

Quickstart Guide: Audacity

Preparation

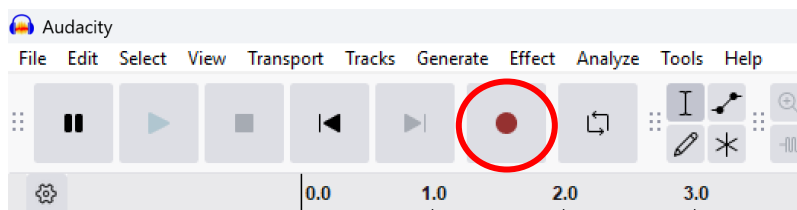
If you have an external microphone you can use for recording, this will always give the highest quality audio and should be your first choice. However, a headset or clip-on mic can also record good quality audio. The microphone should be close enough to capture crisp audio, but not so close that it picks up loud breath sounds. Speak clearly and articulate well for the best possible recording.

Before you begin, ensure you are in the quietest environment possible, that windows are closed, and that all computer and phone notifications are silenced. If possible, avoid recording in a room with too many hard surfaces such as a large lounge with hardwood floors as this can create or increase echoes. Smaller rooms with soft furnishings (at least directly in front of the speaker) soak up audio and prevent reverb. And if at any point during the recording you become aware of unwanted sounds such as a doorbell, dog bark, or errant child, simply stop for a moment and continue once the noise has abated.

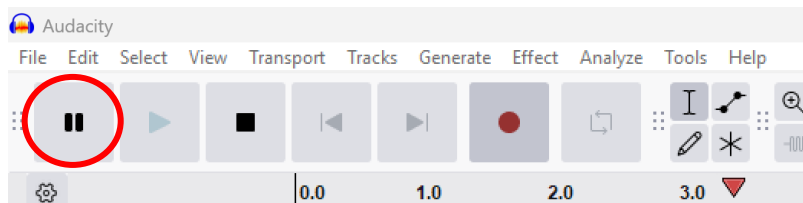
We also recommend reading your script aloud before recording, so that you sound more relaxed in your final recording.

Recording

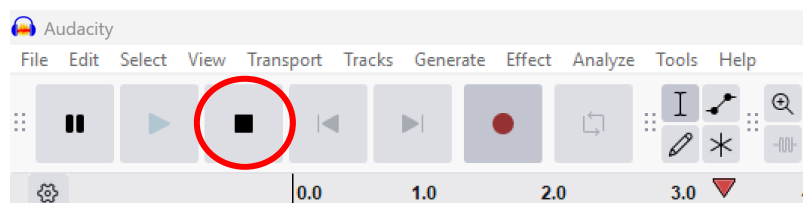
- Start by connecting your microphone
- Open **Audacity**
- When ready, press “**Rec**” button



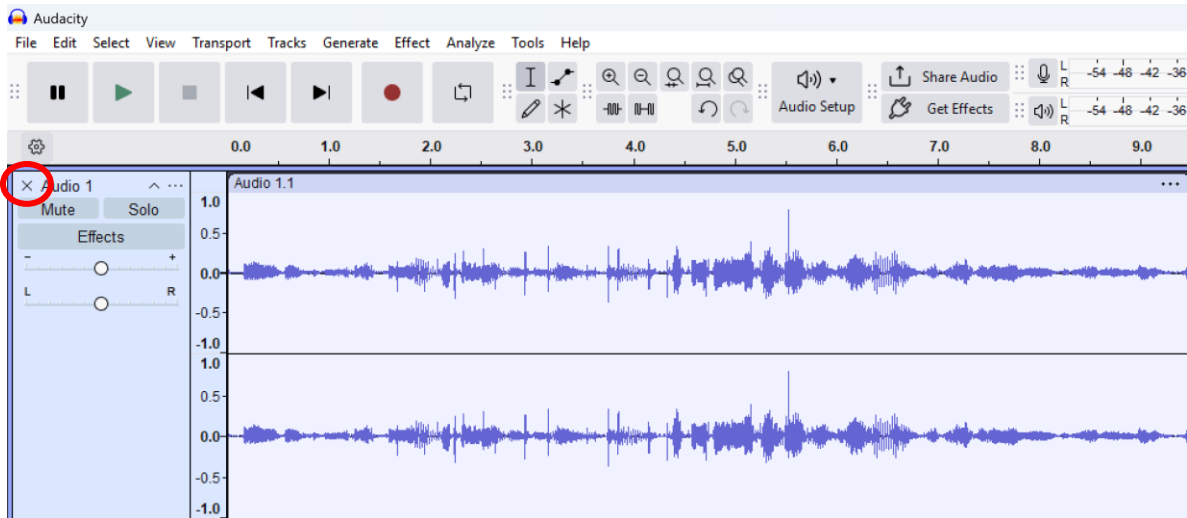
- Read your script, and remember to project your voice and smile while speaking
- If you need to pause at any point, for water or breath, simply press the “**Pause**” button



- Once you have finished recording press the “**Stop**” button



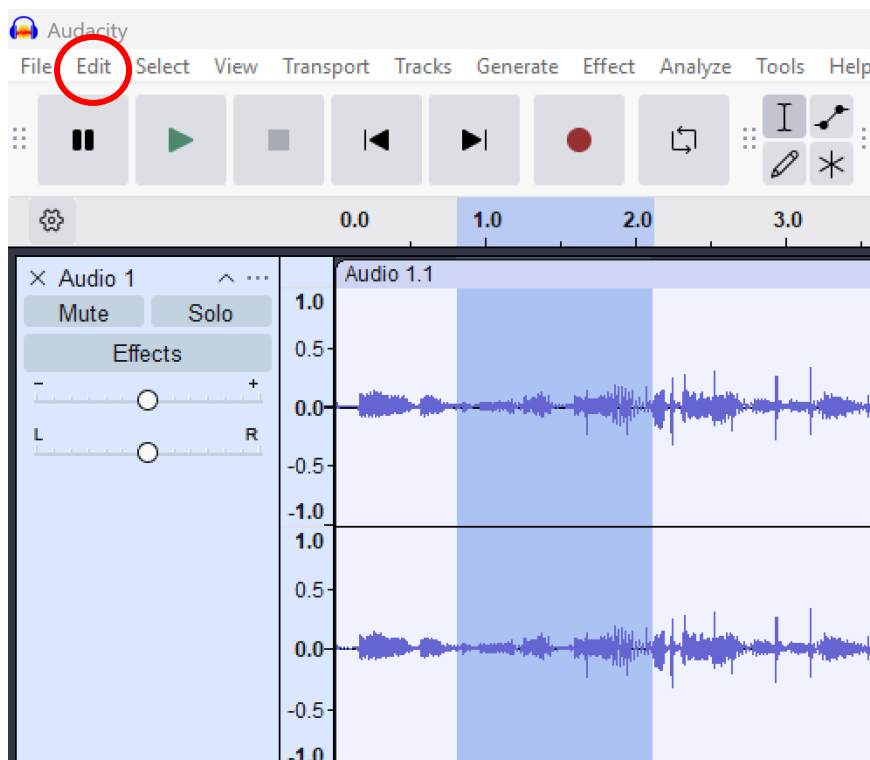
- If you are not happy with the recording then simply **close** the track you have created, and start again



Editing

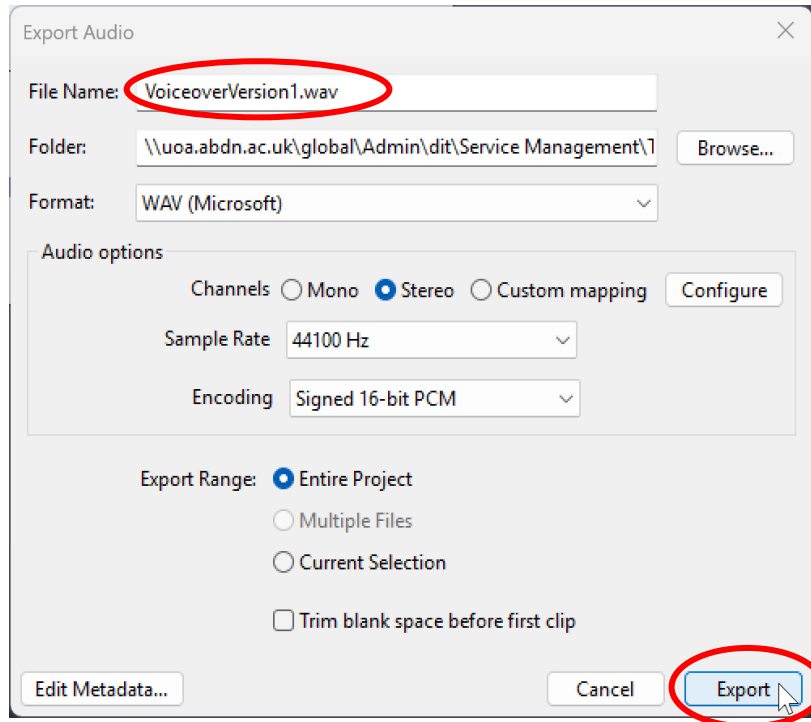
It is possible to edit your recording before saving it as an audio file. Audacity utilises the existing keyboard shortcuts on Windows, so you can very easily cut (*Ctrl + X*), copy (*Ctrl + C*), paste (*Ctrl + V*), undo (*Ctrl + Z*) and delete (*Backspace*) sections of your projects:

Click and drag to select the area you want to adjust, then use options in the 'Edit' menu (or keyboard shortcuts) to delete, copy or reorganise sections of your file.



Exporting

- If you are happy with your track, then you need to **export** a WAV or MP3 file:
 - WAV files are the highest quality, but are only usable by Windows computers
 - MP3 files are slightly lower quality, but are universal and easier to share
- Click “**File**” then “**Export**”.
- **Save** your file with a meaningful name.



- Close Audacity

Further Information

See further resources on our [Audacity page on Toolkit](#).