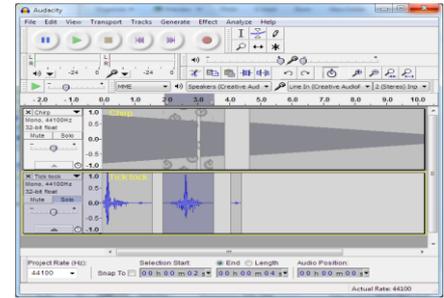


Blended Learning Essentials: Getting Started

Crib Sheet: Audacity



What is Audacity?

Audacity is a free, easy-to-use, multi-track audio editor and recorder for Windows, Mac OS X, GNU/Linux and other operating systems available from <http://web.audacityteam.org>. Programs like Audacity are called 'open source software', because their source code is available for anyone to study or use. You can download the software from the [website](http://web.audacityteam.org) above and then use it to record, edit, mix and export sound files as .Wav or .MP3 format sound files. Audacity can be used to create educational sound files, which are known as 'podcasts' (from iPod – the Apple device for listening to digital music).

Where can I find out how to use Audacity?

The best way to find out how to use Audacity is to access the many useful video tutorials on 'Youtube'. [Rebecca Wilson](#) has created two video tutorials: the first is a [basic Audacity tutorial](#) along with a slightly more [advanced tutorial here](#). But there are loads more to choose from. If you have a Lynda.com account there are detailed training videos there as well.

How can Audacity be used in learning and teaching?

Audacity is a very easy to use and popular sound recording and editing tool and many institutions will already have it available on their network or it can be easily downloaded. Many learners find it easier to process auditory information and tone of voice can communicate a tutor's sincerity much more effectively than writing. Learners also have their own device such as iPods and smartphones to listen to sound in any location. It is very easy for learners to create a sound piece using Audacity either on their own, in pairs or as a whole class activity. There are websites with free sound effects which can be easily incorporated into Audacity, for example [FindSounds](#). The finished sound file or podcast can be shared on Moodle, or many audio hosting websites for example [Podcast Machine](#) or [SoundCloud](#). There are also free and easy online sound recording and editing tools available which have similar features to Audacity such as [Soundation Studio](#).

Within the Vocational Education and Training sector, possible uses of Audacity that could be adapted to your own educational context are:

- Teachers or trainers use Audacity to record a welcome message for distance learners posted in Moodle
- Learners in a work place setting create audio diaries using Audacity;
- Performing arts learners import the audio they created in Audacity into Windows Moviemaker and turn it into a news flash-style promotional video using still images;
- Teachers or trainers interview specialist practitioners in the fashion industry e.g. pattern cutters, retail,

- fashion retail about their routes into the profession and how it has changed, future developments;
- Learners revise a topic using Audacity to create a short audio summary of a key elements of the topic to post to a peer support forum in Moodle;
 - Modern Foreign Language or ESOL learners create a radio show incorporating news, interviews and weather reports;
 - Learners create group podcast with good ideas, revision tips, and ways to learn things;
 - The teacher or trainer creates a model audio recording for MFL speaking exam;
 - Learners tell a story recorded in Audacity and incorporate appropriate sound effects.

Using Audacity in the Vocational Education and Training Sector

Level 3 Creative Media Production

The teacher or trainer has set an assignment for Creative Media Production learners, who have been taught to use Audacity for recording and editing sound, to create a 30 second radio advertisement.

- Learners use audacity to record speech from a script.
- Learners use the effects options to time-compress their recording to precisely 30 seconds.
- As an extension task, learners add in music and sound effects they have recorded themselves and located on the web.

Level 3 Plumbing Studies

The teacher, trainer or mentor has created a bank of short audio tutorials to guide apprentices through fault recognition posted on Moodle:

- Apprentices are able to listen to the tutorials whilst travelling to their work place to prepare and are able to access them via their mobile phone on site if required.

Level 2 Business Administration

The teacher or trainer introduces the weekly assignment for a distance learning course that can be downloaded and listened to by learners on the move:

- The teacher or trainer explains the assignments requirements and refers them to the handbook for further guidance.
- The teacher or trainer emphasises their availability and ways that learners can get support.