

Introduction to Recording and Editing Podcasts with Audacity



Taught by: Johan Arango-Quiroga & Shannon Peifer

ENGL 2770: Writing To Heal

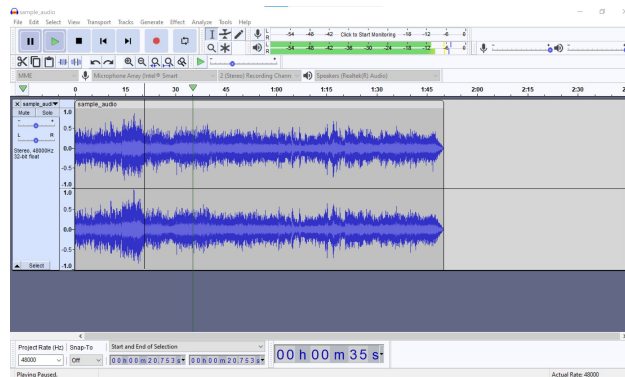
Laurie Edwards

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Making Podcasts: Audacity

What is Audacity?

Audacity is a free, easy-to-use, **multi-track** audio editor and one of the more popular free audio editors used for creating podcasts.



Multi-track: the ability to have different layers of audio in one clip (for example you can have background audio playing while you talk, if you want).



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Downloading Audacity

<https://www.audacityteam.org/> —Audacity is platform-agnostic!

Choose if you want it for Windows, Mac, or Linux.

Audacity is free software and developed by volunteers.

Audacity for Windows

Windows 10/8/7/Vista (XP support has officially been dropped)

Audacity for Mac OS X / macOS

Mac OS X/macOS 10.7 and later.

Audacity for GNU/Linux

Source code

For PC users: download **Windows Installer**

For Mac users: download **MacOS.dmg**



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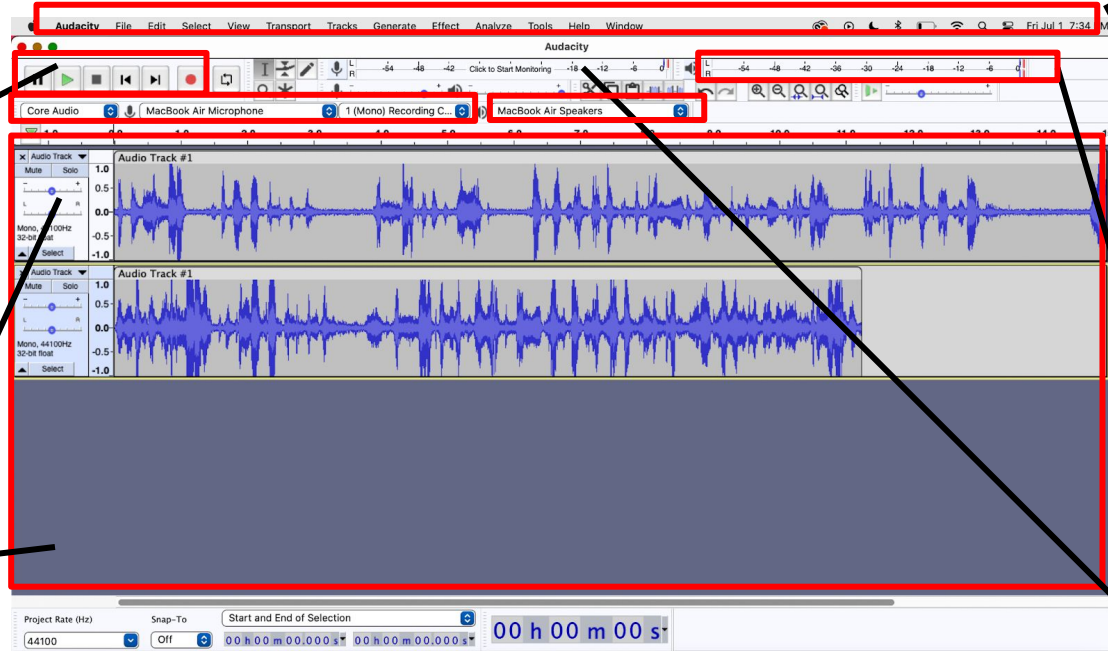
DOWNLOAD		FILE	SIZE	VERSION	ANTIVIRUS
Audacity Windows Installer		Signature	26.6 MB	2.3.2	0 / 15
Audacity Windows Zip		Signature	13 MB	2.3.2	0 / 15
Audacity macOS DMG		Signature	36.2 MB	2.3.2	0 / 15
Audacity Linux Source		Signature	8.6 MB	2.3.2	0 / 15
Audacity Manual		Signature	20.2 MB	2.3.2	0 / 15
Audacity macOS 2.1.1-DMG (screen reader accessible)		Signature	38.6 MB	2.1.1	0 / 15

Anatomy of Audacity

Main buttons (L-R):
pause, play, stop,
fast-forward/
backward, record

Microphone,
volume, input, and
output

Recordings (audio
tracks) will display
in this window



Editing, saving,
effects,
transporting or
exporting the
recording

Output Volume
Level Monitor:
shows the
loudness of
each track in
real-time
*Tip: try for -12
to -6db*

Other Audacity
tools

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.
- **Waveform:** the curve within a track showing the duration and volume of individual sounds.
- **Clip:** a section of audio, often made with the **split** tool.
- **Mixing:** the process of audio production, or mixing tracks of recordings, music, and other desired media.
- **MP3 File:** the most generally used audio file format. Others include .wav and .mp4.



Basics: Audacity & Recording Audio

Recording

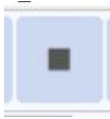
Make sure your **microphone** is working by checking to see that it's selected in the microphone section of the screen. Each computer will have different microphones, so check your sound settings for your model.



To **record**, click the button with the **red circle**.



Hit the **pause** button to pause a recording.



Hit the **stop** button to stop recording.

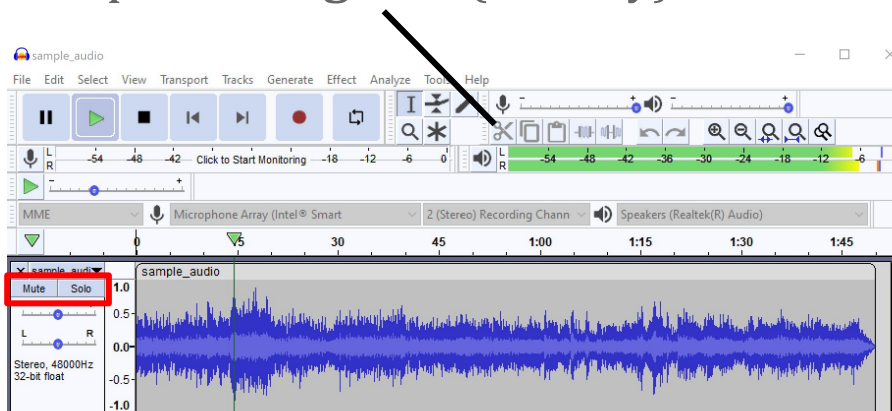


Use **re-play** to verify that the recording is the quality/ volume that you want.



Checking volume

Keep an eye on the **monitor** when recording and playing back your audio—try to keep it in the **green** (literally).



If your volume is too loud, the monitor levels will turn yellow and red. Tracks that are too loud will have a blown-out effect when played back.

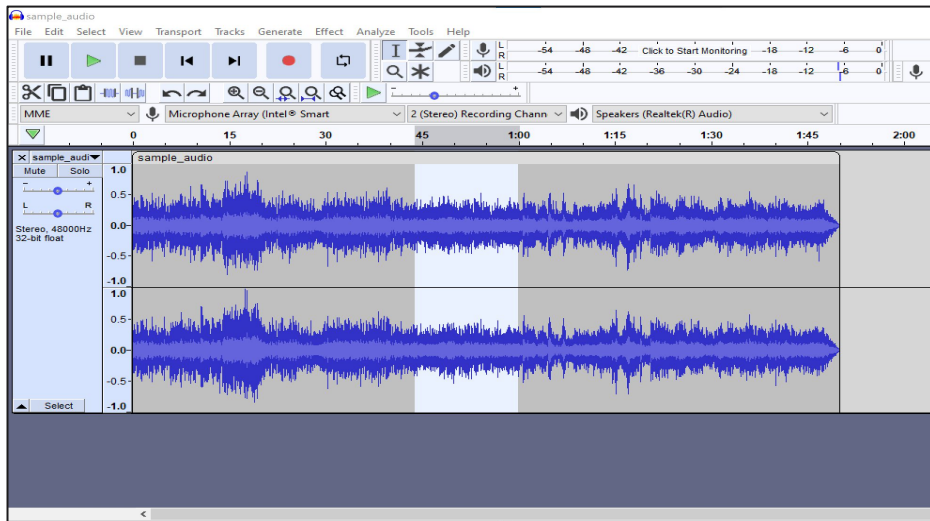
If one of your tracks is louder or softer than the others, you can adjust the volume on each track.

Tip: to hear one track without the others, you can **mute** the other tracks or click “**solo**.”



Moving Tracks

To move entire tracks or audio around in Audacity, you can click and drag them by hovering your mouse over the top of the clip.



Once you have selected the clip, click whatever clip or track you want to move and drag it into position.






Basics: Audacity & Editing Audio

The Audacity Toolbar

- **I** The **selection tool** will be selected automatically when you open Audacity.
- ***** The most useful tool is the **multitool**, which allows you to use all the functions of the other tools without switching to them.
 - The selection tool function is the default.
 - Hover over the waveform borders to use the envelope tool function.
 - Use your trackpad to zoom.
 - Zoom in and left click to use the draw tool function.



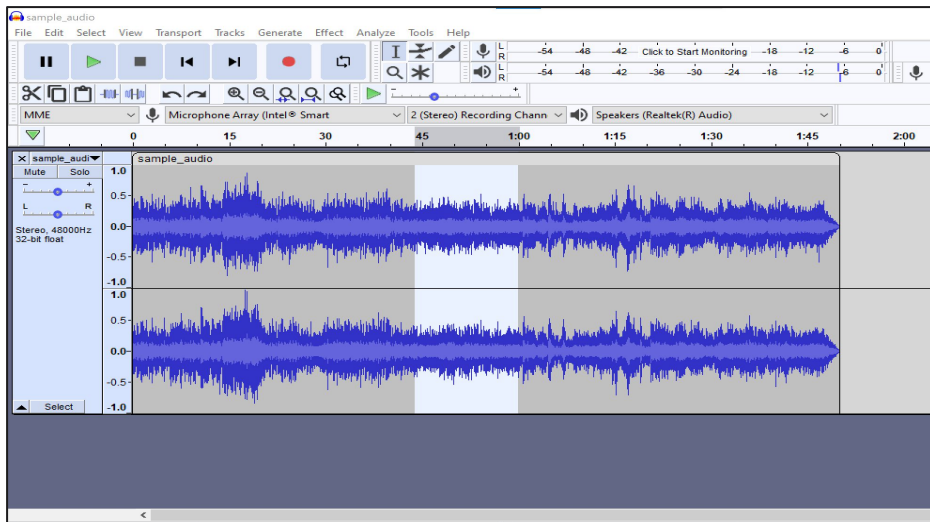
The Audacity Toolbar (Cont'd.)

-  The **envelope tool** allows you to smooth changes in volume by using control points at the top and bottom of the waveform.
 - Clicking on the blue border will create control points, which you can then move around to adjust the waveform envelope.
-  The **zoom tool** lets you zoom in and out of the waveform in order to make adjustments.
-  The **draw tool** allows you to manually redraw the waveform to change the volume or correct background noise.
 - You can only use the draw tool if you've zoomed into the waveform.



Removing Parts of Tracks

Once you have recorded audio in Audacity, you can easily edit it. Here is how to remove sections using the **Selection Tool (F1)**:



Click and drag with your cursor to select the portion you wish to remove.

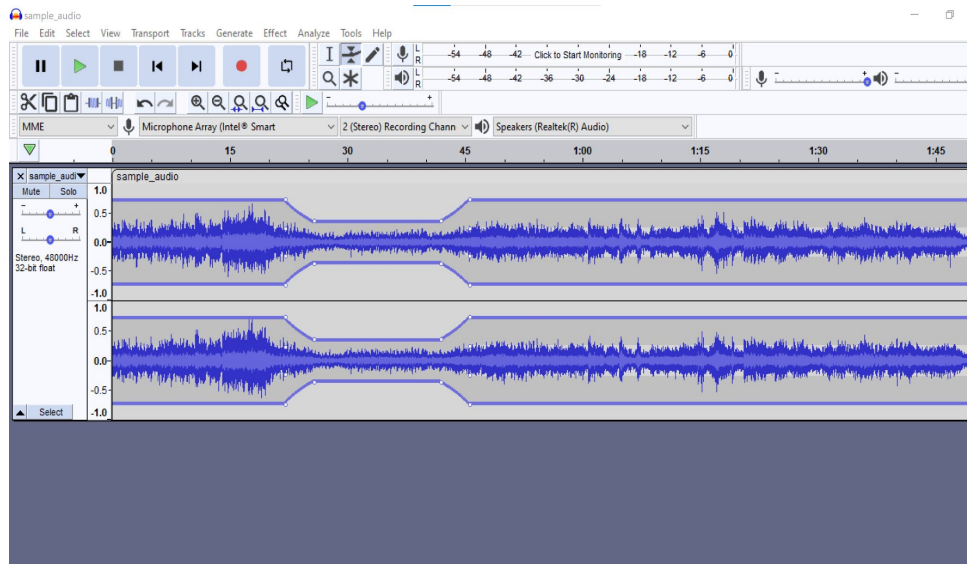
Then, hit backspace or delete on your keyboard.

Tip: you can zoom in and out with the **Zoom Tool (F4)** to better see what you're trying to delete.



Fading In/Out

To fade music in and out on Audacity, use the **Envelope Tool (F2)**. Two yellow bars will show up on each track.



Click to add **control points** (little white dots) on the track you want to fade in.

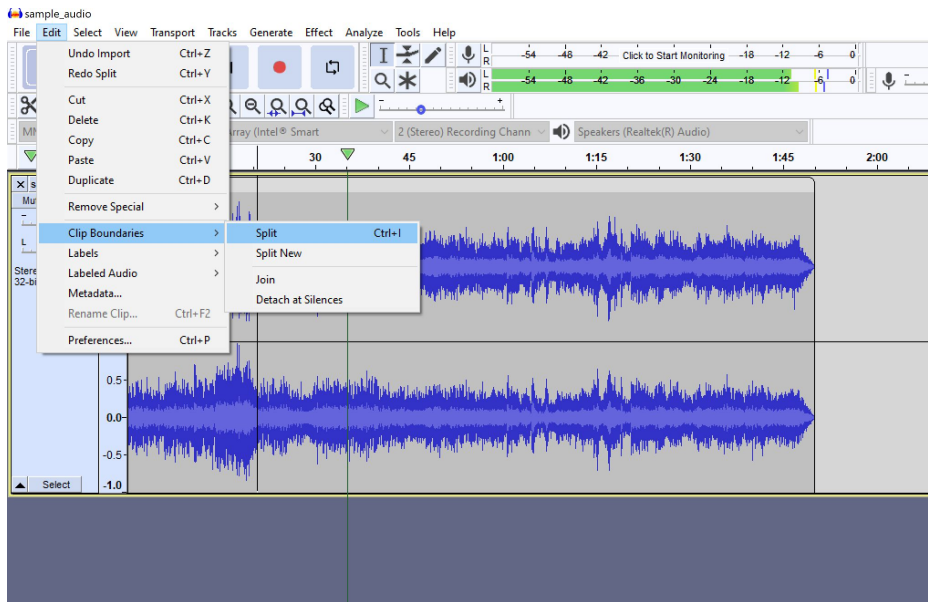
Drag and move the nodes to up and down and side to side to change the volume and how gradual the volume fade is.

Add and adjust nodes at the end of the track to fade the music back in.



Splitting Tracks

To split a track in Audacity, follow these steps to make shorter clips:



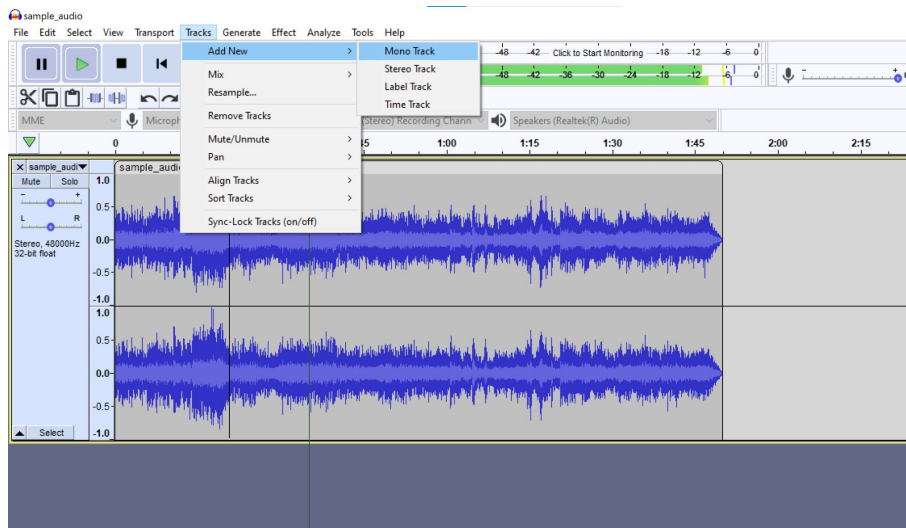
With the **Selection Tool (F1)**, place your cursor over the section where you want to split your track.

Navigate to the **Edit** section, click under “**Clip Boundaries**” and select “**Split**,” or press **Ctrl+I**.



Adding Tracks

To create additional tracks in Audacity for a **new recording**, hit the record button and it will start a new track. Another option is:



Navigate to the “Tracks” menu option and select “Add New.” This will open a list of options. Select the “Mono Track” option. You can also add a new mono track by pressing **Ctrl+Shift+N**.



Your Turn!

- Visit <https://sound-effects.bbcwind.co.uk/> OR studio.youtube.com and click on the 'Audio Library' tab (you have to be signed into Google for this one)
- Download something you want to play around with and try to:
 - **Remove** some of your track.
 - Choose a part to **fade in** or **fade out**.
 - **Split the track** into multiple.
 - **Add a new track** to your project.

**Saving, Exporting,
and Sharing**

Saving

Audacity does not auto-save! Save your recording, early and often!

Try and save after each major edit/input of a recording, just to be safe.

Save in multiple places. Always have backup.

File > Save Project > Save Project As> “Name of your podcast”

And once your project is saved...

File > Save Project > Save Project > [saves the updates to your file]



About File Formats

- **Lossless Audio File Formats:** better than or equal to CD-quality.
 - **WAV:** uncompressed file, meaning huge file size. The best for editing raw audio files in Audacity.
 - **AIFF:** Apple's alternative to WAV. Uncompressed, not widely used.
- ***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.

**Note: The DITI typically recommends you save files as mp3 (sometimes mp4, if you use a PC).*



Exporting and Sharing

Finished with your recording?

- Make sure you **export your project as an MP3** before you send or share it!
- This will ensure that other people are able to listen to it! Exporting to an MP3 will ensure that anyone—even people who don't have Audacity—can listen to your project file.

File > Export > Export as MP3

Select “best quality”

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Q&A

Smooth Transitions

Crossfade Tracks Import or Record Audio Tracks / Position Tracks /
Overlap Tracks/ Zoom In / Select Space in the Soundtrack

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSmtJU2LU54&t=9s>

Effects > Fading > Crossfade Tracks > Apply (click OK)

Crossfade Tracks Menu

Fade Type: Default is constant gain (i.e., linear fade) or Custom Curve (explore different types of fade)

Fade Direction: Alternating out/in; alternating in/out



Overlapping Sounds

Amplify Function

Select the entire track with the sounds

Effects > Volume and Compression > Amplify > Adjust track volume

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Imfzp_6SAvY



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Handout: Copyright and Fair Use

Let's take a closer look at this document!

- Explore CreativeCommons search portal
<https://search.creativecommons.org/>
- IMPORTANT MISCONCEPTIONS!
- Explore Different Resources



For Further Exploration

[DITI Handout on Audacity](#)

[DITI Handout on Copyright and Fair Use](#)

[DITI Handout on Accessibility](#)

[Northeastern Library Recording Studios](#)

[Northeastern Library Digital Media Toolkit](#)

Thank you!

— Taught by Johan Arango-Quiroga & Shannon Peifer

—Developed by Claire Lavarreda, Liam MacLean, Juniper Johnson and Cara Marta Messina

- For more information on DITI, please see: <https://bit.ly/diti-about>
- Schedule an appointment with us! <https://bit.ly/diti-meeting>
- If you have any questions, contact us at: nulab.info@gmail.com