open**.
- 6. In the **File Name** box, name your podcast something you will remember, like the topic of your podcast.

This will create a folder with the name you gave it that ends in _data. This will contain all the data that Audacity needs to edit your podcast. Do not delete anything from this folder or save anything into it. Let Audacity handle this folder.

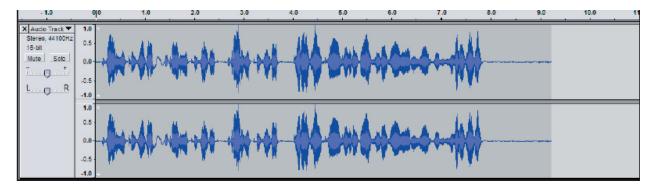
Now you're ready to begin recording your podcast! But during your recording make sure to save often in case there is a computer glitch or some other unforeseen error.

Recording

This is when you will actually begin recording your podcast. Make sure you know what you plan to say before you begin recording: you won't impress anyone saying "umm" or "uh" every five seconds! But don't worry if you mess up any lines; you'll be able to edit these parts later on (see Editing Recording).

- Press the red Record button on the Audacity toolbar.
 Remember, this will automatically add a new audio track to the project that will contain your voice recording.
- 2. Speak into the microphone.

Play around with the microphone to see how loud you should speak and how far away from the microphone you need to be. You don't need to be right next to the microphone but a distance of about a foot should be close enough for the microphone to record everything you say. Ideally the levels in Audacity will be about half-way on the audio track (see below). If the levels aren't that high and you don't want to re-record your podcast you can always fix the volume when you edit (see Editing Recording).



There are two channels here because of how we set up the program in Audacity Setup.

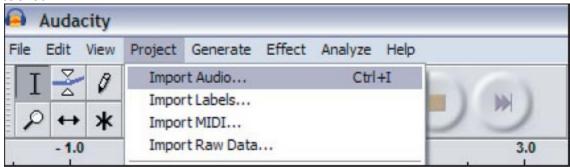
3. When you're done recording press the yellow **Stop** button on the Audacity toolbar.

Note: You don't have to do all your recording in one take; if you need to take a break to rest your vocal chords then take it! When you are ready to get back to recording just press the Record button again and Audacity will create a new track so as not to disturb your first recording. The Editing Recording section will tell you how to combine different audio tracks into one audio file.

Now that you've recorded your voice for your podcast it's time to add any extra audio files you may want into the project. If you do not want or need to add audio into your podcast continue to the section, **Editing Recording** (next page).

Importing Audio

 Click Project on the Audacity toolbar then click Import Audio from the toolbar

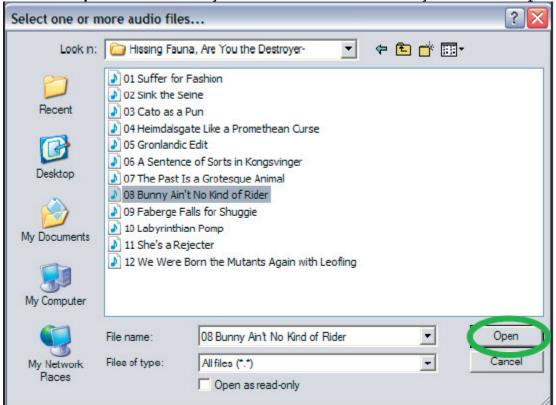


This will open a dialog box asking you to find the audio you want to add into your podcast.

Note: Audacity can import .mp3, .wav, .au (note: do not use the .aup file that Audacity uses), .aif, and .ogg files.

2. Find where you saved your audio file onto the computer.

3. Click the Open button when you have selected the audio you want to import.



What's Next?

The Editing Recording section will give you tips on how to fit the imported audio into your podcast.

Editing Recording

Next to brainstorming and outlining your podcast this will likely be the most time consuming part of creating it. You will need to find all the times you either had too large a break between words or sentences or said the wrong thing. This section will help make your podcast seem like you said everything correctly on the first try instead of stuttering every time you were faced with a tongue-twister. This section will also tell you how to place sounds you imported into yourpodcast so they are incorporated seamlessly.

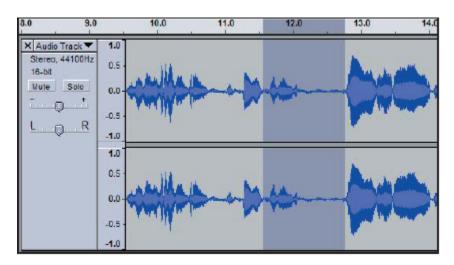
Correcting gaps in sentences and deleting extra words

To do this you will need to find the places in your podcast where you may have meant to say something like, "This is my podcast," but you actually said, "This is my......podcast." Also, you may not want filler words such as "uh" or "um" in your podcast.

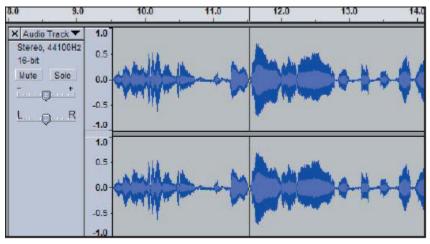
Either make a mental note of where these gaps are or write down what times they occur at on a sheet of paper. You can also go through your podcast from the beginning to the end and fix the problems as you spot them. If you plan to add extra sounds make sure you catch all the places you need to delete sounds before rearranging your tracks. Your podcasting life will be much easier if you catch all your mistakes now rather than later.

Deleting Audio

1. Using the **Selection Tool**, select the audio segment you want to erase. The Selection Tool is the default tool and should already be selected.



2. Hit the delete key on your keyboard. You can also click **Edit** then **Delete** from the toolbar.



3. Repeat on all audio segments you need to delete.

Note: there's no formula for how long of a gap to leave in between words. Listen to the edited copy by rewinding the track and clicking the green **Play** button to see if it sounds natural. If it doesn't then click **Edit** then **Undo** and try again. Sometimes you just need to re-record a certain sound bite.

Exporting Podcast

After you've edited your podcast you're ready to send the file out to the world, right? Nope! First you need to save your podcast as a file that everyone will be able to access. The .aup file extension (Audacity Project) allows you to edit your recording but you won't be able to play it back on an mp3 player or open it in any program except for Audacity. To ensure everyone can listen to your podcast you'll need to save it as an mp3 by:

1. Click File then Export as MP3.

If a warning saying "Your tracks will be mixed down to two stereo channels in the exported file" just click OK.



- 2. Save your mp3 on the desktop.
- 3. Name your file in the File Name box and click Save.
- 4. Click on ID3v1 and give your podcast a Title, Artist, and Album name. If your podcast falls under any genre select one from the drop down menu and enter

any additional comments you may have about your podcast in the **Comments** box.



Once you've exported your podcast make sure to save it to your computer. You will then need to upload to the web so it can be accessed by users. There are many options available. You can upload it to Moodle as a Resource.

You can also upload it to an online service like Youtube, Drop box etc.