

Introduction to Recording & Editing Audio with Audacity

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CRIM2300 - Punishment in the Age of Mass Incarceration
Prof. Megan Denver
Fall 2023



Today's Agenda

- Overview of Editing + Saving in Audacity
- Practicing with chosen music
- Recap:
 - On Monday, we:
 - Talked about the basics of podcasting
 - Talked about the basics of recording
 - Downloaded Audacity



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.



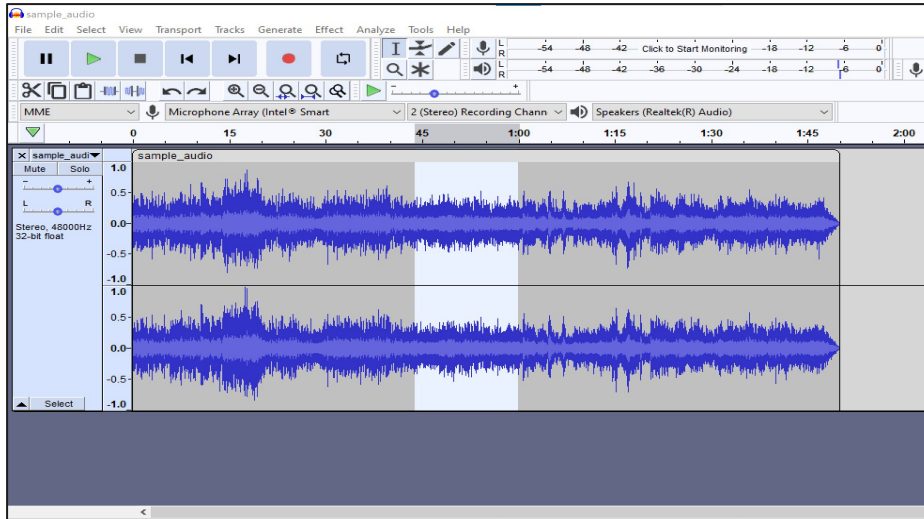
The Audacity Toolbar (Cont'd.)

-  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.

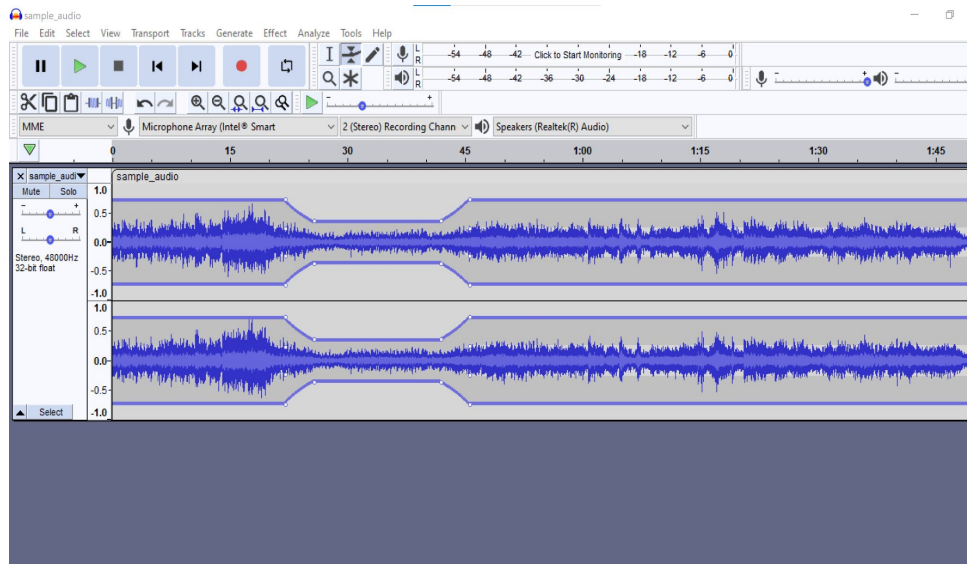
Then, hit backspace or delete on your keyboard.

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.

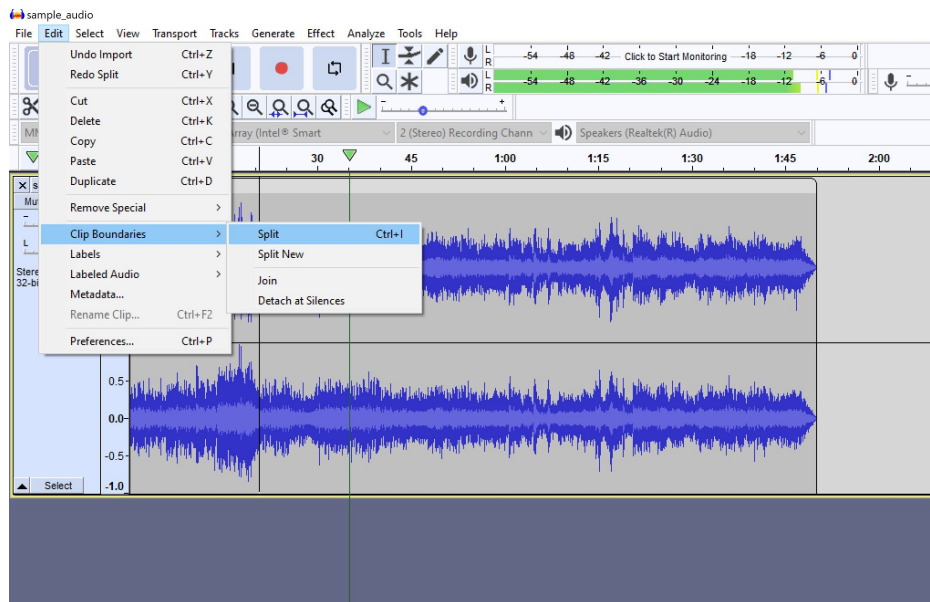
Drag and move the nodes to up and down and side to side to change the volume and how gradual the volume fade is.

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:



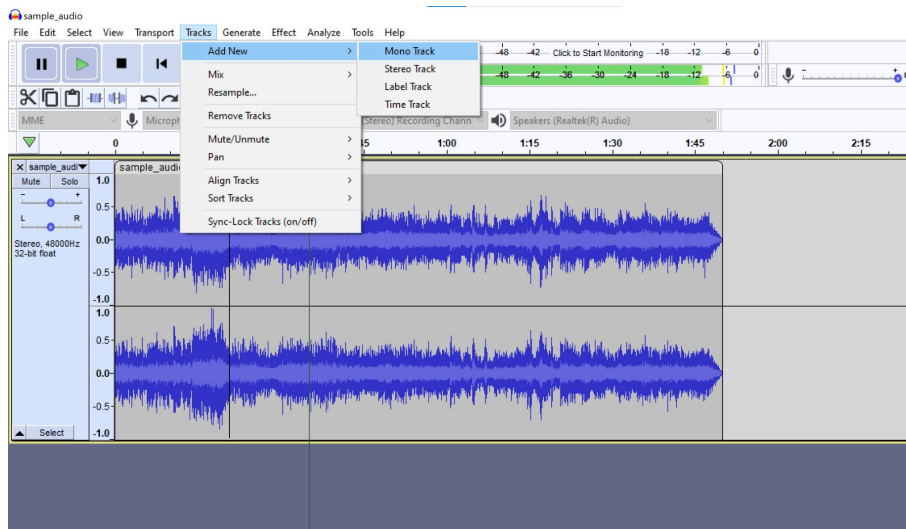
With the **Selection Tool (F1)**, place your cursor over the section where you want to split your track.

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!

- If you didn't pick music already: Visit freemusicarchive.org 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



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*Feel free to ask questions at any point
during the presentation!*

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; anyone who does not have Audacity downloaded will not be able to open your project file otherwise.

File > Export > Export as MP3

Select “best quality”



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Exporting Metadata Tagging

When you export your file, Audacity will prompt you to add metadata tags to identify it.

In order to add artwork, you should import your file to an Apple Music library, right click on it and click “Get info.” You will see the metadata tags you entered in Audacity, and will be able to upload artwork for your podcast.

Edit Metadata Tags

Use arrow keys (or ENTER key after editing) to navigate fields.

Tag	Value
Artist Name	
Track Title	
Album Title	
Track Number	
Year	
Genre	
Comments	

Buttons: Add, Remove, Clear

Genres: Edit..., Reset...

Template: Load..., Save..., Set Default

☐ Don't show this when exporting audio

Buttons: Cancel, OK, ?

DITI Audacity Sample

DITI Researcher
DITI

Details Artwork Lyrics Options Sorting File

title DITI Audacity Sample

artist DITI Researcher

album DITI

album artist

composer

☐ Show composer in all views

grouping

genre Audacity Podcasting

year 2022

track 1 of

disc number of

compilation ☐ Album is a compilation of songs by various artists

Buttons: <, >, Cancel, OK



Final Questions

- Now that you've practiced with Audacity, how do you think it will be useful for your incarceration-themed podcasts?
- Any additional comments or take-aways?



Looking Ahead

- Tomorrow (Thursday, November 16th)
 - Zoom drop-in session
 - 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM
 - Questions, demos, etc
- Link:
 - <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82056461297?pwd=sr1bgJfJfJvhczN4TaIG6LvFlUNYb1.1>



Thank you!

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We love feedback! Please fill our 2-minute survey: bit.ly/diti-feedback

Office Hours sign-up: calendly.com/diti-nu/

Contact us at: nulab.info@gmail.com

Slides and handouts available at: <https://bit.ly/fa23-denver>

