

Importing .m4a Sound Files into Audacity

When you record your sounds for this project on a smart phone chances are that you are creating .m4a (.aac) files (mpeg 4 compressed audio files). If you are running Audacity on a Mac you should be able to import these files without a problem. On PC or Linux systems however you will need to install the optional FFmpeg library (see : https://manual.audacityteam.org/man/faq_installing_the_ffmpeg_import_export_library.html)

Exporting Sound Compositions as .mp3 Files from Audacity (vers. 2.3.2)

The LAME .mp3 library is now built-in with Audacity and you can simply go to File > Export Audio and export an .mp3 version of your final composition. Under options choose Variable bitrate (a quality setting of 4 or above should work well, going to 6, 7 or 8 decreases the sound quality considerably. Make sure to fill out the meta-data fields (artist name, track title, year) and also make sure to export an .aiff/wav encoded version of your final composition for backup/archive purposes.

Exporting Sound Compositions as .mp3 Files from Audacity (older versions, vers. 2.1.3, etc.)

Option 1 (preferred): Using the LAME mp3 encoder to convert your Audacity sound compositions into mp3 files with metadata (artist, song, album name, year, description, etc...):

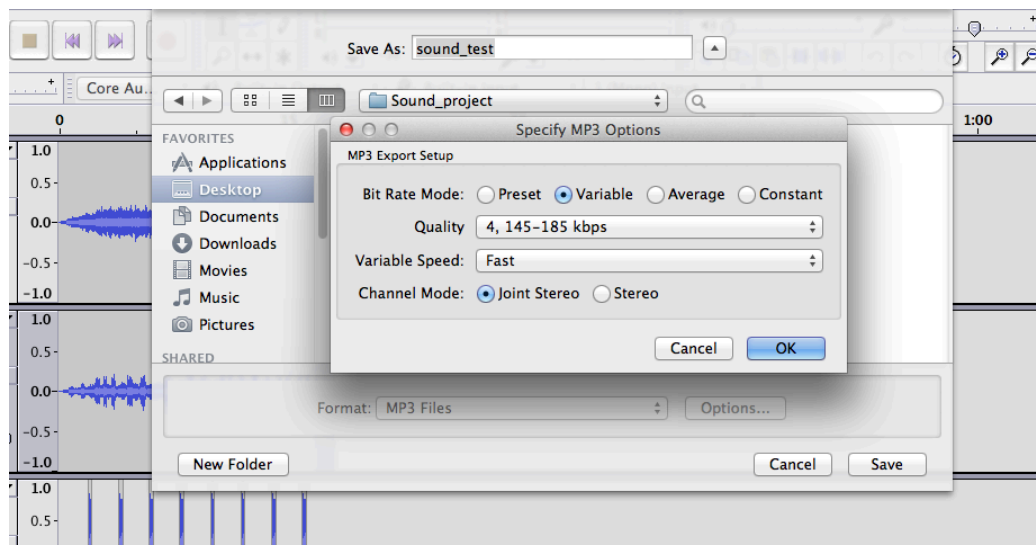
(1) download and install the LAME mp3 encoder following these instructions:

http://manual.audacityteam.org/o/man/faq_installation_and_plug_ins.html

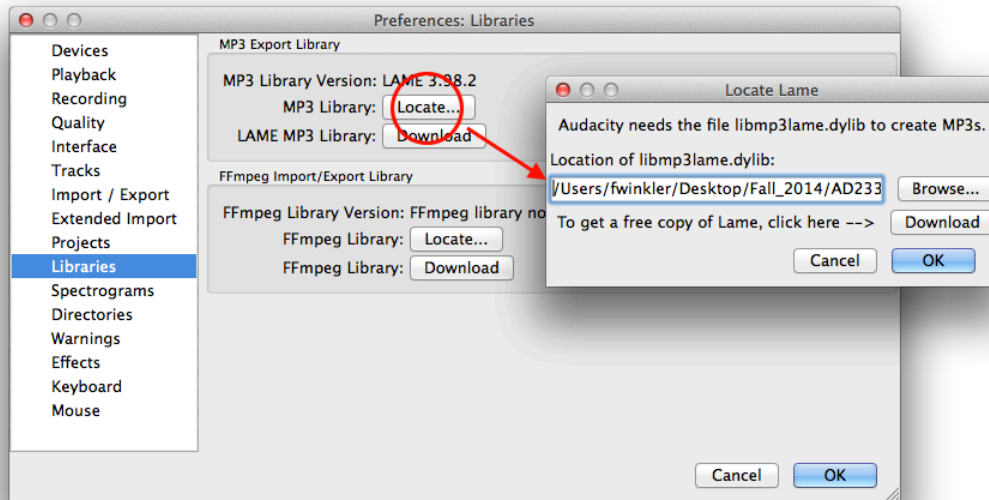
Item 5 talks about installing LAME on a Macs and on windows PCs.

(2) After the installation, simple go to File > Export Audio and choose under Format: MP3 files. Under options choose Variable bitrate (a quality setting of 4 or above should work well, going to 6, 7 or 8 decreases the sound quality considerably).

Either joint stereo or stereo should work well, for a difference between the two settings see: http://manual.audacityteam.org/man/MP3_Export_Options

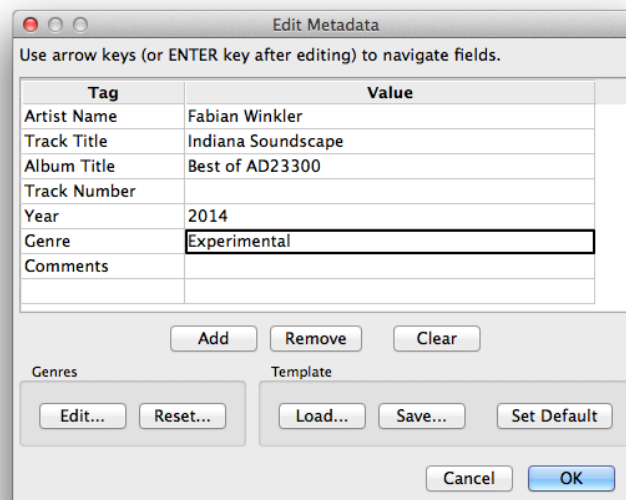


Note: there seems to be a problem in the **Pao B179 lab** with the LAME installer. If you are working on the machines in the lab, please download the .zip file instead of the .dmg file on the download page. Unzip the .zip file and then in Audacity go to Audacity > Preferences > Libraries and navigate to the unzipped folder with the libmp3lame.dylib file, like this:

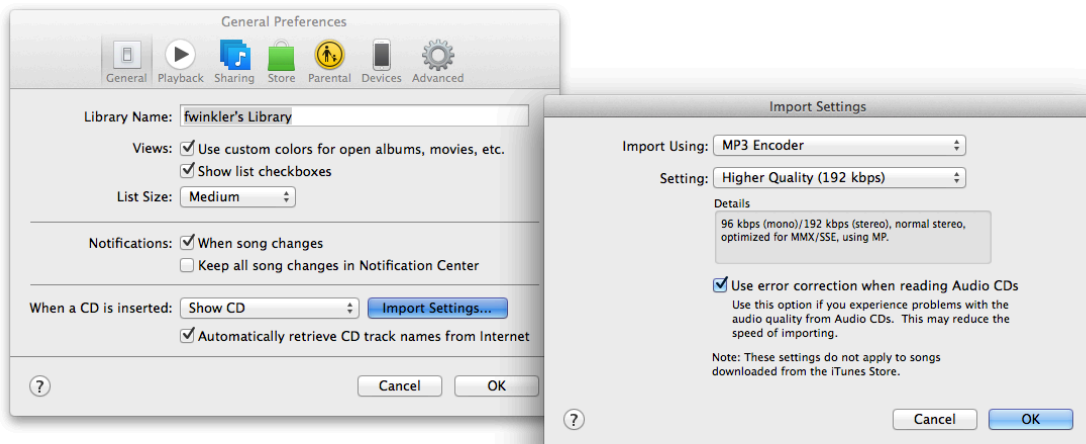


Option 2 – alternative: using iTunes (vers. 11/12)

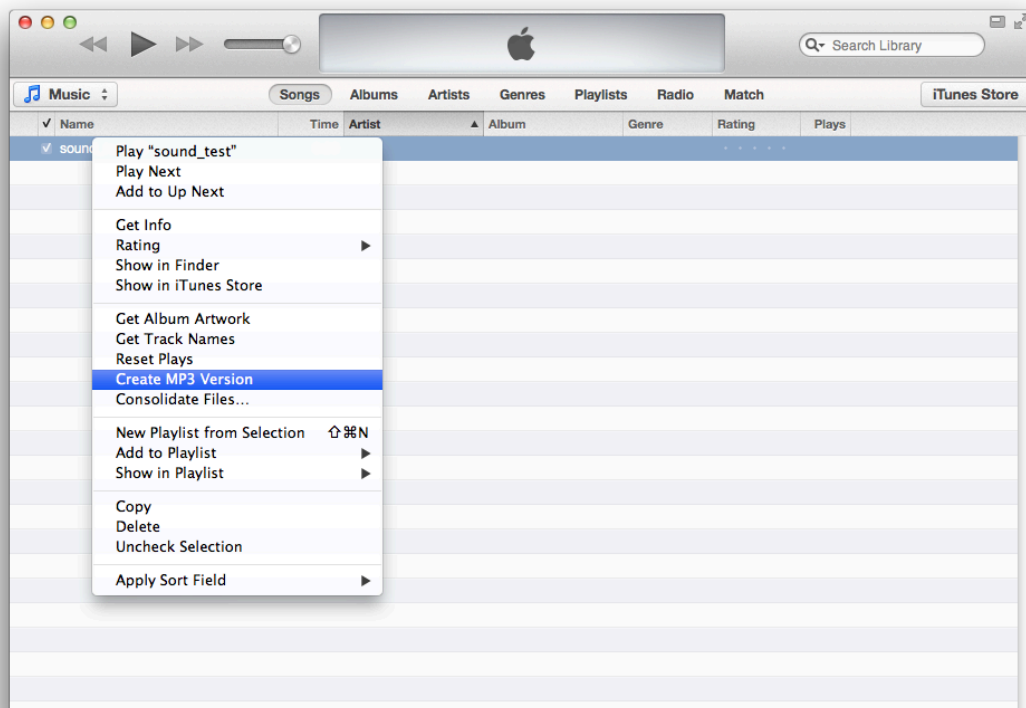
(1) Export the final sound composition from Audacity as an .AIFF file. Make sure to already fill out the metadata form when exporting from Audacity (this information will be saved in the mp3 file, too).



(2) Then simply drag and drop the file onto the iTunes icon. Go to iTunes > Preferences and make sure to set the .mp3 encoder option in the “General Preferences” by clicking on “Import Settings...”



(3) In the iTunes' Music Library select the file, ctrl.+click on it and select Create MP3 version.



Where is my .mp3 file?

After you created the .mp3 version ctrl.+click on the new file in the Music Library and choose “Show in Finder” – this will open a new Finder window with your .mp3 file in it.

