

How To Use



Portsmouth High School
Music & Computers

WHY USE AUDACITY?

Audacity is a free piece of software used by Educators around the world. It is simple and easy to use. It incorporates many functionalities used in Microsoft packages and so has a familiar look and use.

PODCASTING

Podcasting is the creation of audio files available for download or play on the internet.

BENEFITS OF PODCASTING

Pupils can become writers and presenters of their own shows! Podcasts can be used for online revision notes, glossaries or recording plays, poems and short stories. Teachers can even record repetitive lessons and then play key points back to students.

WHAT YOU NEED!

- ⊖ An installed copy of Audacity.
- ⊖ A microphone
- ⊖ Headphones
- ⊖ Speakers
- ⊖ Internet Access

HOW TO DOWNLOAD & INSTALL AUDACITY

Audacity is available for download from this webpage:

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

Follow the simple instructions to save the files on a suitable location on your computer.

Once the files have been downloaded then you run the set-up wizard. It is very much like all new installations, whereby you follow the step-by-step instructions and select a location for Audacity to be properly installed on your machine.

OPENING AUDACITY

Start Menu – All Programs – Music - Audacity

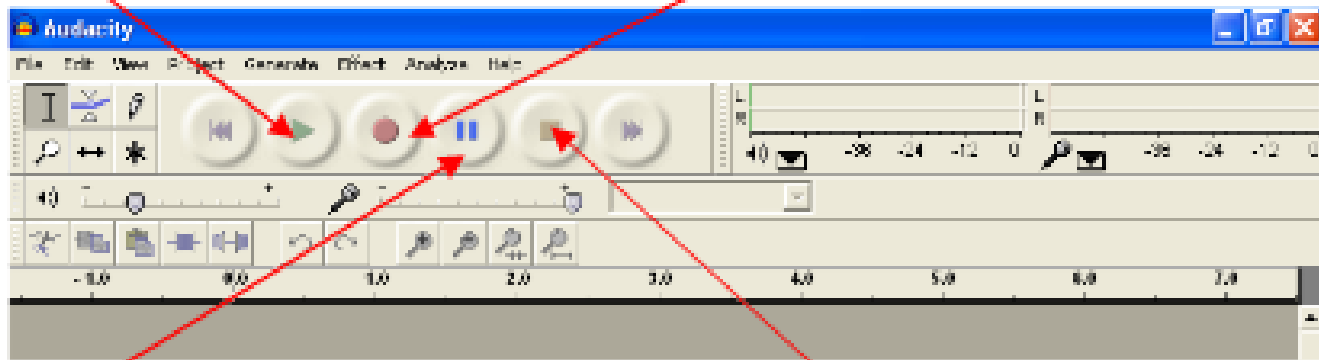
USING AUDACITY FOR THE FIRST TIME

When you open Audacity up it takes you to a blank project for recording. The toolbar is very easy to use and understand.

Here is a description of the main buttons:

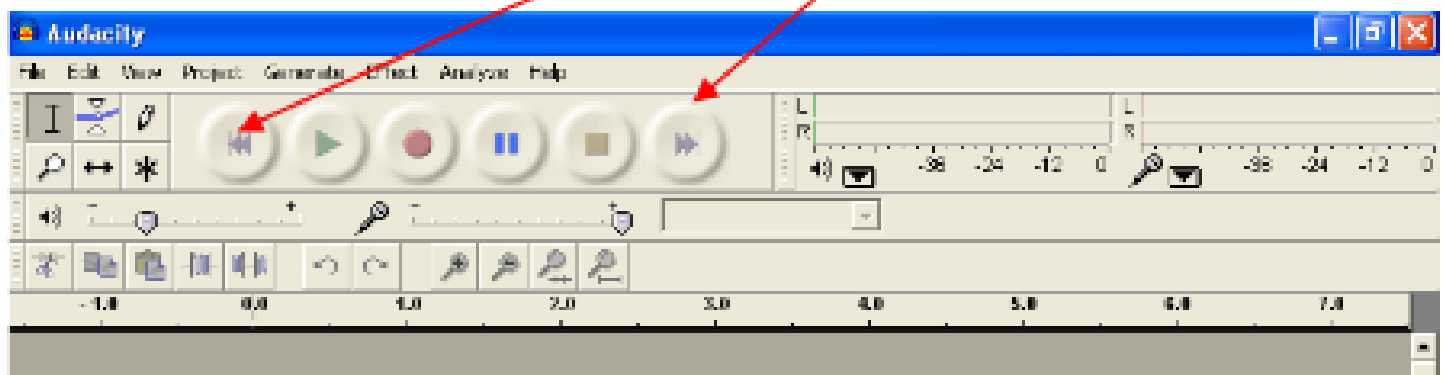
Play – playing the recorded file.

Record – records the sound via mic.

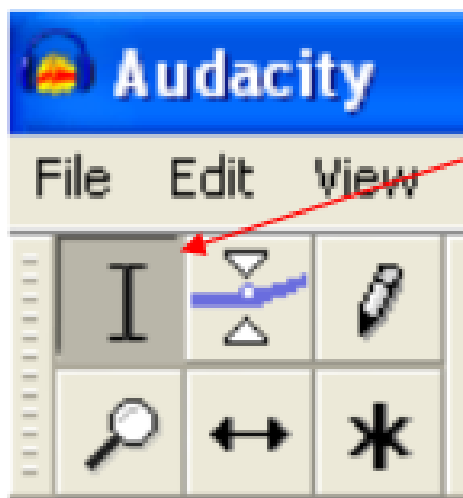


Pause – pauses the current recording. **Stop** – stops the recording.

Other notable buttons are the **Skip to Start** and **Skip to End** buttons, which takes the recording to the beginning or end.



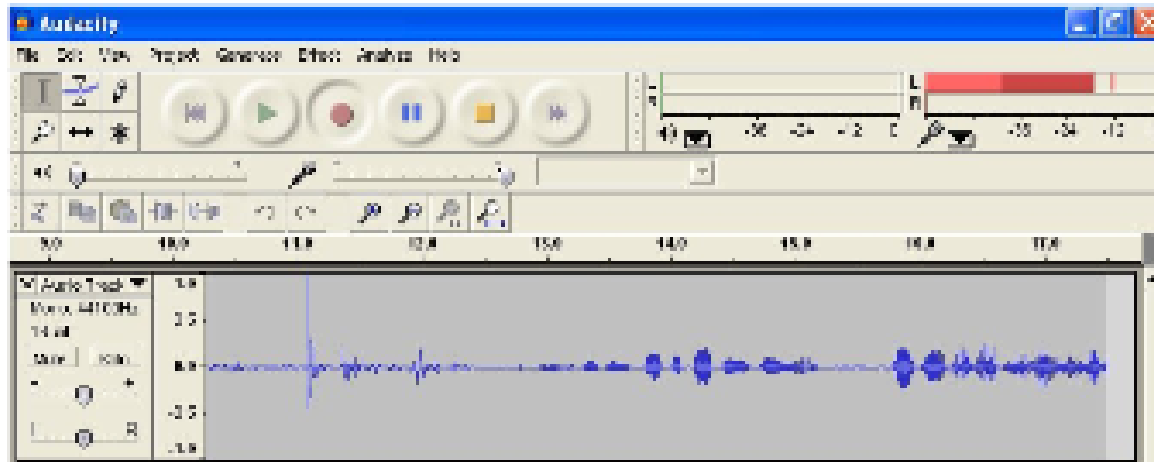
Also for the purposes of this beginner's guide we will assume the **Selection Tool** is always on.



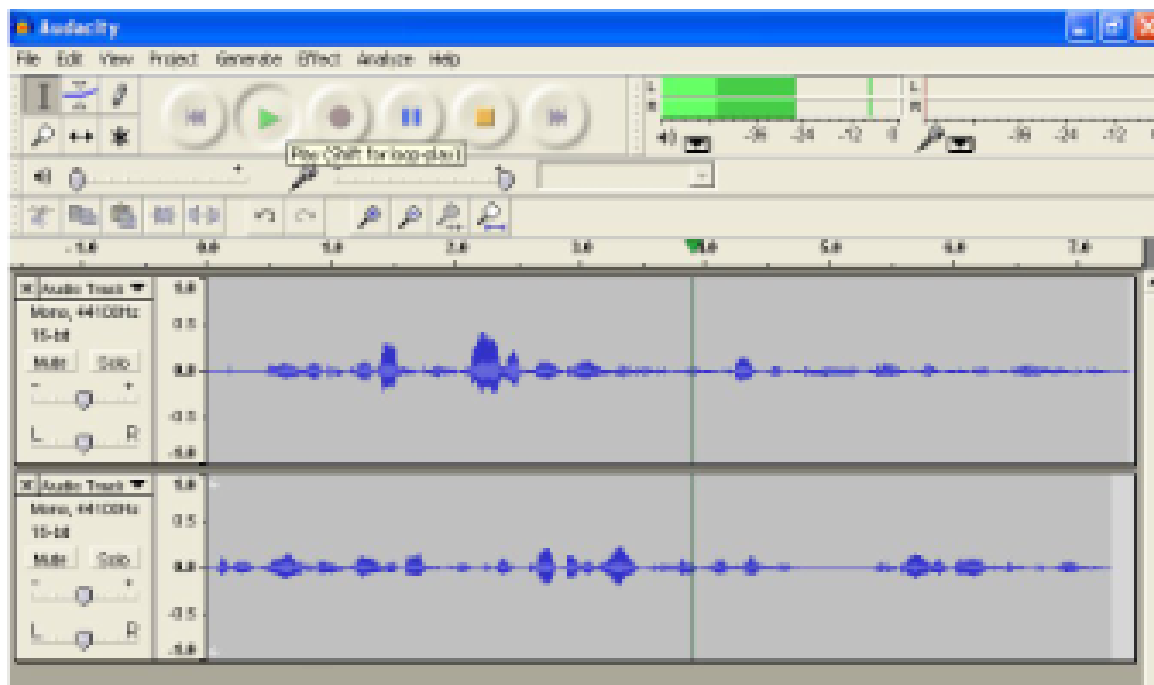
RECORDING TRACKS

To begin recording, once you are sure your microphone and speakers are okay just click on **Record** and begin talking.

Sound is displayed as a line just like a heart monitor. Naturally the peaks are louder than the troughs.



If you click on **Stop**, a new track comes up.

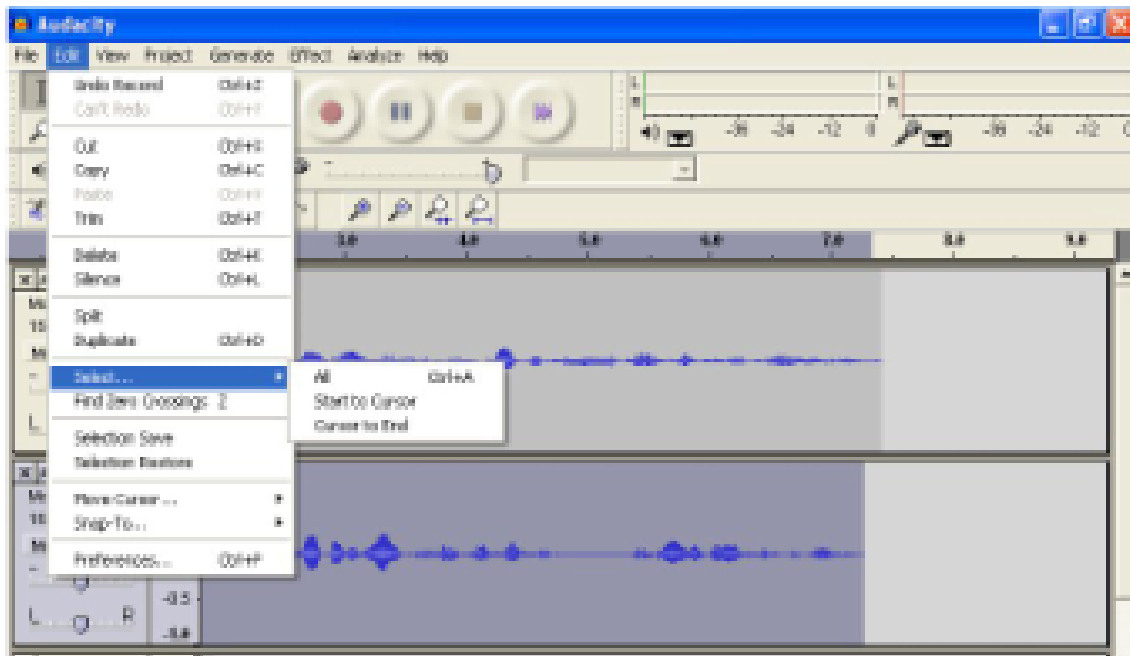


The second and indeed multiple tracks can be used to add sound effects such as a crowd noise or incidental music.

So remember: it is better to just let the track record and ignore mistakes and errors. They can be edited later.

HIGHLIGHTING TRACKS

Click on **Edit** then **Select** and then you have three options. **All**, **Start to Cursor** and **Cursor to End**.



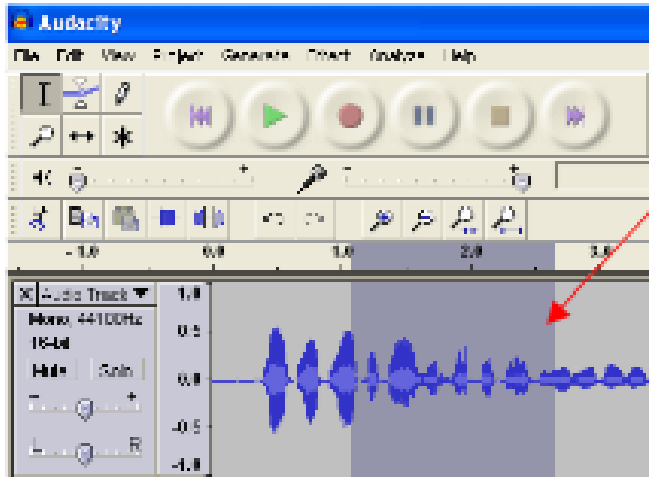
You can also use your mouse to highlight the section(s) needed.

JOINING TRACKS TOGETHER

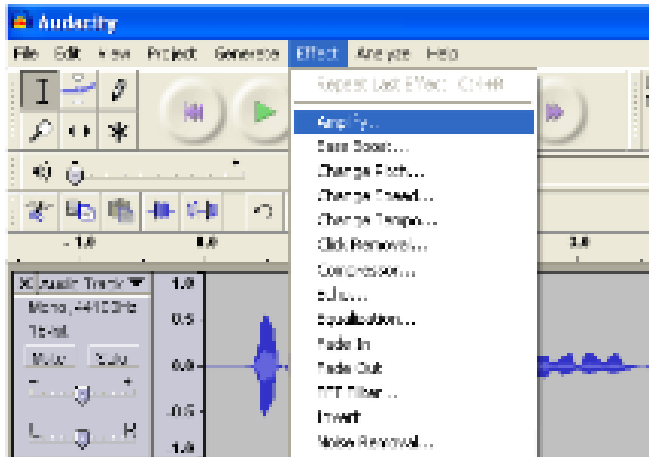
If you wish to join two different tracks together it is straightforward. Highlight the Section(s) required and then **Edit – Copy**, click on the destination track where you wish to make the join and then **Edit – Paste**.

EDITING TRACKS

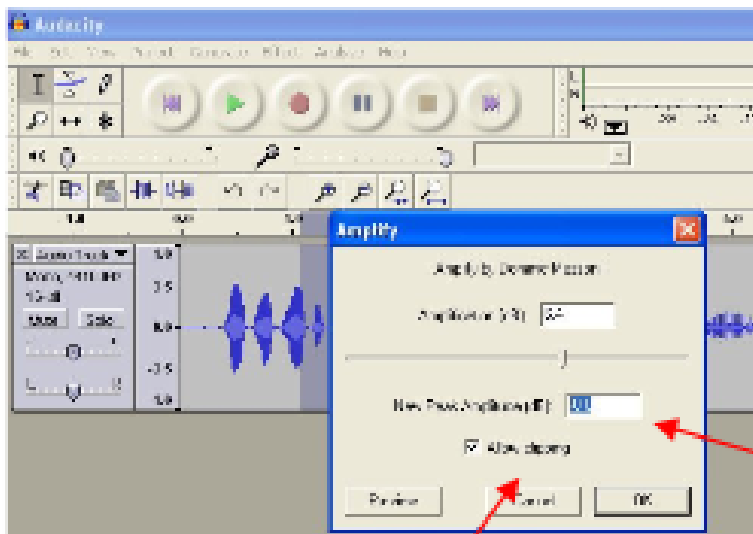
The first step in editing is to use the **Selection Tool** to highlight the audio required.



Then, for example, we can choose to increase sound. This is a common need in Audacity. Select **Effect** and then **Amplify** like so:

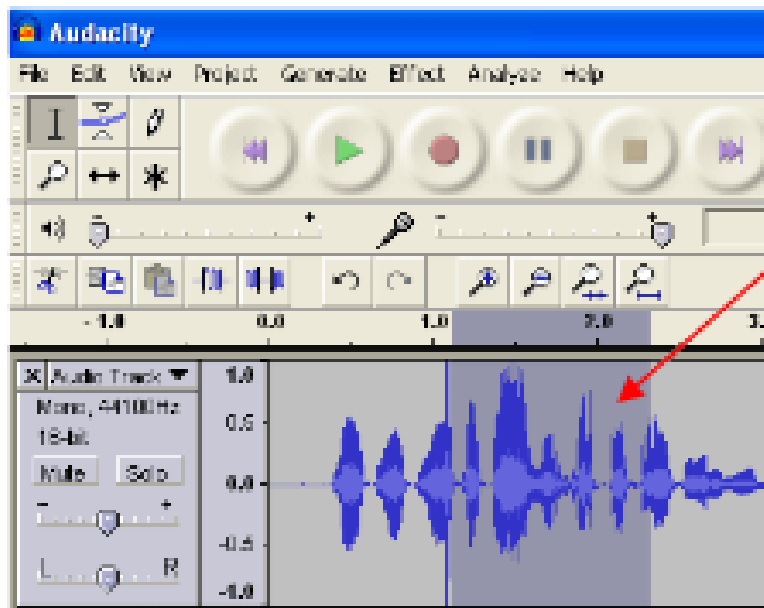


In this case you will see a new dialogue box:



Make sure you tick **Allow clipping** and then you can enter a figure into **New Peak Amplitude**. 1 or 2 is normally sufficient.

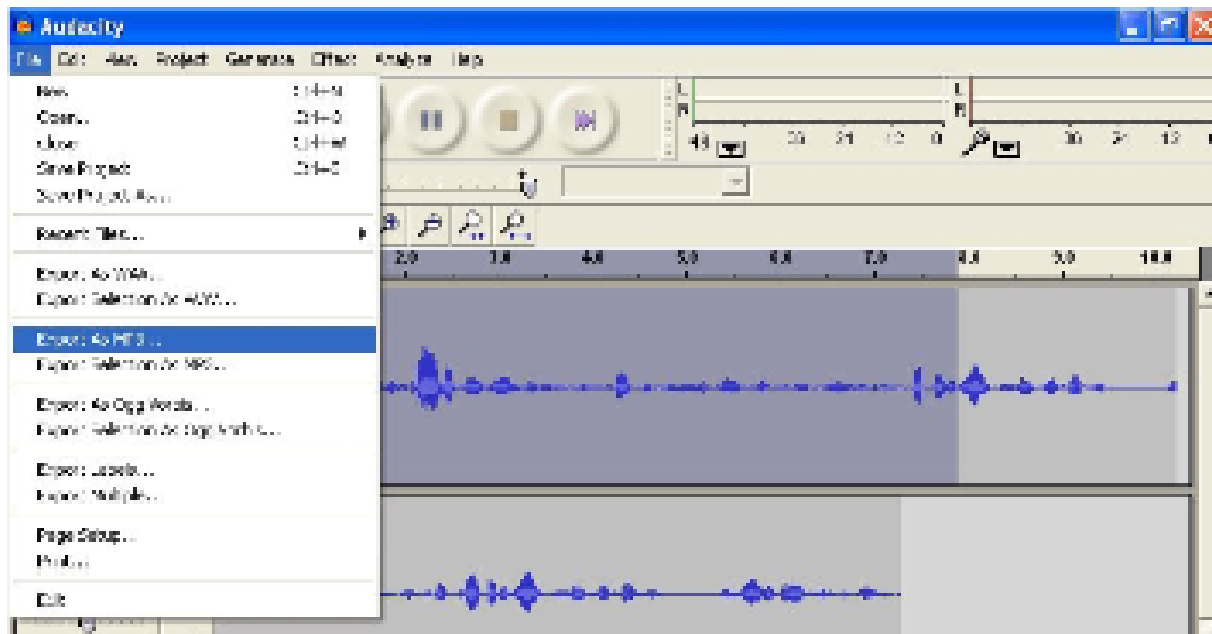
The result sees an increase in the height and depth of the audio like so:



EXPORTING AS MP3 FILES

Audacity cannot encode MP3 files on its own. It needs to use a file called `lame_enc.dll`.

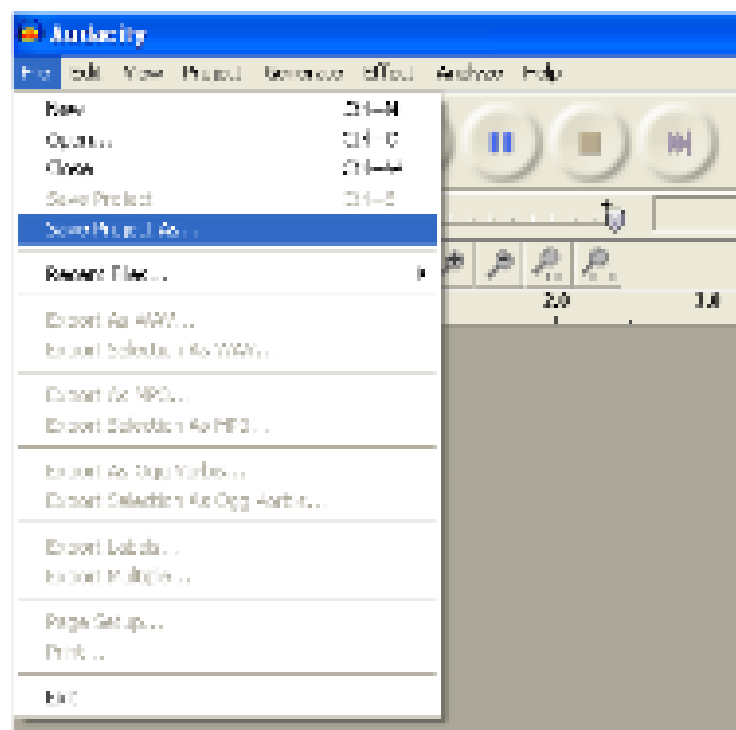
Once you have recorded, edited and saved your work and want to export it as an MP3, then go to File and then Export as MP3.



The first time and first time only you are converting to MP3 you will be told Audacity cannot encode the track and needs to find another file. When you do so you will have a browser come up and you look for the file `lame_enc.dll`. Select this file and Audacity will do the rest for you.

SAVING A FILE

Audacity calls its files Projects. Saving is simple. Click on **File** then **Save Project As**.



OPENING A NEW PROJECT

If you need to open a new project, go to **File** and then **New**, as demonstrated below.

