Podcasting
for Teachers & Students

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A podcast is a series of audio or video files on the Web that can be cataloged and automatically downloaded.

This booklet explores the possibilities of podcasting in schools. First, learn to sample dozens of podcasts to know what's already out there and what can be used in classrooms. Then learn about creating and publishing your very own, whether it's recorded by teachers, students, or both.

Contents

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Podcasts Deliver Free Audio & Video
Listen, Learn, and Publish Your Own

Students and teachers from all over the world are learning from audio and video programs on desktop computers, laptops, iPods, Pocket PCs, Palm handhelds, and other devices. Hundreds of free educational programs are available online. Here are some examples: Grammar Girls Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing, English Idioms and Slang, Storynory: Free Audio Stories for Kids, MathGrad: Everyday Mathematics Explained, and First Amendment Minute.

Online educational media are produced not only by broadcast and cable networks, radio professionals, and education experts, but also by ordinary students and teachers. Podcasts by students include Radio WillowWeb, Coulee Kids, and ColeyCast. With a PC or Mac and freely available software, it's fairly simple to create audio or video content, complete with introduction music and sound effects.

Putting audio and video on the web is not a new concept. However, in September 2004 a new way of cataloging and downloading audio and video programs emerged. It's called podcasting. A podcast has a news feed (known as RSS) that allows it to be cataloged in various podcasting directories like iTunes and Podcast Pickle. The popular directory, Podcast Alley, has cataloged over 41,000 podcasts and nearly 3 million individual episodes. If you are interested in listening to the podcasts mentioned here, launch iTunes and type the name into the search field.

In addition, the news feed allows podcatching programs like iTunes to automatically download new episodes. Once you have found the podcast you want to subscribe to, simply click its Subscribe button. There's no need manually check a website to see if there's new content; iTunes does it for you. The episode will be downloaded and waiting for you to play. Play the episodes in iTunes on your Mac or PC. To listen or watch on a mobile device, connect a handheld to your computer and copy the file to the device. To listen on a CD, place the podcast in a playlist in iTunes and click the Burn Disc button. There are certainly plenty of options for listening to podcasts!

There are three kinds of podcasts. Audio podcasts are usually an MP3 file and are the most common types of podcasts. Enhanced podcasts can have images to go along with the audio. They can also have chapter markers, making it easier to skip to different portions of an episode. Enhanced podcasts are an AAC file and are not supported by all devices. Video podcasts are movies, complete with sound. Video podcasts can be in a variety of formats, but MPEG-4 is the most popular.

In most classrooms the teacher will find podcast episodes for students to listen to or watch. Sets of laptops, iPods, Palm handhelds, Pocket PCs, or other devices can be loaded with podcast episodes so students can use them at their desks, on field trips, in the library, or at home.

Teachers may want to make their own podcast to communicate with students, parents, and the community. Creating podcasts has many educational benefits for students. Students are able to create a product to share with a potentially world-wide audience. Their podcast can be listed in iTunes, right along with podcasts from The Discovery Channel, Disney, and NPR. Knowing that there is a real-world audience gives students purpose and motivation to create a spectacular product. The process of putting together an audio recording is extremely valuable and is certainly a cross-curricular experience.

There are so many ways to listen to and create a podcast. In this booklet, I will focus on using free and cross-platform tools. That means that Windows and Mac users alike can do everything I mention. It's nice that software like iTunes, Audacity, and Levelator are all free--making it easy to get started. There are two things you may want to purchase. One is a headset microphone. I recommend USB, and USB is a must for Mac users. Second, you might consider paying for a service that hosts your podcast. While there are free services, pay ones typically cost $5 per month.

Podcasting is inexpensive, and students love it. Let's get started by finding and listening to some podcasts. Afterwards, you'll learn how to make your very own audio podcast.

Finding Podcasts

iTunes

iTunes is free software for Macintosh and Windows computers. There are over 125,000 podcasts listed in iTunes podcast directory.

Before getting started, be sure you have the latest version of iTunes. As of this writing, iTunes 8 is the most recent version. You can download iTunes at **www.apple.com/itunes/download**.

1. Launch iTunes. Click **iTunes Store** in the Source panel on the left side of the window.

2. Click **Podcasts** in the iTunes Store panel.

3. There are podcasts in many genres and subject areas. You can select a subject in the **Categories** panel.
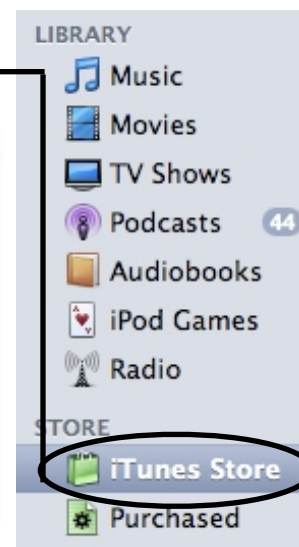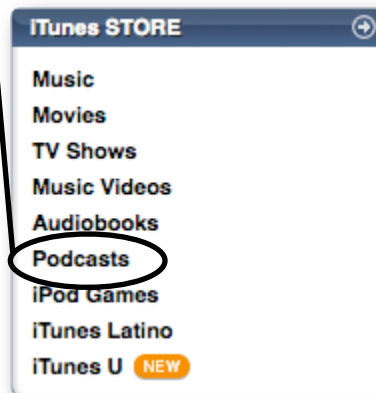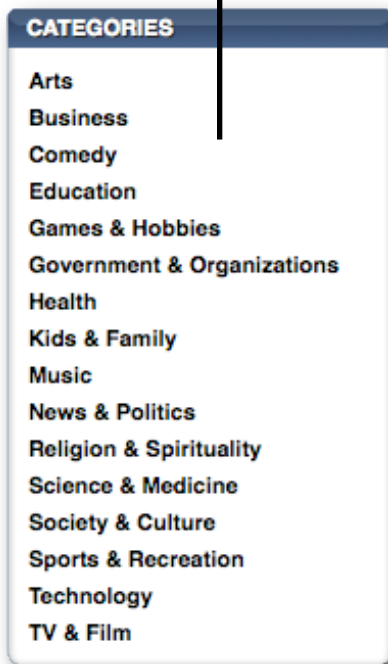
4. Click the title or artwork of a podcast to be taken to the details page for that podcast.

According to Apple in 2007, of the 125,000 podcasts listed in iTunes, 25,000 are video.

You can also browse categories in iTunes by clicking the **Browse** button in the lower-right corner of the window. This will be bring up a list of podcasts. Clicking the arrow ➡ will take you to the details page for that podcast.

Search the iTunes Store by typing your search into the search box in the top-right corner of the window. Press **Enter** on your keyboard to submit the search. Select **Podcasts** from the menu in top-left portion of the window to narrow your search to only podcasts. Clicking the arrow ➡ will take you to the details page for that podcast.
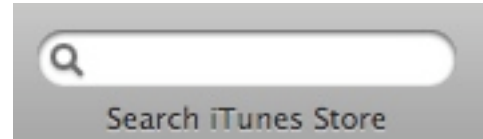
Each podcast has a **details page**. The details page provides information about the podcast, including: title, author, category, description, a link to the podcast's website, customer reviews, and a listing of all available episodes.

Terminology
Podcast: A series of episodes
Episode: A single show
Segment: A portion of an episode

Online Directories

There are dozens of online directories that list podcasts. Here are three popular sites:

learnoutloud.com

podcastalley.com
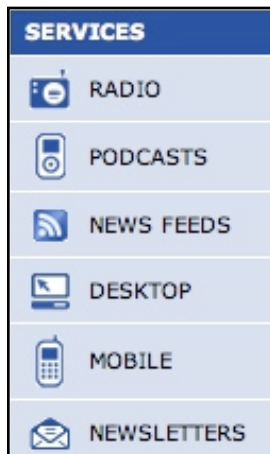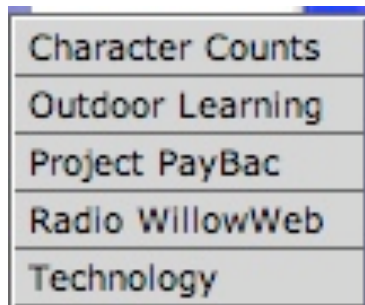

podcastpickle.com

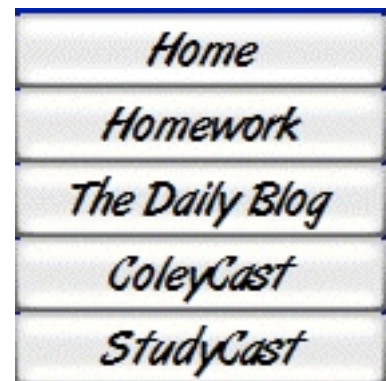# School & Organization Websites

Podcasts can be linked directly from a school's or organization's website.

National Public Radio lists podcasts under its "Services" menu.

Willowdale Elementary School's podcast is listed under Special Programs on the school's website's main menu.

Mr. Coley's classroom site lists the ColeyCast podcast along the side of each page.

Subscribing to Podcasts

iTunes

iTunes is the preferred way to subscribe to podcasts. Whether you found the podcast in the iTunes directory or from somewhere on the web, it's easy to subscribe.

When you subscribe to a podcast, iTunes downloads the most recent episode and will download future episodes as they become available. iTunes also gives you the option to download past episodes.

If you found the podcast in the iTunes directory, simply click the Subscribe ⬭SUBSCRIBE button.

Once subscribed, episodes will be stored on your computer's hard drive. To view the podcasts you are subscribed to, click **Podcasts** in the iTunes Source panel.

In the Podcasts window, you will see the title of each podcast you subscribe to. Click the arrow to the left of the title to display individual episodes. Double-click the title to begin playing the podcast.

Podcast	Time	Release Date ▼	Description
▶ The Best of National Geographic Magazine	4:33	7/26/07	Explore Earth's deepest trench. Discover Afri... ⓘ
▶ ColeyCast	14:44	6/9/07	The Official Podcast of Room 34 at Tovashal ... ⓘ
● ▶ EdTechTalk.com	39:03	7/24/07	Edtechtalk shows are recorded during live int... ⓘ
● ▼ Grammar Girl's Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing		8/30/07	Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing ⓘ
● ☑ 73 GG Go Forth And Simplify	6:45	8/30/07	Tips for better writing (with special guest, Ad... ⓘ
● ☑ 72 GG The Thing Is...	6:11	8/24/07	What to do about the double "the" ⓘ
☑ 71 GG Size Matters (Units Of Measure)	4:24	8/17/07	Those words and symbols that come after nu... ⓘ

The video icon 🖥 will appear next to the episode's title if it is video or enhanced.

The blue dot next to a podcast indicates an episode that has not been listened to.

Clicking the ⓘ button next to a podcast or episode will display a description.

You can use iTunes to subscribe to podcasts, even if you found the podcast in another directory or on a website. Websites may simply list the podcast's feed URL or may link to the URL using a small image. To the right are some of the images websites use to indicate an RSS feed. Here's how to subscribe:

1. Copy the RSS feed's URL. If the feed is indicated by an image, right-click the image and choose to copy the link.

2. In iTunes, choose **Subscribe to Podcast...** from the **Advanced** menu.

3. Paste the URL into the field and click OK.

4. The latest episode of the podcast will be downloaded and stored in the **Podcasts** section of your iTunes library.

> Many websites link directly to a podcast's details page in iTunes using an iTunes icon.

Listening to Podcasts

Listening in iTunes

Downloaded podcasts are stored in the **Podcasts** section of your iTunes library. Simply listen by clicking an episode title and clicking the **Play** button. If you return to listening to the episode later, iTunes will continue from where you left off.

You can click and drag the diamond-shaped playhead to skip around the audio or video.
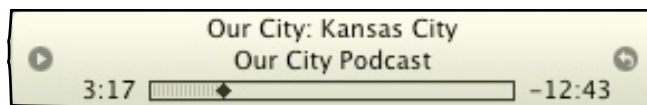
Video podcasts and enhanced podcasts might play in the bottom-left corner of the iTunes window. Click the video or image in the corner to enlarge it.
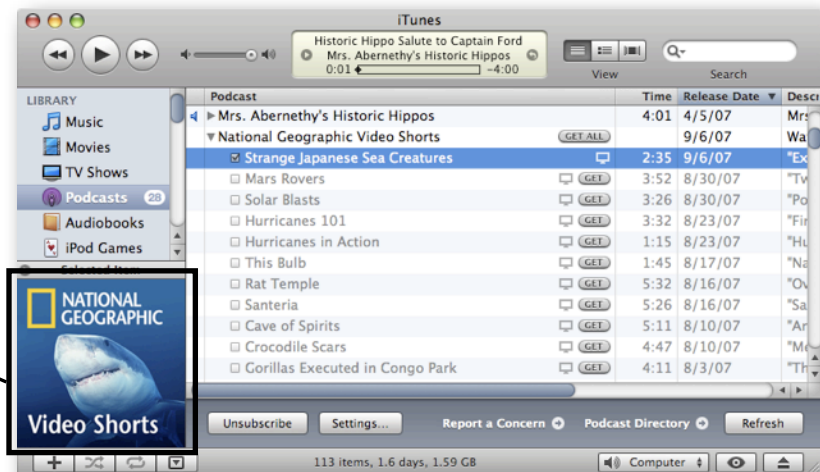
Listening in Web Browsers

Many podcasts provide a way for you to listen right in your web browser. The website may simply link to the MP3 or media file. Some websites are fancier and have players embedded right on the page. Other sites have a player appear in a popup window.

Listening on Mobile Players

A great thing about podcasts is that listeners can take them anywhere with a mobile player. iPods are the most popular media players, accounting for over 70% of all players sold. iPods are designed to work seamlessly with iTunes. Users can simply connect an iPod to their computer. Podcasts in the computer's iTunes library can be transferred to an iPod.
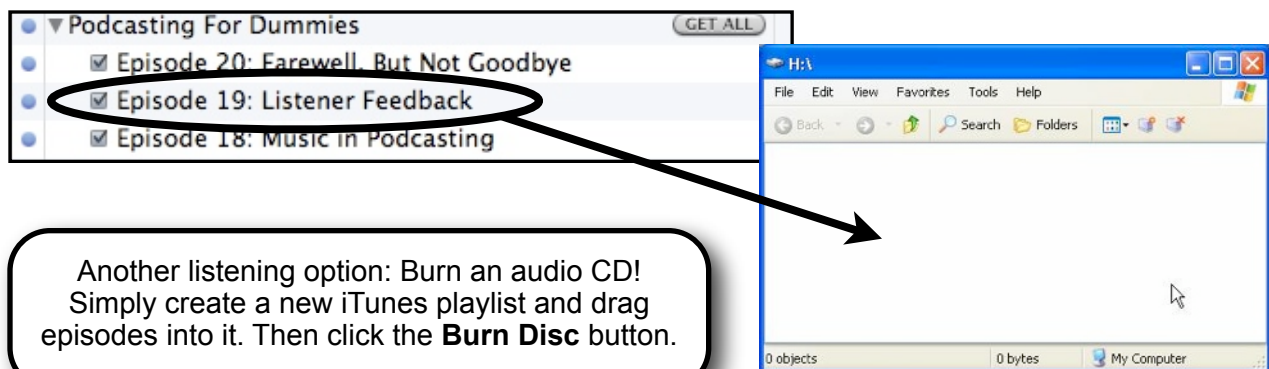
Besides dedicated media players, many mobile phones and handheld computers can play podcast files. Unlike iPods, these devices do not sync with iTunes; you will have to manually place individual files into the device's memory. This may involve copying files to a memory card or mounting the player as a drive.

To copy an episode to the device, first open iTunes' **Podcasts** window. Also open the memory card or mounted device in Windows Explorer or the Macintosh Finder. Position your iTunes windows so you can drag and drop individual episodes from iTunes and onto the card or device.

Another listening option: Burn an audio CD! Simply create a new iTunes playlist and drag episodes into it. Then click the **Burn Disc** button.

Podcast Possibilities and Formats

With over 125,000 podcasts and millions of episodes, there are so many different possibilities for podcasting! Find and sample various podcasts.
Record notes about five podcasts.

Podcast Title	Notes

Creating
a Podcast

There are four phases in creating a podcast: preproduction, recording, postproduction, and publishing.

Preproduction

Before even thinking of stepping up to the microphone, much planning should take place. Since podcasts are a series of episodes, you will probably want a consistent format to be used for each episode. Of course, you will need a name for your podcast. Typically, the better the planning, the better podcast you will have.

Outlining and Scripting

While some successful podcasts are unscripted, you'll probably want to have a script (or at the very lest a detailed outline) before you record. Each episode will need a title. Some podcasters simply use a number for the title while others use descriptive or creative titles.

Scripting Tips

- Identify the podcast and episode right away.
- Grab the listeners' attention in your introduction.
- Follow copyright laws. Be sure you have permission to use any music or sound files you include. Be aware that reciting copyrighted text or poetry is not allowed without explicit permission from the copyright holder.
- How scripted will your podcast be? Will it be completely polished or will there be room for spontaneity?
- Determine the audience and purpose for your podcast.
- Many podcasts are broken into segments. Segments break episodes into smaller sections, each with its own theme.
- Include a clever conclusion.
- Slogans help make your podcast memorable.

Developing Slogans

You want to make your podcast memorable and a slogan is a great way to do that! You can have a slogan for your entire series of podcasts. Alternatively, you may choose to have a different slogan for each episode. Here are some examples:

- Our City Podcast: "Learn about places from the kids who live there."
- Radio WillowWeb: "Radio for Kids, by Kids."
- Grammar Girls: "Friendly tips to improve your writing."
- This Week in Tech: "Netcasts you love from people you trust."
- TravelCommons: "More about the journey than the destination."
- Sticks and String: "A podcast by an Australian bloke who knits."
- The Mr. Brown Show: "Don't let your next family gathering be your funeral."

Sloganizer at www.sloganizer.net and **Free Slogan Generator** at slogan4u.com can provide inspiration for developing memorable catch-phrases. *(Note: Sloganizer generates some inappropriate slogans for use in school.)*
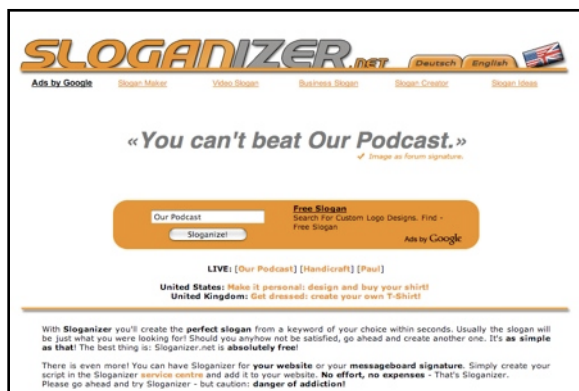
www.sloganizer.net

slogan4u.com

Podcast Episode Ideas

Record your ideas for possible episode topics, segments, slogans, and titles. I've included some podcasting ideas to get you started.

Share book review

Document a field trip

Classroom news

Record a class discussion

Conduct interviews

Review curricular content

Recording

The content of your podcast is extremely important. However, if your listeners cannot hear you speak or are distracted by background noise, few people will actually listen for your message. If they cannot control background noise in their office or home, some podcasters record using their laptops in their enclosed vehicles. Using a microphone headset is a great way to achieve a clear recording.

Speaking Do's and Don'ts

While in front of the microphone, there are some important basics of speaking to remember.

Do...
- Enunciate clearly.
- Speak at a normal volume.
- Practice, practice, practice!
- Reduce background noise.
- Pause recording to take short breaks.
- Smile while speaking!

Don't...
- Talk too quickly.
- Drop off the ends of words.
- Try to sound like a radio D.J.
- Pop p's into the microphone.
- Get too close to the microphone.
- Touch the microphone or its cord.

Setting Up Audacity

Dozens of different programs allow you to record and edit audio. A favorite for podcasters is Audactiy because it is free, cross-platform, and simple to use. Download Audacity at audacity.sourceforge.net. After Audacity is installed:

1. **Connect** your microphone.
2. Launch Audacity.
3. Click the **File** menu and choose **Preferences**. In the **Recording** section, select your microphone.
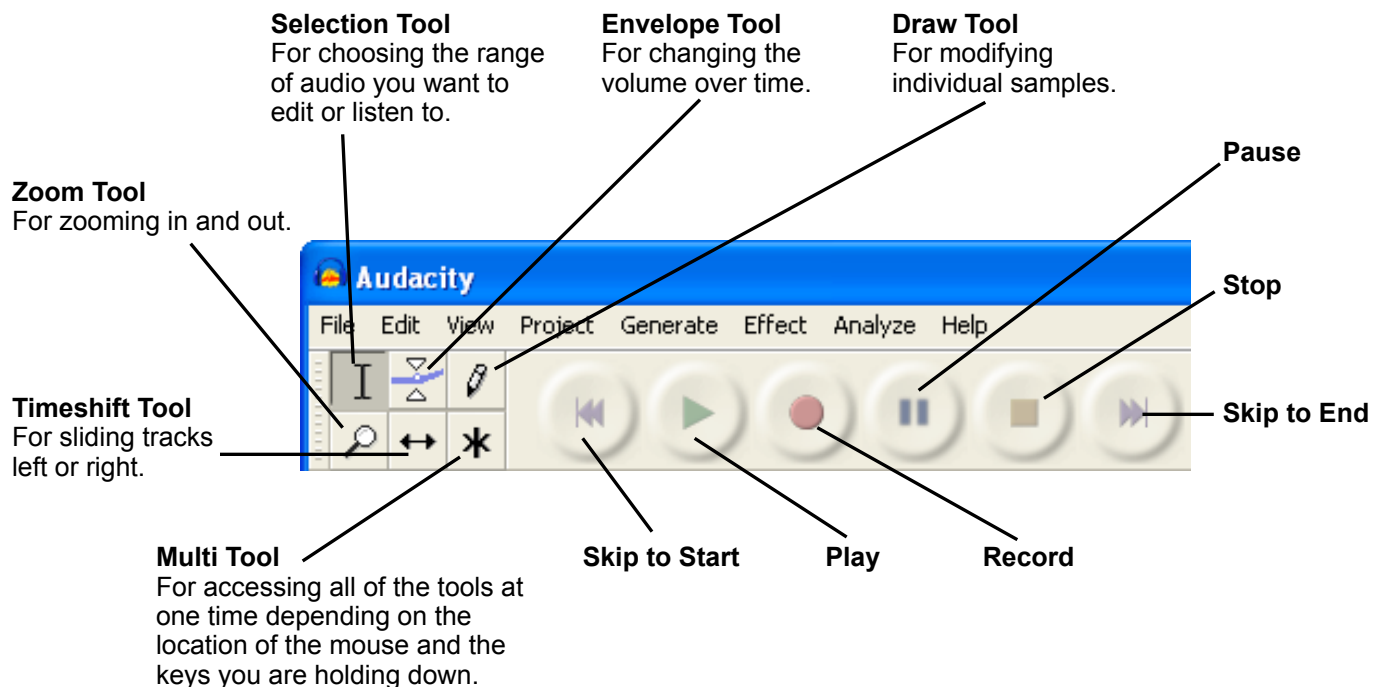
4. Also in **Preferences**, click the **File Formats** tab. Change **When importing uncompressed audio files into Audacity** to **Make a copy of the file before editing (safer).** This will prevent you from losing sections of your audio if the original file is moved or deleted.
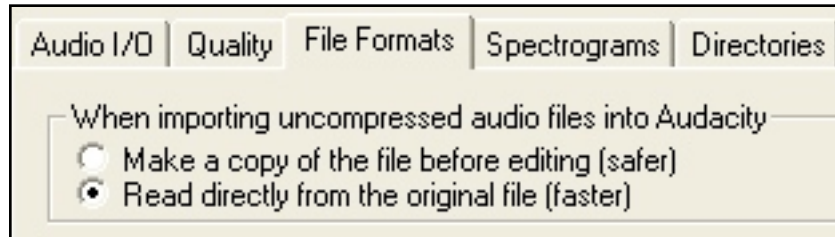
Recording with Audacity

Audacity is multi-track recording software. That means you can record or import various sections of audio and have them overlap or play at the same time. You can move tracks around to have them start and stop at specific times. Audacity has six tools, though most podcasts use only the **Selection** and **Timeshift** tools.

Audacity's Toolbar

Selection Tool
For choosing the range of audio you want to edit or listen to.

Envelope Tool
For changing the volume over time.

Draw Tool
For modifying individual samples.

Pause

Zoom Tool
For zooming in and out.

Stop

Timeshift Tool
For sliding tracks left or right.

Skip to End

Multi Tool
For accessing all of the tools at one time depending on the location of the mouse and the keys you are holding down.

Skip to Start   **Play**   **Record**

5. Click the **Record** button.
6. Speak into the microphone. Notice the waveforms appear as you speak.
7. Click the **Stop** button.
8. Click the **Play** button to listen to the recording.

This waveform is small and indicates speaking too softly or too far away from the microphone.

This waveform is flat on the top and bottom and indicates speaking too loudly or too closely to the microphone.

This waveform shows proper volume and distance from the microphone.

Unfortunately, there are many things that can prevent sounds from your microphone from being recorded. If no sound is being recorded, check:
1. Is your microphone selected in the Preferences?
2. Is the Input Volume slider moved all the way to the +?
3. Is your system input sound unmuted?
4. Is the Mute button on your microphone deactivated?

Audacity has a useful help menu. Use it to learn about the Toolbar and other functions of the software.

Editing with Audacity

It's easy to edit out mistakes in your recording. Audacity's **Selection** tool is very similar to what you use in a word processor. Just click, hold, and drag across what you want to select. Then press **Delete** or **Backspace** on your keyboard. The mistake is erased!
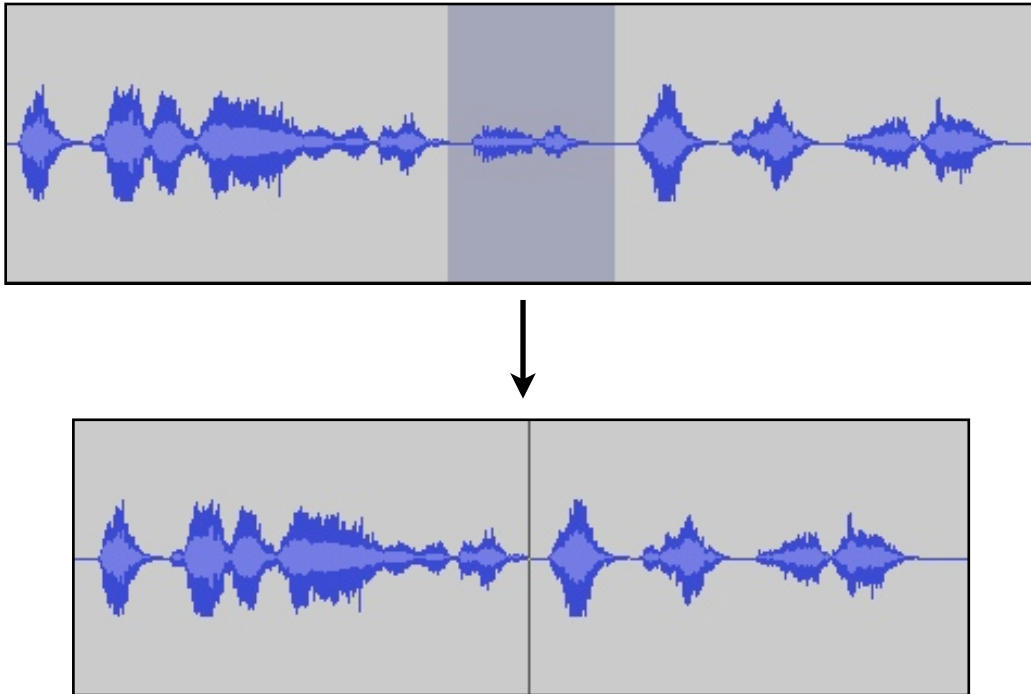
You will notice that when you press **Record** again, the waveforms will appear on a new track. You may want to combine multiple tracks into one to keep things tidy. You can combine the two tracks using Quick Mix.

1. Use the **Timeshift** tool to align the tracks exactly how you want them.
2. Choose **Edit** > **Select** > **All**.
3. Click the **Project** menu and choose **Quick Mix.**
4. The tracks are combined into one!

When you click the **Pause** button, either for playback or recording, Audacity may seem frozen. You will need to click **Pause** or **Stop** to resume using Audacity.

Postproduction

After recording, it's time to edit the audio and add music and sound effects. You may not have recorded the audio in order, so the first priority is to make sure all audio is arranged properly. Also, clips can be trimmed to delete any unnecessary pauses or interruptions (you might have already done some editing on-the-fly as you recorded).

Finding Podsafe Audio

When adding music and sound effects be sure you are using **podsafe** audio. Podsafe audio can be legally used in a podcast and freely distributed online for others to download. There's actually so much podsafe music online that you can spend hours sifting through it.

A favorite site for podsafe music and effects is SoundSnap. The site has a collection of thousands of sounds. It has a great selection of loops, where there music is designed to be repeated several times to fit the length of how long you need it to be. Unfortunately, some Soundsnap sounds are not appropriate for student use and you are limited to 5 downloads a month.
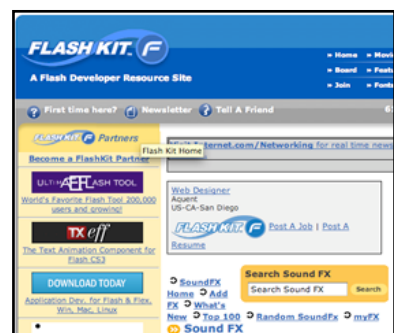
It is recommended the teacher download dozens of sound files ahead of time and have them available for students to import into Audacity.

SoundSnap
www.soundsnap.com
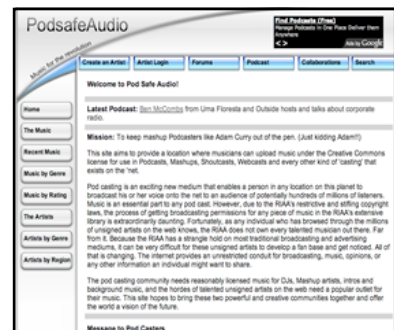

The Freesound Project
freesound.iua.upf.edu

Flash Kit
flashkit.com/soundfx


fOUR bEES
tinyurl.com/5mpwv5

Podcast Bumper Music
bumpermusic.blogspot.com

Podsafe Audio
podsafeaudio.com

Importing Audio

You can import audio downloaded from websites or audio you've recorded in other programs or on other devices. As long as the audio is in a standard format (i.e., mp3, wav, aiff), Audacity will import it and bring it in on a new track. Just choose **Import Audio** from the **Project** menu. Note: Stereo audio will appear with a left and right track in your Audacity project.
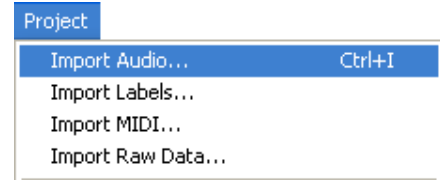
If you would like to make a musical loop longer, you need to copy and paste the waveforms several times in a row. Use the **Selection** tool to select the waveforms for the loop you imported. Click the **Edit** menu and choose **Copy**. Then click at the end of the background music waveforms. Click the **Edit** menu and choose **Paste**. Again, click at the end of the waveforms and choose **Paste** again. Continue this technique of clicking and pasting a few more times so that the music repeats itself for the desired amount of time.

If the music is being used for background to spoken audio, you will want to reduce its volume level. Drag the **Track Volume** slider to the left to lower the volume of the music. Click **Play** to see if the volume is appropriate and make any adjustments.

Adding Audio Effects

Audacity has over two dozen effects it can perform on your audio. They include changing pitch, adding echo, and amplifying. Useful effects for music are Fade In and Fade Out. Here's how to fade music in:

1. Select the first several seconds of the music track.
2. Choose **Fade In** from the **Effect** menu.
3. The waveforms have been changed to indicate fading the volume in.
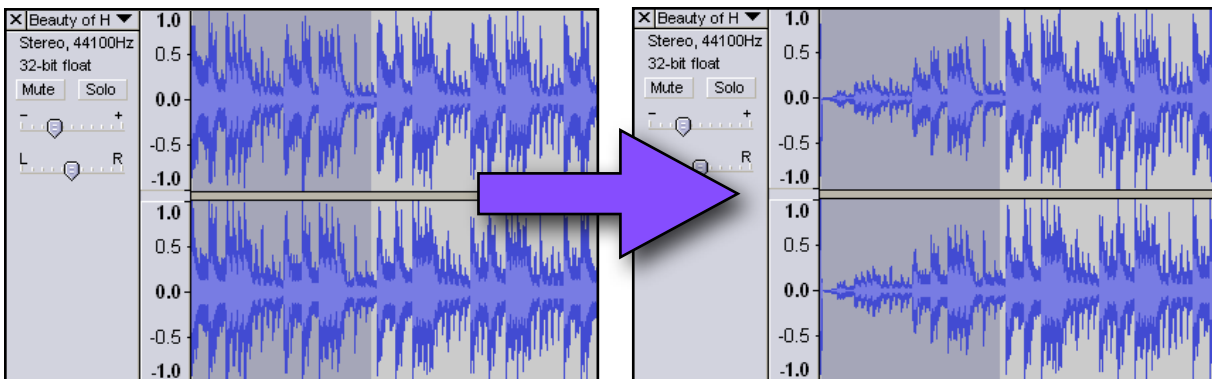
You can perform other effects in similar ways. Note that you always have to select some audio before you are able to apply any effects.

Saving and Exporting

There is a difference between saving your project and exporting. You will want to do both. Saving the project from the **File** menu will save your project as an Audacity file. Only Audacity can open this file. But, when you open it back up, you will see all of your tracks and you can continue editing.

In order for other programs to play the audio, the project must be exported. Exporting flattens the audio. That means when you open an exported file, it appears as one sound. The tracks are no longer separated and editable. Audacity allows you to export to WAV, MP3, or Ogg Vorbis. WAV files are 10 times larger than MP3 files and are of a higher sound quality.

We will export as a WAV file so we can use a software tool to level out the volume. When your project is complete, choose **Export as WAV** from the **File** menu. Give the audio file a name, and save it to the desktop.

Perfecting the Sound

Your podcast may contain different speakers or the speaker may have spoken at different volume levels throughout the recording. **Levelator** is a free program that painlessly levels out the volume, making your recording much more pleasing to listen to.

1. Download and install **Levelator** from conversationsnetwork.org/levelator
2. Launch **Levelator**.
3. Drag and drop your exported WAV file onto the **Levelator** window.

4. Wait while **Levelator** processes the file.
5. Locate the WAV file with "output" in the file name and delete the original WAV file.

Adding Identification Tags in iTunes

We're going to use iTunes to add identifying tags to your audio file. First, the audio file must be changed from WAV to MP3.

iTunes needs to be set up to convert to MP3. You only need to make this setting change once and iTunes remembers it the next time you convert.

1. Launch **iTunes**.
2. Choose **Preferences** from the **Edit** or **iTunes** menu.
3. Click the **General** tab.
4. Then click the **Import Settings...** button.
5. Select MP3 Encoder next to **Import Using**.
6. Select **Good Quality** next to **Setting**. Click **OK**.
7. Click **OK** again to return to the main window.

Now, bring in that WAV file outputted from Levelator by selecting **Import** from the **File** menu. The file should appear in iTunes' **Music Library**.

Click to select the newly imported file and select **Convert Selection to MP3** from the **Advanced** menu. After conversion, you will have two copies of the same file listed in iTunes. You can choose **View** > **View Options** and checkmark **Kind** and click **OK**. Now you can see which one is the WAV file and which one is the MP3 (listed as MPEG audio file).

Click to select the MP3 file, choose **File** > **Get Info,** and click the **Info** tab. Fill in the Name blank with the title of your episode and perhaps a number. Input **Podcast** for the **Genre**. The other blanks are optional, and you can fill in as many of them as you like.

Adding Artwork

iTunes, iPods, and other players display artwork when an audio file is playing. You can add any image to be the artwork. However, images that are square and at least 300 pixels by 300 pixels work best for iTunes.

With the **Get Info** window open, click the **Artwork** tab. You can paste a copied image into the blank box or you can click the **Add** button to find a saved file on your hard drive. Click **OK** after you see your image in the box.
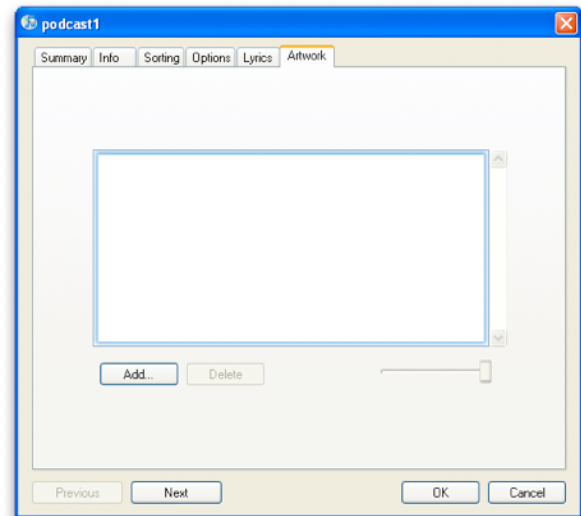
Copy and paste, drag and drop, or click the Add button to give the audio file artwork.

Creating Artwork

You probably want to have artwork with the name of your podcast or title of your episode. You can use any graphics program that exports a JPG, GIF, or PNG image. If you don't have software like Photoshop available, you can use the free website Picnik to create your artwork.

First, go to picnik.com, and create an account. This way you can go back to picnik.com to later edit your work.

Go to **learninginhand.com/files/square**s and choose a color square image and save it to your desktop.

In Picnik, click **Get Started** and then click **Get Photo**. Choose the JPG square that was that was saved to your desktop.

After the background has been loaded into Picnik, click Picnik's **Create** tab and choose **Text** to add the name of your podcast or episode. Click **Shapes** to add objects to your artwork.
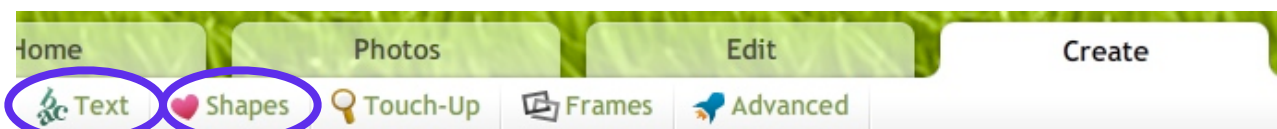
Once you are finished creating your artwork, it's time to save it. Click Picnik's **Save & Share** tab. Give the file a name, and click the **Save Photo** button. Choose to save the image to your desktop. Now you can add the newly created image to your MP3 file by clicking **File** > **Get Info** in iTunes. Click the **Artwork** tab, and click **Add**. Choose your new image from the desktop, and click **OK.** Your MP3 file now has customized artwork!

Preparing for Uploading

You cannot upload your podcast through iTunes, so you need to save your finalized audio file, complete with tags and artwork, to your desktop.

Click to select the audio file in iTunes' **Music Library.** Drag the file's name from iTunes, and drop it onto the desktop. iTunes saves a copy of the file to the desktop.
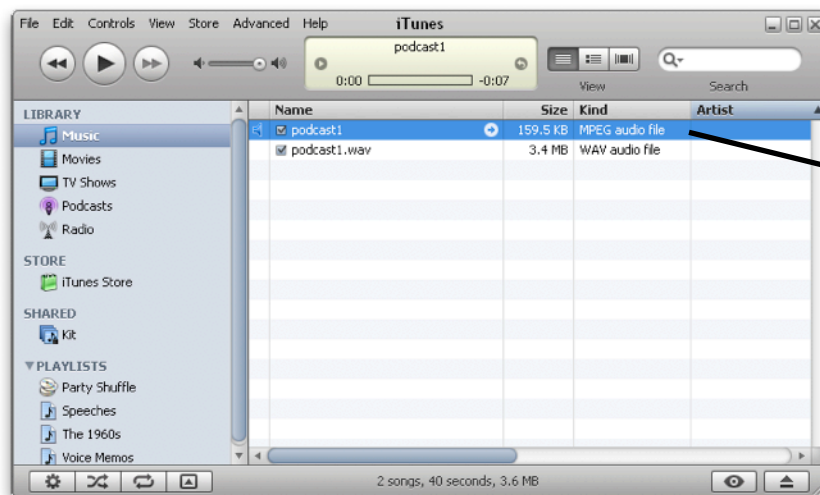
Drag the MP3 from iTunes, and drop it on the desktop.

You might consider renaming this file to begin with the number **01** so that it is easy to find and sort episodes when you have more in the series.

Publishing

Three Components: MP3, Web Page, & News Feed

There are three components that every podcast must have posted online. First, the MP3 file must be uploaded to a web server. A web page must be maintained that tells about the podcast and links to the MP3 files. The news feed is essential for listing in online directories and for automatic downloading.

There is a variety of ways to publish the three components to the Web. Your school or district may already have guidelines for posting content to the Web that you must follow. You may wish to have the three components hosted on a specific Web server, such as the one already used by your school. You may need to consult with your technology department or Internet Service Provider for specific instructions.

> A **news feed** (also known as an RSS feed) is a Web page with information coded in XML, which is similar to HTML. The news feed contains all of the information about your podcast, including the title, description, cover art, and details for each episode and the URL for each audio file.

Method #1: School Server & FeedForAll
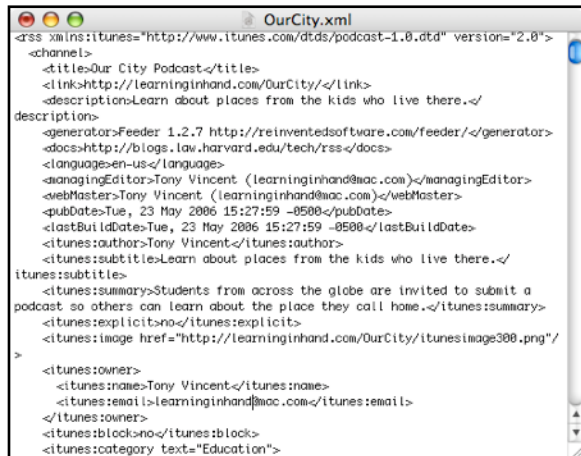
Use this method if you have access to uploading files to your school's Web server.

1. Upload **01episode.mp3** (or whatever you named the MP3 file you saved from iTunes) to the server. Note the path on the server so that you know the URL. For example, it might be http://www.yourschool.com/folder/01episode.mp3.

2. Create a link from a current Web page or make a new page for your podcast. This way your audience can listen in their Web browsers.

3. Download, install, and launch **FeedForAll** (feedforall.com), $40 software for Macintosh and Windows computers. After filling in information about your podcast in the **Feed Creation Wizard**, including the URL of the MP3 file you uploaded, FeedForAll will create the news feed. News feeds are like HTML files, but in a slightly different format called XML.

4. Once FeedForAll generates the feed, it needs to be uploaded to the Web server. If you input your server's settings, FeedForAll can upload it for you. Like the MP3 file, the news feed will have a URL. You will need this URL to submit your podcast to online directories.

An advantage to using your school's Web server is that your school has total control over the content. Also, all web addresses will use your school's domain name.
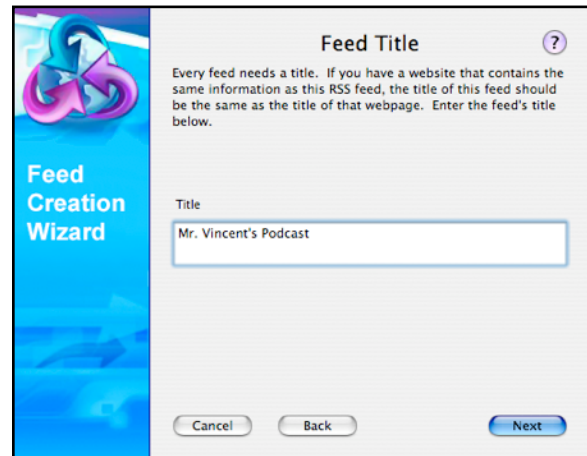
A disadvantage to using your school's server is that it can be complicated to upload the three components. Additionally, podcasts can take up storage space and use large amounts of bandwidth.

Method #2: Podcast Hosting Service

*This is the code for the news feed.*

Instead of typing the code yourself, let FeedForAll generate it for you.

A less complicated way to publish your podcast is to use a podcast hosting service. Services like Gcast, SolidCasts, LibSyn, and PodOmatic allow you to upload your audio file to their site through a Web browser. Then you are prompted to enter information about your podcast. Podcast hosting services then generate the news feed and a website for your podcast.

Some hosting services are free and others charge monthly or yearly fees. While a hosting service is the easiest way to publish, if the hosting service goes out of business or you stop paying the fee, your podcast will be deleted from their servers and, thus, unavailable to your listeners.
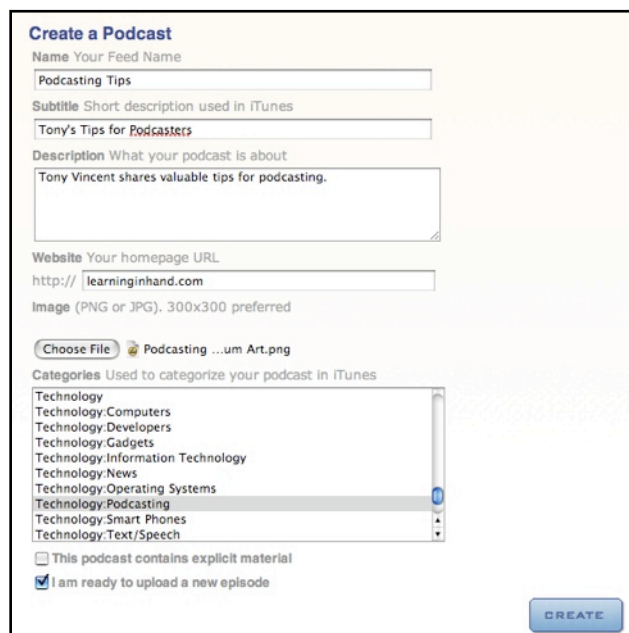
A chart comparing six **hosting services** and directions for using two services, SolidCasts and PodOmatic, can be found on page 28.
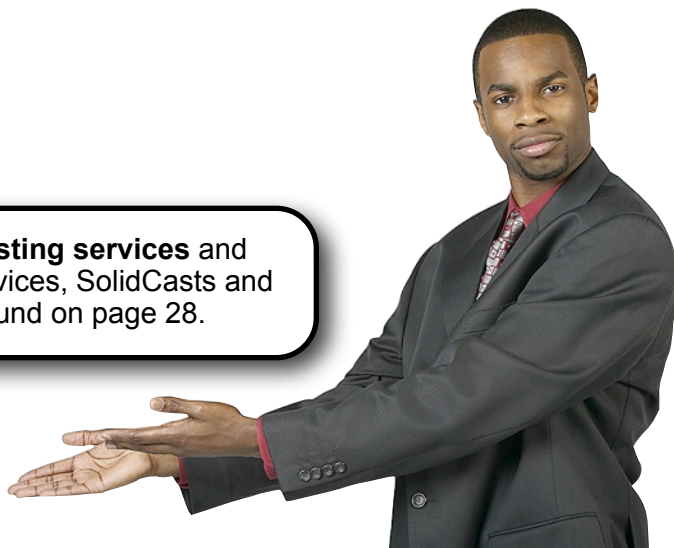
SolidCasts

SolidCasts hosts your audio files and creates a website and feed for your podcast. SolidCasts offers 100 MB for free. $13 per month will get you 1 GB of space. Free and paid accounts have unlimited bandwidth.

1. Go to **www.solidcasts.com** and click **Sign Up Today** to create an account.

2. Personalize your subscription by entering your name, language and subdomain. Click **Next**.

3. Complete the fields for **Create a Podcast**. This is the information that will appear on your podcast's details page in iTunes. (Note: When adding cover art, you can use the same image you saved from Picnik.) Click the box next to "I am ready to upload a new episode" before clicking **Create**.

4. Complete the fields for your first episode. Click the **Choose File** button. Select the MP3 file you exported from Audacity Click **Save**.

5. Once updated, SolidCasts provides you with the RSS feed address for your podcast. Remember, your SolidCasts website URL is *yoursubdomain*.solidcasts.com.

6. With only 100 MB of storage, you will only be able to store a dozen episodes for free. Unless you upgrade to a paid account, you will have to delete past episodes to make room for new ones.

> Other podcast hosting services work in similar ways. You will set up a podcast by filling in fields. Each episode will have more fields for you to complete and you will choose your MP3 file for uploading.
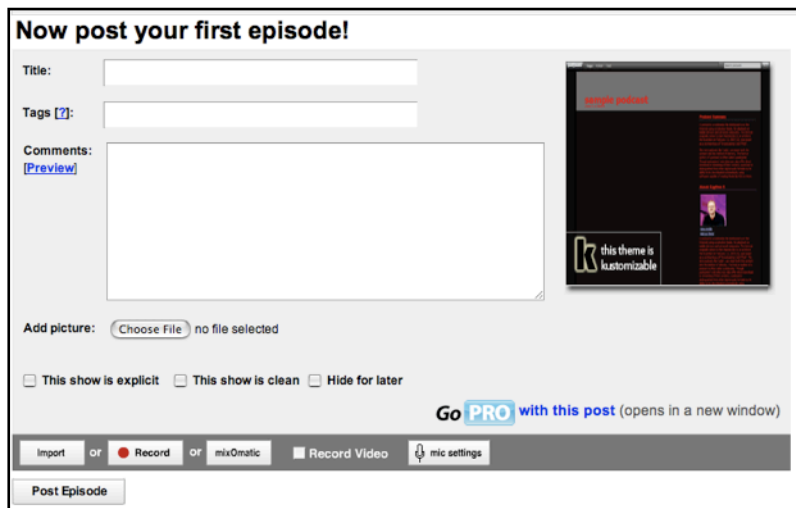
PodOmatic

PodOMatic is a free online service that hosts your audio files and creates and hosts your podcast's website and RSS feed. In a few easy steps, you can have your podcast online and ready for listening in iTunes. PodOMatic gives a podcaster 500 MB of storage and 15 GB of bandwidth per month for free. PodOMatic keeps track of statistics so you can know how many times your podcast has been downloaded. Unfortunately, the free version of PodOMatic places ads on the website it hosts for your podcast.

PodOMatic Pro accounts are free of advertisements and cost $8 per month. Upgrading to the Pro version gives a podcaster 2 GB or storage and 100 GB of bandwidth.

1. Go to **podomatic.com** and click **Sign Up** to create an account.

2. Once you complete the sign up, PodOMatic will ask for details of your first episode. Complete the fields. (Note: When adding cover art, you can use the same image you saved from Picnik.)

3. Click the **Import** button and then **Choose File**. Select the MP3 file you exported from Audacity.

4. You can skip the steps to "Get the Word Out" for now.

5. On the **Manage My Podcast** page, edit the **Tagline and Description**. These appear on your iTunes details page, so be creative and specific. Also click **Edit Cover Art** to upload an image. This image also will appear on your iTunes details page. (Note: When adding cover art, remember that square images look best in iTunes. 300 pixels by 300 pixels is recommended.)

6. Clicking **Design** will allow you to customize the look of your podcast's webpage.

7. Take note that PodOmatic provides you with the URLs for the podcast's webpage and for its RSS feed.

Podcast Hosting Services

There are many podcasting hosting services to choose from. Below is a selection of services and their features.

Hosting Service	Free Version	Paid Version
AVMyPodcast.com	30 days free.	$5/mo - 250 MB storage. $9/mo - 500 MB storage. Unlimited bandwidth.
Gcast.com	Unlimited. Ads might be placed in your audio.	Not available.
LibSyn.com	Not available.	$5/mo - 100 MB monthly storage. $10/mo - 250 MB monthly storage. Unlimited bandwidth
MyPodcast.com	Unlimited storage. Unlimited bandwidth. Inserts 15 to 60 second ad.	Not available.
PodOmatic.com	500 MB storage. 15 GB bandwidth. Ads are placed on website.	$8/mo - 2 GB storage. 100 GB bandwidth.
Slapcast.com	3 episodes. Unlimited bandwidth.	$5/mo - 1 GB storage. Unlimited bandwidth.
SolidCasts.com	100 MB storage. Unlimited bandwidth.	$13/mo - 1 GB storage. Unlimited bandwidth.

Internet Archive, Blogger & Feedburner

You can use completely free services to publish your podcast; however, it will take you a few extra steps to set it all up. After initial setup, it's just a matter of uploading and then adding a post to a blog with a link to the uploaded file's URL.

1. Go to **archive.org** and create an account. Then click **Upload** and follow the directions. Once you finally get the MP3 uploaded, follow the link to the page that was created. Find the link to the MP3 file. You will need this URL in Step 3.

2. Go to **www.blogger.com** to create an account and name your blog. Fill in all of the required fields with information about your blog. You'll even get to select a colorful template.

3. Once your blog has been created, add a new entry. Title the post the name of your podcast episode. In the body of the post, describe the contents of the episode you recorded. You must include a hyperlink to the URL of the sound file you uploaded the to archive.org.

4. Click Publish and view the blog. Note the URL of your blog. The URL is like this one: http://thename.blogspot.com.

5. Now you have a web page for your podcast. The final component is the RSS feed. Your site at Blogger.com will have an RSS feed, but it won't work well with iTunes. We'll use the free FeedBurner service to redirect and reformat the feed for podcasting. You'll have the added benefit of knowing how many subscribe to your podcast.

6. Go to FeedBurner at **feedburner.com**. Enter the URL of your blog in the field. Be sure to check the box next to **I am a podcaster**. Click Next. FeedBurner will ask you questions about your podcast. Be sure to select the SmartCast option.
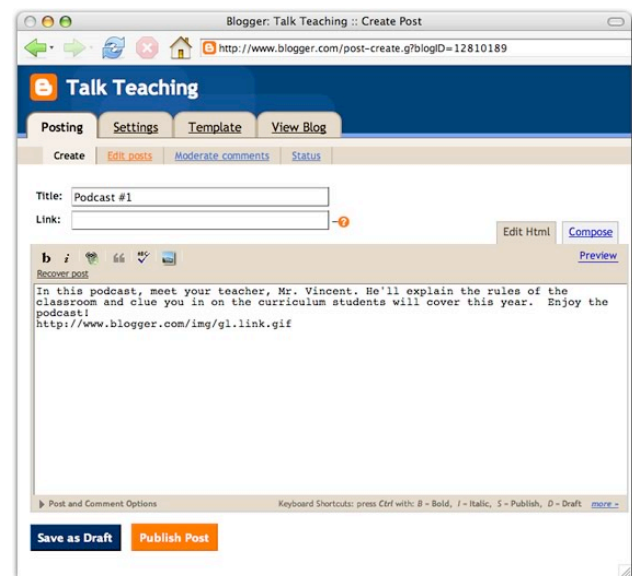
7. Also make sure you indicate that your podcast is iTunes-ready. You will get to choose part of the URL for your podcast's RSS feed. The final URL may look like this: http://feeds.feedburner.com/yourpodcastname.

8. Test out your podcast by subscribing with iTunes. **Copy** the new FeedBurner URL. Launch iTunes and select **Subscribe to Podcast** from the **Advanced** menu. Paste the URL and click **OK**. Your podcast should begin downloading and appear in the **Podcasts** section of your iTunes library.

9. When it's time for your next episode, upload it to archive.org and then simply add a new post to your blogger.com blog where you link to the uploaded file. That's it. You only follow the other steps the first time you set up the podcast.

Want to publish just one episode without the hassle of uploading to web servers and creating a webpage? Participate in **Our City Podcast**! It's the podcast where classes from around the globe contribute episodes about the places they call home. There are lots of resources available to help students create an awesome episode, including a booklet full of planning pages. Publishing is simple because you email your audio and Tony Vincent puts it on the site, on an episode map, and in iTunes. Check it out at **ourcitypodcast.com**!

Submitting to Podcast to Directories

Once the three components are all online, it's time to get your podcast listed in online directories.

FeedBurner

Before submitting your podcast's news feed to directories, you may want to run it through the free service, FeedBurner. FeedBurner republishes news feeds to make them more useful. FeedBurner's main feature is that it tracks how many subscribe to your podcast. Here's how to set up your podcast with Feedburner:

1. Go to **feedburner.com**. Enter the URL of your podcast's news feed in the field. Check the box next to "I am a podcaster!" and click **Next**.

2. FeedBurner will request you enter some information about yourself to create a free account. It will also suggest a **Feed Address**. *This is the URL for your republished feed and is the URL you will provide to online directories and to listeners*. All FeedBurner feeds URLs begin with http://ffeeds2.feedburner.com/_____. You get to decide what goes in the blank. Make it short, simple, and memorable! Click **Next** when you've entered all requested information.

3. FeedBurner will congratulate you on setting up your feed. The next few pages will prompt you to customize the services applied to your feed.

You can watch the numbers of subscribers grow by periodically logging into your FeedBurner account. You can view statistics and graphs like the ones below.
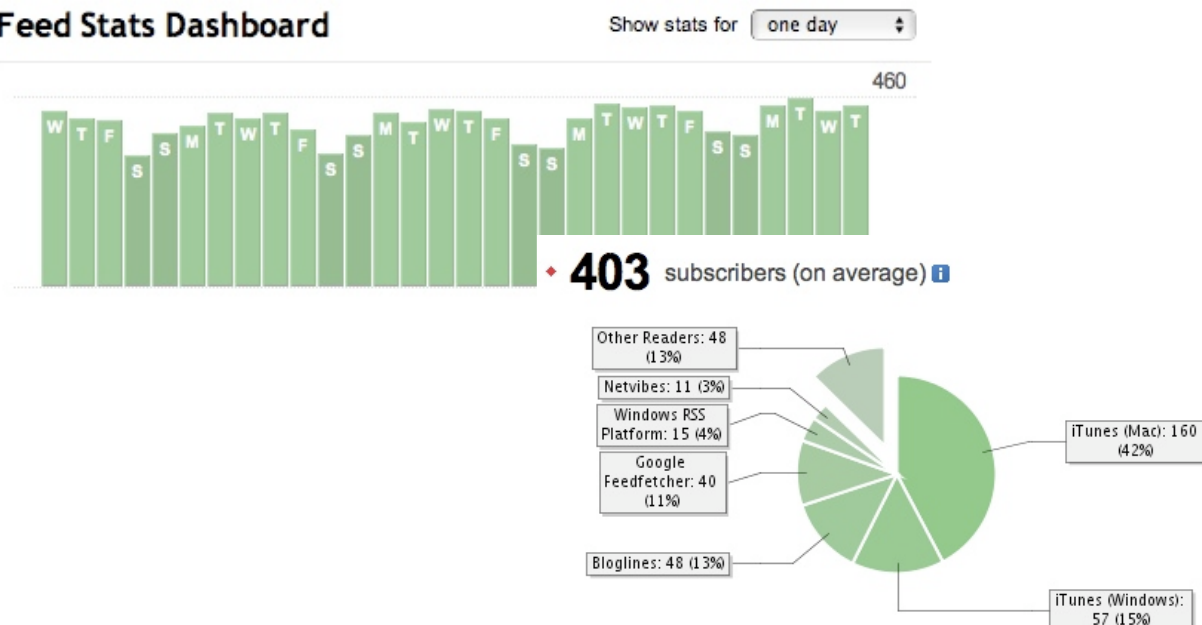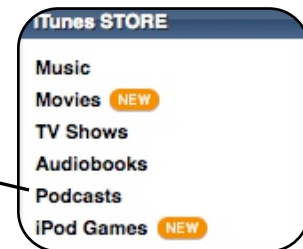
iTunes
The most popular podcast directory is the one built into iTunes. Let's get your podcast included.

1. Launch iTunes. Click **Podcasts** in the **iTunes Store** panel.

2. Locate the **Submit a Podcast** button, and click it.

3. Enter the URL of your podcast's feed in the box, and click continue. (If you are using FeedBurner, the URL begins with "http://feeds2.feedburner.com/".) Complete any other questions to submit your podcast. It will take several days for your podcast to show up in the iTunes podcast directory.

You submit your podcast to iTunes *just once*. After your initial submission, iTunes will periodically check your podcast's feed to see if it has been updated. When there is an update, iTunes will automatically update your podcast's details page.

Other Directories
There are dozens of online podcast directories. The Podcasting Tools website lists over 100 sites that accept podcast submissions at *podcasting-tools.com/submit-podcasts.htm*. It's not necessary to submit to each and every directory. Here's a short list of recommended directories:

- **Podcast Alley**: podcastalley.com
- **Podcast411**: podcast411.com
- **Podcast Pickle**: podcastpickle.com
- **Podcasting News**: podcastingnews.com

Each of the directories handle submissions in similar ways. They will all require you to provide the URL of your podcast's feed. They might also require other basic information about you or your podcast.

Just as with iTunes, you submit to an individual directory *just once*. After submitting, the directory periodically checks your podcast's feed for updates.

Promoting the Podcast

Once you have a few episodes of your podcast published, you may want to expand your audience. There are many ways to help listeners learn about and subscribe to your podcast.

Encourage Listeners to Rate

The details page for you podcast in the iTunes podcast directory allows listeners to rate your podcast. Podcasts with high ratings and with a number of comments have more of a chance of being featured in iTunes.

Categorize Your Podcast Accurately

Contained inside your podcast's feed is a reference to your podcast's category. First, be sure you have specified a category. Most hosting services ask you to provide a category. FeedForAll and Feedburner also ask podcasters to provide a category. If your podcast's content doesn't match the category it is in, listeners won't find your podcast.

Link to iTunes

Make it easy for those that visit your site to subscribe by including a link to your podcast's iTunes details page. One way to do this is to go to the details page of your podcast in iTunes. Right-click the cover art and select **Copy iTunes Store URL**. Use that URL as a hyperlink from your site. When clicked on your site, the user's iTunes will launch and display the details page where they can then click the **Subscribe** button.

Alternatively, Apple provides **iTunes Link Maker**. Simply enter the name of your podcast and click search. Then locate and click the title of your podcast in the results. iTunes Link Maker provides you with the HTML code for a button that will launch iTunes to display your podcast's details page where users can then click the **Subscribe** button. Access iTunes Link Maker at *tinyurl.com/rbrs*.

Another way to make it easy for listeners to subscribe is to make a **itpc** link. Change the http:// at the beginning of your podcast's feed URL to **itpc://**. When this link is clicked by a user, iTunes will launch and instantly subscribe to the podcast. It's a one-click subscription!

Interview Interesting People

Interviewing interesting people will not only make for great content, but can also draw attention to your podcast. You don't even need to be in the same city to interview. **Skype** is a free download from *skype.com*. It allows for free computer-to-computer calls. Software like **PowerGramo** (powergramo.com) allow you to record Skype conversations. Those conversations can be saved as WAV files and imported into Audacity to become part of your episode.

Prepare a Press Release

A press release can be posted to your school's site and may be picked up and published in other sources, like local newspapers.

Comment on Other Podcasts and Blogs

Let others know about your podcast by posting about it on various sites. Find podcasts and blogs related to topics your podcast covers and leave comments. Post on online message boards and forums about your podcast. *Make sure your comments and posts don't seem like spam.*

Produce a Promo

Create very short promotional audio recording that gives a quick and accurate synopsis of your podcast. Exchange promos with other podcasters and play them in your podcast.

Show Notes

Post detailed show notes on the web page or blog post for each of your episodes. Search engines will pick up keywords and display your notes in search results.

Publish the Best Podcast Possible

The best way to promote your podcast is to produce episodes that your listeners absolutely love! They will tell their friends and colleagues who might also become listeners.

Learn lots more about podcasting at **learning**in**hand**.com! Tony Vincent keeps the site up-to-date and you can read what's new on his blog.

Please consider hiring Tony to present a workshop or to speak at your school, organization, or conference! Contact him at tony@learninginhand.com.