

Screencast Assignment Handout:

Audacity

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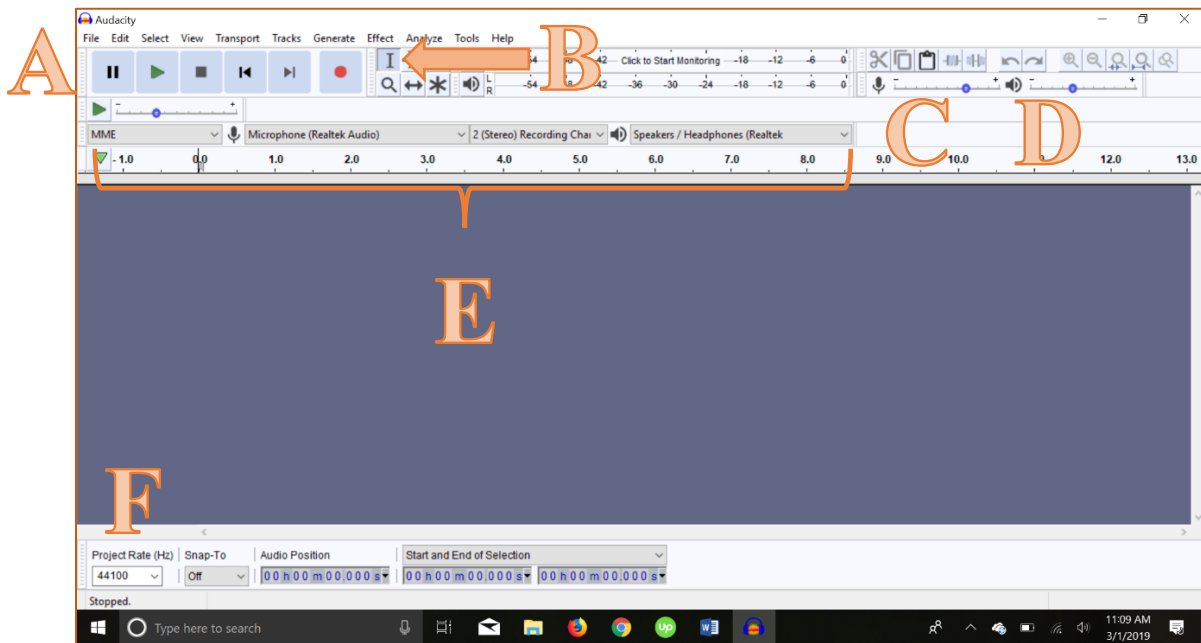
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Introduction

- **WEB 2.0 Tool:** Audacity v2.3.0 (released September 29, 2018)
- **Description:** Audacity is an easy-to-use, multi-track audio editor and recorder for Windows, Mac OS X, GNU/Linux and other operating systems. It is an open source (free) program developed and maintained by a group of volunteers (2019).
- **Features:** Audio recording, import/export, sound quality, plugins, editing, effects, accessibility, accessibility, analysis.
- **Common Applications:** Podcasting, music editing/recording, audio presentations, etc.

Layout and Familiarization

- Ensure that your **microphone**, whether an external piece of equipment or integral to your computer, is **attached**, **unmuted**, and **working correctly**. Audacity does not provide a means of troubleshooting audio input issues external to the application.
- Screen layout/familiarization:



- (A) Player Controls (record, stop, play, etc.)
- (B) Iron Bar (serves as cursor or *play head*)
- (C) Input Volume Control

- (D) Playback Volume Control
- (E) Main Dropdown Menus
- (F) Project Rate Window

- **Player Controls**



Audacity’s player controls are very standard and mirror the functions of similar controls found elsewhere. From left to right, they control pause, play, stop, skip reverse, skip forward, and record.

- **Iron Bar**



In the figure above, the iron bar, which controls the cursor or *play head*, is represented by the shaded “I” button. Make sure this is depressed prior to starting a recording.

- **Input Volume Control**



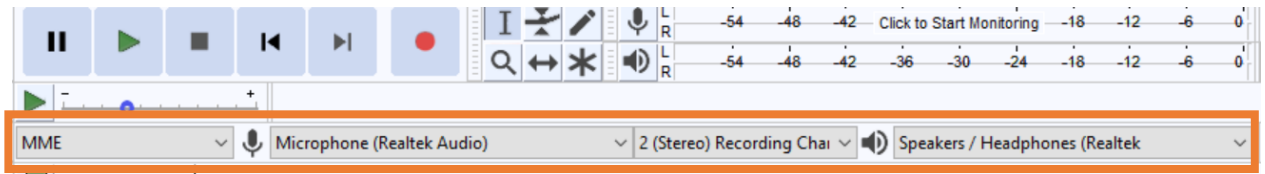
Used to measure and set input volume during recording. Keep the input level set somewhere near the middle of this slider for your first few sessions.

- **Playback Volume Control**



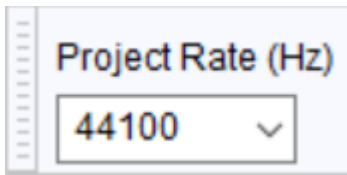
Like the input volume control but instead controls playback volume. Also try to keep this set somewhere near the middle for your initial session.

- **Main Dropdown Menus**



Located beneath the player controls, these four dropdown menus control, from left to right: (1) **audio file format**, (2) **input device**, (3), **mono/stereo recording**, and (4) **output devices**. The default information displayed in these menus will vary depending on many variables, including your computer, operating system, and peripherals. Feel free to use whatever audio file format sounds best on your machine (MME or Windows DirectSound). It's worth mentioning, however, that **Windows DirectSound** is the newer of these two formats and tends to render better on more recent machines.

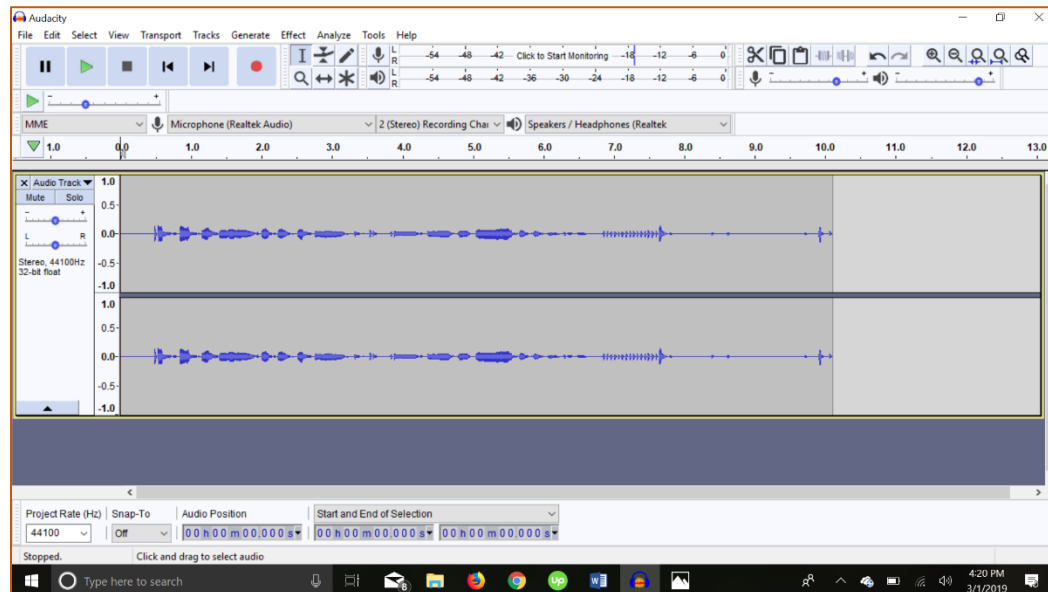
- **Project Rate Window**



By default, this should be set at 44,100 hertz (Hz). The project rate, or *sample rate*, represents the highest frequency that will be captured while recording. Anything significantly higher or lower than 44,100 Hz for a simple voice recording may cause playback distortions or defects. Unless you're an audio pro, it's best to **leave this setting untouched**.

Making, Saving, and Sharing a Recording

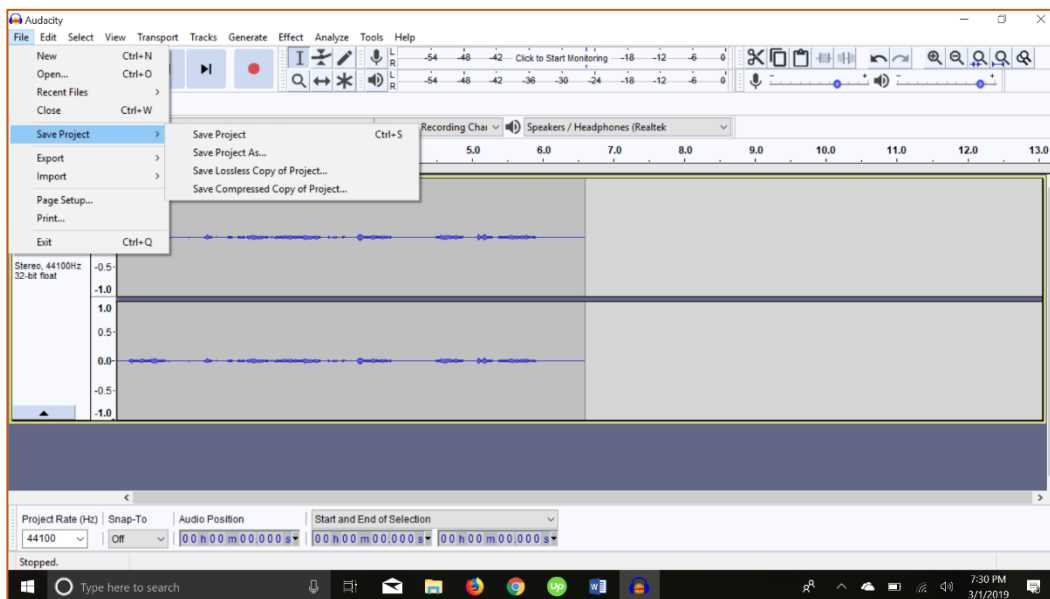
1. Make a Recording



Making a simple recording is easy as clicking on the red record button and speaking into your microphone. If you need to take a break, you can pause the recording by clicking on the appropriate button or pressing the “p” button on your keyboard. As you progress through your recording you should notice two things. First, two squiggly lines (*timelines*) will form and begin moving from left to right across the screen. Second, two green bars (the recording and playback meters) should start pulsing and flashing at the top-center of the screen. These animations represent inputs/outputs being recorded/played. Finally, press the stop button when you’re done recording.

There are many more technical features you can get acquainted with while using Audacity, such as using the play head (cursor) to cut and alter tracks or add sound effects.

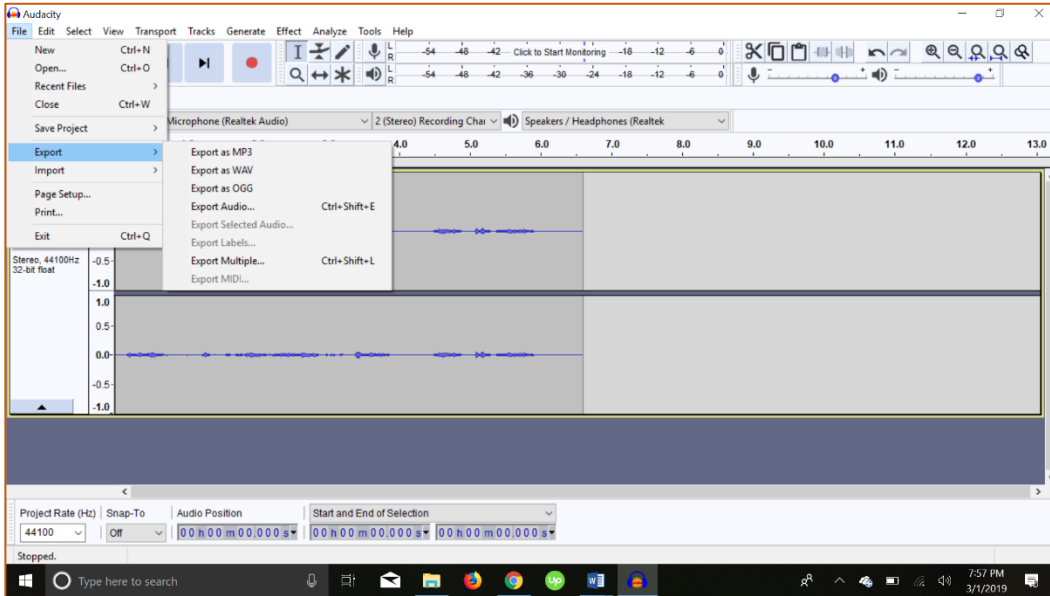
2. Save Your Recording



If you plan to use or share your file outside of Audacity, skip this part and move on to step #3 instead. To save a recording only for use in Audacity, mouse over the “File” dropdown menu. From there, mouse over “Save Project.” Doing so will reveal four options: (1) **Save Project**, (2) **Save Project As**, (3) **Save Lossless Copy of Project**, and (4) **Save Compressed Copy of Project**. Selecting any of these options will save a file to your computer under an Audacity folder in an Audacity file format that can only be played by the Audacity program. A *lossless copy* is larger than a regular file but automatically backs itself up in another predetermined location without compromising audio quality. A *compressed copy* is smaller than a regular file but sacrifices quality for

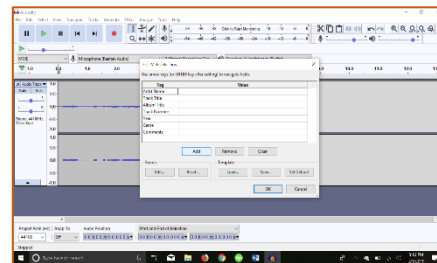
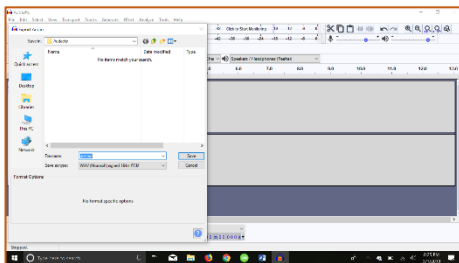
the condensed file size. Most users will likely select the “Save Project As” option to assign a specific name to a project.

3. Export/Share Your Recording



If you plan on using your recording outside the Audacity platform, such as a MP3 or WAV file for use on an independent platform, you’ll want to **export your file** rather than just saving it. To do this, first mouse over the “File” dropdown menu. Next, mouse over the “Export” option. From here, you’ll be presented with the option of saving your work in a few different popular audio formats (MP3, WAV, and OGG).

If you DO decide to export a file in **MP3 format**, please bear in mind that doing so will require the downloading and installation of [LAME](#), a free third-party MP3 encoder. WAV and OGG files, on the other hand, will immediately take you to the below screens, where you can enter metadata tags and credentials.



Reference:

Audacity. (2019). Audacity [Webpage]. Retrieved from <https://www.audacityteam.org/>