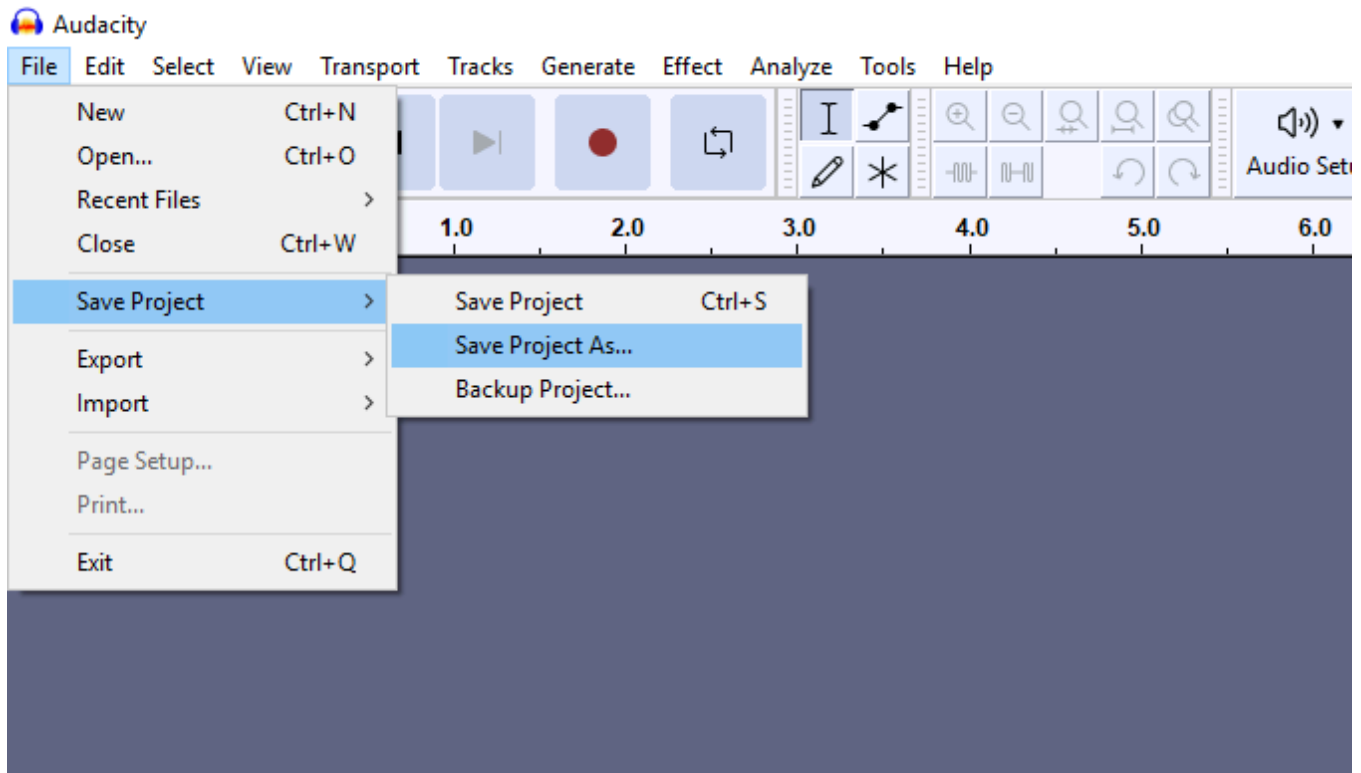# Audacity Basics Guide

Creating and Saving a Project

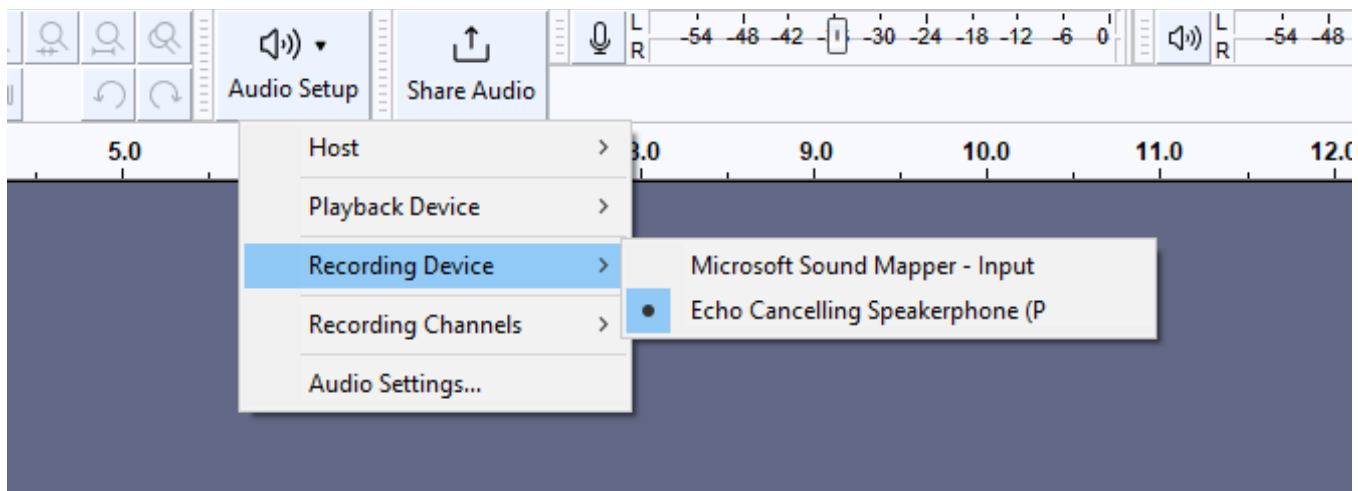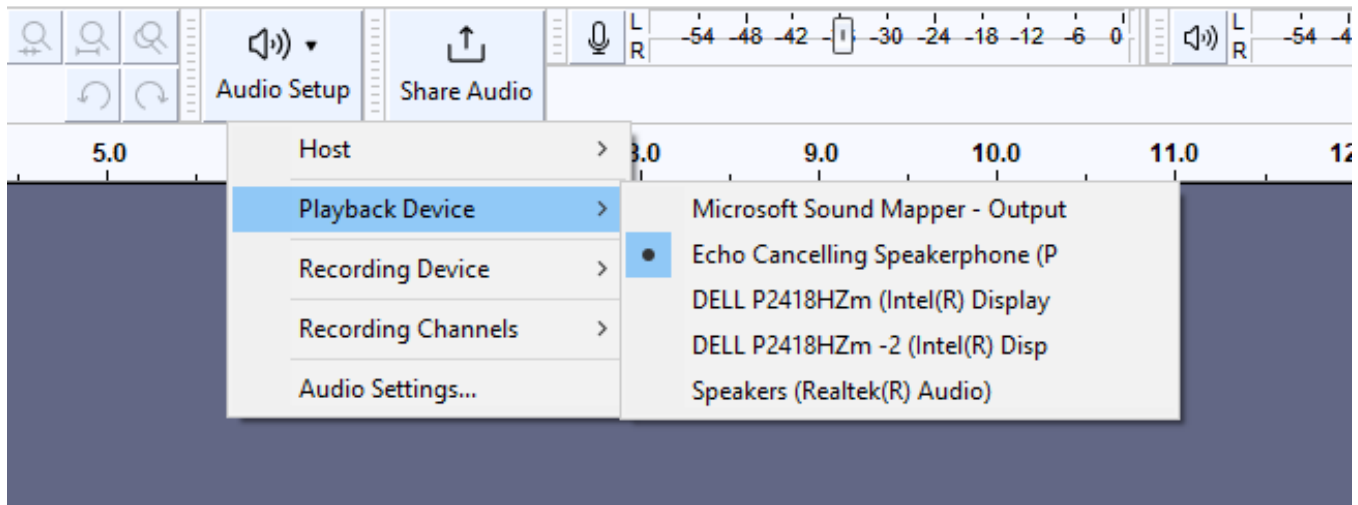Open Audacity and save your project before recording or importing any audio.

NOTE: An Audacity Project is not the same as an audio file. A saved Audacity Project can be opened and used only by Audacity. It is not readable or playable by any other application. To make an audio file (such as WAV or MP3), use File > Export Audio.
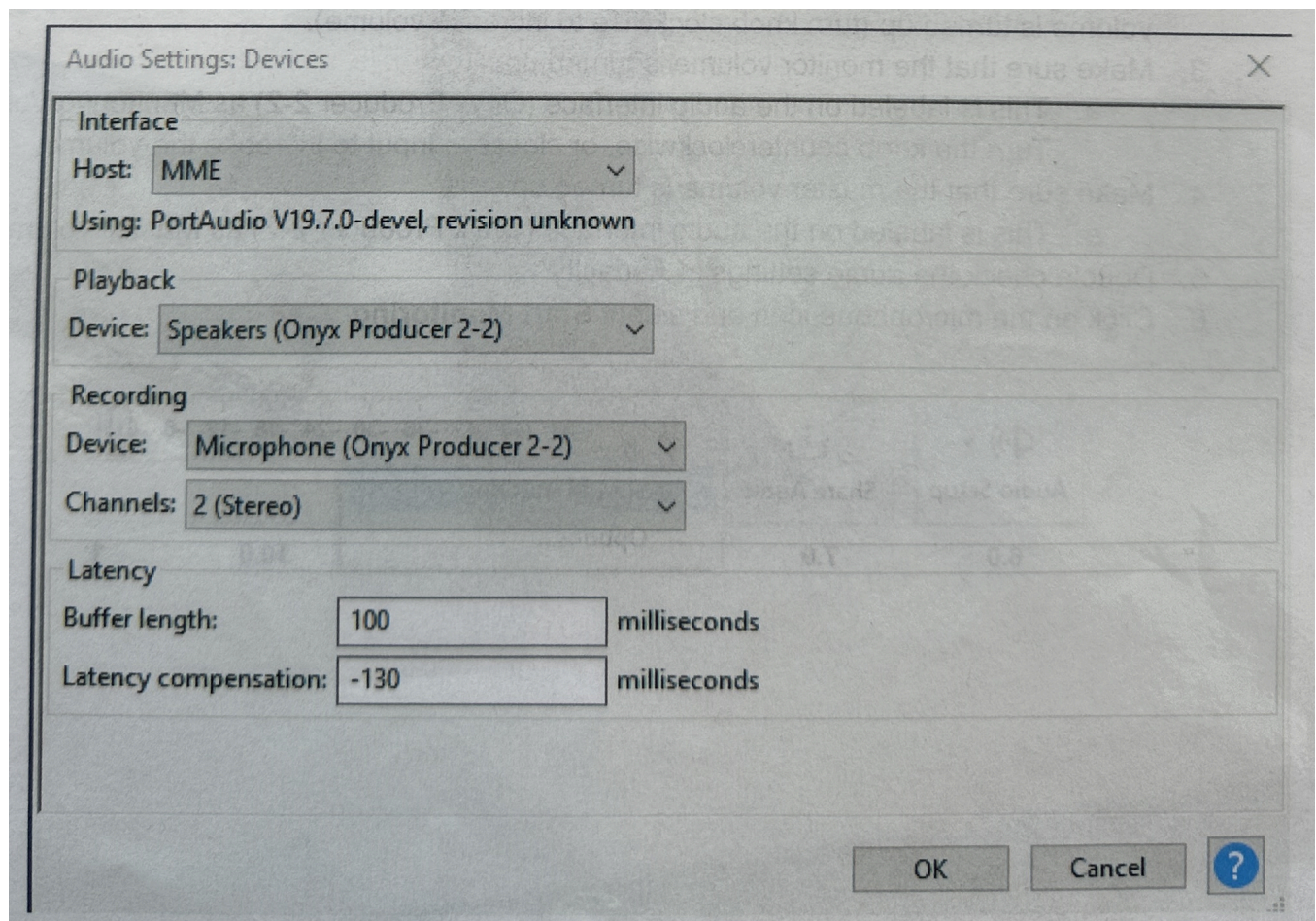
Checking Audio Setup

Prior to recording or importing audio, check your playback and recording setup.

To check your playback and recording setup, click on **Audio Setup**. Select your preferred playback device as well as your preferred recording device. If you make any changes to these settings, you may need to restart the program.
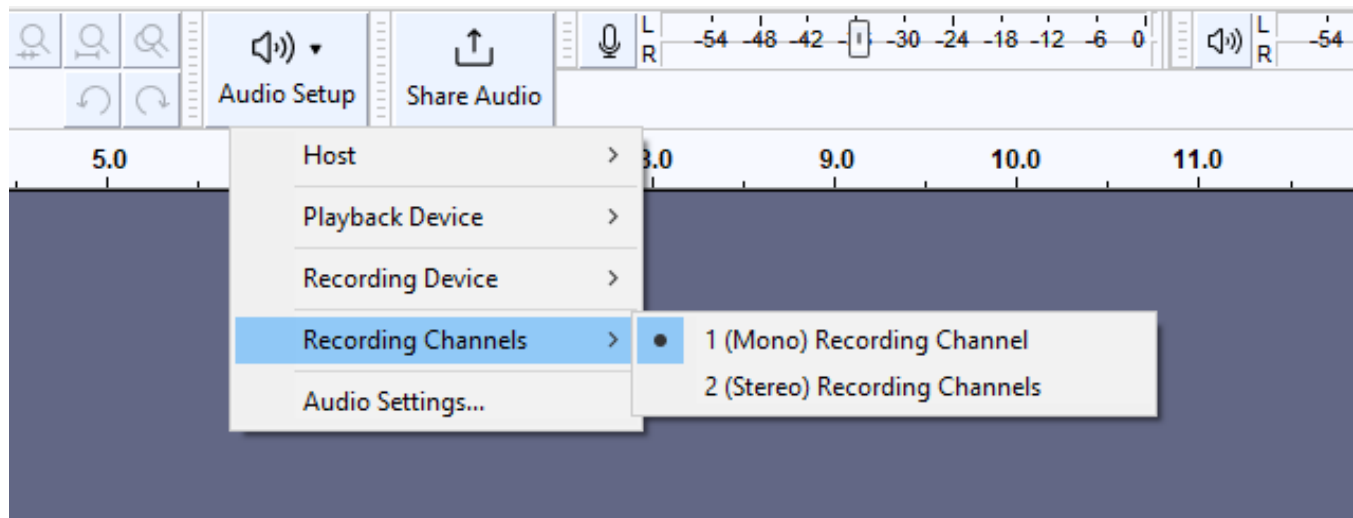
When using the microphones in Recording Room A, make sure the playback device is "Speakers (Onyx Producer 2-2)" and the recording device is "Microphone (Onyx Producer 2-2)." You can also select these devices using Audio Setup > Audio Settings.
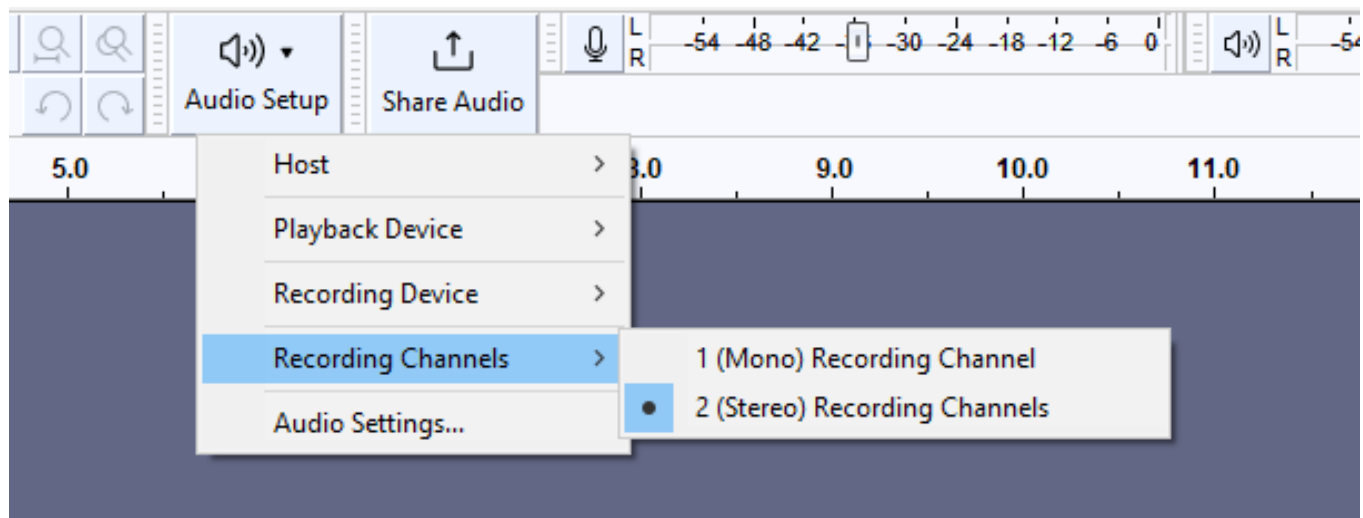
Stereo vs. Mono

Monophonic (mono) audio is audio from one single source. Stereophonic (stereo) audio comes from multiple sources.

If you're recording audio with one microphone, change the **Recording Channels** to 1 (Mono) Recording Channel.

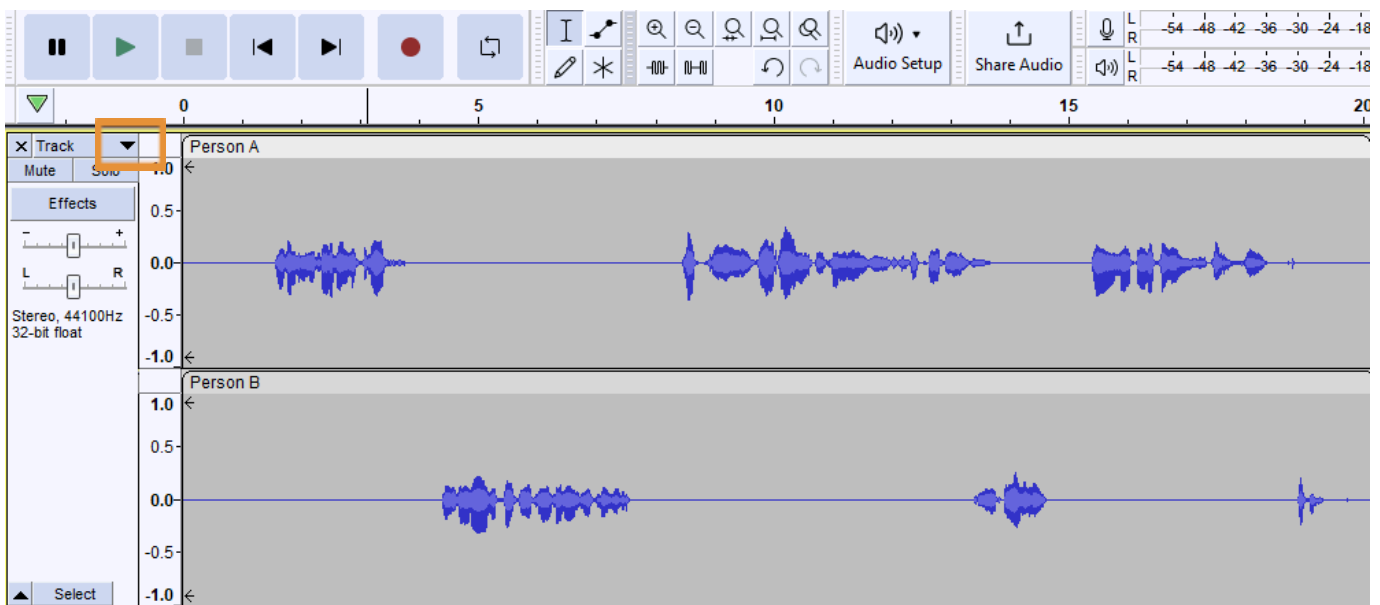If you are recording audio with two microphones, use 2 (Stereo) Recording Channels.

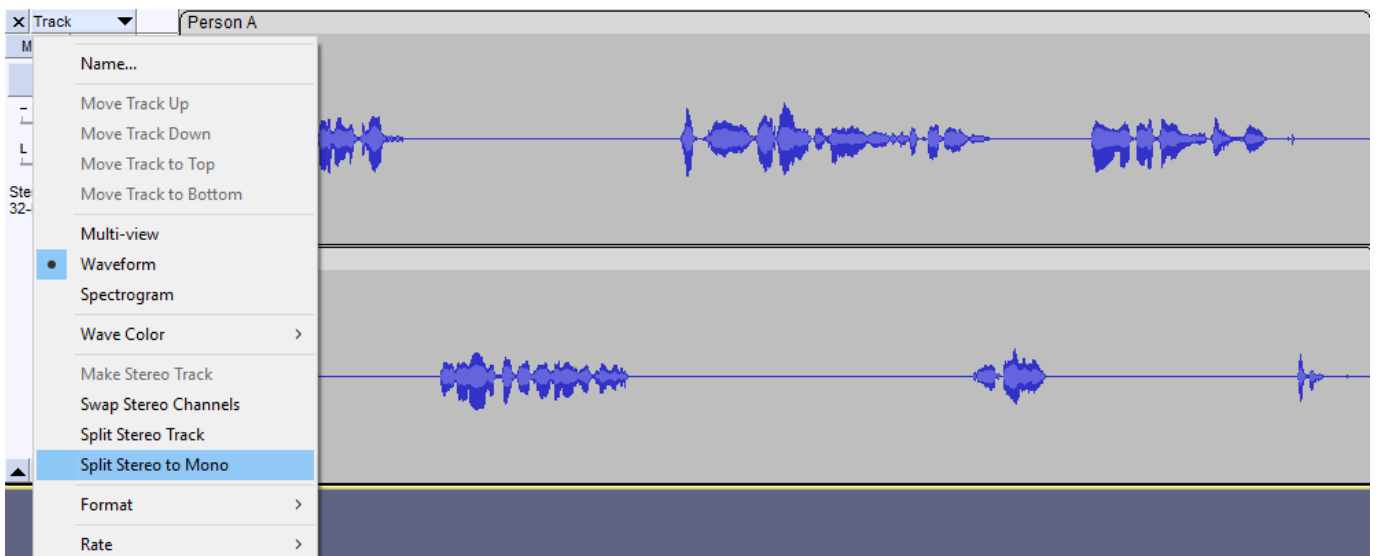If you're using Recording Room A and only using one microphone, use the left microphone to record.

If you're using both microphones, keep the setting as 2 (Stereo).

During playback while you're editing, if you come across a situation in which you hear Person A on the left side of your headphones and Person B on the right side of the headphones, split the stereo track into two separate mono tracks. This will allow you to hear both Person A and Person B on both sides of the headphones. Here are the steps to do that:
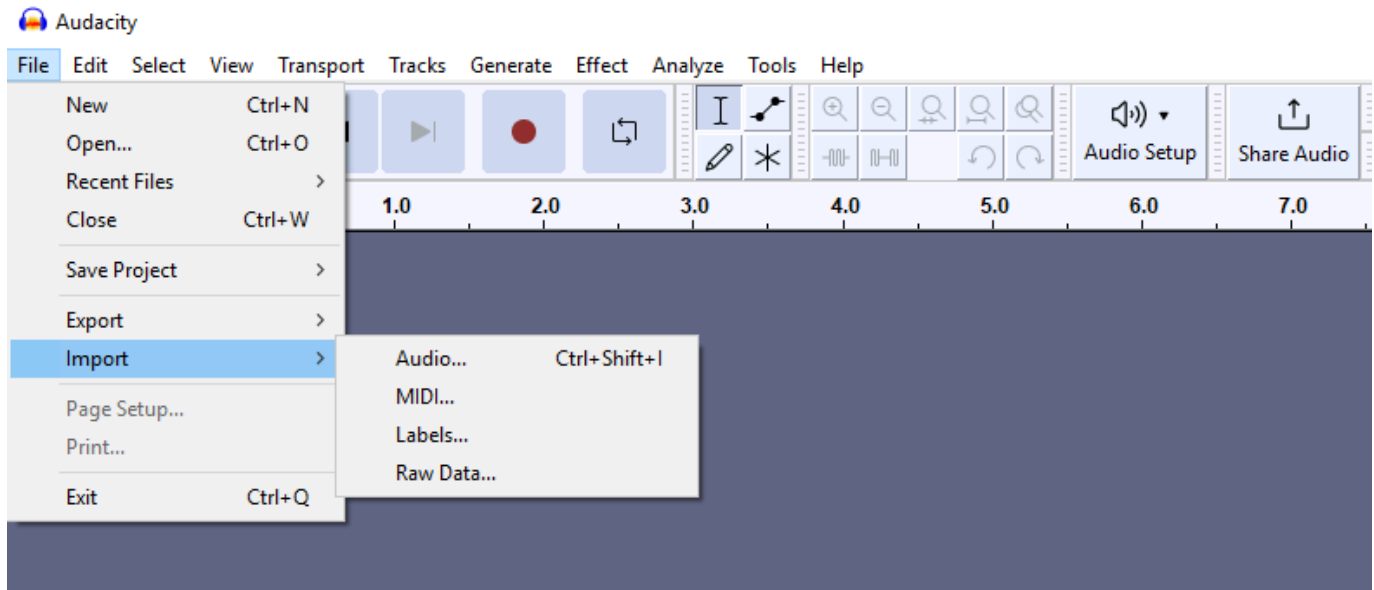
Step 1: Click on the dropdown arrow.

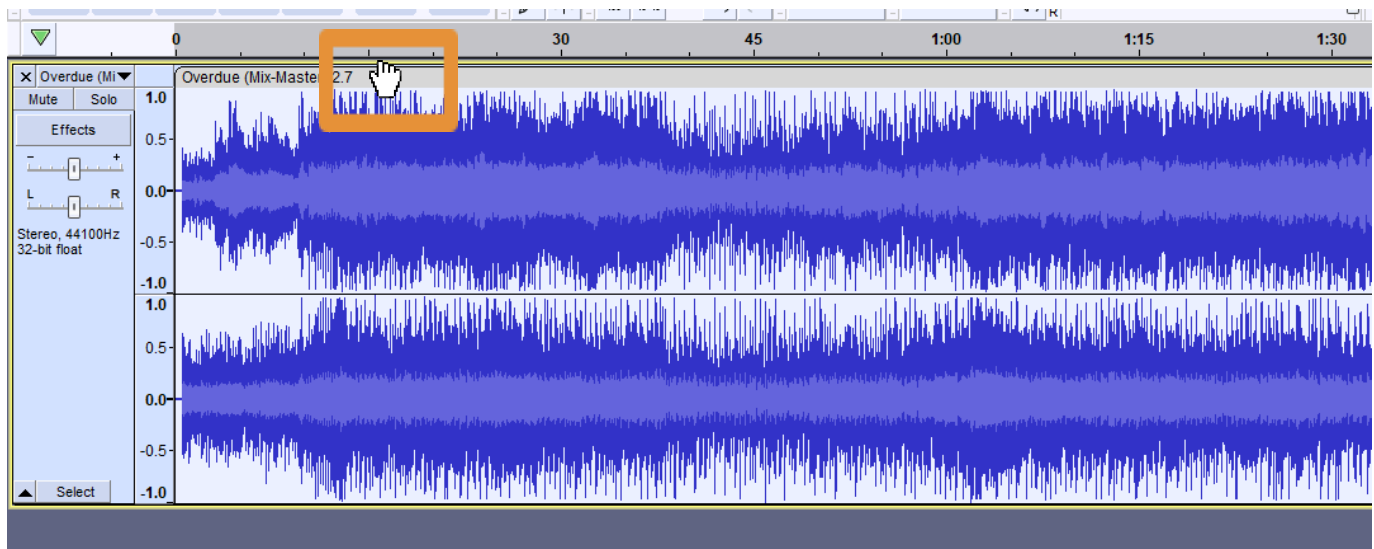Step 2: Click on Split Stereo to Mono. This will split the stereo tracks to mono tracks.

Importing Audio

To import audio, go to File > Import > Audio and locate the audio you'd like to include in your project.

Once the audio is in your project, you can drag tracks around using the top gray bar of the track with the hand cursor/pointer.
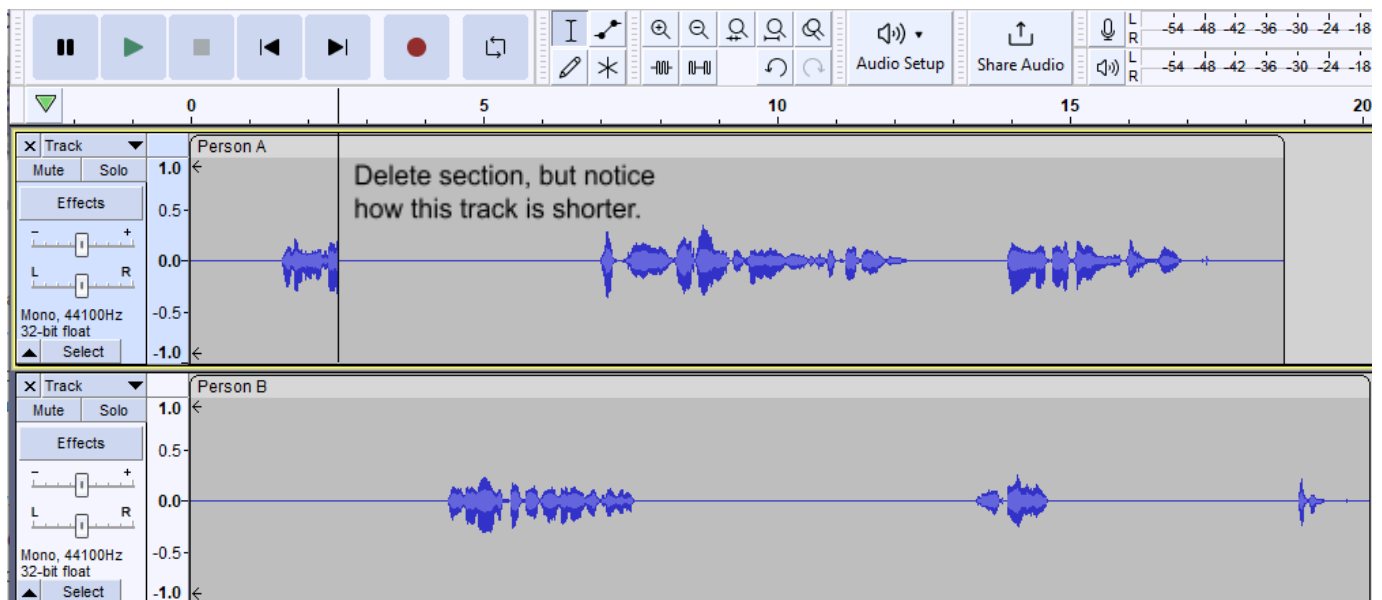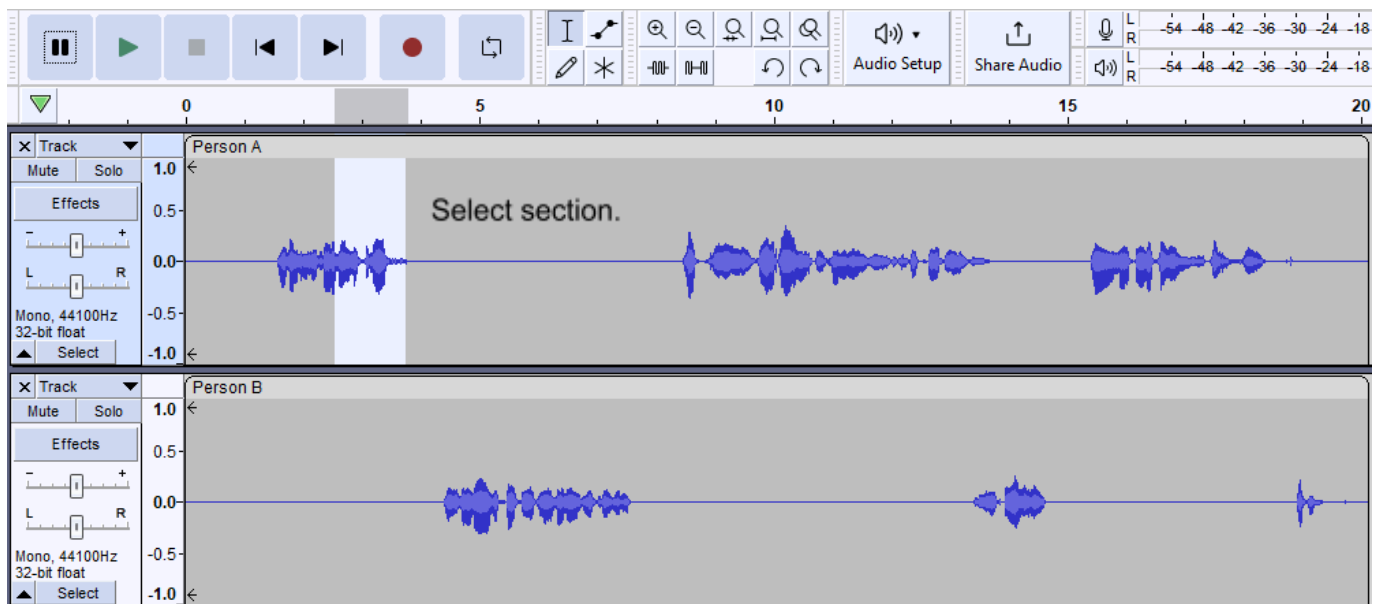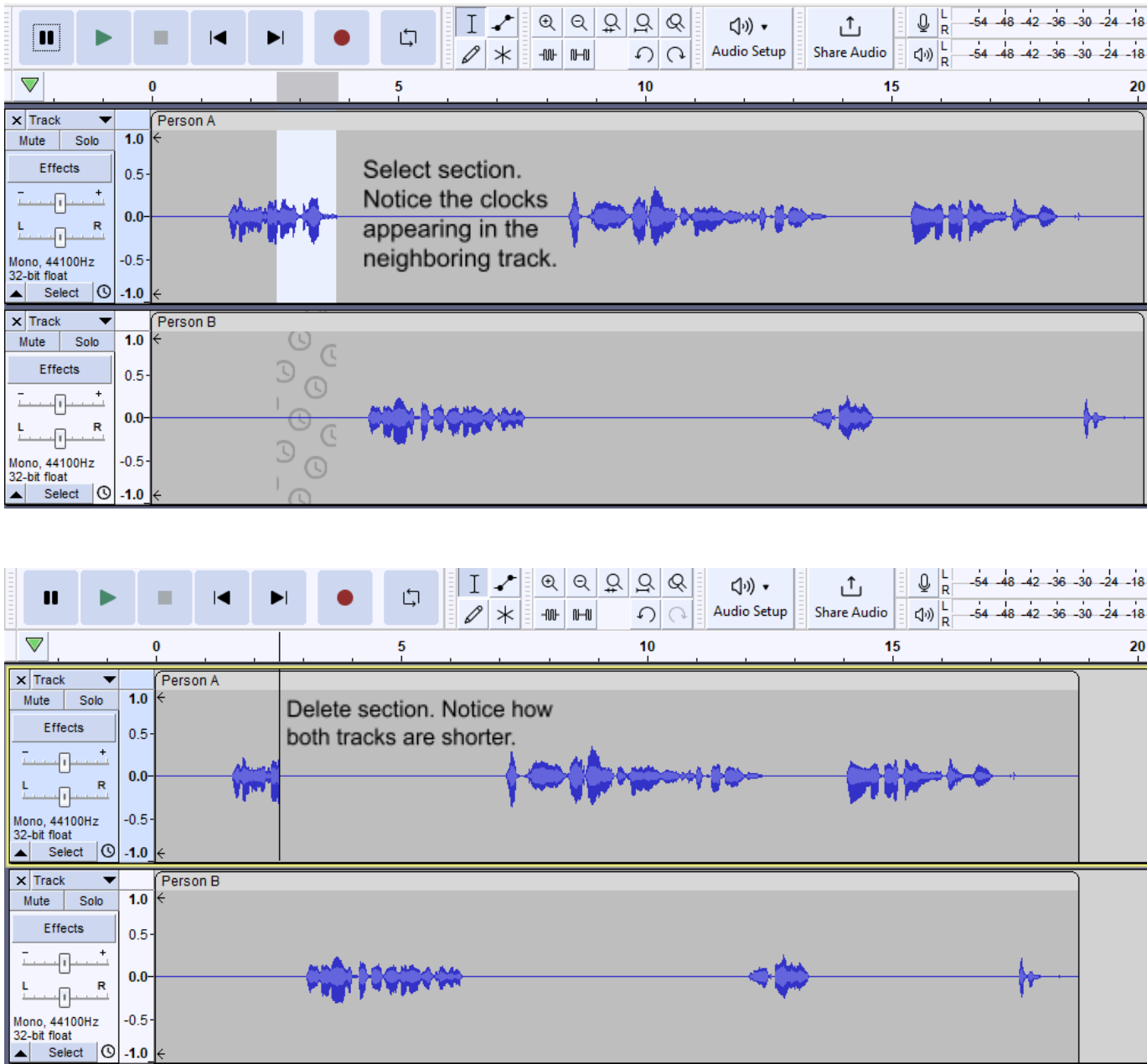
Sync-Lock Tracks

If you're working with multiple mono or stereo tracks and trimming audio, one tip is to use the sync-lock feature. This will lock all of the tracks, so when you trim one track, it will apply the trim to all of the other tracks.

To use this feature, go Tracks > Sync-Lock Tracks (on/off).
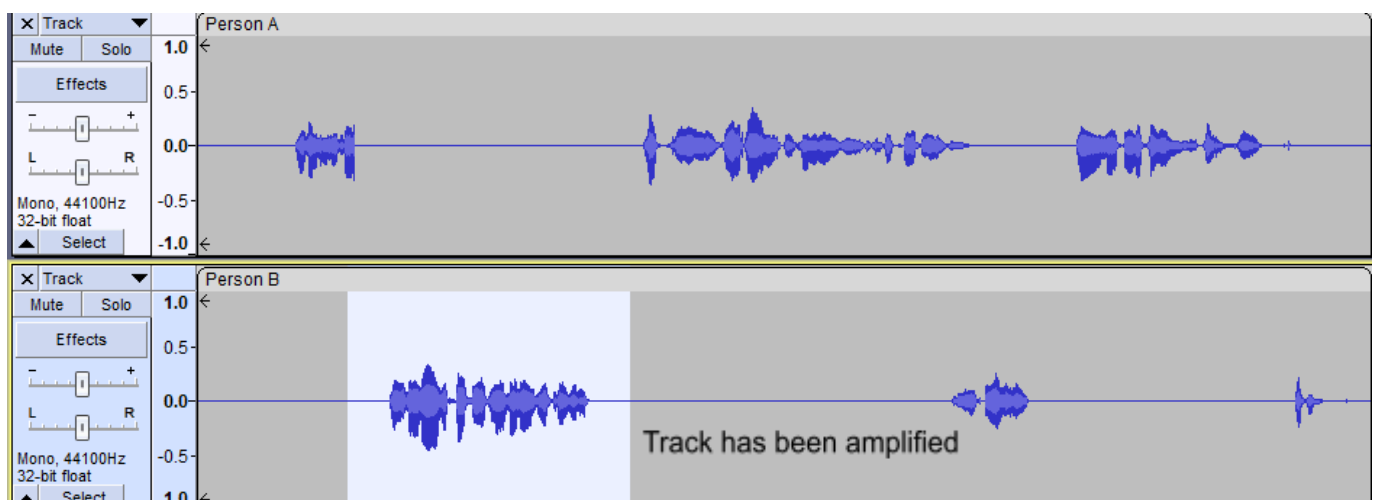
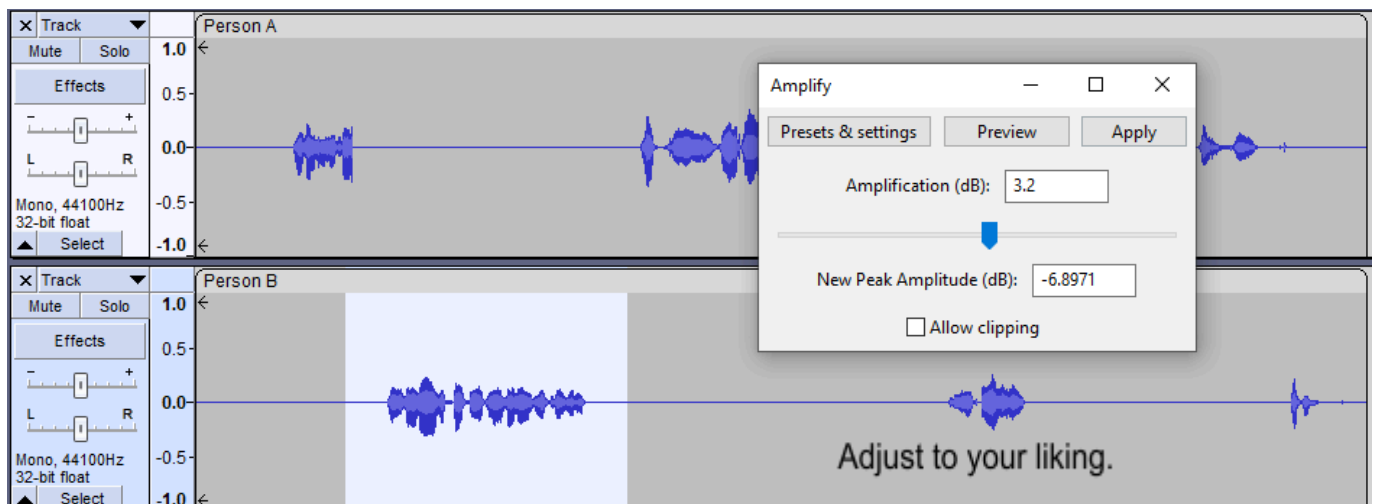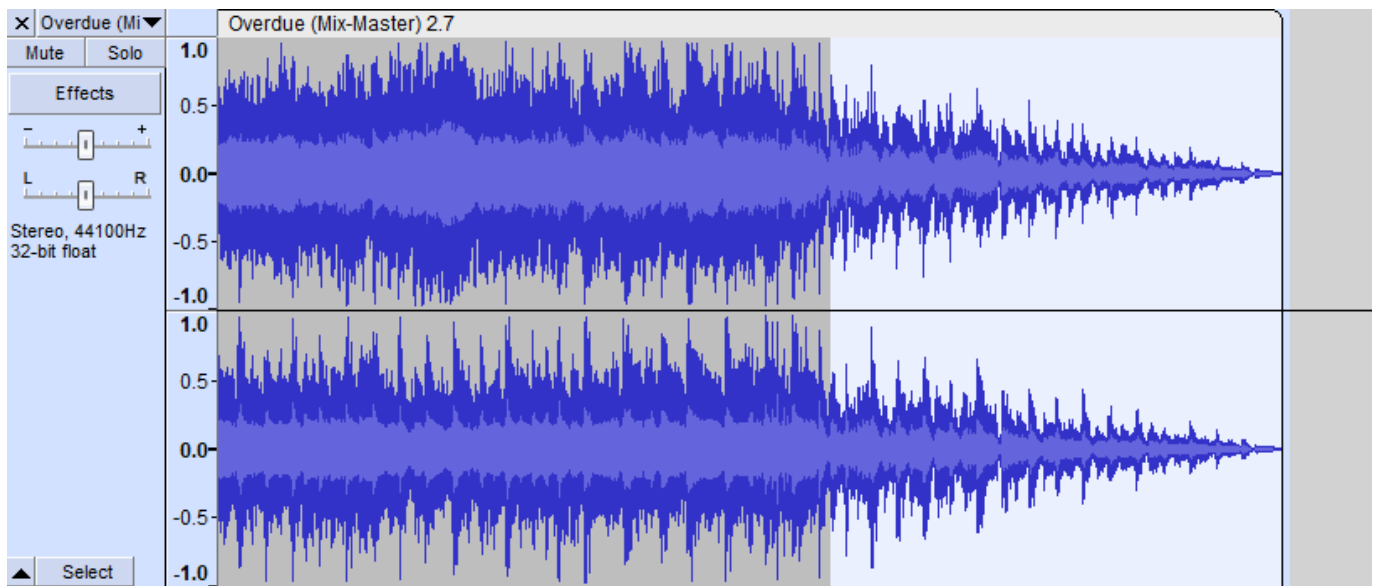Example of trimming without sync lock:
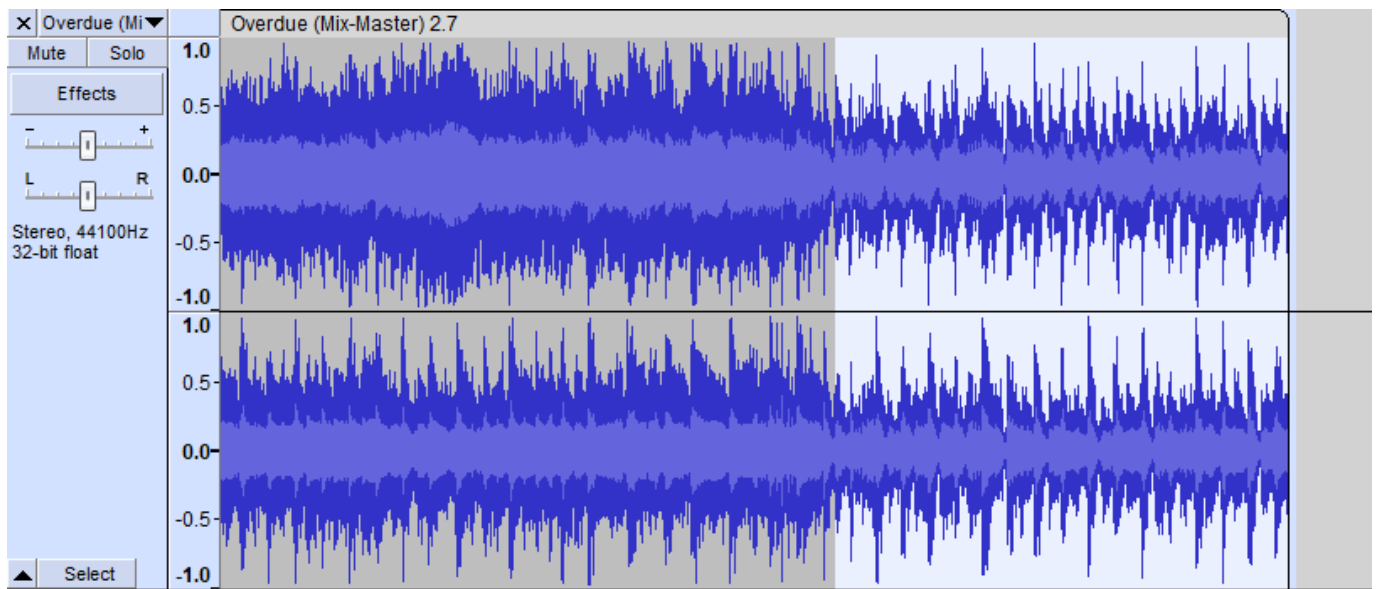
Example of trimming with sync lock:

Select section. Notice the clocks appearing in the neighboring track.

Delete section. Notice how both tracks are shorter.
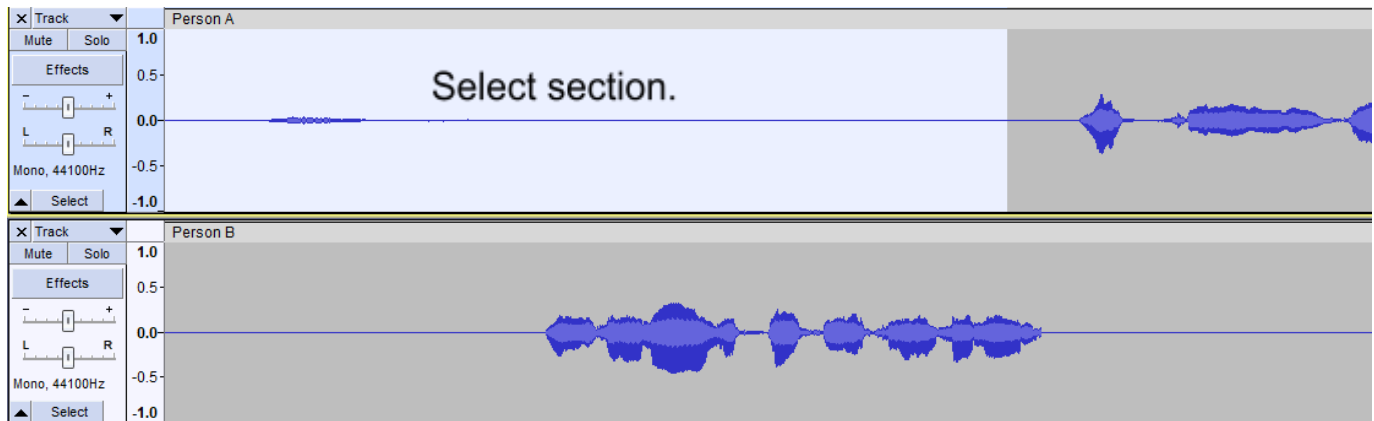
Basic Effects

Amplify: Use Amplify (Effect > Volume and Compression > Amplify) to change the volume of the selected audio track(s) or selections. Example:

Fade In/Fade Out: Use Fade In or Fade Out (Effect > Fading) to have a track, such as a music track, fade in at the beginning and/or fade out at the end. Example of fading out:

Noise Reduction: A good tip is hitting the record button and waiting 15-20 seconds prior to speaking. This will capture the noise profile around you and your microphone. Once you're done recording and you're ready to edit, you can use noise reduction (Effect > Noise Removal and Repair > Noise Reduction) to help reduce ambient noise, like air conditioning. Example:

Click on "Get Noise Profile" in Step 1. The window will disappear to analyze the section you selected.

Noise Reduction

Step 1

Select a few seconds of just noise so Audacity knows what to filter out, then click Get Noise Profile:

Get Noise Profile

Step 2

Select all of the audio you want filtered, choose how much noise you want filtered out, and then click 'OK' to reduce noise.

Noise reduction (dB): 12

Sensitivity: 6.00

Frequency smoothing (bands): 3

Noise: ⦿ Reduce ◯ Residue

Preview   OK   Cancel   ?

Next, select all of your tracks (Select > All). Then, go back to Noise Reduction and select okay to apply the default settings in Step 2.

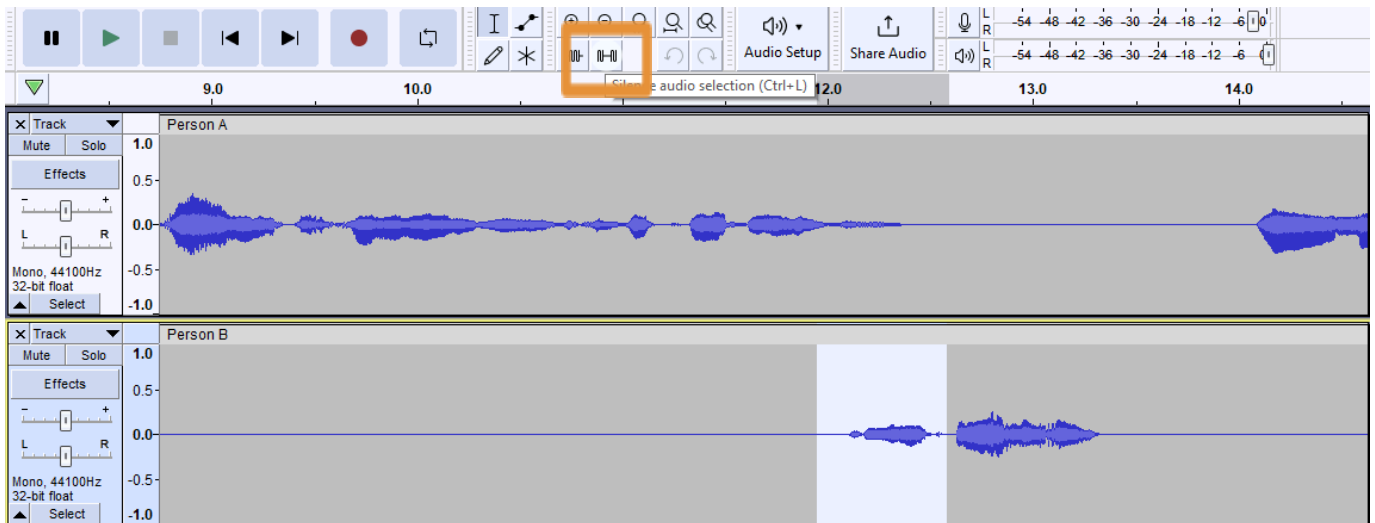The ambient sounds have now been reduced. Feel free to play around with the settings to find what works best for you.
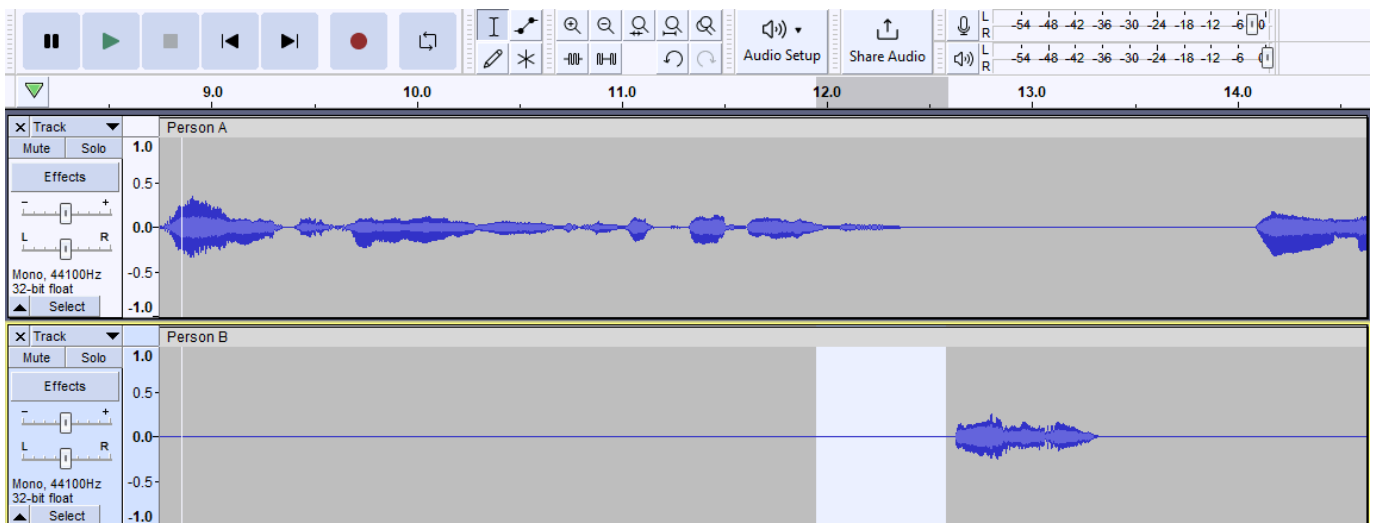
Silencing Sections

To silence sounds, select the section you'd like to silence and click on the "Silence Audio Selection" button in the menu.

Before silencing section:
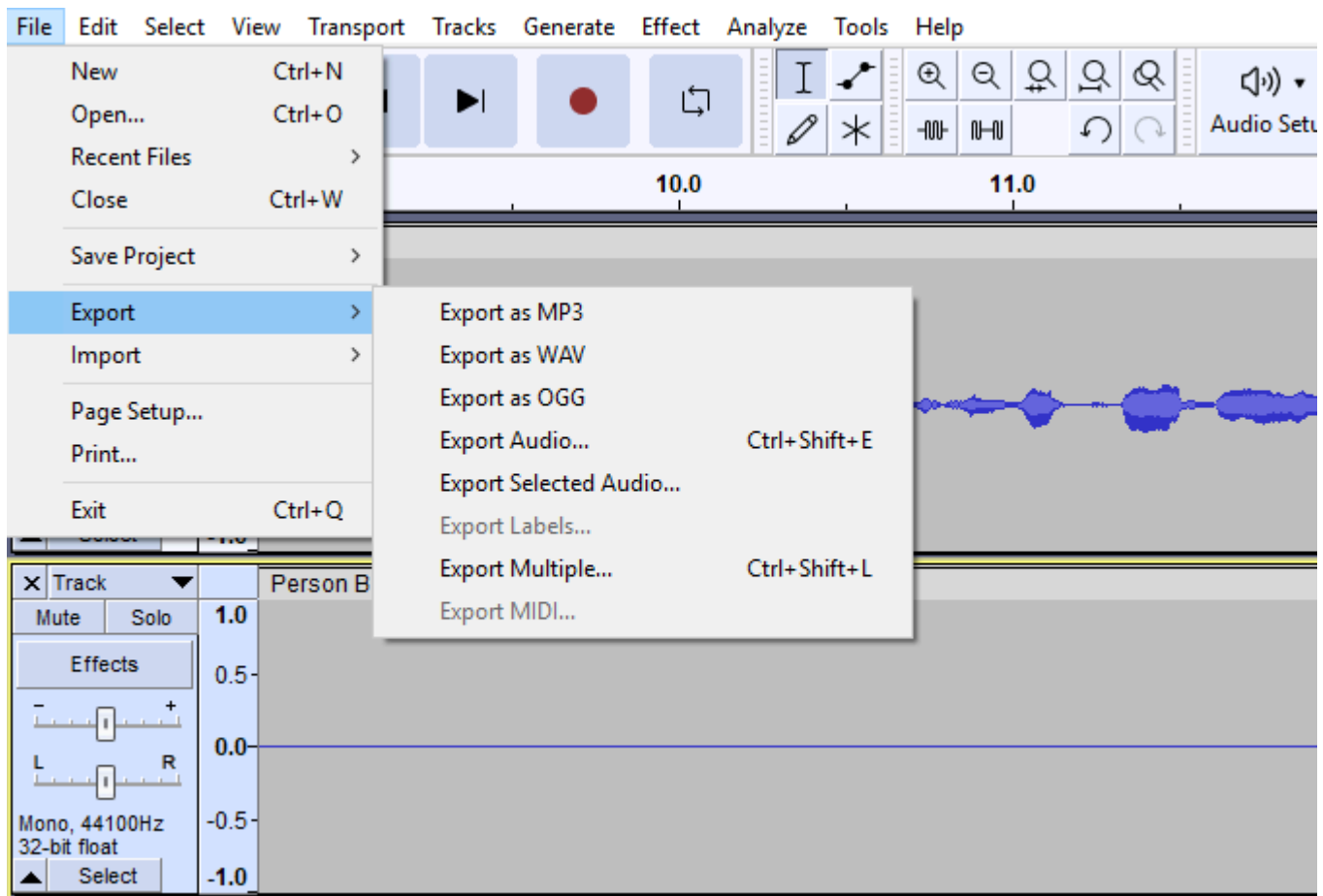

After silencing section:

Exporting Tracks

MP3 is great for "access file" (this is what will be uploaded to Spotify for Podcasters), while WAV is great for "preservation" (or original) file. It's a good habit to save both versions.

To save as an MP3 = File > Export > Export as MP3 (Select OK to mix down the tracks to one mono file)
To save as a WAV = File > Export > Export as WAV

When saving as an MP3 file, you'll be prompted to add information about the file. Here are some suggestions:

- Artist Name: Central Piedmont Library
- Track Title: [Title of the episode]
- Album Title: Overdue: The Central Piedmont Library Podcast
- Track Number: [We can leave this blank]
- Year: 2024