

SoundEdit

To launch SoundEdit double-click on its icon. SoundEdit should then open and create a new empty document window. This is where the waveform of your soundfile will be displayed after recording.

From the Modify menu, choose Sound Format. In the window that appears set your sampling rate, resolution, and compression options (usually 44.100 kHz, 16 bits, none.) Then click OK.

SoundEdit will instruct you to cue input audio. (If the Controls window is not open go to the Window menu and select the Controls option.) Put your CD, tape, cassette, or other audio source into the appropriate player, making sure that it is properly connected to your computer, and cue it to the track you wish to record. (If you are using a microphone to record directly into the computer, just cue your speaker or musician to stand by.)

Start the source device manually or by clicking the onscreen Start button.

At the end of the selection, click the Stop button on the SoundEdit recording panel, then stop the source device.

An untitled waveform representing the audio you just recorded appears in the previously empty SoundEdit project window. (if you recorded in stereo, there will be two parallel waveforms, one for each channel, left and right.) Buttons at the top of the window give you access to a variety of signal-processing functions, such as normalisation, compression and equalisation and audio effects such as reverberation, echo and fade-in and fade-out. (For information on how to utilise these basic editing functions go to the Help menu and select SoundEdit help.)

When the selection sounds the way you want it, choose Save As from the File Menu. A window offering all the file options appears. Name your file, identify the folder where you want to save it, and from the File Format pulldown menu, choose the file type you want.

Click Save, and a progress bar will let you monitor the saving process. How long it takes depends on you computer's processing power, the file type, and size.

Audio Data

Stored in binary digital form, or bits, the computer-readable representation of sound waves.

Channel

A single stream of audio. An audio file with one channel is called mono (for monaural), with two - left and right is called stereo (for stereophonic.)

Resolution

Also known as sample size, the number of bits used to define the portion of sound wave captured in a single increment of time. Sample size is given in bits.

Sample

The smallest increment of a sound wave represented in an audio file, measured in bits, usually either 8 or 16 bits per sample. Sample is also used as a verb, to record.

Compression

Analogous to abbreviation, a process by which audio files are reduced in size without significant (or sometimes any) loss in information or quality.

Sampling Rate

Expressed in kilohertz (kHz), the number of samples captured per second. The three most common rates are 11.025 kHz (11,025 samples per second), 22.5 kHz, and 44.1 kHz.

Dynamic Range

The variance between the loudest and quietest part of a sound file, the maximum and minimum points on the audio signal.

Ripping

Also known as digital audio extraction, the process of translating Red Book Audio files into computer files without processing them through the computer's sound card.

Signal Processing

Any number of post-recording operations for digitally enhancing audio data.

Optimise

To use any of a variety of signal processing techniques to eliminate extraneous audio data and concentrate bits where they're most needed.

Psychoacoustic

Relating to the science of audio perception - the way the brain interprets sound stimuli.