



Digital Humanities & Video Game Studies Lab
University of Maine at Farmington | umfdh.org

Overview

Audacity is an open-source audio editing program that can be easily learned and used for podcasts, music, and spoken word recording.

What You Need to Begin

- Download the free program optimized for your device at <http://www.audacityteam.org>.
- Raw audio (via your phone, computer, or microphone).

Walk-Through for Using Audacity

- Drag and drop raw audio clips into the main workspace to begin editing.
 - This will create a waveform visualization of your audio clip, which will provide the basis for your editing process.
- Click the Selection Tool (the icon looks like a text cursor) to highlight portions of your waveform. You can delete, copy, cut, etc. this selection.
- Click the Envelope Tool (the icon consists of an upward and downward facing arrow). You can click the beginning and end of a section you wish to edit. Within this selection you can, for instance, lower the volume without affecting the dynamics of the entire recording.
- If you are creating a podcast or other spoken word recording, you can record directly into Audacity by clicking the red dot icon.
- Click Tracks→Add New to add another track (if you want to have two clips playing at the same time; this is useful for bumper music, for instance).
- To add effects, highlight the desired portion and then click the Effect menu.
- To export your final file, click File→Export.
 - Select Format: MP3 Files.
 - Click Options:
 - Change Bit Rate Mode to Constant.
 - Change quality to 320 kbps.
 - Be sure that Channel Mode is set to Stereo.

Recording Tips

- Find quiet space with low echo and test record first.
 - Listen to your test recordings on headphones before beginning your actual recording process.
 - Adjust your microphone volume, if necessary. It's much easier to get quality audio at the beginning than to edit after the fact.
- Try to aim for a peak volume: between -12 and -6 (which can be seen when playing back your clip). Anything higher will lead to distortion, while anything lower will require your user to put their volume higher than usual.
- Avoid the typical urge to maximize volume, which distorts recordings.