

Podcast

What is a Podcast?

A Podcast is simply an audio file saved as an Mp3. This can be uploaded onto web sites and downloaded easily onto PC's, laptops or even mobile devices such as mobile phones.

What can you do with it?

A podcast isn't much different to having an old fashioned cassette recorder and microphone. The difference is that you don't need a cassette and they are much more transportable. You can play them, email them and send them almost anywhere where there is a computer.

1. You might record a section of a difficult lesson where you feel that the students might struggle to remember the facts or process you are teaching. In this way the students might be able to access your lesson at home and repeat the lesson for themselves. It might also be used for students who are absent.
2. A podcast might be used as a learning tool for the students to make their own 'inter-active' content or presentation for History, Geography, English, Science or Maths. Students love doing this and it is a fun way of learning.
3. You might download podcasts from websites such as the BBC or iTunes where a famous people, writers, speakers and educationalists have made podcasts on almost every topic on the planet. Most Podcasts are free.
4. Podcasts are a quick way of recording music or singing or make interviews.
5. Students who have difficulty reading can be helped enormously by having their reading lessons recorded and played back to them discreetly.
6. You might record a play, a speech, read a story or make a presentation.
7. Revision notes can be easily made into a podcast then sent to a mobile phone so the students can listen at their own leisure.
8. Assessment. Why spend hour's labouriously writing assessments over and over again when you could simply RECORD an MP3 and email it to the student?

How do you make a Podcast?

Schools that have an Apple Mac computer will likely have this facility built into their machines. For PC users you can use any software that allows you to record sound. Windows XP does have software built into it for sound recording but this has restrictions and isn't much good for making podcasts.

You can download a piece of software called Audacity for free from <http://www.audacity2008.com/> You will need to install this first. When you download the programme you will also need to download and install a file called: 'Lame' This file allows you to save files as Mp3's.

Step 1: Plug a PC microphone into your pink microphone socket (some PC's have them built in)

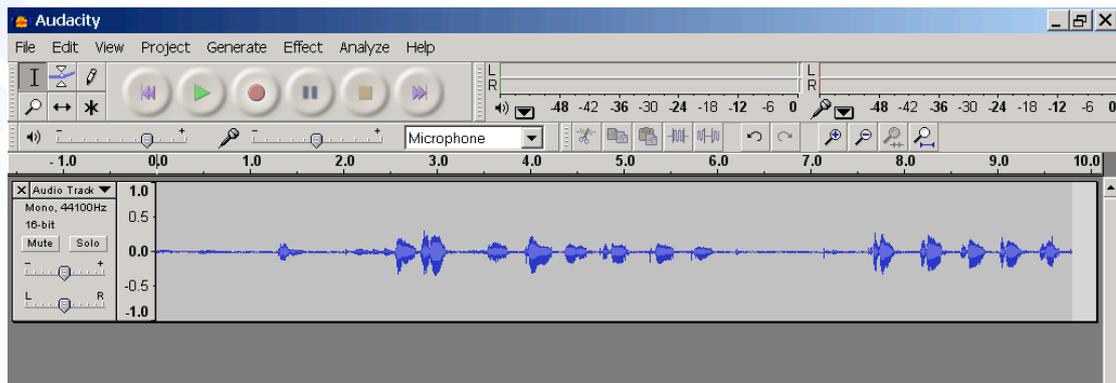
Step 2; Open the programme and click on: FILE – NEW. Press the RECORD button.

You will know that it is recording if you see lots of blue wavy lines appearing as you talk. These are sound waves.

You can drag over these blue wavy lines when recording has finished and then click on the EFFECT tab. This will give you the option of altering the sound waves and making lots of good effects to the sounds. This is great fun!

Also, you can create multiple 'layers' of sound files by simply stopping recording and re-starting. By clicking on the blue sound wave a selection bar appears. This is where the recording will start from when you press PLAY or RECORD. So you might have multiple voices added.

You can also add sound effects. You can find sound effects for free by searching web sites in a search engine. You might even add background music by IMPORTING a track from your computer.

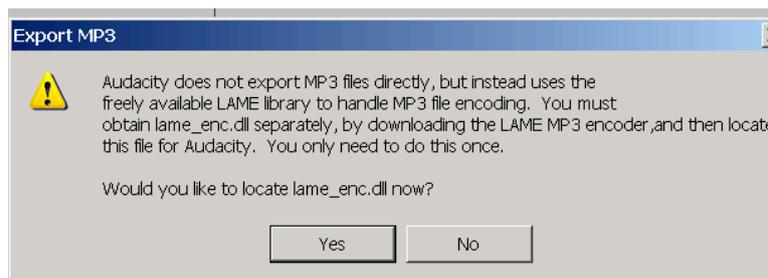


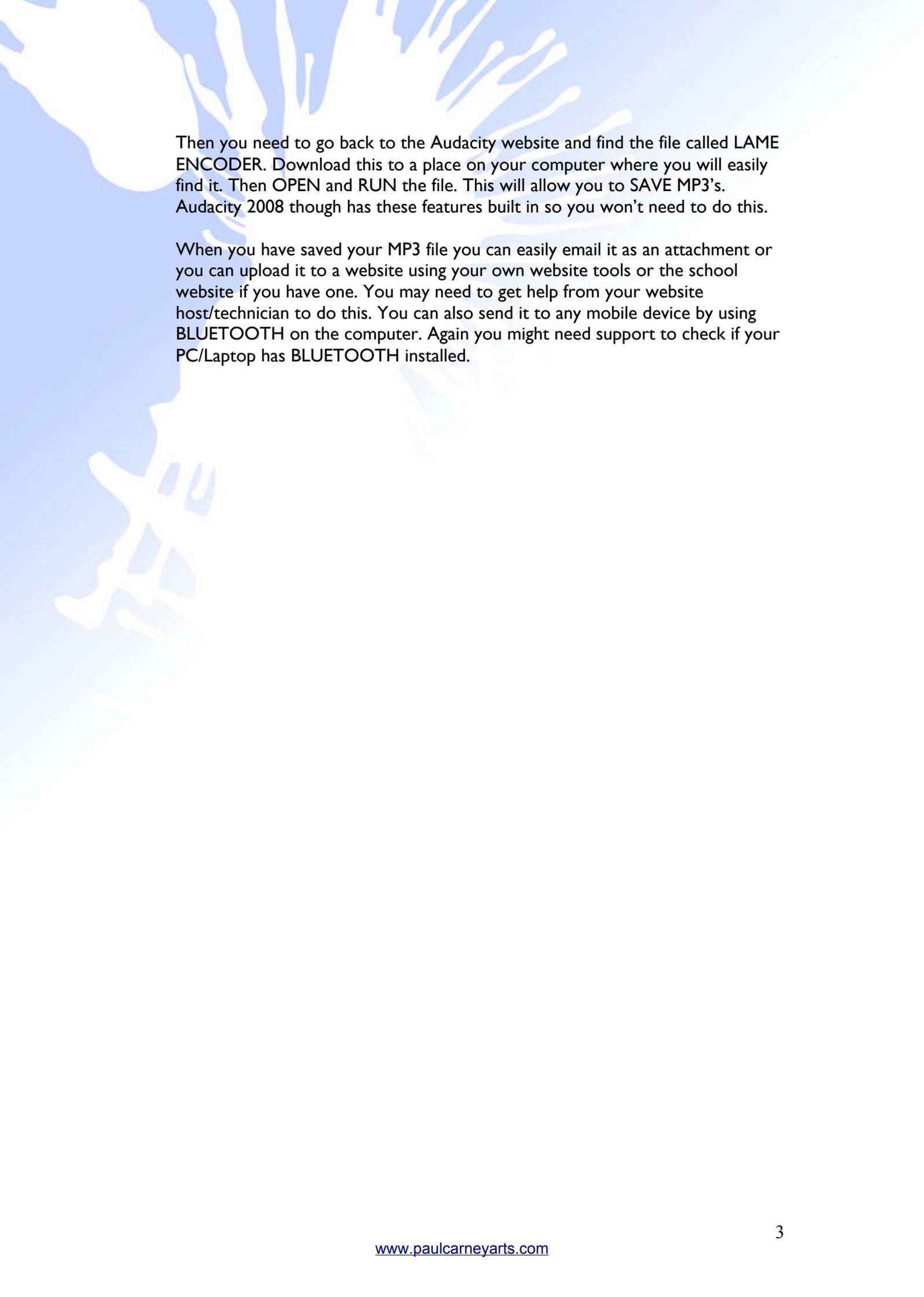
Saving a podcast and uploading it to the internet.

If you want to upload your podcast to the internet it needs to be saved as an MP3. You would firstly SAVE your AUDACITY project to your folder in the normal FILE SAVE manner for future reference.

The file then needs to be EXPORTED as an MP3. Simply, select: FILE - EXPORT as MP3.

If you get a message saying:



The background of the page features a faint, light blue illustration of several hands of different skin tones reaching upwards to hold a globe. The hands are positioned around the globe, with some fingers pointing towards it, symbolizing global unity or support.

Then you need to go back to the Audacity website and find the file called LAME ENCODER. Download this to a place on your computer where you will easily find it. Then OPEN and RUN the file. This will allow you to SAVE MP3's. Audacity 2008 though has these features built in so you won't need to do this.

When you have saved your MP3 file you can easily email it as an attachment or you can upload it to a website using your own website tools or the school website if you have one. You may need to get help from your website host/technician to do this. You can also send it to any mobile device by using BLUETOOTH on the computer. Again you might need support to check if your PC/Laptop has BLUETOOTH installed.