

Troubleshooting Audio Editing

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The most important step to ensuring that you record a great audio file or podcast, is ensuring that you have working equipment and software. The audio editing software that the DITI recommends is [Audacity](#), a free audio editing and recording software which enables you to edit and mix audio in a multitrack style. Multitrack editing means that you are allowed to edit various parts of the audio independently from each other which allows for more complex sounds. While we recommend at least editing your audio in Audacity, you may decide to record audio using a phone app for ease of recording or for more on-the-go interviewing. Modern phones have fairly decent mics, though you should test the recording quality before committing to a full recording.

If you don't have access to a laptop or working microphone, Northeastern provides a variety of equipment through the library which can be borrowed using your Husky ID. In addition to this equipment, Snell also offers recording spaces that are available for reservation. All of these services are free of charge:

- [Northeastern Vending Services](#)
 - Students can rent voice recorders as well as USB-C chargers and adapters
- [Northeastern Locker Services](#)
 - Students can rent laptops and cameras through this service. Both Apple and Windows laptops are available
- [Snell Library's Digital Media Toolkit](#)
 - Provides resources to students who are working on digital media assignments in addition to contact information for renting equipment
 - [Their equipment catalog lists](#) all the equipment you can check out to use, it includes a full podcasting kit
- [Snell Library recording studio](#)
 - For those who have limited access to recording spaces, the library has a recording studio that students can reserve space in

Developed by: Avery Blankenship

Questions? Contact us: nulab.info@gmail.com

When troubleshooting audio while in an audio editing software like Audacity, there are a few key points to keep in mind:

- Is your mic fully plugged in/synced with your computer/tested? Have you tested to make sure that your mic is picking up on your audio?
- Have you checked to ensure that your headphones are plugged in/synced/tested OR that your speakers aren't muted?
- Have you checked to ensure that the volume on the track itself isn't muted or turned down?
- If you have imported an audio file, is the file in the appropriate format? For example, .mp3?
- If you are attempting to share your completed audio file with someone else, are you exporting it as a mp3?
- If you are reopening your project file and discover that some of your file is missing, were you saving frequently? Audacity (and many audio editing platforms) do not autosave

In addition to this list of steps to check which apply to any audio editing software and can solve a number of easy fixes, there are a number of common errors that are specific to Audacity that also have easy fixes:

- If you see an error message informing you that there is an error opening your sound device, select **Transport > Rescan Audio Device** from the toolbar in order to get Audacity to resync with your audio device. Next, select **Audio Setup > Playback Device** or **Audio Setup > Recording Device** and ensure that the correct devices are selected for both playback and recording. If rescanning for your microphone does not work, make sure that your microphone is actually enabled in your computer's device settings
- Sometimes, operating systems may block playback or recording for apps like Audacity. If you are using airpods and you notice there is no playback audio, try disconnecting your airpods to verify if the issue is with the headphones or with the app, itself. If the playback issue is coming from the app, locate the **Privacy and Security** settings on your laptop and then select **Microphone** (both Windows and MacOS have these settings). Next, you should select the option that allows desktop apps to access the microphone (on Windows) or select Audacity specifically (MacOS)
- If you aren't able to hear playback for a recording, try **Transport > Transport Options > Enable Audible Input Monitoring**. It should be noted that this will allow you to listen to your recording as you are recording. In order to disable this, select **Enable Silent Monitoring**
 - If you are hearing echoing while recording, make sure that **Enable Audible Input Monitoring** is turned off

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- In order to record with a bluetooth headset, you may need to fiddle with the audio settings. If you aren't able to record with your headset, try **Audio Setup > Audio Settings > Project Sample Rate > 16000 Hz**

Audacity also provides a [manual for visually impaired users](#) which is navigable by a screen reader and includes instructions for navigating the platform using a screen reader. For other troubleshooting guidelines, refer to the [Audacity Support manual](#).