Audio Editing Tips: 3 Easy Steps to Better Voice Recordings

Robert Hershenenow
rdhersh@gmail.com
(510) 368-6355
Why edit?
Edit for better sound.
Edit to improve timing.
Edit for easier recording.
Guide to the Audacity Project Window

1. Menu Bar  
2. Transport Toolbar  
3. Tools Toolbar  
4. Recording Meter Toolbar  
5. Playback Meter Toolbar  
6. Mixer Toolbar  
7. Edit Toolbar  
8. Transcription Toolbar  
9. Device Toolbar  
10. Timeline  
11. Track Control Panel  
12. Audio Track  
13. Label Track  
14. Selection Toolbar  
15. Status Bar

Hover over and click on the image to learn more. Skip the image.
Audacity

http://audacityteam.org

Tutorials

- Editing an Audio File - Import the file, edit and export it
- Your First Recording - Record microphone, guitar, keyboard
- Mixing Voice with Background Music - For podcasts
- Recording Multi-track Overdubs - Record over other tracks
- Vocal Removal and Isolation
- Looping - make an audio loop with Audacity
- Making Ringtones - For your cellphone
- Recording streaming audio playing on the computer

- Copying tapes, LPs and other media to CD or computer
- Click and pop removal techniques
- Splitting a recording into separate tracks
- Burning Audio CDs and How to import CDs
- Exporting to iTunes and Importing from iTunes
- Sample workflow for LP digitization
- Sample workflow for exporting to iTunes
- Recording 78rpm records

Using Audacity

Quick Help

- Getting Started - Recording, Importing, Editing, Exporting...

Audacity Foundations

- Managing Audacity Projects - Audacity's internal workspace
- Audacity Setup and Configuration
  - Preferences - changing your settings and reset to default
- Toolbars Overview - including how to arrange Toolbars
- Audio Tracks, Waveform view and Spectrogram view
- Label Tracks
- Playing and Recording, Quick-Play and Scrubbing
- Importing audio and Exporting audio files - For use in other programs
  - LAME MP3 export and FFmpeg import/export libraries for more formats
  - On-Demand Loading of uncompressed files
  - Metadata Editor
- Navigation Tips, Playback Tips and Audio Alignment Tips
- Keyboard shortcuts

Editing with Audacity

- Selecting audio and Spectral Selection
- Clips - individual sections within an audio track
- Splitting and Joining Stereo Tracks
- Zooming
- Effects, Generators and Analyzers
- Creating a Crossfade
- Mixing Audio Tracks
- Undo, Redo and History

Help with Advanced Topics

- Sync-Locked Track Groups
- Accessibility - Audacity for the visually impaired
- Latency when recording overdubs
- Chains - for batch processing and effects automation
- Crash Recovery
- Customizing Audacity, Scripting and Simplifying Menus
3 Big Steps
Big Step 1

Trim Excess Material
Big Step 2

Reduce Noise
Big Step 3

Optimize
• Cut, Copy, Paste
• Generate Silence
• Adjust EQ
waveform
my voice
ambient noise
noise spike
trim excess, reduce noise, optimize voice
but first, this noise spike...
select the area (click & drag)
view the selected area
refine the selection
use the “Amplify” effect…
...to reduce the amplitude
goodbye spike
goodbye spike
now, reduce the ambient noise
select a noise sample
select “Noise Reduction” effect
get Noise Profile
select entire waveform
preview the change (listen)
adjust parameters, or...
click OK
Audacity’s graphic equalizer
a high-pass filter blocks low frequencies
normalization optimizes volume
normalization optimizes volume
Effect > Normalize
Normalize to -1 dB
click OK...
Normalized to -1 dB
now, trim the “excess material”
select the excess material and delete
select the fade-in area
apply the fade-in effect
now the track fades in
now, a trim and fade-out at the end
listen before you edit
listen before you edit
now, a trim...
now, a fade-out...
…and…
Voila!
select…
...and delete to tighten timing
place the cursor...
choose Generate > Silence...
specify length...
...and click OK to add time
The Levelator
http://www.conversationsnetwork.org/levelator

the last step is The Levelator
Thank You.

Robert Hershenenow
rdhersh@gmail.com
(510) 368-6355
Set up project file structure.

Special Bonus Section!
Save original recordings.

- Project
  - Original Recordings
  - Also backup remotely
Save working files in increments.

Save these incrementally, and keep a log.
A separate folder for outputs.
A separate folder for extras.
Organization saves time later on.

- Project
  - Original Recordings
  - Working files
  - Finished Files
  - Other