

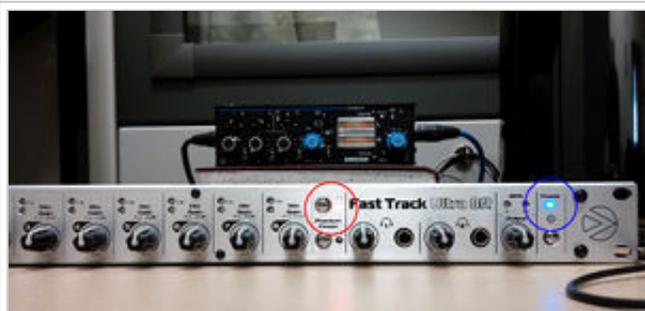
# Making a Recording in the Booth

From UW Phonetics/Sociolinguistics Lab Wiki

This page is a quick-start guide to making a recording in the soundproof booth. Before continuing with the guide, check to ensure the setup looks like the following pictures:



Recording station



Default settings for the audio interface. Main power on (circled in blue), phantom power on (circled in red)



Connections. Head-mounted mics connected in channels 1 and 2 (circled in red), amp connected to channel 5 (circled in blue), stand mic connected to amp (circled in yellow)

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## Setup

### Booth

If you plan to display materials on the booth monitor, turn on "mirroring" on the new computer by using the pull-down menu under the monitor icon in the upper right corner of the screen. This will allow you to control the computer from inside the booth.

1. Turn off the booth ventilation fan!
2. Make sure the subject is comfortable, but do not allow them to bring drinks etc. into the booth, and make sure that they're not chewing gum. If they are wearing an overcoat that is made of noisy material (like most nylon shells) have them take it off and leave it outside the booth. Make sure that any computers, cell phones, etc are turned off (not just asleep). This is because these devices emit an electromagnetic field that can interact with microphones and create noise in the recordings. It's best if they leave the devices outside the booth.
3. Place the reading material directly in front of the subject (or behind the microphone) to keep the subject oriented properly. Many people either pin material to the wall, or present it on the computer monitor, behind the microphone.

4. While subjects are reading some material (not just saying numbers or random words), adjust the settings on the audio interface. If you see that the needle on the VU meter on the amplifier/mixer is barely reaching the red-zone (0 dB) and only very briefly, the settings are good. If they are too low try adjusting the levels up a bit.
5. Either sitting in the booth and using the booth's monitor and mouse, or sitting outside at the computer, observe the input levels while the subject is reading material. The peaks should reach around -18 for a good level. More than -18 and you are likely to clip, a little lower is ok too. Remember that the noise floor is quite low.
6. Once you have successfully set your levels, first start the recording, then tell your subject to begin.
7. You can monitor the recording outside the booth by plugging headphones into the jack on the right side of the audio interface. You can adjust the volume with the master volume knob to the right.
8. Once your recording is finished click the stop button.

## Using a Head-Mounted Mic

### Setup

1. Once the subject has put on the headset, route the cable down their back to as to avoid noise from the movement of the cord.
2. Position the microphone slightly below and a couple inches in front of their mouth, although you may need to adjust it closer or farther away depending on how loud your subject is. Hold your hand over the microphone while they talk, and adjust it if you can feel puffs of air from aspirated sounds.
3. If recording multiple people, try to orient the microphones so that they aren't pointing towards another speaker.



AKG C520

### Tips

- The microphone can be attached to either the left or right side of the headset.

## Using the Stand Mic

1. If all the connections look right, make sure the Shure amp is switched on before proceeding.
2. The microphone should be placed directly in front of the subjects about 6 inches from their mouths. You may need to move the microphone closer or farther away depending on how loud your subject is. Try holding your hand over the microphone while they are talking to see if you can feel strong puffs of air hitting the microphone. If you can, the microphone is too close.

### Advanced Guide

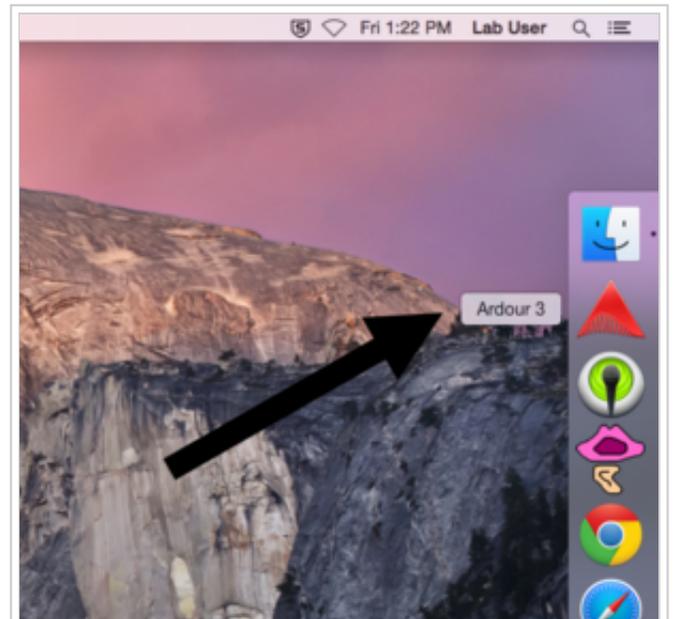
## Making a Recording

To get started making a recording, first open Ardour.

After starting it, you should get this window:

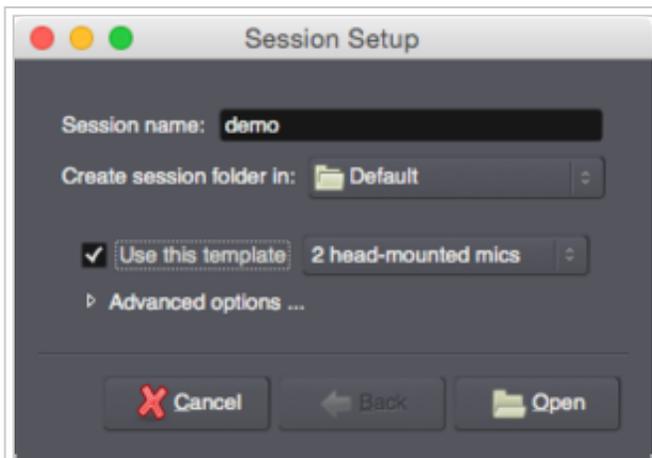


Start screen



Ardour icon on the desktop

To continue a previous recording, select it from the drop-down menu, otherwise click "New Session" and you should get the following screen:



New session screen

First give your session a name (note that the project files will be saved in `~/Documents/labusers/yourname/`). If you're recording with a standard mic setup, check "Use this template" and select the appropriate template from the drop-down menu, before clicking "Open". If you're not using a standard mic setup, see advanced setup for instructions.

After clicking "Open" the "Audio/Midi Setup" window will open.



Audio/Midi Setup

Click "ok" to be brought to the main screen. On the left is a listing of the tracks with volume controls and other options. Master is the 'bus' the audio will be outputted to (basically it just collects audio from all the tracks in the session).

To record audio, activate each microphone by clicking the red record button next to the device name (this activates monitoring for the device).

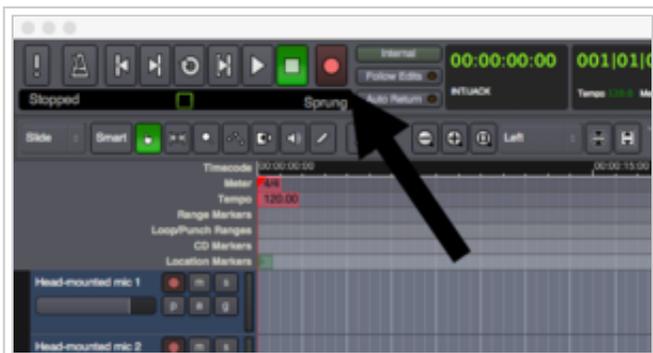


Main window



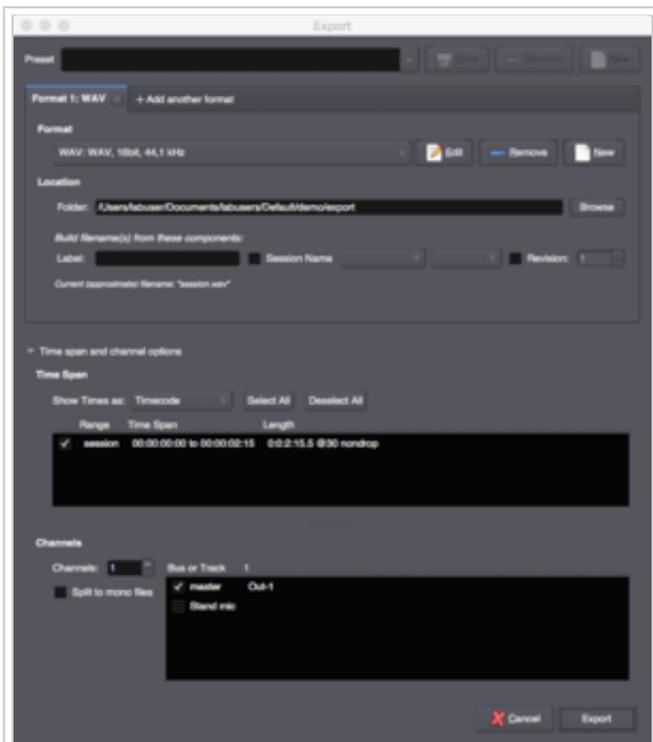
Track record button

Next click the red record button at the top (it will flash when armed), then click the play button to start recording.



Master record button

When you're finished, click stop to end the recording **then make sure both the record buttons are turned back off** (if you don't disable recording, Ardour will export silence instead of your audio). To save your recording, click the "Session" menu, then "Export" and "Export to audio file(s)...". This will open the export window (see below), and allow you choose a filename, filetype (for the default, select WAV under "Format"), and location. By default the exported file will be stereo. To save in mono instead, expand "Time span and channel options", and change "Channels" to 1. Click Export to save the file.



Export window

Clicking "Save" under the "Session" menu will save your session, preserving tracks and other metadata in case you need to do any editing after the fact.

If you encounter any other problems, see the troubleshooting guide.

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- This page was last modified on 27 January 2015, at 14:17.