

Introduction to Podcasting: Editing Audio with Audacity



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

Discussion

Break into groups of 2-3 and discuss these questions. Then, we will talk in the larger group.

- What are some of your favorite things to listen to? This might be music, the radio, podcasts, talk shows, audiobooks, etc.
- How do you listen to them? (what devices do you use, where do you listen, etc)
- What about these forms are appealing to you? What do you find effective?



Workshop Agenda

- Objectives
- Sample podcast
- What are podcasts?
- How to create a podcast
- Introduction to Audacity

Slides and handouts available at <http://bit.ly/2ZiQfDC>



Objectives

- Understand and define podcasts/podcasting
- Understand narrative devices used in podcasts
- Learn about and explore Audacity as a podcast editing tool



“Sex Appeal” from Radiolab’s *More Perfect* (2017)

Listen to this five-minute clip from Radiolab’s *More Perfect* podcast, which is a spin-off series from Radiolab (WNYC) produced in partnership with Radio about historic cases in the U.S. Supreme Court.

- What techniques do they use to engage their audience?
- How do they introduce their topic?
- What kinds of media are included?

[Radiolab Episode \(listen until 5:45\)](#)



What is a Podcast?

Podcast: an audio broadcast or program in digital form that can be accessed and listened to online or downloaded.

- Who listens to podcasts? Do you have any favorites?
- How would you describe the content of a podcast?
- What is the difference between a podcast and an audiobook?
- What makes a podcast interesting and why do people listen to them?



Podcasts and Format

Podcasts can be categorized by content and format.

Content (For example: iTunes Podcast Categories)

- Arts, Comedy, Business, Education, Health, News & Politics, Technology, Arts

Format

- Interview, Panel, Co-hosted conversation, Commentary, Narrative Storytelling (Fiction and Nonfiction), Hybrid



Narrative and Genre

Like other narratives, there are important aspects that inform the creation of a podcast:

1. **Audience:** who is the audience of listeners?
2. **Genre:** what will the podcast be about? (fiction, nonfiction, political or social commentary, news, etc.)
3. **Structure:** what is the structure? Are there different segments or one continuous narrative?
4. **Media:** is there additional media (sound effects, music, etc.)?



Podcast Profile: *More Perfect* by Radiolab

We listened to an episode of *More Perfect*. Here is how we might analyze their podcast profile:

1. **Audience:** people interested in history of law and social policy
2. **Genre:** journalism, non-fiction historical narratives
3. **Structure:** 30–50 minute episodes with advertisement breaks and story segments
4. **Media:** music, sound effects, intro (“In Order to form a more perfect Union...”), and theme songs



Tips for Getting Started

- Figure out who your ideal **audience** is and listen to other podcasts that appeal to a similar audience. What techniques do they use?
- Develop a detailed **script** first and indicate when specific types of audio and media should be included.
 - For example, make a note when will you use snippets from news media or sound bites
- Involve **multiple** voices and media types. One person talking without interacting with another person or media is probably not interesting
- Read the script out loud to **practice** so the recording sounds natural. You want it to sound like a discussion or dialogue, rather than you reading off a script



Tips for Recording Audio

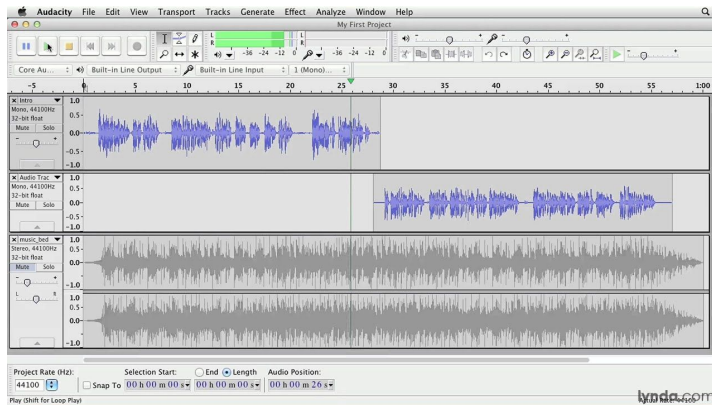
- Start recording **way in advance** and do several **takes**
 - The original recorded audio is often much longer than the actual podcast episode.
 - Do not record everything at once! Break your script into segments that you can record several takes of individually.
 - **Editing often takes much longer 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 [Digital Media Commons](#) in Snell Library for professional studios and equipment!



What is Audacity?

An open source, multi-track audio recorder and editor.

Multi-track: the ability to have different layers of audio in one clip.



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It's similar to GarageBand....



.....but *audio*-centric, not music-centric



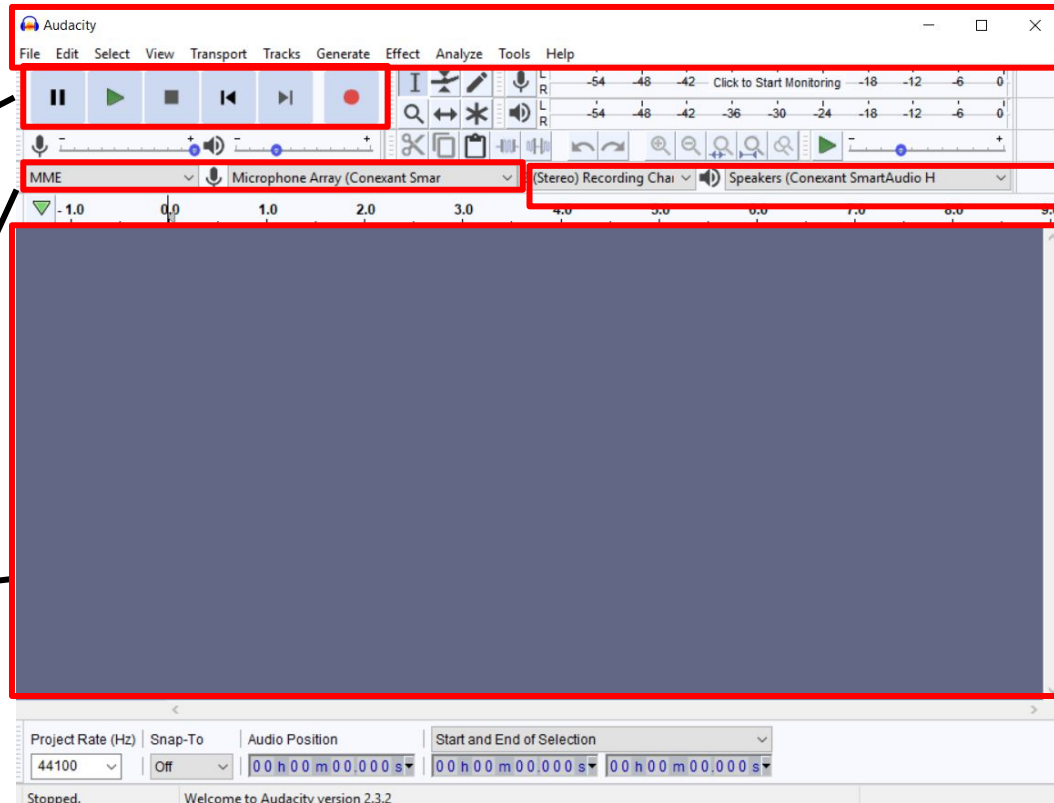
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Anatomy of Audacity

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

Microphone,
volume (the
“input”)

Recordings will
appear here.



Editing, saving,
effects,
transporting or
exporting the
recording.

Stereo
adjustments
(the “output”)

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—that is, making “clips”
- **White Noise/Ambient Noise:** the background noise in a particular room is picked up when recording. This can include machines hums, talking, or sounds from the surroundings (i.e. cars and people).
- **Mixing:** the process of audio production, or mixing tracks of recordings, music, and other desired media.
- **MP3 File:** the most general audio file. Others include .wav, .mp4, etc.



Downloading Audacity

<https://www.audacityteam.org/> --- 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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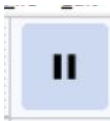
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Recording

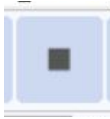
Make sure your **microphone** is working by checking which one is selected in the microphone section of the screen. Each computer will have different microphones, so check your sound settings for your model.



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



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



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



Re-play to verify that the recording is the quality/ volume that you want.

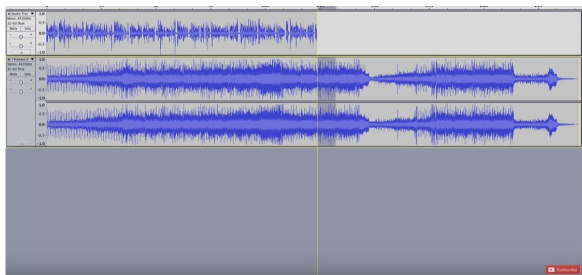


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Basic Editing

- To remove sections of your recording, just select the part of your track you want to remove, then hit “delete” on your keyboard.
- You can also split your track (Edit > Clip Boundaries > Split) once you have the specific section of your track you want to divide selected.
- You can move clips around by clicking and dragging the tracks with your mouse using the Time Shift Tool (F5).



Check out this video for more information:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xl-WDjWrTtk>



Sound Effects

You can import sound effects or music by downloading MP3 versions of the sounds to your computer.

- A great site to find open-sourced, non-copyrighted music/sounds is: <https://freesound.org/>

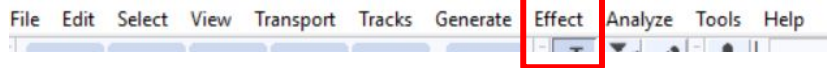
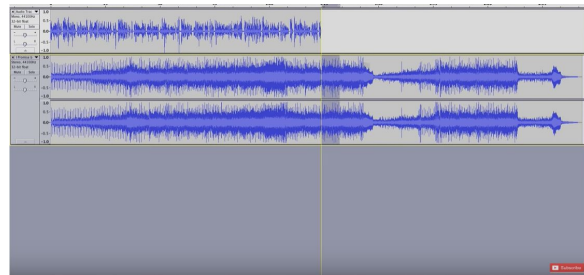
Then, you can just drag and drop the files into your Audacity recording space (below).

You can also use:

File > Import > Audio to add in MP3s.

You can also use any of the effects on Audacity!

- An “Effect” option is in the taskbar.



Saving

Don't forget to save your recording!

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

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]



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Exporting and Sharing

Finished with your recording?

Make sure you export before you send or share your project!

File > Export > Export as MP3



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Your turn!

Down and explore Audacity.

Try to make:

- A 30-60 sec bio about yourself.
 - Imagine this is your introduction as a speaker/interviewer for your podcast!
- Include background music or sound effects
- Try to edit, save and export your recording

Find these slides at <http://bit.ly/2ZiQfDC>



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Thank you!

If you have any questions, contact us at:

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Slides and handouts available at <http://bit.ly/2ZiQfDC>

Office Hours: **Tuesdays from 1–3PM in 401 Nightingale Hall**



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