

---

# Introduction to Audacity

[Click to schedule a meeting with the DITI Team](#)

---

Audacity is a free, easy-to-use, multi-track audio editor and one of the more popular free audio editors used for creating podcasts. It can be used with Windows, Mac, Linux, and most other operating systems.

## Audacity 101

- Click on the red button to record your track!
- To edit out sections of your recording, select the part of your track you want to remove, then hit “delete” on your keyboard.
- You can split tracks by selecting the point in the clip you wish to divide, then go to Edit > Clip Boundaries > Split.
- You can move tracks by dragging and dropping them with your mouse.
- Save your project by going to File > Save Project > Save Project (or Save Project As, if you are just creating your podcast project).
- Finished? Export your project before sharing your recording! Go to File > Export > Export as an MP3.

## Downloading Audacity:

To download Audacity, go to [Audacity's download page](#), choose the option that matches your operating system, and then follow the instructions to download and install the software. If you need an older version of Audacity, you can find those in the [archive of past versions](#).

## Key Terms

- **Track:** a single audio channel or stream.
- **Multi-track:** an audio recording or channel with more than one track or recording of sound. Another term for this is “multimedia.”
- **Clipping:** splitting audio into separate sections or making “clips.”
- **Waveform:** the curve within a track showing the volume and duration of individual sounds.

## Digital Integration Teaching Initiative

- **Mixing:** the process of audio production, or mixing tracks of recordings, music, and other desired media.
- **MP3 File:** the most general audio file format. Others include .wav, .mp4, etc.

### Files Formats

- **Lossless Audio File Formats:** better than or equal to CD-quality
  - **WAV:** uncompressed file, meaning huge file size. The best for audio-editing in Audacity.
  - **AIFF:** Apple's alternative to WAV. Uncompressed, not widely used
  - **FLAC:** compressed file, takes up less space than WAV. Not supported by Apple.
- **MP3/MP4:** compressed audio file, ensures small file size. Best for exporting and distributing from Audacity.
- **Ogg Vorbis:** Open-source alternative to MP3. Used in Spotify streaming

### Tips for Audio Recording

- Start recording well in **advance** and do several **takes**.
  - The original recorded audio is often much longer than the actual podcast episode.
  - Do not record everything at once! Break your script into segments that you can record several takes individually.
  - **Editing often takes much longer than the actual recording!**
- Find a quiet space to do any audio recording.
- Use headphones or microphones to capture your audio.
- Reserve space at the [NU Library Recording Studios](#) in Snell Library for professional studios and equipment!

### Fair Use, Copyright, and Public Domain Resources

Here are some resources for finding creative commons and public domain media. Don't forget to provide credit!

- [Internet Archive Audio library](#)
- [Partners in Rhyme](#) database of sound effects
- [The Public Domain Review](#) collection of media objects
- [Musopen](#) catalog of music resources
- [Incompetech](#) database (search for Royalty-free Music)
- [Creative Commons Search](#) portal for reusable resources

## Digital Integration Teaching Initiative

- [BBC library of sound effects](#)

For more information:

- [Copyright and Fair Use handout](#)
- [Library of Congress guide to Copyright and Primary Sources](#)
- [Fair use guidelines from Purdue University](#)
- [Northeastern Library guidelines to copyright and fair use](#)
- [Audacity for Beginners video](#)
- [Audacity for Podcasting video](#)