

# Converting Sound Files to MP3 or wav

*To manipulate a sound file, you first need it in a format useable by Audacity. I like mp3s but some people prefer wavs. Either format works fine.*

## WINDOWS

In Windows Media Player, you can change the format in which your track are imported by choosing **Format** under the **Rip** tab. The format will remain at whichever type you choose until you change it. I import all of my tracks as MP3s. Note that just as in iTunes, you don't have to import an entire CD if you only want one track—just check the track(s) you want. The default storage for Windows Media Player is in **My Music** (available from the **Start** menu at the bottom left corner of your desktop).

**Another option for both Mac and Windows operating systems is to use Switch Audio Converter Software** (free download at <http://www.nch.com.au/switch/>) or... online use [www.zamzar.com](http://www.zamzar.com) .

## MAC

In **iTunes**, you can universally change the format that your tracks are imported by choosing **iTunes>Preferences>General>Import Settings>Import using MP3 Encoder**. If the track you want to use was not originally imported this way, just highlight the track you want to use and at the top of your screen just right click (ctrl+click) on the track you want to modify, select **Advanced** from your top menu and then choose **Create MP3 Version**. You can then just drag this track out to your desktop so that you can find it while in Audacity, or maneuver to your “Music/iTunes/iTunes Music” folder where iTunes are stored by default to retrieve the file that way.

# Converting Tapes and Records to Digital Sound

## EQUIPMENT

You will need a cord to get from your sound source to your computer microphone jack or through a USB port. For microphone input use an [1/8" to 1/8" stereo cable](#).

For USB input, I use the [Griffin iMic](#). This allows you to use a sound source that has AV (that cord that has red and white ends) or go from a headphone jack.

Two other helpful pieces of hardware are a [y-cord](#) (use this so that you can connect headphones while you are inputting sound) and [1/4" to 1/8" plug](#) (to connect to a keyboard headphone jack).

## CONVERTING

Connect your sound source (out) to your computer (in).

Open **Audacity** and check to make sure you have the appropriate input. (See “ClassroomRecordings” handout for visual of this on page 2.)

Click **Record** (the round red button near the top).

Play the cassette or record. If there is more than one song, you will notice a break in the sound which will allow you to export each “track” separately if you would like. (From **File** choose **Export Selection as MP3** rather than just **Export as MP3**).

If there is a steady white noise type sound throughout your recording and you want to remove it, highlight a small portion of the sound where the only thing recorded is that “noise”. Now choose **Effect** and go to **Noise Removal**. You may be able to reduce that sound but be sure you listen to the final result as in my experience it often sounds “tin-ny”.

**Export** your recording as a **wav** or **MP3** file. That's it!