

Lesson 1, Part 2

And welcome back again. If you successfully installed Audacity, you'll see its icon on your desktop here, looks like a pair of blue headphones. Go ahead and double click on that and open the program. The first thing we're going to do is set up some preferences. So, come to Edit, Preferences, and make sure Devices is selected. We'll leave host here as it is, the default MME. Then for playback, make sure that your speakers from your sound card are selected. My built in sound card for this motherboard is Realtek high definition speakers here, so that's what I'm going to choose. For your recording device, also whatever your sound card is, is what you can use, that's what I'm doing here to prove what can be done.

Remember I said that earlier. I'm using the Realtek high definition which is the built in sound card for this computer. I also mentioned though that you could go through this tutorial with a USB mic, and you can see down here that if I were to do that, I would choose this device here, microphone USB audio device, as my recording device. But we're going to go ahead and show the zero to five dollar studio, and in doing that we're using the onboard sound card here, so I'm gonna choose Realtek. Leave channel set at mono and go ahead and click Okay.

For those of you who do have multiple sound cards, there's just one more quick thing we need to do. Go to the Start button, select Control Panel, and select Sounds and Audio Devices. In this window go to the Audio tab. Make sure the sound playback device, and the sound recording device, are set to same sound card that you selected in Audacity. Then go to the Voice tab, and do the same thing with voice playback and voice recording, then click Okay.

Now for Windows 7 users, we're going to come down here to Start and Control Panel, then we want to select Hardware and Sound, and under the sound row here, we want the last link, Manage Audio Devices. Then we wanna make sure Playback is selected and our sound card's output is selected like we just did in Audacity. Now, normally, I would use this line out for my interface here, which we'll talk about actually in the next course, but for right now since we're working with the computer's sound card, you wanna click here and click on set default. That moves the green check mark to your output. And we're not actually using speakers cause remember earlier we switched the headphone input into the speaker plug, the green circle in our sound card, so we just wanna make sure that there's a green check mark in your sound card's output.

Next, we wanna go to the Recording tab, and as usual I would have something like this selected, my interface. But we don't want that. We want the microphone that is connected into the pink jack of our sound card on the computer, so that's this one here, the Realtek high definition audio. So, make sure there's a green check mark in there. If there isn't, click on the Set Default. And then click on this to make sure it's selected and go to Properties, 'cause we're not done with the recording part yet. You need to go to levels and make sure that this level is set somewhere around 75% to start. Sometimes the default setting for a microphone in Windows 7 is way down here, way low, and you can barely hear it, so we need to move it up. So, set it to about 75 or so, and if it isn't loud enough, you can come back and bump this up. If it's too loud, you can bump this down.

Once that is at about 75% click Okay. Click Okay again. Come back to Audacity and we are ready to rock. Well, actually we're just gonna talk today. Come up to these colored buttons, don't pay attention to any of this other stuff. We'll learn about all that stuff later. For right now, you just need

to know about these buttons. They're called the transport controls, and represent one of the few carry overs from the old tape recorder days.

The first button we're concerned with is this red dot, which pretty universally means Record, which is what we're trying to do. So let's go ahead and press that and talk into your microphone and see what happens. "Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." Then hit this square, which means Stop, and look at what we've got. What is this? It's called, as it says here, an audio track. It's like a swim lane that goes horizontally across your screen and shows you the audio.

Now, let's go up to this other button that has two purple triangles pointing to the left. This used to be called Rewind in the tape recorder days and now they label it Skip to Start, or Home. I still refer to it as Rewind because I remember the old tape recorder days. But anyway, Skip to Start or Rewind, go ahead and click that button. And then press the green triangle which means Play, so we can listen to it. "Blah, blah blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." See how easy that was? I know, I know, the blah, blah, blahs weren't very helpful were they? So, we're gonna delete this track and we're gonna do something else. Come up to this "X" in the top left corner of the track here, click it and it goes away. We get a fresh screen.

So let's do it again and record something that sounds a little closer to what might be useful for you. Red dot. "Hi, and welcome to the first Home Brew audio podcast." Stop button, and there it is. Let's listen. Rewind. Play. "Hi, and welcome to the first Home Brew audio podcast." And that's all there is to it. Congratulations you just made your first audio recording. See how easy that was? You have just completed the first step to producing professional quality audio. In Lesson Two, we'll take our first steps into editing audio, doing something with the audio that you just recorded. So I'll talk to you again in Lesson Two.