

How to use Audacity to Make a Podcast

1. **Plug in the microphones. For a PC:** Use a combination microphone/headphone. Plug the red end into the microphone jack of the computer and the black end into the headphone jack. Turn the volume switch all the way up. For projects with multiple voices, use a Y-shaped splitter. **For a Mac:** Plug the USB microphone into the USB jack of the computer. Turn it on by pressing the button on the microphone stand.
2. **Log into your computer. Open the Audacity program.**
3. **Set your papers down on the table.** (If you hold them in your hand, they will make noise).
4. **Make a test recording.** When you are ready to record, use your mouse to click on the red "RECORD" button on the top menu. Then begin to speak. You will see a blue pattern appear below. When it is a flat line, it is not picking up any sound (you might have plugged in your headphone/microphone jacks backwards!). When it is recording sound, you will see clumps of blue. Try to speak loudly enough so that the blue clumps fill up about half of the recording bar. Record about ten seconds of talking so you can test the levels.
5. **When you are done speaking, press the STOP button on the top menu.**
6. **Press the REWIND key to hear your voices.** If you like what you hear, continue with the next step. If you don't, go to FILE > NEW and start over again.
7. **Edit out the blank spots at the beginning and end of your recording.** (It's blank when the blue line is horizontal.) Highlight the part you want to get rid of at the beginning. Then click EDIT > CUT. Repeat at the end.
8. **Export into mp3 Format.** This converts your file into a format that can be heard on the Web or burned to CD. Go to FILE > EXPORT AS MP3. It will ask where you want to save it and what you want it called. (If you are making a class recording, you might want to ask students to use their first name, last name, or student number as the name of the file). If you're working on a class project, you might want to put a folder on your desktop into which students can save. Click SAVE.
9. **Add descriptive metadata.** Now a new dialog box will come up, asking you for some metadata (some words that describe what you just recorded).
 - a. For TITLE, give the name of the student's project (i.e., "Dinosaur Interview")
 - b. For ARTIST, type the student(s)' first name(s) *only*.
 - c. For ALBUM, type the name of the project. (Keep this to one easily-spelled word to avoid student error.)
 - d. Use the pull-down menu to select SPOKEN WORD as the genre.
 - e. Click "OK." Your mp3 has been made and is ready to be shared!
10. **Share your work.**
 - a. **To burn to CD,** you will transfer your file to iTunes. (You will need to be on a computer with a CD burner in order to do this.) Open iTUNES. Go to FILE > IMPORT. Navigate to the file you just made. And select it. Voila! Now your mp3 file is in iTunes. You can now build a playlist and burn it (if your computer has a CD burner).
To post to the web, try uploading your file to a free service like switchpod.com or odeo.com. You will need to open an account here in order for this to work. If your building has purchased web space, ask your Media Specialist for instructions on how to upload the file to that space.