



Recording Podcasts with Audacity User Guide

Release 2.1.3

REV 01

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PREFACE

Purpose

This user guide describes how to use the Audacity® software to record, edit, and export podcasts.

Audience

This user guide is intended for users who produce podcasts using the Audacity software.

Revision History

The following table presents the revision history of this document.

Table 1 Revision History

Revision	Date	Description
01	September 2, 2017	First release of this document for Audacity 2.1.3.

Style Conventions Used in this Document

The following style conventions are used in this document:

Note: Contains information that is incidental, but not essential, to the topic.

Bold: Bold text is used to identify user interface elements, such as field names, window names, tab names, and menu paths.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This chapter includes the following sections:

- ◆ [Product Overview](#) 8
- ◆ [Using Audacity to Create Podcasts.....](#) 8

Product Overview

Audacity is a free, open-source software for recording and editing audio. Audacity supports the following features and capabilities:

- Recording live audio.
- Importing audio files from other sources.
- Producing multi-track recordings.
- Applying many different effects to audio.
- Trimming and re-arranging audio.
- Exporting to many different audio file formats.

Using Audacity to Create Podcasts

Audacity is an excellent tool for creating podcasts. Audacity's clean yet powerful user interface makes it easy to record and produce podcasts for free. You can use any combination of Audacity's many effects and editing tools to remove errors and add a professional touch to a podcast.

Audacity's built-in tools support the editing needs of any podcaster, including the following functionality:

- Editing and arranging multiple tracks.
- Adding background or intro/outro music.
- Amplifying and normalizing volume.
- Removing background noise.
- Truncating silences.
- Mixing and rendering audio.
- Exporting to popular podcasting file formats, such as WAV, MP3, and AAC.

CHAPTER 2

Installing and Configuring Audacity

This chapter includes the following sections:

- ◆ [Installing Audacity..... 10](#)
- ◆ [Installing the LAME Extension for Exporting MP3 Files..... 10](#)
- ◆ [Installing the FFmpeg Library Extension for Exporting AAC Files..... 11](#)
- ◆ [Configuring Audacity 12](#)

Installing Audacity

The Audacity software is packaged for Windows and Mac OS-X operating systems.

Install Audacity on Windows

1. Log in to the computer with an administrative user account.
2. Launch a web browser and navigate to audacityteam.org/download/windows/.
3. Click **Audacity 2.1.3 Installer**.
You are redirected to the FossHub web site, where the installation files are hosted. The file should begin downloading automatically.
4. Save the file to local storage.
5. Once the download is complete, double-click **audacity-win-2.1.3.exe**.
6. Follow the prompts in the installation wizard to complete the installation.

Install Audacity on Mac OS-X

1. Log in to the computer with an administrative user account.
2. Launch a web browser and navigate to audacityteam.org/download/mac/.
3. Click **Audacity.2.1.3.dmg file**.
You are redirected to the FossHub web site, where the installation files are hosted. The file should begin downloading automatically.
4. Save the file to local storage.
5. Once the download is complete, double-click **audacity-macos-2.1.3.dmg** to mount the file and open the contents.
6. In the DMG window, select and drag **Audacity** from the DMG window into the /Applications folder.
7. Eject the DMG file by clicking the eject button in the Sidebar.

Installing the LAME Extension for Exporting MP3 Files

To use Audacity to export MP3 files, you must install the LAME extension. After installation Audacity automatically detects the extension and supports exporting in MP3 format.

Note: Ensure that Audacity is closed while you install the LAME extension.

Install the LAME Extension on Windows

1. Launch a web browser and navigate to lame.buanzo.org/#lamewindl.
2. To begin downloading the LAME installation file, click **Lame v3.99.3 for Windows.exe**.
3. Save the file to local storage.
4. Once the download is complete, double-click **Lame v3.99.3 for Windows.exe**.
5. Follow the prompts on the installation wizard to complete the installation. Install the extension in the default install directory so that Audacity can detect the extension.

Install the LAME Extension on Mac OS-X

1. Launch a web browser and navigate to lame.buanzo.org/#lameosxdl.
2. To begin downloading the LAME installation file, click **Lame_Library_v3.99.5_for_Audacity_on_macOS.dmg**.
3. Save the file to local storage.
4. Once the download is complete, double-click **Lame_Library_v3.99.5_for_Audacity_on_macOS.dmg** to mount the file and open the contents.
5. In the DMG window, double-click **Lame Library v3.99.5 for Audacity.pkg**.
6. Follow the installer prompts to complete the installation. Install the extension in the default install directory so that Audacity can detect the extension.
7. Eject the DMG file by clicking the eject button in the Sidebar.

Installing the FFmpeg Library Extension for Exporting AAC Files

To use Audacity to export AAC files, install the FFmpeg library extension. After installation, Audacity automatically detects the extension and supports exporting in AAC format.

Note: Ensure that Audacity is closed while you install the FFmpeg library extension.

Install the FFmpeg Library on Windows

1. Launch a web browser and navigate to lame.buanzo.org/#lamewindl.
2. To begin downloading the FFmpeg installation file, click **ffmpeg-win-2.2.2.exe**.
3. Save the file to local storage.
4. Once the download is complete, double-click **ffmpeg-win-2.2.2.exe**.
5. Follow the prompts on the installation wizard to complete the installation. Install the extension in the default install directory so that Audacity can detect the extension.

Install the FFmpeg Library on Mac OS-X

1. Launch a web browser and navigate to lame.buanzo.org/#lameosxdl.
2. To begin downloading the LFFmpeg installation file, click **ffmpeg-mac-2.2.2.dmg**.
3. Save the file to local storage.
4. Once the download is complete, double-click **ffmpeg-mac-2.2.2.dmg** to mount the file and open the contents.
5. In the DMG window, double-click **ffmpeg-mac-2.2.2.pkg**.
6. Follow the installer prompts to complete the installation. Install the extension in the default install directory so that Audacity can detect the extension.
7. Eject the DMG file by clicking the eject button in the Sidebar.

Configuring Audacity

Before you begin recording your podcast, ensure that you configure recording and playback devices as well as recording preferences.

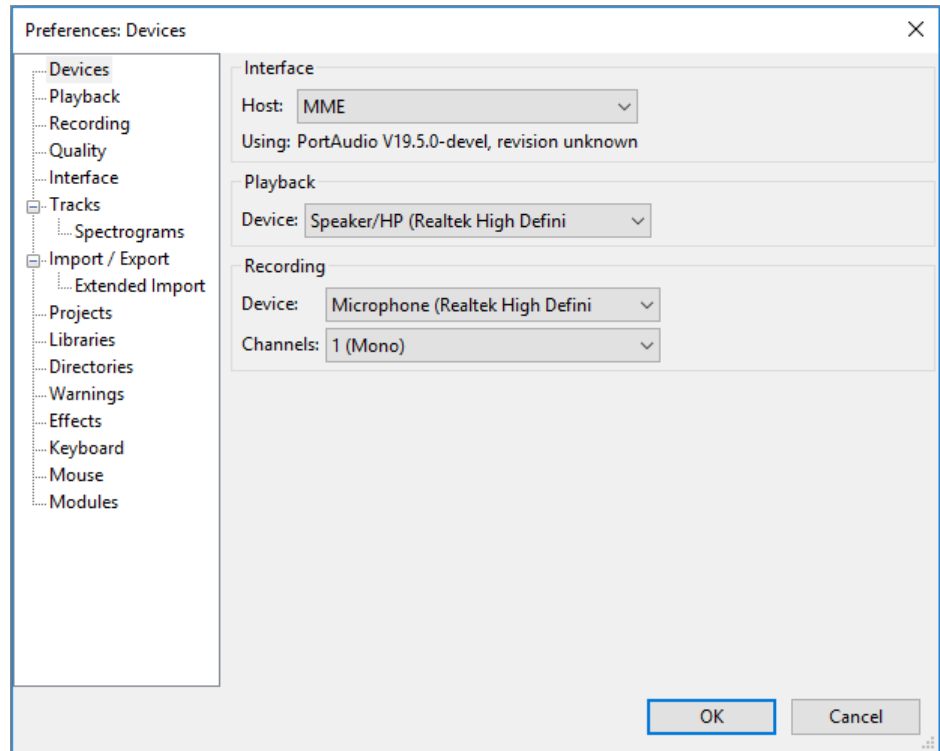
Set up Recording and Playback Devices

1. Ensure that the microphone and speakers are connected to the computer.

2. Click **Edit > Preferences**.

The **Preferences** window appears open to the **Devices** page, as shown in the following figure.

Figure 1 Preferences: Devices Window



3. Under **Playback**, in the **Device** drop-down menu, select the speakers that will be used to listen to the podcast.

4. Under **Recording**, make the following selections:

- In the **Device** drop-down menu, select the microphone that will be used to record the podcast.
- In the **Channels** drop-down menu, select the number of channels you want to use to record the podcast. It is recommended that you select **1 (Mono)** for voice recordings.

Set Up Recording Quality Preferences

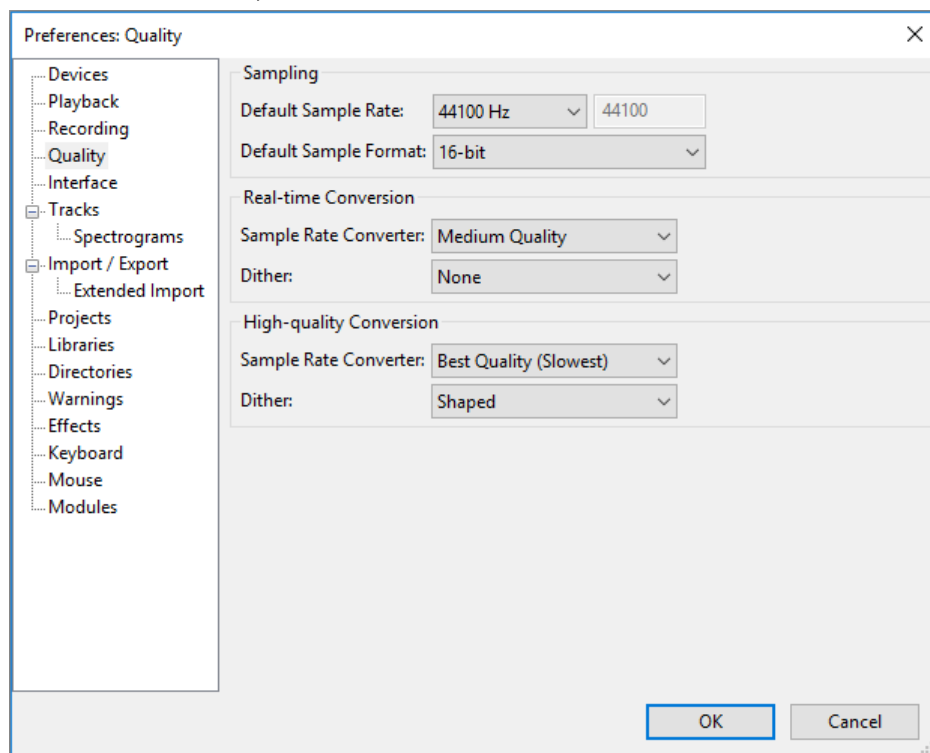
1. Click **Edit > Preferences**.

The **Preferences** window appears open to the **Devices** page by default.

- From the left pane, click **Quality**.

The following figure shows the **Preferences** window open to the **Quality** page.

Figure 2 Preferences: Quality Window



- Edit the quality preferences as required.

The following table outlines the recommended quality settings for recording podcasts.

Table 2 Recommended Quality Preferences

Section	Field name	Recommended setting
Sampling	Default Sample Rate	44100 Hz
	Default Sample Format	16-bit
Real-time Conversion	Sample Rate Converter	Medium Quality
	Dither	None
High-quality Conversion	Sample Rate Converter	Best Quality (Slowest)
	Dither	Shaped

CHAPTER 3

Recording a Podcast

This chapter includes the following sections:

- ◆ Audacity Projects 16
- ◆ Recording and Playback Toolbars 16
- ◆ Recording Audio Tracks 18
- ◆ Delete an Audio Track..... 18

Audacity Projects

Workable Audacity files are called projects. When you save an Audacity project, it is saved in an Audacity Project File format, which can only be opened with the Audacity software.

To save a project in another audio file format, you must export the project. The Exporting a Podcast chapter provides details.

Create a New Project

By default, Audacity opens to a blank project each time the program is launched.

If you have an existing project open and want to work on a blank project in a new window, click **File > New**.

To save a new Audacity project, click **File > Save Project As**. Save projects regularly to prevent lost work.

Open an Existing Project

To open an existing project, click **File > Open**, browse to the project, and then click **Open**.

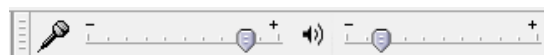
Recording and Playback Toolbars

The Audacity user interface features multiple toolbars for monitoring, recording, and playing back audio.

Mixer Toolbar

Use the Mixer Toolbar to adjust the recording and playback volume. Adjust the sliders to change the volume. The following figure shows the Mixer Toolbar.

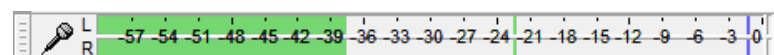
Figure 3 Mixer Toolbar



Recording Meter Toolbar

Use the Recording Meter Toolbar to monitor the recording input volume level in decibels (dB).

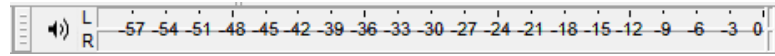
Figure 4 Recording Meter Toolbar



Playback Meter Toolbar

Use the Playback Meter Toolbar to monitor the playback output volume level in dBs.

Figure 5 Playback Meter Toolbar



Transcription Toolbar

Use the Transcription Toolbar to adjust the audio playback speed. Affecting the speed also affects pitch: when you increase the speed the pitch is higher, and when you slow the speed the pitch is lowered.

Figure 6 Transcription Toolbar



Transport Toolbar



Use the Transport Toolbar to record and play back audio takes. The following figure shows the Transport Toolbar.





Figure 7 Transport Toolbar



The following table describes the Transport Toolbar buttons and their functions.

Table 3 Transport Toolbar Functions

Button	Function
	Pause the recording or playback. Press the Pause button again to resume recording or playback.
	Play the recorded takes from the beginning.

Button	Function
	Stop the recording or playback.
	Skip to the beginning.
	Skip to the end.
	Record.

Recording Audio Tracks

An audio track is a recorded clip of sound. Audacity supports only one continuous piece of audio per track. However, Audacity supports multi-track editing, so you can layer one piece of audio on top of another. Audio track length is only limited by the space available on your local storage.

Recording and playback is controlled through buttons on the Transport Toolbar.


Record an Audio Track

Before you begin, set up the recording and playback devices. The Installing and Configuring Audacity chapter provides details.

- To begin recording, click the Record button.
- To pause the recording, click the Pause button. Click the Pause button again when you are ready to resume recording.
- To stop recording, click the Stop button.
- After clicking the Stop button, to continue the recording in the same track where you left off, press and hold the Shift key and click the Record button.

Delete an Audio Track

To delete an audio track, complete the following steps:

1. To enable the Selection tool, click  on the toolbar.
1. Click the audio track you want to delete. A yellow border appears around a track that is selected.
2. Click **Edit > Delete**.

If you accidentally delete a track or must undo a deletion, click **Edit > Undo Delete**.

CHAPTER 4

Editing a Podcast

This chapter includes the following sections:

- ◆ Podcast Editing Recommendations..... 22
- ◆ Editing Toolbars 22
- ◆ Applying Edits to a Podcast 24

Podcast Editing Recommendations

Podcasts that sound over-produced or mechanical are often the result of applying too many edits and effects. For more natural sounding podcasts, avoid applying too many edits and focus on removing audio distractions, extended silences, and mistakes.

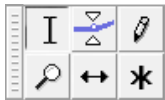
Editing Toolbars

The Audacity user interface features a number of built in toolbars which allow you to apply various adjustments and edits to recorded audio tracks.

Tools Toolbar

Use the Tools Toolbar to select various tools for selecting, arranging, and editing audio. The following figure shows the Tools Toolbar.

Figure 8 Tools Toolbar



The following table describes the functions of the Tools Toolbar.

Table 4 Tools Toolbar Functions

Button	Name	Function
	Selection Tool	Select audio tracks or portions of tracks.
	Envelope Tool	Apply volume changes to areas of audio.
	Draw Tool	Manually redraw a wave form.
	Zoom Tool	Zoom in for a closer look at a wave form.
	Time Shift Tool	Rearrange audio tracks and clips.
	Multi Tool	Enables all five tools from the Tools Toolbar at once.

Edit Toolbar











Use the Edit Toolbar to perform edit functions such as copy, paste, undo, and zoom. The following figure shows the Edit Toolbar.



Figure 9 Edit Toolbar



The following table describes the functions of the Edit Toolbar.

Table 5 Edit Toolbar Functions


Button	Name	Function
	Cut	Cuts selected audio to the clipboard.
	Copy	Copies selected audio to the clipboard.
	Paste	Inserts audio from the clipboard.
	Trim Audio	Trims the audio to the selection.
	Silence Audio	Replaces selected audio with silence.
	Undo	Reverts last operation.
	Redo	Restores previously undone operation.
	Sync-Lock Tracks	Locks adjacent tracks in place with each other.
	Zoom In	Zoom in to a higher magnification of sound waves.
	Zoom Out	Zoom out to a lower magnification of sound waves.

Button	Name	Function
	Zoom Selection	Zoom in on the selected clip of audio.
	Fit Project	Fits the entire project to the window.

Applying Edits to a Podcast


Arrange Audio Tracks

Use the Time Shift tool to arrange audio tracks.


1. To select the Time Shift tool, click  on the toolbar.
2. Click within an audio track and drag the mouse to move the track. When you release the mouse, the track is moved.
3. Arrange all tracks as needed. When you align a track exactly at the start or end point of one or more tracks, a yellow line appears between the tracks.

Lock Adjacent Audio Tracks in Place

Use the Sync-Lock tool to lock all adjacent tracks in place with each other.

To enable Sync-Lock, click  on the toolbar.


When Sync-Lock is enabled, if you move a track that is locked to one or more other tracks, each track that is locked with that track is moved as well.

To disable Sync-Lock, click  again.

Add Fade Effects

Add a polished sound to your podcast by fading sound in or out. You can add fade effects to the beginning and end of your podcast, or cross fade overlapping tracks.

Fade the Beginning and End of a Podcast

1. To enable the Selection tool, click  on the toolbar.
2. Click and drag the mouse to select the portion of an audio track that you want to fade.
3. Add the fade effect that you want:
 - To fade the beginning, click **Effect > Fade In**.

- To fade the end, click **Effect > Fade Out**.

It is recommended that you apply a longer fade effect to the end a podcast than the fade at the beginning.

Crossfade Overlapping Audio Tracks

1. Use the Time Shift tool to arrange the tracks that you want to crossfade to overlap. The “Arrange audio tracks” section provides details.

The tracks should overlap a few seconds while the upper track is ending and the lower track begins.


2. To enable the Selection tool, click  on the toolbar.
3. To select the overlapping audio tracks, click and drag the mouse starting in the upper track and down to the lower track. The following figure shows an example.

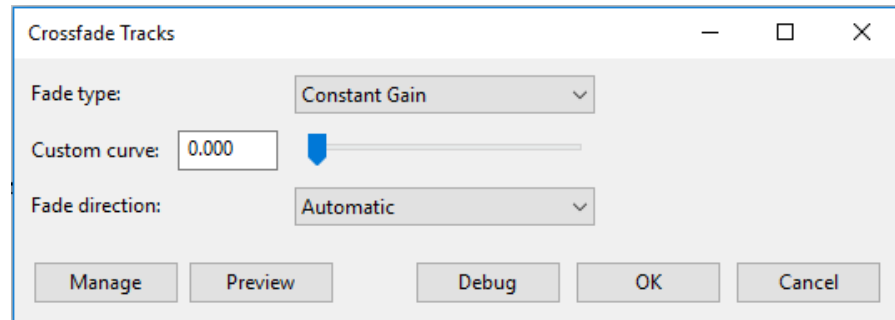
Figure 10 Two Tracks Selected for Crossfade



4. Click **Effect > Crossfade Tracks**.

The **Crossfade Tracks** window appears as shown in the following figure. It is recommended that you use the default crossfade settings.

Figure 11 Crossfade Tracks window




5. Optionally, click **Preview** to preview the effect.


6. To apply the effect, click **OK**.

Split Audio Tracks into Clips


You can divide an audio track into multiple sound clips.

1. To enable the Selection tool, click  on the toolbar.
2. Click and drag the mouse to select the portion of an audio track that you want to separate into a clip.
3. Perform one of the following actions:
 - Click **Edit > Clip Boundaries > Split** to split the audio into a clip within the same audio track.
 - Click **Edit > Clip Boundaries > Split New** to split the audio into a clip in a new track.
4. Use the Time Shift tool to arrange the audio clips as required. The “Arrange audio tracks” section provides details.


Import Background Music

1. Click **File > Import > Audio**.
2. Browse for and select the music file, and then click **Open**.
A new track is added to the project with the music.
3. Adjust the volume of the music track using the  Gain Slider.

Adjust Audio Track Volume

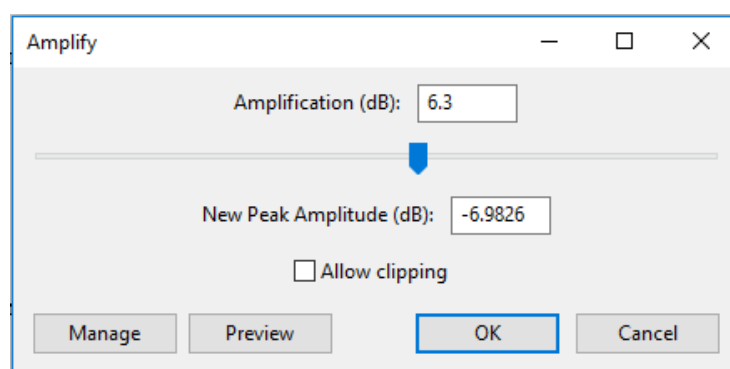
Control the volume of each track in a project using the  Gain Slider.

If you need more volume, use the Amplify effect:

1. To enable the Selection tool, click  on the toolbar.
2. To select an audio track to amplify, click anywhere within the track.
3. Click **Effect > Amplify**.

The **Amplify** window appears as shown in the following figure.


Figure 12 Amplify Window



4. Use the slider to adjust the amplification.
5. Optionally, click **Preview** to preview the effect.
6. To apply the effect, click **OK**.

Normalize Audio Track Volume

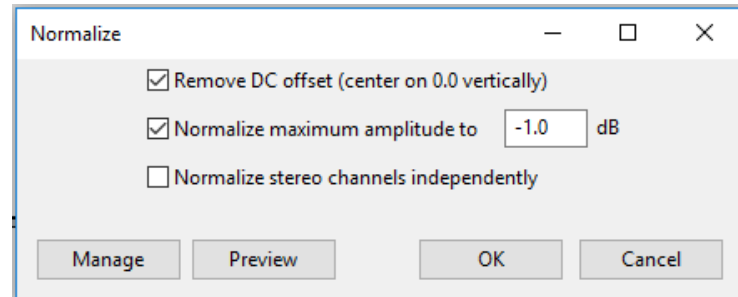
The Normalize effect ensures that audio remains within the same level of volume. Normalizing audio tracks prevents all tracks from going over an amplitude level of your choosing.

1. To enable the Selection tool, click  on the toolbar.
2. Select the tracks that you want to normalize:
 - To select a single track, click within the track. A yellow border appears around a track that it is selected.
 - To select multiple tracks, click and drag the mouse until the tracks are selected. A yellow border appears around each track that is selected.
 - To select all tracks in a project, do not select any tracks and continue to step 3.

3. Click **Effect > Normalize**.

The **Normalize** window appears as shown in the following figure.


Figure 13 Normalize Window



4. Select **Remove DC offset** to center the waveform to a 0.0 amplitude level. This option is selected by default.
5. Select **Normalize maximum amplitude to** field, and then type the maximum amplitude level that tracks will be allowed to have. This option is set to -1.0 by default. Only negative values are valid.
6. Select **Normalize stereo channels independently** if you are recording in stereo and want to normalize the left and right channels of each stereo track separately. This option is deselected by default.
7. Optionally, click **Preview** to preview the effect.
8. To apply the effect, click **OK**.

Remove Background Noise from Recording

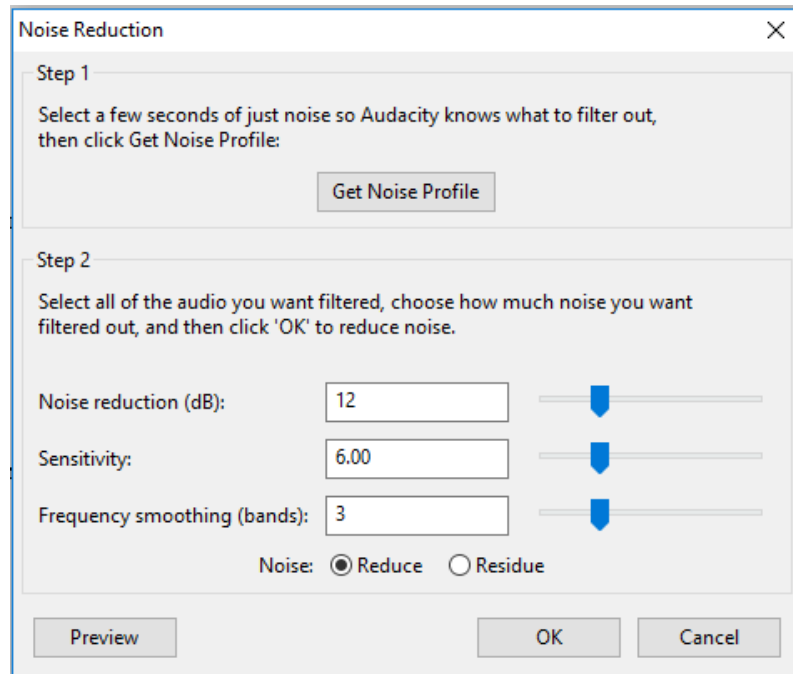
The Noise Reduction effect detects and removes noise from an audio track.

1. To enable the Selection tool, click  on the toolbar.
2. Click and drag the mouse to select a portion of an audio track that contains the noise that you want to remove.

3. Click **Effect > Noise Reduction**.

The **Noise Reduction** window appears as shown in the following figure.

Figure 14 Noise Reduction Window



4. Click **Get Noise Profile**.

The **Noise Reduction** window closes. Audacity uses the audio sample that was selected to determine what sounds to filter out.

5. Select the tracks that you want to apply the Noise Reduction effect to.

It is recommended that you apply Noise Reduction to all tracks to ensure a consistent sound.


6. Click **Effect > Noise Reduction**.

7. Optionally, click **Preview** to preview the effect.

8. To apply the effect, click **OK**.

Trim Audio Tracks

Trim audio tracks to remove unwanted sounds or silences.

1. To enable the Selection tool, click  on the toolbar.
2. Click and drag the mouse to select the portion of audio that you want to delete.
3. Click the Play button to verify that the selected audio is correct.

4. Click **Edit > Delete**.

The selected audio is removed from the track.

Truncate Silent Pauses

The Truncate Silence effect automatically detects extended pauses in a track and reduces the length of the silence.


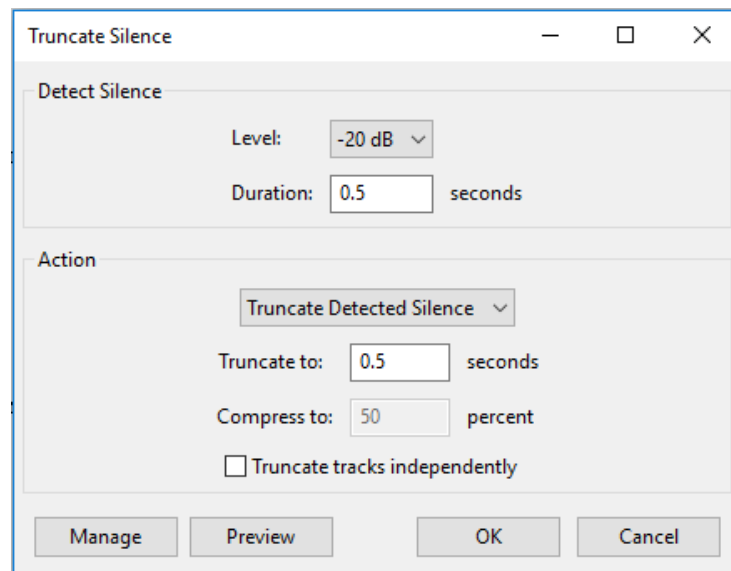
1. To enable the Selection tool, click  on the toolbar.
2. To select an audio track, click anywhere within the track.
3. Click **Effect > Truncate Silence**.
The **Truncate Silence** window appears as shown in the following figure.

Figure 15 Truncate Silence Window



4. Leave the default settings or customize the settings. The following settings control silence truncation:
 - **Level**—Specifies the maximum level of volume that is considered silence.
 - **Duration**—Specifies the minimum amount of time that is considered silence.
 - **Truncate to**—Specifies the amount of time that the silence is reduced to.
5. Optionally, click **Preview** to preview the effect.
6. To apply the effect, click **OK**.

Mix and Render a Podcast

When you have multiple tracks in an Audacity project, use the mix and render tool to mix the entire project into a single track.

Audacity supports two different mix and render functions:

- **Mix and Render**—Mixes the project into a track that replaces all tracks. Click **Tracks > Mix and Render**.
- **Mix and Render to New Track**—Mixes the project into a new track that is added to the project, retaining the original tracks. Click **Tracks > Mix and Render New Track**.

CHAPTER 5

Exporting a Podcast

This chapter includes the following section:

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- ◆ Audio File Formats for Podcasting..... 34
- ◆ Exporting an Audacity Podcast 35
- ◆ Sharing a Podcast 36

Supported Audio File Formats

Audacity exports to many different audio file formats. The following table lists the supported file export formats.

Table 6 Supported Audio File Formats

Uncompressed audio formats	Compressed audio formats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIFF • AU • AVR • CAF • HTK • IFF • MAT4 • MAT5 • MPC • PAF • PVR • RAW • RF64 • SD2 • SDS • SF • VOC • W64 • WAV • WAVEX • WVE • XI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC • AC3 • FLAC • MP2 • MP3 • OGG (Vorbis) • WMA

Audio File Formats for Podcasting

There are several factors to consider before exporting a podcast, including size restrictions, quality, and the programs you want to the podcast to be compatible with.

The most popular audio file formats for podcasts are WAV, MP3, and AAC.

WAV Files

A WAV file is uncompressed and retains the original recording quality. However, WAV files can become quite large. WAV files are a good choice for podcasts that will be burned to a CD or other physical media.

MP3 Files

An MP3 file is compressed to a smaller size with minimal loss in quality and is compatible with many popular podcast streaming applications. MP3 format is a good choice for podcasts that will be uploaded online or to a streaming service.

Note: If you are exporting to an MP3 file, you must install the LAME encoding extension first. The Installing and Configuring Audacity chapter provides instructions.

AAC Files

An AAC file is an Apple audio format. Similar to MP3, AAC files are compressed to a smaller size with a small loss in quality. However, AAC files are compressed to be smaller than MP3. The AAC file format is a good choice for podcasts that will be exported to iTunes and will not be used with other music playing applications.

Note: If you are exporting to an AAC file, you must install the FFmpeg library extension first. The Installing and Configuring Audacity chapter provides instructions.

Exporting an Audacity Podcast

Export an Audacity project to save it as an audio file format that can be used with music playing applications or shared to podcast streaming services.

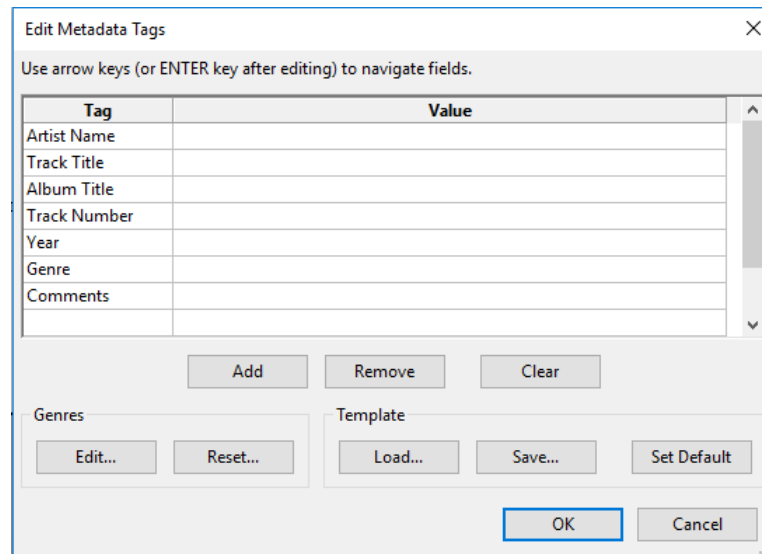
Export a Podcast

1. Click **File > Export**.
The **Export Audio** window appears.
2. Browse to a location on the local storage.
3. In the **File name** field, type a name for the podcast.
4. In the **Save as type** drop-down menu, select an audio file format.

5. Click **Save**.

The **Edit Metadata Tags** window appears, as shown in the following figure.

Figure 16 Edit Metadata Tags window



6. In the **Edit Metadata Tags** window, type metadata values for the podcast.

You can add or remove custom metadata fields with the **Add** and **Remove** buttons.

7. Click **OK**.

Sharing a Podcast

To share a podcast through podcasting services, such as the iTunes store, you must first set up an RSS feed. An RSS feed provides information about your podcast and delivers the podcast episodes. You can create and manage a free RSS feed using the SoundCloud web site.

Create an RSS Feed with SoundCloud

1. Launch a web browser and navigate to soundcloud.com.
2. Create a new SoundCloud account.
3. Navigate to your profile page and click **Edit**.
4. Complete your profile information, including the following items:
 - Artwork for the podcast that is between 1400 x 1400 pixels and 3000 x 3000 pixels as the profile image.
 - A description of the podcast as the profile biography.

5. Navigate to the **Settings** page.
6. On the **Content** tab, edit the following information:
 - Under **Category**, select the type of subject matter for the podcast.
 - Under **Language**, select the language of the podcast.
 - Under **Upload Defaults**, select **Include in RSS feed**.
 - If the podcast contains explicit language, select **Contains explicit content**.
7. Click **Save Changes**.
8. From the **Settings > Content** tab, the RSS feed URL is displayed. Copy this link for sharing the RSS feed with podcast streaming applications.

Upload a Podcast to a SoundCloud RSS Feed

1. Launch a web browser and navigate to soundcloud.com.
2. Log in with the account associated with your podcast RSS feed.
3. Click **Upload**.
The **Upload to SoundCloud** page appears.
4. Click **Choose a file to upload**.
5. Browse for and select the podcast file, and then click **Open**.
A page appears to edit the file information.
6. On the **Basic Info** tab, type a title and description for the podcast. Edit the remaining fields as required.
7. On the **Metadata** tab, type metadata values for the podcast.
8. On the **Permissions** tab, select **Include in RSS feed**. Select other options as required.
9. Click **Save**.
The file is uploaded and a page appears with a link to the podcast.

Share a Podcast to the iTunes Store

1. Launch a web browser and navigate to podcastsconnect.apple.com.
2. Log in or create a new Apple account.
3. On the **My Podcasts** tab, click **+** to add a new podcast.
4. Under **RSS Feed**, in the **URL** field, type the address of the podcast RSS feed, and then click **Submit**.
The podcast feed is loaded and appears under **My Podcasts**. Each

podcast is marked with the **Submitted for review** status until Apple reviews them. Once Apple approves a podcast, the status changes to **Active**, which means that the podcast is live on the Apple Store.

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