

## Quick Guide to Getting Started with:



### **1.0 Introduction -- What is Audacity**

Audacity is free, open source software for recording and editing sounds. It is a program that manipulates digital audio waveforms. In addition to recording sounds directly from within the program, it imports many sound file formats, including WAV, AIFF, MPS, and Ogg Vorbis. It is available for Mac OS X, Microsoft Windows, GNU/Linux, and other operating systems.

The software might be particularly useful for those of you who want to be able to record your voice, but don't have access to an expensive digital language lab. It would also be useful for transferring older cassette tapes or video material into digital material that can be stored on a computer.

### **2.0 Steps for Downloading the Software**

**Step 1** Please open your web browser (Internet Explorer) and input the following address:

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

This is the official homepage for the software.

**NOTE:** It would be a good idea to return here later by oneself and read-up a bit on the software for further details.

**Step 2** Click on **Download** from the menu across the top.  
Click on  [Windows 1.2.6](#)

**Step 3** Scroll down and click on [Audacity 1.2.6 installer](#) (.exe file, 2.1 MB).

### 3.0 Steps for Installing the Software

**Step 1** Click **save** and choose **Desktop** as the location to save to.

**Step 2** Click on "**run**" twice.

**Step 3** Click on **next**; then select "I accept the agreement" Click on "next" 4 more times. Finally, click on "install." The software will then automatically install itself on your computer.

**Step 4** Click on "**Finish.**"

**Step 5** Select **English** in box that says "Choose language for audacity to use" and press **OK**. Audacity should open automatically. Also, if you exit Internet Explorer, you will see the Audacity short-cut icon on your desktop. Double-click on this icon any time you wish to open the software.

**NOTE:** (When you do this at your own computer, you may want to read carefully before clicking to answer the prompts).

### 4.0 Steps for Using the Program

#### 4.1 Creating a new project

Audacity writes all the changed and recorded audio to a directory called **Projectname\_data**. If you don't save your project before you start recording or importing, all recordings, edit and other files will be written to the directory set on the directories tab of the preferences.

**Step 1** **Double Click** on the Gimp 2.0 icon on your desktop.

**Step 2** Select **Save Project As...** from the **File** drop-down menu, and choose the location and filename for your project.

**NOTE:** To save your project later on, you can also use the keyboard shortcut: **CTRL+S**

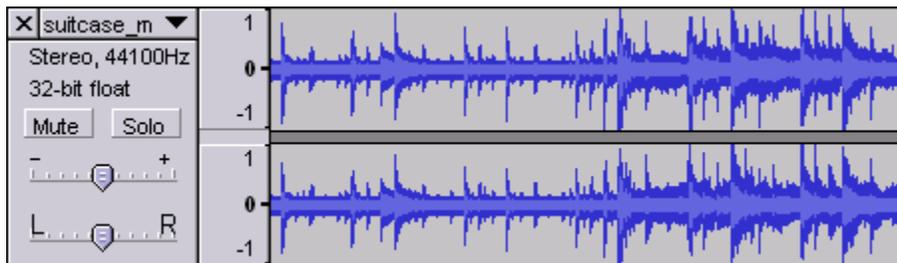
## 4.2 Importing & Playing an Audio File

**Step 1** There are three ways to import an audio file. Choose one of the following:

1. Simply drag and drop the audio file in to the Audacity window. (If you're using Mac OS 9 or X, drag the audio file to the Audacity icon instead...)
2. Select **Import Audio ...** in the **Project** menu. Then select your file and press **Open**.
3. Use the keyboard shortcut : CTRL+I Then select your file and press **Open**.

Audacity can import WAV, AIFF, AU, IRCAM, MP3 and OGG files. If you're not sure where to find audio material, simply rip some off a CD, or in Windows, check the Media folder in the directory of your Windows installation.

**Step 2** The imported file should now be displayed in an audio track. The track will look a little like this, depending on what you imported:



Trackpanel and Waveform Overview of the imported Track

Now click on the green **Play** button  at the top and you should hear the file you have just imported.

## 4.3 Recording with Audacity

**Step 1** Create a new project. Select **Save Project As...** from the **File** drop-down menu, and choose the location and filename for your project.

**Step 2** Check the preferences by selecting **Preferences** from the **Edit** drop-down menu. Make sure your playback and recording device are set. If you're going to record a stereo signal, set the number of channels to record to 2 (Stereo) on the **Audio I/O** preferences.

When picking a device to record from, make sure you've set up all the connections properly, such as plugging a microphone in to the **Mic Input**, and any other device into the **Line In** of your sound card. Then check that the gain level knob (the amount by how much the input should be amplified) of the mixer of your soundcard is set right.

### Step 3

Click on the red **Record** button  to begin recording.

Click on the blue **Pause** button  to pause the recording. Press it again to continue.

Click on the yellow **Stop** button  to cease recording. The cursor will return to its previous position, before the recording was started.

That's it. You can now play around with your recording and explore the editing capabilities of Audacity. Remember that you can use the Undo function almost without limits whilst the project is open.

## 4.4 Mixing Background Music with a Voiceover

**Step 1** Select **Open** from the **File** drop-down menu, and open one sound (for example, the background music).

**Step 2** Select **Import Audio** from the **Project** drop-down menu, and open the other sound (for example, the voiceover).

### Step 3

Listen to your sound using the **Play** button . Audacity automatically mixes them together.

### Step 4

Choose the **Time Shift** tool  and adjust the position of one track or the other until they're synchronized the way you want them. You can even move tracks around while they're playing.

**NOTE:** If you hear clipping which wasn't present in either of the original files, it means that the combined volume of the two tracks is too loud. Use the gain controls on the tracks to reduce the volumes until you don't hear clipping anymore.

### Step 5

Export as a WAV or MP3 file (select **Export WAV** from the **File** drop-down menu).

## 4.5 Mixing Two Voice Recordings

Audacity allows you to create one sound file, and then listen to it as you record another. The two recordings automatically merge into one sound file. For example, you could record some questions in advance and then have students record their responses to your questions as they listen to your recording. As well, pairs of students could create dialogues by having one student record his/her part and then later the other student could add his/her part to make a fluid dialogue.

### Step 1

Make a voice recording and save it to the appropriate folder. Then select **New** from the **File** drop-down menu.

### Step 2

Select **Open** from the **File** drop-down menu, and open the first sound file.

### Step 3

*This step is crucial...* Select **Preferences** from the **Edit** drop-down menu. Then on the **Audio I/O tab**, click on "**Play other tracks while recording new one.**"

#### Step 4

Now you can press **record**  and respond to the questions/lines of dialogue after you hear them.

#### Step 5

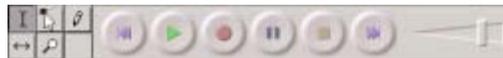
Save the recording. Select **Save Project As...** from the **File** drop-down menu, and choose the location and filename for your project.

#### Step 6

Now you have to make sure that the recordings don't overlap and that there are no unnecessary pauses or delays. Refer to the following editing functions:

##### Step 6.1

*To synchronize the tracks* to the way you want them, choose the **Time Shift** tool  from the Main Toolbar



and adjust the position of one track or the other.

##### Step 6.2

*To omit unnecessary pauses or delays*, choose the **Selection** tool  and highlight the part you want to discard. Then press the **Cut** tool  from the Editing Toolbar



##### Step 6.3

*To add a pause to prevent overlapping of speech*, choose the **Selection** tool  and highlight a pause. Then press the **Copy** tool  from the Editing Toolbar. Move the cursor to the place you want to insert the pause and press the **Paste** tool .