

# GETTING STARTED WITH AUDACITY

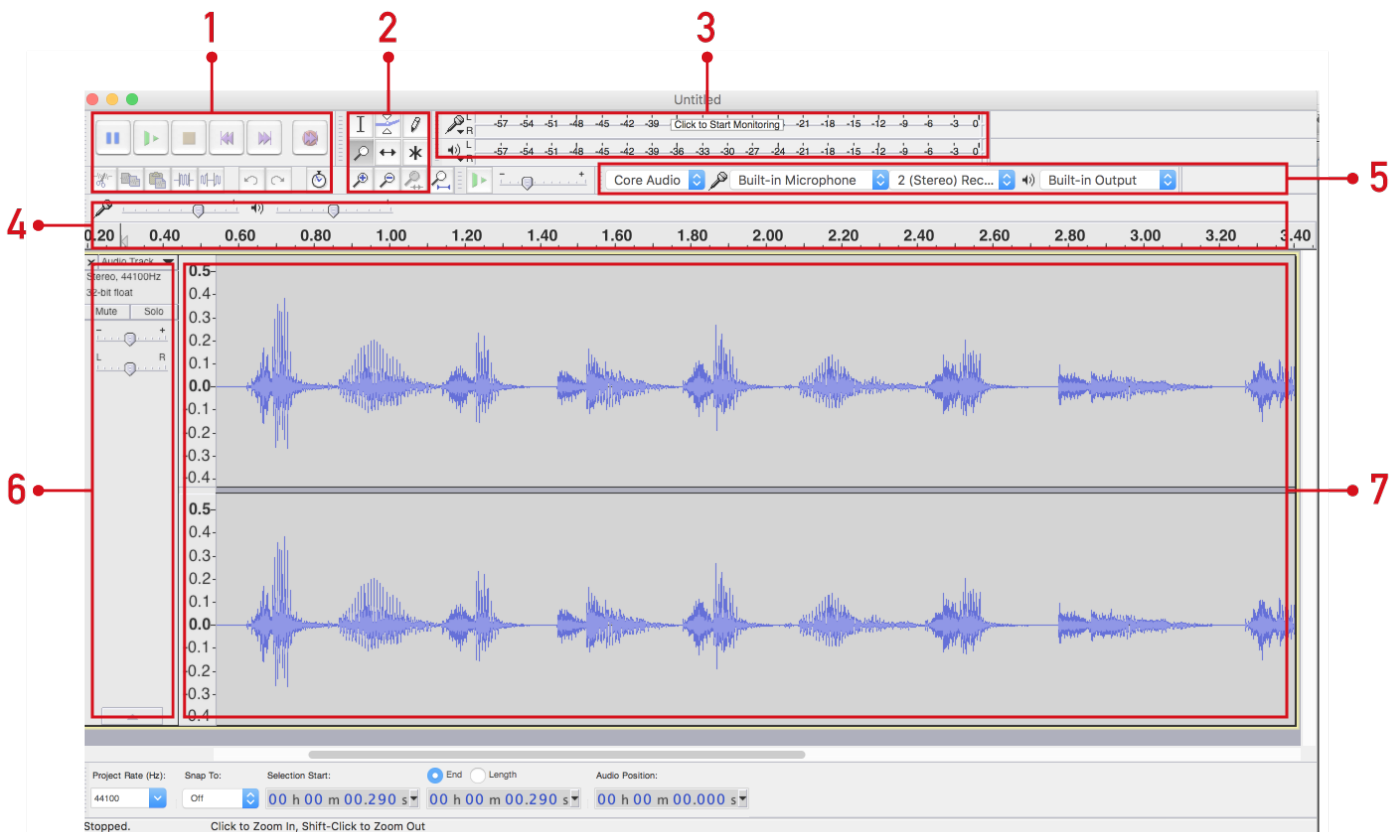
Audacity is free, open source, cross platform software used for recording and editing audio.

You can download Audacity 1.1.2 here: <http://www.audacityteam.org/>

It is recommended that you stay away from downloading Audacity from a SourceForge website. This will prevent you from downloading older versions of Audacity that might be bundled with apps and junkware.

## AUDACITY CHEAT SHEET #1:

The Basics of the Audacity Interface



### 1. Transport Toolbar

Use the Transport toolbar controls to: Pause, Play, Stop, Skip To Start, Skip to End and Record. Keyboard Shortcuts: The spacebar will always start and stop playback at the beginning of a selected region. You can try hitting the 'P' key during playback anytime you want pause and play from where the cursor has stopped.

### 2. Tools Toolbar

The Tools toolbar is essential for editing your audio files. Here you can select the Selection, Envelope, Draw, Zoom, Time Shift and Multi-Tool tools.

### 3. Meters toolbar

The Meters toolbar allows you to monitor the input of your microphone source. Aim to record your voice so they reach -12 db with maximum peaks at -6 db on the meters.

### 4. Mixer Toolbar

The Mixer Toolbar is where you go to adjust the recording volume of your microphone input and set the playback volume to listen to your project in Audacity.

### 5. Device Toolbar

The Device Toolbar allows you to select your Audio Host, Recording Device, Recording Channels and Playback Device. Using the Device Toolbar is the equivalent of setting your input and output under Preferences. NOTE: On **Mac OS X** the only choice is Core Audio.

### 6. Track Control Panel

The Track Control Panel allows you to Mute, Solo, Close, Adjust Panning and overall gain (Volume) over each individual track. NOTE: The Track Control Panel contains an Audio Track Dropdown Menu that allows you to Name the track and gives advanced splitting and joining track features.

### 7. Audio Track

The Audio Track contains your recordings. \* Here is where you will be able to edit and mix Stereo Audio Tracks and Single Audio Track (Mono, Left or Right).

\* Please note that not all files in Audacity will come from recording to tracks. At anytime you can open audio files by either dragging the files into the current project window, or choose **File > Import > Audio**. Files can be opened into a new project window with **File > Open....**

## GENERAL RECORDING CONSIDERATIONS:

### Microphone placement.

For any audio recording, there is a sweet spot where the microphone is picking up the voice, AND, the least amount of room tone. (Hums, furnace sounds, traffic etc.)

If you are TOO close to the mic it will record all your "P" pops and "S" sounds. Too far away and you will sound distant. GENERALLY you want to be 1-1.5 ft. away from the mic and you MUST monitor with headphones.

### Find a quiet location.

Think your spot is quiet? Close your eyes for 20 seconds and just listen. If you can hear the air conditioner, the computer hum, voices, the refrigerator, traffic, etc. so will the microphone. And while it is sometimes possible to remove these sounds, it is a BIG undertaking. It is always BEST to get it right and NOT try to fix it in postproduction.

### Check your levels.

You want to record voice at -12 db. Not too loud or quiet but this mid-level can accommodate fluctuations in speech. Again, you will want headphones to check the sound quality, and set your recording quality, if possible to .wav with a minimum setting of 128kbps.

There are many other options like mp3 etc. But you want to start with the largest file type you can to avoid compression at this stage.