

# Using Audacity to Record from Home

Audacity is free audio editing and recording software. Here's the download link:

<https://www.audacityteam.org/download/>

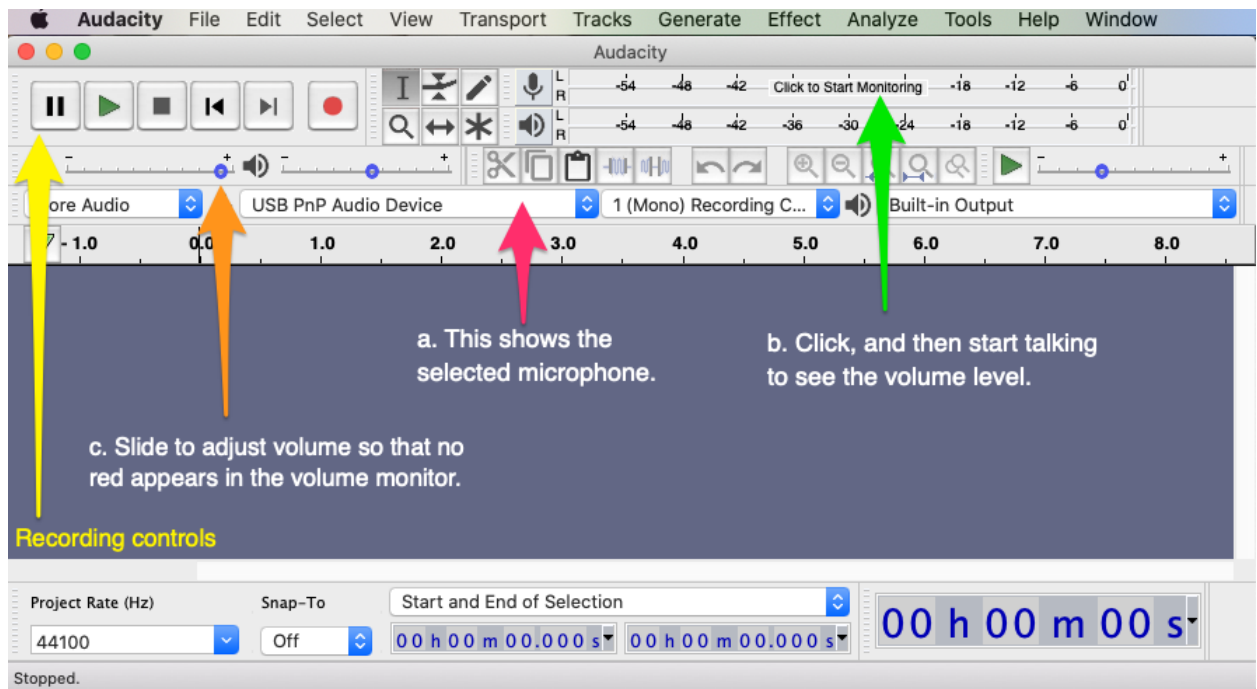
Audacity is capable of doing much more than we need for Audio-Reader. These instructions are just the basics for understanding how to record and save your projects for A-R. If you're using a Windows computer, your screen might look a bit different, but the program functions the same way for both Windows and Mac.

Need help? For a firehose of Audacity information, use the online manual.

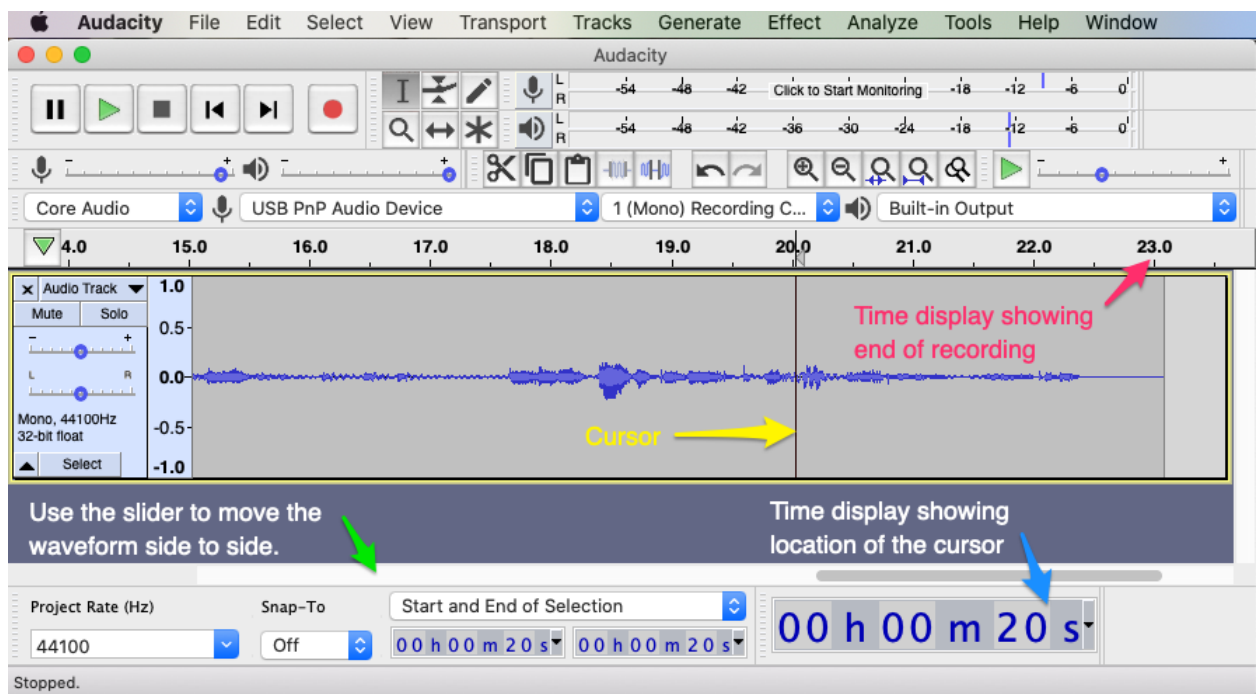
<https://manual.audacityteam.org/>

## Getting to know Audacity

1. Connect the microphone BEFORE you open the Audacity program.
2. When you open the software, you'll see a blank project. Look at the toolbars across the top. If your toolbars aren't quite the same, open the View menu, select Toolbars and make sure the toolbars selected are at least Transport, Recording Meter, Playback Meter, Edit, Device, and Time.
3. The Device toolbar is the one that shows your microphone (a). If you see Built-in Microphone, click the drop-down arrow to select your external microphone. If it doesn't appear in the list, check to make sure the mic is plugged in, and then click the Transport menu -> Rescan Devices, which should make your mic appear in the list.



4. Check the volume level by clicking the microphone icon to start monitoring (b). Begin talking. If you see red in the display on that line, adjust the volume with the slider (c).
5. Now you're ready to record. Click the red dot in the recording controls to begin OR press R. A waveform of the recording appears below the toolbars.
6. To pause recording, press P.
7. To listen to a part of the recording, put the cursor where you want to start, and press the spacebar.

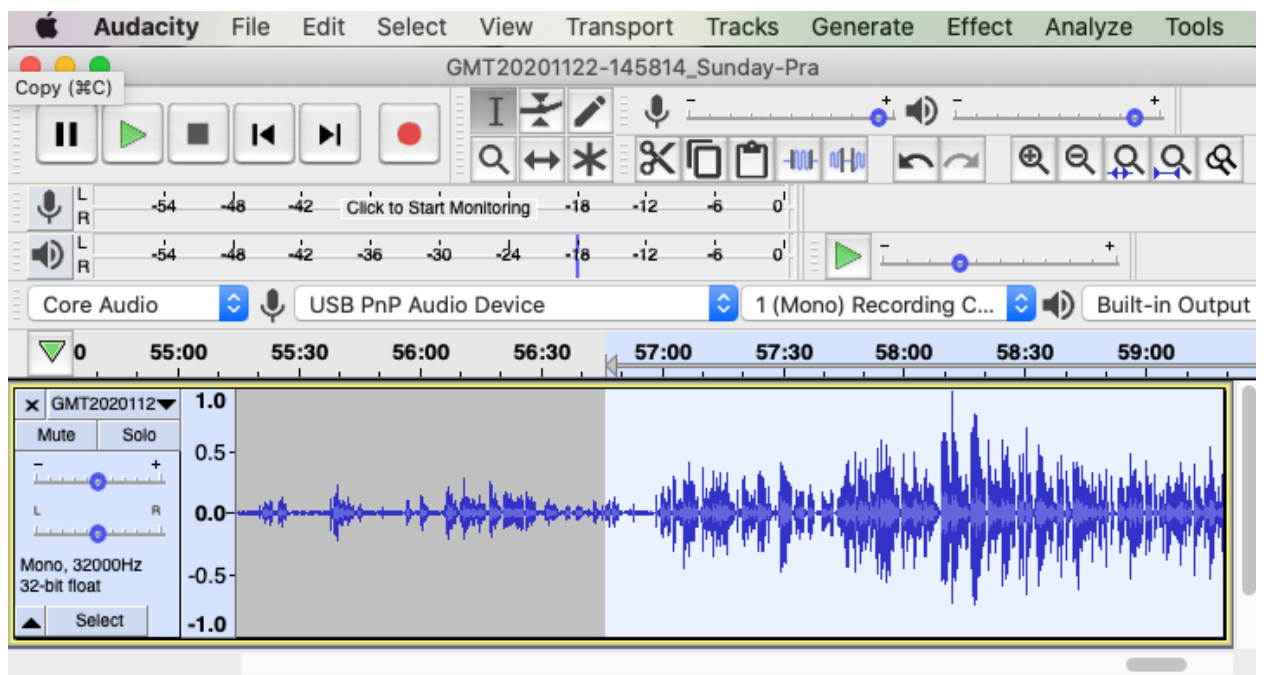


8. Note the time display below the waveform. This shows where the cursor is (usually at the end of the recording). You can also use the slider to move the waveform horizontally to see the time across the top.

## Making edits

Audacity will not allow you to record over a section. Recording always begins at the end of the existing recording. To edit a section you just recorded, you'll select the section at the end, delete it, and then re-record.

1. Place the cursor in the waveform more or less where you plan to erase. A vertical line appears where the cursor is. Press the spacebar to play from that spot.
2. Drag the cursor from the point where you want to start the deletion to the end of the waveform. The waveform box changes color so you can see what you're about to delete.



3. Press the delete key on the keyboard. The selected section disappears, and you can begin recording again.
4. Made a mistake and deleted too much? You can undo! Press Command-Z (Mac) or Ctrl-Z (Windows), OR select Undo from the Edit menu.

## Saving files

Audacity saves files as projects by default. So if you do a routine save, it won't be in a format that's usable by Audio-Reader. It's a good idea to save as an Audacity project (File -> Save Project -> Save Project) first. Then export it as a WAV file, which is what you will send to Audio-Reader. Here's one of several different methods for saving.

1. From the top menu, select File -> Export. Then choose Export as MP3 or Export as WAV. (See next section on file formats.)
2. The file save dialog box appears. Choose where to save it (see below for suggestions on this). Ignore the various options. Name the file using the conventions given to you by Audio-Reader for your publication (e.g., TopCap-Nov19-part1) and click Save.
3. After you save it, another dialog box appears for editing metadata tags. Click OK. (Note: you can ignore this entirely by selecting "Don't show this when exporting audio.")

## File considerations

### Choosing file formats

Audio-Reader uses WAV files. However, these can be quite large and thus difficult to upload. Try saving as WAV at first, and if they turn out to be too big, save as MP3.

### Saving to file locations

The following is just a suggestion for organizing and keeping track of your work.

1. Make a folder on the hard drive called something like 'Audio-Reader'. This is also where you could store other A-R information such as timing or login information.
2. Inside the Audio-Reader folder, make a folder called 'temp'. Save the recordings in this folder. This way, you can find them easily for uploading, and then for deleting them as soon as they have aired. The next section on uploading assumes this file structure.

## Uploading recordings

1. In the browser (Chrome, Firefox, or Safari), click the link to the Audio-Reader Dropbox.  
<https://www.dropbox.com/request/MxiUOT9E1CiQLhKrgUYY>  
(Suggestion: Make a bookmark for the link and put it on the browser toolbar.)
2. Click Add Files, choose Files from Computer, and navigate to the folder where you saved the files. Select and add the files.
3. Follow the instructions to complete the upload.

## Audacity key commands

These will make your life much easier when you are recording! There are more of them, and they are all available from the menus at the top of the Audacity window.

Record - R

Pause recording - P

Play - Spacebar

Stop playing - Spacebar

Stop playing and set the cursor where you stop - X

Pause playing - P