

Lesson 2 – How to record audio using Audacity

Today will be about recording your voice using **Audacity**. Audacity is free and opensource software that runs on both Mac and Windows (and LINUX). We will also need **LAME Encoder** to convert our recordings to MP3. Today you also need **a microphone or headset**.

Step 1:

Download and install the needed software on your computer



http://etwinning.dorok.info/audacity_win.exe
http://etwinning.dorok.info/lame_win.exe



if you are on an older PowerPC Mac (Powerbook, Pro Mac, iBook):
http://etwinning.dorok.info/audacity_osx_ppc.zip
http://etwinning.dorok.info/lame_osx_ppc.zip

if you are on a newer Intel Mac (Macbook, Macbook Pro, Mac Pro):
http://etwinning.dorok.info/audacity_osx_intel.zip
http://etwinning.dorok.info/lame_osx_intel.dmg



if you are a LINUX user, please download the needed files (Audacity and LAME) from the Audacity website: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/linux>

Please install Audacity first and choose the language you'd like Audacity to use.

Then please install LAME. This is merely about copying one files onto your system. (Windows: we only need the .DLL file). Please **put the LAME Encoder somewhere you can find it later on** – maybe your home- or programs-folder.

Step 2:

If you need, please connect your headset to your computer. Most laptops do have internal microphones, if not please connect your microphone to the microphone jack (normally that's the **pink** connector).



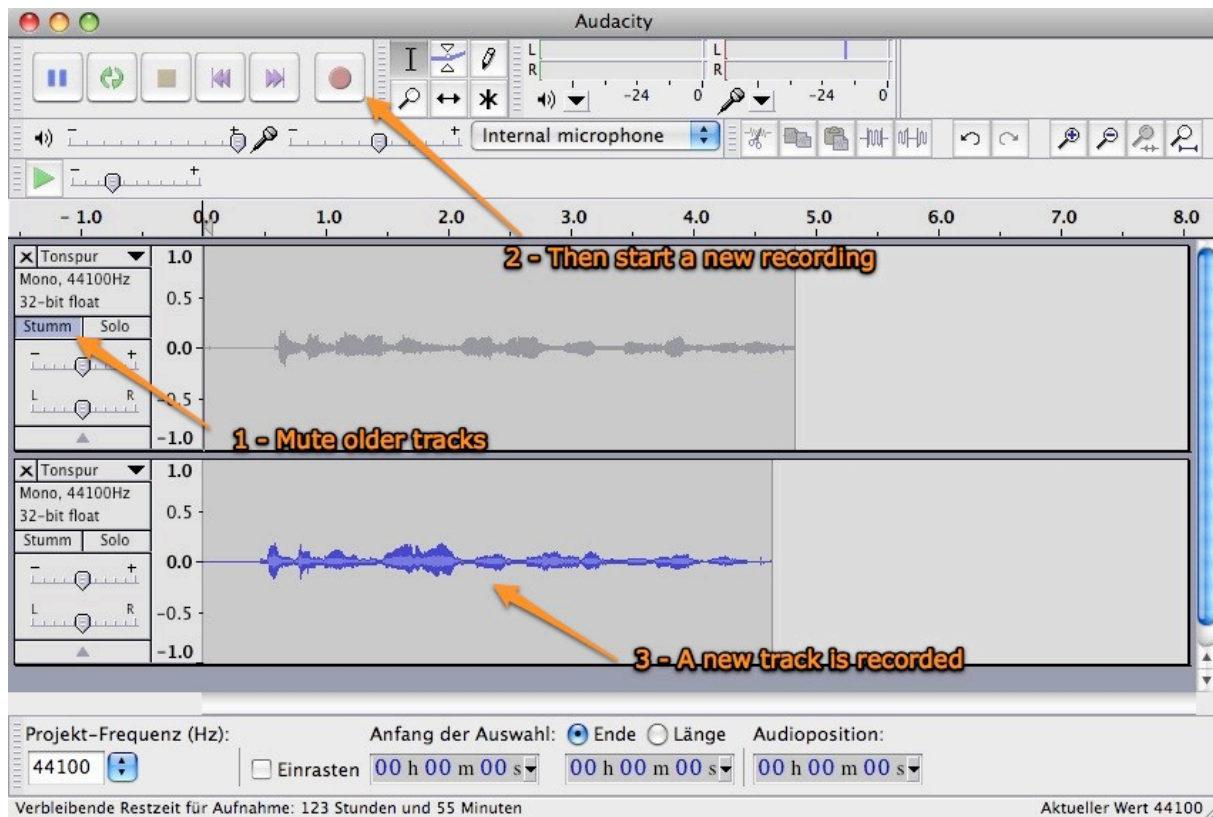
Step 3:

Audacity looks a bit different on Windows and Mac – I therefore decided to have some Mac and some Windows screenshots – I am sure you will find things even if they look slightly different on your machine. Start Audacity and begin your recording.

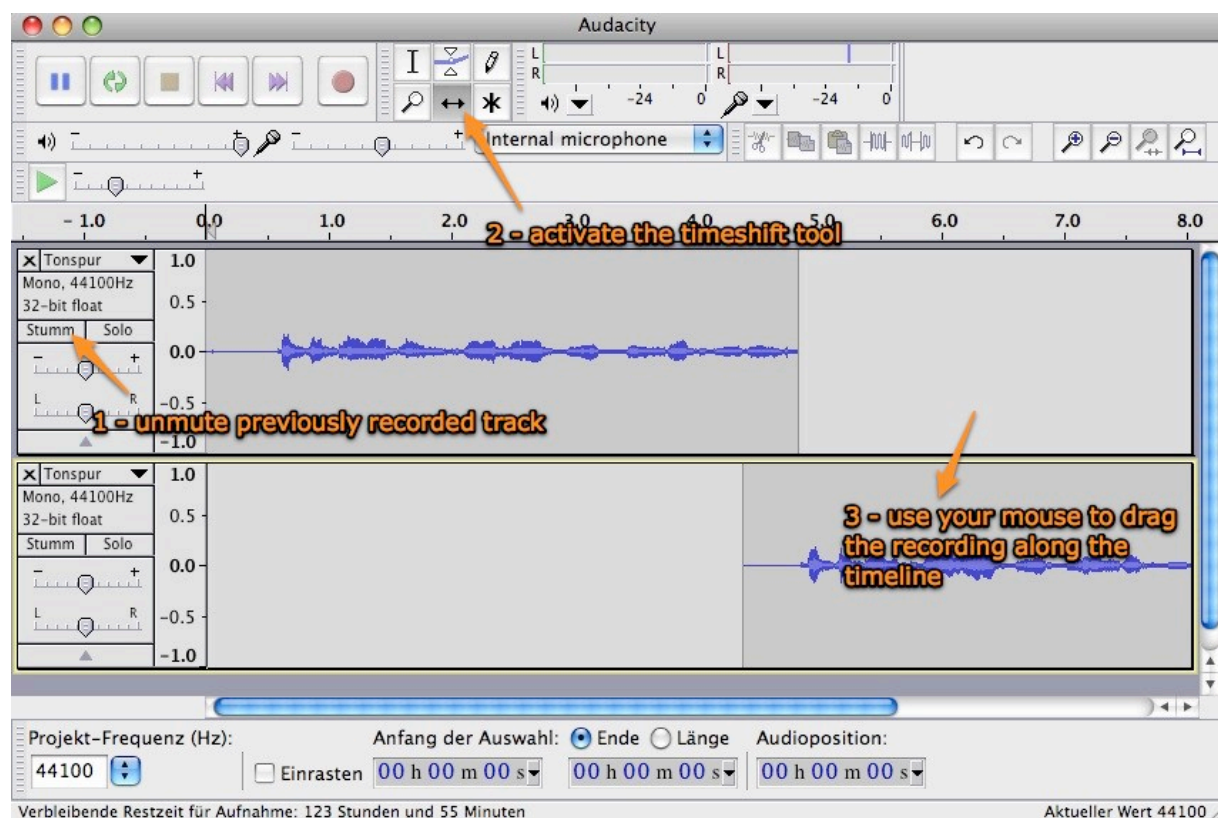


About multitrack-recording:

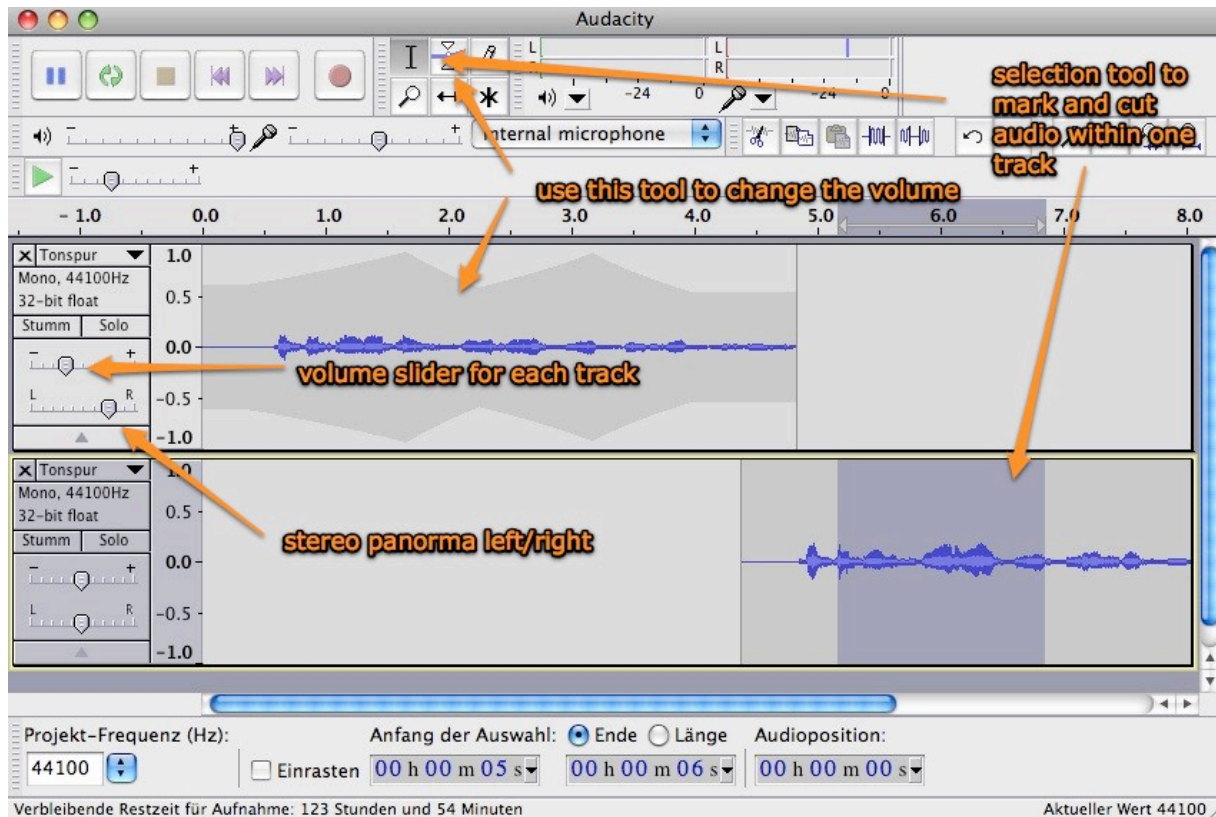
When you hit the record button a second time, Audacity records another track. As you don't want it to playback your first recording while you record a new one, make sure that you mute the older tracks before beginning a new recording:



If you now hit the play button you will hear both tracks playing at the same time (of course you have to **unmute** the first track to do so). As we do not want the tracks to play simultaneously we have to rearrange our recording a little bit:



As Audacity is a quite powerful audio-editor it would take a special seminar to cover all the things you can do with it. For those of you who'd like to dig in a bit deeper here are some hints – if you're not too much into audioediting you can skip this ;-)



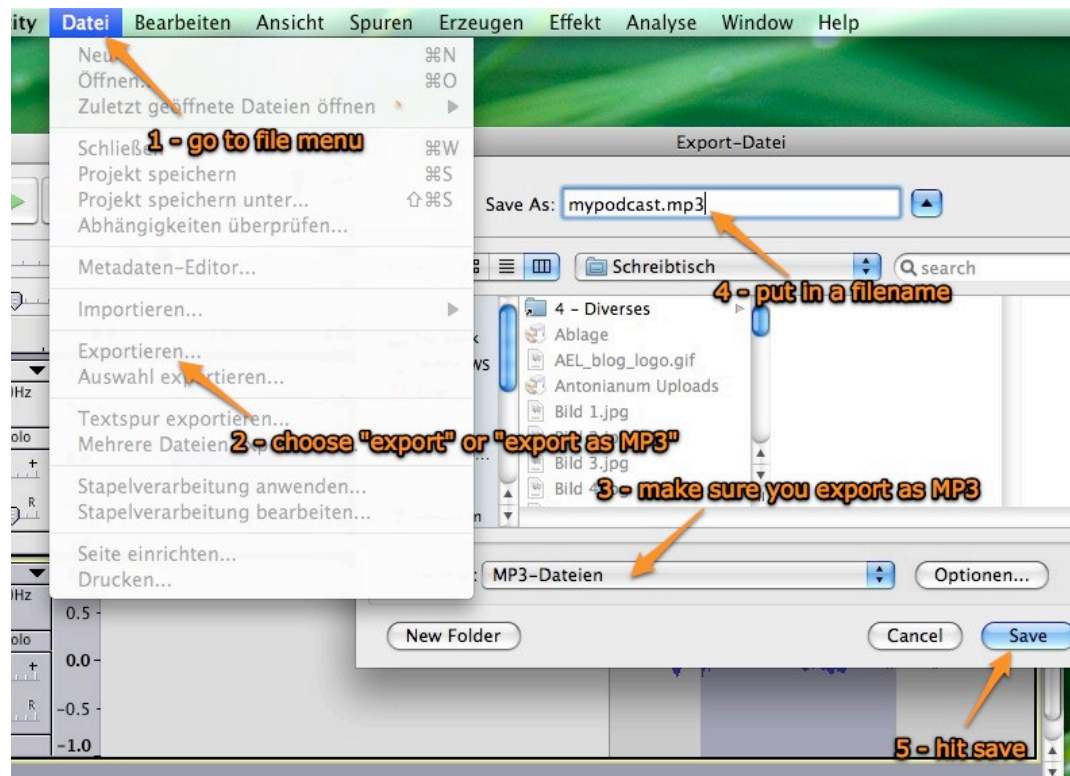
Step 4:

Now that your recording is ready you should save it. This **is a bit tricky** if you do it for the first time so **read carefully** and follow the instructions.

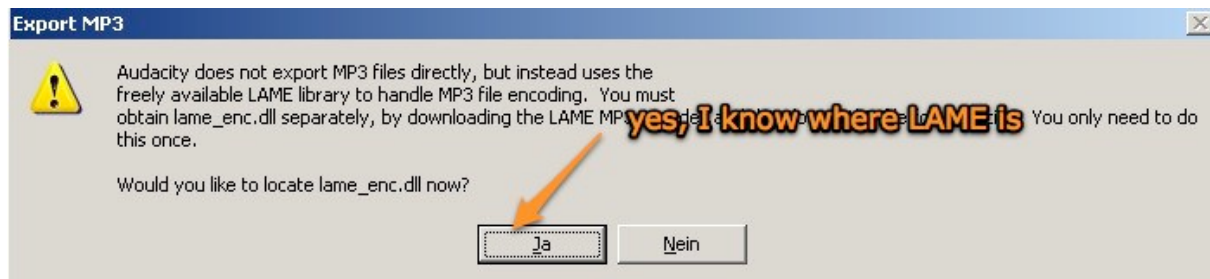
In order to use our recording in a podcast we need it to be in MP3-format. As the Fraunhofer Institute invented MP3 they ask programmers for a license fee if their software supports MP3 encoding. Of course opensource software like Audacity does not pay license fees – but there is help: **LAME Encoder** is opensource as well and it produces great MP3-files – without having to pay for it.

Audacity makes use of LAME to encode MP3-files. This is why you had to download it to your computer in step 1. **Do you still remember where you put the LAME Encoder? ;-)**

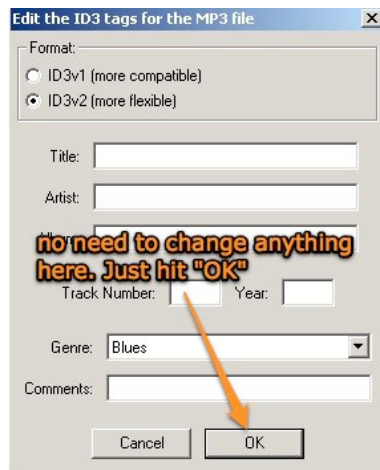
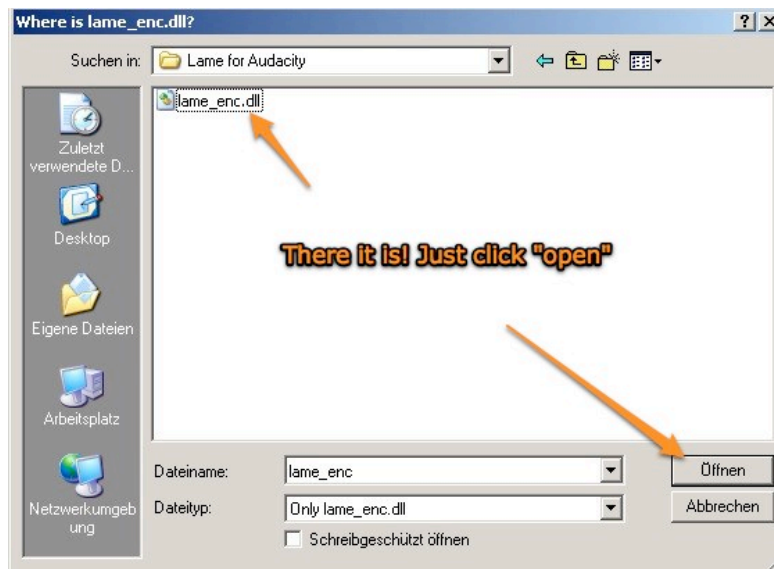
Inside Audacity go the "file" menu -> "export" -> "MP3" (this might differ between Windows and Mac, but you should find the "export as MP3" option somewhere in the file menu)



After clicking on "Save" Audacity will tell you that it needs LAME to encode MP3-files.



Browse through your system and find LAME. (If you use windows you should normally find it in c://programs/lame for audacity)

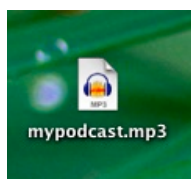


The next dialogue is not important for us – it asks us to provide ID3-Tags which are used by MP3-players to show you artist's name, album and other information about the title that is being played. Just hit "ok" as we won't need the ID3-Tags.

If you recorded more than one track in step 3 another message will pop up telling you that those tracks will be mixed down into one (or two if you are working with a stereo file) channels in your final file. That is okay, so simply hit "OK".



That's it. You're done and you should find your MP3 file in the location you saved it to.



Now that you worked your way through lesson 3 it's time to head over to the files section and look for today's task. Be sure that it has to do with Audacity and MP3-files ;-)