

Podcasting Workshop - Medical (WQ '21 edition)

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Openers

Goals

- You feel comfortable with the “tech side” of recording and editing audio files
- You gain familiarity using Audacity
- You know where to go for help

Why Audacity? Free and multi-platform (works on Mac, Windows, Linux, though not on Chromebooks or tablets). Already comfortable using GarageBand or a similar tool? While the workshop today will focus on Audacity, feel free to use something else for your project if you prefer it!

Examples of the Technical Side

What sound features do you notice here? What do you like? What don't you like?

[EMoverEasy](#)

[RAGE podcast](#)

[Doctors and Litigation: The L word](#)

Installing Audacity

Visit audacityteam.org/download and follow the steps. Note that it will take you outside Audacity to [Fosshub](#) to download. Use the Audacity Windows Installer for PCs and the Audacity MacOS DMG for Macs.

Recording and Editing

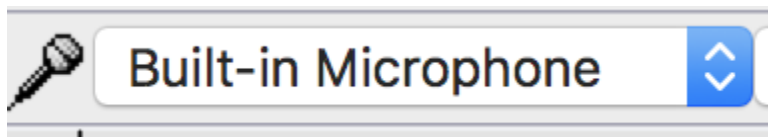
Recording Directly in Audacity

1) Press the red button to record something, stop to stop

You'll have to give Audacity permission to use your microphone the first time.

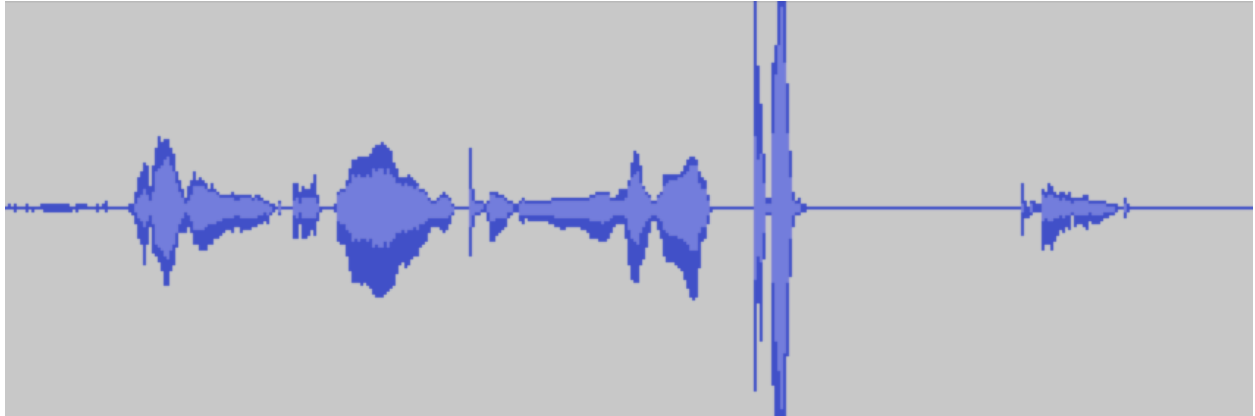
Didn't work? Try:

- Check your input; you may have to go into your computer's microphone settings



- Check your mic--if you are using an external mic, try plugging it in *before* starting Audacity
- Make sure your last recording was stopped and not just paused

Editing



You will probably have empty space, restarts, or even just weird sound clicks. Spend some time cleaning up your track.

1) Highlight and Delete

Highlight with the selection tool, and just hit “delete” to delete things. Select, copy, paste, and undo all work the ways you’d think they would.



= selection tool

2) Time Shift

If you want to adjust a track so that it starts earlier or later, use the Time Shift tool



3) Split to Time Shift Part of a Track

Don’t want to move your whole track? Edit -> Clip Boundaries -> Split to move just a piece of the audio to a different time in the track.

Your Turn: Take 5 minutes to **record, delete, split, and time shift** something in Audacity.

Adding Opening and Exit Music

Finding Royalty-Free Music

Make sure that any music you use is open-source and royalty free. Some sources for this are [Dig ccMixer](#), [Freesound](#), and the [Free Music Archive](#).

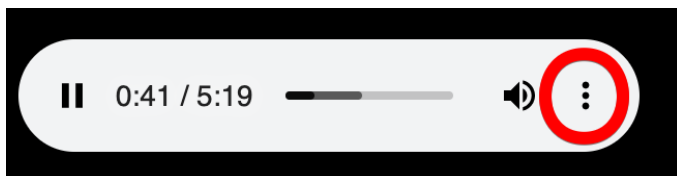
You're looking for a Creative Commons license. Most of these allow you to use the project provided you give credit to the musicians.



There are variations on this. Some licenses prevent the song being used for *commercial* purposes. Unless you're planning to use your podcast to sell products, you're probably okay for this. One to keep an eye out for is a *no derivatives* license. For this, you can only include the song in full, probably making it useless for podcasts.

Importing from Dig.ccMixer

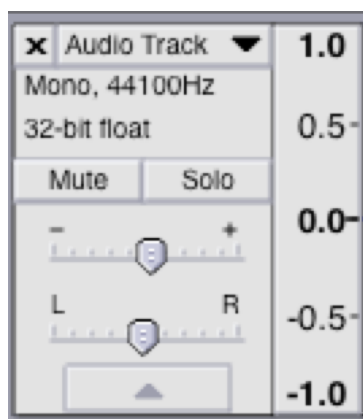
[Dig ccMixer](#): I like this one because it's easy to search by keywords. Download to open the MP3, then click the three dots to download as an audio file. Drag into Audacity.



Tip: Don't forget to copy down the artist information for your show notes or end credits!

1) Adjust volume

To adjust the whole track, use the -/+ signs at the front of the track



To adjust volume for a piece of the track, highlight and select Effect -> Amplify and drag the slider up or down.

2) Use Delete, Shift, and Time Shift to select the music you want

3) Add Fades

To fade in or fade out, highlight the part you want -> Effect > Fade Out/Fade In

Your Turn: Take 10 minutes to **find a music track** and make a one-sentence podcast with **intro and exit music**.

Save and Export

Save your project as an Audacity file to continue working in Audacity.

Export your project (File -> Export) when you're done. MP3 is a good format if you want to maximize playability. If you're planning to upload it to SoundCloud, they recommend exporting as a WAV or other lossless format for highest quality. [SoundCloud's uploading requirements](#).

If you imported music, it might automatically populate the metadata when you export; you might want to delete that information and add your own.

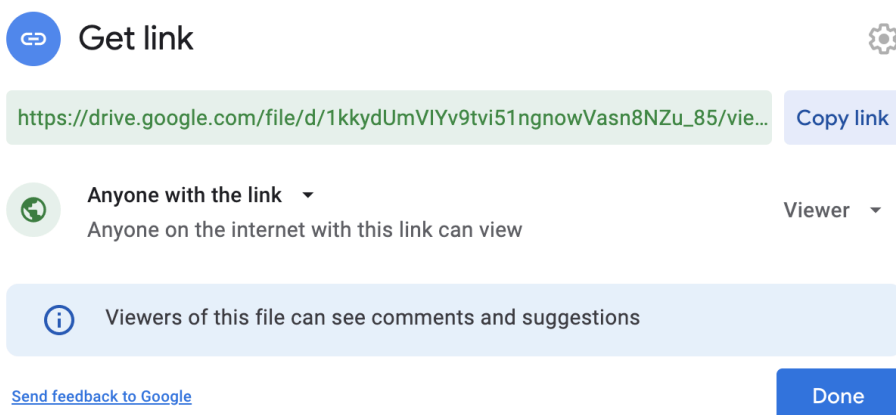
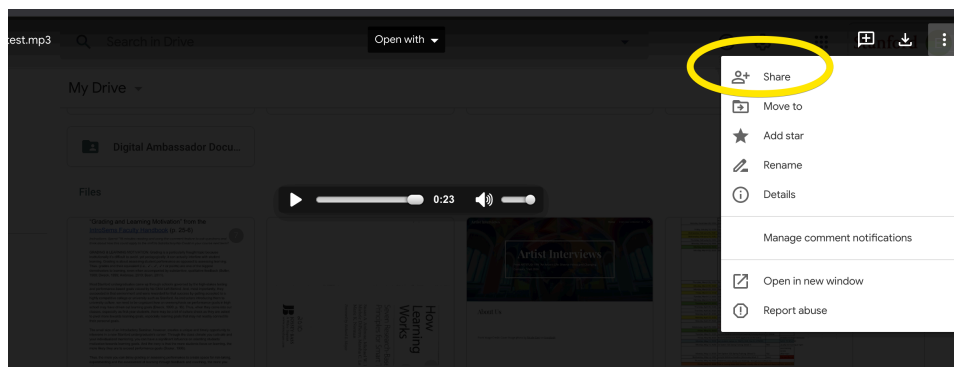
Hosting

There are a few ways to share your podcast online.

Option 1: Host on Google Drive

For many, the easiest method will be to host on Google Drive.

- In Audacity, export your final version as an MP3. This will make it most readily playable.
- Upload it into your Drive and set the permissions to “Anyone can view.” Copy the link to share it.



Option 2: Host Online through SoundCloud or Similar

If you prefer a more publicly-accessible podcast, you might want to consider hosting it with an online service.

- In Audacity, export your final version as an WAV. This preserves the quality.
- Upload your podcast to [SoundCloud](#) (or a similar service as you prefer). You'll probably want to stick with the free Basic plan. See the [SoundCloud Creator Guide](#) for more details. [Podomatic](#) and [Spreaker](#) also offer free accounts levels.

- Copy the Embed code from SoundCloud to embed it onto your side (see [SoundCloud's tips on embedding](#) and [Adding Video and Audio](#))

Your Turn: Take 2 minutes to **save and export** your very short podcast project.

Recording Interviews in Zoom

Zoom is great for recording interviews, with the caveat that you'll have to download one additional Audacity package, or convert the Zoom file, to use the recordings with Audacity.

Get Permission if Recording Humans

If you're planning to integrate any sort of interview, word on the street, etc., you want to get permission to record. A simple consent over email is probably sufficient for many class uses. ("Do I have your permission to record our discussion and use pieces of it in a podcast that will be shared with my class and posted on SoundCloud? I'd share the podcast with you for approval before sharing it publicly.") If the material is especially sensitive or if you plan on a very public distribution, you might want to adapt the [Interview Release Form](#) you'll find on this page to get more formal consent.

Obviously, never record anyone without letting them know you're recording them, and don't publish anyone's voice without explicit written permission.

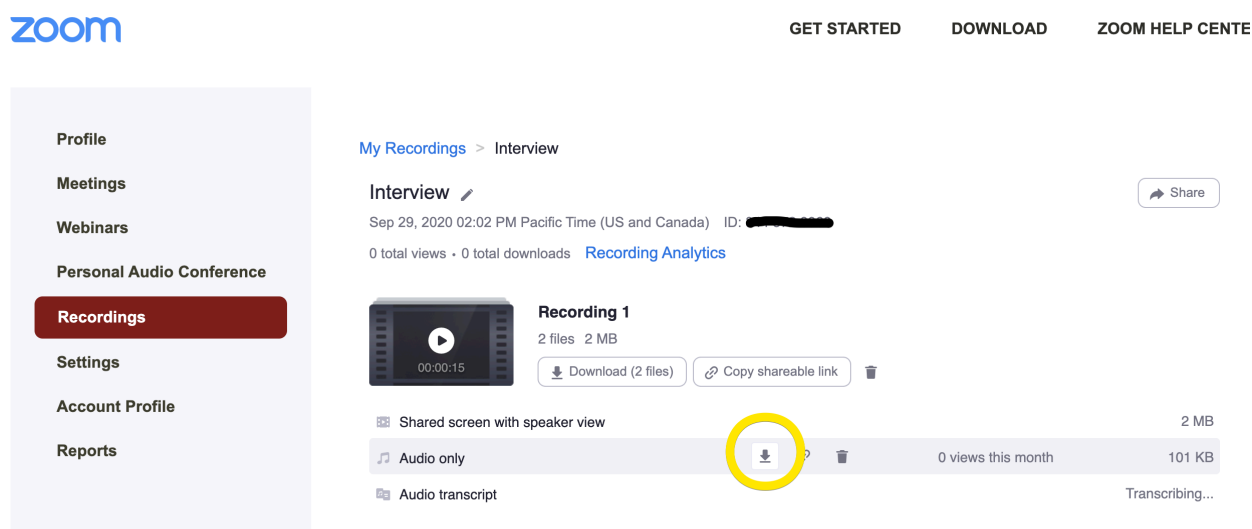
Test Your Zoom Setup

Try Out a Few Recordings: In advance of the interview, do a check of your equipment and a few recordings to test the recording quality. Experiment with different equipment if you have it, different locations, etc. If possible, do a practice run with a classmate in advance just to make sure you feel comfortable.

You might also want to check at <https://stanford.zoom.us/profile/setting?tab=recording> that "Record an audio only file" is checked. (It should be on by default.)

Make and Download Your Recording

1. Make sure you are logged into Stanford's Zoom.
2. During the meeting, select "Record to the Cloud."
3. The video will take some time to process (in busy times for long videos it may even take a day, so plan ahead!) and should email you when it's done.
4. Go to <https://stanford.zoom.us/recording> to see your recordings. Click on the blue name of the meeting.
5. Download the audio.



Convert the m4a to mp3

Option 1: Download FFmpeg Package. This will allow Audacity to open any Zoom downloads ongoing.

- 1) Make sure Audacity is closed.
- 2) Download the FFmpeg package ([PC instructions](#), [Mac instructions](#)). You need this package to be able to work with the .m4a files that Zoom exports. You do this from this [external site](#). Make sure you select the right operating system and the FFmpeg rather than the LAME package. Download, drag onto your Desktop, and open.

Option 2: You can also use a free m4a to mp3 converter online, such as [Cloud Convert](#), to do a one-time conversion of your file so that you can use it in Audacity. Drag the mp3 file into Audacity. (This is quicker and easier, but some of these sites can be a bit dubious, so I wanted to give you another option, especially if you're importing multiple files or something especially sensitive.)

Where to Get Help

- [Audacity Manual](#) has detailed information about how to use the program.
- Email Beth with questions bethseltzer@stanford.edu or [set up an appointment](#).
- [Lathrop](#) offers peer tech support.
- Make an appointment at the [Stanford Storytelling Lab](#) for tips on crafting a great story with media.
- Google it or try an online tutorial, like the tutorials on [LinkedIn Learning](#).

Bonus! Credits and Tips from NPR

- [NPR's Storytelling Blueprint Worksheet](#)
- [3 Act Structure](#)
- [How to Make Local Listeners Care About Your Story](#)
- [Sound Better on Air](#)
- [Radio Intros](#)
- [How Audio Stories Begin](#)

This tutorial relies heavily on teaching materials developed by the [New York Times](#) and [NPR](#); these might also be useful for you.