

YalMusT Instructional Guides

5.10.2010

Installing, Configuring, and Using Audacity Sound File Editor

Contents

- Downloading, Installing, and Configuring the Audacity Sound File Editor pg. 1
- Editing Sound Files with Audacity pg. 2
 - Normalizing pg. 3
 - Cutting or Trimming pg. 3
 - Adding Fades pg. 4
 - Saving Your Work pg. 4
- For Further Help pg. 5

I. Downloading, installing, and configuring the Audacity audio editor

1. Click on the following link to download the latest audacity version*.

<http://audacity.googlecode.com/files/audacity-macosx-ub-1.3.11.dmg>

2. If you plan to edit or export mp3 files, also download the following file:

[Lame_Library_v3.98.2_for_Audacity_on_OSX.dmg](#)

3. Navigate to your Applications folder and create a folder called Audacity by pressing shift+command+N
4. Navigate to your downloads folder (wherever you downloaded the files to) and double-click the Audacity installer .dmg. drag all of the folders and files to the Audacity folder you created in the Applications folder.
5. Double-click the LAME .dmg to open it and double-click the installer. Follow the instructions in the installer.
6. Open Audacity and choose Preferences from the Audacity drop-down menu. Select Libraries from the list on the left of the pop-up window.
7. The LAME library version should appear at the top of the MP3 Export Library section. If it does not, click on the Locate button next to MP3 Library. The default installation location should be:

`/usr/local/lib/audacity/libmp3lame.dylib`

8. Type the above into the space provided and click OK.

* the latest version at the time of this writing (1.3.12) has a serious bug that causes the program to crash when opening sound files on certain mac operating systems

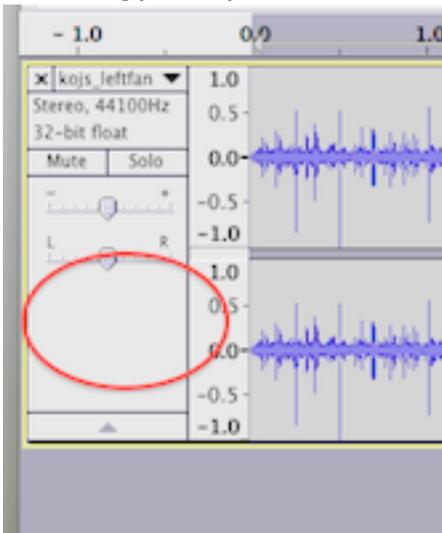
9. In the preferences window choose Devices and select the input and output devices you want to use for recording. If you are using Audacity as an editor only, just be sure your output preferences reflect your hardware setup. For example, if you are using headphones or the built-in speakers on a mac laptop, make sure Built-in Output is selected as your "Playback" option.
10. To set the default quality of sound files, select Quality and choose your desired sample rate and sample format. By default these are set to 44100 Hz and 32-bit float.

Audacity is now installed and basic parameters set.

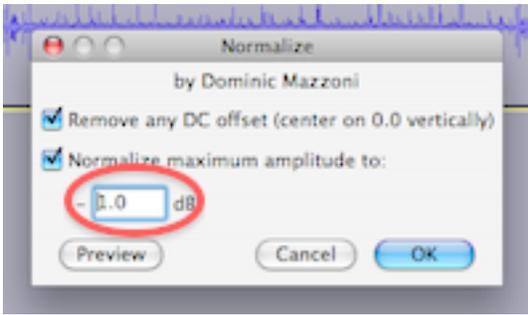
Editing sound files with Audacity

Normalizing

1. Open Audacity and select Import -> Audio from the File menu and select the file you wish to edit.
2. Depending on the source of the audio file, it may need to be normalized. Normalization is the process by which the loudest point of the sound file is brought to "maximum amplitude."
3. Click in the grey area under the pan functions to select the entire sound file. (Or press command+a assuming you only have one sound file in the project.)

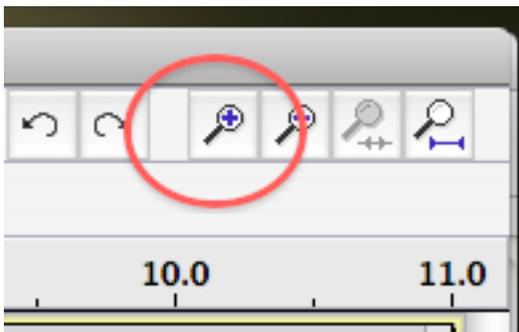


4. navigate to the Effect menu and choose Normalize.
5. Set the number box under "Normalize maximum amplitude to:" to -1.0. This will eliminate the possibility of distortion when processing the file. Click OK.

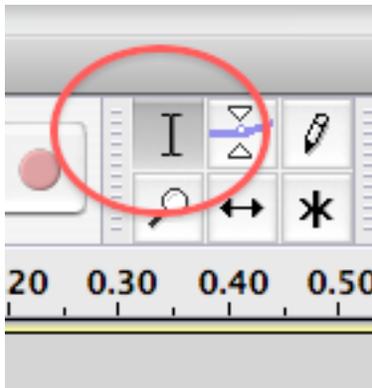


Cutting or Trimming

1. Click towards the beginning of the file and click the zoom button a few times to zoom in on the file.



2. Select as much of the file as you would like to delete by using the Select Tool



3. and click and drag on the sound file itself as shown below.



4. Simply press delete to remove the selected area. Alternately, you can select the area you wish to preserve using the same method and selecting Trim (command+T) from the Edit menu. This will trim the sound file to the selected area only.

Adding fades

Because cutting/trimming audio can result in unpleasant clicks at the beginning and end of the file, it is usually necessary to add a fade-in and a fade-out to the file.

1. Select a small amount of beginning of the sound file as indicated above, and select Effect -> Fade In. Repeat with the very end of the file selecting Effect -> Fade Out.

Using the zoom functions as indicated above is helpful in selecting the appropriate amount of the file to fade in or out. Remember too that you can always undo the processing, so you can experiment with the amount of fade applied.

Saving your work

Most important is to save your work and export your file. Clicking Save in the project will save the project itself, data files and all. To save the changes made to the sound file itself it is necessary to export the file.

1. Select File -> Export
2. Choose a name for the file in the top box.
3. In the drop-down dialogue box at the bottom of the window, select the file format for your sound file. For compressed files, choose mp3, aac, or OGG, being careful that the file type is suitable for the end media or venue for the sound file. You may select the Options button to further specify file format parameters.

4. Click Save.
5. If you wish to keep the document for later editing, select File -> Save to save an .aup Audacity project file. You can later open this project in audacity.

For Further Help

For help, see the Audacity Support page on the Sourceforge site

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

or select Help -> Manual (in web browser) to open the Audacity manual.