

# Super-Fast Guide to Audio Editing

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**Audacity** is a free, *totally free*, audio editing program. Get it here:

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

## Installing Audacity

1. **Download** Audacity to your own computer.
2. The file you downloaded is an installer file. Do whatever your operating system requires to install it (e.g., double-click and put into Program Files, or drag and drop the DMG into Applications).
3. You could start editing audio immediately, but don't.
4. **Download** the **LAME encoder file**. Follow these instructions to do so: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/faq?s=install&i=lame-mp3>
5. Unzip or uncompress the downloaded LAME file.
6. It is very important that you know *exactly* where you saved the lame\_enc.dll or LameLib file. Reason: The very first time you try to export an MP3 file from Audacity, it will ask you: **Where is the LAME encoder file?** You must *show Audacity where the file is*. You will do this only *once*.

*If you don't* follow steps 4, 5 and 6, you will not be able to export MP3 files from Audacity. However, you will not have a chance to do **Step 6** until you have some audio to export.

**So, make a note for yourself:** The first time you export an MP3 file, you must remember where you put that LAME file *after* you unzipped it.

## Opening an Audio File

How do you open any file in any program? **File** menu > **Open**.

**Note:** Audacity *cannot open* WMA files. If you have WMA files, you must convert them first (convert to the WAV format, for example). Conversion can be done with **Switch** (Mac and Win) or **EasyWMA** (Mac only)

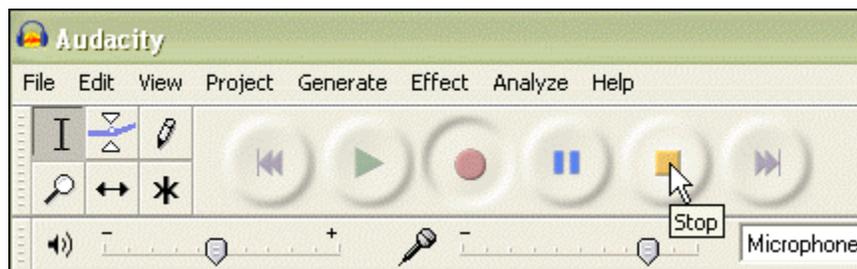
- Switch: <http://www.nch.com.au/switch/index.html>
- EasyWMA: <http://www.easywma.com/>

## Recording Your Own Voice

1. Connect a microphone.
  - a. If your computer has a **Mic In** port, plug in a microphone.
  - b. If your computer has a **Line In** port, get a USB microphone or an audio adapter such as the iMic:  
<http://www.griffintechology.com/products/imic/>
  - c. If you have a built-in mic, okay, but it won't be the best quality.
2. Open Audacity.
3. Click the red button.

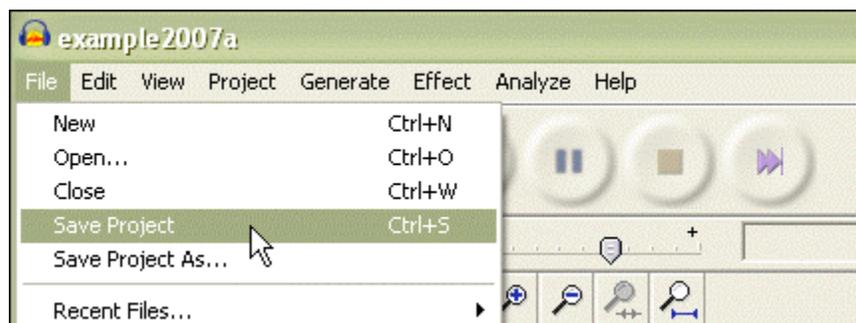


4. When you've finished, click the Stop button.



## Saving Your File

How do you save any file in any program? **File** menu > **Save**. But no, in this aspect, Audacity is different.



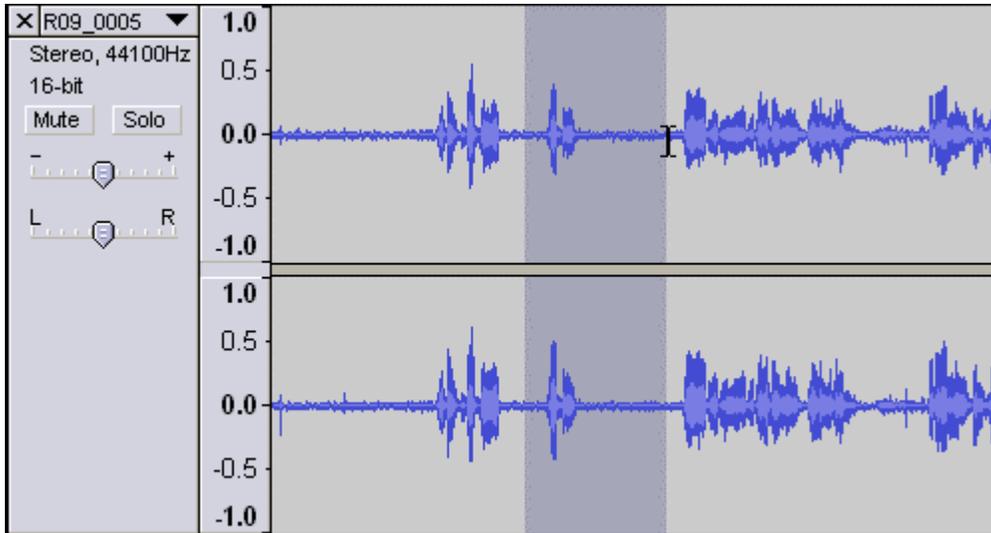
Like many audio editing programs, Audacity wants you to **save a "project"** and not a file—until you are completely finished with your editing. When you

are finished, you will **export** a new file. But until then, you will just go on saving your project as many times as necessary to avoid losing your work.

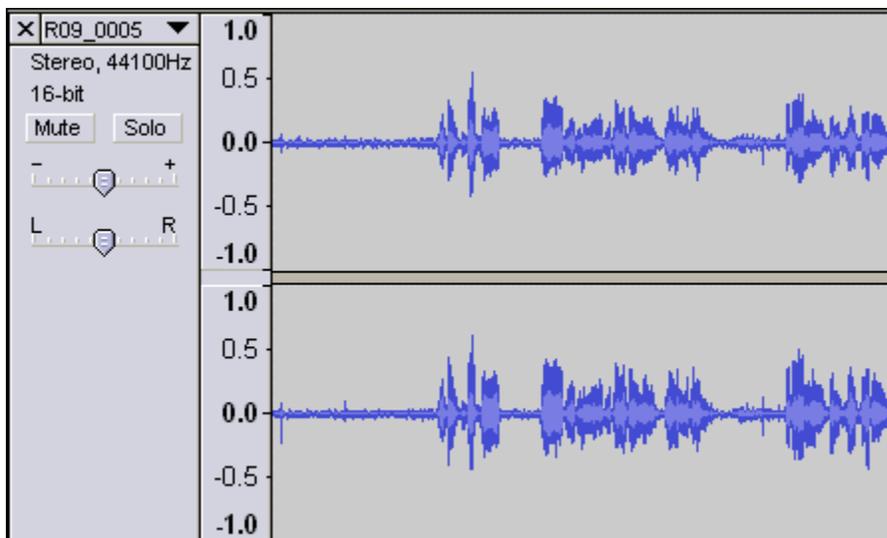
## Editing Audio

The basics are easier than you might assume.

**To delete something**, first you will click, hold and drag to select the section:



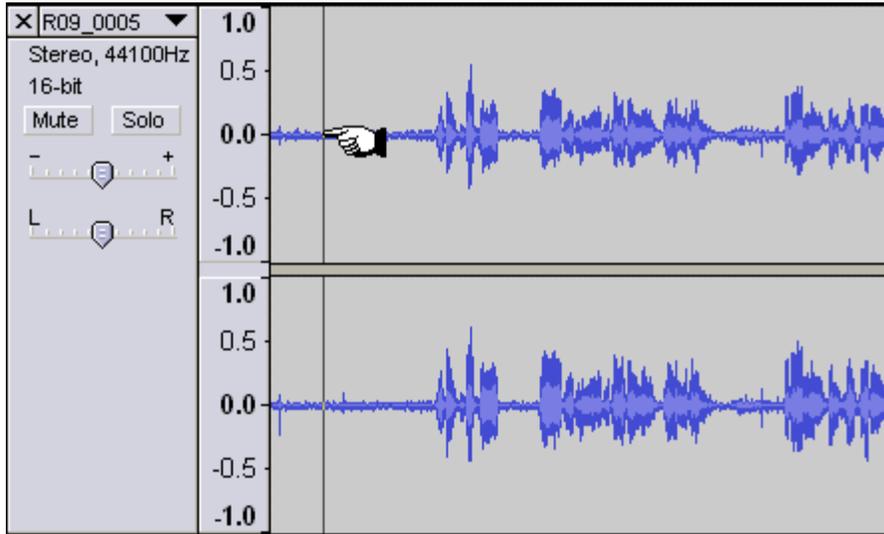
Then press the Delete key on your keyboard. (**Note:** The player must be **stopped**, not paused, or else this will not work.)



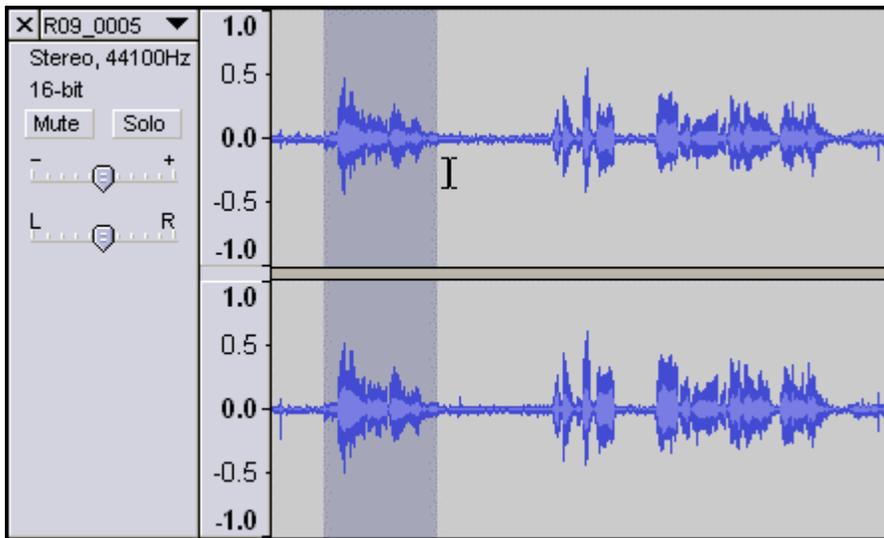
If you make a mistake, hold Ctrl (Win) or Cmd (Mac) and press Z.

To move a section from one place to another, first select it (as shown above), but hold Ctrl (Win) or Cmd (Mac) and press x (for cut). This is exactly the same as Microsoft Word. **Cut**, **copy** and **paste** all work in your audio editor.

Move the cursor to where you want to add the cut section, and click once:



Then hold Ctrl (Win) or Cmd (Mac) and press v (for paste):

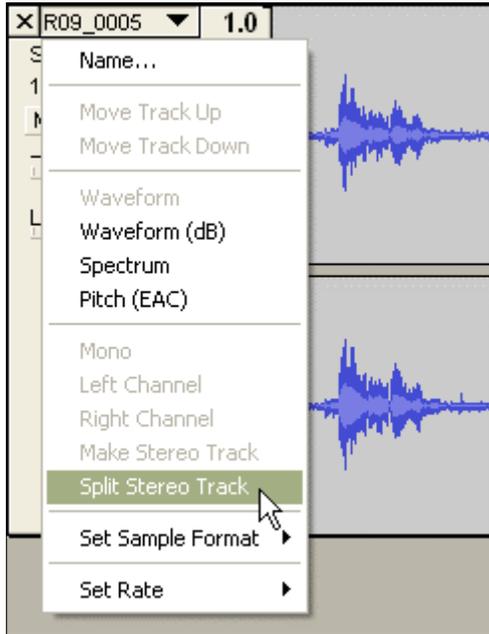


## Before You Export the Finished File

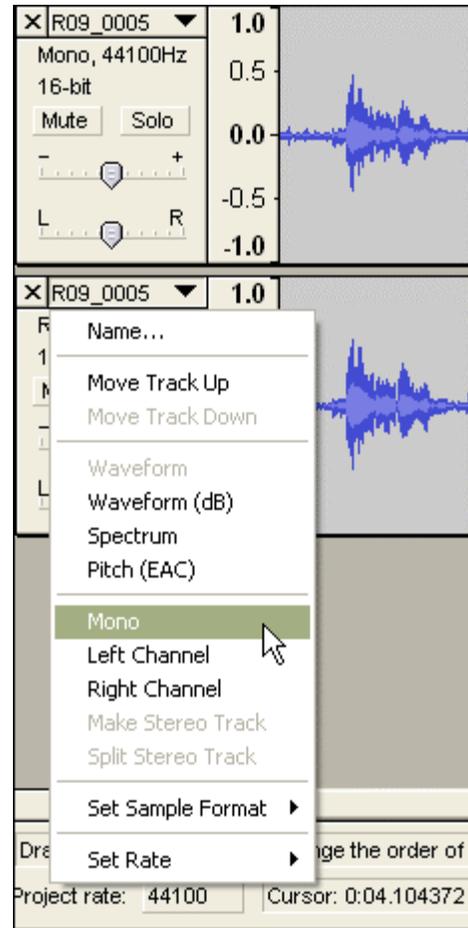
When you've completed your editing, you will want an MP3 file. First, you should convert a **stereo** file (two tracks) to a **mono** file. This reduces the file size by 50 percent.

## Convert Stereo to Mono

1. Click track name (here it is “R09\_0005”; yours will be different) to open menu. Select “Split Stereo Track.”



2. After splitting, change EACH track to Mono.



3. Select **all tracks** by shift-clicking each track until all are highlighted.

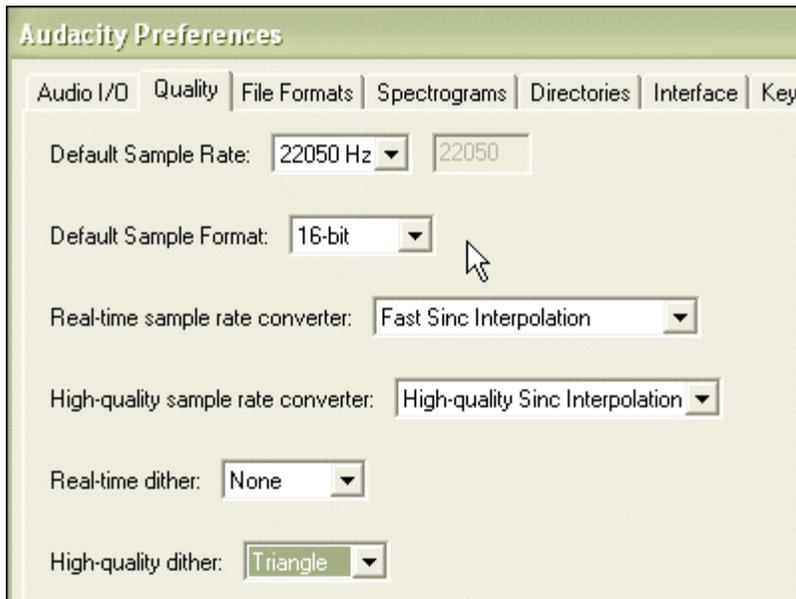
4. **Project** menu > **Quick Mix**

If you had only one track, you don't need to do this.

## Adjust Output Settings

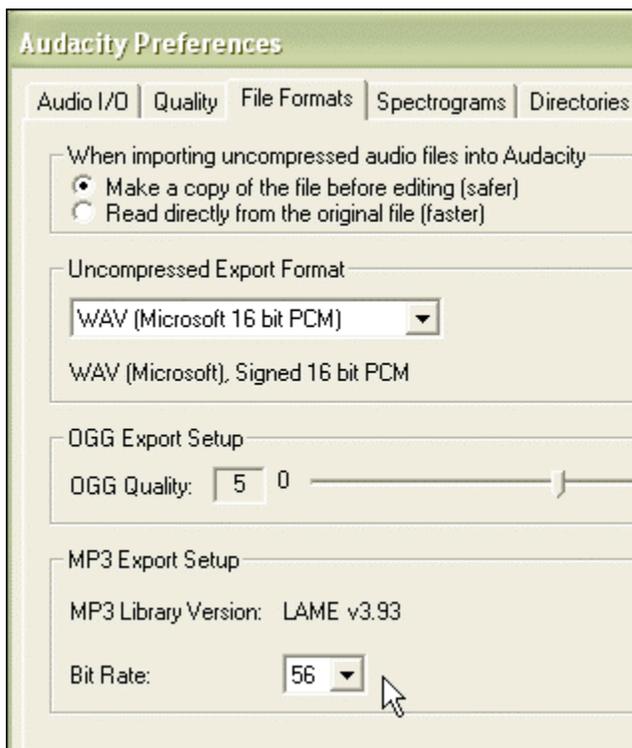
Next, you need to adjust your output settings. **Edit** menu > **Preferences**

On the “Quality” tab, you need 22050 Hz\* and 16-bit:



\*Actually, the current version of Audacity will save the MP3 file at 44100 Hz even though you have changed the sample rate.

On the “File Formats” tab, you need a bit rate of 56 (at bottom):

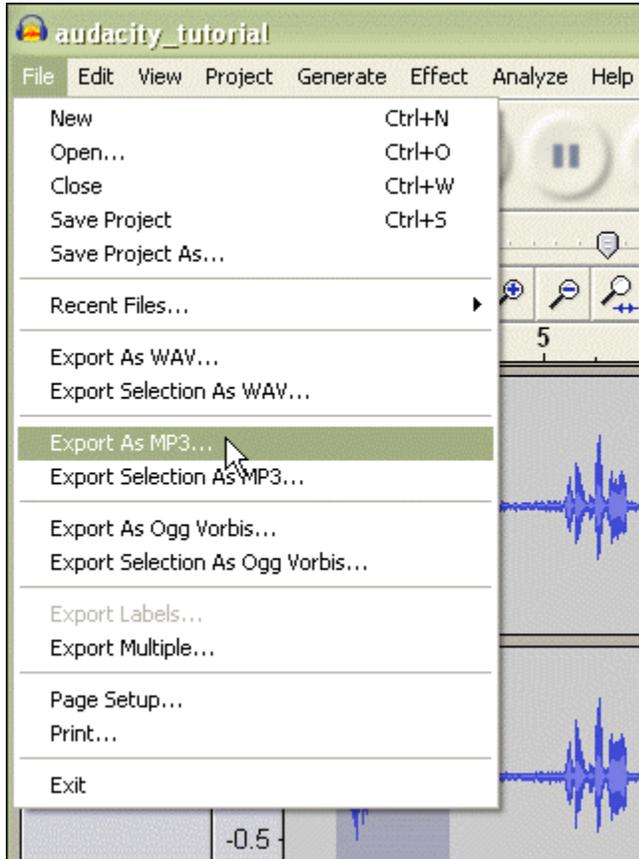


When finished, click OK in the Audacity Preferences dialog box.

## Exporting the Finished File

If you have completed all your editing, then it's time to export an MP3.

**File** menu > **Export As MP3** (see below)



You can leave the “ID3 tags” blank, or fill them in.

Voilà! You have an MP3 file suitable for uploading to the Web.